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DRUM FABRICATION MYTHS

Michael Oppitz, University of Zurich

Introduction

Over the past few years I have pursued a small-scale research project, focussed on a particular type of drum, as used by the shamans (or $ramm\bar{a}$) of the Northern Magar in west-central Nepal. This drum is called $r\tilde{e}$.

It is composed of a roundish hoop frame, $r\tilde{e}gor$, made of wood of the prickly oak; of a membrane, syelo, finished from the hide of a ghoral chamoix, and stretched over one of the two open surfaces of the hoop; of two bamboo canes crossed in the shape of a steep x and hung on iron hooks loosely inside the hoop to serve as drum handles, $h\tilde{a}t\tilde{a}sso$, as well as a clattering source of rhythm production; of various iron rivets, $t\tilde{a}s$, holding together the overlapping ends of the bent frame; of cowhide laces, $t\bar{a}n\bar{a}$, which keep the membrane stretched over the hoop; and of a tendon, yel, to keep laces and membrane fastened; plus of a drum stick, $gaj\bar{a}$, made of $m\bar{a}ke$ -wood ornamented with various geometrical and pictographic carvings.

This type of shamanic drum can be encountered not only in the Himalayan valleys inhabited by the Northern Magar, but also in those further south inhabited by a mixed Hindu-Magar and Indo-Aryan caste population in the Bāglung-, Pyuthān-, and Gulmi-districts; and in those further west in the districts of Rukum and Jajarkot, predominantly composed of Kami caste villages. The geographical distribution of the $r\tilde{e}$ -drum corresponds roughly with the expanse of a complex that has been termed as »Dhaulāgiri shamanism«.

More remote morphological relatives of the $r\tilde{e}$ -type drum are: the ringh of the Chepang shamans (or $p\bar{a}nde$) in the Mahābhārat Range between the Dhāding- and Chitawan-districts and the nga-drum of the Gurung healers (or pajyu) in the Kaski- and Lamjung-districts. All these types of drums share as common features a wooden hoop covered with a deer-hide on one side only and a crossed bar inside the frame serving as a handle. In this respect they sharply differ from the drums employed by shamans of any other ethnic group in the Nepal Himalaya, such as those of

the Tamang, Sherpa, Rai, Limbu and other eastern hill populations. These drums constitute variants of a second basic Himalayan type, the elementary features of which are a double membrane attached to both sides of a wooden hoop; and a singular handle standing vertically out from the frame and ending in a ritual dagger of the *phurbu* kind. This drum is morphologically related with the Tibetan rnga, whereas the $r\tilde{e}$ -type points to a kinship with Siberian drums.

This North-Asian connection of the Magar drum can also be drawn in regard to the depictions painted on it. From the wide range of pictorial motifs such as cosmological, erotic or ritualistic ones, those found also on Siberian drums are depictions of celestial bodies; of cosmic spheres and their boundaries; and of drums in schematic reduction (painted on drums).

Useful as these classifications of shamanic drums may be, concerning their fabrication techniques, their morphological features, and their symbolic representations, it should be pointed out as well that each exemplar is also an original, a unique and singular piece. This is not a minor statement, for it concerns not only drums. It is relevant to shamanic practice in general. In distinction to the so-called *high religions* with their codified doctrines set forth in holy scriptures and piles of exegetic regulations, the shamans assemble anew their religious universe each time they sit down for a *séance*; and each time it is re-established, it is slightly different from any other enactment before and thereafter. As many drums as many shamans; and as many shamans as many shamanisms. Each drum in its individual distinctness materializes and recalls this fact to mind. For this very reason any research on the topic is casuistic by nature and deserves to be as concrete as possible.

In the minds of those who make them, own them, hear them, play them, shamanic drums have a life: They are born at one point, get inaugurated, do their job, are worn down, sometimes get repaired and finally die. Therefore each drum has a biography. The drum's biography is dependant on, and determined by the life of its owner or that section of his life, during which it accompanies him. So to write the biography of a particular drum requires some knowledge of the shaman's vita who owns it.

Their individual fate and singular life set aside, all shamans' drums of the Magar share a common primordial predecessor: the first drum of mythic times. The story of this drum is recounted each time a new instrument is to be made or a used one is being repaired. A coherent picture of this prototype can be put together from a set of mythic chants, each dealing with the original fabrication of a single constituent part for the first drum. As a collection, these recitals are called *dãgori murine kheti*, or »drum fabrication myths« and it is these that I will focus on for the remainder of my presentation.

The collected sum of »drum fabrication myths«, as recorded on May 25th, 1978 in Taka village, Rukum District, West Nepal during a performance given by shaman Parsad of Ghumilbang on the occasion of a drum repair for the damaged instrument of shaman Kathka of Taka village, comprises six individually named recitals of varying lengths (between 13 and 113 verses each) with a total length of 384 different verses. This circumstantial remark has to be made, for another recording on another date with another performer (or even the same one) would certainly come up with a different amount of verses sung and possibly with a different combination of verses and maybe even of recitals. This is an intrinsic trait of oral tradition: the elements of a literary set are never fixed, they are forever changing.

The drum fabrication myths constitute one division of two basic classes of Magar mythological chants. One consists of proper genesis stories relating the beginning of the world; the origin of species; of man and his fundamental social institutions; and the formation of his natural environment. The other class is made up of ritual auxiliary chants with little or no narrative plot development, dealing either with the first shaman's search for lost souls; or with his fight against and expulsion of unwanted spirits; and lastly, with accounts on finding the appropriate means for ritual operations.

This last group of auxiliary chants is again subdivided into two sections: One concentrates on the primordial search for certain natural products considered to be essential for the correct execution of rituals, such as a tree of a particular species which serves as the patient's life-tree ($suw\bar{a}$) in a healing séance; a specific type of bamboo (lo) suited to be woven into a mat to represent the inhabited world; the appropriate kind of grain – the buckwheat ($l\bar{a}w\bar{a}$) – which, when fried, can pacify agitated spirits by its sweet smell and can jump out of the frying pan, a symbolic sign for its capacity to uplift tumbled souls; and the correct variety of an incense plant ($t\tilde{e}$), which alone can purify the space of the ritual and please the deities concerned. The second section of search songs revolves around

the appropriate raw materials needed for the fabrication of the drum prototype. Both subclasses of *search songs*, *khimne kheti*, treat of the so-called Nine Implements, *nau sardam*, the indispensable auxiliary tools of the shaman.

The first of the six recorded drum fabrication myths is called $r\tilde{e}gor$ khimne kheti or "searching the drumframe song". It has a length of 101 verses and is concerned with the search for the appropriate tree from which the wood for the drum frame will be cut. It is not explicitly said who conducts the search, but it is implied that it is the first shaman and his nine assistants. The text just observes that they go to the eastern gate to find a tree

which no Rammā had ever felled a tree with no ancestors with no connection to the deities which no Ranju had ever felled a tree with no forefathers with no connection to the spirits

The search for the proper tree is carried out successively in all four cardinal directions, until, finally, in the high north, the members of the expedition come across a tree of sandal wood and of prickly oak wood, sāndhan sī / guipāl sī. Which of the two species is the right one is again not explicitly expressed, they are both mentioned in a single parallel verse, but inferring from present day practice it ought to be the prickly oak. The chosen tree is honoured with an offering gift of grains and coins and felled in a way that the top points to the east and the trunk to the west – an inversion to the customary burial position of the dead. Then it is bared off its branches, transported down from the steep hill by the helpers – the text says »ridden by them on their genitals«, – trimmed to a lath, measured, heated and bent to a hoop.

On the way back home nine chips of wood are cut off and thrown into all directions to pacify various classes of deities and spirits; and at the village crossroads the two wives of the first shaman greet the new drumframe with a word of blessing and consecrate it with yeast. At the same place the first shaman jumps over the hoop four times subdueing with this gesture all negative influences that might be lurking in the vicinity, whereupon he falls into a magical sleep. Using the name of his archantagonist as a pseudonym he returns after nine days of slumber, carrying his drumframe into his house, where he sprinkles it with blood of a

sacrificed bull. The first bites of sacrificial meat he throws into all four directions as an offering, while the rest is dried on the central post of the house where from now on also the drum will be kept.

The second of the drum fabrication myths called syelo khimne kheti or "searching the drum hide song" concentrates, as the title suggests, on the primordial search for the adequate hide to serve as the drum's membrane. Again the first shaman and his helpers look out in all cardinal directions. In the east they prepare the hide of a mountain sheep and of a mountain goat (cyepu lu and cyangrā lu); in the south the hide of both a wild and a domestic buffalo (arnā and baīsi); and in the lowland the skin of a lowland goat and of a highland goat (chekarī and bākarī); but only in the northern forests and high rocky places they find what they need as a hide for their drumframe: "the skin of a jhāral-deer / the skin of a ghoral-deer". Again the text is not explicit as to which of the two is ultimately the right one, for they are presented both in parallel position, but again, inferring from contemporary practice, it ought to be the hide of a ghoral chamoix.

The third of the drum fabrication myths, the *tānā khimne kheti* or searching the leather laces song«, seems to be incomplete. It is only 13 verses long and ends abruptly, before the proper leather donor has been discovered. Nonetheless, a considerable list of candidates is presented, such as the spotted cow, the speckled cow, the tufted cow, the dotted cow, the red cow, the black cow and the brownish cow. None of these is suitable, snot apt to establish a standard« as the text critically points out.

The fourth of the drum fabrication myths, the *yel khimne kheti* or *searching the membrane stretcher song* is 32 verses long and possibly also incomplete, even though it mentions at the end the proper tendon to be used for tightening the membrane on the wooden frame, after a series of others made of different bamboo varieties have failed to fit.

The fifth of the drum fabrication myths, the <u>tās kheti</u> or *song of the iron rivets relates in its 79 lines how the first shaman pays a nightly visit to Tiko Kāmi, the blacksmith of the netherworld, calling him out of bed and imploring him to fix immediately some iron rivets on his drum before the cock has crowed. This urgency has its reason in the belief that the iron pieces on a shaman's drum have power over the future and health of a patient, and as his fate is determined during the *séances* held at night time, the primordial iron rivets should also be applied then. Reluctantly the blacksmith consents and, at the prospect of a fat compensation (three

turbans, nine offering coins and a sheep sacrifice), kindles a fire, prepares pipes and bellows, employs pincers and hammers, heats and tempers the iron in various grades, until the drum frame is equipped with the requested rivets.

The sixth and last of the drum fabrication myths, the *chokorā kheti* or "song of the first beer", sometimes also called *lādu khimne kheti* or "searching the yeast song", is 113 verses long. Its relative length is explained by the fact that almost half of it (46 verses) is dedicated to the invocation and enumeration of predecessors in the shaman's profession. These invocations may precede any of the narrative genesis myths and even the auxiliary ones, – either at the beginning of a *séance* or after an intermission. In these preludes the singing shaman begs his deceased colleagues for support: "guide us on the unpassed fords / guide us on the ungone paths".

