

UNFORGOTTEN

Images from the Bhutanese refugee camps in Nepal

Eveline van de Putte & Alice Anna Verheij

Woordenstorm 
PUBLISHERS * THE HAGUE

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INTRODUCTION

By a coincidence that perhaps wasn't coincidental I got in touch with refugees from Bhutan. In stead of a conversation about the Nepalese kitchen I heard a refugees tale. Right on the spot I decided to write a novel about the Bhutanese exile. Not much later I found myself in Nepal with a videocamera, a photcamera and in the company of my good friend the writer / photographer Eveline van de Putte. We had started the production of our film Headwind, the forgotten exiles from Bhutan.

A year later we are still working on the final edits of the film for release later this year and struggling with selecting 175 photos from our collection of 18,000 photos made in Nepal in and around the refugee camps. I did write the novel and it is published together with this book. The book you're holding in your hands now however contains that painfull selection of 175 photos.

This book is a testimony of the existence and life of refugees who fled the south of Bhutan as a result of ethnic cleansing to that other wonderous country in the Himalayas, Nepal. But it is much more than a testimony. For the ones who lived in these camps and have now resettled to one of the resettlement countries it is a memorial book depicting images so familiar to them and bound into a book intended for their siblings. This book is also a cry against the injustice of refugeeship and an inside view on the culture of the Bhutanese who by some people are named Lotshampa's, meaning 'people from the south'. A culture that is being erased by the Bhutanese government and by the massive third country resettlement that is ongoing and shifting almost all of them from their south Asian grounds to modern western society. This book is a visual accusation against them who are responsible for human rights violations, ethnic and cultural cleansing.

But for Eveline and me this book is a photographic gift to our dear friends in Nepal and the Netherlands, who were exiled from their motherland. They are our friends, they are in our hearts and minds. With this book they and their stories remain unforgotten.

Alice Anna Verheij
The Hague, July 2012



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Himalayas, Nepal. But it is much more than a testimony. For the ones who lived in these camps and have now resettled to one of the resettlement countries it is a memorial book depicting images so familiar to them and bound into a book intended for their siblings. This book is also a cry against the injustice of refugeeship and an inside view on the culture of the Bhutanese who by some people are named Lotshampa's, meaning 'people from the south'. A culture that is being erased by the Bhutanese government and by the massive third country resettlement that is ongoing and shifting almost all of them from their south Asian grounds to modern western society. This book is a visual accusation against them who are responsible for human rights violations.

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MOTHERLAND B H U T A N

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CROSSING BORDERS











IN THE



Millions of families have lost their homes because of violence and war.

There are over 10 million refugees who have lost everything.

Millions of

family without shelter
is too many.

1 refugee without hope
is too many.

1 of
is



CAMP



DAILY

ROUTINE

MON

OUT PASS

TUE

BIRTH and DEATH

WED

CENSUS SLIP

THU

MERRIAGE in § OUT WITH TRANS

FRI

SUSPEND and RELIEF FER













LWF Nepal

Complain Box

(उजुरी पेटिका)





MDA NEP
For Bhutanese Refugee
HEALTH CENTER
eldangi-II (A)



CONNECTED



Internet phones boon to camped Bhutanese refugees





RADIO ROOM



FAMILY & FRIENDS















DOMESTIC LIFE













Malnourish Children in 2010

NAME	M	F	Sec-H	Third	Rem
1 Binisha Dhimal	-	✓	A-3	85	
2 Krishan Basnet	✓	-	A-2	69	
3 Ram Rasaily	✓	-	A-8	85	
4 Pranita hotar	-	✓	A-2	27	
5 Lisa monger	✓	-	A-3	62	
6 Shital XXXX Tamang	✓	-	A-4	83	
7 Chena Rai	-	✓	A-3	08	
8 Apakchga Rai	-	✓	D-3	64	
9 Deepesh Dulal	✓	-	D-4	114	
10 Dev Guragai	✓	-	D-1	51	
11 Srigana Khanal	-	✓	D-1	04	
12 Gurav Bastola	✓	-	D-1	32	
13 Bibash Dhimal		✓	A-3	35	
14 Darshan "	✓		A-3	34	
15 Anisha Karmi		✓	A-4	70	
16 Rojmeri Ghatley		✓	D-3	2	
17 Yeshan Pradhan	✓		B-2	70	
18 Sita Basaily	✓		B-4	92	
19 Gangan Adhikari	✓		C-3	50	



FOOD

















H O U S I N G

DAILY GUIDE TO *Happiness*



PRAY:
IT IS THE GREATEST
POWER ON EARTH.

