



Late in 1982, I lived with the family of Hom Prasad Subedi in Thuli Pokhari. Hom Prasad's daughter, Sharada, got married during my stay. This photo shows the arrival of the groom's party at the bride's house. The party is led by a band which plays traditional music for such occasions: a kind of music suited for dancing or marching. The band is followed by the dancing male friends of the groom, then the groom's family, and finally by the groom himself.

The wedding is held at the bride's house. The groom's party normally arrives in the early evening, usually walking from the groom's village on foot, which can be many hours distant. An evening dinner of *daal-bhaat tarkari* is offered to all the guests by the bride's family; i.e., rice cooked in *gyu* (clarified butter), lentils and vegetables. The couple is wedded by a Brahmin priest under a makeshift temple in the courtyard of the bride's family. The ceremony takes all night due to the many rituals, prayers and chanting that must take place. Many of the guests stay overnight, but many also fall asleep around midnight. This photo shows the temple for Sharada's wedding in the process of final arrangement.





The early days of the marriage are typically a time of stressful adjustment, but for no one more than the bride. Early in the morning after the wedding, she is placed in a special carriage, and carried by porters to the groom's village, there to spend the rest of her life in the groom's household. Generally, she has never met the groom till the wedding night. The separation from family and friends, indeed, from all she has ever known, is often agonizing and traumatic. These feelings are usually exacerbated by uncertainties regarding her status in the new household. Unmarried girls who attend the wedding are confronted by what the future holds for them. They ponder their future, yet relish their present freedom. These young ladies, students at JS Secondary School, talk in low but eager tones in the early hours of Sharada's wedding.



The girls discover that they are being photographed, and are amused. The one on the left is Kamala Kumari Sharma. Note the bamboo basket in front of her. I took the previous photo surreptitiously by leaning outside my bedroom window. The girls are on the 2nd floor balcony of Hom Prasad's house. The courtyard and makeshift temple are to the right.

Practically everyone gets married in Nepal, and the divorce rate is negligible. Over time, nearly all newly wed women adjust to their lives. Having children often brings them new love, and increased prestige and power in their new homes. In such ways, they gradually come to exert more control over their living environments. Nevertheless, the home of origin (called *mait* or *maiti ghaar* in Nepali) remains an object of especially tender affection in their hearts. Returning to one's *mait* (which happens once to several times a year for many women) is a special kind of holiday. Children usually learn to love their mother's *mait* also. This temple in Kathmandu illustrates the importance of the *mait* in the lives of all Nepalis: it is dedicated to *Maiti Devi*, the "Goddess of the *Mait*." Newly wed women often come here to seek consolation in prayer. This temple was just outside the so-called "TEFL *Deraa*," (the apartment for Peace Corps Volunteers Teaching English as a Foreign Language). I stayed at this apartment often when I was in Kathmandu during my first two years in Nepal, 1979 to 1981.





This photo shows typical porter traffic between the nearest roadhead (Naudada) and Thuli Pokhari. The photo was taken a good 4 hours' walk from Thuli Pokhari. Note how many porters carry goods: the goods are placed in bamboo wicker baskets, which are then supported by a belt that ties the basket to the porter's forehead. Makeshift canes are often used by the porters to provide stability. The large tins in the baskets shown here may contain flammable liquids.



This is a *chautara*, which is a platform where porters can rest as they carry their loads. Typically, the porter will place the load that he's carrying on one of the steps (depending on his height), and then sit on the *chautara*. The trees offer shade. He can chat with people passing by, and perhaps enjoy a *bidi* (Nepali cigarette). This *chautara* is on the western edge of the JS Secondary School campus.



This is another photo of JS Secondary School campus looking from near Devisthaan. The area stripped of grass in the center is where students normally play volleyball. Note the *chautara* in the background.



