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.

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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
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<td><strong>Dzongda</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Dzongkha</strong></td>
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</table>
**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-ze**
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.
<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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<tr>
<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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<td>BHU</td>
<td>Basic Health Unit</td>
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<td>CAPSS</td>
<td>Curriculum and Professional Support Section</td>
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<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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<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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<td>ISC</td>
<td>Indian School Certificate</td>
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<td>NIE</td>
<td>National Institute of Education</td>
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<td>NRTI</td>
<td>Natural Resource Training Institute</td>
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