The actual search song commences with the observation that at the time when the sound »nguwar« of his drum came into being, the primordial shaman had no way to stop his shaking unless by drinking alcohol or by scattering yeast. So he sent his two wives out into the wilderness to find the yeast plant, mahājuri. With the help of the »habitual drinker« (matwal bāni) Mahādev (sic!) they accomplished their mission: drying grain on the world mat lo and preparing a bear mash, they added the yeast to it and gave the brew to their dogs to test it: if they went crazy, it was bad, if they became illuminous, it was good. As it turned out to be good, some yeast is strewn on the madly possessed wood of the drum. Immediately it stops trembling and shaking, as did its owner, the first shaman. The drum is now capable of revealing the future and of dissolving dangers.

This is, in its most condensed form, the content of the drum making myths. Some of the plot matter exposed here is openly related in the recitals, while some is only hinted at. Those of the six chants that are explicit search songs, i.e. one to four, are occupied only with the search for the appropriate drum materials. And in this respect they display some common features. All these searches take place along the points of the compass in strict sequential order, starting either in the east or in the north. If east comes first, south will follow, then west and finally north; if north is the starting point, the order remains the same, only with one more search stop. In this way, the searchers, no matter what specific raw

material they search, all describe a circular movement and one in clockwise direction.

This must be seen in correlation with the circular dance movements of a shaman in session. When he performs a séance in the service of life, a healing séance for instance, his circular movements are predominantly clockwise; when one in the service of death, for instance a commemoration ritual for a deceased collegue, anti-clockwise dance movements prevail. Now the drum of the healer has its raison d'être in the recapture and preservation of his patient's life; so when it is fabricated, the clockwise search for its constituent parts works as a reminder of this intention. One might even say, via these clockwise searches the drum's assignment to serve life is established. Moreover, all appropriate drum materials are finally found in the north, high up in the mountains. This is not surprising, for north, in Magar belief, is a region of good luck and health, from where the first shaman himself originated.

The circular and clockwise search movements for the original drum materials are complemented by opposing movements found in the second set of search songs mentioned before. In the auxiliary myths dealing with the finding of the appropriate life-tree, the world-mat, the jumping grain, and the purifying incense, the search movements are exclusively linear, either along an east-west, or a south-north orientation. These two linear movements allude to a virtual pair of coordinates, one along a life-death axis (east-west) and the other along a sickness-health axis (south-north). And these axial alignments are as essential for shamanic space concepts as the circular ones. These various patterns of spatial orientation in the search songs are not just a matter of content, they are also a major tool used to structure the text as an artistic form.

Another such tool and by far the most prominent one is the constant application of parallelism. Parallel constructions in Magar mythological verse are so overwhelmingly dominant that the rare examples where they are absent, attract attention. Parallelism in Magar shamanic oral literature can be characterised as minimalistic: it tends towards repetition. It can be detected within a single line, between two successive lines, between sets of couplets (i.e. pairs of successive lines), and between lines interrupted by other sets of paralleled verse. Here are some examples:

The most common type of parallelism is the one employed inside single lines. A standard Magar verse is constituted by two almost equal half-lines, of which, when sung, the first has seven, the second six syllables, and between which there is a light caesura, in which, however, the reciting shaman does not inhale. Breath is taken in at the end of the second half-line. When two shamans perform together, which in larger séances is the rule, the lead-singer recites an entire line before the echo-singer repeats it. In special situations this standard form of antiphony can be changed and each of them will sing different lines without the other one repeating them.

The rhythmic similarity of half lines invites intra-verse parallelism. The most common way is to repeat in the second half-line all members of the first half-line except one single word. Five out of six of all verses are constructed in this way; (the numbers to the left of this and the following quotations indicate the positions they have in the respective chants):

purba khanda bāra purba dhokā bāra they went to the eastern sector they went to the eastern gate (rēgor khimne kheti)

Very often this single alteration is also minimalized, to a slight phonetic shift:

o sākhu jā māleo o bākhu jā māleo
[a tree] with no ancestors [a tree] with no forefathers
(rēgor khimne kheti)

The single altered word in intra-line parallelism may even be a jingle word, especially made up for this purpose. For instance:

The first of the two jingle words - asule - may be totally sufficient in everyday language to denote the dogs employed in a battue; the second one is a parallelistic expletive, non-existent in common speech.

In inter-verse parallelism between successive lines, an entire verse is set in parallel to its preceding one:

32	sisai puta jāko	kānul cheojeo bhaigo
33	bhuta preta jāko	bānul cheojeo bhaigo
	from the sons and pupils	the bad signs were cut off
	from the spirits bhut and pret	the bad omens were cut off
		(rēgor khimne kheti)

Intra-verse parallelisms such as:

14	<i>kā</i> nul ngā māpaidu	<i>bā</i> nul ngā māpaidu
	I have not eliminated the bad signs	I have not eliminated the bad omens
		(regor khimne kheti)

can turn into inter-verse parallel constructions between two or more non-adjacent lines such as in the following series:

14	kānul ngā māpaidu	bānul ngā māpaidu
28	o kānul jā bāzeo	o bānul jā bāzeo
37	kānul cheojeo bhaigo	bānul cheojeo bhaigo
42	kānul basināye	bānul bāsināye
47	kānul hājā ţãye	akāś gharla bānul hājā bhaigo
14	I have not eliminated the bad signs	I have not eliminated the bad omens
28	they made the bad signs go	they made the omens signs go
37	the bad signs were cut off	the bad omens were cut off
42	the bad signs they fell off	the bad omens they fell off
47	the bad signs became happy	in the skyhouse the bad omens be-
		came happy
		(rêgor khimne kheti)

Here the shaman sings in intensive repetition about bad signs and bad omens which he would like to see eliminated from his client. But in the beginning (line 14) he does not have the means to achieve this yet: his drum is still not made. Later, when the proper drumframe is at hand, the situation improves: He can make the negative signs disappear (lines 28 and

37), make them fall off his drum (line 42), or even turn them into happy and harmless beings (line 47). Thus the repetition contains a progression – analoguous (if this comparison be permitted) to the progressions in minimal music.

In the *ṭās kheti*, the »song of the iron rivets«, we come across a chiastic play of words (pun) in a parallel construction between two adjacent lines:

4	mangal bāra dāzeo	rato bara dazeo
5	rātai kaṭeng bhaigo	dinai kateng bhaigo
	on a Tuesday	on a red day
	all night the drum went kateng!	all day the drum went kateng!
		(ṭās kheti)

Here, the first word in the second half-verse of the first line, $r\bar{a}to$ and the first word in the first half-verse of the second line $r\bar{a}tai$ standing in a chiastic position to each other, are homonymic, but differ in meaning: 'red' and 'night'. The chiasm is completed by the second word of the first verse: $b\bar{a}ra$ and the first word in the second half-line of the second verse: dinai; here both words are phonetically different, yet the meaning is almost the same: 'day of the week' and 'daytime'.

It may also ocur that parallelism is established on the level of pairs of sucessive lines as the basic unit. The following example brings a whole set of four couplets into parallel relation:

58	utar gharla	utar mukhala
59	lāma piūlā hāye	brāhā deutā hãye
61	purbu khanda jāla	purbu dḥokā jāla
62	bhuta zyeā jā hãye	preta zyeā jā hãye
63	dakhin gharla	dakhin mukhala
64	aulo zyeā jā hãye	agan zyeā jā hãye
65	pachim ghar jāla	pachim dhokādā
66	durgā mātā hãye	durgā bhawāni hãye
68	cārai diśā	cārai mukhala
69	kānul cheojeo bhaigo	bānul cheojeo bhaigo

58	in the northern house	at the northern exit
59	Lama Piũlā became happy	god Brāhā became happy
61	in the eastern sector	at the eastern gate
62	the bhut spirit became happy	the pret spirit became happy
63	in the southern house	at the southern exit
64	the malaria-spirit became happy	the shivering-fit-spirit became happy
65	in the western house	at the western gate
66	mother Durgā became happy	goddess Durgā became happy
68	in the four directions	at the four exits
69	the bad signs were cut off	the bad omens were cut off
		(rēgor khimne kheti)

In this example a long sequence of verses are clamped together by parallelism, binding the verses 58 to 66 into a single set of four interrelated couplets. The concluding lines 68 and 69 confirm and summarize this unity, which consists in associating the main four cardinal directions (again in circular and clockwise succession) with supernatural beings. One might be tempted to read this verbal configuration as a tribal mandala. Thus parallelism, as exercised in Magar shamanic verse, does not only correlate corresponding word material in close vicinity, but also over extended passages.

As such, parallel constructions help to ease the memorisation of a huge body of oral literature. One of my Magar teachers estimated that it takes about seven years of apprenticeship until a new shaman controls the entire body of about 10'000 shamanic verses. But parallelism is not a mnemotechnical aid alone. As pointed out, it serves multiple artistic intentions as well: the epic effect, slow motion, dramatisation and minimal narrative progression, – to name only a few. Moreover, it promotes formulaic expression, of which Magar shamanic lore is full. This contradicts to a degree the announcements of scholars studying oral traditions elsewhere, where, as they affirm, improvisation can play a considerable part (see for instance Lord). In the literary production of Magar shamanism, at any rate, improvisation is quite reduced, if compared with the massive recourse to formulaic and prefigurated manner of poetic speech.

In conclusion it may be suggested that the drum fabrication myths as presented in the foregoing lines, could now be compared to the actual

Magar practice of drum making. Myth and fact would reveal a high degree of conformity and mutual reference. Accordingly, the drum making myths of the Magar could be compared to the myths of neighbouring ethnic environments, such as those of the Jajarkot Kami, of the Hindu-Magar, of the Chepang, the Gurung and the Tamang. For all of these groups some scattered documentation already exists. It just needs to be assembled. Finally, the material presented could be compared to the Siberian shamanic complex – in the manner done already for drum types and drum drawings. All this would testify – in concrete cultural materialisation – to the unity and diversity of shamanism. But this task will be reserved for another occasion.

