

Some Unpublished Gorkhali Documents and Early British Records: The Example of the *Seṇū Jośī* Community

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Introduction

There was a time when Uttarakhand (India) and Far West Nepal formed one single polity under the Katyūrīs who ruled this region from at least the fourth century CE onwards (see for details, M.P. Joshi 2014a, and references therein). The Katyūrīs continue to figure in cultural events in many parts of this region even today (M.P. Joshi 2014b). Consequently, the vast majority of the masses inhabiting the cis-Kali (India) and the trans-Kali (Nepal) region of the Indo-Nepal border share a common history, culture, language, traditions and, above all, kinship relations!¹ Interestingly, while studying the folklore of this region, Gaborieau observed:

On field enquiry, it appears that part of the same corpus of legends is also known in the Westernmost districts of Nepal between the Karnali and the Mahakali rivers, where once flourished the kingdoms of Doti, Bajhang and Accham. Thus the whole area from Western Nepal to Garhwal must be considered as one from the point of view of the culture. (Gaborieau 1977: xii)

Sadly, this aspect of Indo-Nepal relations has exceedingly few takers in academic circles, hence it remains little known. Among those who share common history and culture, the *Āṅgirasa gotrī* Jośīs, variously known as *Seṇū/Siṇai/Seḍhyāla* Jośīs in Kumaon (Pāṇḍe 1937: 566,

1 See for details, M.P. Joshi 2010, 2014a, 2014b; Joshi et al. 2014.

578) and Sedhāi Jośī/Joisī/Jaisī in the Gorkhali documents (M.R. Pant 2002: 127 n. 95), are conspicuous by their envious presence in the official documents of the Gorkhalis (D.R. Panta VS 2063; M.R. Pant 2002) and total absence in the early official British records (M.P. Joshi 2011).

The *vaṃśāvalī* (genealogy) of the Seṅṅ Jośīs of Kumaon reads that its compiler consulted a number of literary texts and knowledgeable persons to redraft it, and it was completed in Śaka 1702 (1780 CE). In sum, it informs us that Padmanābha, the progenitor of the Āṅgirasa *gotrī* Jośīs in Uttarakhand, a priest in the temple of Somanātha in Gujarat, came to the hills along with his family during the reign of King Kalyānarājadeva in Śaka 590 (668 CE). The king settled his family at modern Joshimath (District Camoli, Garhwal), which place was named after them. In the course of time, they moved to Kumaon under the patronage of King Padmaṭadeva, who granted them five villages, including Śeṅṅgau, in Śaka 936 (1014 CE), whence they dispersed into different places (J. Jośī 2010: *Parīśiṣṭha* Ā).

One of us (M.P. Joshi 1990a) has studied the *vaṃśāvalīs* of several prominent Brahmin septs of Kumaon. Interestingly, the Āṅgirasa *gotrī* Jośī *vaṃśāvalī* alone is written in *paurāṇic* diction and does not claim that these Jośīs served their royal patrons as counsellors or high-ranking officials hereditarily under the old regimes, which being the wont of the authors of such literature in Kumaon.

Furthermore, the occurrence of the names of the Katyūrī kings Kalyānarājadeva and Padmaṭadeva lends credibility to this *vaṃśāvalī* follows from the fact that these two kings are also known from the Katyūrī inscriptions dated to the ninth-tenth centuries CE (Prinsep 1838; Kielhorn 1896; Sircar 1955–1956). Significantly, on the basis of these inscriptions, Kalyānarājadeva's rule may be assigned to the latter half of the eighth century CE and that of Padmaṭadeva to approximately the second quarter of the tenth century CE (M.P. Joshi 1990b: 45–48). Thus, the respective dates of these two kings occurring in the *vaṃśāvalī* are remarkable in that they are close to the ones worked out on the basis of internal evidence of the inscriptions by about a century. Obviously, originally the Āṅgirasa *gotrī* Jośīs were associated with the Katyūrīs, who, as rulers of Far West Nepal, also settled a branch of these Jośīs there.²

2 Some of the Āṅgirasa *gotrī* Jośīs settled in Doti still maintain ties with their parent branch in Kumaon, hence in contact with the present authors who are also Seṅṅ Jośīs.

In course of time, the Seṇū Jośīs spread to other areas of Nepal, and one of their branches, namely, the house of Satānanda, settled in Ragini (Lamjung).³ His grandson Dāmodara became a prominent figure in the Gorkhali polity.⁴ What is central to the present essay is that at the age of eleven Dāmodara fled to Gorkha from Ragini and, due to his proficiency in astrology, soon became a confidant of the Queen of King Pṛthvīnārāyaṇa Śāha. In Śaka 1691 (1769 CE) he accompanied the Queen when the royal couple moved to Kathmandu. After the death of the Queen, he became a close confidant of Bahādura Śāha (uncle of the minor King Raṇabahādura) who took over as the Regent of Nepal in 1785 CE (ibid.). It is during the Regency of Bahādura Śāha that Gorkha occupied Kumaon in 1791 CE.

