TIBET IN 1938-1939
PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE ERNST SCHÄFER EXPEDITION TO TIBET
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EDITED BY
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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements 6

Foreword
Peter Schwieger 7

Tibet in 1938-1939: The Ernst Schäfer Expedition to Tibet
Isrun Engelhardt 11

The Schäfer Collection Through an Ethnographic Lens
Claudius Müller 62

British and German Photography in Tibet in the 1930s: The Diplomatic, the Ethnographic, and Other Modes
Clare Harris 73

The Goloks Through Western Eyes: Fascination and Horror
Bianca Horlemann 91

The Autobiography of Tsarong as Told to Rapten Kazi, Interpreter for the Schäfer Expedition
(Dasang Damdul) Tsarong
with A Brief Comment on Tsarong by Tsering Shakya 103

Catalogue 113

Notes 248
Bibliography 258
Sources for Illustrations 261
Index 264
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Ishra Engelhardt
The photographs in this exhibition represent a selection of the 17,000 negatives that document Ernst Schäfer’s Tibetan expedition of 1938–39; they are preserved at the Federal Archives (Bundesarchiv) in Koblenz. Although much has been written about this expedition, generally focusing on its political implications, on the possibility of it having hidden political objectives, and on its occult aspects, the actual results of the expedition have not attracted much attention. Extensive materials, for the most part undamaged, lay dormant and largely unnoticed in storerooms and archives. For the first time, this volume of photographs provides insight into some of the practical results of the expedition, and thus hope is also bound up with this exhibition and its catalog – hope that the pictures will contribute to a more objective discussion of this expedition and convey a more nuanced picture of it.

This is an exhibition of largely unpublished photographs of Old Tibet, a distant country in every respect which few travelers have visited and of which even fewer have left graphic representations. This is not the first book of photographs of its kind. Seeing Lhasa, the catalog of an exhibit shown during the Tenth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (Oxford, 6-12 September 2003) revealed to us the photographic treasures of Old Tibet taken by British photographers in the 1930s and 1940s, now housed at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford.
Since photography is hardly an objective medium, each new glimpse changes the image that we have acquired of an object. To a large extent, our images of other cultures depend on the society and time in which we ourselves live. We cannot escape this dependence, even in our own travels. Our efforts to confront this reality consciously are aided by photographers from a society and a time that few alive today have viewed with their own eyes. Even if the photographer is always "in the picture," the photos nonetheless also reveal pieces of a bygone life and a bygone world. They show people in the clothes and hairdos they wore then, people engaged in activities that are no longer performed in the same way today. They show facial expressions of pride, joy, curiosity, and skepticism, and they document buildings and plazas that no longer exist, or that appear quite different today. In short, such photographs are for historians not only an intentional description or production, but also a direct trace of the past. The graphic nature of photographs provides an invaluable aid for clarifying circumstances that written records alone can convey only incompletely. Conversely, because of their selective nature, photographs always require background information. This catalog brings together both images of a distant land with the background information that places these photographs in context, making their content intelligible.

I would like to thank Isrun Engelhardt for the meticulous care she took in scouring archives and libraries to help bring about this exhibition and catalog. Due to her intensive engagement with Ernst Schäfer and his expedition to Tibet in 1938-1939, she has brought home to us the historical circumstances under which these photographs were taken. A detective's nose and steady persistence led to her remarkable success in identifying so many of the people depicted in the photos.

Clare Harris, a recognized expert on photographic sources dealing with Tibet, sheds light on the divergent perspectives of the British and Germans. Her extensive experience includes the Seeing Lhasa photo exhibition and book and a complete familiarity with the Pitt Rivers Museum photo collections.
The Goloks of Eastern Tibet have apparently held a particular fascination for Western travelers, and Ernst Schäfer was no exception. Bianca Horlemann, already familiar with the Goloks through her own field research, explores the roots of this phenomenon in her essay.

Claudius Müller, ethnologist and director of the State Museum of Ethnology in Munich (Museum für Völkerkunde), examines the photographic perspectives of the people on this expedition, focusing on their photographs as ethnographic source material.

Tsering Shakya, an authority on modern Tibetan history and co-editor of Seeing Lhasa, provides a brief explanation about the oral autobiography of Tsarong, a leading figure in Lhasa, who dictated his story to the expedition's interpreter, Rapten Kazi.

My special thanks go to all of the above, and to all of the people who contributed to the success of this exhibition.
Übersichtsskizze
zu der Deutschen Tibet-Expedition
Ernst Schäfer 1938/39

Marschroute
Landesgrenzen

Route map for the Schäfer expedition to Tibet in 1938–1939.
From Ernst Schäfer, Geheimnis Tibet, Munich: F. Bruckmann 1943, 18.
TIBET IN 1938-1939:
THE ERNST SCHÄFER EXPEDITION TO TIBET

Isrun Engelhardt

INTRODUCTION

High above the Rhine, the Federal Archives in Koblenz are home to a collection of 17,000 surviving negatives out of an original 20,000. These photographs reveal a self-confident country, Tibet, or rather a self-confident people, the Tibetans, and are unique in that the members of this research expedition were interested in virtually every aspect of life in Tibet and Sikkim. Of great interest for Tibetan Buddhism and the Buddhist way of life – as we see in photos of monks, pilgrims, and religious festivals – these photos record a deep ethnological curiosity and thus provide a comprehensive picture of the daily lives of the people at that time. In contrast to many other photographers, the young Germans were also interested in the unspectacular – handicrafts, agriculture, and trade, among others subjects. Like other Europeans before them, they too were fascinated by nomadic peoples, most especially the Goloks of Eastern Tibet, who were visiting Lhasa on a pilgrimage during Losar, the Tibetan New Year. Also unique are a number of photographs of historic buildings and fortresses that no longer exist.

But why does this expedition continue to fascinate us today, and why does it still engender controversy? Most such discussions do not focus on
the expedition’s actual – and important – scientific results. From a technical point of view, there was nothing singular or spectacular about the expedition, nothing to compare with the adventures of, say, Sven Hedin or Wilhelm Filchner. It involved little uncharted territory, explored few new routes, no expedition members were ambushed by predatory tribes, and no one was killed. Ernst Schäfer’s earlier expeditions to Eastern Tibet, in contrast, had involved considerably more adventure and excitement. Interest in this expedition no doubt derives from the period in which it occurred, shortly before the outbreak of World War II. This was the first German scientific expedition to receive an official invitation to Lhasa from the Tibetan government, and its members were ultimately allowed to stay in the Tibetan capital for a full two months. With the Tibetan government’s strict policy in the 1930s of refusing entry to foreigners, the invitation alone was a minor sensation, generating further tensions in the fraught and complex state of Anglo-German relations of the time.

Today the expedition has largely been forgotten, although its declared aim was to make scientific discoveries in several disciplines, primarily the natural sciences. Forgotten too are its members, who collected an astonishing quantity of scientific materials, some still awaiting analysis. Yet Germany’s most comprehensive collection of Tibetan ethnological objects, now at the Bavarian State Museum of Ethnology in Munich (Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde München), came from the materials the Schäfer expedition collected. Because Schäfer’s books on this expedition have never been translated into English, public opinion in the English-speaking world has mainly been shaped by the sources available in the India Office Library in London, and by Hugh Richardson, who was in charge of the British Mission in Lhasa at the time of the expedition. This may account for the expedition’s dubious legacy in the English-speaking world, while in Germany today it has nearly been forgotten. Only in popular scientific literature and occult histories is the expedition cited repeatedly in recurring attempts to establish far-fetched connections between the Third Reich and Tibet, or occult relationships between Hitler and Tibet. The majority
METHODS AND SOURCES

In order to follow historical facts as closely as possible in my reconstruction of the expedition, I have drawn largely on unpublished sources as contemporaneous as possible, despite the four reports from the expedition that have been published so far. To create the most direct impressions possible, I have attempted to let the expedition members speak for themselves as often as possible through their unpublished notes, especially Schäfer’s diaries. The English records of the expedition’s Tibetan interpreter, Bhutia Rapten Kazi from Sikkim, were a lucky find. The previously unnoticed comments he wrote in Tibet about places, encounters, and events, such as Losar, also deserve to be published because his impressions and perspectives reflect more those of a local, rather than those of the expedition members. I have attempted to pursue primarily those themes that convey new and supplemental information. With the photographs, I have given preference to those that have not been published elsewhere, or that reveal motifs that other photographers have ignored. I have tried to give special attention to historical structures that have since been destroyed.

EXPEDITION PLANS

I first focus on the planning of the 1938-39 expedition and its objectives in order to show that it became ensnared in conflict between politics and science from the outset, even though it was planned as a purely scientific venture, more so than the earlier American expeditions in which Schäfer had participated. The ‘Ahnenerbe’ (German Ancestral Heritage Society) tried to influence and define the project from a political, esoteric, and
pseudo-scientific viewpoint, while the need for official permits from the British entangled the expedition more deeply in foreign affairs. Here it becomes clear the extent to which German foreign policy, political alliances, and propaganda ultimately damaged the expedition's goals and created enormous obstacles, although Britain's political attention to, and fears about, the expedition were in inverse proportion to its size and scientific objectives.8

Ernst Schäfer, born in 1910, interrupted his university studies in zoology and geology twice. In 1930 Brooke Dolan, a rich young American, came to Germany to recruit scientists for a zoological expedition to Tibet he wanted to undertake. Although only 20 at the time, Schäfer participated in the first Dolan expedition to Western China and Eastern Tibet, before returning to Germany in 1932 to resume his studies.9 In 1934 Schäfer again interrupted his studies to head Dolan's second expedition, this time to Eastern Tibet and China, sponsored again by the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia; this trip concluded in 1936.10 The Academy acknowledged the great scientific success of both expeditions more than 50 years later in their 1992 obituary of Schäfer, which mentions that Schäfer and Dolan "collected scientific data and specimens of the region's birds and mammals that have never been equaled in size and importance." In recognition of his many scientific contributions Dr. Schafer was elected to life membership in the Academy [already] in 1932.11 After his return to Germany, he resumed his studies in Berlin and in 1937, under Erwin Stresemann, completed his doctorate with a thesis, of unusually comprehensive scope for its time, on bird life in Tibet.12

At the time, Himmler was already trying to make use of Schäfer's reputation for Nazi propaganda purposes. In June 1936 Himmler summoned Schäfer to ask about his future plans, and Schäfer told him that he wanted to lead another expedition to Tibet. Himmler had a genuine interest in Tibet13 as an adherent of a bizarre mixture of mystical and esoteric ideas.16 He believed in karma17 and reincarnation, ideas linked to his cyclical concept of history as recurring.19 "At this interview, Himmler said
that he would like to facilitate Schäfer's future plans for exploration, and that he would take over the sponsorship of Schäfer's next expedition."

Already in August 1936, Schäfer presented the German Research Foundation (DFG, or Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) with a first detailed plan for an expedition to Eastern Tibet, which included archaeologists, ethnologists, geologists, and botanists.

"But the primary focus of the expedition was to be the Amnye Machen region, previously uncharted in every sense of the word. A region that contained the last completely undiscovered area of Central Asia from a geographical, but also an ethnological, botanical and faunistic viewpoint."  

In Kant we can already find the ideas of Tibet being the point of origin and dissemination of many species and genera of plants and animals, being the key area in tribal history, being a refuge for a number of ancient life forms long extinct in other parts of the world, and of Asia being the cradle of mankind. At the start of the 20th century, Americans William Diller Matthew and Henry Fairfield Osborn had taken Kant’s ideas as the starting point for the development of their theories. Schäfer himself closely aligned his goals for the expedition with the models and results of American researchers Roy Chapman Andrews and Gordon T. Bowles, and of an Australian missionary in Eastern Tibet, James H. Edgar.

Negotiations on issues such as financing dragged on until a memorandum from the ‘Ahnenerbe,’ dated August 1937, stated that Himmler wanted “the ‘Ahnenerbe’ to equip a new expedition to Tibet. The expedition is to be organized officially by the ‘Ahnenerbe’.” The ‘Ahnenerbe,’ which Himmler and others founded in Berlin in 1935, initially occupied itself with subjects such as early Germanic history, research into runes, the myth of Atlantis, and the World Ice Theory. However, the organization increasingly tried to gain a foothold in serious science, to extend its scope of study to include and focus on natural sciences, and to attract first-class scientists, so that their concerns extended towards both “serious” and “pseudo” science.
In addition, Himmler constantly tried to influence the work of the scientists so that they might turn their attention to new or unusual topics that interested him. He was also interested in putting Schäfer’s work to use for his own pseudo-scientific purposes. Schäfer, however, was not interested in pseudo-science at all – he was completely devoted to natural science, and was steadfast in his refusal to allow Edmund Kiss, a disciple of Hörbiger’s “World Ice Theory,” to join the expedition.

Although Himmler eventually accepted Schäfer’s goals, a memorandum from September 1937 makes clear that the ‘Ahnenerbe’ continued to exert pressure on the issue of expedition membership, demanding that a geographer, anthropologist, geologist, botanist, representative of the World Ice Theory, and a prehistorian be included.

In December 1937 Schäfer submitted a final, detailed plan to the DFG in which he still assumed that the destination of the expedition would be Eastern Tibet, with access from China. This also included an anthropological program from anthropologist Bruno Beger, whose program was based around the question of whether Indo-Europeans could be traced to Central Asia, an idea that had long been debated far beyond National Socialist circles. Indeed, international and interdisciplinary discussion on this subject continues to this day.

CONCESSIONS

Although Schäfer was eventually able to free himself from Himmler’s meddling, and to assert his scientific freedom, his objectives and those of Himmler and the ‘Ahnenerbe’ continued to diverge – so much so that Wolfram Sievers, head of the ‘Ahnenerbe,’ declared in January 1938: “The task of the expedition in the meantime has diverged too far from the targets of Reichsführer-SS [Himmler], and does not serve his ideas of cultural studies.” Sievers added in a later note, “[Himmler] complied with Dr. Schäfer’s request to be permitted to conduct negotiations himself concerning the expedition’s financing and organization. The ‘Ahnenerbe’
subsequently transferred the file to Dr. Schäfer.” Eventually, at Himmler’s request, the ‘Ahnenerbe’ did not organize and carry through Schäfer’s expedition, a decision in which financial factors no doubt also played a role.

In the end, neither Himmler nor the ‘Ahnenerbe’ directly sponsored the expedition, though Schäfer continued to receive political support from both. He was well aware of his dependence on Himmler and was forced to accept various compromises in order to maintain later the cooperation of the British in getting passports and especially in procuring foreign currency, the most difficult problem facing him at that time. Himmler gave his consent to the expedition on the condition that all its members join the “SS”. Schäfer even had to compromise on the name and the letterhead of the expedition. After his arrival in India, this letterhead caused Schäfer considerable difficulties with the British authorities. Even the German Consul-General in Calcutta (Kolkata) included an unusually pointed criticism in his report to the German Foreign Office, arguing that the prescribed letterhead was counter-productive and immediately generated mistrust among the British.

Schäfer continued his efforts to secure financing for the expedition to carry through his research objectives, and indeed did raise the funds for the expedition himself, albeit with the support of the ‘Ahnenerbe’. He received 30,000 Reichsmark (RM) from the DFG. A final statement from 15 November 1940 shows that the Public Relations and Advertising Council of German Business (Werberat der Deutschen Wirtschaft) bore the majority of the budget cost, with a contribution of RM 46,000. In return for sending in reports to two newspapers, the Völkischer Beobachter and the Illustrierter Beobachter, Eher Verlag – publishers of the papers – contributed another RM 20,000. The Foreign Office contributed RM 7,000 more, and finally RM 6,500 came from private donors, including Brooke Dolan. The final bill of expenses totalled RM 112,111. Only the final leg of the hasty return flight from India, arranged at the looming outbreak of war, was financed by Himmler’s circle of friends.

In the end, however, political conditions in East Asia compelled Schäfer to change his plans. After learning that there was no possibility of
access through China, Schäfer had no choice but to attempt to reach Tibet through British India, where he would have to negotiate with the British authorities. Schäfer therefore left for London in March 1938 and there got an important letter of recommendation to Sir Aubrey Metcalfe, the British Foreign Minister in India. He also had a memorable and effective meeting with the aging Sir Francis Younghusband.42

**EXPERIMENT MEMBERS**

The expedition comprised five members: Schäfer as mammologist and ornithologist; Ernst Krause, entomologist, as photographer and film camera operator; Karl Wienert, geophysicist; Edmund Geer, logistics and transport manager; and Bruno Beger, anthropologist, who was influenced by the racist anthropology that formed part of the Nazi ideology prevalent at the time. Yet what he actually did in Tibet, such as measuring skulls and making casts of people's faces, was part of scientific practice at the time. The Schlagintweits had made casts as early as the mid-19th century, as had Gordon T. Bowles, an American anthropologist on the first Brooke Dolan Tibet expedition, for his doctorate at Harvard. On Giotto Dainelli's expedition to the Himalayas in 1930, the anthropologist Renato Biasutti had also done so, as had many others.45

**START OF THE EXPEDITION**

The expedition finally set out for Calcutta via Colombo in April 1938. Political controversy, stirred up by a German newspaper article published when the expedition left Germany,46 caught up with them on their arrival and caused Schäfer enormous problems during negotiations with the British over entry permits for Sikkim and Tibet. In the meantime, the German Consul General had informed Schäfer of the Tibetan government's refusal to let them enter,47 which was consistent with that government's customary behavior.48 In meetings with Sir Aubrey Metcalfe and Viceroy
Linlithgow in Simla, Schäfer initially succeeded in allaying British concerns. Lord Linlithgow promised to give Schäfer permission to stay in Sikkim for six months, and Sir Aubrey indicated his willingness to submit another application to the Tibetan government.

Schäfer’s second request for permission to enter Tibet was also fruitless. He continued exploring a variety of avenues, however, and finally some months later he and his crew were admitted to Lhasa, which was considered a great achievement in Germany.

How then did Schäfer manage to get permission to travel to Lhasa? In Gayokhang, North Sikkim he had a chance meeting with Gerpa Changla, Chief Steward of the Taring Raja and half-brother of the Maharaja of Sikkim, “who promised us to do his best with his important friends in Lhasa, Shigatse and Gyantse....” He also arranged for Schäfer to get an invitation from the Raja of Taring to visit the town of Doptra inside Tibet for several days. In accepting the invitation, Schäfer in a sense tricked the British by following the personal advice of Francis Younghusband “to sneak over the border.”

In Tibet he immediately established friendly contacts, and Taring promised to transfer Schäfer’s entry application directly to Lhasa. After returning to Gangtok, Schäfer drafted a flawless formal request to the Tibetan Regent Reting Rinpoche with the assistance of the private secretary of the Maharaja of Sikkim, two high-ranking Tibetan lamas, and a Tibetan doctor. They also sent similar letters to the Prime Minister and the Kashag, and so began a long period of waiting. However, after a telegram from Hugh Richardson to Basil Gould, Schäfer received through Gould an official letter of invitation with five seals from the Kashag, stating:

*To the German Doctor Saheb Sha-phar:*

*Thank you for your letter of the 17th day of the 9th of the English month together with two boxes containing a gramophone, records and two pairs of binoculars.*
Concerning you and the other Germans, Doctor Wienert, Mr. Krause, Mr. Beger, and Mr. Geer (altogether no more than five persons) who want to visit Lhasa and the holy Tibetan monasteries, please understand that no foreigners whatsoever are allowed to enter Tibet.

Although we know if we allow you to enter, others might come the next time, it nevertheless appears from your letter that you intend only friendship and to see the holy land and its religious institutions. Acknowledging this, we deign to give you permission to go to Lhasa and to stay there for two weeks, on condition that you oblige yourself not to harm the Tibetan people and consent to not hunt any birds or game, which would deeply hurt the feelings of the Tibetan people, both clergy and lay. Please kindly keep this in mind.

Sent from the Tibetan Kashag on the auspicious 3rd day of the 10th month of the earth-tiger year [plate 11].

And so Schäfer finally had his "official leave," albeit not from the British but directly from the Tibetan government. In the broader geopolitical context of the complicated relations between Britain and Tibet, this also demonstrated a certain independence on the part of Tibet from the British.

Schäfer considered this letter from the Kashag a minor miracle, as it was the first official invitation to a German mission to Tibet, where many of his predecessors, such as Wilhelm Filchner, had failed, although invitations to Lhasa had been granted to the American couple, Suydam Cutting and his wife, and to Theos Bernard the year before.

On 20 December the expedition finally set out for Yatung, Phari, Gyantse, and Lhasa by way of the usual route across the Nathu-la, arriving in Lhasa on 19 January 1939. At the recommendation of Gould and Richardson, Schäfer left Gangtok accompanied by Rapten Kazi [plate 3], a master of Tibetan etiquette, to act as his advisor and interpreter for the
The members of the expedition did not take to him at first, and were distrustful because they suspected he was a spy planted by the British to keep an eye on them. Over the course of the expedition, however, he became a committed member of the party.

**Native Expedition Member. Kaiser Bahadur Thapa**

According to Schäfer, the expedition "had a permanent native team of about ten men, including Sikkimese, Bhutias, Lepchas, Nepalese and Tibetans. They all were good, after I had dismissed the first bad ones. But one outstanding character was among them, our Nepalese interpreter Kaiser Bahadur Thapa [plate 4], who owing to his faithfulness and ability was of the utmost help to the expedition and actually became my friend, as neither in China, Eastern Tibet nor any of these countries, have I ever found a man of such valuable qualities."

The young Gurkha in the dark blue suit had introduced himself in Gangtok, offering his services as an interpreter. He had attended secondary school there, he seemed clever and bright, and he spoke English well. He was in the service of the "Political Officers Work Department," where he had received excellent training, but he was willing to quit in order to join the expedition, and for the spirit of adventure. Schäfer agreed to his demand for an unusually high salary because the project was in dire need of an interpreter. Beger writes,

There was a story behind his first name, Kaiser. When Kaiser was born, there was a constellation in the shape of a capital 'K' in the night sky and according to paternal tradition, the first name of the child had to start with that letter. This was at the end of the First World War, which had taken his father to France as a British mercenary. As a true warrior, his father held the German Kaiser in high regard so he gave his son the name of Kaiser. Unfortunately, this father died soon after, in 1924, so as the oldest and only son,
Kaiser had to take care of his mother and three sisters now that he was grown. His earnings went to support the household.62

Kaiser quickly became an indispensable advisor to Schäfer, and the others on the expedition also treated him as one of their own. Schäfer had him to thank – most especially his tact, his nerves, and his sensitivity – for much of the success of the expedition.63 Oddly, his mastery of the Tibetan language did not seem quite sufficient in Lhasa.64 Schäfer even wanted to take him back to Germany for advanced education but this was rejected with the reasonable argument that "Kaiser Bahadur Thapa is a Sikkim subject and was supported and educated by the Sikkim Durbar at their expense and at the same time the Durbar strongly object[s] to their subject being sent to the Foreign Country."65 And "the Durbar that had spent so much money and taken great interest for his education must have the primary claim to utilize his services."66 Another member from Sikkim should be mentioned, German Akay, who became the leader of the native members and hunter for the expedition. He was strong and tough, fond of women, and seems to have been rather wily. He died only recently, at age 90, in 2005 [plate 2].67

**DEPARTURE FROM SIKKIM**

In Gangtok, Schäfer met with the Maharaja of Sikkim, Tashi Namgyal, and his private secretary, Rai Sahib Tashi Damdul. In the official photograph of their visit, as private secretary he was not allowed to sit on the couch, on the same level with the others, despite Schäfer’s insistent requests, but had to sit on the floor [plate 5].

Schäfer summarizes the results of six months of research in Northern Sikkim in a report for the Indian press in December 1938. The English is his:

*The German Scientific Party (Schäfer Expedition) under the leadership of Dr. E. Schäfer has after a six months’ thorough study now*
completed the expedition work in Sikkim where permission was kindly granted by his Highness the Maharajah of Sikkim and B.J. Gould, the Political Officer in Sikkim...

The expedition might be called an all-round natural history expedition comprising studies of terrestrial magnetism, ethnology, anthropology, ornithology, mammology and partly botany and of course geography, besides of taking moving pictures of wild life, and the magnification of nature of the Himalayas and the adjacent countries.... The Germans think that the co-operation of closely related branches of sciences and especially of evolutionary and biological studies has to be fostered....