Textual presentation

The drum fabrication myths dagori murine kheti

regor khimne kheti	searching the drumframe song	101 lines
syelo khimne kheti	searching the drumhide song	46 lines
tānā khimne kheti	searching the leather lace song	13 lines
yel khimne kheti	searching the membrane stretcher song	32 lines
țãs kheti	song of the iron rivets	79 lines
chokorā kheti	song of the first beer	113 lines
(lādu khimne kheti)	(searching the yeast song)	

dagori murine kheti drum making songs total: 384 lines

Recorded on tape in Taka-village Rukum District, Rolpa Zone in West Nepal on May 25th 1978. The performing shamans: Parsad of Ghumilbang, lead-singer; Kathka of Taka, echo-singer. Transcribed, translated and annotated by Michael Oppitz and Rana Prasad Gharti Magar.

regor khimne kheti

1	purba khanda bāra	purba dhokā bāra
	cābiraldeo rammā māgonāyo	ranju māgonāye
	o sākhu jā māleo	o bākhu jā māleo
	deōe māhilnākyo	dhāmai māhilnākyo
5	o sākhu jā māleo	o bākhu jā māleo
	dakhin ghar bāra	dahkin diśā bāra
	khaira sîlāi	noye baira sîlāi
	guwācāpi rālra	cābiraleo
	o sākhu nā māleo	o bākhu nā māleo
10	olja ţesināe	olja paisināe
	ngārge gosāyera	āoe ngā kahāti
	rammā puran can lāi	rāti mākaināo
	caudāhārala	mayam saharla
	kānul ngā māpaidu	bānul ngā māpaidu
15	kadio regor khimo	mā sāndhan rēgorko khimo
	pachim gharla guipāl rēgor khoja	guimāl rēgor khoja
	guipāl sī jālāi	guimāl sī jālāi
	kuwā ṭābā rālra	kuwā damā rālra
	olja ţesināe	olja paisināe
20	ngārge gosāera	deōe māyānāo dhāmi māyānāo
	orge dãkurāra ajhai pani ta	kadio regor khimo
	hãpāl pākherala	hãmāl pākherala
	sāndhan sī jāye	sāndhan rēgor jāye
	hãpā dāldanaiwo	hãmā dāldanaiwo
25	nāe sāndhan sīlāi	nāe sāndhan sīlāi
	kuwāţ āpa yeda	kuwā nāpa yeda
	nauai țilā yeda	nauai gare yeda
	o kānul jā bāzeo	o bānul jā bāzeo
	ekai ceparī hāida	utar ghardā khyera
30	utar gharla	utar dhokāla
	puthā zyeā jā hãye	ghosim zyeā jā hãye
	sisai puta jāko	kānul cheojeo bhaigo
	bhuta preta jāko	bānul cheojeo bhaigo
	kānul cheojeo bhaigo	bānul cheojeo bhaigo
35	ekai ceparā hāida	purbu ghardā khyera purbu dhokāla
	bhuta zyeā jā hãye	preta zyeā jā hāye brāhā deotā hāye
	kānul cheojeo bhaigo	bānul cheojeo bhaigo
	ținai ceparī hāida	dakhin dhokala
	dakhin gharla	dakhin dhokala
	-	

MICHAEL OPPITZ

40	aulo zyeā jā hãye	agan zyeā jā hãye
40	khaira rammā hãye	baira rammā hãye
	kānul bāsināye	bānul bāsināye
	cārai ceparā hāida	pachim gharla khyera
	A Law Interest of the Control of the	
15	durgā mātā hāye	durgā bhawānī hãye
45	pancai ceparī haida	akāś ghardā khyera
	iśwar rājā hãye	akāś gharla
	kānul hājā ţāye	akāś gharla bānul hājā bhaigo
	chaye ceparī hāida	patāl gharla khyera
50	patāl gharla	bāsudeo hãye
50	ngā lāi manduruko	sisai puto jāko
	rāhu cheojeo bhaigo	kitu cheojeo bhaigo
	lupā cheojeo bhaigo	lumā cheojeo bhaigo
	kānul cheojeo bhaigo	bānul cheojeo bhaigo
	sāndhan rēgorla	guipāl rēgorta
55	purbai siren bhaigo	pachim goden bhaigo
	nauai sawāre rāi	nauai dawāre rāi
	māgākhāmlạ jādạ	ādhā kharkhar hodhā kharkhar selra
	utar gharla	utar mukhala
	lāmā piūlā hāye	brāhā deutā hãye
60	nauai ceparā hāida	purbu mukha khyera purbu dhokā jādā
	purbu khanḍa jāla	purbu dhokā jāla
	bhuta zyeā jā hãye	preta zyeā jā hãye
	dakhin gharla	dakhin mukhala
	aulo zyeā jā hãye	agan zyeā jā hãye
65	pachim ghar jāla	pachim dhokādā
	durgā mātā hãye	durgā bhawānī hãye
	ajhai durgā mātā hãye	durgā bhawānī hãye
	cārai diśā	cārai mukhala
	kānul cheojeo bhaigo	bānul cheojeo bhaigo
70	sāndhan rēgor lāi	kātā kholsa
	caudāhārla rāira	mayam saharla rāira
	jumā jhãkrelnī	padmā jhãkrelnī
	purkha gin rājāe	bhagiwante tāni
	puro āyo raiyo	puro jiuni raiyo
75	nauai ţilā raiyo	nauai garẽ raiyo
	jasiwante tāni	bhagiwante tāni
	ţadā hailida	nedā hailida
	lādusaye oyni	barmāsaye oyni
	āsik bāda yeni	bāke yeni
80	sāndhan rēgor lāi	guipāl rēgor lāi
00	caudāhār jāla	mayam sahar jāla
	Caudaniai Jala	mayam sanai jala

	ekai nāwan haida	dui nāwan haida
	cārai nāwan hāyo	sātā jāgi nāra sātī jāgī nāra
	sātā nāmlạ	sātī nāmla
85	ekai dina bhaigo	dui din bhaigo
	cārai din bhaigo	pancai din bhaigo
	chaye din bhaigo	āṭhai din bhaigo
	sātā din bhaigo	nauai din bhaigo
	sāndhane rēgor lāi	maite dhāmi jāye
90	o hemānra candra dandu	bindra dandu
	rammā puran can	o gariye bāje o mātāla bāje
	sun bhale jāye dākā	ocho diota purbu ujyelota
	candrakheye regor lai	o jimką rāiwo
	jora rakat hāida	macãdāko țiko
95	mā kandelā hāida	māsesa jā garyo
	o syesą jā hāida	jāle lāṭā māle lāṭā
	cārai tira herzeo	ekai balkan jāncha dui balkan jāncha
	seyű sekal járái	sime hã hã jāira bhumi hã hã jaira
	bārai nām jātāo	mākartālāi maine khãbā rākhyo
100	rākhe rāmmā	rākhe
101	rāpā sāndhan rēgor sạ	guipāl rēgor sa

syelo khimne kheti

1	utar gharla	utar dhokāla
	o lo nāru māyo	o tānā māyo
	simariko lāgi	bhungarīko lāgi
	sāndhan rēgor jāye	lumā lusī jāye
5	dāpā saira bāzeo	dāmā saira bāzeo
	o deo cālā mārā	o dhāmai cālā mārā
	cyepu lu lāi jaiwo	cyangrā lu lāi jaiwo
	deoe cālā bhaena	dhāmai cālā bhaena
	ge tānāko khoja	ge bānāko khoja
10	purbai gharla	purbai dhokā jāla
×	cyepu lu lāi jaiwo	cyangrā lu lāi jaiwo
	cālikheko tānā	naureko tānā
	ţadā mārucīye	mātānāko khojī
	dakhin ghar khimo	dakhin dhokā khimo
15	mālai nāma jāla	mālai dhokā jāla
	arnā lu lāi jaiwo	bhaisī tānā jaiwo
		~

MICHAEL OPPITZ

	tolo māro ciye	tānāci māyoye
	tānājā māyo	tablo māyo siye
	sāndhan rēgor	guipāl rēgor
20	dāpā sar mārāo	dāmā sar mārāo
	ajhai pani ta kadio	lupā khimo kadio lumā khimo
	mālu nāmko khoja	mālu nāmko pāilo
	kadio lupā khimo	kadio lumā khimo
	bārai dāngala	barai deokhorīla
25	māpeţīko tānā	talo māyo siye tānā ţe māyoye
	chekarīko tānā	bākarīko tānā
	talo mālo siye	tānā țe māyo
	kadio lupā khimo	kadio lumā khimo
	jāḍai bhoṭlạ	bārai yegharla
30	pancai paņdawāra	pancai paņdawarai
	nadā kukhurā	nadā kukhurāsa
	ãsulee kāsa	pãsulee kāsa
	jala rolda bāra	cedār rolda bāra
	bista bān jāla	māita bān jāla
35	āran gharla	parān gharla
	lāla na ghar jāla	pāṭan ghar jāla
	ādhī mulu gowārje	odhī mulu gowārje
	asān gharla	masān gharla
	masān gharla bāze	asān gharla bāze
40	panca bhai jarai	pāṇḍawārai
	cheka bathān dora	ghāta bathān dorạ
	ādhā guwa guwa bāra	odhā guwa guwa bāra
	sīka rolda bhaigo	lũkạ rolda bhaigo
	sāndhan rēgor jātā	jāral lupā tāze
45	ghoral lupā tāze	ghoral lupā bohke
46	sāndhan rēgor jātā	dāpā saran pāriyo dāmā saran pāriyo

tānā khimne kheti

1	sāndhan rēgor ţa	guipāl rēgor ţa
	kadio tānā khimo	kadio bānā khimo
	dāpā saran mārāo	dāmā saran mārāo
	kadio tānā khimo	kadio bānā khimo
5	hāie hāimāli dī	hāie jurmālī dī
	mālī hāie phoni	māle hāi bohke

jurmālī phoni jurmale bohke
nitānājā māyo
gujurie phoni gujure bohke
gorī hāie phoni rauṭe geye jā bohke
nakalīe phoni nakale bohke
rāmlī hāie phoni rāmle hāi bohke
nitānājā māyo

10

yel khimne kheti

1	āga sāndhan rāgar jātā	ngās val nām mālas
1	āoe sāndhan rēgor jātā kaḍio yelpā khimo	ngāe yel nām māleo utar khanḍa jāla māyāl nāmko khojī
	utar khanda jāla	māyāl nāmko pāilo
	•	•
5	jarmutāko yel	tayel māyel siye neyel māyel siye
5	rammā puran can lāi	tayel māyelo
	rammā ranju jālāi	tayel māyelo
	kadio yelpā khimo	kadio yelmā khimo
	ngā yel nāmko khoja	ngā yel nāmko pāilo
	purbu khanḍa jāla	purbu dḥokāla
10	jipā yel jaiwo	lālā pāṭanla
	tayel māyel sike	neyel māyel sike
	kadio yelpā khimo	kadio yelmā khimo
	māgī barā māyel	sailā barā māyel
	kānul māyel	bānul māyel
15	kadio yelpā khimo	kadio yelmā khimo
	ngā yel nāmko khoja	ngā yel nāmko pāilo
	dakhin gharla	dakhin disa jala
	gāmā calko yeldī	gāpā calko yeldī
	ţayal māyel siye	neyel māyel siye
20	kadio yelpā khimo	kadio yelmā khimo
	calpā yel jaiwo	calmā yel jaiwo
	sāndhan rēgorla	tabarã tānāta
	tayal māyel siye	neyel mayel siye
	caudāhārla	mayam sahar la
25	gaũdī māyel siye	galbī māyel siye
	kānul māyel siye	bānul māyel siye
	kadio yelpā khimo	kadio yelmā khimo
	candra ghāta nauai dadā gāpo	nauai gairā gāpo
	māgī barā sita	sailā barā sita