LOVE:
IT IS A GOD GIVEN
PRIVILEGE.

READ:
IT IS THE FOUNTAIN
OF WISDOM.

THINK:
IT IS THE SOURCE
OF POWER.

BE:

... DAY
...
... THE SECRET OF
PERPETUAL YOUTH.

LAUGH:
IT IS THE MUSIC OF
THE SOUL.

WORK:
IT IS THE PRICE OF
SUCCESS.





नेपालमा भारतीय चुनाव

रोबोट

जया

धुवचन्द्र
उमेर दा





EDUCATION









CARITAS NEPAL



Bhutanese Refugee Education
Programme

PAGE
100

EXERCISE BOOK

NAME PHUNZOL CHEN RENO

CLASS ROLL NO

SUBJECT SECTION

SCHOOL



TRANSPORT







MLT
891

R 10
C24





DESTRUCTION & CONSTRUCTION



sometimes a few huts and sometimes hundreds when there's a large fire.









A QUIET DAY

A person is sitting on the ground, hunched over, in a hazy, smoky environment. A small fire is burning in the foreground, casting a warm glow. The background is filled with thick, white smoke or mist, obscuring the surroundings. The overall atmosphere is quiet and somber.



















MEN

A photograph showing two men in traditional clothing. The man on the left is wearing a brown knit hat, glasses, a red scarf, and a light purple jacket. The man on the right is wearing a brown turban with a red and white patterned top, a white long-sleeved shirt, and a white vest. They are both looking towards the right, where they appear to be working on a wooden structure made of vertical poles and horizontal slats. The background is a dark, textured wall.