Sikkim, though it is only a very small country, has, due to its geographical position, the greatest advantage of being a country of not less than five entirely, different biological zones and it is a country of the greatest climatrical changes imaginable. Ranging from the semi-arctic condition which prevail on the Tibetan steppes north of the snow-covered main range of the Himalayas through palae-arctic, temperate, sub-tropical to purely tropical areas such as the fever invested Terai. Therefore it is a country par excellence to study not only problems of adaptation of climate and altitude but also of development of races and species with human beings as well as animals and plants.

Herr Beger's work as anthropologist and ethnologist confined itself to the studies of the very interesting human races found in a great number in Sikkim such as Bhutias, Lepchas, Tibetans, Nepalis, Hindus, and the most interesting mountain people from Lachung and Lachen who in different valleys have developed not only their different cultures but also seem racially to be very distinct bodies of highly civilised traders and agriculturists, it was most astonishing that with the change of the anthropological aspects in the different zones there was also a great parallelism observed within the different races and species of animals and birds. Nature
having had the same effect or at least the same tendency of development with all living beings in space of time.

Here the anthropo-geographer's problem clearly touch those of the biologists: Dr. Schafer as a mammologist and ornithologist and Mr. Krause as entomologist. The party was specially successful in discovering a big game animal unknown from Sikkim and as far as evidence shows to the present day, also entirely unknown to science. Beginning in the eastern Himalayas and even in the spurs of the Himalayas on the western China border and stretching far westwards along the axis of the Himalayas the most interesting biological zone is to be found in the sub-tropical parts at altitudes between 7,000 and 12,000 feet where most of the endemic species and so-called living fossils can be found. There are species of animals and plants which have survived as relicts forms from the late Tertiary, the Miocene and Pliocene many million years ago, in fact they are the most primitive forms, known to science such as the Giant Panda of western China and the Takin of Szetschwan, Mishmi and Bhutan, the westernmost boundary of the latter animals having been found near Lachung in north eastern Sikkim.

In this very same highly interesting climatic zone however the expedition was able to secure the above-mentioned new animals called the 'Schapi' by the Lepchas being related to the goats family and to the western Himalayan Thar but having been blocked in its distribution by the high snow-covered ranges of Kanchenjunga and therefore being restricted only to a very small area. There were only 4 or 5 Lepchas existing who have heard about this strange animal which was otherwise unknown to the entire population of Sikkim. Of course most of the scientific researches have to carefully worked over when the expedition is finished.68

We can also hear from Beger, who describes the mayoral system he found:
In Lachen and Lachung the person named to head the village, the Pipön, was replaced every three years. In both villages, the head of the village had been chosen for many years from the richest, most respected and certainly the most talented clan. For some time now the young Namgyal Pipon had been the head of the village [plate 6].

ON THE ROAD TO LHASA: DIARY ENTRIES AND PHOTOGRAPHS

At the Tibetan border crossing at Nathu-la, to everyone's astonishment there were neither guards nor soldiers, no barriers or gates. Only a ladze surrounded by prayer flags and an old cairn erected years previously at the top of the pass marked the border between the two countries. On 27 December 1938, the expedition reached Phari Dzong, the southernmost town of Tibet's southernmost dzong (administrative district). As such, and as a stop on the route for large caravans, Phari was an important market town of 700-800 people. Beger writes:

In Phari Dzong most of the houses were no higher than 2.5 or 3 meters, most likely due to the loosely packed ground, and they were generally constructed of peat. The construction material was dug up from the bogs surrounding Phari Dzong in the shape of bricks, but larger than ours [plate 20].

In the next village, Tuna, they had a fantastic view of the holy mountain Jomolhari [plate 19].

Under the influence of Political Officer Charles Bell, the caravan road between Phari Dzong and Gyantse on the way to Lhasa has been so well reinforced that you could drive a car on it if the Tibetans would allow it.
The 5–6 kilometer stretch from Khangmar, south of Samada, to about Saphügang, just before Gyantse, proved to be unusually rich in ruins [plate 27]. Beger counted a total of 60 rather large-scale and impressive ruins. He tried to find out why there were so many, but questioning local Tibetans led to no satisfactory explanation. To Beger and Schäfer, it looked as if the countryside had once been a more thriving and more densely populated place. They wanted to know whether a greater population density would still be possible today and whether the land could support it. They hypothesized that there had once been much more rain and richer vegetation, and that some of what were now ruins had been deserted simply because of drought, turning to ruins the structures whose style suggests they were built in the same era. Several factors were likely involved, so that droughts, epidemics, or wars caused the demise of these villages. Rai Bahadur Döndup, for example, attributed the demise of the population to a shortage of water.\(^7\)

In Gyantse, with a population of 4,000–5,000,\(^7\) the travelers had friendly contact with the ambitious head of the western dzong, Dzongpön Coktray, a good friend of the Reting Regent, and his wife Namgyal Tshedrön, who charmed all the members of the expedition. [plates 24–25]

The interpreter Rapten reported the following impressions in English:

Conversation with Dzong Choktray and his wife Cham Kusho:

Kungo and Cham Kusho invited all the Sahibs to lunch by sending their ponies. The Kungo and Cham Kusho received the gentlemen at their courtyard and were taken in to their altar place. All the gentlemen were served with Chinese food. One of the dishes was hot and Dr. Wienert unknowingly tasted it – he generally takes no hot things. Mrs. Dzong said that the other day Dr. Wienert [had] paid no visit to their place that is why she punished him by giving him that hot things. Mrs. Dzong played ... the host in distributing the different dishes to all the gentlemen. But she always put more
things in the dish of Doctor-Sahib and occasionally got up and went to sit with him. She said that she likes a gentleman who has hair like gold and eyes like turquoise....

The Dzongpon went on [to say] that they would meet the Kashag ministers and Taring Kumar and Tsarong Dzasa (who will be very glad to see us) and not to speak from [of] the Regent. He said that if the Regent is pleased, he will allow the Sahibs to take his photo, otherwise not. In any case the Dzong says that it is not the rule to disallow a visitor to stay for more than 15 minutes with the Regent. He also says that the Regent is a young reincarnated Lama, who has a great interest in photography.

In comparison with these visits, the encounter between members of the expedition and the young spiritual leader of Gyantse seems to have taken a much more formal course:

Interview with Labrang Kungo, the monastic head of Gyantse:

Through a servant of the Kungo we sent word of our visit. Instantly the Lama appeared at the door of his house, saluted to Dr. Schafer and Dr. Beger and shook hands. He said Tashi Dilay which means "so [it] is," like the English "How do you do." The Lama asked whether the Sahibs would like to have some Tibetan tea and it was served. The Lama said it is the first German visit to Tibet and requested Dr. Schafer to keep a long ... good-will between Tibet and Germany. He regretted very much for not being able to give any reception to the Sahibs. However, he said that he wished to see all the Sahibs in health on their return from Lhasa. He said the Sahibs will have a very pleasant journey and favourable weather except at Karoo-La, where they will feel a bit cold. He said that the sahibs will spend the days very nicely at Lhasa as the weather is warm there. The lama said that the German swastika is the lasting unchangeable sign, which always turns from the left to the right.
He also said that the new incarnation of Dalai Lama is believed to have been born at Amdo and although the tracing of the New Dalai Lama is not yet finished, yet the young Dalai Lama will ... be brought to Lhasa within this year.

He said that the present Regent is the reincarnated Lama of Reting during whose birth many wonderful signs appeared. He was requested [to serve] as a regent till Dalai Lama's rebirth by all the religious and lay men of Tibet. Then this conversation ended and the Lama requested the Sahibs [take] care very good about their health and returned the scarf a sign of meeting again.28

The day before their arrival in Lhasa the expedition encountered a pilgrim who performed a ritual of traveling along the road by kyangchak, or body-length prostrations.

We met a devout man from Amdo sitting on the edge of the road praying. He had a thick gray leather apron wrapped around him and gloves with a wooden surface on the hands. We had already heard about this kind of pilgrimage. He measured his path by the length of his body, throwing himself down to do so, then drawing a line above his head, raising himself up, moving forward to the line, and starting over again, saying a long prayer as he did so. And as soon as that was finished, he took a short break to recover. This pilgrim was only 26 years old and had been traveling through the country in this manner for seven years, covering about six kilometers a day, which he conscientiously measured by the length of his body. This pilgrim's acts were considered very holy in Tibet. And every Tibetan who met such a holy man contributed money and food to him. A woman coming down the road was blessed by him. In giving his blessing, he placed his wood-gloved hand on her head and said a short prayer. In accordance with their vow, these pilgrims always had to stay overnight in the next-closest village and
begin the following day wherever they had quit the day before. The pilgrim, who we watched for some time, interrupted his journey as twilight approached. With raised hands, he said a long prayer. The next day he would return to this spot and continue his pilgrimage. He wanted to be in Lhasa in five or six days [plate 29].

ENCOUNTERS IN LHASA

While in Lhasa, Schäfer successfully extended the mission’s stay several times, so that they were able to stay a full two months in the city instead of two weeks, as the permit had previously specified. Soon after their arrival, they began their official visits to members of the Kashag and in some cases developed friendly relations with them. The following are a few personal impressions.

What expedition members liked most about the young 29-year-old Silön (or “Prime Minister”) Yarpzhi Langdün [plate 47], nephew of the 13th Dalai Lama, was his richly furnished house.

The Senior Shape, Langchunga [plate 50], was the most conservative of the Shapes. “The old Shape is completely opposed to modern doings. Like an old lion, he got his back up about installing electric lights and to this day his house is still bathed in the light of butter lamps.” But during their stay in Lhasa this apparently changed because the next time they visited, Schäfer was told, “Now he has already bought the light machines and he said they have been installed, although he himself is strongly opposed and doesn’t want anything to do with it. ‘Look,’ he said, looking at the ceiling, ‘Now I have electricity; I’m an old man and stick to the old ways. New things only bring misfortune.’ Although he was the most important of all the Shapes, he was also the most modest and lived more simply than anyone. As always, our political discussion is very guarded.”

Schäfer’s only comment about Böndong [plate 52] was that he was the richest minister, who had risen from modest family circumstances.
Kalön Lama, the Shape Trekhang [plate 51], was an uncle of the Phalha brothers and, in the view of expedition members, the most open and interesting of the ministers. Schäfer was touched by their meeting and very pleased that Kalön Lama even gave them a letter of recommendation to the supervisor of his estate in Yarlung.

Friendly relations developed with Yapzhi Phünkhang [plate 49], the recently appointed Shape from the family of the 11th Dalai Lama, and his family, with whom they were very much taken. Later his two sons even wanted to come to Germany. “His wife also cut a good figure, enveloped in a festive decoration, a patruk. Fake hair wrapped around a triangular frame on her head, bedecked with pearls on top of pearls, jade, turquoise, and agate, the riches of the Nagas. Then rose quartz, smoky quartz, and coral valued at about 50,000 rupees” [plates 65–66]. They were also particularly taken with their 17-year-old daughter, who was a nun. [plate 69]

Concerning the Reting Rinpoche, [plates 53–55] Schäfer in his diaries gives us a lively and detailed account of his meetings with the regent. He tells us that although requests for an audience had by rule to be submitted at least three days in advance – even the Prime Minister was forced to wait a long time – Schäfer himself was soon able to have an audience with the regent whenever he liked. Schäfer once even met with him for over three hours. During the audiences, the regent would sit
on his throne with his favorite dog. A young boy, the son of the new Kashag minister and described as his “favorite,” was also always present. Reting wore a yellow suede coat and had several German and two golden Belgian pistols hanging above him on the wall. According to Schäfer he knew little about the outside world, although he was interested in modern technology.

Schäfer at first appeared to be impressed with the personality of the regent, his contemporary in age. Schäfer invited him to Germany and they seriously discussed plans for the journey, as several other aristocratic young men also wanted to travel there. Reting wanted to be picked up by a German plane in Calcutta and flown to Germany, but apparently the Kashag would not consent to the trip. Gradually, however, Schäfer’s initial impression became increasingly negative, as Reting Rinpoche apparently always tried to get some personal benefit from their relationship.

Reting must have also been very fond of Bruno Beger, whom he wanted to engage as a bodyguard. Beger had some difficulty extracting himself from this situation without offending the regent. Reting suggested that Beger stay in Tibet and that a geshe, a particularly learned monk, go to Germany in exchange to introduce Buddhism there. This may have been the first official attempt by Tibetans to spread Buddhism to Europe. Schäfer apparently persuaded the regent to write a polite and non-commital letter to Hitler, although he seemingly had little idea of who Hitler was. Schäfer had probably given the impression that he carried far more political weight than he did, and presumably wanted additional proof of his success in Tibet.

The expedition’s most valuable informant, however, with whom members met almost every day, was Möndro [plate 60], a high monk-official who had been one of the four “Rugby Boys” sent to school in England in 1913. Möndro was responsible for the police force in Lhasa, but he had been demoted from the Fourth to the Sixth Rank after his motorcycle, the first in Tibet, caused the horse of a Kashag minister to throw him.
He was forbidden to use the motorcycle anymore, but was an endearing personality who thoroughly enjoyed life. Even though he had returned to Tibet over 20 years previously, he still spoke good English. When the expedition departed Lhasa by way of the Yarlung Valley on the way to Shigatse, Mönödro was assigned as official escort, although this was certainly also to keep an eye on them for the Kashag.

The maitre de plaisir, escort commander, guide, and protector is K.K. Mönödro, a high Tibetan officer (higher than a general, directly under the ministers). He speaks English, he was assigned to us by the Regent, who is very friendly towards Germany, he has long been our best friend, and he is responsible to the government for our well-being and the receptions. He does everything I want and arranges everything perfectly. The messengers are always two days ahead of us so I can truly say that we are treated royally. Given Mönödro's outstanding organization of the caravan on the one hand, and his advanced education and absolute tolerance on the other, we enjoy the most pleasant scientific work imaginable.

The members of the expedition also appreciated his sense of humor and repeated pranks, as the following vignettes illustrate:

Mönödro imitates Barasahib [i.e. Schäfer]: Ang Bao, Beger's servant, was supposed to carry five small ruddy shelducks to Penam in Schäfer's cap. But one of them escaped along the way so the hunt was on. We watched in amusement. Then Mönödro said to me, 'If Schäfer were here now, he would be yelling;' and then he started yelling himself, 'He spoils all my birds, this fool!' As he yelled, he tried to imitate Barasahib's facial expressions, his speech, and tone, and he was quite pleased with himself.

And again:
In a monastery in Tsethang, the lama there attempted to show a relic in the gloom and everyone stared without being able to see anything. Môndro was also watching curiously for a long time. Finally we asked him what it was. Then he answered with that unique and charming laugh of his, 'Nothing, but it's very interesting.'

Friendly relations also developed with the other two surviving “Rugby Boys,” Ringang and Kyibu, and the two came and went in their guest-house, which the Kashag had provided for them. Kyibu Wangdu Norbu turned out to be a well-informed connoisseur of classical German music [plate 79].

Friendship ensued with the family of Ringang [plate 57, 64], youngest of the four “Rugby Boys.” He was the most intelligent of them, and stayed in England until 1924 to study engineering. He was in charge of the hydro-electric power station in Lhasa and also became the official translator for the Tibetan government.

He is the most conservative and the most progressive in one. He retains his Buddhism, although he spent thirteen years in England and left at thirteen years of age. He gets up at 4 AM every morning and circumambulates the Tsuklakhang after the sun has risen. Today Ringang is not only in charge of electricity, he's also interpreter, code developer, English advisor, and a kind of foreign minister.

The expedition made contact with many aristocratic families as well. The person who fascinated them the most – as he did all foreigners – was Dzasa Tsarong [plate 58], whom they considered the most outstanding and only true politician in Tibet. They even had their Tibetan interpreter write a short autobiography of him after interviewing him for that purpose.

Bruno Beger, the expedition’s anthropologist, had a particularly positive influence on the expeditions relations with the Tibetans because he had
some medical training that enabled him to treat members of the Tibetan aristocracy effectively. Beger, who had not sought this kind of work, was chagrined to find that his success generated envy among the local English, who regarded him as a source of competition. Every morning people queued up in front of the government guesthouse where Schäfer and the other men were staying and waited until Beger was awake. Over and over again he complained that his days in Lhasa were almost completely occupied with this medical work and that he was so overrun with Tibetan patients that he was hardly able to do any ethnological work. So it came about that expedition members were frequently invited into the houses of the nobility:

*The Tibetans had something on their minds. Most of all they asked about our German medicine, which they believed was the best in the world. And in the opinion of Tibetans, German doctors have supernatural powers. Since I was not a specialist, I always took great care not to endanger this good reputation. We repeatedly told the ministers and the Regent how good it would be to send intelligent young Tibetans to Germany to study medicine. We also promised to send them a lot of good medicinal products when we were back in Germany.*

In his diary, Schäfer also remarks on the good reputation that German medicine had:

*Today on February 24 the ... Dzongpön on the Nepal border asked whether we had invented medicine that could completely prevent death since we had invented the greatest war machines. When I had to say no, he was visibly disappointed, but his respect for us rose once again when I explained to him about cardiac operations that had already succeeded, even when the heart muscle was damaged [by gunshot].*
The expedition members were also frequent guests of the Phalha family. "The three brothers were kindness itself, and two are real lamas who neither smoke nor drink. This is a very rich family that owns three houses, including one in Gyantse where they also maintain a large carpet factory that employs 40 workers. Some of the dyes were Tibetan and some came from India." Beger quickly made friends with Tashi Wanchuk Phalha [plate 150].

One day the expedition had an opportunity to admire and photograph a servant in a wonderful old festive costume and expensive mutik thugkhok, a kind of pearl coif, which was so elaborate that it prevented her from walking [plate 68]. Beger was asked to treat the mother of the Phalha family, who was seriously ill. Even when his arts did not help, he was still presented with rich gifts. In return for his medical treatment, the family went so far as to give the expedition a complete copy of the Lhasa Kanjur, which required nine mules to carry.

**MEETINGS WITH OTHER NOTABLES**

After visiting the Nechung Oracle, Ta Lama Lobsang Namgyal [plate 59], Schäfer observed:

*He gave the impression of being a fine, distinguished person, he was even born in Drepung and, despite his forty-six years, had known very little [about the world] until he became the oracle. Four years earlier, his predecessor in office had died and although he had been a completely normal person and not at all epileptic, he became Rinpoche of a Tendzin incarnation, assuming the spirit of Nechung. He eagerly provided information about everything to me.*

He impressed Schäfer as the most intelligent and mentally alert and among the best informed about foreign policy, and had his own opinions not only
about China, Japan, Russia, and India, but also about Europe.\textsuperscript{133} This was all the more surprising considering his background.

Tendzin Dölkar [plate 61], wife of former minister Dorje Tshegyal Lungshar and daughter of the deceased Horkhang Dzasa, came to visit the expedition shortly before the end of their time in Lhasa. She brought several gifts particularly valuable for their ethnological collection but also asked them to visit her mother and herself for medical treatment. Beger had absolutely no desire to play doctor anymore, but could not refuse her request:

\begin{quote}
Despite the fact that she was forty-three, she was still an attractive woman. The little broken English she knew sounded simply enchanting coming out of her mouth. Besides that, she was the first Tibetan woman who had left the country through India. Twenty-five years ago she had traveled to England with her husband and had even visited Germany along the way.\textsuperscript{134}
\end{quote}

Beger thus visited her and her seventy year-old mother on 16 March 1939, accompanied by Ang Bao:

\begin{quote}
Her stomach and intestinal complaints, she repeated several times, were undoubtedly connected to her state of mind and a great deal of sorrow and grief. I inquired further but on that day I couldn’t learn any more from her. Something remained incomprehensible to me. This woman certainly had a secret to hide. On March 18, the day before our departure, she visited us once again. We found her exceptionally pleasant, just as before. Since Möndro was present, we learned somewhat more about her and the fate of her family this time.

When the Dalai Lama was still alive, her husband had been one of the most respected and powerful men in Tibet. There were two political parties in Tibet at the time, the leader of the stronger
one was Lungshar and that of the opposing party was Tsipön Kapshöpa. After the Dalai Lama's death, the tide turned, however. The weaker party now won state power. It was during this time that Mrs. Lungshar had a bad dream that led her to advise her husband to flee to India. But it was too late. He was arrested that same day and they fixed him for life in a horrible manner. They put two toggles on his temple and, using a cord thrown over his head, they pulled them tighter and tighter until his eyes bulged out. They cut out his eyes and poured boiling oil in the empty sockets. Then they locked him up for two years.

The Lungshar family is still very rich and respected. The oldest son was adopted by another family. He is one of the young, and certainly one of the greatest revolutionaries in Tibet. The disgrace suffered by his father is indelibly burned into his heart. His hatred and that of the Lungshar family is directed at the Tsipön of Lhasa, who gave the order to arrest, torture, and imprison his father. Even without knowing this story, I too found the Tsipön family to be one of the most disagreeable in all of Lhasa.115

The blind Mr. Lungshar now lives quietly on an estate near Lhasa. He wants very much to emigrate with his family to India (Darjeeling) or another neighboring country but he is under constant surveillance, making escape impossible. With admirable courage and strength of character, his wife had held together the family and the sizeable family property all those years. Now she is almost at the end of her strength. Soon she wanted to follow her mother into the convent.116

Before meeting Mrs. Lungshar, her oldest son Lhalu had invited the members of the expedition to a feast after the archery contest at the dzonggyap (literally, "behind the fort") festival grounds north of Lhasa on the third day of the New Year. Despite being only 20, Lhalu had already reached the Fourth Rank117 and was one of the best marksmen.
[He] turned out to be not just a great guy among the youth but also a friend and a revolutionary who said all sorts of things to get a conversation going with us. He was still young so he was not yet very high placed but he wanted to get ahead, he said, and most of the young royalty thought like he did. Tibet had to develop, they wanted to attend college, make something of themselves, and change the tide in their country.¹¹⁸

Jigme Taring [plate 62], the current treasurer, Labrang or Lachag, seemed to Schäfer to be quite different from any other Tibetan, since he had been raised in an English manner and "represented a truly aristocratic figure" in his eyes.¹¹⁹ Weeks before the Mönlam festival, he was already extremely busy because, as Labrang, he was responsible for the food for 30,000 lamas.¹²⁰ During Mönlam, the expedition watched as he stood on a high pedestal and had money handed out to the monks, who pressed forward in a single line to receive one copper coin each.¹²¹

Schäfer also contacted representatives from China and Nepal, who had sent delegates to greet the expedition outside Lhasa. From the start he got along especially well with Nepal's representative, Major Hiranya Bahadur Bista [plate 72]. "The Nepali, Major Bista, came to us with half a regiment of red Gurkhas under a parasol and in full regalia, a splendid man who really wants to help us with Nepal."¹²² This was a promise he would keep many times over.

Soon after their arrival, the expedition was invited to a banquet in their honor at the Chinese mission, together with Chang Wei-pei (Zhang Weibai) [plate 71], Tsarong, Möndro, and Pangdatshang.

The Chinese representative's house was in the middle of the city, on the main street that went around the Tsuklakhang Temple, about 200 meters south of its entrance. The Chinese national flag waved from the roof of the building; it was raised every morning while the Chinese national anthem was sung and taken down every evening.
with the solemn earnestness of the New China. The building is genuine Tibetan. In the living quarters of Chang, the Chinese representative, however, the spirit of new China was apparent. Pride of place in the visitor’s room went to the portrait of Chiang Kai-shek. The wall panels are filled with large Chinese characters, national sayings that promote the China of Chiang Kai-shek. Mr. Chang was a thin, tall, intelligent Chinese, with whom I was quickly able to move to a new topic, although his English was poor and my Chinese even worse.”

The dinner was excellent and the conversation apparently amusing, and Tsarong in particular proved to be especially interested in medicine, animal epidemics, and technical accomplishments. Thus Schäfer gave enthusiastic descriptions of German inventions, such as “stones made from air” (artificial gems made by IG-Farben), “clothing from wood” (viscose) and medical advances. But Schäfer later learned during one of his visits with the Kashag ministers that the Chinese were otherwise much looked down upon because of their plundering of monasteries and the fact that they melted down gold and silver statues, and made shoe soles out of book bindings, and did other things of the like.