30	kanul cheojeo jaida	bānul cheojeo jaida
	tiri bara sita	miri bara sita
32	yelpā cheojeo jaida	yelmā cheojeo jaida
	[mantra]	

țãs kheti

1	ye gariyā raida	ye mātāla raida
	ye gariyā jāla	ye mātā jāla
	sātā nām bhaigo	pandra dina bhaigo
	mangal bāra dāzeo	rāto bāra dāzeo
5	rātai kaţeng bhaigo	dinai kateng bhaigo
	khāla bārī nazeo	dajyu țiko kāmi
	sāndhan ngā rēgor lāi	ţāsa mārināyo
	sāndhan ngã rēgor lāi	ţasa mārileyo
	bista bānra lupā jāye	lumā jāye
10	ţās ngā mārie	bās ngā mārie
	lãke dājyu lãke	dhaniwanțe lãke
	ținai pagarie diũlā	nauai tilā diūlā
	nauai gạrẽ diũlā	ţāsa māri diữna
	haijā ṭākin bhandā	bārai burkhā diũlā
15	raiceo poro raiceo	bārai rāta lila
	tamrai sāndhan rēgor	ngā dokānla raiceo
	ngā yeranla raiceo	ngā jāpinla raiceo
	ajha pani ta	nauai sāndhan rēgor lāi
	lādu sạ jāsạ	barmā sa jāsa
20	sāndhan rēgor lāi	mākā khila jāda
	ţāde dokān bāra	terse dokān bāra
	ţiko kāmi jāye	lāmdukhee
	o āranla bāra	o dokānla bāra
	caudāhāra bāje	mayam sahar bāje
25	caudāhāra bāje	mayam sahar la
	ţiko kāmi jāye	lāmdukhee jāye
	jāde o kukure	bhote o kukure
	hã hã leda gowārje	he-u he-u leda gowārje
	bhalo ngāe kāmeni	bhalo kāmeni
30	keko jāta yencha	keko bhāta yencha
	ṭadā hernu gayo	nedā hernu gayo
	dhanna kāmenie	țadă cinne bhaena nedă cinne bhaena

DRUM FABRICATION MYTHS

	jasaipo nikleo	țiko kāmie
	keko jāta āecha bhani	āphai hernu gayo
35	bista bānra keko	
33		kāja lāi āyo keko kāmlāi āyo
	dājyu ţiko kāmi	dājyu lāmdukhee
	sāndhan ge rēgor lāi	sāndhan ge rēgor lāi
	ţāsa māri yēceo	khila māri yēceo
*	ādhārāta lila	keko kāma holā
40	ngā ngā mādānāye	ngāmi mādānāye
	khāla mājori siye	khāla ngā joraiye
	ajhai pani ta mero	khāla mājoraisiwo
	mābũndukạ	ajha pani mijyu
	mābũndukạ	khala māri dēke
45	ajai dekhi wārla	ajai dekhi parla
	uthe deo dājyu	uthe deo dājyu
	sun bhālee jāye	dãkā chodinākyo dādim chodinākyo
	khāla gajoriyo	nāla gajoriyo
	sun bhālee	dãka chodeo belā
50	sun bhālee	dadīm chodeo bela
	purbai ujyelo bhaigo	khāla jorinākeo
	purbai ujyelo tā	nāla jorinākeo
	dājyu ţiko kāmie	lāmdukhee jāye
	khala jorinākeo	nāla jorinākeo
55	eko hāta tạ	māsan deso raida
	eko hāta jāta	mācaurā raida
	māghanajā dāda	mācaurā dāda
	ţiko kāmi jāye	lāmdukhee jāye
	eka pachi māryo	kāka phule pāina
60	tyesa pachi māryo	jampā phule phārwar
	dājyu tiko kāmi	dājyu lāmdukhee
	mācaurā liyo	māghana liyo
	thāde dokān jāla	terse dokān jāla
	dājyu ţiko kāmā jāye	ekai pāina jāpeo
65	kāka phule pāina	adhā relo mātāe odhā relo mātāe
	ripā relo mātāe	rimā relo mātāe
	gaūdī relo mātāe	galbi relo mātāe
	deoe pāina jameo	rą̃taleko paina
	kunda pāina jāpeo	karnā phule pāina cārai pāina jāpeo
70	kāka relo bhaigo	rimā relo bhaigo
	sepā relo bhaigo	serõ relo bhaigo
	sisai ngā putu	bhālo ngā jaran lāi
	gaũdī cheojeo bhaigo	galbī cheojeo bhaigo
	kānul relo bhaigo	bānul relo bhaigo

75	jasiwante bhayo	bhagiwante bhayo
	ye gariyā raira	ye mātāla raira
	dājyu ṭiko kāmi jālāi	sira pagarī baidera
	sāndhan rēgor jātā	chārjār bhaigo
79	sāndhan ngā rēgor tạ	sāndhan ge rēgor tạ

chokorā kheti

1	gura bābue	gura bābu singa rammā
	maryo pittr jāye	bābu raman rammā
	je yũ seta ngā boh	je kal seta ngā boh
	lāyo gita tamro	gāyo gita hāmro
5	je āgee sama	je bākee sama
	āũsī joglą	punni joglą
	sāndhan rēgor lāi	guipāl rēgor lāi
	cyepu lujā	cyangrā lujā
	sākhu sunāi dinchu	bāhku sunāi dinchu
10	gura bābu jāye	bābu gulāph singhe
	bābu bal bahādure	bābu dal bahādure
	bābu budhe rammā	najāneko ghāta nāhirneko bāṭa
	ghāta laida yēceo	bāţo bida yeceo
	dakhin ghartāo	dakhin dhokā jālāo
15	ãndhī kholā jāko	jātāi laurī lede
	ngā sarpasa lede	ngā lāpasạ
	ghāta paināceo	bāṭa paināceo
	utar ghara	utar ḍhokādā
	bārai kuṭi bāng lāo	ãnkhe alākhera
20	kāku jaije māni	kaku rāma rammā
	najāneko ghāta	nabujheko bāṭa
	ghāta laida yēceo	bāṭa laida yẽceo
	gura ge pitra	gura ngā deora
	kāku kāsi	kāku kaile rammā
25	gura bābu jāye	bābu nārayan rammā
	bābu anan singhe	bābu pancu rammā
	jijyu gorkhe rammā	jijyu bhorse rammā
	jijyu lāljī rammā	jijyu bhakteni
	jijyu ranga rammā	bājyu daljīte rammā
30	najāneko ghāta	nahirneko bāṭa
	ghāta laida yēceo	bāta laida yeceo

	māgī ge barāsa	selā ge barāsa
	pāţan devi jāsa	bhaie bhagwānsa
	galde na leo	kāku bhalāyo
35	kāku cundurāsa	kāku ghana jāsa
33	utar khanda jāla	rammā boliyo
	nauai cāre jālāo	nauai dhāre jālāo
	bābu kāmāresa	bāta laida yēceo
	bābu jānsā rammā	bābu bādur rammā
40	bābu manrā jesa	gura bābu jāra
40	talnā nām bada	pare ngā daulesa
	unā dinko sākhu	unā dinko bākhu
	sākhu sunā yēceo	purkhā palā yēceo
	tirthā jugla	dharma jugla
45	cārai jug jāla	cārai mānamila
13	unā dinla	unā bārla
	utar khanda jāla	utar dhokāla
	jāḍai bhoṭ jāla	tānā tālā jāla
	syergwā bã jāla	nauai lāṭā sita nauai lātī sita
50	sombāraiko āũsī	mangal bāre punni
	āũsī joglą	punni joglą
	rātai nguwār bohke	dinai nguwār bohke
	bhalo rammā jāte	bhalo ranju jāte
	o lāyo jā māleo	
55	ore bāceo	bācchī gorkhā bāceo
	bhalo ngāe imānni	bhalo padmāni
	bhalo ngāe imānni	kānchī jumā jhākrelni padmā jhākrelni
	lādu sachaiyēcin	barmā sachaiyēcin
	jumā jhākrelni	padmā jhãkrelni
60	utar ghar bānī	utar dhokā bānī
	mahādeoe leonga	pārbatie leonga
	neptai parna gaigo	goptai parna gaigo
	dhanna mahādeoni	dhanna pārbatini
	purkhā gin rājātā	purkhai gin dhanitā
65	oh otharā māleo	opatharā māleo
	deoe sanca māyo	dhāmai sanca māyo
	o jijyue deoe	o bājyue deoe
	rātai karkar bhaigo	dinai karkar bhaigo
	deoe sanca māyo	dhāmai sanca māyo
70	ajhai pani tạ otharā māleo	opatharā māleo
	lādusa jā māyo	barmāsa jā māyo
	dhanna mahādeoe	matawāl bānī
	dhanna pārbatinie	utar khanḍa jāni