Whether it was a coincidence or else due to intimacy with Dāmodara, the Seṇū Jośī, the Gorkhalis appointed Śivarāma, another Seṇū Jośī, to the coveted post of *tahsildāra* and *paṃca daphatarī* for collection

3 Interestingly, Satānanda's descendant Rājīvalocana Jośī has compiled a *vaṃśāvalī* of his family. According to it, Satānanda “left Jhijhaud Gaon in Kumaon because of a breach of conduct on the part of the British and came to Lamjuṅ in V.S. 1721 when Vīramardana Śāha was reigning” (Pant 2002: 126–127 n. 95; see for text, D. Panta VS 2063: 14–21). However, Dīneśārāja Panta (VS 2063: 8 n. 7) has conclusively shown that Vīramardana Śāha was ruling over Lamjung in VS 1839 (1782 CE) when it was annexed to the state of Nepal. Furthermore, the British took over Kumaon in 1815 CE, and the “breach of conduct” could not have taken place earlier than that date, therefore, these discrepancies point to the erroneous presentation of events (M.R. Pant 2002: 126–127 n. 95). To these may be added another fallacious piece of information contained in the *vaṃśāvalī* under reference. It reads that Satānanda belonged to the Āṅgīrasa *gotra* and Sedhāī *thara* (branch/line) of the Jośīs of Jhijhaudā (Kumaoni Jhijhāda) Gāu, which is in modern Champawat District (Kumaon, Uttarakhand). However, Sedhāī Gāu is the Nepali rendering of Kumaoni Seṇugau, i.e., Village Seṇu (Katyur Valley, District Bageshwar, Uttarakhand), given to the Āṅgīrasa *gotrī* Jośīs by Katyūrī King Padmaṭadeva mentioned above. Jhijhāda is the original home of the Garga *gotrī* Jośīs of Kumaon associated with the Candra kings of Kumaon and it has nothing to do with the Āṅgīrasa *gotrī* Jośīs (see Atkinson 1886: 423; Pāṇde 1937: 564–565). Since Garga *gotrī* Harṣadeva Jośī of Jhijhāda, “the Earl Warwick of Kumaon”, enjoyed a pre-eminent position in the Anglo-Nepal affairs leading to the British occupation of Uttarakhand (see Atkinson 1884: 595–606, 609–610, 616–617, 646–647), it seems, by showing affiliation with Jhijhāda Gāu, the chronicler wanted to claim higher socio-political antecedents of his family in Nepal, the like of Harṣadeva of Jhijhāda. In that case, this part of Satānanda's *vaṃśāvalī* refers to the times when Harṣadeva Jośī was a close confidant of the Gorkhalis (ca. 1788–1794 CE). They seem to be in strained relations from ca. 1794 CE onwards (see Atkinson 1884: 610ff.), though, seemingly, the Gorkhalis continued to maintain good relations with him. Thus, a royal order of “Samvat 1860” (1803 CE) to Harṣadeva reads: “you are hereby ordered to do faithfully what lies in our interests. We shall grant you possession of the lands given to you by Pratip Shah and Lalit Shah” [of Garhwal] (Regmi 1988: 12).

4 See for details and family archives of Dāmodara, which also include official Gorkhali documents (D. Panta VS 2063).

of revenue of Kumaon. However, it is also likely that, as one of the documents (Śaka 1860 [1803 CE]) reads, Śivarāma Jośī already held that office during the preceding Candra regime, and therefore he was reappointed to the position. In any case, it suggests that he was taken as a trustworthy official by the Gorkhalis. Śivarāma Jośī belonged to Village Galli (District Almora, Kumaon, Uttarakhand, India).⁵

By virtue of being the *tahsildāra* of Kumaon, Śivarāma Jośī possessed a large number of archival records.⁶ In the present study we will discuss two *lālamohara* documents from his archives (see Appendix), issued by Kājī Gajakesara Pāmḍe (VS 1860 [1803 CE]) and Sudhākar-nasiṃ Bogaṭī (VS 1866 [1809 CE]). We will eventually show that, significantly, these documents deconstruct the official British version of the concerned part of the administrative history of pre-British Kumaon.

From these documents we can see that the office of the *tahsildāra* and *paṃca daphatarī* was assigned a fairly large number of duties, such as maintenance of the records of all of Kumaon, along with revenue collection, supervision of the headquarters of different administrative units, of storehouses, of arms, of ammunition, and of religious institutions. In fact, the Gorkhali documents clearly show that the office of *daphatarī* was the nerve centre of the revenue management of the state.⁷ Therefore, the incumbent of this office was required to be a man of integrity and an experienced, efficient person. Obviously, Śivarāma Jośī met all these qualifications, for, as we learn from Kājī Gajakesara Pāmḍe's letter, he had already held the office of the *paṃca daphatarī* during the preceding Candra regime and must have proven his integrity.⁸ Otherwise, Kājī Gajakesara Pāmḍe would not have appointed him

5 For the *vaṃśāvalī* of the Seṇū Jośīs of Galli, see P.C. Jośī n.d.

6 Sadly, due to his adventurous lifestyle Śivarāma Jośī could not manage his records as he was always on the move in the wake of the Anglo-Gorkha war. Credit goes to his direct descendant, the late Advocate Rām Candra Jośī, who salvaged some of the archives, which include part of the famous Sanskrit text *Kalyāṇacandrodayam*, and a few *lālamohara* documents, among others. Currently these documents are in the custody of his son Dr. M.M. Joshi (one of the present authors).