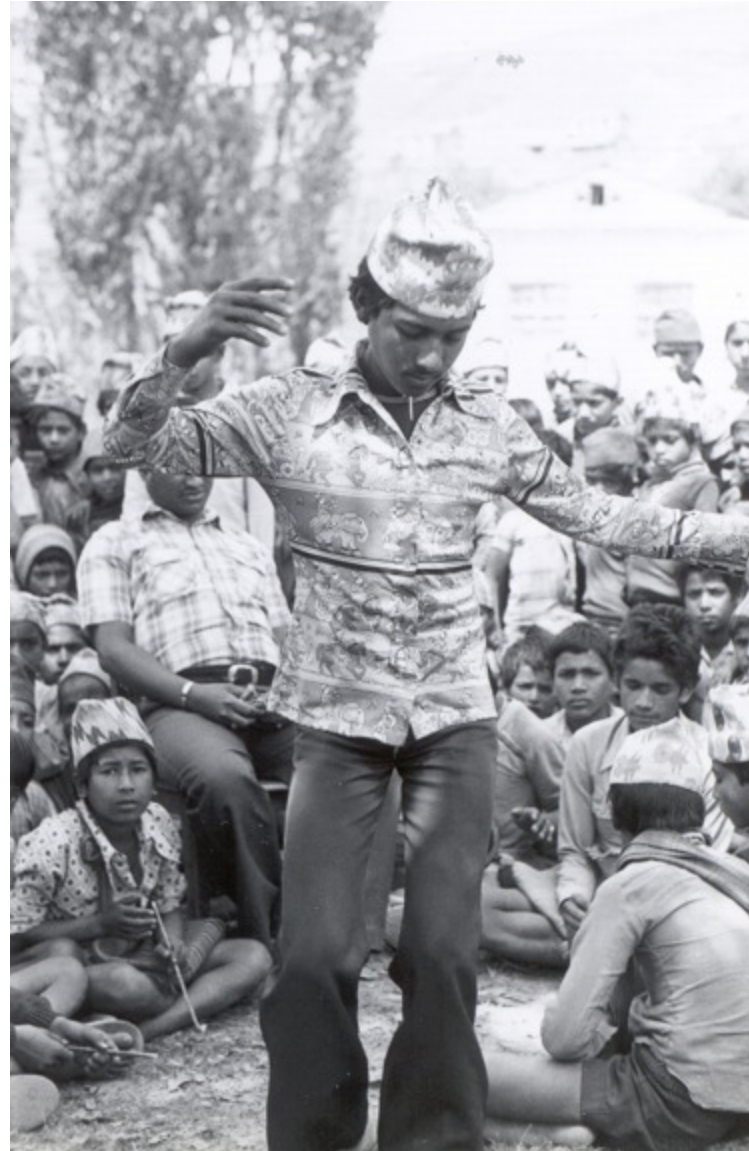


Mr. Ganga Prasad Sharma (standing) teaches 10th Class outside during a warm day in late 1982 at JS Secondary School. This photo was taken in front of the main school office. The area where students played volleyball is in the immediate foreground.

Kalika Kumari Chhetri dances during a Friday afternoon program in front of the school. Many Nepali schools have programs on Friday afternoons in lieu of class. The programs include poetry contests, speech contests, debates, song, and dance.



As I recall, this student's name was Ram Prasad. He was from a village named Silmi, which was located at the northern base of the hill where Thuli Pokhari was located. The village was on the Modi Khola River. Ram Prasad is dancing during the same Friday afternoon program.





A Brahmin farmer with his son, seated on a *ghundri* mat. His head is shaved, with the exception of the tuft of hair in the back of the head, probably in observance of a holy festival. This photo was taken in Thuli Pokhari.

This photo shows two young Newari boys outside their home in Kathmandu. They live in a large, old communal building that houses their extended family. Note the five principal buddhas shown above the doorway. The Newaris are an ancient people who ruled much of Nepal before the emergence of the modern Nepali state around 1768. They are traditionally Buddhist, although many follow a syncretistic blend of Hinduism and Buddhism. They speak Newari (as one might expect), which unlike Nepali is not an Indo-European language; I believe it is in the Tibeto-Burmese family of languages. They are (if I may say so) a stunningly beautiful people, representing something of a blend of the east-Asian (e.g., Tibetan) and south-Asian (e.g., north Indian Brahmin-Kshatriya) types.

