Six months following the 2015 Gorkha earthquake in Nepal, three fully intact mani walls hosted large cruciform lichens that were not previously present. The most likely explanation was that mani walls had already been reconstructed using previously interior blocks as exterior blocks. Moreover, the original mani wall was found 170 m from its previous location. This research raises the possibility that many Himalayan religious structures are not the original structures, but are replicates that are reconstructed after natural disasters.

**Mani walls, Buddhist sacred walls constructed of carved blocks with Tibetan letters and elaborately imaged, are common in Langtang Valley, Nepal Himalaya (Figs. 1–3).** Fieldwork in 2009–2014 involved mapping and photographing all 80 mani walls, measuring and photographing all occurrences of the cruciform lichen *Rhizocarpon geographicum*, and interviewing local inhabitants regarding the history and traditions of the mani walls. The consensus of the informants was that the mani walls were constructed 400–600 years ago and that the original mani wall was in the village of Ghoutaloba at the mouth of the glacial valley and had never been cleaned of lichen. Based on a locally-developed growth curve, the oldest lichen on a mani wall dated only to 1942. On April 25, 2015, Nepal was struck by an earthquake of moment magnitude 7.8. The last two observations would not constitute evidence for reconstruction by the mani wall owners themselves, but they help to support a pattern of extra attention paid to the mani walls after the earthquake.

**Out of the 80 mani walls in Langtang Valley, it was found that 12 mani walls (15%) had been severely damaged, 27 (33%) were damaged, 41 (51%) were not severely damaged, and 12 mani walls (15%) were severely damaged (Figs. 5–6).** At each of three sites of former mani walls (Mani Wall 67, 76–77), a chorten was found that was topped by what was apparently a broken, carved block of a former mani wall (Figs. 7–8). This combination of a chorten topped by a mani wall block had never been seen by the author before anywhere in the Nepal Himalaya and could be regarded as a form of post-disaster religious art. There were no cases of severely damaged mani walls and no transition zones between areas of undamaged and either severely damaged or destroyed mani walls (Fig. 5). It is most likely that the mani walls had already been repaired in cases where it was obvious how to get the blocks back into place. The original mani wall in Ghoutaloba could not be found among the scattered boulders and fallen trees at the location where it had been previously mapped (Mani Wall No. 4, Fig. 8a). However, a similar structure that had not existed prior to the 2015 Gorkha earthquake was found 170 m to the northeast of the previous original mani wall and closer to the trail that passes through Ghoutaloba (Mani Wall No. 5, Figs. 9, 10). The closest mani wall to replicade would be a mani wall that looked as if it had received no maintenance for several centuries, as opposed to replicating the imitative design of the maintained mani walls (Fig. 1).

The most challenging observation is the existence of five mani walls on which the largest *Rh. geographicum* in 2015 was not even present during any previous photographs. Two of the mani walls were severely damaged, but the other three appeared to have suffered no damage at all (Figs. 10–12). While did not previously unclean lichens and the mani walls blocks that hosted them come from? The only plausible explanation for the post-earthquake appearance of previously unclean lichens is that mani wall blocks that were formerly interior blocks were present on the exterior. All of the previously unclean lichens were heavily bleached with a strong color contrast from white to pale yellow (Fig. 13), as opposed to the bright yellowish-green of healthy *Rh. geographicum* (Fig. 14). These lichen colors were consistent with a previous history as an interior block, where only diffuse light with a strong spatial heterogeneity of light intensity would be present. The three apparently reconstructed mani walls were all within 195 m of each other, and the presence of a missed cleaner of mani wall would be one of the first places where mani walls would be reconstructed.

**Discussion**

There are five lines of evidence that, within six months of the 2015 Gorkha earthquake, at least four mani walls had been reconstructed in a manner similar to, but not identical to the original designs:

1. The structure that had been called the original mani wall by pre-earthquake informants could no longer be seen in any of the villages and cultural areas.

2. There were no cases of severely damaged mani walls and no transition zones between areas of undamaged and either severely damaged or destroyed mani walls (Fig. 5). It is most likely that the mani walls had already been repaired in cases where it was obvious how to get the blocks back into place.

3. The last two observations would not constitute evidence for reconstruction by the mani wall owners themselves, but they help to support a pattern of extra attention paid to the mani walls after the earthquake.