**TIBETAN INTEREST IN PHOTOGRAPHY AND TECHNOLOGY**

It was a great advantage for the expedition that photography did not meet with general rejection and was nothing new or unknown to Tibetans. On the contrary, they were often fascinated with it and took great interest in it [plate 26]. As Jamyang Norbu writes in his impressive article, *Newspeak and New Tibet*, photography may have been introduced to Tibet as early as the end of the 19th century. At the time of the expedition’s stay in Lhasa, there were already quite a few enthusiastic amateur photographers, such as Tsarong, Taring and Reting. Beyond that, there were also professional photographers, such as Demo Rinpoche. Apart from a stone-throwing
incident at the end of Mönlam, Beger [plate 80] reported that they never had difficulties while taking photographs, with some exceptions in the Golok camp.

The things Schäfer gave as gifts also indicate that there was a great deal of interest among the Tibetans in the technical achievements of the West. Since there were too few technical items to use as gifts, Schäfer supplemented these with a number of items from the expedition’s equipment, as DFG’s extensive records reveal. Zeiss binoculars appear to have been particularly popular – he gave a pair to each of the four Kashag ministers, Jigme Taring, Môndro, and the Dzongpön of Shigatse, Dingja. To Reting he gave a Phillips radio set, Tsheten Kazi a 6 x 6 Rolleiflex camera, and to the Raja of Taring phonograph records and a record player. Schäfer also ordered additional gifts from Calcutta several times. He even ordered presents from Germany for Reting, but they probably got only as far as Gyantse, never making it to their intended recipient.

**LOSAR AND MÖNLAM**

The main event in Lhasa and the primary reason for Schäfer’s repeated requests to the Kashag to extend their stay was Mönlam, the New Year’s Festival, which lasted more than three weeks. They were able to witness the festival and Schäfer gave a vivid and extensive description in his diaries, and in even more detail in his book, *Fest der weissen Schleier*, which is mainly devoted to the subject. The expedition was even invited to attend the Gyalpo Losar, which according to Damdul Namgyal Tsarong was “the second day of the Tibetan New Year – which is considered a more important day than the New Year’s day itself. This day is called ‘King’s New Year.’”

Rather than the extremely detailed and almost mystical 11-page description Schäfer has written in his book, here is the relatively brief and sober report of his interpreter, Rapten Kazi:
In the special hall for celebrating the New Year, there was in the middle the royal throne of the Dalai Lama, the pontiff of Tibet. In the front of the throne there hung a Chinese signboard, with translation reading “Dzenchog thinlay bod kyi chok-kun khyab” meaning “the powers of one, who sends all soul to heaven, cover all part of Tibet.” On the right hand are the throne and seat of the Regent and the Prime minister, rows of Tsedrungs (Lama Officials) on the left, and Trungkhors (Lay Officials) on the right. In the middle of the right-hand side of the hall were the seats of the Cabinet ministers and Dzasaks in one row and behind them were the Junior officials. On the top and left-hand side of the Dalai Lama’s throne were the seats for members of the German expedition. Behind them were the Chinese and Kashmiri seats and below them was the Nepalese seat. The seats for the German gentlemen and Chinese representative were as high as those of the Cabinet ministers.

After all the officials gathered in the hall, a Lama [musical] band emerged into the hall from the Western door, which was followed by the Regent and the Prime minister. A white carpet was spread on the ground by a lama and after this came the officials, who carried the “Dagam” (or the warm coat) of the late Dalai Lama, which was kept on the throne. The Regent and the Prime ministers kowtowed to the throne of the Dalai Lama and dispersed to their individual seats. The Lama band stood up in the front of the throne and offered a mandala (or the offering of the world) with music. After the mandala offering was over the ministers stood up and in a single file offered scarves to the throne of the Dalai Lama and then to the Regent. The ministers were followed by the entire officials and servants of the Government of Tibet, and after them the German gentlemen were admitted, who were successively followed by Chinese, Nepalese and Kashmiri representatives.
When the scarf offering was finished, all the people took their seats and the immediately “Khar” dance started. Then came the “Drebuling” dance. This dance consisted of subjoined [paired?] dancers. One god carries the “Gyaltsen,” the holy umbrella, two gods sound the drums, two gods blow the horn, one god sounds the cymbals and two “Acharas.” Then came the dancers proper, consisting of “Changpa” and “Gyalchin” (the kings of Gods), “Klu,” the Nagas, “Trisa” (gods living on smells), “Tsen” (spirit gods), “Nyotjin” (god of harm), “mi” (men), “mimayin” (non-men), “Kyung” (god of the birds), “Lhamo” (goddess queen) and “Namsray” (god of wealth). It is said on vacuum [?] of Dalai Lama being incarnation of God “Chenresig” and being powerful all the gods and different beings of the universe came to supply him (the Dalai Lama) with amusement and also to pay their respect to the holy soul. After this dance came the “Trigar” (sword dance), which is also supposed to be gods who came to pay their respects and to supply amusements to the Dalai Lama.

Then came the holy debate by the “Geshes” (highly educated Lamas) in front of Dalai Lama’s throne. They discussed on “Tsultrim” meaning the 8 [lakh] and 4 thousand [804,000] rules of Buddhism, on “Soljyang” (practice of non-eating) and “Sothar” (way to heaven). When the debate was finished, one Geshe said prayers, both bowed down before the Dalai Lama’s throne, offered scarf to the throne and also to the Regent.

... a huge pile of sweets, fruits, cakes, breads, and dried yak and sheep [had been] kept in the centre of the hall and a wooden toy-house representing the heaven of wealth, was kept behind the collection [plate 84]. Later several scores of men... at a time [were] allowed to rush in towards it to fight for the sweets. It is to signify that Tibet is so wealthy like the heaven of wealth. When people were scrambling for the sweets and meats trampling on each others’ heads, the four “Zingako” (door-keepers) of the Dalai Lama beat
the people ruthlessly with sticks. It is said that they beat them in order to save [them] from being trampled to death. Later came once more the “Klu chen” dance and the whole New Year ceremony is finished. Then the “Dagam” (warm coat) of the Dalai Lama is taken down and rolled in a silk handkerchief and taken on the back of a lama. Then the lama band plays music and the Regent with the clothes of the Dalai Lama slowly emerged out of the hall for their private chambers. \(^{139}\)

The expedition also saw secular and comic events as well, like theatrical and dance performances put on by the Nepalese delegate, “a kind of cabaret in which two actors in European suits behaved like Europeans, sitting on stools, crossing their legs and chain-smoking cigarettes. That’s how they viewed us here!”\(^{140}\)

**YARLUNG VALLEY**

To give the Tibetan Government a credible reason for his request to visit the Yarlung Valley,\(^ {141}\) Schäfer deliberately misrepresented the symbol of the swastika, claiming that it had been brought to Germany from the valley some 5,000 years before.\(^ {142}\) Some time elapsed, however, before the Tibetans believed his story;\(^ {143}\) the expedition was eventually granted permission – not to mention the singular chance – to visit the Yarlung Valley;\(^ {144}\) Schäfer thought they were the first Westerners ever to do so.\(^ {145}\) Before departure, Reting blessed the Tibetan members escorting the expedition, a fact of which they were quite proud.\(^ {146}\)

First the expedition visited Samye, which was surrounded by a three-meter-high, whitewashed wall on top of which were 2,300 small clay chörten. They were impressed by the cleanliness of the monastery, its location making Samye seem to them one of the most beautiful places in Tibet. The main temple had been renovated a few years previously under the direction of the provincial governor, making it among Tibet's
most beautiful and valuable buildings. By their estimate, the population was about 300 to 400 people, including the monks [plates 105–107, 109]. Not far from Samye they were amazed as they approached the five white chörten of Zunggar [plate 108]. “These miraculous figures, artfully sculpted out of the cliff, were still intertwined with the original stone.”

Here follows a summary of Schäfer’s diary entries, found among Helmut Hoffman’s papers, as a record of the expedition’s time in the Yarlung Valley.

The old royal palace of Yarlung-Podrang is about 60 to 80 meters above the floor of the valley, on a lateral ridge protruding toward the northwest, on the eastern side of the Yarlung valley. The village of Yarlung-Podrang is located at the foot of the ruins. Some of the houses were undoubtedly built on the dilapidated ruins themselves. There are a number of ruins of houses both in the immediate area and farther away.

The structures underlying the palace ruins are difficult to recognize but they are undoubtedly organized in a group of four buildings. Both the palace itself, from which a few soaring walls still remain, and the surrounding houses and watchtowers are aligned with the Bhutan side, that is, the sunny or southern side on the steep lateral ridge, which is made of slate and sandstone slate. For the most part, the mountain faces to the south, toward the holy Snow Mountain, about which I will have more to say below.

Three massive walls of the palace that lean inward and, above the palace, a defensive tower covered with embrasures are still easy to discern. Otherwise, the image is that of a rubbish heap, a chaotic jumble of meter-thick walls and the collapsed remains of buildings. This place is worth a dig someday.

I called for the most educated lama from the monastery in the village, who looked after the old statutes that had once belonged
to the palace and the monastery that no longer existed. Along with these granite statutes representing the Gautama Buddha, the lama also showed me a series of old brass chörten about 20 to 40 cm high that, as he said, had also been found in the ruins of the palace. (I photographed these chörten; they are supposedly the first form of chörten commonly used in Tibet).... The current regent made a visit to Yarlung-Podrang in 1937 and is said to have expressed a desire to have the ruins renovated, just as he would like to see the small village of about 20 houses and 300 residents cared for.

Along with the design of the defensive system and the watch-towers already mentioned, all of which point to a martial past, it was obvious to me that the soaring walls of the Podrang ruins still reveal today the remains of the red brushwood lower roof (supposed to act as a lightning rod), which is unique to and characteristic of Tibetan monastic buildings. It was also clear that the old royal palace of Yarlung-Podrang must have been built in an architectural manner similar to that of the Potala or other large temples in Tibet. The sloping position of the walls was most characteristic, i.e. a gradual inward incline of the entire building that is termed "sloping lines," that are also characteristic for Bhutan. That means that the foundation walls are farther apart than the roof architecture.

The disposition and dilapidation of the building indicate that the ruins of the palace in Podrang are about the same age as the ruins that we found in the entire Brahmaputra valley up to Gyantse. Bhutan can be reached in 6 to 10 days, and the lama claimed that the original royal culture came from Bhutan, as one finds marked echoes of Bhutan in the entire Yarlung-Podrang valley. (For instance, I find a large number of apple trees in Yarlung-Podrang itself that were almost certainly introduced from Bhutan.) Without doubt, the ruins of Yarlung-Podrang are among the oldest and most dilapidated that I saw in Tibet.
During the time of the kings of Yarlung-Podrang, when the Yarlung Valley, protected from the wind, was not yet a desert of mountains and sand, there was probably a direct agricultural and cultural connection with the Samye monastery or its surroundings. There are ruins along the entire stretch between Samye and Yarlung-Podrang as well as beyond the Brahmaputra Valley and Shigatse and in the area around Yamdrok Lake and in Gyantse, where there is no water at all today, which would indicate that not only was the climate better then and agriculture flourished but also that the population must have been greater in the past as well. The situation today would indicate that the entire culture originated in the fruitful Yarlung Valley, protected from the fierce west winds but open to the rain-bringing monsoons from the Bhutan side, and that it expanded to the north and northwest from there. Perhaps, with its palatial castle, Yarlung-Podrang was the first Buddhist fortress....

Culture and religion flourished under the successors to King Nyatri Tsenpo until Songtsengampo moved to Lhasa, but he was said to have continued to reside in Yarlung-Podrang during bad seasons of the year. (It is possible that the silting up of the Brahmaputra Valley and the resulting isolation of the Yarlung-Podrang Valley was the climatic impetus to transfer the capital to Lhasa)...There are still a large number of ancient ruins scattered throughout the Yarlung-Podrang Valley, generally located along the slopes, but it has not been possible to construct a clear picture from the rubble that remains. Today pasture farming prevails on the flat slopes of the Yarlung Valley, where there is even artificial irrigation.

The floor of the valley itself is organized for continuous farming, with triple crop sequence: wheat, barley, beans, and then wheat again, etc. The valley is about one to three kilometers wide. The side valleys are no longer farmed today. The intensive cultivation on
the valley floor is almost comparable to European circumstances. Individual houses, hamlets and small towns are visible everywhere, and water mills are located everywhere on the banks of streams and canals.

The population of the Yarlung-Podrang Valley is probably around 30,000 (there were in all about 100 settlements counted). It remains today without doubt one of the most densely populated regions in Tibet... The upper nobility of Lhasa and specifically the old "king's families" still retain the better part of their land and family estates in the Yarlung-Podrang Valley, between Tsethang and the old capital.

At a point where the plain is about 1.5 km wide, nestled up against the small mountain rising abruptly north of Yarlung-Podrang, is the Ombu Lha Kang,\(^{148}\) the oldest house in Tibet and, as the locals say, the oldest human settlement period... Most of the natives believe that humanity itself took shape here. The Ombu Lha Kang rises on meter-thick foundation walls and forms a fortress-like labyrinth of corridors and footbridges, with two floors of gloomy temple halls on top of each other. The slim westward-facing tower sports a golden roof today that was first put on under the regime of the last Dalai Lama and exhibits Chinese stylistic influence. With the exception of the slim tower, which was probably built in the modern era, Ombu Lha Kang is like a fortress, a fort, and not only in terms of its position, which is very useful for defense purposes, but on the basis of its architecture as well, the many evident embrasures, etc. We scoured through the crumbling interior of the old house up to the tower chambers. Inside, because of the rooms stacked on top of each other and the temple halls, it looked a lot like the medical school on the Iron Hill in Lhasa.

In the main temple located on the ground floor, I found statues of the seated Maitreya (Chamba), Padmasambhava, Gautama
Buddha, Tsongkhapa, a many-armed Chenresig, and a Dölma. Our lama guide claimed that these relatively modern gods had only been brought here in recent centuries... The last Regent had done a lot to maintain and renovate this oldest cultural symbol of Tibet. The view from the roof offered us a fantastic panorama of the entire Yarlung-Podrang Valley [plates 112–114].

(In a side valley branching off the east side of the main valley, between Yarlung-Podrang and Ombu Lha Kang, there is a stone prayer wall several hundred meters long composed of a great number of chörten-like monuments that blocks the side part. A similar prayer wall made of 128 small chörten is located between Ombu Lha Kang and the mouth of the Yarlung River. There is said to be a pearl from the rosary of an old holy priest in each of the chörten, a priest who supposedly spread the religion at the time of the kings ...)

Just as from the palace of Yarlung-Podrang, the Ombu Lha Kang, which occupies a similar topographical situation, offers a view of the holy mountain of Yarla Shampo to the south. Along with [Mt.] Kailas, it is supposed to be one of the holiest mountains, a throne of the gods that rises as a gigantic, powerful ice massif from the high cliffs almost 7000 meters above the beginning of the Yarlung Valley. All the lamas in the area must make a journey around the mountain at least once in their lifetime. Mönödö explains that, before people lived in Tibet, there were nine oracle gods, one of whom had his throne on the holy mountain of Yarla Shampo. Yarla Shampo ruled over the welfare of humans and still today determines the fruitfulness of the Yarlung-Podrang Valley (and indeed, the powerful mountain complex absorbs a large part of the monsoon and thus in fact can be viewed as responsible for the fertility of the valley). The oracle Yarla Shampo is supposed to have existed for 2800 years. Since that time, it has determined the flow of water, flooding, drought, sun and flourishing of vegetation. For this reason, he is very, very holy.¹⁴⁹
UPSTREAM FROM TSETHANG

With 2,000 to 3,000 residents, Tsethang was the fourth-largest city in southern Tibet [plates 115, 116]. People came from Changthang with salt and soda, trading them for grains and other fruits of the field, and there were also extensive cloth- and rug-weaving establishments there. Besides Tibetans, there were also many Muslims whose ancestral homeland was Ladakh and Baltistan.**

As the party set out upstream, Schafer the ornithologist made an important observation three kilometers from Tsethang:

*The last house is the holy “ornithological station” in Tibet, a virtual “ornithological transfer station,” a beautiful isolated temple with old poplars and junipers around its courtyard and gardens where the holy lama sits at the door with drum and cymbals to invite the weary traveler to eat. This is a symbol of the Tibetan love of animals. Cha-Te-Lha Khang is the name of the temple, the bird-resting temple. All migratory birds that travel north from India to their cold nesting places must make their first resting stop here, as the Tibetans believe. Of interest to the ornithologist is the fact that the temple was built right in the main migratory path of birds, evidence of their gift of keen observation.*

A few kilometers from Dratang they marveled at the Jampaling Chörten [plate 123].

*About a hundred meters above the valley, the shape of Gyantse chörten rises, but in colossal, simple white with a 13-part golden skittle, the largest and most powerful in Tibet. He stands tall and impressive, 50 or 60 meters high, a colossal construct with twelve floors. An imposing building that is said to be 500 years old.*
There is a higher area on the ground floor with a ten-meter-high figure of the eight-year-old Jampa Maitreya.\(^{153}\)

The town of Chitishö\(^{154}\) [plate 111] spreads out beyond the Chitishö Dzong, which can be considered part of the ruins. With some 800 residents, the town at the time was famous for the quality of its textiles. The clothes of the Dalai Lama were always made here, and Schäfer was able to examine the material himself at the fort.

*The two Dzongpons in command of the town come in July to the half-crumbling dzong and live there until December in order to supervise the making of the Dalai Lama’s clothes. Then they are delivered to Lhasa where they are stored in the Potala. The population of Chitishö must still pay compulsory taxes on the woolen material.*\(^{155}\)

During the expedition’s stay the Ache Lhamo dance troupe with fourteen dancers and a three-man drum and cymbal chorus also happened to be staying there and gave a performance for the expedition, with the greater part of the local population streaming in as well [plates 117, 118].\(^{156}\)

In Nedong [plate 119], home to some 800–1,000 residents, the expedition met Dzongpön Parkhang [plate 120]:

*He preceded the current Kashag minister, the Kalön Lama. He was removed by the previous Dalai Lama because, it was said, he...*
did not implement the structural changes and improvements to the Potala that he was entrusted to make to the satisfaction of his religious dignitary. In April 1939, the governor was 76 years old. He was already severely bent with age and suffered from sciatica. He had once been a powerful man in Lhasa; after his fall, he was given responsibility for renovation work in Samye. After working there himself for four years, he became governor of the extremely wealthy district of Lhoka in 1937. His family comes from a farm in close proximity to Netong Dzong.\textsuperscript{157}

**DZONGS**

The members of the expedition seemed to be especially impressed with the many powerful fortresses, or dzong, that they passed. They visited the Rinpung Dzong, located in the side valley named Rong Valley, off the upper Tsangpo. “The ‘dzong’ rises above the city on huge banks of gravel that are vertically dissected by two rivers.” Möndro translated the name Rinpung as “pile of minerals,” which Karl Wienert immediately proved: “He went through the sand just once with the magnets and he was immediately covered with iron filings, pure valuable oxidized iron. If the Tibetans only knew how to exploit their riches!”

*The dzong in Rinpung is built like a fortress, with old shrubbery roofing, tremendous ornamentation, and massive. All around the powerful stone complex, virtually a city in itself with many domestic buildings, alcoves, dark passageways, embrasures, [it] is surrounded by a walkway on a narrow defensive wall that looks deep into the ravine, and running out into the valley, [surrounded] again by a powerful terraced wall. ‘Sloping lines,’ wonderful old horse stalls, an interior courtyard of the castle is especially ornamental with ancient lions heads of wood above the entry, triple Dalai Lama stairs and four stories, flat roof, large interior day-
light space, fabulous old curved solid wood pillars and splendid buttresses. The reflection of bygone splendor and an advanced civilization.

The room of the wife of a most important prince and Nyingmapa lama, Rinpung “Dje Djel,” is still well preserved. Otherwise you would be afraid that the whole thing would collapse. Exploring old castles where no Europeans had been before had its unique attraction. This castle is especially beautiful. The dzong was a palace of Rinpung “Dje Djel,” an important Nyingmapa lama. He lived before Lhasa even existed, when Netong was still an independent dzong, even before the kings of Yarlung Phodrang had united the country – others say before the fifth Dalai Lama.

All of Tibet was independent and the individual dzongs were independent principalities that were only later united. Shigatse was subordinate to Rinpung “Dje Djel,” who had his estates there. This lama also built Rinpung Dzong; he must have been a good strategist ...

There were said to be about 10,000 people under Rinpung Dzong, [but] only 500 to 600 live in Rinpung itself [plate 122].

As district governors, the Dzongpons are appointed and removed by the central government in Lhasa; they have to pay certain annual levies of grain, flour, and butter to Lhasa and depending upon the size of their district, they are also obligated to deliver certain rates of taxes every year. Otherwise the lord “Dzongpons” are little kings who exploit and oppress their territory as they please and who possess the ancient chartered right to decide on the freedom or captivity, life or death of their subjects. There is a lot of romanticism connected with these Tibetan castles that evoke memories of our own medieval times. Bold and imperious, they stand on the cliffs and buttes at the edge of the plains.

Unfortunately Schäfer’s prediction that “their walls, several meters wide, will survive for many more centuries, just as centuries have already
passed over them," did not prove true – almost all the dzongs were destroyed during the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966–76).

The expedition met Mönbro’s sister [plate 67] in Shigatse, a good-looking woman of thirty-five with six living children, married to a high official of the Panchen Lama. She came with her two eldest boys, who were quite good-looking (of the four sons, two were lamas, the elder in Tashilhunpo), on five horses in order to cross the river and welcome her older brother, whom she had not seen in eight years. They met in Nyemo, where:

Mönbro, in the middle of a conversation, made his own sister wait at the door for half an hour. When asked if this was the custom in Tibet, he answered evasively, “She may be tired, so she should wait and drink tea and relax.” Then when he called for her, she entered bent over in reverence before him, crept toward the table, and placed the usual khatak in front of him. Mönbro didn’t even get up but just stared past his own sister, like he always did when people made their formal visits, and directed her to sit on a cushion, much thicker than his own, on the flat ground.

South of the garrison in Shigatse, the expedition was struck to see “several hundred dilapidated grave mounds in the Chinese cemetery, the last sign of the Chinese who had been driven out of Tibet. The graves stood there, lonely, neglected, without any enclosure. China’s influence has disappeared without a trace and the powerful dzong, a fairytale castle, glows from afar in the evening light. The garrison, standing like a symbol between the dzong and the Chinese cemetery, seems to be built upon the remains of the ancient walls, the same ruins that characterize the landscape of Gyantse” [plate 129].

It was near Shigatse that Schäfer observed a scene that was probably not an everyday occurrence:

It looks fantastic when 30 to 60 singing lamas in rows of 6 to 12 meters, dragging large stones needed for the new buildings, move
one after the other, tied together in yokes, just as wild as the Sera lamas. I recently observed how they moved like a steamroller and thoughtlessly ran right over a caravan of donkeys coming toward them, without halting, the small donkeys collapsing under the weight of the heavy tree trunks, some of them even left to die from their neck injuries. The rowdies then began a regular row, ten donkeys rolled in the dust, and the roaring laughter of the lamas drowned out the curses of the caravan people who had incurred terrible damages [plate 139].

END OF THE EXPEDITION AND RETURN TO GERMANY

After their stay in Shigatse, the expedition ended in a hasty retreat to Sikkim when Schäfer finally realized after reading a letter from his father that, given the imminent threat of war, it would be wise to return to Germany as quickly as possible. Upon the completion of the expedition, Lord Linlithgow, Viceroy of India, received Schäfer in a private audience in Simla. Schäfer presented the results of the expedition on 25 July 1939 at the Himalaya Club Calcutta, here recorded in his own English:

.... I myself, besides doing the negotiations and leading the Expedition in general, worked mainly with ornithology, mammalogy and seed collecting.... what follows is a rough and preliminary sketch of the results of our work in this field. As we were on a Community Expedition, with the greatest ideal of helping each other, of exchanging scientific ideas, of comradeship and mutual understanding, a common achievement was created, and therefore I will not mention in this connection the individual names of the scientists who brought about the results, but rather only the branches of sciences.
Geography:

Terrestrial magnetism, Geophysics, Surveying and similar problems:

1. 650 terrestrial magnetic stations were completed.
2. 61 absolute stations including exact measurements of all terrestrial elements, astronomical positions etc. were brought [up].
3. A large number of photogrammetric measurements for map-making including the outstanding mountain ranges in Sikkim and Tibet and exact maps of the great cities of Lhasa, Shigatse and Gyantse with their surroundings.
4. Exact meteorological measurements, including observations of clouds, the problem of the monsoon, temperatures, air pressures, humidity in all camps and places.
5. Measurements of the salt content in Tibetan and Sikkimese lakes.
6. The soundings of lakes and rivers and the rapidity of rivers.
7. Very numerous measurements of exact altitudes of all important places, all camps, all passes, all contact zones, timberlines, changes of Fauna and Flora, etc.
8. A representative collection of the minerals.
10. Maps and sketches of the geological structure and stratifications of the country etc.

