

A Geology Lesson in Manang Mountaineering School in Nepal

POSTER

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Insufficient knowledge and inexperience of participants of the Himalayan expeditions claimed by many Sherpas's lives. The native Nepalese living in higher areas have admirable qualities for mastering high altitudes and enduring extreme efforts, but they need instruction in alpine techniques for transition from the classical period of himalaism to more and more extreme climbing. They should be qualified to be able to successfully accompany expeditions as well as to become reliable mountain guides for tourists - trekkers. Basing on the idea of Aleš Kunaver (leader of many Himalayan expeditions), in 1975 Slovenia (former part of Yugoslavia) started a cooperation with Nepalese Mountaineering Association (NMA), preparing the project of mountaineering school with its basic aim to educate the Nepalese as well as interested trekkers and tourists in mountaineering. In 1979 the construction got started in western Nepal, in the zone of Gandaki, district of Manang. The school is situated beside the Sabche Kola, on the picturesque trekking route around Annapurna (second most frequently visited in Nepal), close to Ongre airport and Manang.

Part of the course the Slovenian instructors are giving to Nepalese trainees is the basic knowledge of rock and mountain genesis. Apart from explaining the natural processes and possible danger caused by erosion, our aim is also education in basic geology and preservation of the nature.

The present knowledge on Himalayan geology has been limited to highly specialized expert groups and can be found mostly in professional publications. We think that basic knowledge on geology should be presented to broader public. For instance, on the trail near Muktinath we can see a lot of ammonites called "sali-grami". For native guides and interested tourists a geological guidebook would be useful for learning and observing the principles of fossilization, tectonics, geomorphology etc. Very useful are the photo views with sketches of geological interpretations. In latest courses we included the published data on geology of the Annapurna range. With further investigations, new results and wider international cooperation of interested professionals we could write a book and organize courses on geology not just for natives but also for trekkers and interested geologists. Vicinity of the airport, accommodation in the Mountaineering school and relatively dry climate in the monsoon period are advantages for people who are not familiar with high mountain hiking. They could obtain a lot of experience in mountaineering and geology.

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Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

Zeitschrift/Journal: [Berichte der Geologischen Bundesanstalt](#)

Jahr/Year: 1993

Band/Volume: [43](#)

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