7 See Whalley 1870: 37–38; Regmi 1970: 148; for details of its official activities, Regmi 1980, 1981a–d, 1982, 1983ab etc.

8 It is to be noted here that the earliest known revenue registers found in Kumaon belong to the Raikā rulers of Doti-Sira (Far West Nepal-eastern Kumaon), which were adopted by the Candra rulers some time after dislodging the Raikās from the cis-Kali area (India) in 1581 CE. The earliest date of adoption of these records by the Candras as mentioned in these records, which are termed *daphatarā*, is Śaka 1522 (1600 CE). Currently these records are being critically examined by the first author (MPJ, see for further information, M.P. Joshi 1992, 1998b, 2005; Joshi/Brown 2000).

as the Chief Record-keeper in VS 1860 (1803 CE), and he was still in office in VS 1866 (1809 CE) as we learn from the letter of Sudhākarnasiṃ Bogaṭī.

Since the high-ranking Gorkhali functionaries serving in Kumaon were subjected to frequent transfers on account of their arrogance, corruption, neglect of duties and the like, or else due to court intrigues in Kathmandu (see for details, Regmi 1999: ch. 3), Śivarāma Joṣī serving for a period of six years is indeed long. It seems that he continued to serve Gorkha throughout up to 1815 CE, as follows from the fact that no Gorkhali document is available showing the termination of his services or else appointment of another person to the office of the *paṃca daphatarī*. In this connection, it is interesting to note that in VS 1862 (1805 CE) King Gīrvāṇayuddha Vikrama Śāha of the Gorkhalis appointed “Ramkrishna Joshi” as “Dafadari” (subordinate to *paṃca daphatarī*) in Kumaon on probation, the conditions being:

Have statements recorded accurately, without affection or favoritism*,⁹ and records (Dafdar) thus prepared. In case you listen to anybody, indulge in maneuvers (Prapanch), receive* bribes and suppress (information), and in case we receive reports to this effect from any source, and we are able to obtain a confession from you, we shall award you punishment according to your caste. In case you have accurate statements recorded, and discharge your functions* promptly* accordingly to the regulations, we shall grant you rewards (Rijh) and confirm you in your post. (Regmi 1972: 65–66)

It may be noted that Kumaon during those days was divided into several administrative units called *parganā*, and Ramkrishna Joshi was appointed as keeper of records (“Dafadari”) of a *parganā*, obviously under Śivarāma Joṣī who was in-charge of the whole of Kumaon. We do not know whether the former was confirmed in his post or not; however, as can be noticed, no such condition was imposed on Śivarāma Joṣī when he was appointed to the office of the *paṃca daphatarī*. Obviously, his integrity was never doubted, even though he had served the adversary of Gorkha.

9 *Asterisk-marked words, misspelled in the original text owing to typographical mistakes, have been corrected.

The British Accounts

It may be noted that the early British archival material is replete with references to certain local “principal inhabitants” whom the British contacted for support to conquer Kumaon-Garhwal (Saksena 1956: 1–9, 16–23, 31–42, 56–61, etc.). After the conquest, the British created a new group of subordinate political elites from those “principal inhabitants” who, by virtue of their high caste, claimed to have enjoyed hereditary bureaucratic status from the pre-Gorkha regimes and who vouched for utmost loyalty to the British. In the process, “Othering” their own fraternity, a new section of local political elites claiming hereditary descent to high offices emerged to share power. Read in this context, omission of the *Seṇū Jośīs* from the pre-British administrative history of Kumaon as recorded by the early British can be explained. Whether such discrepancies were the products of British ignorance or of manufactured history, in either case, they relate to the process of “Othering” (see for details, M.P. Joshi 1998a, 2011).

The so-called Jaisi caste in Nepal is a unique example of the process of “Othering”. Thus, Acharya (1970: 277), writing on “The Jaisi Caste”, notes:

The Smritis, written in the plains of the “Madhydesha” between the Ganga and Jamuna rivers, regard it as a sin for a Brahman to take a married woman or widow of Brahman caste as his wife. Children born of a married Brahman woman or widow in this manner are known as “Kunda” and “Golaka” respectively. Orthodox Brahmans framed these rules even though* it was not proper to punish children for the sins of their fathers. However, Brahmans inhabiting principalities established during the medieval period in the hill regions* between Kumaun-Doti and Jajarkot-Salyan mitigated this punishment to some extent. The offspring of the unions mentioned above were employed as Jyotishi, or astrologers, which gradually corrupted to Jaisi, as well as clerks. However, they were not permitted to perform religious functions at the homes of pure Brahmans (Upadhyaya) and pure Kshatriyas* (Thakuri). Jaisis thus occupied a lower rank in the Brahman caste. There were Jaisis all over the hill region up to the Kirat region in the east. In contradistinction, Upadhyaya Brahmans were permitted to study and teach the Vedas, conduct or perform religious functions (Yajnyas) and

give or accept ritual gifts* (dana). Jaisis were prohibited from teaching the Vedas* to conducting Yajnyas for the [sic] taking ritual gifts from Upadhyaya Brahmans and Thakuris. During the invasion of Nuwakot, Prithvi Narayan Shah employed Kalu Jaisi (Adhikari) of Nuwakot to install a past [? post?] according to Tantric rites at Mahamandal without the knowledge* of his enemy,* Jayant Rana. Jaisis had not been able to do so at Sankhugaun when this village was attacked by Sardar Shivarama Simha Basnyat in 1745. The Gorkhalis were defeated* in this battle. Prithvi Narayan Shah then introduced a rule according to which this task was to be performed* by a brave soldier*, not by a Jaisi, on the hill adjacent to the fort that was the target of attack. But the observance of this rite did not insure victory. Prithvi* Narayan Shah did not recruit Jaisi as soldiers, but employed them to find out prospective* recruits and discharge clerical functions. He had chosen Jaskarna Pande to start the economic blockade of Kathmadu Valley. Upadhyaya Brahmans too functioned* as astrologers and they too were called Jaisis. But these two groups of* Jaisis did not have commensal and marital relations between them, sometimes, an Upadhyaya Brahman who had the mother of Kundaka or Golaka children in his home secretly took rice touched by her. When the secret leaked, expiation was essential, and this sometimes involved the royal family too. In 1759 A.D., the practice was introduced of members* of the royal family and other Kshatriya of offering obeisance* (Pranama) to Upadhyaya Brahmans who functioned as astrologers (Jaisi), and “Salaam” to Kundakas Golakas and their descendants*. Jaskarna Pande received the first “Salaam” accordingly at Belkot in that year. In 1761 A.D., this practice was introduced all over the kingdom of Gorkha. Soon afterwards, Jaskarna Pande sentenced to capital punishment on the charge of having attempted to capture the Crown Prince, Pratap Singh Shah, and hand him over to Jaya Prakash Malla, but this did not affect the practice of offering “Salaam” to Jaisis. Both King Prithvi Narayan Shah and Crown Prince Pratap Simha Shah thus offered “Salaam” in their letters to Srikrishna Pathak, who had taken up the responsibility of attacking Kathmandu Valley. No letter of King Prithvi Narayan Shah in which he has offered “Salaam” in this manner to any other Jaisi has been discovered.

Acharya is palpably wrong if he is using the word “Jaisi” for the entire Joṣī community of the hills area under reference. However, if he is using the term as generic for all such Brahmins as practised marriage with a married woman or a widow of Brahman caste, he is right. Even in that case, he was expected to consult the then available published material on the Joṣī caste of Kumaon. In fact, the Gorkhals had promulgated area and caste specific rules relating to such marriages, as these were widely practised in Nepal in all sections of society, as is clear from the following account:

Sexual relations with the widowed wives of elder brothers seem to have been a common practice among many communities in the hill regions of Nepal. It is interesting that even high-caste Upādhyāya Brahmins and Chhetris followed this practice. (Regmi 1972: 1)

Obviously, such a practice was not exclusive to any caste. If the offspring of Brahmins from such practices were called “Jaisis”, the term “Jaisi” is generic, it is not a caste. Admittedly, some of the Sedhāi Joṣīs, like Upādhyāya Brahmins, may have married widowed wives of elder brothers or married women, however, it does not follow that the entire community of Sedhāi Joṣīs of Uttarakhand origin in Nepal should be clubbed with the Jaisi caste.

It would suffice to add here that, in the pre-Gorkhali polities of Kumaon and Doti, the Joṣīs enjoyed a pre-eminent position in political society. The word “Jaisi” does not occur in any document of Kumaon. Even in the *lālamohara* documents of the Gorkhali relating to Kumaon, the Joṣīs are invariably styled as “Joṣī/Josī/Joiṣī/Jyotirvid”. Furthermore, in most of the letters issued by the Gorkhali Kings, the Joṣīs of Kumaon are offered *praṇāma*. In a single case, King Raṇabahādura offers *salāma* to Gadādhara Jyotirvid, however, in another letter jointly addressed to Harṣadeva, Gadādhara, and Rāmanārāyaṇa, he styles the trio as *dvijakula tilaka* (ornaments in the lineages of the Brahmins) and offers them *premāliṅgana* (affectionate hug); obviously a Jaisi as defined by Acharya cannot be addressed as *dvijakula tilaka* by the Gorkhali King. *Lālamohara* documents also reveal that Harṣadeva Joṣī was offered both *praṇāma* and *premāliṅgana* by King Raṇabahādura (Joshi/Shah/Joshi 2017). Interestingly, Śivarāma Joṣī was the son-in-law of Harṣadeva Joṣī. Considering the then prevailing socio-political conditions and orthodox behaviour of Kumaoni Brahmins, it is