MICHAEL OPPITZ

75	bāghai bāose pōni nāgai laije mānchī galde bira rālāi yi moco zyeā rālāi saka pache jaiceo mahājurī lāi	hākin gao jāni pachim gharla cārai bir rālāi yi karam zyeā rālāi lādu sachainānī barmā sachainānī ekai bārla ṭādā chārjār jaiyo nedā chārjār jaiyo
80	simā dur rālāi lopā jāla o tharā jāḍa ajhai pani tạ	pimā dur rālāi lomā jāla mā jurnula otharā jāda cārai bir jārāi yi mānchī jālāi
	dhanna jumā jhãkrelni	āsik dāda yeunī bāke dāda yeunī
85	kāya sipan dādạ	kāya bāgen dāda
	koye lāţo dāni	koye bātho dainī
	purkha gin rājā lāi	tutyo naranakin bhagyo naranakin
	lādu goe cinī	pāţī goe cinī
	ţuţee namārānkin	bhajyo namārānkin
90	gaūdī namārānkin	galbī namārānkin
	lādu chārjār tānī	pāţī chārjār tānī
	tinai rāte tāni	tinai dine tāni
	lādu chārjār bhaigo	pāţī chārjār bhaigo
	acal dawāre rāi	macal dawāre rai
95	āran jaine	āran jaiko lāgi
	rammāe o lāgita	ranju o lāgita
	ajhai pani ta	raksī botol tāye
	māmantrīko lāgitā	māmantrīko lāgi
100	lādu sa jā thānceo nauai sawāre rāi	pāṭī sa jā thānceo nauai dawāre rāi
100		
	nauai țilā thānceo utar ghara bāra	nauai gare thanceo utar dhoka bara
	utar gharla utar gharla	utar dhokāla
	thengā sī jālāi	mungā sī jālāi
105	lādu sa jā charaika	barmā sa charaika
103	karkar māgunāe	jeojeo māgunāe
	olja tesināe	olja paisināe
	ngārge gosāye ngārge	dāngorae
	āoe ngā gariyela	āoe ngā mātāla
110	rammā puran can lāi	puro āyo mātāye
	rammā puran can lāi	rammā ranju jāye
	gaūdī ngā mā rānye	galbā ngā mā rặnye
113	goye taboyo	gopi ţāboyo
		# · • · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·

regor khimne kheti — Searching the Drum Frame Song

They went to the eastern sector the assistants went to the eastern gate 1 To find [the tree for the drumframe] which no Ranju had ever felled which no Rammā A tree with no ancestors a tree with no forefathers With no connections to the deities with no connections to the dhāmi gods 5 A tree with no ancestors a tree with no forefathers in the south direction They went to the southern house in order to detect In order to find out The acacia-wood this wood acacia It had no ancestors it had no forefathers 10 It showed the future by itself it told the future by itself My master and my owner this is my story I made no connections at night with Ramma Puran Tsan on the main road At the crossroads I have not eliminated the bad omens I have not eliminated the bad signs I search the sandhan drum What type of drumframe do you 15 search In the western house they searched for the she-frame of the prickly oak for the he-frame They found the guipāl wood they found the guimāl wood At a waterpond at a watersource It showed the future by itself it told the future by itself to the deity nor to the dhāmi gods My master and my owner I have not 20 been presented My owner's drum is not yet perfect what kind of drumframe do you search On the male hillslope on the female hillslope the wood for the sandhan drum The sāndhan trees Have been covering the male and the female slopes This sāndhan wood this sandhan wood 25 They heated at the waterwell they measured at the waterwell They paid to it nine offering coins nine offering grains They made the bad signs go they made the bad omens go They sliced off one chip of wood and threw it to the northern house In the northern house at the northern gate 30 The spirit of the mountain storm the spirit of the rainbow became happy became happy From the pupil's offsprings the evil influences were cut off The bad omens of the evil spirits bhut and pret were cut off The bad signs were cut off the bad omens were cut off

35	After slicing off a second chip of wood	they threw it towards the eastern house towards the eastern gate
	The bhut spirit was happy	the <i>pret</i> spirit was happy, god <i>brāhā</i> was happy
	The bad signs were cut off	the bad omens were cut off
	After slicing off a third chip of wood	they threw it towards the southern house
	At the southern house	at the southern gate
40	The malaria-spirit became happy	the shivering-fit-spirit became happy
	The shaman of the acacia-tree	of the acacia-wood became happy
	The bad signs they fell off	the bad omens they fell off
	After slicing off a fourth chip of wood	they threw it towards the western house
	And mother Durga became happy	goddess Durga became happy
45	After slicing off a fifth chip of wood	they threw it towards the sky
	The king of gods Iswar	became happy in the sky house
	The bad signs became happy	in the sky house the bad omens became happy
	After slicing off a sixth chip of wood	they threw it towards the house of hell
	And in the house of hell	the snake-god of hell Basudev became happy
50	And from my patient	the pupil's offspring
	The sign of zodiac was cut off	the keto comet was cut off
	The sign of the he-sheep	the sign of the she-sheep were cut off
	The bad signs were cut off	the bad omens were cut off
	On the sāndhan drum	on the guipāl drum
55	The top of the drumtree fell to the	the trunk fell to the west
	east	
	The nine assistants	the nine helpers
	Rode it on their sexual parts	pushing it this way that way
	To their northern house	towards the northern exit
	Lama Piũlā became happy	god brāhā became happy
60	After slicing off a ninth chip of	they threw it towards the eastern exit
	wood	towards the eastern gate
	In the eastern sector	at the eastern gate
	The <i>bhut</i> spirit became happy	the <i>pret</i> spirit became happy
	In the southern house	at the southern exit
65	The malaria-spirit became happy	the shivering-fit-spirit became happy
65	In the western house	at the western gate
	Mother Durga became happy	goddess Durga became happy

	Mother Durga is still happy	goddess Durga is still happy
	In the four directions	at the four exits
	The bad signs were cut off	the bad omens were cut off
70	The covering-hide they needed	for the sāndhan drum
	They brought it to the crossroads	they brought it to the main road
	The shaman's wives Juma Jhkrelni	and Padma Jhkrelni said
	Our royal husband	you've been lucky
	You brought a long life-span	you brought long life
75	You brought nine offering coins	you brought nine offering grains
	You will become renowned	you will become lucky
	They said this	time and time again
	Both sprinkled the drum	with <i>lādu</i> yeast and <i>barma</i> grains
	And gave a blessed dictum	a blessed word to it
80	At the crossroads	on the main road
	The shaman did one jump	he did two jumps
	Over the sāndhan drum	over the guipāl drum
	After jumping four times	he went into a magical sleep
	In his magical sleep	in his magical slumber
85	One day passed by	two days passed by
	Four days passed by	five days passed by
	Six days passed by	eight days passed by
	Seven days passed by	nine days passed by
	And Maite Dhāmi	took his sāndhan drumframe
90	To his two wives	Candra Dandu and Bindra Dandu
	And Rammā Puran Tsan went to his	to his maternal home
	house	
	When the cockcrow time had come	when the east began to brighten
	He brought his Candrakheye	drumframe to his house
	He put some blood on his forehead	as an unction sign
95	After cutting the bull Candrakheye's	they prepared the first bite
	loin	
	After his first bite of meat	the spotted dumb dog helper
	Threw some meat in four directions	and one pain was gone a second pain
		was gone
	The heart and kidney meat	made god sime happy made god bhume
		happy
	After smoking it above the fireplace	they kept the dried meat on the central
		post
100	Keep it	Rammā keep it
101	On the heated sāndhan drum	on the guipāl drumframe

1

syelo khimne kheti — Searching the Drumhide Song

A deerhide for the drum was missing So he went for a reddish cowhide For a sheep-skin of the *lusi* sheep On his way he met a male snake 5 And yet his deities' dance did not arrive Then he took a mountain sheephide But his deities' dance did not arrive Let us search for a leather lace At the eastern house 10 He prepared the hide of a mountain The leather lace of a cālikhe deer But they did not please the deities He went searching at the southern house 15 In the lowland of the Terai He prepared the hide of a wild buffalo But it did not please the deities The lace was not sufficient The sāndhan drum Had not got the make-up 20 What he-sheep should he search for To find the sheep What he-sheep should he search for In the twelve regions of Dang 25 For the lacing of a belt the hide was not enough The lace of the lowland goat Their hide was not enough What he-sheep should he search for In cold Dolpo 30 He went To the five Pandap deities With his asule He searched in the wet places

In Ramma's northern house

at the northern gate a leather lace was missing

for a black-brown yakhide for his *sāndhan* drum met a female snake and killed it his *dhāmi* dance did not arrive

and a mountain goathide
his dhāmi dance did not arrive
to create a standard
at the eastern gate
the hide of a mountain goat

the lace of a blue-sheep to search for another thread at the southern gate

at the lowland gate the lace of a domestic buffalo

the lace was not sufficient
one cover did not suffice
the prickly oak drum
for the male and female snake
what she-sheep should he search for
he followed the footprints of sheep
what she-sheep should he search for
in the twelve regions of Deokhuri
the lace was not enough

the lace of the highland goat for the lacing of the drum what she-sheep should he search for in the twelve high rocky pastures with a river-bird's offering to the five Pāṇḍava brothers with his pāsule hunting dogs he searched at the marshes

	At the honourable client	at his parental home
		2000
35	At the workshop	at the forge
	At the Kāmi's red house	at the house in Totāpātan
	He looked all around	this way that way
	In the house of asān	in the house of masān
	He went to the house of masān	he went to the house of asān
40	All five brothers	the five Pandava
	Went to the fenced deerstand	to the deerstand at the ford
	They went in a crowded group	this way that way
	They came to search in the woods	they came to search at the rocks
	And for the sandhan drum	they got a jhāral deer
45	They got a ghoral deer	the drum hide of the ghoral deer was
		born
46	And now the he-snake was	the she-snake was controlled by the
	controlled	sāndhan drumframe

tānā khimne kheti — Searching the Leather Laces Song

1	For the sāndhan drum	for the prickly oak drum
	What lace should he search for	what standard should he set
	For he could not control the he-	he could not control the she-snake
	snake	
	What lace should he search for	what standard should he search for
5	Should the cow be a spotted cow	should the cow be a speckled cow
	From the womb of the spotted cow	the spotted bull was born
	From the womb of the speckled cow	the speckled bull was born
	Both were not sufficient as a drum	not sufficient for the standard
	lace	
	From the womb of the tufted cow	the tufted bull was born
10	From the womb of the red and black	the red ox was born
	cow	
	From the womb of the speckled cow	the speckled bull was born
	From the womb of the dotted cow	the dotted bull was born
	All were not sufficient as a drum	not sufficient for the standard
	lace	

yel khimne kheti — Searching the Membrane Stretcher Song

1	On this sāndhan drum What kind of membrane stretcher shall I search In the northern sector The jarmutā-bamboo membrane stretcher did not fit	I do not have a membrane stretcher search the membrane stretcher in the northern sector are the traces of the membrane stretcher not once and not another time
5	It did not fit	for Rammā Puran Tsan
	It did not fit	for Rammā Ranju
	What kind of male membrane	what kind of female membrane stretcher
	stretcher shall I search I will search my membrane stretcher	shall I search on the traces of the membrane stretcher
	In the northern sector	at the northern gate
10	He made of <i>ji</i> bamboo a membrane	at Lālāpātan
	stretcher	
	But it did not fit	not once and not another time
	What kind of male membrane	what kind of female membrane stretcher
	stretcher shall I make	shall I make
	It does not fit the <i>magi</i> helping spirit	it does not fit the sailā helping spirit
	It does not fit the bad signs	it does not fit the bad omens
15	What kind of male membrane	what kind of female membrane stretcher
	stretcher shall I make	shall I make
	I will search my membrane stretcher	on the traces of the membrane stretcher
	At the southern house	in the south direction a female membrane stretcher
	He made of <i>gāpā</i> lowland bamboo a male	a female memorane stretcher
	But it did not fit	not once and not another time
20	What kind of male membrane	what kind of female membrane stretcher
	stretcher shall I make	shall I make
	He made of plain cal bamboo a	a female membrane stretcher
	male	
	On the sāndhan drum	the stretcher did not fit
	To one of the holes	time and time again
	On the crossroads	on the main road
25	It did not fit the narrow passes	it did not fit the narrow ways
	It did not fit the bad signs	it did not fit the evil omens
	What kind of male membrane stretcher shall I make	what kind of female membrane stretcher shall I make
	Successian I make	Shall I make