WOMEN















WEDDING









RELIGION





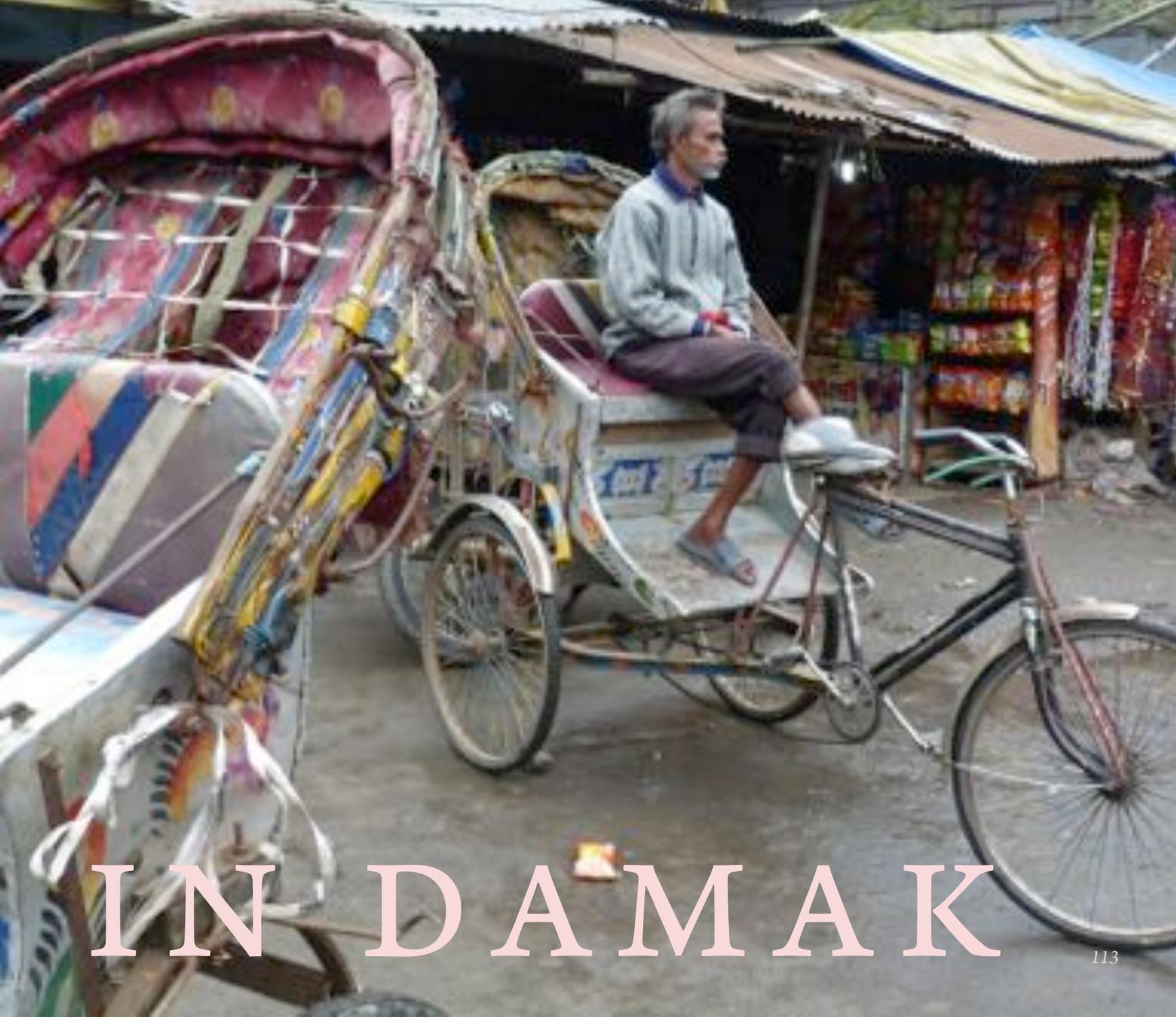






STREETLIFE

मि मिदिमुत्त्व
वन्नी - लाम्बान वर्री



INDAMAK









AROUND THE

A landscape photograph showing a green field with a cow grazing, a line of trees, and mountains in the background under a cloudy sky. The text 'AROUND THE' is overlaid at the top in a white serif font.

CAMP

A landscape photograph showing a rice paddy field in the foreground, with a line of trees in the middle ground and mountains in the background under a cloudy sky. The word 'CAMP' is overlaid in the top left corner.

















RESETTLEMENT 127









A photograph of a sandy area, possibly a beach or a cleared lot, with a blue building and a white van in the background. The word "ERASURE" is overlaid in large, white, serif capital letters across the center of the image. The background is slightly blurred, showing a person standing near the van and some trees.

ERASURE

















Where have my people gone?

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LOOK WEST



THINK EAST

GLOSSARY

Page	By
<i>cover</i>	<i>Eveline van de Putte</i>
<i>1, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 16, 18, 19a/b, 22, 23, 27, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40a/b, 41, 46, 47, 48, 50, 53, 54a, 55a/b, 57, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 72, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 84, 86, 91, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 112, 118, 120, 122c, 123a, 124, 128a/b, 129c, 130a, 136</i>	<i>Alice Verheij</i>
<i>2, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 20, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29a/b, 30, 31, 34, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 51, 52, 54b, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 63, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 82, 83, 85, 87, 88, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 110, 111, 113, 114, 115, 116, 121, 122a/b, 123b, 125, 126, 127, 128c/d, 129a/b/d, 130b, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143</i>	<i>Eveline van de Putte</i>

All photos were taken between February 2011 and January 2012 during three visits to Sikkim (India) and the Morang and Jhapa districts in Nepal and specifically the Goldhap, Sanischare, Beldangi 1, Beldangi 2 and Beldangi 2 extension camps in those districts.

Without the kindness and support from our relatives, the members of the Bhutanese community in exile and the inhabitants of the refugee camps it would not have been possible to work as freely as we did during our visits. In particular we would like to thank the following people for their moral and practical support, their hospitality and their endless efforts for the Headwind project:

Vidhyapati Mishra and family, Arati Dahal and family, Babita Gurung, Binod Dunghel and family, Jeetan Muskan, Prakash Angdembe, T.B. Chhetri, the Sivakoti family, the Dahal family, Ram Bahadur Chhetri, Lucas, Eva and Ewout Verheij, Haydi Cameron, the Empowerment Foundation, Bhutan News Service, Bhutan Media Society, Bhutanese Community in the Netherlands and many others unmentioned here.

Alice Anna Verheij, Eveline van de Putte



Between 1990 and 1992 the government of the Himalayan Kingdom Bhutan (known for its cultural and natural beauty and the concept of 'Gross National Happiness') exiled almost 1/6th of its population through ethnic cleansing.

They have lived in refugee camps in Nepal ever since and now they are being resettled to the West, thrown in diaspora by the United Nations as a durable solution to the problem of the Bhutanese refugees.

This book depicts their life in the camps, so we will not forget their ordeal and their endurance.

Eveline van de Putte and Alive Verheij went to Nepal and the camps to film a documentary and capture history in the making. They give you an insight in the life of refugees in Nepal in 175 beautiful photos documenting all aspects of life in and around the camps.

This photobook is a product of the Empowerment Foundations project *Headwind* that was initiated in 2010 by Alice Verheij in cooperation with representatives from the Bhutanese community in exile in Nepal and the Netherlands.

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