Anthropology and Ethnology:

11. About 400 complete anthropological measurements of Sikkimese-Bhutias, partly Lepchas, Lachenese, Lachung people and many Tibetans.
12. Hundreds of dactiloscopic hand and a certain number of footprints.
13. Sixteen head masks and sculptures of Lachenese, Lachung people, Nepali, Sikkimese-Bhutias and Tibetans, men, women and children.

14. Sketches of many foundations of houses and photogrammetric pictures for the purpose of reconstructing interesting buildings such as the Potala.

15. A large and nearly complete collection of ethnological objects embracing the cultures, both material and spiritual, and religions of Sikkim and Tibet. A third of the entire expenditure of the Expedition went into this collection, which came up to about 150 mule loads. The greatest trouble was also taken to obtain as many of the cheap everyday tools used in households, fields, handicrafts etc.

Botany:

16. About 2000 samples of wild flower seeds, such as Rhododendrons, Poppies, Primulas and medicinal plants were collected and shipped. All seeds of grains, fruits and vegetables, mostly primitive forms and species, which we need badly for crossbreeding with our already in many degenerate forms, were collected, numbering approximately to 4000-5000 samples, requiring up to about 10 mule loads.

18. Several hundreds, may be more than a thousand flowering plants, dried and pressed, were also brought together in herbariums.

Zoology:

19. 3500 bird skins, 2000 bird eggs, 400 mammals, a certain number of reptiles and amphibia, many thousands of butterflies, several thousands of hymenoptera, a smaller collection of orthoptera and about 150 skulls of all existing domestic animals, were collected.
Photography and Films:

20. More than 20,000 good black and white still pictures of land, people, animals, plants etc. were taken and in addition to this, about 2000 coloured still pictures. About 40,000 ft. of moving pictures, of which more than 90% came out well, were taken, and in addition to this, about 4,000 ft. of colour moving picture films....

I have just returned from Simla, where His Excellency the Viceroy kindly and most graciously granted me a farewell audience, and from Dehra Dun, where for reasons of mutual understanding and gratitude to the Government of India with the results of our surveying work, which of them, have a practical and material, but for us only a scientific and theoretical value.\(^{165}\)

From Calcutta the expedition first took a British Airways seaplane to Baghdad, which developed engine trouble and was forced to make an emergency water landing in Karachi. In Baghdad they were fortunate to be able to continue their flight to Athens on a Lufthansa JU 52. They learned a few hours later that their previous British Airways seaplane had sunk off Alexandria. A surprise awaited them in Athens, where they boarded a special new aircraft that was placed at their disposal by the German government for their safe return home.\(^{166}\)

The extensive amount of material gathered by expedition members, despite their relatively short stay in Sikkim and Tibet, is impressive, as is the way in which they used every occasion to collect as much information and learn as much as possible in order to make the most of their unique opportunity.
Points of Controversy

During the expedition’s stay in Lhasa, its status was affected to some extent by Richardson’s disapproving attitude; he was strongly opposed to Nazism. In 1936 Hugh E. Richardson (1905-2000) was initially appointed British Trade Agent in Tibet by his superior, Basil J. Gould, Political Officer for Sikkim, with the aim of consolidating British influence against the presence of the Chinese in Lhasa. Later Richardson became head of the British Mission there.

One problem that Hugh Richardson faced, along with all the other members of the expedition, was Schäfer’s unpredictable temperament. Years later, Heinrich Harrer mentioned that a Khampa man who had worked with Schäfer for a long time shared his recollection in 1946 of how quickly Schäfer’s “blood could boil.” The unevenness of his moods only seemed to grow worse in Lhasa, apparently especially towards the end of the expedition, as the danger of war in Europe loomed and Schäfer grew increasingly nervous about getting back to Europe before its outbreak. The reports of other Englishmen involved also give witness to his outbursts. Yet when Gould and Metcalfe in Sikkim later learned of Schäfer’s tragedy – his new bride had died in a hunting accident just a few months before the start of the expedition – they expressed their understanding of his moody behavior.

By the time the expedition was settled in Lhasa, Richardson’s many contacts had already enabled him to attain an influential position there. It is thus easy to imagine his suspicions about the contacts that developed between the Germans and influential Tibetans, and his fear of the potential disruptions in his circles these contacts might cause. The competition between the British and the Germans, already highlighted by Richardson before the expedition arrived in Lhasa, evidently put the Tibetans in an uncomfortable situation. As the competition increased, Tsarong, when interviewed by Rapten for his autobiography, was finally driven to ask “whether relations between the Germans and English really were good.”

58 Tibet in 1938–1939
When Rapten affirmed that they were, Tsarong folded his hands, prayed, and said, "The two great nations must keep peace with each other; if there is another war between them, the world will be destroyed."

One of Richardson's major criticisms of the Germans was that the expedition members' appearance and style of dress undermined the prestige of the Europeans in Lhasa. The Tibetans, however, appear to have had a more easy-going attitude on the issue. The report of Tsewang Pemba – only nine at the time and the only Tibetan to my knowledge who mentions the Schäfer expedition – amusingly shows this:

One day we saw a queer looking group of horsemen ride into Dekyi-Linka. The ponies were Tibetan, with Tibetan saddles of a poor quality. The riders, however, were distinctively not Tibetan! They had blond hair, blue eyes and dirty unkempt beards. Hunched over their saddles, the three of them, with a Tibetan, rode into the place. We learnt that they were Germans. I think they were probably anthropologists or entomologists of some sort. The British were always conscious of maintaining their prestige in Tibet, and wherever they went it was due to pomp and ceremony. They would not dream of putting in such a ragged appearance as these Germans.

Soon the stories about these people were the daily topic of conversation amongst the folk of Lhasa. These Germans collected lice! They were said to pay about sixpence for a louse. I must say that many of the Tibetan beggars continually harbouring cohorts of lice almost became millionaires overnight.

An event that principally Richardson exaggerated, and referred to it again and again, occurred when Schäfer had evidently been taking photographs too openly in Lhasa in the Mönlam crowds and was hit on the head by a stone from the crowd. Sporting an outsize bandage, Schäfer dramatized the event to coerce the Tibetans into awarding him an additional permit for Shigatse to appease their consciences. The event did
not seem to be too out of the ordinary, since the Tibetans universally comforted Schäfer, saying that the same thing had happened to others. In 1937 Theos Bernard had had to flee from the stones of the crowd while taking photographs, as, allegedly, had Charles Bell, Richardson himself, and even the former Chief of Police, Laden-La. But the Tibetans were also susceptible to rumors, as Tsewang Pemba remarked after the stone-throwing incident: “After this incident rumors started to fly about thick and fast. It was said the Germans had radioed to Germany to send heavy bombers to blast Lhasa, and for that fear ... the Lhasa Government had made an official apology.”

A central criticism of the expedition, particularly from the British, was that Schäfer killed so many birds in Tibet for research. However, the expedition had brought no weapons from Sikkim to Tibet, and Schäfer bagged all the birds with home-made slingshots, generally after dark. Schäfer’s use of the slingshot no doubt frequently hurt the feelings of the Tibetan population, particularly when he killed the birds near monasteries. And yet he was not an exception, for the British and Tibetans also hunted, principally in Eastern Tibet. F.M. Bailey, for example, ordered 3,000 birds to be collected in Nepal for scientific purposes. Joseph Rock collected 1,600 bird skins for study in 1923 and over 700 in the first season of 1928, and Roy Chapman Andrews collected 800 birds in Mongolia. Among the Tibetans in Lhasa, Jigme Taring was particularly known for his passion for hunting, a legacy of his English upbringing and the cause of much sorrow to his wife. Despite the ban on hunting in and around Lhasa, he added to Schäfer’s zoological collection without the latter needing to fire a shot.

**Final Considerations – Reasons for the Expedition’s Success**

Whatever the controversies and problems the Schäfer Expedition may have faced, in terms of the scientific material they collected and the way
in which they served to improve relations between Germany and Tibet, the mission was a success. We may now turn to consider briefly some of the reasons for their success.

Before entering Tibet, every member of the expedition made efforts to learn Tibetan etiquette; they took with them the Sikkimese aristocrat Rapten, who also served as their interpreter and continued their instruction.

Schäfer himself must have been an excellent negotiator. He proved successful even when he complained about ill-treatment from the Tibetans. He seems to have been very much concerned with his honor, which he often connected with that of his home country. Schäfer cleverly used the swastika symbol to create the idea of an identity shared between the Germans and the Tibetans, thus linking the two nations – West and East – even on the symbolic level.

Bruno Beger, the anthropologist, had brief medical training that enabled him to treat sick members of the Tibetan aristocracy, and so expedition members were frequently invited into the houses of the nobility. Finally, the Tibetans appear simply to have enjoyed the Germans’ cheerfulness. According to Schäfer’s diaries, they were fond of the expedition members singing German songs. It is quite amusing to read about parties in Tsarong’s house, the Germans linking arms with the Tibetans and swinging from side to side, singing the most popular song from Munich’s Oktoberfest. Heinrich Harrer also reports on the expedition in his unpublished diaries and memoirs:

I never knew Ernst Schäfer personally, although I frequently encountered the names of the five members of his expedition when in Lhasa. They had gained great popularity. I was often called upon to translate the instructions in the numerous packages of medicines which they had left.
Between 1936 and 1951 a number of Western travelers – diplomats, researchers, and refugees – spent time in Tibet, primarily in Lhasa. Among them were the British mission of Sir Basil Gould (1936–37) which included Frederick Spencer Chapman and Hugh Richardson, the subsequent British representative to Tibet; the German expedition under the leadership of Ernst Schäfer (1938–39), the Americans Brooke Dolan and Ilya Tolstoy (1942–43); and the Austrians Heinrich Harrer and Peter Aufschnaiter (1944–51), who fled British internment in India to reach Tibet. All of them documented their stays in records, in a large number of impressive photographs (and a few films), and in various publications that appeared after their return to their home countries.

**DIPLOMATIC MISSION AND ETHNOLOGICAL INTEREST**

The images documenting that era supplement one another and attest to a cosmopolitan life in the Tibetan capital that was nonetheless marked by the shadows cast by global political developments and diplomatic entanglements in faraway Europe. Many photographs illustrate the efforts of representatives of Britain, the United States, and Germany to maintain frequent and good contacts with Tibet’s political and religious personalities in order to fulfill their respective missions.
In contrast to British and American initiatives that openly served diplomatic purposes, Ernst Schäfer and his four German colleagues conceived of their mission as explicitly scientific. Its aims were to collect geomagnetic, geological, and meteorological data, to describe and collect samples of the area's flora and fauna, to record ethnographic data, and most especially to acquire evidence of daily life in Tibet. The German expedition, of course, maintained contacts with governmental and religious dignitaries, as is clear from numerous photographs. These meetings resulted in an inconsequential letter from the Tibetan regent to Hitler. Ernst Schäfer was able to take this letter back with him to Berlin as a "diplomatic success."

A significant portion of the photographs taken by the foreign delegations illustrates official and semi-official occasions for diplomatic contacts with ministers, officials, dignitaries and important religious teachers, at audiences, political discussions, banquets, and religious ceremonies. While certainly of historical and cultural interest, these photographs also show the prestige that was attached to such contacts. Photographs of Tibetan daily life, however, are primarily of ethnological interest. And for that, Lhasa, by far the largest city in Tibet, offered a wide stage, being the seat of both the religious and secular government and the most holy place of pilgrimage. Pilgrims from all areas of the country and all strata of the population flocked to Lhasa for the annual New Year's celebrations, which lasted one month, temporarily doubling the city's population with farmers, nomads, monks, traders, crooks, itinerant theater companies, singers and beggars. The Western travelers mentioned above all participated at least once in these celebrations and documented not only the religious ceremonies but also the daily life of many pilgrims, spectators, and others.

AN ETHNOLOGICAL LENS

The selection of photographs from the Schäfer expedition published here represents only a fraction of this previously unsung treasure of 17,000

64 Tibet in 1938–1939
photographs documenting traditional Tibetan culture. The technical equipment with which these photographs were made, the best available at the time, needs no discussion here, nor does the odyssey that the images underwent during and after World War II, their dispersal among various archives and private collections, and the current status of their documentation. Before making an initial evaluation of their ethnographic content, however, they must be situated within the history of that science. As with all photographs and even more so historical ones, when viewing the Schäfer photographs we are confronted with two preconditions. First, photographs are “silent,” and second, their intent is “unreliable.” As Brody has remarked, this accounts for their great power. “Silence and unreliability are part of what holds our attention when a picture is first seen, and moreover at the heart of a photograph’s extraordinary power.”

The Schäfer expedition photos are also “silent;” they must first be made to speak, to tell their stories, which in our case must be interpreted ethnographically. Such interpretation is conditioned by time and will change with new discoveries and insights. More important is their unreliability, since we cannot know the photographer’s original intentions, nor whether they were implemented with a certain “setting of the stage.” Our conjectures about the feelings of the people photographed are even more speculative – how did they experience this unfamiliar and in many cases unknown event, sometimes viewed as taking possession of their personality? Is the seemingly neutral facial expression of a Tibetan woman [plate 15] evidence of her agreement to the procedure? Or is it perhaps embarrassment? Questions of this type are the daily ration of those who work with historical photographic material and are spontaneously posed all the more forcefully the older the photographs are.

Such questions also arise due to the historical conditions under which the Ernst Schäfer expedition took place. It was an environment that, according to the testimony of individual participants, was rooted in the race ideology of National Socialism. These roots in those times left their mark on the travel reports subsequently published by Schäfer and Beger.
yet there are no unequivocal indications that National Socialist ideology was reflected, for example, in photographs taken to illustrate what were considered to be “race typologies.” The additional members of the expedition – Krause, Wienert, and Geer – were employed according to their education and function as geophysicist, geomagnetic scientist, ethnologist, film operator, cameraman and technician. The photographs they took, like those of Schäfer, himself a zoologist specializing in mammals and birds, were dedicated to documenting ethnological subject matter and not to any racially motivated agenda. Bruno Beger was an “anthropologist and ethnologist,” in fact the only expedition member who engaged in ethnological work. He was responsible for assembling a collection of approximately 2,000 ethnological objects of Tibetan daily life, most of which would subsequently find their way into the collections of the Bavaria State Museum of Ethnology in Munich, and his photographs documented life on the plateau. According to his own testimony, he collected anthropometric data primarily about the people of Sikkim and Bhutan, as well as a few Tibetans, a few hundred fingerprints and footprints and 16 casts of heads. This part of his activities seems to have left no apparent trace in his photographic work.

In light of the written record left by Schäfer and Beger as a context for these photographs, the significance of anthropometry to ethnology must be mentioned. Making casts and taking measurements were typical nineteenth-century techniques in ethnology. The Schlagintweit brothers, for example, brought numerous facial masks back from their expeditions to High Asia in the mid-nineteenth century, which they hoped would yield information and insights into a people’s level of cultural development. It soon became apparent, however, that the attempt to create *ethnological* connections between “race” and “culture” led nowhere. The time-consuming taking of measurements and making of casts of skulls became obsolete in international ethnology by the 1920s, but not in anthropology.\*
Although the occasionally racist vocabulary may have clouded the ethnological perspective of the expedition’s participants – to the extent they had any ethnological training at all – it does not undermine the ethnographic testimony found in the photographs. In this essay, the ethnological significance of the photographic material from the Schäfer expedition will be illustrated through selective observations and in connection with certain themes. At present, this is only possible on the basis of a selection, and any comparison with the evidence from other expeditions in the 1930s and 1940s can only be suggested. A systematic inspection of the entire surviving photographic material would be highly desirable. However, it can be stated at the outset that, in comparison to the photographic documentation of other travelers of that era, the significance of the Schäfer material lies in its record of a wide range of ethnological themes. The series of different stages of work, or activity, are virtually unique for this period, which, according to lists and the catalog, comprise between 20 and 90 images of a single process (such as the documentation of New Year’s ceremonies, religious wrestling competition, or the steps involved in drying clay bricks).

Another unusual feature of the Schäfer photographic material is the opportunity it affords to identify objects that later became part of the museum’s collection. In these instances, the photos become supplemental documentation. Such is the case of a small folding table that was exhibited together with perforated patterned paper for the decor in the exhibition “The Path to the Top of the World.” One photo (plate 141) shows two craftsmen with their paint bowls and painting instruments, including a bag with nozzle, which was used to apply a mixture of clay and glue to wood. This is one example of developing an ongoing “biography” of an object, a method that has become popular in ethnology in recent years. A series of photographs show everyday utensils – pots, ladles, pottery – that were purchased in the markets of Lhasa, and which can possibly be found in the museum’s collection using Beger’s notes (plate 40).
Most of the photos portray people, and clothing naturally plays an important role in these images. Tibetan traditional clothing features many variations based on regional origin, social status, and both worldly and religious standing. The Schäfer expedition photographs represent an enormous store of comparative material that supplements museum collections, which were often assembled by chance and contained many gaps. They therefore provide assistance in identifying the social and regional origins of various objects, as well as jewelry and the insignia of rank and honor that are so important in Tibetan tradition. Here the photos offer the possibility of establishing connections between items of clothing and the jewelry that belongs with them, which in many instances is no longer possible in Western collections since pieces of clothing and jewelry that might have originally belonged together were stored separately as “textiles” and “jewelry,” as museum storage conditions demanded.

The many photographs of the Tibetan aristocracy and religious elite taken at important ceremonies point out the significance of cultural influences on clothing, which reflect cultural developments. These influences are also seen in the use of valuable silk and brocade imported from China. Apparently they enjoyed enormous esteem in various traditions in Tibet: not only the robes of the secular and religious elite were cut from these, but also those of the cham dancers, and most importantly the mounting for religious scrolls, or thangkas. In a tradition that dates to the second century BCE, China concluded agreements with the rulers of non-Chinese neighboring peoples by presenting gifts of robes and silk material. Such customs led to the development of intensive trade in such textiles, and this tradition held in Tibet as well. These valuable materials that came from faraway lent prestige to those who wore them, yet such practices did not lead in any way to a “foreign inundation” in the sense of sinicization. This “foreign material” was simultaneously extracted from its origins and absorbed by Tibetan culture, as new “Tibetan” robes were fashioned from it. A similar process occurred with Japanese robes among the Ainu, Chinese fabrics with Siberians, as well as cotton fabric used by Native
Americans of Guyana in South America, each being taken over by indigenous people and becoming part of their culture. This cultural appropriation is demonstrated particularly well in several photos from the Schäfer expedition. Examples are an abbot's cloak, a waistcoat composed of scraps of Chinese textiles [plate 91, left], and an unorthodox combination of various elements - Chinese cloud collars, fur trim on sleeves and coats - in the Qalqa Mongolian style [plate 91, right].

Some photographs from the Schäfer expedition show clearly that Tibetan aristocrats decorated themselves with Chinese materials, but the clothing was cut in the traditional Tibetan chuba style. Two curious and instructive parallels are revealed by comparing the Tibetan and Chinese traditions in clothing. Even the classical and apparently typical Chinese robes of dignitaries (often lumped together as "dragon robes") are of non-Chinese origin. The Manchu brought their cut of robes with them when they came out of the northern forests to conquer China in 1644, a cut based on the efficient use of animal skins while allowing for extended arms to keep hands warm during the hunt, functioning like a muff. The Manchu transferred both elements to the new material, silk, and elevated them (now robbed of any function) to standards for the subjugated Chinese. The original cut of the chuba is also based on animal skins, namely sheep, and its excessively long arms recall the Tibetan nomadic tradition. Such comparisons are easily made when viewing the Schäfer photographs.

The costumes worn by Tibetan women were a popular photographic motif with all travelers in all eras. Two photographs show women from Central Tibet and the province of Tsang with traditional head decoration: for Central Tibet, a pearl coif with finery of turquoise and coral sewn onto a pad covered with red woolen material was worn for important occasions; for Tsang, a headdress of coral, turquoise and pearl beads fastened to a wooden arch covered with material. The Tibetan women in these photos also wore traditional jewelry with amulets, pendants of pearls, and necklaces decorated with gems. In one photo [plate 68] these are combined with a Chinese brocade gown, and in another [plate 67] with traditional
Tibetan clothes. A thangka in the Munich museum’s possession shows the same costumes, each combined with traditional Tibetan clothing, a floor-length blue skirt with back cloth and apron sewn together with striped woolen material.12

Numerous foreigners documented the traditional Tibetan workday, yet Schäfer and Beger provided more, and more comprehensive, examples: two women plucking and spinning wool with a round whorl, four women knotting rugs on a vertical frame [plate 153], women drying clay bricks, a woman carrying bricks in a cloth around her waist. The fact that almost only women are shown at work may be coincidental, since Tibetan women play a lesser role than men in crafts, with the exception of textiles.13 Over and over again yak-hide boats, or coracles, were photographed, whether on water or when being transported across land to illustrate the lightness of their construction; a single person could carry one without great difficulty [plate 32]. Large ferries made of wood [plate 31], with a horse’s head at the prow, served to transport caravans, including the typical shipping crates of standard size made of red-painted wood covered with leather. The Schäfer expedition also used a few such shipping crates.14

Photographs of secular and religious architecture are among those whose documentary significance grows with each passing year. Schäfer’s photos are part of a tradition that dates back more than a century – the recording of fortresses (dzong), palaces (especially the Potala), chörten, monasteries and simple townsccapes in Gyantse, Lhasa, and elsewhere, with structures in their specific historic stage of development. Such documentation has thus made possible renovations and even reconstruction after the demolition of buildings throughout Tibet by Red Guards and others over the past 40 years.

Religious themes and motifs are in general varied and well represented. Along with religious architecture one finds signs of the everyday religious life of the people: the painting of a scorpion image on the outer wall of a house to ward off demons [plate 126], or the construction of a trap for demons, richly decorated and extravagantly created from a ram’s skull,
a bundle of straw, several cross hairs and feather bundles. Painted wood tablets hidden in the straw lure in the demons, who then become hopelessly entangled in its strings [plate 124]. A series of photographs documenting the 1939 New Year's festival in Lhasa is particularly interesting: the parade of high lamas in their festive robes cut from Chinese fabrics, marchers in armaments that date back to the Mongolian wars of the thirteenth century and testify to the influence of Iranian armaments - chain mail with breastplate [plate 103]. The expedition was able to acquire a complete set of armaments, which became a part of the collection of the Munich museum.

A rare photograph of the New Year festival cycle [plate 90] shows two wrestlers who were part of larger games and competitive sports that included riding, archery, rifle marksmanship, and running. The rationale behind such ritualized competition was the belief that the power of success was concentrated in the winners and thus the New Year would be blessed with success as well. Another photograph of the same wrestling match shows a wrestler in the pose of an "eagle dance," also typical for wrestlers at the traditional Mongolian Naadam festival (among the three fields of male competition: riding, archery, and wrestling). Neither Schäfer nor Beger explained these wrestlers, rather it was Richardson who stated: "They are men from the Dalai Lama's body guard regiment. They wear small loin cloths and are rather small and wiry. The bouts are rather small and spiritless and as soon there is a fall their seconds hurry to cover them in their cloaks.... Later I heard that the duty is rather unpopular and the participants feel shame because it is deemed improper to appear naked or nearly so in front of one's superior." We have the German expedition to thank for this extensive documentation of the New Year's festival in Lhasa, which resulted in Ernst Schäfer's book with the appropriate title of Festival of the White Veils.

A comparison of images gathered by travelers to Tibet in the 1930s and 1940s, now available in numerous publications, shows a consistent range of motifs (apart from the "diplomatic photography" of the Basil
Gould mission): Lhasa with the Potala, *chörten*, yak-hide boats, monks, women in decorative costumes and valuable jewelry, religious and secular dignitaries in fine robes, Golok “robbers,” pilgrims and beggars, masked dancers, criminals, the Dalai Lama or the regent. The observer “expects” such evidence as an indication that the author/photographer was really “there.” In addition to the main motifs mentioned, there might be unexpected peculiarities such as ice-skating²² or soccer matches in front of the gates of Lhasa.²¹

Some people and places were repeatedly photographed by Western visitors during the 1930s and 1940s. The Dalai Lama, the regent, and government representatives appear again and again in the “diplomatic” photographs. Also popular were members of Tibet’s leading families, such as the gray eminence Tsarong, the Phalha family, and Jigme Taring, who for personal reasons maintained contacts with the foreigners. A comparison of religious festivals and parades – photographed steadily through the years – would be useful in documenting change. The Schäfer expedition photographs rise above the norm of common motifs because of the many additional subjects dealing with Tibetan daily life, which are of particular significance for documentation and research into Tibet’s culture.