From Candraghat he jumped to the nine ridges and over the nine valleys

With his māgi helping spirit with his sailā helping spirit with his shining miri spirit

After he cut off the bad signs after he cut off the bad omens

After he cut off the he-yel bamboo [mantra]

țãs kheti - Song of the Iron Rivets

1 They brought the drumframe to they brought it to their maternal home their house In their house at their maternal home Seven days went by fifteen days went by on a red and inauspicious day On a Tuesday all day the drum resounded kateng 5 All night the drum resounded kateng Elder brother Tiko Kāmi prepared a pair of bellows made of sheep skin To fix the iron rivets for my sāndhan drum He fixed the iron rivets for my sāndhan drum male and female sheep My honorable client an offering please I fixed the iron rivets 10 I put the iron rivets on Take all away elder brother take it bringer of wealth I'll give you nine offering coins I'll give you three turbans I'll give you nine offerings of mixed let us fix the iron rivets grain When this has happened I may give you twelve wooden pots of Bring light meal bring it in the twelfth night 15 Bring your sāndhan drum bring it to my workshop Bring it to my forge bring it to my smithy for your nine-holed sāndhan drum If that is not enough Bring also lādu yeast and barma grain Keeping the sāndhan drum under the armpit 20 to the workshop on the wayside crossing Ramma went with his assistants on the steep and lenient hill To the forge of Tiko Kāmi of the arm-aching blacksmith To the workshop

they went along the main road

They went along the crossroads

At the crossroads on the main road 25 the mastiff dogs The mountain dogs of the armaching blacksmith Of Tiko Kāmi they were barking he he Were barking hã hã I am the gentle Kāmi's wife said the gentle Kāmeni What caste are you from what subclan are you from 30 And she went to regard them this way and that way But the blessed Kāmeni did not she did not recognize them recognize them Immediately thereafter Tiko Kāmi came out of the house To see for himself what caste they might be what work did you come for My honourable clients what job did 35 you come for Elder brother Tiko Kāmi elder brother arm-aching blacksmith For our sandhan drum for our sandhan drum we came let us fix the nails Let us fix the iron rivets It can't be that important to come during the love-plays of the night my eyes cannot see straight 40 My face cannot look straight with the pipe I cannot join the bellows with the pipe I could not yet join the bellows My dear mit-friend at the place outside the stable at the place outside the stable Let us join the bellows in the morning 45 Maybe at daybreak Let us get it done elder brother let us get it done elder brother Before the golden cock has finished before the night is over crowing You must have joined the bellows with the pipe has finished crowing At the time the golden cock 50 At the time the golden cock has finished with the night When he had joined the bellows the east began to brighten When he had joined the pipe the east began to brighten When elder brother Tiko Kāmi the armaching blacksmith and bellows Was joining pipes 55 He carried pincers in his one hand And carried a small hammer in his other hand Holding a big hammer holding a small hammer Tiko Kāmi the arm-aching blacksmith the crow-flower temper Prepared at first After that he completed 60 the berry-flower temper Elder brother Tiko Kāmi the armaching blacksmith Took up the small hammer took up the big hammer In the workshop at the crossing of the steep and lenient hill

Elder brother Tiko Kāmi increased the temper of the iron could not destroy neither this nor that 65 The temper of the crow-flower could not destroy the female future It could not destroy the male future marker marker It could not destroy the narrow it could not destroy the narrow ways passes To increase the temper of the deities he increased the temper of the pheasantblood In the vessel he increased the of the ear-flowers four tempers temper 70 And now the crow could be the future marker could be destroyed destroyed sepā could be destroyed serõ could be destroyed my gentle successor My pupil and my son The narrow passes have been cut off the narrow ways have been cut off The bad signs have been destroyed the bad omens have been destroyed 75 They carried the drum back to the back to their maternal home house Where it became renowned where it became lucky For elder brother Tiko Kāmi's they bound a turban arround his head honour became completed And so the *sāndhan* drum our sāndhan drum 79 My sāndhan drum

chokorā kheti — Song of the First Beer

Our teacher father teacher father Singā Rammā 1 Dead ancestor father Raman Rammā I was born from your kidneys I was born from your heart It was yours to give the songs it is ours to sing the songs According to your order according to your word 5 At the new moon time at the full moon time We attached the hide of a mountain the hide of a mountain goat sheep On the sandhan drum on the guipāl drum I let you hear about the forefathers I let you hear about the ancestors father Gulaph Singh 10 Of all my teacher fathers Father Bal Bahādur father Dal Bahādur

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	Father Budhe Rammā	on the unpassed fords on the unknown paths
	Give us guidance on the fords	give us guidance on the paths
	At the southern house	at the southern gate
15	At the Andhi Khola river	where the tailless stick-snake lives
15	Show me the fords	show me the paths
	Me and my tailless snake	me and my tiger
	At the northern house	at the northern gate
	At the twelve Kutibang	at the Ankhe-Alakhe-people
20	Uncle Jaijmāni	uncle Rama Shaman
20	On the unpassed fords	on the ungone paths
	Give us guidance on the fords	give us guidance on the paths
	Master our ancestor	master our deity
	Uncle Kāsi	uncle Kaile Rammā
25	Of all our teacher fathers	
23	Father Anan Singh	father Nārayan Rammā father Pancu Rammā
	Greatgrandfather Gorkhe Rammā	
	Greatgrandfather Lalji Rammā	greatgrandfather Bhorse Rammā greatgrandfather Bhokte you two
	Greatgrandfather Ranga Rammā	greatfather Daljite Rammā
30	On the unpassed fords	on the ungone paths
30	Give us guidance on the fords	give us guidance on the paths
	With our <i>māgi barā</i> helping spirits	with our <i>selā</i> helping spirits
	With the deity of Patan	with younger brother Bhagwan
	You are the wild boar	uncle Bhalayo
35	With uncle Cundura	with uncle Ghana
33	At the northern sector	calling the Rammā
	At Naucare	at Naudhare
	With father Kāmare	give us guidance on the path
	Father Jansi Rammā	father Badu Rammā
40	Father Manrāje	all our teacher fathers
40	After having gone to the	with my spotted boar of the paria-caste
	netherworld	with my spotted boar of the paria-easte
	Ancestors of many days	pedigree of many days
	Let us speak of the ancestors	let us enumerate the forefathers
	In the third age	in the religious age
45	In the four ages	amongst the people of the four ages
43	After many days	after many years
	In the northern sector	at the northern gate
		at the horthern gate at Tānātāli
	In cold Dolpo At Syergwabã with the nine male	and female dumb dogs
50	At the new moon of a Monday	at the fullmoon of a Tuesday
30	At the new moon time	at full moon time
	At new moon time	at fullilloon tille

	The nguwar sound of the drum was	the nguwar sound was born at day
	born at night	4.75
	Gentle Rammā	gentle Ranju
	He had no armour	had no song
55	So he went beyond	to the village of Bacchigaon
	Both my gentle faithful ones	both my gentle Padma-wives
	Both my gentle faithful ones	younger wife Juma Jhãkrelni and Padma
	Vou two places purify same lade	Jhãkrelni
	You two please purify some <i>lādu</i>	and purify some barma grain
	yeast	and Dadma Thälmalni
CO	Both Juma Jhãkrelni	and Padma Jhãkrelni
60	The two went to the northern house	went to the northern gate
	They called in at Mahādeo's	they called in at Parbati's
	They kneeled down	they bowed down in front of them
	You two praiseworthy Mahādeo	and praiseworthy Parbati
	Our royal husband	our wealthy husband
65	He has no beer mash	has no beer mash
	The deities did not give him rest	the <i>dhāmi</i> gods did not give him rest
	The deity of his greatgrandfather	the deity of his grandfather
	Made him lightly shake all night	made him shake lightly all day
70	The deity did not give him rest	the <i>dhāmi</i> gods did not give him rest
70	So far he has no beer mash	has no beer mash
	They did not give him <i>lādu</i> yeast	they did not give him barma grain
	Praiseworthy Mahādeo	with his drinking habits from the northern sector
	Praiseworthy Parbati said	
	From the place of tigers and of wolves	from Hakin village
75	At the western house	of the man who wears a snake skin
13	The wild boars	the four boars [have the yeast]
	These <i>moco</i> spirits	
	At the very end he ordered them	these <i>karam</i> spirits [have they yeast] to purify the <i>lādu</i> yeast to purify the
	At the very end he ordered them	barma grain
	Within a year the mahājuri yeast	was ready time and time again
80	They dried the barley seeds	and wheat seeds
00	On the male lo mat	on the female <i>lo</i> mat
	And they put the beer mash	into a small bamboo basket
	The four wild boars	and these people there
	Blessed praiseworthy Juma Jhãkrelni	and advised her
85	To feed the beer mash	to their hunting dogs to taste it
33	To see if they turned dumb	or if they turned wise
	If you see that your royal husband is	or his soul will run away
	wiped out	or mis sour win run away
	wiped out	

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	Then the yeast is rotten	and the mugwort too is rotten
	If you see that he is not wiped out	and his soul will not run away
90	If you do not see the narrow passes	if you do not see the narrow ways
	Then the yeast is perfect	then the mugwort is alright
	Within three nights	within three days
	The yeast will be perfect	the mugwort will be perfect
	The lazy assistants	and the diligent assistants
95	Will do their duty	in the workshop
	For the Rammā	and the Ranju
	Until then	the raksi bottle will be ready
	For our man of knowledge	for our man of knowledge
	Place the <i>lādu</i> yeast	and place the mugwort
100	You nine assistants	you nine helpers
	Place the nine offering coins	place the nine offering grains [in front of
		me]
	They went to the northern house	they went to the northern gate
	At the northern house	at the northern gate
	When they were sprinkling <i>lādu</i>	and sprinkling barma grain
	yeast	
105	On the crazy wood	on the wood possessed by madness
	It did not start to shake	neither heavily nor lightly
	But it showed the future by itself	it told the future by itself
	My master	my dāngora drum
110	In this my house	in this my maternal home
110	Rammā Puran Tsan's	life time is not long
	Neither Rammā Puran Tsan's	nor Rammā Ranjus
112	I do not see the narrow passes	I do not see the narrow ways
113	Do not rip out the <i>goye</i> souls	do not rip out the <i>gopi</i> souls