inconceivable that a Kumaoni Brahmin of Harṣadeva's stature would have married his daughter to a Jaisi. Furthermore, due to the prestige attached to the Joṣī caste, the Regmīs of Nepal settled in Kumaon also styled themselves as Joṣī, to wit, the family of the late Munish Chandra Joshi, formerly Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India. His illustrious father, the late Pundit Ram Datt Joshi, was a renowned Sanskrit scholar and astrologer who initiated an ephemeris, which is still running in its 111th year (*Śrī Gaṇeśa Mārtaṇḍa Saurapakṣīya Pañcāṅga* 2016–2017: 2, 4), and it is considered to be the only standard Kumaoni Pañcāṅga.¹⁰

It has been noted above that when King Pṛithvīnārāyaṇa Śāha transferred his capital to Kathmandu, he was accompanied by Dāmodara, a Seḍhāi Joṣī. Dāmodara seems to have commanded sufficient influence as an astrologer on the royal family so as to invite jealousy of fellow Brahmins. It is likely that at an opportune time when Dāmodara failed to deliver as an astrologer, his rivals planted the story of low descent of the Jaisi Brahmins and clubbed his family with the Jaisis. It is an interesting example of “Othering” in a large scale. We reserve it for a future study.

Whalley (1870: 37) notes in this context: “After the British occupation of Kumaon, the officers who were known by the name duftrees under the Goorkha Government were styled canoongoes.” He cites two documents relating to the office of “Canoongoes of Kumaon”, namely, “Appendix K.O.” and “Appendix K.P.” The first one issued in VS 1869 (1812 CE) was “enclosed in a report of Mr. Trail” (ibid.: 38). It reads:

Whereas Kajee Umer Singh has favourably represented that the said duftrees [names not given] have been most zealous in the discharge of their duties, in conciliating the tenants, in collecting the rents, in recalling the cultivators who had fled to the plains, in restoring the cultivation and population of deserted villages, in preparing and keeping up the revenue accounts and records, and in obedience to orders, we accordingly authorize them to collect the dustoor duftree from the lands included in the assignments to the three battalions and three captains, according to the receipts, and in excess of the jumma of the said lands...

10 We have already given a brief introductory note on the Seṇū Joṣīs. For more information about Seṇū Joshis/Joṣīs, see Atkinson 1886: 423–424, Pāṇḍe 1937: 564–568, J. Joṣī 2010: Bhūmikā, M.M. Joshi 2014.

Whalley comments:

The question of the resumption and settlement of canoongoe lands occupies a considerable portion of the correspondence of 1819. *From that time they became paid servants of Government.* (ibid.: 38, our italics)

Obviously, contrasted to contractual assignment, a salaried office not only provided service security to its holder but it also gave him legitimacy to negotiate power relations, thus elevating his socio-political status. This accounts for a memorandum “on cannongoes or duftrees” (Appendix K.P.) found in the Commissioner’s office. It is “of old but uncertain date and authorship” (ibid.: 38). It reads:

Office hereditary in particular families; there are four in Gurhwal, and five in Kumaon. Under the former Government they were called duftrees.

The office of duftree is considered hereditary so far that the succession remains in one family; but the several Governments have always exercised their discretion of selecting the most capable member of the family without reference to claims of birth or seniority.

The Dwarahat Chowdrees furnish two canoongoes—one for Palee and one for Baramundal; the Duneea Josees furnish two canoongoes—one for Shore, &c, and one for Chowgurkha, &c; the Jhijar Josees furnish one canoongoe, for Kalee Kumaon, &c. In Gurhwal the canoongoes are all of Khundooree family... (ibid.: 38)

Atkinson, despite his in-depth study of archives and local traditions, echoes Whalley’s observation:

On the British occupation, the office of kanungo in Kumaon was found divided amongst two families, one of Chaudhris and one of Joshis... Practically, however, the Dwarahat Chaudhris furnished kanungos for Pali and Barahmandal; the Dhaniya Joshis, one for Shor and one for Chaugarkha, and the Jijhar Joshis, one for Kali Kumaon; and all acted generally as collectors of the land-revenue, writers and record keepers. (Atkinson 1886: 505–506)