“Silent and unreliable” – that is how historic photographs present themselves to the viewer at first glance. But images of events, procedures, and processes can be described and analyzed, objects can be named and identified, perhaps from a museum’s collection, people can be provided with biographies. So the reliability of photographs is subject to proof, that is, the historical context, the self-representation of the photographers in accompanying texts, and comparisons with other photographs. These all contribute to understanding. The photographs from the Schäfer expedition can be made to speak, and they are indeed reliable sources for ethnology.
When the five-man Schäfer expedition team entered Tibet in 1938, they were by no means the first foreigners to do so. They had been preceded by citizens of various nations, including Italians, French, Russians, Japanese, Americans, and perhaps most significantly, by the British. From the pioneering journey of George Bogle in the eighteenth century, the British had been making concerted efforts to establish diplomatic and trade links with Tibet, efforts that continued in the 1930s. Due to the repeated forays made into Tibetan territory by Britons (operating in both official and unofficial capacities) and the advantages of their position as colonial rulers of India, the British were undoubtedly the most powerful of the European nations in the competition to gain access to Tibet. In fact, the Schäfer team arrived less than two years after the last major contingent of British visitors (under Basil Gould) had left Lhasa. In the following years the British continued to regard themselves as gatekeepers to the “Forbidden Land” and, as Isrun Engelhardt has shown, they explicitly sought to control the activities of the Schäfer expedition.¹
In considering the photographic documentation produced by British and German missions to Tibet in the 1930s, it must be stated from the outset that a degree of rivalry among European nations had been a common feature of international exploration and scientific expeditions throughout the colonial period. In the rush to salvage the remnants of traditional cultures around the world, anthropologists and museum curators around Europe had amassed vast amounts of material to be housed in national and provincial museums. Such collections acted as a resource for research and a source of pride for individual states. From the mid-nineteenth century both the Germans and the British had been extremely active in this kind of collecting, but by the 1930s the accumulation of photographs was beginning to supersede the drive to acquire artefacts. Improvements in camera manufacture and film processing made the production of photographs significantly easier than it had been in the past, and many adopted the view that the verisimilitude of the photograph could perform the task of representing cultures just as effectively as three-dimensional things. The photographic object had the additional merit of being small and comparatively easy to transport back to the centers of empire in Europe. This helps to explain the extraordinarily large numbers of photographs produced in Tibet in the 1930s. As Ernst Schäfer announced in a lecture about the results of his expedition at the Himalaya Club Calcutta on 29 July 1939: “More than 20,000 good black and white still pictures of land, people, animals, plants etc. were taken and in addition to this, about 2,000 colored still pictures. About 40,000 ft. of moving pictures, of which more than 90 per cent came out well, were taken, and in addition to this, about 4,000 ft. of color moving picture film.”

The fact that photography had been attempted in the Himalayas and Tibet even before the emergence of film negatives and lightweight cameras is testimony to its inextricable connection with the politics of European encounters with Tibet. Despite the technical and logistical complexities involved, British visitors to the country during the colonial period placed a high priority on the creation of a photographic record of Tibet. L. Austine
Waddell and John Claude White, for example, took hundreds of glass plate negatives during the Younghusband Mission in 1903–4. In his many publications, Sir Charles Bell reproduced some of the hundreds of images from the collection he made while serving in the Indian Colonial Service as political officer for Sikkim, Bhutan, and Tibet intermittently between 1908 and 1921. Over the course of his long career in government service in similar areas, Hugh Richardson accumulated more than two thousand photographs. Many of them are featured in his book, *Ceremonies of the Lhasa Year*, and demonstrate his sense of the value of the photograph in documenting Tibetan cultural activity. Public awareness of Tibet (as mediated through the photographic record) was dominated in the first half of the twentieth century by images produced and controlled by elite figures in the British colonial service. When reproduced in books, lectures, newspapers, and other formats, the photographs made by some of the key players in Anglo-Tibetan relations created a particular kind of vision of what Tibet was: a vision that, as I have argued elsewhere, was framed by diplomatic and social conventions. Comparing the photographs assembled during the Schäfer expedition (1938–39) – an intentionally scientific exercise – with those of the Gould Mission (1936–37) – a primarily diplomatic undertaking – allows us to question the extent to which these images can be defined as “ethnographic.” This is an important question – both because the legitimacy of the Schäfer expedition is predicated (in part) on its anthropological objectives and because of a wider, ongoing debate about what constitutes “the ethnographic” in visual anthropology and in museums.

British colonial officers such as Bell and Richardson were heirs to a set of practices already well established by the end of the nineteenth century, in which the lives of colonial subjects had been meticulously documented, classified, and taxonomized. Within this epistemological project, photography had rapidly emerged as an extremely effective archival technology. For example, *The People of India* project (begun in the late nineteenth century and published in 1908), led by Herbert Risley, was designed to document the inhabitants of the subcontinent according to ethnic types, caste group-
ings, and vocation, with illustrations provided in the form of photographs. At the same time, anthropologists were devising ways of studying racial variation. In this, J.H. Lamprey's famous grid (1869) gave the process the gloss of scientific method by providing a control against which to measure anatomical differences when photographing subjects in a studio. Such exercises were highly influential in both academic and administrative circles; the results of these projects were published and widely disseminated. It therefore seems unlikely that a colonial officer in the early twentieth century could have been unaware of them. In fact I would argue that the culture of British colonialism should be thought of as one marked by high degrees of inter-visuality, that is, the cross-fertilization and referencing of visual codes was a crucial feature of its modernity.

Traces of the aesthetic of late nineteenth century anthropological photography certainly appear in Charles Bell's portraits of Tibetans, particularly in the formality and frontality of their composition, as demonstrated in the illustration of a Nakpa priest which Bell published in *The Religion of Tibet* (1931) [facing page]. An ethnological intent is also evident, in the sense that Bell clearly sought to document the different "types" of Tibetans he encountered and to record some of the key events that occurred, for example during his visit to Lhasa in 1920–21. Recent research at the Pitt Rivers Museum has shed important new light on the contexts in which Bell's images were actually produced and has revealed that photographs made on the occasion of what Bell called "his Ache Lhamo" (a Tibetan opera) were actually taken by his Sikkimese assistant, Rapten Lepcha. This point articulates the tension between the diplomatic and the ethnographic modes of photography in the colonial era. As a result of his role as a diplomat, Charles Bell's knowledge of Tibet was undoubtedly extensive and of comparable depth to that of an anthropologist: he enjoyed a long-term connection to Tibetan communities, had a strong proficiency in the language, and made meticulous notes on all kinds of details of Tibetan culture which he later incorporated into a number of serious but accessible publications. His photographic collection reflects this specialist knowledge and
Brītisn un German Photoγrahyy in the 1930s
therefore is of unquestionable ethnographic value for those who consult it, but ultimately Bell’s role as British representative also prevented him from becoming a true “participant observer.” For example, on the occasion of the Ache Lhamo in Lhasa, etiquette and status dictated that Bell should sit with Tibetan dignitaries to watch the performance he had commissioned, while Rapten moved freely within the crowds to produce the visual ethnography of the event [facing page, top]. We can therefore perhaps best describe Bell and his photographs as ethnographically inclined but somewhat circumscribed by diplomatic protocol. A similar argument can be made in the case of Hugh Richardson who, among the British “frontier cadres” (McKay), spent the most time in Tibet. Again, his involvement with the country was made possible by his role within the colonial infrastructure, a position that enabled him to learn Tibetan and develop close ties with powerful figures in Tibetan affairs. Like many colonial servants, he developed a passionate interest in the history and culture of the people with whom he worked, and some of them even became close friends. The relaxed nature of those relationships is evident in photographs such as the portrait of his friend Sumdowa on a swing [facing page, bottom]. Richardson (unlike Bell) was able to travel extensively beyond the Tibetan capital and photographed monastic and other historical sites to supplement his research on Tibetan history. In its documentation of culturally significant persons and places, his photographic collection is hugely important, but as an ethnographic record it reflects the elite circles in which he moved. The constraining effect of the diplomat’s role means that his images reveal very little about the daily lives of ordinary Tibetans and could therefore be said to have greater value as a resource for historians and archaeologists than for anthropologists.

This of course is assuming a particular definition of what constitutes the ethnographic in a photograph and prioritizes image content over the many other ways in which photographs can be interpreted and used. As Elizabeth Edwards notes: “The defining essence of an anthropological photograph is not the subject matter as such, but the consumer’s classification of that knowledge or ‘reality’ which the photograph appears to convey.
Sumdowa on a swing (1944–49).
Photographer: Hugh Richardson.
Pitt Rivers Museum
2001.59.12.23.1

Bell attends 'his Ache Lhamo' with Tibetan dignitaries (1920).
Photographer: Rapten Lepcha,
Material can move in and out of the anthropological sphere and photographs which were not created with anthropological intent or specifically informed by ethnographic understanding may nevertheless be appropriated to anthropological ends." This raises the vital issue of consumption – or rather the complex matter of the relationship between the intentions of photographers and the interpretive framework in which their work is received by viewers. This factor may help to answer our question about the ethnographic nature (or otherwise) of photographs made in Tibet in the 1930s.

For British photographers from the turn of the twentieth century onwards, photographs undoubtedly played a significant part in communication within diplomatic networks. Colonial officers, such as Bell or later Basil Gould, capitalized on their capacity to act as visual evidence within political debates about the status of Tibet as a sovereign territory. The visual record was crucial in presenting the case to their superiors in government and colonial administration, since it could act as proof of the distinctiveness of Tibetan culture vis-à-vis China. However, this point only reiterates our definitional problem, as anthropological photographs had been used since the nineteenth century for precisely this kind of purpose, that is, for representing the cultural distinctiveness and collective identity of distant "others" back to the centers of Empire. That both the makers and consumers of photographs shared a sense of this visual history ensured that in the 1920s and 30s the ethnographic mode was recognized as an authoritative format for communicating ideas about non-Western places and peoples. Hence the ways in which photographs of Tibet were circulated by Bell, Gould, and others tapped into this collective knowledge and the famed reproducibility of images enabled them to reach all kinds of audiences, whether civil servants in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or members of the general public. The "ethnographic" might therefore be described as a particularly efficient mode of representing cultural difference that could be strategically deployed in diplomatic circles. However, it is only one of a number of such modes, and if we examine the entire collection of photographs made during a particular expedition or those
Khampa Woman in Lhasa (1937).
Photographer: Frederick Spencer Chapman, Pitt Rivers Museum
1998.131.290
of an individual photographer, it quickly becomes apparent that there are frequent slippages between them. For example, in 1936, Frederick Spencer Chapman photographed a woman from Kham in the style of anonymous ethnological types [previous page], but the majority of his pictures feature named individuals and key players in the social world encountered by the British in Lhasa. These subjects are treated according to a rather different style of visual engagement on the part of the photographer (see below).  

**GOULD MISSION 1936–1937**

It is to the mission in which Chapman operated that we must now turn, as the Gould Mission to Tibet provides the most relevant and revealing point of comparison between British and German approaches to photography in Tibet in the 1930s. A discussion of the expeditions led by Basil Gould and Ernst Schäfer will further illuminate the question of “ethnographic” versus “diplomatic” photography. Although their stated aims, political affiliations, and intentions may have been markedly different, the Gould and Schäfer missions were actually similar in certain key respects. Significantly, both missions consisted of a team of men, most (if not all) of whom were equipped with cameras. Among Gould’s officers, Chapman, Nepean, Neame, and Richardson all took photographs, and Gould himself used a cine camera. Only telegrapher Dagg and mission doctor Morgan seem to have been the exceptions in the British party. Working as a team was also a key feature of the German endeavor, and both groups knew that material accumulated by individuals (such as photographs) would ultimately be designated as the property of the mission leader or even the sponsor of the mission, which in Gould’s case was the British Government. This concept of collective ownership again has its roots in the scientific disciplines and the kinds of nineteenth century collecting projects mentioned earlier. For the British, a pioneering example of such a collaborative project with an overtly anthropological agenda had been the 1898 Torres Strait expedition led by A.C. Haddon from Cambridge and in which natural scientists and
ethnologists joined forces to record and collect data. Given the degree to which some of the methodology (if not the message) of anthropology remained entangled in the colonial project well into the twentieth century, it is no surprise that Gould's team collected specimens for research just as the Schäfer expedition did.\textsuperscript{10} Hence, alongside his duties as Mission secretary, Chapman collected samples of 600 species of Tibetan flora, conducted ornithological observations, and made meteorological measurements. Though the Schäfer mission took this kind of activity to another level and acquired hundreds of specimens of all kinds (including 2,000 artefacts), the idea of using empirical methods to explore in the "laboratory of mankind" was by no means unique to them.

Because the Gould Mission only predated Schäfer by two years, the Tibet (and especially the Lhasa) they visited was not hugely changed, and many of the same personalities and events recur in their photographs. Both teams met many of the same people and certain powerful figures in Tibetan religion and politics appear in the visual record of each mission, such as members of the Taring family, the Nechung oracle, the regent of Tibet (Reting), and the richest man in the country, Dasang Damdul Tsarong. Tibetans such as these clearly assisted both the British and the Germans in their activities in Lhasa and thus indirectly facilitated their access to the city. However, the British in some sense also mediated this access for the Germans, through a group of Anglophile Tibetans – the so-called 'Rugby boys' – Kyibu, Ringang and Möndro. In 1913, the three had been sent to an elite private school at Rugby in England under the patronage of the thirteenth Dalai Lama and Charles Bell. By the 1930s they were grown men employed by the Tibetan government who had the advantage (from a foreigner's point of view) of speaking English. The many photographs of these men in the Schäfer archive suggest that communication in this shared language meant that their relationships were both useful and cordial. Möndro, for example, accompanied Schäfer to Shigatse and other places outside Lhasa, acting as a kind of guide [plate 79]. Thus, despite Richardson's attempts to block their visit,\textsuperscript{11} the British also paved the way
for the Germans and created an inter-cultural space of collaboration into which the Germans could readily step. Whether knowingly or not, the Schäfer team emulated some of the tactics that had been established by the British in order to ease their interactions with Tibetans. For example, the provision of medical facilities had been a feature of the Gould Mission, when Dr. Morgan treated many patients for common conditions afflicting the Lhasa population, such as syphilis and cataracts. As we saw in the case of Charles Bell and Rabten Lepcha, the use of Sikkimese staff as translators, guides, and even photographers had been the norm for the British from the first decades of the century.

The presence of the British in Lhasa had also prepared the Tibetans for their encounters with other foreigners in many culturally salient ways, including a conscious control of the locations and subjects that might be photographed. By the 1930s, the Tibetans had methods for determining where foreign visitors should be positioned – both in the physical and social senses. Hence, the images of Losar (New Year) ceremonies at the Jokhang produced by Bruno Beger in 1939 are almost identical to those made by Chapman in 1937 or Richardson in the 1940s, precisely because foreigners were instructed to sit on a balcony reserved for them when photographing such a significant event [facing page]. The fact that both Chapman and Schäfer produced images of the ragyapa community who lived on the outskirts of Lhasa due to their role as disposers of corpses, also suggests that the itinerary for photographic encounters in and around Lhasa followed a somewhat proscribed route. By this period, high-ranking Tibetans had also become entirely accustomed to the photographic attentions of foreigners, as a comparison between the Gould and Schäfer mission photographs reveals.

**THE SCHÄFER EXPEDITION 1938–39**

Instead of the military men and diplomats who had accompanied Gould, Schäfer's expedition was composed of natural and social scientists. They
each had specific roles in terms of the collection of data and materials, in addition to which they were all equipped with cameras. The sheer volume of photographs produced by them suggests that visual documentation was deemed vital to the expedition’s success and that, at least in terms of quantity, the photographs were intended to provide an ethnographic record. If we are to define the ethnographic in terms of the professional background of the maker of an image, then the presence of a trained anthropologist within the Schäfer team (in the person of Bruno Beger) also confirms this. Beger undoubtedly sought out subjects of particular interest to other anthropologists of the period, as we see in the visual cataloging of ethnic types in Sikkim for example. In his search for the distinctive particularities of Tibetan culture, he succeeded in recording some activities that had escaped the notice of previous European visitors, as is revealed in his pictures of wrestling competitions and those of artisans and laborers. His portrait of a smiling woman carrying rocks to a construction site, for example, is rare in capturing a glimpse of low class women’s work in Tibet in the 1930s [plate 70]. In all this, Beger’s photographs fulfill a requirement that the “ethnographic” should give particular emphasis to the popular, the non-elite, and the everyday aspects of life in a particular community.

However, the overall impression given by many of the photographs in the Schäfer expedition collection does not tally so readily with this characterization. As noted above, the subject matter of pictures taken by other members of the team (including Schäfer himself) is frequently similar to those of the Gould mission and also reflects a preoccupation with the elite social world of Lhasa. The same key figures in Tibetan politics and religion are photographed intensively and repeatedly, with portraits of the Lhasa nobility, members of the Tibetan government, teachers, and leaders of Tibetan Buddhism all recurring. But there is a noticeable shift in the atmosphere of the Schäfer mission photographs, particularly in those taken by the expedition leader himself. These are by no means stilted views of “ethnic” subjects, but rather documents of people who seem to be at ease, both with the camera as a recording device and the photographer himself.
This relaxed atmosphere distinguishes the Schäfer expedition photographs from Chapman's portraits, where the subject is often posed seated and appears to be hyperconscious of the process in which he or she is participating. Compare, for example, Chapman's and Schäfer's views of the prime minister of Tibet, Langdun [overleaf and plate 47]. Chapman's image has the feel of studio photography, while Schäfer's is noticeably more casual in tone and composition. Both Chapman and Schäfer were afforded the opportunity to photograph the regent, Reting Rinpoche, at his house on the outskirts of Lhasa, where multiple portraits were made. Again, the Schäfer pictures are remarkably candid. Similar comments could be made about many others, but the differences should not solely be explained on the basis of the “ethnographic” intent of the photographer. Instead, I would suggest that variations in photographic style are more likely to be the result of aesthetic concerns, the photographer's consciousness of the likely destination of his work, and the impact of different photographic technologies.

Members of the Schäfer team used a particular type of camera in Tibet that had revolutionized photography when it first came on the market in Germany in 1925. The Leica was light, easy to use, and did not require complex flash attachments or other accoutrements to get decent results. All this enabled the photographer to get physically closer to his subjects and to make more intimate pictures. Hence, many of Schäfer's portraits are half-length and taken in a kind of documentary style in which the subject is actively engaged in an activity other than just posing for the camera. This photographic intimacy could be a reflection of the jovial atmosphere that apparently surrounded the Schäfer team as they liaised with Tibetans. As Engelhardt (2004) recounts, they were notoriously casual in their clothing and personal grooming, often sported Tibetan dress, and grew their beards long, whereas the British quite literally stood on ceremony. (Gould, for example, wore full formal dress for his evening meals throughout the duration of his time in Tibet, even in the absence of guests.) Since they were not officially representing their government, there was less need for the German team to make a diplomatic impression and they were certainly
Prime Minister Langdun and family (1937).
Photographer: Frederick Spencer Chapman, Pitt Rivers Museum
1998.131.437
not as keen to mirror the social norms and hierarchies of elite Tibetans as the British. However, it is precisely this social/diplomatic aspect that heavily influenced the mode of British photography in this period. The rather static atmosphere of Chapman's portraits of Tibetans can partly be explained by the conditions in which he made them - a “sitting” for him was time consuming and laborious, as he frequently operated several large cameras at once, mounted on tripods. The fact that he had briefly studied fine art prior to taking up photography also meant that his compositions were influenced by the conventions of Western portrait and landscape painting; hence his subjects were arranged before a backdrop, often the whitewashed wall of his outdoor studio at the Mission house, the Dekyi Lingka. But it is also due to his role as a “court photographer” to high class Tibetans, producing pictures that could be used in their homes as markers of social capital and as emblems of their engagement with European-derived modernity. Meanwhile, the same pictures were destined for other purposes, such as the official Mission Diary (prepared by Chapman), presentations to the British government in Calcutta and London (delivered by Gould), and for viewing by the general public in books, articles, and lectures by various members of the Gould mission on their return from Tibet.

CONCLUSIONS

For many, the key determinant of what constitutes “the ethnographic” is based on the theory and methodology of the post-Malinowskian era, when long-term participant observation coupled with excellent language skills became the entry qualifications for a professional anthropologist. According to this definition, the ethnographic character of photography is therefore dependent on the amount of time spent in a location and the quality of the encounter with a community. Through a strange quirk of fate, the Schäfer and Gould missions managed to spend almost the same amount of time in Tibet (that is, six months) and both established a degree of rapport with the Tibetans, though it was always inflected with the politics of inter-cultural
encounters. Though Gould spoke some Tibetan, others in the British team did not and none of the Germans had this skill. So it could be said that neither of their efforts was truly anthropological in the strict sense of the term, even if the photographic results can be interpreted retrospectively as ethnographic. This brings us back to the question of reception and interpretation. The most dramatic contrasts between the two teams concern the number of images produced: the Schäfer expedition members took far more photographs (some 17,000 compared to around 2,000) and double the quantity of cine film (44,000 feet shot by Krause and only 22,000 feet by Chapman). The other radical difference concerns the destination and use of the photographs. We can reconstruct what happened to the Gould photographs (in publications and official reports) and note their diplomatic role, but a fair appraisal of the ethnographic effectiveness of the Schäfer material is precluded by the impact of political events. Despite his success in accumulating huge amounts of photo-documentation of Tibet, Schäfer had to suffer the consequences of arriving back in Europe at the outbreak of World War II. In 1939 and later, he and his team were banned again and again from publishing their results or giving lectures about the expedition; political sensitivity about their activities ever since has meant that 17,000 images have remained in store, unreproduced and unanalyzed. The present volume indicates that the process of assessing the anthropological and scientific value of this enormous archive is only just beginning and that the images remain one of the most important untapped resources for the visual history of Tibet, whether or not we conclude that they are truly ethnographic.
The Goloks through Western Eyes: Fascination and Horror

Bianca Horlemann

The most horrific stories are told not only about the unfailing courage of the Ngoloks [Goloks] but also about their cruelty. Of all the tribes of Tibet, they are said to have developed the most ingenious methods of dispatching their victims. Chopping off hands and cleaving skulls are small matters, best left to others. But sewing them up in fresh yak skins and letting them roast in the sun – disemboweling while still alive ... those are the methods most favored in Ngolok country.¹

But the Ngoloks are not only the most cruel and barbaric of all Tibetan marauding tribes, they are also the most courageous and feared, who ... descend upon peaceful nomadic settlements and kill everything within reach of their five-meter long spears. At any time of year, the Ngoloks ... may undertake major robbing expeditions ... they are a true scourge of God, a horror and the embodiment of everything dreaded by peaceful nomads.²

Ernst Schäfer

The Golok Tibetans and their territory have held a powerful attraction to Western explorers and adventurers since the end of the 19th century. Whereas Tibetans in general have been perceived
in overwhelmingly positives terms as strict Buddhists, living in a peaceful Shangri-La, the Tibetan Goloks have been seen quite differently. Their territory, which is still largely inaccessible to foreign travelers today, has been regarded as the “Wild East” of the Tibetan highlands, a place where neither the Tibetan government in Lhasa nor Chinese political or military influence reached before the twentieth century.