Annotations to the regor khimne kheti

- The name pair Rammā and Ranju designates the first shaman, Rammā Puran Tsan. While the first term *rammā* is still used today as a general Kham designation for 'shaman', replacing the Nepali word *jhākri*, the second term *ranju* will be encountered only in the context of mythological chants, as a parallelistic filler.
- 3 »... with no ancestors«, »with no forefathers« means: a drum, which has never existed before.
- 10 With these words the singer alludes to the divinatory capacities of the drum.
- 31 »My master and my owner« is the address of the acacia-wood to the first shaman.
- The verbal duplication of the prickly oak into a male *guipāl* and a female one *guimāl*, is a frequent procedure in mythic style of speech. It serves the requirement for parallel words. The usual way of accomplishing this is to add to the word stem a male ending *pāl* or *pā* in the first half-line and a female ending *māl* or *mā* in the second half-line. Moreover, dual sexuality plays an elementary role in mythic times, not only for living beings, but also for objects and natural phenomena, see for instance *hāpāl/hāmāl* (in verse 21) and *hāpā/hāmā* (in verse 24) for the »male and female slope«.
- »... they heated it, they measured it«: are short-hand descriptions for steps in the fabrication process of a drumframe. After a drumtree has been located by its subsequent owner, it will be felled by some assistants. Then it will be debranched and carried to a well nearby (acts which the text leaves unmentioned in this passage, but deals with later on in lines 55 and 57). Near the well, the trunk of the tree will be cut to a lath. This will be measured to get the right size and then be heated over an open fire, as to be bent to a round frame more easily. In case the lath breaks in the difficult task of bending it (which is a bad sign for its future owner), a second lath will be cut, measured and bent. Once this stage has been reached, the bent frame will be deposited into a circular hole in the soil where the drum-makers throw offering gifts over it such as coins, chicken-blood and grains, as stated in verse 28.
- The spirit of the mountain storms, puthā zyeā, which is also the spirit of the northern, high altitude pastures, will attack people in the guise of a mountain storm or a snow avalanche. The rainbow spirit, ghosim zyeā, also a spirit of high altitude pastures, can make people disappear. Thus, both spirits are especially dangerous for shepherds, hunters and those who travel through alpine regions.
- »... from the son and pupil ...«, sisai puta: The text alludes to the successor of the first shaman, Barca Pargil Pu, who is Rammā Puran Tsan's own son and his first and only pupil. He is the primordial representative of all new initiates, that is of all those who aspire after a new drum.
- 35 »... a second chip of wood«: Up to the present day the makers of a new drum scrape off nine chips of wood from the drum lath and throw them into all direc-

- tions at nine different stopovers on their way back from the forests. This is an important ritual gesture, by which they beg the supernatural beings forgiveness for having felled a tree.
- The spirits *bhut* and *pret* usually appear as a pair. They reside in natural objects, such as rocks, trees or in marshy places. They can be harmful to man in many ways. The *bhut* spirit has the head of a water buffalo. God *brāhā*, called Brahma by preference in the Hindu context, the divine source of all Being, is redefined in Magar religion as the all embracing principle of ancestorship. As *sidha brāhā* he is worshipped by all Magar clans; he has the power to animate the shaman's staff, *kothye*.
- The malaria spirit, *aulo zyeā*, and the spirit of shivering fits, *agan zyeā*, bring various kinds of fever to man. They reside predominantly in the southern plains, where malaria is widely spread.
- In the Hindu pantheon Durgā is the śakti of Śiva. According to Magar astrology it is an auspicious sign to meet goddess Durgā in a visionary dream.
- The »king of gods«, *iswar rājā*, is none other than god Indra.
- The snake-god of the netherworld, Basudev, tries to drag newborn children into his reign. He is warded off with the help of drawings of protective circles.
- The zodiac is a demon, known under the name of *rāhu*. He causes eclipses of sun and moon; *kitu* or *ketu* is a comet; both are planets with extremly negative astrological connotations.
- »The sign of the he-sheep/the sign of the she-sheep« lupā/lumā: The singer alludes to the companion sheep of deceased people, which guide the souls of the dead to the Pass of the Beyond, located on the eastern border of Magar territory, mapped out as Jaljala Pass. When, as in this verse, the companion sheep of the dead are repelled, it will follow that the shaman's client will be rescued from the dangers of death.
- In this verse the felling of the drumtree is recounted, which is already a *fait ac-compli* in verse 26. It is essential that the tree falls eastward with the top. The east-west direction is considered to be the direction of life and death. A drumtree which has all its life ahead as a drum and which will be used to prolong life, should never point into the direction of death whem felled. Deceased people, on the other hand, are layed out and later buried with the heads pointing west and their feet pointing east.
- To ride the trunk of the drumtree »on the sexual parts« is a habit still practised today. This symbolism allows the assumption of an erotic partnership between the shaman and his drum. At least it can be stated that by riding the trunk, the drum makers allude to the future function of the drum as a vehicle, a kind of horse, on which the shaman undertakes his transcendental journeys.
- In Magar lore Lāmā Piūlā is a legendary bonpo priest from Dolpo.
- This verse anticipates the application of the drumhide on the frame, a subject to be treated in detail in the next drum fabrication myth, the *syelo khimne kheti*, in

- which the long search for the appropriate membrane precedes its application. In contemporary practice the hide is applied to the drumframe also on a crossroads outside the village, just as stated in the next verse.
- 72ff. Up to the present day it is the drumowner's wife who greets the new hoop with a word of blessing at the entrance to the village.
- Sprinkling the drumframe with yeast brings about its appearement, see also the »Song of the First Beer«, verse 104.
- »... did one jump«: By jumping over the drumframe the shaman appropriates the power of the wood. At the same time he subdues the evil influences that might be nesting there. This custom is continued up to the present day.
- The magical slumber, sātā, is enacted in present day séances by the shaman's lying down on the floor in a sleeping position. Putting his drum under his head like a pillow he remains in a motionless state for some time, until he starts trembling, then shaking and finally moving about on all fours, transformed into an animal tutelary spirit.
- Maite Dhāmi is one of the main opponents of the first shaman Rammā Puran Tsan. Here, after his nine-day slumber, the shaman employs this pseudonym to remain unrecognized.
- Candra Dandu and Bindra Dandu are the two wives of Maite Dhāmi, Rammās arch-enemy. In correspondence to verse 89 the names of these women are used by two wives of Rammā as codenames.
- In this verse the drum is given the name of the sacrifice which it receives, i.e. the name of the bull Chandrakheye.
- Not only the shaman is beneficiary of the sacrificial blood: some of it is also sprinkled over the drum. Both shaman and drum are said to be invigorated by it.
- The dumb dog, *lātā kukur*, is a clownesque assistant of the shaman.
- The pair of deities, *sime* and *bhume*, are the »master of the swamplands« and the »god of arable land«. In the mythic chants they usually appear together in formulaic juxtaposition.

Annotations to the syelo khimne kheti

Right from the beginning of this chant the search for the appropriate drumhide, syelo, is combined with the search for the ideal leather laces, tānā. This juxtaposition is repeated several times in the course of the song (in the verses 9, 13, 17, 19, 25 and 27), so that one might conclude the two items are fashioned in a single operation. This, however, is not the case. In present day practice the leather laces are made of cowhide, i.e. of domestic stock, while the membrane is fabricated from the hide of a deer, the ghoral chamoix. The ghoral supplies the hide for the drum's membrane also in other ethnic surroundings, among the Tamang, the Chantel and the Chepang for instance. This deer should not be hunted,

- it should be found dead. Nevertheless, the apparent brevity of the search song for the leather laces might be explained by the fact that the search is already treated in the preceding song on the drumhide.
- The connection made in this verse between the correct raw materials for the drum and the shaman's dance is indicative: The drum is the ideal rhythmic supporter of the dance. Moreover, the dance is introduced as being divine.
- The hides of the mountain sheep, cyepulu, and of the mountain goat, cyangrā lu, which are discovered in this verse as being not the right ones, are said to be appropriate in a verse of the chokora kheti (see verses 7 and 8), falsely so, as we will hear later on.
- »... to create a standard«: This is an explicit indication for the charter value of the myth. In the mythic chant the prototype is fixed for each constituent part of the drum and each successive drum has to be rebuilt according to it.
- The »lowland of the Terai«, *mālai*, designates the Indian plains, situated south of the plains in the inner Terai, located in the regions of Dāng and Deokhuri (mentioned in verse 24).
- The adjacent regions of Dang and Deokhuri in the inner Terai are traditional winter destinations for the sheep- and goat-herds of the transhumant Magar of the North.
- The literary translation for »Dolpo« should be »Tibet«, or *bhot*. But every local lay person listening to the myths, knows very well that in this context only Dolpo can be meant.
- The five Pāṇḍava brothers, i.e. Dhamrāj (son of Viṣṇu); Bhimsen (son of Bāyu); Arjun (son of Suriya); Nahakul (son of Duryudan); and Sahādev (son of Duryudan). They normally play only a role in Magar astrology, but are mentioned in this mythological context, because they are good hunters; and good hunters are needed to kill the timid deer of the mountains.
- The jingle word *āsule/pāsule* refers to the hunting dogs of mythic times, encountered also in the genesis stories.
- A visit in the house of the spirits of the dead, asān and masān, is meant to remind the audience of the dangerous task that consists in searching for the drumhide.
- 44f. The text mentions two different varieties of wild Himalayan goat as the appropriate ones, *jhāral* and *ghoral*. But it is clear to everyone that only the latter can be taken to provide the correct hide for the membrane.

Annotations to the *tānā khimne kheti*

The different varieties of cattle enumerated in the preceding lines play also a role in a popular genesis story of the Magar tribe. According to this legend, vaṃsāvali, the first ancestor, a half-god with a divine pedigree, comes from the inside of a steep rock, located north of the present habitat of the Magar. Entering the

human world he meets a young woman and makes love with her. From their children derive the three proto-clans of the Magar, the Gharti, the Budha and the Pun. As his inheritance the divine ancestor brings a yoke, servants and cows from the gods' dwelling place behind the rock. There are white cows, brown ones, black ones, spotted ones, and speckled ones parading into the human sphere; when green ones and tumeric-coloured ones appear, the woman shrinks back and her husband returns them to the interior side of the rock; that is why they do not exist nowadays in our world.

As the text ends abruptly after this line, it is not clear which one of the diverse varieties of cows provides the proper leather laces for the drum.

