The centre of things

After 35 years, it is time to look back at the extraordinary accomplishments of the Kathmandu-based Nepal Research Centre.

Research Centre (NRC)

Today, the NRC offers assistance to visiting scholars from abroad who require institutional affiliation in Nepal. Language training, both in Nepal and in a range of local languages, are arranged. It also encourages visiting scholars to present or publish the results of their research findings while in Nepal. The centre has an active and high profile publishing series comprising of occasional monographs as well as the Journal of the Nepal Research Centre (NRC), of which there have been twelve volumes to date.

Finally, the centre assists scholars by providing them working facilities, including access to a well-stocked reference library, technical equipment, facilities for viewing microfilms, a working space as well as meals and accommodation. To foster lively academic exchange, the NRC also hosts an informal daily lunch to which both local and foreign scholars are invited and encouraged to share ideas over dal-bhat.

Over the last 30 years, the NRC has been handling the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP), which microfilms every important manuscript and historical document located in Nepal. The material photographed include various branches of Hindu and Buddhist literature in languages such as Sanskrit, Tibetan, Nepal and Newari—texts which are of significance far beyond the boundaries of Nepal. Many of these manuscripts are the oldest or last remaining copies of important religious or historical works, and a significant number are so degraded that they are close to disintegration. Since 2002, the Nepal-German Manuscript Cataloguing Project (NGMCP) is setting up a detailed online catalogue of the manuscripts microfilmed by the earlier project.

Nepal Research Centre

(01) 4420 855
rm@ukir.com.np

Mark Turin is a Visiting Scholar in Anthropology at Cornell University.

(01) 4420 855
mt272@cornell.edu