Thus, it is clear that the early British account of the administrative history of Uttarakhand rests on oral statements of those political elites who were instrumental in preparing “Appendix K.P.”, cited above. Obviously, these elites manufactured facts to benefit from the British rule, and in the process the *Seṅū Jośīs* of Galli were relegated to the position of non-entity. Thus, despite serving two successive dynasties as Chief Record Keepers, the *Seṅū Jośīs* of Galli do not figure as the hereditary holders of the office of *daphatarī* in the British records. Apparently, they seem to have been deliberately ignored by the British on account of their loyalty to the Gorkhalis. It is to be noted here that *Śivarāma Jośī*, despite being the son-in-law of *Harṣadeva Jośī* of *Jhijhāḍa*, remained loyal to the Gorkhalis, and was always on the move to escape the British. It proves his integrity, and may account for the subsequent revision of the British policy towards him by recruiting his eldest son to the office of “*peshkar*”, as we learn from Batten’s incidental mention of “*peshkar* of the *Huzoor Tehseel, Kishna Nund, Joshee of Gulleē*” (Batten 1851: 170). However, as we have noted above, despite genuine claims, in the British records the Galli *Jośīs* do not figure as the hereditary holders of the office of *daphatarī*. Interestingly, probably owing to their experience, soon the Galli *Jośīs* were also recruited to the British offices, and the British do acknowledge that their ancestors kept revenue records of the Candra dynasty (ibid.: 166, 170).

Conclusion

The Gorkhali administration in Uttarakhand is believed to have been notorious for anarchy and atrocities.¹¹ However, the official documents of the Gorkhalis clearly show that the Kathmandu Government was always keen to address the problems of the masses (see *Paṅgenī* 2014). The fact that unruly high functionaries of the Gorkhalis were frequently transferred or dismissed from services by the kings (see *Regmi* 1999: ch. 3) speaks for the royal inclination towards an efficient and well-intentioned administration. The appointment of *Śivarāma Jośī* may be taken in the same vein.

There are many families in Uttarakhand whose ancestors have served the Gorkhalis, and some of them possess Gorkhali documents. The only scholar known to the present authors is *Yogī Naraharinātha*,

11 See for a detailed account, *Ḍabarāla* VS 2056.

who collected information about these documents in the 1950s and published them subsequently (see, for example, Naraharinātha VS 2022). It is sad that nothing has been done since then, although reports appear sporadically about the presence of such documents in private collections. If the documents studied in this essay are any index, a thorough search of the Gorkhali documents in Uttarakhand needs to be undertaken, as only then we can present a faithful account of Uttarakhand under Gorkhali rule. We are of the firm view that the Gorkhali documents need to be published with careful translations as they give us an insight into understanding the limitations of an ambitious Himalayan polity striving to expand its territories and to delivering an efficient system of governance, albeit unproductively. It would be reasonable to add here that being the hereditary revenue collectors, the Galli Jośīs were well versed in the settlement pattern and revenue collection thereof. Since the primary concern of the early British was revenue collection, they were obliged to seek the services of Kṛṣṇānanda, the eldest son of Śivarāma Jośī.

Appendix

Document 1: Letter of Kājī Gajakesara Pāmḍe (Plate 1)¹²

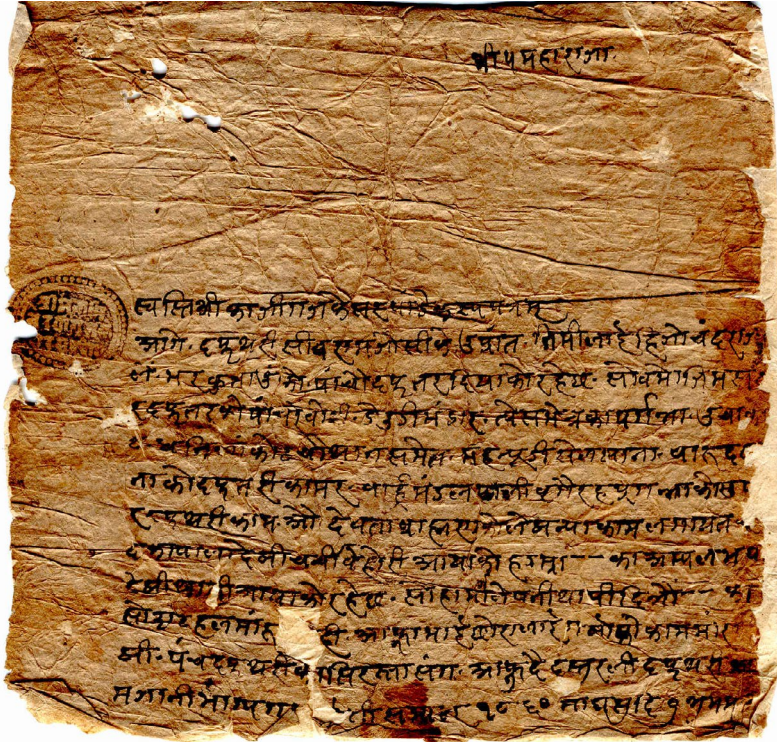


Plate 1: Letter of Kājī Gajakesara Pāmḍe, VS 1860 (1803 CE).

12 The first author [MPJ] alone is responsible for the transliteration and translation of the text of these documents and hence also for lapses. While translating these documents, literal meanings of the original words have been adopted to the best of the translator's knowledge. Both documents stem from the archive of Sivarāma Joṣī. Their originals are currently held by Dr. Madan Mohan Joshi, Uttarakhand Open University, Haldwani (District Nainital), Uttarakhand, India.