Annotations to the yel khimne kheti

- The varieties of bamboo that are successively tried out as materials for the membrane stretcher, starting in this verse with the *jarmuta*-kind, followed by the ji-, $g\bar{a}$,- and $c\bar{a}r$ -bamboo, are only temporary choices. In the end it has to be the tendon yel.
- The hamlet Lālāpātan is one of the original places of Magar shamanism. It is located on the northern slopes of the Jangla Bhanjyang Pass.
- The *māgi* and the *sailā*-spirits are secondary helpers of the shamans, belonging to the class of *barā*. They are invocated to enlarge the shaman's ecstatic powers.
- 28 Candraghat is a village to the south-west of Magar country.
- The pair *tiri* and *miri* are secondary helping spirits of the *barã*-class. They are embodied in the rays of the sun.
- The chant is interrupted in this line by a *mantra*. It is not clear whether the story continues, telling us more about the *yel* or not. When the tendon is stretched over the drum frame the assistants cry out: *ghumike yel!* »Jump on the frame, tendon!« in order to transfer to the tendon the responsibility for the success of their action.

Annotations to the *tas kheti*

- The chant begins with the statement that the fabrication of the drumframe is practically completed, only the iron rivets are missing which hold together the bent ends of the lath, which, up to this point, had been held together provisionally with bamboo strips.
- 4 »Red days« are days of inauspicious constellation.
- The primordial sound »kateng« which the drum lets go without being sounded, is a sign for its untamed ferocity.

- 6ff. In a short sequence of verses starting in this line a preview is given on the activities of the blacksmith of the netherworld, the main description of which is presented later (starting with verse 51).
- The person asking for a sacrifice is none other than the blacksmith whose craze for profit is notorious. Here, and in the subsequent dialogue, it is not always easy to establish who of the dialogue partners is speaking. Oral tradition has no quotation marks.
- Starting with this verse the visit of Rammā Puran Tsan in the forge of Tiko Kāmi is recounted; the previous dialogue between the two should therefore follow. This shows that the mythic narration is not always linear, it cuts foreward and backward.
- 23 »The arm-aching blacksmith« is a formulaic attribute of Tiko Kāmi, an euphemism for his ardour.
- What has been translated as mastiff dogs is given in the original as "Tibetan dogs", bhote okukure.
- 35ff. Here is the beginning of the dialogue between shaman and blacksmith, some scraps of which have already been interspersed in the opening lines of the chant.
- 3 »Joining the bellows with the pipe« is a paraphrase for an enormous heat of the fire in the forge, prerequisite for the iron works.
- The expression *mit*-friend, in Kham *mijyu*, designates a pact of ceremonial friend-ship between two partners. It obliges them to extend mutual hospitality and to support each other; it excludes consecutive marriages between members of the two parties.
- 46ff. The urge with which the shaman presses the blacksmith to complete the iron work before daybreak, is connected with a need for secrecy. If it were executed in plain daylight the work could be seen by enemies.
- The **crow-flower-temper**, and the tempers that follow, such as the *berry-flower-temper** (verse 60), the **pheasant-flower-temper** (verse 68) and the **ear-flower-temper** (verse 69) are poetic metaphors for various water mixtures in which the heated iron will be tempered. Each mixture produces a different degree of hardness. The metaphors serve to guard the secrets of the blacksmith's knowledge.
- »Future markers« are material objects to indicate the future. These divinatory devices consist of some scraps of cloth and fingernails of the patient rolled to miniature balls. These balls are put on the shaman's drum which then is beaten while held in a horizontal position. In this way the balls begin to dance over the membrane. Depending on the spot where they stop moving or where they fall off the frame, they provide variable allusions to the patient's future.
- 71 The pair of spirits *sepā* and *serõ* are supernatural beings of the swamplands, sons of *separā*, a spirit residing in wet places, at watersources and in morasses. All three of them cause polio.

Annotations to the *chokorā kheti*

- The *song of the first beer commences with a so-called pittr khulne or *invocation of the ancestors, in the course of which all professional predecessors and teachers of the performing singer be they dead or alive are invocated. Their list varies from performer to performer, as each shaman has a different set of ancestors and teachers. In the recorded case presented here, the list contains 26 shamans, beginning with Singa Rammā, a healer from Sera, who was 65 years old and alive at the date of the recording in 1978. The invocation of the ancestors is a kind of prelude to the recitational part of a séance. It has to precede the first myth recounted in a sitting; in a night-long séance it may be repeated after an intermission.
- 2 Raman Rammā was a shaman from Sera who died approximately around 1963.
- off. As the invocations of the ancestors can be the prelude to any myth, they are unspecific for the occasion. To overcome this, a performer may put in a few lines indicating the actual occasion, such as some words about drum making. The entire invocation of the ancestors ends with verse 45.
- In 1978 Gulāph Singh was the oldest living shaman of Taka, aged 84. He died six years later in 1984, aged 90. He was a member of the Budha clan.
- Bal Bahādur, in 1978 about 57 years old, is the head shaman of Taka, widely recognized for his knowledge, zeal and wit. Dal Bahādur, in 1978 about 55 years old, is a reincarnation of his own father Rupsingh. He has been many years in the service of the Indian Army Assam Rifles.
- Budha Rammā, renowned for the beauty of his singing, is a blind shaman of Taka. He was about 60 years old in 1978.
- The Andhi Khola is a confluent of the Kāli Gandaki, to the south-west of Pokhara. It flows through territory outside the sphere of the Northern Magar.
- 20 Jaijmāni and Ram Rammā are names of two non-identified shamans.
- While the shaman Uncle Kasi could not be identified, Uncle Kaile, also called Kāle, is known as a healer who died around 1980 and has since been reincarnated twice: once in his nephew Dute Rammā and in the *dhāmi* or spirit medium Bhim Bahādur Gharti.
- Nārayan Rammā is a blind shaman of Taka, who died around 1958 and was reincarnated in Sarki.
- Anan Singh Gurung was a famous shaman of Taka who died around 1960. He was the paternal uncle of Beth Bahādur Gurung, whose *gel* or ancestral spirit he is. Pancu Rammā was a shaman of Taka who died around 1971. He was, like Anan Singh, a descendant of Gurung immigrants, who moved into Magar villages approximately five generations ago as copper miners.
- Shaman Gorkhe from Taka, who died around 1890, was the greatgrandfather in the paternal line of Man Bahādur, one of the three great shamans of the seventies. He is Man Bahādur's gel or ancestral spirit. Bhorse Rammā, who died around

- 1900, was the greatgrandfather in the paternal line of Chame Budha and his gel or ancestral spirit.
- Lalji and Bhokte were both shamans of the Budha clan who died in the 1920ies.
- Ranga Rammā, who died around 1930, was a shaman of the Budha clan. His reincarnation is Kathka Budha, one of the leading shamans of Taka. Daljite, also a shaman from Taka, of the Gharti clan is the pre-incarnation of Harka Gharti.
- 32 The spirits *māgi* and *selā* (sometimes *sāilā*) belong to the class of secondary spirits called *barā*.
- Balayo was a shaman of Taka who died in the 1940ies.
- 35 Cundura and Ghana are two non-identified shamans.
- The place names Naucare and Naudhare are alpine pastures about three hours walk above and away from Taka. The verse could also be translated as: »On the nine ridges / on the nine high pastures«.
- 38 Shaman Kāmare was the grandfather in the paternal line of Bal Bahādur Budha and is his *gel*, his ancestral spirit.
- Jansi of the Budha clan was a shaman in Taka, who died around 1925, himself a *dhāmi* or spirit-medium. Badur was a shaman in Taka of the Budha clan, who died in the 1940ies.
- Manrā, member of the Budha clan, was a shaman in Taka, who died around 1955.
- The *spotted boar of the paria-caste*, pāre daule, is none other but galde vir, one of the protagonists of the Barcāmeni genesis myth. In that story the wild boar, amourous of the orphan girl Barcāmeni, accompanies her on a journey to the Terai in the lowlands a metaphor for a journey to the netherworld. On their way back the boar brings lost souls back to the surface, by kicking them up on its back. Through this act the wild boar becomes one of the nine principle helpers, dōwa, of the shaman.
- Tānātāli is the birthplace of the first shaman, Rammā Puran Tsan, both a mythical and real place, located near the village of Tārākot in southern Dolpo, on a hillslope beyond the Jangla Bhanjyang Pass, which divides the territory of the Northern Magar from Dolpo, an enclave of Tibetan culture. All indispensable accessoirs of the shaman originate at Tānātāli.
- Syergwab »the high meadow of the syergwa-tree« is a place-name, found predominantly in parallel position to that of Tānātāli.
- Besides the sound imitation »kateng« the sound »nguwar« is one of the *urlauts* of the shaman's drum. Both sounds are part of the genesis story of the drum.
- Bacchigaon is a twin village of Taka, overlooking the Utar Ganga; the two villages are about 15 minutes walk away from each other.
- Up to the present day the brewing process and its preparations, such as the collection of yeast, are activities reserved to women. When this division of labour is being discussed, women claim their right by reference to the mythical figures Juma Jhãkrelni and Padma Jhãkrelni.

- In the mythology of the Magar the divine couple of Mahādev and Parbati appear as creators of the universe; they also create man out of ashes and bird's droppings.
- They »... didn't give him rest« means: the shaman is not master of his trance. He cannot stop his shaking, *ghune*, typical sign for someone who has been selected by supernatural forces to become their medium, but who is too unexperienced to decide the moment of possession himself, or someone, who lacks the neccessary means such as yeast to stop it.
- 372 »The habitual drinker«, matwal bāni is a surprising epithet for Mahādev, but one fitting well into the context. As the primordial yeast is sought for the production of the first alcohol, it makes sense to ask someone who is an expert in alcoholic beverages. Among Hindus of the Himalaya matwal are called caste people among whom alcohol drinking is a habit.
- Hakin is identical with Hukam, an old Magar village in the valley of the Pelma Khola.
- The spirit pair *moco zyeā* and *karam zyeā* is interchangeable with all those spirits that cause premature death. Amongst these are the child spirit *rā*, who is specialised in killing small children and the spirit of white lime, *sarā zyeā*, who pushes people over rocks and cliffs. Both these spirits need careful ritual attention.
- 305 »... the crazy wood / the madly possessed wood« is the drumframe in its savage state, before it has been appeased by yeast.
- The word dāngora is a general term for the shaman's drum in the Himalaya, the specific Kham word for which is $r\tilde{e}$. It can be encountered in the variants dḥyāngro, dhāgori, dhāgorio, dāngora or dākura. It may be associated with the onomatopoeic word dḥyāng, which in Nepali reproduces an *explosive sound*. It is tempting at the same time to connect the Himalayan word dāngura with the Siberian and Mongolian word variants tüngür, düüngür or dünür, all of which designate a shamanic drum.
- Ripping out a soul of a human being by supernatural force is the beginning of illness, a process which will eventually lead to death, unless the shaman is able to bring the soul back and reincorporate it into his patient's body.

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