Abstract

This book is an investigation of discourses of modernisation, culture and tradition and how these interact with and shape the state development policies of Bhutan and the attitudes of young Bhutanese people. A fundamental aim of Bhutanese development policy is to maintain a balance between modernisation on one side and culture and tradition on the other. Young people in society are generally accused of being alienated from Bhutanese culture and tradition and of being influenced by Western media and culture. This book examines the dynamic interactions between state policy and local discourses among young people.

The book argues, firstly, that the Bhutanese development policy of preservation of culture and tradition and the prevalent social norm that one must be culturally aware is derived from Bhutan’s position as a small country sandwiched between two giants, China and India. The state defines Bhutanese culture and tradition as guardians of the nation’s independence. Secondly, and following the same logic, the Bhutanese government constantly presents its development policy as being original and unique, and insists on its distinctiveness from Western development discourse. Thirdly, the book finds that the state’s development discourse influences but is by no means hegemonic among young people.

Using educational differences as a way of investigating competing discourses among young people, the book establishes the existence of important differences pertaining to discourses of modernisation, culture and tradition between three groups of young people; those in English medium education, Dzongkha (the national language) medium education and monastic education. Furthermore, it examines the social background of these differences applying Pierre Bourdieu’s framework. The book argues that young people’s identification of their position is not only in terms of their career (economic capital) but also in terms of how they
present themselves as being culturally aware (cultural capital). This is clearly limited by state discourses but does not represent a single imposition of a hegemonic discourse.

Finally the book contextualises development discourses within theories of globalisation and discourse analyses of development. It criticises globalisation theories for concealing the existence of power imbalances between the West and the non-West. However, it is also argued that the capacity of the Bhutanese government and of Bhutanese youth to indigenise Western development discourse shows that Western development discourse is not as powerful as posited by mainstream discursive analyses of development.
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Acknowledgements

This book is based upon my Ph.D. thesis titled Multiple Discourses on Modernisation Culture and Tradition in Bhutan: State Development Policies and Development Discourses among Young People in Education, which was submitted to the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, in 2001. Although I have made some minor modifications, the material presented in this book is largely as it appears in the Ph.D. thesis. The data and information contained in this book mostly dates from the time of my fieldwork in Bhutan which took place from April 1997 to April 1998.

In the process of the research for the thesis a number of people supported me, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to them by recording their names in this book as well. I only regret that I cannot record the names of all the people who deserve my appreciation.

Firstly, I am enormously indebted to Dr. Jens Lerche for his encouragement, understanding, patience and generosity, as well as his valuable and thoughtful advice. I could not have wished for a better supervisor.

The fieldwork in Bhutan was realised through the support of many people in Bhutan. Without them the book could not have existed in its present form. They also showed their warm hospitality and kindness during my stay in Bhutan. I would like to express my humble appreciation especially to: Dasho Tshewang Rixin, the then Deputy Minister of Health and Education, for his support and understanding; Lyonpo C. Dorji, the then Planning Minister, for his warm encouragement; Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup, the Minister of Health and Education, for his support and valuable advice; Mr. Nima Wangdi, the then Director of Education, for his support; Mr. Kinley Dorji, the Head of the Youth Guidance and Counselling Section, for his understanding. I also would like to thank Dasho Karma Gayleg, a former Royal Advisory
Councillor, Dasho Sangay Dorji, the Secretary of Dzongkha Development Commission, and Ms. Neten Zangmo, the then Director of the Ministry of Planning, for their generosity in sharing their knowledge.

My special thanks are due to Mr. Karma Ura, Head of the Centre for Bhutan Studies, and Lopon Kunzang Dorji, Deputy Director of the National Environment Commission Secretariat, for their friendship, warm encouragement, considerate support and countless pieces of practical advice and assistance which made my fieldwork fruitful and enjoyable. In particular, I would like to thank Mr. Karma Ura, without whose help my fieldwork in Bhutan would not have taken place. He was also instrumental in publishing the thesis as a book. My sincere appreciation goes to Lopon Kunzang Dorji for designing the cover of this book.

I am very much thankful for each young person who shared time with me and cooperated with my research by engaging with me in conversation. Meeting with young people was always full of excitement and a source of inspiration, and I cannot help wishing each one of them a bright and happy future. I cannot name everyone here, but, instead, I would like to express my appreciation towards the principals and staff of some of the schools and institutes where I was privileged to receive kind cooperation when I was conducting my interviews. At the Institute for Language and Cultural Studies, Simtokha, Mr. Singye Namgyel, the then Principal, encouraged me and facilitated my research. At Drukgyel High School, Paro, Ms. Namgay Om, the then Principal, kindly allowed me to conduct interviews with students. Ms. Tshering Dolkar and Ms. Tshering Yangzom, then in Drukgyel High School, introduced me to the Principal, and provided me with accommodation, warm hospitality and friendship. At the Sherubtse College, Kanglung, Mr. Pema Thinley, the then Principal, and Mr. Thakur Singh Powdyal, the then Vice Principal, kindly extended their helping hands toward me.
I am also thankful to Ms. Tashi Yangzom for acting as an interpreter during some interviews. For technical support with “page-making”, I am grateful to Mr. Kesang Tshering.