In 1923, the British explorer George Pereira assumed that the Golok territory was home to the highest mountain in the world, the Amnye Machen, but at 6,282 m above sea level it is significantly lower than Mount Everest. Yet it proved extremely difficult to verify Pereira’s theory because the Goloks made every effort to prevent outsiders from penetrating into their territory, regardless of their motives. Most researchers and adventurers therefore failed in their efforts when they tried to approach the Golok tribes or Amnye Machen, with some even losing their lives in the process.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find the Goloks described in so many reports in terms similar to those of Ernst Schäfer. For instance, the American botanist Joseph Rock, who was one of very few researchers to actually get fairly close to Amnye Machen, writes in 1926:

*Although murder was said to be outlawed within the sanctuary of the Am-nye Ma-chhen the Go-log attack anyone approaching the region west of the Yellow River. They acknowledge no one’s authority except that of their chiefs.... They enjoy attacking anyone, especially foreigners who penetrate their mountain fastness. They have always been thus, and will probably remain so; the struggle for existence has left its mark on the wild, coarse faces, which are never brightened by a smile. Their life is spent on horseback, always ready for battle and even among themselves they squabble to the point of combat. They are a marauding fraternity, going often six hundred strong on robbing expeditions, making the caravan roads west of the Am-nye Ma-chhen unsafe....*
They bring terror to the hearts of all their neighbors and travelers. Their arrogance expresses itself in many ways; they are unrestrained and are accustomed to measure their strength in terms of numbers. They even ask the blessing of lamas before going on robbing expeditions.\

Furthermore, we have the following account from the two French missionaries Évariste Huc and Joseph Gabet who traveled along the caravan route from Xining to Lhasa between 1844 and 1846:

The Kolos [Goloks] never quit these abodes except to scour the desert on a mission of pillage and devastation ... It is said that these brigands are in the revolting habit of eating the hearts of their prisoners, in order to fortify their own courage; but, for that matter, there is no monstrous practice which the Mongols of the Koukou-Noor do not unhesitatingly attribute to these people.

How did the Goloks acquire this image, and to what extent is it accurate?

The various nomadic groups included in the term "Golok" live in an area of northeastern Tibet roughly the size of Austria. Today, the term Golok also refers to a Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture that is administratively part of the Chinese province of Qinghai. Golok, at an average altitude of 3,500-4,500 m above sea level, is marked by a particularly harsh climate that makes agriculture practically impossible. There are, however, lush grasslands in many areas that are well-suited for cattle breeding, and most of the Goloks still earn their living as nomadic pastoralists. Marauding, formerly widespread throughout all of Eastern Tibet, used to be a significant supplementary source of income when animal husbandry and occasional trading with Tibetan and Chinese neighbors proved insufficient.

In the past, Western travelers rarely penetrated into Golok territory much beyond its outer edges. Most approached the territory through the
caravan route from Xining to Jyekundo, which passed near the northwestern corner of Golok territory. Some, like the French explorers André Guibaut and Louis Liotard, as well as Schäfer, tried to enter from the south or southwest. In contrast, Joseph Rock managed to enter the southeastern edge of Golok territory, starting from Ragya Gonpa. In addition to the infamous raids, there were also occasional peaceful contacts with the Goloks, as Guibaut\(^8\) reports:

\[\text{It was an example of the contradictory nature of this extraordinary people, rough and yet gentle. Thus ended the story of my life with the Ngolos [Goloks], this people who so strangely combined brutality with proofs of kindliness and good nature.}\]  

Rock also remarks on the Goloks:

\[\text{Thus ended our first visit to a Go-log camp. They are certainly a wild and wooly [sic] lot, but they were not unfriendly.}\]  

Western reports about the Goloks generally came from second- or third-hand sources which primarily reflected Tibetan and Chinese prejudices and fears of the Goloks. For example, the following statements derive from Tibetan informants:

\[\text{A Tibetan nomad from the Aba region, not far from the Golok area, whose tribe had just been victim to an attempted, but unsuccessful raid by some Goloks, mentioned: "It is told that the Goloks are strangely fierce. They can see at night like wild animals and they eat their meat without cooking it."}\]  

A Tibetan merchant remarked that "... the Kolo [Goloks] are robbers, but they have lofty and generous souls ..."\(^\text{12}\), and a neighbor to the southwest
of the Goloks writes that “... in the distant ages, one of the Dalai-Lamas had cursed them [i. e., the Goloks].”

For the first half of the 20th century, the Hui warlord Ma Qi and his clan controlled the land to the east of Golok territory. With their attempts to collect taxes and exploit mineral resources, such as gold deposits in Amnye Machen, these warlords were repeatedly involved in military conflict with the Goloks from 1917 into the 1940s. We find, among others, these remarks by Chinese Muslims:

... Tibetans will carefully slit open a living man’s abdomen, and put their hand inside to squeeze his heart. And after the Tibetans would come the Ngoloks (or Golaks) ... devils incarnate.

... [The Goloks] strangle their captives with rawhides, behead, drown, cut throats, slice bodies into small pieces.... They shoot, stone to death, burn and blind their victims.

Of course the Goloks’ self-perception stands in sharp contrast to these reports. They view themselves as the only truly free and independent people, bound solely by a strict code of honor:

You cannot compare us N’goloks with other people. You ... obey the laws of strangers, the laws of the Dalai Lama, of China, and of any of your petty chiefs. You are afraid of everyone; to escape punishment you obey everyone. And the result is that you are afraid of everything. And not only you, but your fathers and grandfathers were the same. We N’goloks, on the other hand, have from time immemorial obeyed none but our own laws, none but our own convictions. A N’golok is born with the knowledge of his freedom.... Almost in his mother’s womb he learns to handle arms. His forebears were warriors – were brave fearless men.... This is why we have ever been free as now, and are the slaves of none - neither of
Bogdokhan, nor the Dalai Lama. Our tribe is the most respected and mighty in Tibet, and we rightly look down with contempt on both Chinaman and Tibetan.¹⁷

The following Golok folk song from Golok Serthar has been recorded by the Tibetan scholar Namkhai Norbu, who traveled in the area in 1951:

_I rebel (Nolok) against those up there, I rebel against Tibet, / I rebel! / Against the orders of the Dharma King of Tibet I rebel! / I rebel and the sky is with me. / The blue sky is with the rebellion! / I rebel against those down there, I rebel, / against China I rebel! / Against the Chinese government's laws I rebel! / ... I rebel, it's meat I like! / I, boy, am with the rebellion._⁸

At the same time the Goloks took great care to maintain their image as robbers, apparently as a deterrent to outsiders. For example, in 1900 the Russian explorer Kozloff reports of a meeting with a few Goloks:

_When we expressed a desire to proceed along the valley of the Yellow river, and to become personally acquainted with the mode of living of these independent Tibetans, they expressed the greatest displeasure, and endeavored to change the conversation._¹⁹

A short time later, the same Goloks gave the following covert warning:

_"Although your numbers are few," said one of them, "no one insults you; your valuable rifle will always protect you. The Ngoloks can only get the better of you by stratagem and cunning. For instance, having got into your camp in the guise of merchants selling eatables, with a party of thirty men or so, and having, at a given signal, suddenly drawn our swords and fallen upon you, we could kill you all..."_
in a couple of minutes. You cannot always wear your arms when out in the open valley.\textsuperscript{20}

We read similar reports from the American adventurer Leonard Clark, who penetrated Golok territory in 1949 with a Chinese-Muslim reconnaissance group:

\textit{Such was our first introduction to Ngoloks living within the range: these two specimens smiled and at the same time roughly warned us to get the hell back into the west, and to lose no time about it, waving their rifles and swords under our seventeen noses to emphasize their demands.}\textsuperscript{21}

The Goloks also often justified their unwillingness to allow outsiders into their territory with the argument that they could not provide the necessary protection.\textsuperscript{22} This argument that cannot be rejected out of hand because individual Golok tribes were often at odds with one another and even engaged in blood feuds.

For Ernst Schäfer, the Goloks also held an enormous attraction, which derived both from the Goloks’ assumed savagery and from the inaccessibility of their territory. Rumors at that time about Amnye Machen being higher than Mount Everest also served to arouse his curiosity:

\textit{The next few days in Djugomba were devoted to preparations for the long-planned venture to the mountain of mountains, the legendary Amni-Matschin, in the land of the marauding Ngoloks....}

\textit{There was a unique story behind our Amni-Matschin: all explorers who found themselves in its vicinity were attacked, robbed or murdered by the Ngoloks. If there is anything at all in the world that is holy to these wild Ngoloks, whose Amazon women are said to be as courageous in battle as their fearless men, then it is this mountain that rises like a threatening ogre turned to ice in the}
middle of the land where they live. Amni-Matschin is the god of the Ngoloks, it is their refuge and their protector. That is why they jealously guard it and strike down all outsiders, whether Tibetan, Mongol, Chinese, or white, before they will yield their greatest holy shrine to the ambitions of fanatic scientists....

If they [the Goloks] were not there, Amni-Matschin would not be nearly as appealing to us and there would not be such a "no man's land" – the completely empty steppes that surround the mountain and the land of the Goloks like an unapproachable island shut off from the rest of the world.23

In fact, Schäfer also failed to enter the heart of Golok territory. His above-mentioned attempt to reach Amnye Machen did not succeed because, according to Schäfer, the Tibetan caravan leader-cum-scout was unwilling to continue after coming within 60–80 km of the legendary mountain. Thus the expedition team had to return.24 Schäfer’s subsequent expedition of 1938-1939 – originally planned primarily to explore Golok territory – did not achieve its objective due to political turmoil in the Sino-Tibetan borderland.25

Along with the appalling descriptions of the Goloks, however, we also find in Schäfer’s writing the image of the "noble savage", not unlike the depiction of the Indian chief Chingachgook in James Fenimore Cooper’s The Leatherstocking Tales.26 Like the other German members of the expedition, Schäfer was often impressed by the outward appearance and dignity of the Goloks:

A giant of a figure, the Ngolok prince suddenly stood at the threshold. A man in his prime, about forty-five years old, with an aquiline nose, sharply etched and lively facial features, he wore a large flashing bangle of pure gold with inlaid turquoise in his left ear. The singular stranger was dressed in snow-white riding pants tight around his muscular thighs, together with gleaming riding
boots of European make, a khaki-colored shirt, and a long flowing brown military coat over it. Without uttering a greeting, the Ngolok general strode proudly and solemnly into the middle of the room....

Beger also commented while at the Golok camp in Lhasa:

On the morning of March 2nd, many patients were waiting once again.... Three Ngoloks appealed to me, with their stately form and their good manners. One of them asked for medication for his wife back home in the far northeast of Tibet, something for her eye infections.... He tucked [a tube of Targesin ointment] away with great care, almost solemnly, in the folds of his coat.

When reading Schafer's notes on the Goloks, we encounter many of the clichés typical of the period. However, Schafer's photographs from a Golok pilgrims' camp near Lhasa in early 1939 convey quite a different impression. These images show mainly friendly Golok men and women [plates 73, 76, 78], some even with beaming smiles, full of self-confidence and naturalness. Neither the simplicity of their sheepskin clothing, nor their tousled hair, nor the bare breasts of the young women are a cause for shame. The Goloks' assumed cruelty, indifference, and belligerence are not apparent in these pictures. Instead, these people are more akin to the noble savage mentioned above. Yet again, the written word contradicts the favorable impression of the photographs. In his unpublished diaries, Schafer describes in the following manner the circumstances under which the photographs were taken:

The Ngolok camp, with its white tents, is a world of its own; these wild obstinate creatures with their pretty young wildcat-like wives don't want to be photographed and will even physically attack, they are like their dogs....
Sons of the cold, thick-blooded northeast, dark vultures circling above their colorful tents in the smoky blue haze of yak dung fires, these taut, almost mythical figures do their reputation as professional robbers proud, even here in Lhasa. Although at the moment they are competing with each other in fulfilling their religious obligations and appear to put everything into appeasing the gods, one beholds these big hulking fellows after their daily circumambulation of the holy sites, full of spirit, their long swords close at hand under the belts of their greasy chubas [robes], in large hordes, as if ready to jump, moving about so as to put fear into the citizens ...

So the Ngoloks are the most peaceful of all pilgrims on their way to Lhasa. But as soon as they have left the holy sites to return during months of long marches to their own pasturelands, these wolves of the steppe are in the habit of throwing off their sheep's clothing as they move across the countryside, plundering and robbing like true scourges.32

Tibetan, Chinese, and Western perceptions obviously coincided to solidify the reputation of the Goloks as war-like and cruel, but also as courageous and proud lovers of freedom. Unfortunately, research to date does not suffice either to confirm or reject the details of this image. However, the contradictory nature of the general perception of the Goloks can be further highlighted by two more examples. We have already touched on the rumors about the Goloks that circulated in particular among the Chinese Muslims. In fact, these same Chinese often seem just as cold-blooded and cruel as the following story reveals. Here, the Goloks are not the attackers but the victims:

One time the civil governor succeeded in disarming fourteen Ngolok chiefs by beguiling them with promises and inviting them to a festive dinner. After dining, however, he had them all tied up and beheaded. And years before, the Jekundo Muslims had defeated the
Ngoloks when they laid in wait for the Ngoloks with a two-hundred-man gang in a narrow defile. The victorious Moslems rode back in a spine-chilling procession, the skulls of Ngoloks bouncing up and down on their saddles like horrific little balls.31

The memory of that horrible wrath suffered at the hands of the Ma troops was still fresh among the Ngoloks. Whole tribes had been decimated, women and children slaughtered and a very high ransom demanded.34

To complicate the situation further, the Moslems had rather recently struck the Ngoloks on the far side of their west flank near the Yellow River – the side we were approaching – killing 700 families in a single surprise raid.35

The second example is the myth of the so-called “Golok Queen.” She is supposed to have been an Amazon-like figure who ruled over all the Goloks, with 17 husbands and a bodyguard of 7,000 warriors; she was even said to be an incarnation of the Buddha, a so-called “Living Buddha.” Furthermore, an erotic component had been added to her legend by relating that the “Golok Queen” meditated on the holy Amnye Machen while naked.37

In fact, the “Golok Queen” was not one but two female leaders, mother and daughter, who became fused in later stories. One was Ziji Drölma, who succeeded her father Rinchen Jam at the turn of the 20th century for lack of male issue. Rinchen Jam had been the leader of a branch of the powerful Akyong Gongma tribe and ruled over about 700 Golok tents. The sub-tribe later came to be known as Akyong Wönmotsang, or the “Akyong Tribe with Female Leaders,” which was also later called the Ralo Tribe, a name probably derived from the succeeding male leader, Ralo Dorje. In 1903, Ziji Drölma gave birth to her daughter Lüde, who later (probably in the 1920s) succeeded her mother, since her brother Ralo Dorje was not born until 1915.38
According to Joseph Rock, the Muslim Ma clan army defeated Lüde in 1921 and took her prisoner, but later released her in exchange for ransom money. Supposedly it was General Ma Qi who conferred the title “Golok Queen” on Lüde, hoping to gain more influence with the Goloks. This conferral, however, apparently only led other Golok tribes to regard Lüde as a traitor.\textsuperscript{39} Later Tibetan and Chinese sources indicate that in 1921, Ma Qi captured not Lüde but the mother of the leader of the Akyong Gongma tribe and that Lüde was merely sent to deliver the ransom money.\textsuperscript{40} According to these sources Lüde died in 1935, and thereafter it was once again a male descendant, i.e. her brother Ralo Dorje, who became chief.\textsuperscript{41}

All of these examples confirm that the Goloks are a good example of ethnic stereotyping and prejudice. Tibetan, Chinese, and Western observers all generalized their very partial experiences, thereby dramatizing and distorting the Goloks through superficial knowledge and creating sensational contrasts. The Goloks themselves – consciously or unconsciously – further promoted a distorted image by isolating their territory from all outside influences. This also entailed being treated with respect and fear; the Goloks’ independence from Tibetan and Chinese authority was rarely questioned. It is surprising, however, that the Golok stereotype remains so strong even today and continues to be perpetuated. A Swiss volume of photographs published in 2000, which includes pictures of contemporary Goloks, contains the following:

\begin{quote}
In order to instill terror, it is said that they [the Goloks] used to have the heads of their enemies dangling from their saddles by their hair. Even if we take into account that Orientals love to spin yarns and grossly exaggerate, their [sic] is still enough indescribable cruelty left in their stories that we do not want to go into.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}
Dasang-Tsarong (Phuntsog Rabden) was born at a village named Khakar-Shika near Gyantse, in the Earth-Hare year of the Chinese calendar, corresponding to the year 1888 of the Gregorian calendar. He was the son of an ordinary Tibetan, his father was an arrow-maker by profession. His parents came to Lhasa and sent him to a small school where he studied Tibetan, reading and writing, only for three years. In the Iron-Dog year, corresponding to 1900, Tsarong entered into the service of the late 13th Dalai Lama, Gyalwa Thubten Gyatso, in the capacity of an ordinary menial. No sooner had he entered the service, than the Dalai Lama liked him very much, as he was a very clever young boy. In 1904 (Water-Hare year), owing to certain misunderstandings, war broke out between British Indian Government and the Tibetan Government and his Holiness the late Dalai Lama had to flee towards Sok-Yul (Mongolia) to save his life. Tsarong accompanied His Holiness as servant. Tsarong served His Holiness as cook, bearer etc. and his service was found very useful by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. At the time he was known as Chense-Nangang. Consequently, in 1908 (Earth-Monkey year), His Holiness the Dalai Lama conferred the distinction of Laychen-Ba (an ordinary official,
5th rank) on him, in the small Tibetan Army at Jay-Kubum. In 1909 (Earth-Bird year) the trouble subsided and the Dalai Lama returned back to his capital at Lhasa. Immediately after the Dalai Lama arrived in Lhasa, the Chinese Government sent out soldiers to fight with Tibet and His Holiness the Dalai Lama deputed Tsarong toward the Chinese-Tibetan frontier to defend [against] the Chinese army. His Holiness the Dalai Lama heard of hundreds of Chinese soldiers pouring into Tibet, and thought that it was useless to send Tsarong as he had only a few Tibetans, untrained soldiers with the old Tibetan muzzle loading gun. When Tsarong arrived at a place called Lhatot-Shika he received a letter from His Holiness stating that he should at once return back to Lhasa, with the soldiers, as it was useless to face the huge Chinese army. According to Dalai Lama's order, Tsarong and his small army returned back to Lhasa. On the 3rd day of the 1st month of the Iron-Monkey year (corresponding to 1910), the Chinese army arrived in Lhasa and the Dalai Lama was compelled to flee away again toward India to save his life. Tsarong remained one day behind in order to see that no Chinese immediately can bear [hear?] and come after Dalai Lama's departure. Next morning Tsarong also left Lhasa with 65 untrained Tibetan soldiers, after Dalai Lama and arrived at Chushyol on the 6th day. Immediately after Tsarong left Lhasa, the Chinese knew of the Dalai Lama's absence, and came after them, arriving at Chushyol on the same night Tsarong arrived there. Tsarong and his 65 soldiers took shelter in the Chagsam Gonpa, near the ferry, for the night. At about 3 o'clock at dawn Tsarong heard some noise outside the Gonpa and he slowly peeped through a small window. He saw about 30 Chinese soldiers already arrived at their door and they were talking in Chinese to each other. Tsarong quietly awakened his small troops and went out of the Gonpa out of a window, walked near the river Brahmaputra and hid behind the rocks and big stones standing by the river. It was now about daybreak. Tsarong saw that the Chinese soldiers who came across the river, had made in the night a small wooden boat out of old doors, and wooden almirah, otherwise they couldn't have crossed the river because Tsarong left no skin boat on the other side and
all boats were with Tsarong. The Chinese soldiers who could cross the river could not attack Tsarong's soldiers as they were only a few. By this time day broke and Tsarong saw about 300 more soldiers, in three different rows, marching on the bank of the river. They saw Tsarong and his troops near the river and all on a sudden began to send a rain of bullets towards them from the other side of the river. But Tsarong and his colleagues were hiding behind big rocks, none of them was killed in spite of incessant shower of bullets. Tsarong instructed his troops not to shoot a single bullet at the Chinese till all their bullets were finished, which was near at hand as they were shooting like anything. Unfortunately a mule and one pony ran from behind the rock, being shy of the sound of bullets, and they were killed. From about 6 o'clock to 9 o'clock they heavily fired toward the Tibetan troops. At about 10 o'clock only a few bang of fire could be heard. Then Tsarong wrote a letter to His Holiness stating that now we are beginning to fight with the Chinese soldiers who arrived at Chagsam and advised His Holiness and his companies to go as fast as possible toward India. He also said that "if we win the war is good and if we lose it, it will be very difficult if His Holiness goes slowly on the way." He immediately sent a soldier with this letter with the instruction to go day and night. This messenger caught Dalai Lama’s party at Nagartse, where they had stopped, and according to Tsarong's instruction Dalai Lama and his party left Nagartse instantly for India. On the other hand, at Chushyol the Tibetan soldiers got a good opportunity; the Chinese soldiers' bullets were finished and only a few sound of gun could be heard. At this moment Tsarong ordered his troops to load their guns and fire at the Chinese who were on the bank of the river. This was nice for Tsarong and his soldiers, as the Chinese were standing in open ground and they were shooting from behind big stones. The Chinese had no bullets left as they shot all their ammunition in open air. Consequently the Tibetans could kill almost all the soldiers which were on the other side of the river and a few Chinese left flew away. The Chinese soldiers who were in the Gonpa did not dare to come out in face of the Tibetan army, but in order to threaten the Tibetans the Chinese set the
collection of firewood belonging to the Gonpa on fire. Tsarong also ventured not to go toward the Chinese. He did it in this way, he dismissed his small Tibetan troops and told them to go back to their different houses, and himself (Tsarong) with only 3 servants galloped after the Dalai Lama's party at 3 o'clock in the evening [afternoon]. Tsarong and his 3 servants arrived Nagartse at about 1 am in the night. Dalai Lama and his party had left Nagartse only the other day according to Tsarong’s advice and till his death the Dalai Lama always highly spoke of and appreciated Tsarong’s prompt and wise advice which was so accurately sent. Otherwise Dalai Lama would have been arrested by the Chinese, as the 25 Chinese who crossed the river were coming after Tsarong. Tsarong took a cup or two of tea and being glad of His Holiness’ departure left Nagartse the same night; when Tsarong arrived at Khangma he heard that Dalai Lama’s party had left Phari. Tsarong and his companions left Khangma and arrived Phari in the evening and they were taking some tea when they heard people saying “Chinese coming.” Tsarong and his companions jumped out of a window, went to the neighbouring Dak bungalow and spent the night there. The Chinese made enquiries about Tsarong and his companions but they could not find them. Next morning Tsarong and his companions saddled their ponies and came out of the Dak bungalow when they also saw the 25 soldiers going before them. But Tsarong and his 3 soldiers fearlessly followed them at several yards and the Chinese soldiers, perhaps thinking that the Tibetan soldiers were not running away behind the Dalai Lama, did not [alter] their trot but were following their road straightly. In this way Tsarong and his colleague followed the Chinese till near Dongkar-Gonpa. From there the Chinese met a messenger of theirs with a wire and talking about the telegram they galloped toward Yatung in great hurry. From there Tsarong with only 3 soldiers left the main route and climbed the hill opposite Dongkar-Gonpa and went through the hill jungle. With great difficulty, hard and fast walking through an unknown region, Tsarong and his 3 soldiers crossed the Jelap Pass and bivouacked in a hut. They thought that they were now in heaven and bought something eatable and
passed the night at Jelap in great peace and happiness. By that time the Dalai Lama and his party were already in Kalimpong and Tsarong followed him there. Tsarong arrived Kalimpong safely and Dalai Lama was full of joy to see Tsarong arriving there safely. Tsarong recited the full story to Dalai Lama and there at Kalimpong he (Tsarong) was granted the title of Depon in the year 1911. At Kalimpong news reached that the remaining Chinese soldiers were doing much mischief in Tibet in the Shigatse side. Therefore Dalai Lama ordered Tsarong to go back to Shigatse side and drive away the Chinese forces. Accordingly Tsarong left Kalimpong with a contemptible little army to fight with the well armed Chinese soldiers and arrived at Shang in the Shigatse province. There he (Tsarong) collected 500 raw Tibetans and Lamas, and 200 loitering Khambas, and trained them. In the meanwhile 500 soldiers also arrived from Lhasa and Tsarong had now more than 13 hundred soldiers with him. But almost all the Tibetan soldiers were very poorly armed. And on the other hand the Chinese had modern weapons such as chambered rifles, machine gun and Lewis [orig. Louise] gun. The Chinese army, including the Chinese born in Tibet, were sent out in three installments; 350 Chinese soldiers to Shigatse, 250 Chinese soldiers to Gyantse and 150 soldiers to Thingri. The Tibetan soldiers numbered much more than the Chinese. Tsarong also divided his army in 3 divisions, and 1 division he sent to Shigatse, 1 division to Gyantse and 1 division to Thingri. The army for Shigatse he led himself and they had a very great fight as the Chinese were inside a well protected fort. The Chinese killed numbered only 20, whereas 170 Tibetan soldiers were killed. After fighting for 5 continuous days the Chinese lost their powers and declared peace. Then Tsarong took all arms and ammunition which were in the possession of the Chinese and compromised the trouble with the Chinese officers. Tsarong treated the Chinese very kindly, provided them with rations and sent men to reach [escort] them to India safely. The Chinese officers and soldiers thanked Tsarong very much for this wonderful treatment and this news reached Gyantse where fighting was still going on. There the Chinese soldiers surrendered their arms and
asked for compromise. Now the Gyantse news reached Thingri and the Chinese soldiers willingly ceased fighting and Tsarong took over all their arms and ammunition and sent them down to India the same day. Now the trouble on the Shigatse side was stamped out and Tsarong and his soldiers celebrated the Tibetan New Year in Chāng. There in Chāng he again received orders from the Dalai Lama to go back to Lhasa to repulse all the Chinese soldiers that were in Lhasa. So he left Chāng, with 1,500 Tibetan soldiers almost all of them armed with the guns and rifles taken from the Chinese, for Lhasa in the 2nd month of the Water-Dog year (corresponding to 1912). The Chinese in Lhasa numbered about 5,000, including the Chinese Tibetans. They had 10 pointer and Lewis guns with them. When Tsarong arrived in Lhasa the two Chinese officers, by name Thukin, who came across the river and entered Chagsam-Gompa, and Shay-Kundu, who stood on the other side of the river, came to him and helped him in fighting against the Chinese. Tsarong did not believe at first but at last he found out that they were helping him from their heart. Tsarong says that this is a most peculiar thing the world can hardly believe. Now, after 9 or 10 months of hard fighting, the Chinese were conquered and they declared peace surrendering all their arms to the Tibetan Government. Then Tsarong sent all the Chinese that were in Lhasa by providing them with food, back to China via India. Tibetan guards were also sent to look after them as far as the Tibetan frontier. When all troubles were subsided Dalai Lama came back to Tibet and Tsarong was appointed Dzasag, Commander-in-chief of the whole Tibetan Army. The Dalai Lama made enquiries about the situation during his absence and found Shape Tsarong (the real Tsarong) family with 5 junior officers betraying the policies and secrets of the Tibetan Government to the Chinese authorities prevalent in Tibet. So Dalai Lama ordered some of the Lamas of Sera monastery to arrest Tsarong and the 5 officers, with Tsarong’s only son. and all of them were shot near the tall stone pillar below Potala. After this the Dalai Lama, through the sane views and sound advice of the Chense Nangang (the present Tsarong), ultimately drove the Chinese settlers from Lhasa and peace and powers were restored.
back to Tibet. In recognition of these valuable services His Holiness the late 13th Dalai Lama granted all the estates, both the movable and the immovable, belonging to the real Tsarong (and also his daughter) to the present Tsarong and he was created a noble family of Tibet.