Text:

Śrī 5 Mahārājā[●]¹³

- 1 Svasti Śrī Kājī Gajakesarapāṃḍekasya patram
 āge | Daphatharī Sīvarāma Josī ke uprāṃta timlālī hiyo Caṃdarāja[-]
 le bhara Kumāuṃko Pāṃcau Daphatara diyāko rahecha | so
 bamojima sa[da-]
 ra daphatarako pāṃcau vo(ś)ī | deudī bhaṃḍāra | tyesa bhetrakā
 pargannā Ucāko[-]
- 5 ṭa Dhaniṅāṃkoṭa Cauthāna sameta Maharyūḍī Selaṣānā Bārūda[ṣā-]
 nāko daphatharī kāma ra Bārhramaṃḍala Pālī vagairaha pragannāko
 sa[da-]
 ra daphatharī kāma au devatā brāhmaṇako leṣanyā kāma lagāyata
 [Caṃ]-
 dakā pālādeṣī carcī vehorī āyāko hāmrā - - [●Śrī 5 Mahārājā]kā
 ammala bhay[ā-]
 deṣī thā[p]ī āyāko rahecha | so hāmūle panī thāpīdiṅau - - [●Śrī 5
 Mahārājā]kā
- 10 sojhā ṭahalamāṅ rū[ja ra]hī āphnā bhāī chorālāī garṣāko kāmamā rā[-]
 ṣī paṃca daphatharī[ko] sirastāsaṃga āphnu daidastura lī daphatharī
 kā[-]
 ma jānī bhogyā gara [1] (ī)ī samvat 1860 Māgha sudi 7 śubham [1]

13 ● = Śrī 5, i.e., worthy of honorific title Śrī five times, symbolically represented by two dashes in the text below, as contrasted to usual Śrī 1 (single one) used for Sudhākarnasiṃ Bogaṭī in the next document.

Translation:

Hail. Letter of Śrī Kājī Gajakesara Pāmḍe. Further. After [conveying formal greetings to] Daphatharī Sīvarāma Josī, [we acknowledge that in] yesteryears you were given [all the] five offices (*daphatharas*) of all Kumaon by the Candra King/kingdom. In accordance with it are included office of the Headquarter's five *vo(ś)īs*¹⁴ [as well as] *deuḍī bhamḍāra*,¹⁵ and [falling] within [the jurisdiction of] those [offices], work [concerning] *parganas*, [namely,] Ucākoṭa, Dhaniñāmkōṭa, [and] Cauthāna, along with assignment of the office of Maharyūḍī, Selakhānā, [and] Bārūdakkhānā. [Furthermore,] assignment of the office of the Headquarter(s) of Bārhamāḍala, Pālī, etc. *parganās*. In addition, observing the side of Candra [King when you were engaged] to writing [records relating to] deities and the Brāhmins, [and in connection to this] to discussing customs [including written documents] coming [in similar situations, and] observing our • [Majesty Śrī 5 Mahārājā's] court bringing [rulings in such cases to give effect to] upholding [the assignment with the same person]. [Therefore, be it known that] we have also upheld the same. [You should be] honest in the service of • [Śrī 5 Mahārājā, and therefore employ] your brothers [and] sons by placing [them] in works [concerning] *garkhā* [matters]. Acquainting [yourself with] the work of *daphatharī* enjoy the customary dues applied to the usage of [the office of] *Paṃca Daphatarī*. Thus, [be it] auspicious. [This letter was issued on] the 7th day [of the] bright half [of the month of] Māgha [in] Saṃvat 1860.

14 *Vo(ś)ī* or *vo(t)ī*, meaning not clear, may refer to Pāmca Daphatara (Five offices). It is hard to differentiate letter *v* from *b*, usually in these documents *b* and *v* are not distinguished at all, almost all are written as *v*. Letter *ṣ* is invariably used for letter *kh*.

15 *Deuḍī*, if derived from *deu* (Kumaoni *dyoḍī* = Lord's/royal, and Dotyali *deuḍi* = drawing room attached to a house) means royal storehouse, if that from *deva*, deity's storehouse. In case of the latter it should be read with "to writing [records relating to] deities and the Brāhmins" occurring later.