In England, I am indebted to Mr. Michael Rutland, Vice-Chairman of the Bhutan Society of the United Kingdom, for his encouragement. My warm thanks are also due to Mr. Michael Rowson for bravely taking up the enormous work of shaping my English throughout the book. In addition I would like to acknowledge a grant for fieldwork from the School of Oriental and African Studies.

Lastly, but not least, I thank my parents for their strong support, encouragement and understanding.

It must be noted that any individuals and organisations are, by their association with the book, not responsible for any opinions and errors in it: for these I accept full responsibility.

Akiko Ueda
## Glossary

**Ashi**  
Honorific title used of women of the royal family and of the nobility.

**Ama**  
Polite form of address for an adult woman.

**Apa**  
Polite form of address for a man.

**Ara**  
Home made whisky, usually distilled from barley, wheat or rice.

**Bukhari**  
Wood-burning stove.

**Chang**  
Mild alcoholic beverage made of cereals.

**Chimi**  
Elected member of the National Assembly.

**Chodom**  
Low table.

**Choekey**  
The religious language; classical Tibetan.

**Choku**  
Ritual, religious ceremony.

**Chorten**  
A Buddhist monument, which represent Buddha’s Mind. It is erected in memory of an eminent lama or to ward off evil spirits from places normally considered dangerous, such as crossroads, bridges and mountain passes.

**Dasho**  
A non-transferable title given by the king to certain officials in recognition of service.

**Desi**  
Temporal ruler of Bhutan before the monarchy.

**Driglam Namzha**  
Code of disciplined behaviour.

**Drukpa**  
School of Buddhism, offshoot of the Kagyu tradition.

**Dungtsho**  
Doctor of Bhutanese indigenous medicine.

**Dzong**  
Fortress-monastery, in which civil and religious authorities have been housed jointly since the seventeenth century.

**Dzongda**  
District governor.

**Dzongkha**  
“Language of the dzong”; national language of Bhutan.
Dzongkhag District; Bhutan has twenty districts.

Dzongkhag Yargye Tshogchung District Development Committee.

Dzongpon The old term for dzongda, now no longer in use.

Gelong A fully ordained monk.

Gewog Block; administrative division of several villages within a district.

Gewog Yargye Tshogchung Block Development Committee.

Gho Men’s dress.

Gomchen A lay priest, sometimes married.

Gung Household.

Gup Headman of a block (gewog).

Guru Rimpoche The Tantric saint who converted Bhutan to Buddhism in the eighth century.

Hemchu Pouch created by blousing a gho generously at the waist.

Je Khenpo Chief Abbot of Bhutan.

Kabne A man’s ceremonial shoulder cloth.

Kasho Royal Decree.

Kharang Semi-ground maize food.

Kira Women’s dress.

Lama Buddhist monk of a senior rank.

Lhakhang Buddhist temple.

Lhotshampa “People of the southern border”; generally people of Nepalese descent settled in southern Bhutan.

Lopon “Master”; term of address for educated persons and monks.

Loser Bhutanese New Year.

Lo-zeỳ Ballad.

Lyonpo Minister.

Mang-ap “Community father”; assistant to the gup.

Mathra A twill woollen plaid fabric, predominantly maroon or red; that is closely associated with central Bhutan.
| **Minap** | “A black man”; a villager or a farmer. |
| **Ngultrum** | Bhutanese currency. |
| **Nyingmapa** | Important religious school in central and eastern Bhutan; founded by Guru Rimpoche in the eighth century. |
| **Onju** | A woman’s blouse. |
| **Pchillip** | Outsiders, especially people from the West. |
| **Penlop** | Historical title of regional governors of Paro, Trongsa and Daga. |
| **Phop** | A wooden cup. |
| **Puja** | Ritual, religious ceremony. |
| **Rachu** | A woman’s ceremonial shoulder cloth. |
| **Ngawang Namgyal** | He unified Bhutan under the Drukpa Kagyupa authority and established an administrative and judicial system. “Shabdrung” is the title of Ngawang Namgyal and his reincarnations, and means “at whose feet one prostrates”. |
| **Sharchopikha** | “Language of the east (Bhutan’s eastern region)”. It is also known as Tshangla. |
| **Shaydra** | Monastic school. |
| **Toego** | A woman’s jacket. |
| **Tschechu** | Religious festival honouring Guru Rimpoche which normally begins on the 10th day of the Bhutanese month. |
| **Wang** | Religious blessing. |
| **Zangdopelri** | “The heaven of Guru Rimpoche”; a temple which represents Guru Rimpoche’s paradise. |
| **Zao** | Toasted rice. |
**Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBE</td>
<td>Bhutan Board of Examination</td>
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<td>BBS</td>
<td>Bhutan Broadcasting Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>BDFC</td>
<td>Bhutan Development Finance Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>BHU</td>
<td>Basic Health Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAPSS</td>
<td>Curriculum and Professional Support Section</td>
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<tr>
<td>DYT</td>
<td>Dzongkhag Yargye Tshogchung</td>
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<tr>
<td>EVS</td>
<td>Food Corporation of Bhutan</td>
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<tr>
<td>FYP</td>
<td>Five Year Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>GNH</td>
<td>Gross National Happiness</td>
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<tr>
<td>GYT</td>
<td>Gewog Yargye Tshogchung</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICSE</td>
<td>Indian Certificate for School Examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISC</td>
<td>Indian School Certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIE</td>
<td>National Institute of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRTI</td>
<td>Natural Resource Training Institute</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Royal Civil Service Commission</td>
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