Considering his brave and valuable service, the Tibetan Government promoted him as Shapet (Cabinet minister). For a long time he was acting as Commander-in-chief and Cabinet-minister jointly. In 1930, Tsarong took six months leave and went down to India. During his absence the other cabinet ministers poisoned the ears of the Dalai Lama against Tsarong, saying that as Tsarong has been appointed Commander-in-chief and Shapet, his force of Police has become very powerful. If he is not degraded this moment Tsarong would take away all the powers of His Holiness. His Holiness concurred with the complaints and when Tsarong came back from India, His Holiness confiscated the title of Shapet and Commander-in-chief from him in 1930. Again in 1931 Tsarong was appointed as Commander-in-chief at Trapji. Subsequently in 1933 His Holiness confiscated the commandership without defining any reason. After the demise of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Reting Labrang became Regent and Tsarong was again appointed as commander and in charge of Trabchi (Trapji) office and at present he is known as Dzasag-Tsarong.

At present Tsarong has two wives with one concubine. The first wife is the late Tsarong's daughter, the second wife was the daughter-in-law of late Tsarong (i.e. wife of late Tsarong's son, who was shot with his father) and the third wife is the widow of Horkhang family. The first wife is living with him at Lhasa, the second wife is living at Tsarong near Shigatse and the third wife at Horkhang's family house in the city of Lhasa.
A BRIEF COMMENT ON TSARONG

Tsering Shakya

Tsarong, one of the most remarkable figures in recent Tibetan history, rose from a humble origin to occupy the center stage of Tibetan political life in the first half of the 20th century. His rise and fall have the quality of a Shakespearian drama. We know much about his character and accomplishments from numerous accounts by those who met him, and from the biography written by his eldest son. In this self-narrative, recorded by Rapten Kazi during the Schäfer Expedition of 1938–39, an interesting profile and unique insight of the man comes forth. It is most likely that Rapten Kazi wrote down this short account as narrated by Tsarong himself; it therefore resembles a self-projection about how he saw himself. In recent historical writings, the popular image of Tsarong has been one of a modernizer and a man ahead of his time. His initiatives to bring much needed changes and reforms were fettered by conservative monastic powers, who saw the reforms and especially the enlargement of the Tibetan army as threats to their power.

Tsarong was born the son of an arrow-maker and moved to Lhasa at a young age to live in Norbulingka, the winter residence of the Dalai Lamas, where he worked as a servant. The young man, known as Dasang, caught the attention of the 13th Dalai Lama when he followed the leader into exile to Mongolia. In this narrative, some new information appears and it also sheds light on details of Tsarong’s involvement in fighting the Chinese in 1911. For example, the British usually record the year of Tsarong’s birth as 1885; here Tsarong recounts that he was born in year of the Earth-Hare, corresponding to 1888. This date is also supported by Dundul Namgyal Tsarong’s biography of his father.

In his narration, Tsarong concentrates on telling his account of what occurred during the Sino-Tibetan conflict of 1910–11. It was Tsarong’s involvement in the resistance against the Chinese that propelled him into the center of Lhasa’s political and social life. The account portrays Tsarong...
as a resourceful and capable military leader; it was certainly a remarkable achievement that a hurriedly assembled and poorly equipped Tibetan army was able to defeat the Chinese. Tsarong’s victory not only put an end to Chinese military control but also restored morale for the Tibetans. It is right that Tsarong spent much time telling about his role during the entire incident. This not only brought recognition from the Dalai Lamas, but also made him the most widely known public figure in Tibet.

In this account, Tsarong attributes his downfall to the scheming of others who were fearful of his power; they are said to have “poisoned the ears of the Dalai Lama.” The new professionalized army and police that he established were viewed as loyal to Tsarong rather than to the Dalai Lama. This account reveals little new information, yet it is a first-hand account as narrated by Tsarong himself, and that alone makes it an interesting document.
CATALOGUE
Plate 1 (Previous Page)
Gayokhang, Northern Sikkim. Expedition members, from left to right,
Gerpa Changla, "minister" of the Raja of Taring, Ernst Schäfer, Bruno
Beger; standing, Kaiser Bahadur Thapa, Ernst Krause, Karl Wienert,
Edmund Geer.

Plate 2 (Below)
Foreman Akay and Kaiser Bahadur Thapa.
Plate 3 (right)
Rapten Kazi, interpreter and master of etiquette, in New Year's dress.

Plate 4 (below)
Kaiser Bahadur Thapa, interpreter.
Plate 5
Gangtok. Maharaja of Sikkim, Tashi Namgyal, with Schäfer; on the floor, private secretary Tashi Damdul Barmiok Athing.
Plate 6 (right)
Lachen, Northern Sikkim. Pipon Namgyal, headman.

Plate 7 (below)
Gangtok. Rai Bahadur Norbu Döndup.
Plate 8 (facing page)
Zemu Valley. In former times, travelers on long journeys repaired roads and bridges along the way. Caravans would stop to meet and discuss the sequence of crossing. If they could not agree, lots were drawn. Here, all members of the expedition work together.

Plate 9 (below)
Near Yakthang, Zemu Valley. Porters with their foreman, Akay, who is armed for protection.
Gayokhang. Schäfer in long underwear, too impatient to waste time dressing. He uses binoculars to view the rare blue sheep (bharal) at dawn.
Letter from the Kashag to Schäfer, inviting the expedition to Lhasa.
Chumbi Valley. Large wooden frames for drying crops.
Lachen. Semi-nomadic woman seated at a backstrap loom (bought for the ethnological collection); she wears a Bhutanese shoulder stole.
Plate 14 (below)
A bharal ram for the zoological collection.

Plate 15 (facing page)
Lachen. Beger taking anthropometric measurements.
Plate 16 (facing page)
Gayokhang. Beger bargaining for ethnological objects with a Tibetan woman.

Plate 17 (right)
Gayokhang. A poor Tibetan offers mice to the expedition for its zoological collection.

Plate 18 (below)
Doptra. Women sorting and spinning wool; their faces are painted to protect against sun and cold.
Plate 19 (right)
Tum. View towards Sumdo Khar (2,514 m).

Plate 20 (below)
Phari. The barren plateau has no wood, so yak dung patties placed on mats to dry are the main fuel source.
Plate 21

Travelers celebrate arrival at the Thang-La pass (4,639 m) by shouting words of praise: lha gyal lo, "Victory to the mountain god!"
A lead yak, required to head a caravan, is decorated with red-and-white painted yak-tail tassels between the horns, tassels that hang from the ears, and bells around the neck. Note the beautifully stitched blanket underneath the pack saddle.

Kala. The post rider's mule. Such special mules, of great strength and size, were decorated with chib thur, woven pieces of cloth on the forehead and a collar of bells around the neck. The same saddles and blankets were used for mules and horses.
Plate 24 (right)
Gyantse. Namgyal Tshedrön.

Plate 25 (below)
Gyantse. Dzongpön Coktray and his wife Namgyal Tshedrön.
PLATE 26
Tramalung. Krause with curious Tibetans.
Plate 27
Gyantse, Gobshi. Ghost walls and loess ruins.
PLATE 28
Kampabazi. Ruins with old fort.
Near Lhasa. A pilgrim who measures the road with full body-length prostrations, stops to bless a woman.

Ralung. Kaiser bargains with pilgrims from Kham.
Chaktsan, near Chashid. Large wooden boats are used as ferries. Newari traders in Lhassa say, "For 35 mules and 15 people, you need one day to cross the Tsangpo. Seven mules, five people and baggage per boat." The mules must be tied down and kept calm during the crossing.

Plate 35 (below)
Chaktsan ferry, interior of a canoe constructed with willow branches. The wooden skeleton is tied together with untanned leather straps. Two or three raw yak skins are soaked in water for several days, then sewn together with leather thread and stretched to dry. These boats can carry up to ten people and weigh 30 to 60 kilograms when dry, light enough to be carried by one person.
Plate 35
Lhasa. View of the city from a mountain south of Lhasa, above Drak.
Plate 34
Lhasa. Potala.
Lhasa. "Drago Kalin" chörten at the city's western entrance. Drago, "gate in the rock", means that you can pass through the structure. When two mountain ridges come together on one plane, leaving an open space between them, this is considered "unpropitious for father and son, and for master and servant." A story relates that these mountain ridges were once connected, but envious ministers in the 7th century wanted to destroy the good relations between King Songtsen Gampo and his wife Wencheng, so they built a road through the mountain crest. To counteract this disaster, three chörten were built, but only the center one was provided with a passageway. The chörten were destroyed in 1959. Although a large new one now stands in the middle of the road, the mountain ridges are still divided.
Lhasa. On the banks of the Kyichu, bales of wool are ready for transport in yak coracles.
Plate 37
Chagpori Lingkor. Pilgrims making the holy gesture of veneration. A latecomer runs after the group.
Plate 38 (Right)
Lhasa, Chagpori, the medical college.

Plate 39 (Below)
Lhasa, Barkhor.
Plate 40
Lhasa. A market stand.
Lhasa. Courtyard of the Kalön Lama.
Plate 42
Lhasa. A monk traveling to Lhasa for Monlam, the Great Prayer Festival, shares his daily ration of tsampa with two beggars.

Plate 43
Lhasa. For centuries young women have gone on pilgrimages with large damaru, singing and begging throughout the country. Based on the style of their clothing and boots, these three standing in front of the Jokhang next to a large tea cauldron are probably from Tingri.
Plate 44 (right)
Lhasa. An elderly woman addresses a visitor by sticking out her tongue. As a further compliment she raises her thumb, thus signifying that the person addressed is of first quality.

Plate 45 (below)
Lhasa. This ragyapa tent is home to some of the scavengers of the city who, together with beggars, live at the edge of Lhasa. Earth, stones, and horns of sheep and goats form a protection against the wind.
PLATE 46
PLATE 47
Lhasa. Silön Yabchi Langdün.
Plate 48
Lhasa. Three Shapes, from left to right: Böndong, Kalön Lama Tekhang, Phünkhang.
Plate 49
Lhasa. Phünkhang.

Plate 50
Lhasa. Senior Shape Langchunga.
Plate 53 (right)
Lhasa. The regent, Reting Rinpoche.

Plate 54 (below)
Lhasa. Reting, sitting in his garden, wears jachen, a type of “rainbow boots” made exclusively for highest officials. His personal monk-servant Chöntse Tenzin (?) holds a parasol.

Plate 55 (facing page)
Lhasa. Reting.
Lhasa. Tibetans visiting the Germans, from left to right: Kyibu, Ringang, Mondro, Chang, Tsarong.
Plate 57 (right)
Lhasa. Ringang.

Plate 58 (below)
Lhasa. Dasang Damdul Tsarong.
Plate 59
Lhasa. The Nechung oracle, known as Ta Lama.

Plate 60
Lhasa. Mönro.
Plate 61
Lhasa. Tenzin Dökar Lungshar.

Plate 62
Lhasa. Jigme Taring.
Plate 63
Lhasa. Mrs. Ringang.

Plate 64
Lhasa, Mrs. Ringang and her daughter.
Plate 65 (left)
Lhasa. Mrs. Phünkhang wearing the patruk, headdress of the women of Central Tibet.

Plate 66 (below)
Lhasa. Mrs. Phünkhang; patruk from the back.
Plate 67 (left)
Shigatse. Sister of Möndro wearing the pakor, headdress of the women of Tsang.

Plate 68 (below)
Lhasa. The precious pearl headdress of the Phalha family.
PLATE 69 (LEFT)
Lhasa. Phünkhang's daughter, a nun, wears a winter fur hat.

PLATE 70 (BELOW)
Lhasa. A woman construction worker wears a quilted cap, tsering shamo. She carries stones that weigh at least 60 kilograms.
PLATE 71 (RIGHT)
Lhasa. The Chinese de-facto representative, Chang Wei-pei.

PLATE 72 (BELOW)
Lhasa. The Nepalese representative, Major Hiranya Bahadur Bista.
Plate 73 (right)
Lhasa. Golok woman with her child.

Plate 74 (below)
Lhasa. Golok camp, north of Lhasa.
PLATE 75 (LEFT)
Lhasa. Golok woman wearing a tsagpa chuba – with the fur side inside – made of fleece from older sheep. This kind of chuba was worn throughout Tibet, from the Chinese border in the east to the Afghan border in the west.

PLATE 76 (BELOW)
Lhasa. Golok woman with a headband made of a felt substratum, flannel overlay, and decorated with coral, turquoise, and semi-precious stones. This style is derived from Mongolia.
Plate 77 (left)
Lhasa. Gelok pilgrim wearing a large charm box ga’u and a circular mandala.

Plate 78 (below)
Lhasa. Gelok pilgrim.
Lhasa. Ringang, between Beger and Jigme Taring, takes a photograph.
PLATE 82 (LEFT)
Lhasa. Kunsang Se (?).

PLATE 83 (BELOW)
Lhasa. Doring Theiji.
Plate 84 (Facing Page)
Lhasa. The festival of the King's New Year. Dried goat carcasses are carried into the Potala for the Losar (new year) reception. The goats still have their heads and are placed standing upright on their legs in the center of a heap of gifts. After the ceremonies, the doors of the Potala will be opened for the poor people of Lhasa, who attempt to get as much as possible from the stacks of gifts. In Tibetan, this is called gtsan pa med pa'i sbyin pa, "leaving the door of the house or the treasury open so that everything can be taken."

Plate 85 (Below)
Lhasa. Tibetans celebrate the New Year with a review of the Tibetan flag in front of the Potala.
Plate 86
Lhasa. New Year, kitchen for royalty and lamas, therefore no women are employed as servants.
Plate 87
Lhasa. New Year, open-air kitchen below the Potala.
Plate 88 (left)
Lhasa. New Year, archery contest, probably 3rd day.

Plate 89 (below)
Lhasa. New Year, archery contest.
Plate 90
Lhasa. New Year, wrestling competition, 26th day.
Lhasa. Ringang and Böndong Se in New Year's dress: Ringang in gyaluche – a special patterned style – and Böndong Se in Qalqa Mongolian style dress – khal kha zug – with wagir winter hat of black fox fur and serke brocade belt. In 1939, Böndong Se held the position of the younger Yasö, the New Year's general.

Lhasa. Lhawang Topgyal Surkhang in gyaluche dress.

Lhasa. Shakabpa, right, and his brother Shakabpa Depon in gyaluche dress.
Plate 94
Lhasa. New Year, setting up a darchen, prayer mast.
Lhasa. New Year, young buglers called dungpa. These children, probably attached to the zimjungpa military contingent, performed maneuvers in front of the Jokhang during the Mônlam ceremony; they also took part in the torgya ritual for the expulsion of evil. The copper bugles were probably called madung.
Plate 96
Lhasa. New Year's parade in front of the Potala. Tibetan officers in traditional uniforms take a break to drink tea and smoke a pipe.
Lhasa. New Year's parade, officers in modern uniforms, recognizable by their helmets and insignia of rank.
Lhasa. The elder Yasö – New Year’s general – is probably the Dzongpön of Shigatse. Dingja. Assistants help him dismount from his horse because the gyanshi brocade dress is so heavy; it is said to stand on its own. The brocade contains the "four kinds of ornaments:" dragons, clouds, water and rocks.
Lhasa. New Year, khatak offerings to the Yaso generals.
PLATE 104

Lhasa, Tibet. New Year: During the Tsampa. 'Lhakhang', the officials called to service present their report after reviewing the armor of the cavalry. 23rd day, "The inspection of the armor of the cavalry" at 'Lhakhang' in front of the Kukenk temple. After a magnificent military parade, the cavalry assembles for its annual inspection. Camp is set up there for officials, including the Kukenk ministers and two Kukenk generals. The equipment for each individual horseman and horse is checked against a list. "The inspecting officer (shödrang) supervises and counts the horses, issues commands and orders to his officers, sons of the nobility," who stand in a row like Russian dolls and then move in line to within about 10 meters in front of the minister's throne. Then they remove their 'yellow lions' (tsho) and, bending down to the ground, salute their masters. 'The first company from Minister No-o and So assembled for inspection. The second: 'The horses are strong and the warriors too. The third: 'Armour, weapons, bows, arrows, and spears are ready for battle, etc."
Plate 107
Samye. Small clay chörten crown the top of the encircling wall.
Plate 108 (below)
Samye. Green chörten.

Plate 109 (facing page)
Zunggar. One of five white chörten on the way to Samye.
Near Samye. A monk displays a rhinoceros horn, siru. "We were shown one [horn] about 18 to 20 centimeters tall, along with a horn about 20 to 23 centimeters long ... It was found four days from Lhasa, in a small valley of the Brahmaputra Valley. There are many rhinoceros horns in a monastery there, some much bigger. They bring 600 to 1,200 rupees; the ones from India cost only 30 to 40 rupees, so they must be fossil animals."

Plates 110 (FACING PAGE) and 111 (BELOW)

Chirekho. The two dzongs.
Plate 115 (right)
Tsethang. Panoramic view of Tsethang and its monastery on the banks of the Tsangpo.

Plate 116 (below)
Tsethang. Chinese graves.
Plate 117
Chitishó. Ache Lhamo actors in front of the dzong.
PLATE 118

Chitishō. Ache Lhamo group with child actors.
Plate 120 (right)
Neding: A strategically important location on the way to Lhasa, Lhasa, southern and eastern Tibet.

Plate 120 (below)
Neding, Dzingri Parkhang
PLATE 121 (FACING PAGE)
Kampa Dzong.

PLATE 122 (BELOW)
Rinpung Dzong, Rong Valley.
Plate 124 (below)
Pede Dzong. *This thread cross dô to trap ghosts or demons should contain an axial stick of sandalwood, tsândân. The rest can be made of juniper or bamboo branches.** Brightly colored threads stretched across these rods make so-called “temples,” banners and house forms. To the right and left, elongated wooden tablets are erected to symbolize all the birds of the heavens, all the animals above and below ground, and all the mountain animals and predators, all good food, clothing, types of grain, and treasures in order to please both gods and demons. A monk or lama must meditate and hold in his mind all the offerings while inviting the gods. The thread cross hangs above entryways so that dangerous beings can be turned away and depart satisfied.*
On the road, travelers drink proffered beer from their hand or from a felt hat. The best substitute for a drinking cup is a chiling-shamo, a hat made of thickest English felt. Afterwards, the hat is rinsed in a roadside stream.
Near Shigatse, on the banks of the Tsangpo. *The wall of a farm is painted with two large scorpions to protect against evil spirits.* Dried peat for cooking and heating is stacked on the wall.
Shigatse. View from near Tashilhunpo towards the dzong. Shopping street; on the left is a tsatsa shrine, tsakhang.
Plate 128
Shigatse. Military parade below the dzong.
PLATE 130 (LEFT)
Shigatse. Blacksmith's children sunbathe and pick lice, while their mother handles pliers in her lap.

PLATE 131 (BELOW)
Shigatse. A criminal with a wooden collar around his neck (cangue), known as go. This form of punishment was imported from China.
Plate 132 (left)
Shigatse. Krause catching bees.

Plate 133 (below)
Shigatse. Assistant Migmar dries and sorts a collection of bumble bees.
Gyantse. A welcome gift of a pig, pukhog, is presented to the expedition. The inner organs of the pig are removed though not the skin, so it can be sewn up and seasoned with salt, spices, pepper, and wild caraway before grilling. After scorching off the hair, the pig is half cooked and then frozen so it can be sliced and eaten raw, cooked or roasted in winter. Other gifts are tea, butter, and a bag of tsampa.
Plate 135
Shigatse. A taxidermist prepares the skulls of domestic animals.
Tashilhunpo. A monk strikes the gong, gandi, with a small wooden stick in the shape of an "S." The gandi is an instrument used for summoning an assembly of the monastic community. As for the characteristics of the gandi, which are explained in the Vintara, it should be made of white sandalwood, lade, red sandalwood, sea buckthorn, or mulberry. It should be rectangular in shape, eight to four fingerwidths in length, six fingerwidths wide, and two fingerwidths deep. It has four sides with eight beveled edges, each one two fingerwidths deep. At either end, it is shaped like the head of a frog.

Plate 137 (below)
Tashilhunpo. In a typical practice, fat left by butter not is rubbed into the wooden tea bowl.
Plate 138
Tashilhunpo. Mönchro and Schäfer as guests of the abbot.
Tashilhunpo. Monks carry heavy tree trunks to be used as jogjam, building material. They must keep a special step as they walk. The trunks and beams rest on the folds of their coats, which are wrapped in a roll around their hips (in the style of a dodob). The monks volunteer their services for this work.
Tashilhunpo. On the lingkor (circumambulation route), beggars make tsatsa from clay that will later be purchased by pilgrims.

Gyantse. Tibetan woodpainters, shing tsonpo, decorating Tibetan tables, now in the Museum of Ethnography Munich.
Plate 142 (below)
Tashilhunpo. Mangjia, tea for all the monks on the roof of the monastery.

Plate 143 (facing page)
Tashilhunpo. The temple door is opened with a very long, oversized key.
PLATE 145 (below)
Gyantse Dzong. Fortifications seen from the back.

PLATE 146 (opposite page)
Gyantse. The famous giant appliquéd thangka (fifteenth century) exhibited on a wall specially built for that purpose. The thangka is said to be still in existence. (Schäfer was told that the Younghusband expedition of 1904 took the left section, allegedly to Calcutta.)
Plate 147 (right)
Gyantse. Summer festival; an archer's arm is wrapped with a protective bandage, tsadem, and he wears a thumb ring, träkor.