Document 2: Letter of Sudhākarnasiṃ Bogaṭī (Plate 2)¹⁶

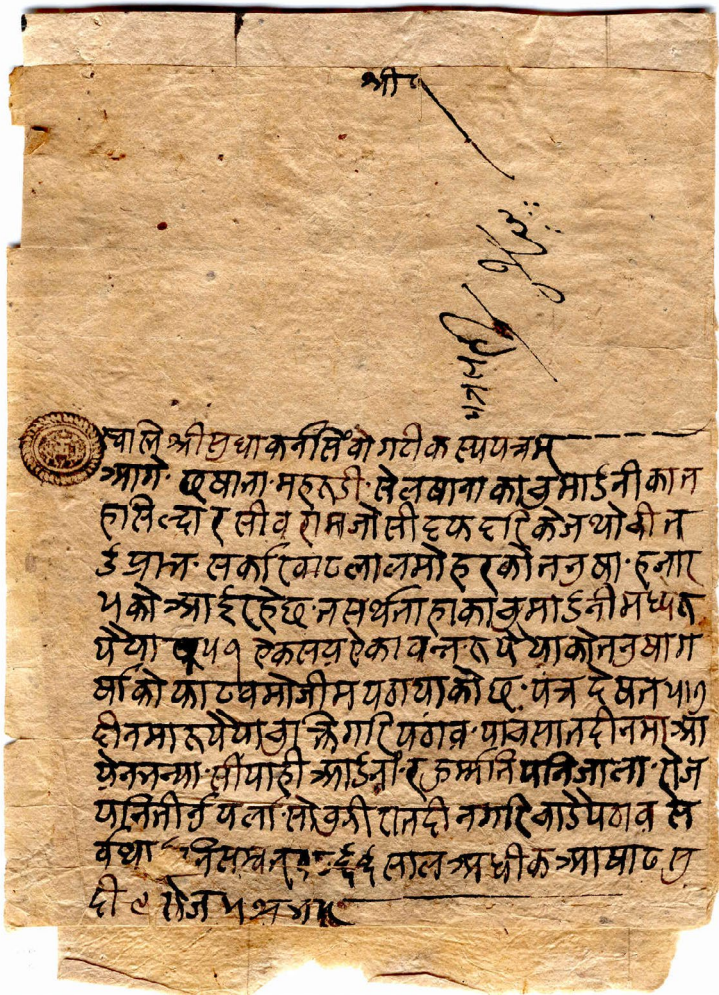


Plate 2: Letter of Sudhākarnasiṃ Bogaṭī, Saṃvat 1866 (1859 CE). The document seems to have been authenticated by some official (?).

16 It is interesting to note that the letter of Sudhākarnasiṃ Bogaṭī has been authenticated by some official with the remark—put vertically turning the document 90° clockwise—*patra sahī* (“letter correct”, i.e., authenticated) and his initials (do not look like Devanāgarī letters) below *Śrī 1* on the top. It is also likely that the document is a true copy of the original letter, in that case the seal-impression on the top left appears to belong to the same official who authenticated it. Identifications of the seal-impression and initials of the official who authenticated the document will undoubtedly add to its importance considerably. We reserve it for a future study.

Text:

Śrī 1
patra sahī

- 1 Svasti Śrī Sudhākarnasiṃ Bogaṭīkasya patram --
āge | Chaṣātā Maharūḍī Selaṣānākā cumāūnīkā ta-
hasildāra Sīvarāma Josī daphadarike jathocīta
ūprānta | sarkāravāṭa lālamoharako tanuṣā hajāra
- 5 5 ko āirahecha | tāsārtha tāhākā cumāūnī madhye rū-
paiyā 151 aika sayā aikāvanna rūpaiyāko tanuṣā ga-
rṣāko phāṭa bamojīma paṭhāyāko cha | patra dekhata 5/7
dīnamā rūpaiyā cukti gari paṭhāva | pāca sāta dīnamā ā-
yena bhanyā sīpāhī āūnāṃ ra hurmmati pani jālā | roja
- 10 pani bhūnu parlā | so bujhī rāta dīna gari cāḍai paṭhāva | sa-
rvathā [ī]ti samvat 1866 sāla adhīka Āṣāḍha su
dī 9 roja 5 śubham

Translation:

Hail. Letter of Śrī Sudhākarnasiṃ Bogaṭī.

Hereafter, [conveying] due [greetings] to Sīvarāma Josī, the *tahasildāra* of Chakhāta, Maharūḍī, [and] Selkhānā [and] of *cumāūnī*.¹⁷ [Be it known that] the *tanuṣā*¹⁸ of *lālamohara* [amounting to] 5 thousand Rupees has come from the Government. For that matter, in accordance with the *phāṭa* (contribution/share) of *garṣā*,¹⁹ emoluments [amounting to] Rupees one hundred and fifty-one [from] the account of *cumāūnī* have to be sent. [As soon as you] see [this] letter, pay the Rupees within 5/7 days [and] send [the amount]. If [the amount] does not arrive within five[/]seven days, sepoy[s] will come [to collect it], and [your] honour will also go. [You] will also [have to] fill daily [fine]. Understand [the gravity of situation, and toiling] night [and] day, send [the amount] by all means immediately. Thus, [be it] auspicious. [This letter was issued on] the 9th day [of the] bright half [of the] intercalated [month falling on] 5th day [of the month of] Āṣāḍha [in] Saṃvat 1866.

17 *Cumāūnī*, customary dues on the occasion of royal sacred-thread-investiture ceremony.

18 *Tanuṣā*, emoluments meant for the official(s) authorized to use the Royal seal, in this case, presumably, Sudhākarnasiṃ Bogaṭī.

19 *Garṣā*, an administrative unit.

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