Plate 148 (below)
Gyantse. Summer festival; during an archery contest the names of the owners of the arrows are announced. Each owner's name or initials are carved into his arrows.
Plate 149

Gyantse. Police, kargyengpa, "the truncheon guard", who patrol with baton and whip, wearing the yellow bokto hat.
PLATE 150 (FACING PAGE)
Gyantse. Tashi Wangchug Phalha.

PLATE 151 (BELOW)
Gyantse. Front row, from left: Tashi Wangchug Phalha, Mönchro, Dorje Tsering Kazi; back row, Beger, Schäfer, and Geer in Tibetan dress shortly before leaving Tibet.
PLATE 122

TIBET IN 1938–1939:
THE ERNST SCHÄFER EXPEDITION TO TIBET

1. Approximately 2,000 prints will be available on the internet by 2007.
5. Schäfer's handwritten diaries in the Bundesarchiv (Federal Archives) Berlin, R 135/36–42 (hereafter cited as BA Berlin) were written in Sütterlin script—a kind of handwriting formerly popular among German speakers—which is difficult to decipher.
6. Schäfer's handwritten diaries in the Bundesarchiv (Federal Archives) Berlin, R 135/36–42 (hereafter cited as BA Berlin) were written in Sütterlin script—a kind of handwriting formerly popular among German speakers—which is difficult to decipher.
10. In 1934 he joined the SS, probably to advance his career and with a clear elitist attitude. The poor career prospects doubtless influenced future academics' decision to join such political organizations. See Michael Grüttn, Studenten im Dritten Reich, Paderborn: Schöningh, 1995, 23; and also Jürgen Haffer, Erwin Stresemann, (1889–1972) – Leben...
und Werk eines Pioniers der wissenschaftlichen Ornithologie, Heidelberg: Barth, 2000, 143.


12. In his letter (Bodleian Library Oxford, MS. OR. Richardson 27, fol. 14) to Hugh Richardson, dated 10 March 1939, Robert McCracken Peck (Academy of Natural Sciences) states that thanks to Schafer, the Museum of the Academy owns one of the world's most comprehensive repositories of Tibetan fauna.


24. From Sievers's memo, 6 August 1937, BA Berlin, NS 21/682.

25. Helmut Heiber, Reichsführer! ... Briefe an und von Himmler, Munich, dtv 1970.


27. Hörbiger's "World Ice Theory" states that Atlantis was destroyed by a great flood that resulted when a moon of ice collided with the Earth. "Himmler believed that ancient emigrants from Atlantis had founded a great civilization in Central Asia." Final Intelligence Report (OI-FIR/32), "The Activities of Dr. Ernst Schäfer," fols. 3–4.

28. "Wüst should also be consulted concerning philological issues and the composition of the team, if necessary taking philological issues into consideration," from Sievers' memo, 20 September 1937, BA Berlin, NS 21/165.

29. BA Berlin R 135/43, fol. 163381; Beger's research program in note form, BA Berlin, R 135/43, fol. 163380; see also Greve, Tibetforschung, 173.


33. See for example Schäfer in an undated letter to Beger from the end of December 1937: "And I set the yardstick for our coming expedition quite independently of other people or explorations... This independence awarded to me by the Reichsführer – and without which I would never have taken on the responsibility..." BA Berlin, R 135/43 fols. 163367–163370.

35. 27 May 1938, BA Berlin, NS 21/682.
36. Schäfer to Galke, 14 October 1937, BA Berlin, NS 21/682; Sievers's memo dated 14 October 1937, BA Berlin, NS 21/165.
38. Poddewils to Foreign Office, Berlin, 11 June 1938, BA Berlin, ZM 1457 A 5, fol. 47-48. As a result, evidently while in Calcutta, Schäfer ordered a new, discreet letterhead in Antiqua font, which read "Deutsche Tibet Expedition Ernst Schäfer."
39. Mentzel, President of the DFG, to Schäfer, 8 March 1938, BA Koblenz, R 73/1498 and BA Berlin, NS 21/682.
40. BA Berlin, R 135/5, fol. 150165.
41. For Himmeler's circle of friends, see Heinrich Vogelsang, Der Freundeskreis Himmeler, Göttigen: Musterschmid, 1972.
42. Ernst Schäfer, Unpublished and handwritten notes at the Library of Congress (Washington D.C.), Manuscript Division, German Captured Documents, Container 828, Reel 491. The bulk of these notes on microfilm is in great disorder. Since the Library has not numbered the folios, no numbers can be given. (Hereafter cited as Library of Congress, "German Captured Documents," Container 828, Reel 491 or 492.)
45. However, Beger's anthropological measurements of prisoners in Auschwitz five years later cast the expedition in a dubious light and contributed to its controversial image. See Landgericht Frankfurt am Main, Case 4KS 1/70, Judgement 6 April 1971, appealed to Bundesgerichtshof, Case 2 StR 293/72, judgement 22 March 1973; see also Irmaud Woyak, "Das 'irrende Gewissen' der NS-Verbrecher und die deutsche Rechtssprechung: Die 'judische Skelettsammlung' am Anatomischen Institut der 'Reichsuniversität Straßburg,'" in Jahrbuch zur Geschichte und Wirkung des Holocaust (1998/1999): 101–130; Hans-Joachim Lange, Die Namen der Nummern: Wie es gelang, die 86 Opfer eines NS-Verbrechens zu identifizieren, Munich: Hoffmann und Campe, 2005.
46. When they left, the Nazi propaganda newspaper Volkischer Beobachter had printed an article headlined: "SS Expedition Leaves for Uncharted Regions of Tibet." An article in the Börsen Zeitung was also carefully noted. See British Library, London, Oriental and India Office Collections (Hereafter cited as OIOC) L/P&S/12/4343, fol. 333. The Indian "Statesman" immediately printed the article, but under the headline "Nazi invasion — Blackguards in India."
47. Poddewils to Foreign Office, 11 June 1938, BA Berlin, ZM 1457 A 5, fol. 45.
48. See OIOC, L/P&S/12/ 4342, fol. 36; L/P&S/12/4263, fols. 51–52.
49. The Viceroy seems to have had a personal interest in Schäfer, "His Excellency the Viceroy, who is taking a personal interest in the matter," Metcalfe to Poddewils, 11 June 1938, BA Berlin, ZM 1457 A 5, fol. 52.
50. Hugh Richardson soon reported: "Sikkim Durbar have agreed to permit Schäfer's expedition subject to a reasonable limitation of collecting birds which in view of Buddhist religious scruples and of general policy of preservation of wild life seems to be quite justifiable," Richardson to Foreign Office, 31 May 1938, OIOC, L/P&S/12/4343, fol. 275.
52. I cannot confirm whether he actually followed Poddewils's alleged advice, "to provoke an invitation from a neighboring Tibetan prince, thus creating a new situation for him and for us." Since relations with Poddewils were strained, this could be a retrospective justification by Poddewils to demonstrate his share in the expedition's success, as Schäfer's relationship with the Consulate General was somewhat tense. From Foreign Office to the Head of the personal staff of the Reichsführer SS, 24 April 1939, BA Berlin, NS 19/1053, fol. 2.
55. Richardson to Gould, 26 November 1938, OIOC, L/P&S/12/4343, fol. 188. However, Richardson stated later in a letter from 30 April 1939 to the Kashag ministers, "that the applications of Dr. Schaefer and Professor Tucci were simply forwarded to you without any recommendation from the Government of India as they had been received from the Embassies in London of Germany and Italy respectively." (OIOC, L/P&S/12/4268.)
56. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Cod. tibet. 536/1; Schäfer, Geheimnis Tibet, 162–163.
60. "Rapten Kazi had received instructions to report most minutely on all the expedition's intentions and conversations, for we were under political suspicion, we were capable of anything and two of us would be capable of toppling Sikkim and transforming it into a German colony!" 26 December 1938, BA Berlin, R 135/38, fol. 414.
61. BA Berlin, R 135/30/12, "Lecture to be given on the 25.7.39 by Dr. Ernst Schaefer at the Himalaya Club, Calcutta."
In 2000 Kaiser died a highly-respected man in Sikkim. See his obituary on
64. BA Berlin, R 135/57, fol. 162 049.
65. OIOC, L/P&S/12/4343, fol. 60. Letter from the General Secre-
tary to his Highness the Maharaja of Sikkim to the Political Officer of
Sikkim, Gangtok, 16 June 1939.
66. OIOC, L/P&S/12/4343, fol. 36. Letter from Gould to Savidge,
8 July 1939.
67. See on his obituary Anna Balikci-Denjongpa, “German Akay
68. BA Berlin, R 135/30/19.
69. BA Berlin, R 135/57, fol. 151 519. On the system of Pipön, see
Sophie Bourdet-Sabatier, “The dzumsa (dzoms sa) of Lachen: An Example
of a Sikkimese Political Institution,” Bulletin of Tibetology 40 (1), (2004),
93–104.
70. BA Berlin, R 135/56, fol. 165 073.
71. BA Berlin, R 135/56, fol. 151 446.
72. BA Berlin, R 135/56, fol. 165 075.
73. BA Berlin, R 135/57, fols. 151 496–515 501.
74. BA Berlin, R 135/56, fol. 165 085.
75. Paul Hackett at Columbia University, who is currently doing
research on Theos Bernard, has kindly informed me that during his visit
in Gyanse in 1937, Bernard also very much admired her and spoke of her
beauty. For more on the story of Namgyal Tshedron, who charmed others
besides these five Germans, see Melvyn Goldstein, A History of Modern
Tibet, 1913–1951: The Demise of the Lamaist State, Berkeley: University of
76. BA Berlin, R 135/46, fol. 164 712, 164 717.
77. According to Beger he was 26 years old and rather critical
toward the strong influence of the British, BA Berlin, R 135/56, fol. 165
085.
78. BA Berlin, R 135/46, fols. 164 714–164 716.
79. BA Berlin, R 135/65, fol. 165 575.
80. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 1b, 12d.
81. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 20d.
83. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 86b.
84. On Trekhang, see Luciano Petech. Aристократия и Государство,
August 1939, see Goldstein, A History of Modern Tibet, 337–338.
85. BA Berlin, R 135/40, fol. 8d.
86. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 18a.
87. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 32c. On jewels and finery see also
Dorje Yudon Yuthok, (Michael Harlin ed.), House of the Turquoise Roof,
er. Unpublished Diaries, 1 September 1946, was apparently impressed
with Phünkhang’s second wife’s decoration as well. “I am sitting together
with Phünkhang, his wife and his daughter. Both of them are dressed in
wonderful brocade and decorated with Tibetan jewelry. Each piece has a
value of about 100,000 rupees.”
88. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 5d.
89. See also Richardson: “The Regent is governed by self-interest.
He has no fixed policy and his actions are dictated by momentary con-
siderations. The misfortune of Tibet lies in the fact that although there
are many officials who may disagree with some of his actions, there is
no determined opposition,” in “Report on Tibetan Affairs from October
1938 to September 1939,” OIOC, L/P&S/12/4165, fol. 90b. On Reting, see
also Wangchen Gelek Surkhang, Tibet: The Critical Years (Part III). The
90. Beger, Mit der Schäfer Expedition nach Lhasa, 160.
91. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 1b.
92. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Cod. tibet. 535 and 535
a. For more on this letter, see Isrun Engelhardt, “Mishandled Mail: The
Strange Case of the Reting Regent’s Letters to Hitler,” in PIATS 2003:
Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the Tenth Seminar of the International
93. F. Spencer Chapman, Lhasa the Holy City, London: Chatto
and Windus, 1938, 85; David MacDonald, Twenty Years in Tibet, London:
Seeley, 1932, 220; Beger, Mit der Schäfer Expedition nach Lhasa, 181.
94. OIOC L/P&S/4193, fol. 156. Lhasa Mission 1936 Diary, 24
August 1936.
95. BA Berlin, R 135/30/34, 18 April 1939.
96. On him and the other Rugby Boys, see Tsering Shakya, “Mak-
ing of the Great Game Players: Tibetan Students in Britain between
Thirteenth Dalai Lama’s Experiment in Modern Education,” The Tibet
98. BA Berlin, R 135/57, fol. 162 060.
100. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fols. 71c–72b.
101. BA Berlin, R 135/30/31.
102. See Tsarong’s autobiography, included separately in this volume.
103. Beger, Mit der Schäfer Expedition nach Lhasa, 155–193, passim.
104. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 86d; Beger, Mit der Schäfer Expedition
nach Lhasa, 193; see also Alex McKay, “Swastikas, Medicine and Tibet,”
Wellcome History 20, (June 2002), 10–12.
105. BA Berlin, R 135/57, fol. 162 048.
106. BA Berlin, R 135/57, fol. 151 684.
108. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 59c.
109. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 65c.
110. On Tashi Wangchug Phalha, see Dorje Wangdu Phalha, Gene-
alogy, Geschichte, und Geschichte des Hauses Phalha, Rikon: Tibet-Institut,
2004, 77–79.
Schleier, and promoted to 4th rank in official. Recently even identified some officials in this book. On Lhalu Lhacham, see Hugh Munich in July replaced by Dr. Kung Ch'ing-tsung, i.e. Kong Qingzong. He says that in Biography p. 39, he was already born in 1915 and was only a 5th rank official in March fols.


133. BA Berlin, R 135/57, fol. 162 044. 134. BA Koblenz, R 73/1498, fols. 25–26, Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), Akte Schäfer, 19 October 1940 and 22 October 1940.

135. On the return route, just before Gyantse, when it appeared that mail had been held up again, Schäfer learned that letters and gifts he had ordered in Germany for Reting had supposedly been sent back to Germany because there was no one suitable in Gyantse to accept them and forward them on to him. BA Berlin, R 135/41, fol. 8d.


143. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 32a.
144. Gould to Savidge, 5 March, 1939, OIOC, L/P&S/12/4343, fol. 168.
145. "Richardson also launched extensive intrigues against our trip to Yarlung-Phodrang and asked the Kashag why we were treated thus."
[Response of the Tibetans:] 'We are suffering from the B.' BA Berlin, R 135/40, fol. 10d.
146. BA Berlin R 135/40, fol. 38d.
147. BA Berlin R 135/56, fol. 165 113.
149. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Munich, Ana 527, D. I.c. 4, "Nachlass Prof. Dr. Heimut Hoffmann."
151. BA Berlin, R 135/40, fols. 34b-34c. See also Guiseppe Tucci, To Lhasa and Beyond, Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1956, 144, who mentions only the Sakya temple.
152. BA Berlin, R 135/40, fols. 39a-39b.
153. BA Berlin, R 135/56, fol. 165 121; R 135/57, fol. 151 465.
154. For the difficulties concerning the correct transliteration, see Ailonsa Ferrari, M'k'en Brtse's Guide to the Holy Places of Central Tibet, Rome: IsMEO, 1948, 134.
155. BA Berlin, R 135/40, fol. 41d.
156. BA Berlin, R 135/56, fol. 165 123.
158. BA Berlin, R 135/40, fols. 65b-66b.
159. Schäfer, Geheimnis Tibet, 182-183.
160. She was wearing a headdress from Tsang, a pagor. The frames were made only in larger towns in Tsang and would be taken to the bazaar, where women would buy and sew red material on them. Depending on the wealth of the woman's family, she might also sew many decorative stones onto the red material. The whole thing would then be attached to her head with her innumerable braids. BA Berlin, R 135/57, fol. 151 418.
161. BA Berlin, R 135/40, fols. 69d-70b.
162. BA Berlini, R 135/41, fols. 17c-18a.
163. BA Berlin, R 135/41, fols. 22d-23a.
164. "I take the liberty of expressing to your Excellency my most sincere thanks for your great kindness in granting me an interview and interesting yourself in the various points to be cleared up," Schäfer to Linlithgow, 21 July 1939, OIOC, L/P&S/12/4343, fol. 28.
165. "Lecture to be given on the 25.7.1939 by Dr. Ernst Schäfer at the Himalaya Club, Calcutta." BA Berlin, R 135/30/12. In the Himalayan Journal 12, (1940), 153, we find the following brief comment: "On the 25th July Dr. Schäfer gave a very interesting lecture on the work done by himself and his scientists in Sikkim and Tibet." 166. Schäfer, Unpublished Memoirs.
169. OIOC, L/P&S/12/4343, fol. 44. H.A.F. Metcalfe, 18 July 1939. "Notes on a conversation with Dr. Schaefer ... He explained that although a recent convert to Nazism, he was not particularly enthusiastic about the present development and he expressed enthusiasm partly 'to get a rise' out of Mr. Richardson, who had rather annoyed him on more than one occasion."
170. L/P&S/12/4343, fols. 99-100, 2 June 1939. Gould to Savidge, Camp Yatung, "Other matters which go to his personal make up are what appears to be a tendency – quite a common one amongst European – to become nervy if he lives for long at a considerable height: a proclivity to become flustered when things threaten not to go right; and his own great personal tragedy which was the cause I have been told of his suddenly being sent by Himmler on his present expedition more than a year ago."
171. Beger, Mit der Schäfer Expedition nach Lhasa, 43, reports that there were times during the expedition when Schäfer suffered from such depression that, even while hunting rare animals in Sikkim, he was so distracted that he forgot critical preparations, injured himself, and luckily escaped a serious accident.
172. OIOC, L/P&S/12/4343, fol. 46. Metcalfe, 18 July 1939: "My general impression of him was, as before, that he is ingeniously interested in science more than politics, that he is excitable and possibly at times unbalanced, but that he is anxious to be on good terms with us and is grateful for the assistance given to him."
173. BA Berlin, R 135/41 fol. 19c, Schäfer, "As we pulled into Lhasa and Richardson had passed us, the 'bigwigs' of Lhasa were all talking about how odd it was that the Germans and the British didn't meet, there must be some major tension. They are of the opinion that R. himself has engaged in intrigues against us with all the cabinet members."
174. Schäfer repeatedly claims that they had better seats at events, BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 50a, 50d, 56a.
175. BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 74b.
177. Their beards were a particular cause of irritation to Richardson, so he advised all later travelers to shave because the Germans had created the impression that any man with a beard was a godless German or a Russian, Bodleian Library, MS. OR. Richardson 2, fol. 94.

Notes 253
179. OIOC, L/P&S/12. 4165, fol. 93v; Bodleian Library, MS. Or. Richardson 2, fol. 98; MS. Or. Richardson 27, fol. 6.
180. Nine days prior to the stone throwing incident, Schäfer had written in his diary that he had already been warned that in previous years, Richardson and Bernard had had to flee from rock-throwing monks. BA Berlin, R135/39, fol. 76d.
181. Bernard, Land of a Thousand Buddhas, 210-211.
182. BA Berlin, R135/39, fol. 76d, 592-596; see also Cutting, The Fire Ox and Other Years, 232.
184. Tsewang Pemba, Young Days in Tibet, 126.
185. Schäfer, Unpublished Memoirs. This is also indicated by the fact that Richardson darkened with rage when Schäfer told him that he had even received a pistol as a gift from a Tibetan official in Gyantse, BA Berlin, R135/40, fol. 8b.
186. The following also alludes to this: "After crossing the Gurka-la, one evening we saw hundreds of pheasants, and after a long debate with our great lama general he agreed to a carbine ball, with which Geer shot one of the birds. . . . It is now the month of Gautama Buddha’s birth, and I was even obliged to desist from using the catapult, although by now I have almost everything and am specializing in breeding biology," Schäfer to Stresemann, Gyantse, June 6, 1939, Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nachlass Erwin Stresemann, (Nachlass 150). Ordner 57. II. (Hereafter cited as Nachlass Stresemann; BA Berlin, R 135/40, fol. 15c.)
189. Stresemann to Schäfer, 3 June 1938, Nachlass Stresemann II.
191. Sutton, In China’s Border Provinces. 190. See also Suydam Cutting on Herbert Stevens having collected 1150 birds and small mammals, Cutting The Fire Ox and Other Years, 148.

THE SCHÄFER COLLECTION THROUGH AN ETHNOGRAPHIC LENS

1. In Germany it is generally understood that the term ethnology corresponds to comparative anthropology, that ethnography is similar to descriptive anthropology, and that anthropology is physical anthropology.
3. Cf. essay by Clare Harris in this volume.
8. Cf. Berlin, Bundesarchiv R 135/58, fol. 164998-165002. Among them are four casts from among the local staff that accompanied the expedition.
11. Cf. also Beger, Mit der deutschen Tibetexpedition, 254.
15. Cf. a comparable museum piece in Müller and Raunig, Der Weg zum
BRITISH AND GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHY IN TIBET IN THE 1930s: THE DIPLOMATIC, THE ETHNOGRAPHIC, AND OTHER MODES


5. This research was conducted in Oxford as part of the Tibet Visual History (TVH) 1920–1950 project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. I am indebted to Mandy Sadan, TVH project manager and researcher, for her thorough and thoughtful work on the Bell archive at the Pitt Rivers Museum.

6. Bell’s major publications designed for a general readership are: *Tibet Past and Present* (1924), *The People of Tibet* (1928), *The Religion of Tibet* (1931), and *Portrait of the Dalai Lama* (1946).


8. As I have argued in "Seeing Lhasa: British Photographic and Filmic Engagements with the Tibetan Capital." It is worth noting that Schäfer photographed Golok nomads in Lhasa in similar ethnologizing vein.

9. Many of the photographs made during the Gould Mission are now held at the Pitt Rivers Museum, including those by Chapman and Nepean. Albums made in Lhasa by Chapman featuring the photographs of Neame, Nepean, Richardson, and Chapman are in private hands but mentioned in *Seeing Lhasa*.


11. See Engelhardt, "Tibetan Triangle": Basil Gould selected the Sikkimese Rapten Kazi to act as interpreter and guide to etiquette for the Schäfer expedition. However, Schäfer thought that he was also expected to inform the British about their activities.

12. Schäfer had prior knowledge of the health problems of the Tibetans from the Dolan expeditions.


14. Not only had Tibetans become accustomed to being photographed by foreigners, they had also been taking pictures themselves. The thirteenth Dalai Lama is said to have had a camera and D. D. Tsarong was a keen photographer. See Harris, "Seeing Lhasa."

15. Only 84 photographs by Beger are listed in the Koblenz photographic archive, though many more remain in his private collection. I have not yet had the opportunity to see them.

16. See Harris, "The Vanishing Point."


18. Reconstructing the ways in which British photographs of Tibet have been used in publications, lectures, official documents and diplomatic endeavours was one of the aims of the Tibet Visual History project at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. The results can be viewed on "The Tibet Album" website http://tibet.prm.ox.ac.uk/.

19. An exception is the article published by Ernst Schäfer, "Lhasa, die Stadt der Götter," in *Atlantis* 11, October 1939, 541–552, which contains just photographs and captions, with no text.
THE GOLOKS THROUGH WESTERN EYES: FASCINATION AND HORROR

I wish to thank Isrun Engelhardt for generously making available to me her Schäfer materials for the work on this essay.

3. Some districts of Golok Prefecture are still closed to foreigners today, and tourist infrastructure still remains in its infancy.
4. The Frenchman Dutreuil de Rhins died in 1894, as did his fellow countryman Liotard, in 1940, while attempting to pass through Golok territory. Dutreuil de Rhins, however, did not die at the hands of the Goloks, as is sometimes reported, but rather during a fight with Tibetans and tourist infrastructure still remains in its infancy.
7. For example, the missionaries Huc and Gabet who traveled this route in 1846, as did (with slight deviations) Grenard (1894), Pereira (ca.1922), G. Roerich (1920), Filchner (1904), Tafel (1906) and others. They all saw the Amnye Machen mountain range only from relatively great distances.
8. The French explorer André Guibaut lost his fellow traveller Louis Liotard in a Golok attack in 1940.
10. See Walravens, Joseph Franz Rock, 59.
22. See, for example, Kozloff, "Through Eastern Tibet and Kam," 524–525.
24. See Schäfer, Dach der Erde, 76–78. According to my own calculations based on modern cartographical material, Schäfer and his expedition team had arrived at a place northeast of Sershul on the northern side of the Bayankara mountains, at least 160 km in a direct line from the summit of Amnye Machen, when they had to turn back.
25. Schäfer’s original plans are stated in his letter to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation): résumé of planned expedition, 26 August 1936, DFG file, BA Koblenz R 73/1498, fol. 86–93. A modified plan dated December 1937 could not be implemented either; see R 73/1498, fol. 57–62. Thus, Schäfer redirected his efforts towards Central Tibet and Lhasa.
27. See Schäfer, Dach der Erde, 283–284.
28. This is a remark made by expedition member Bruno Beger, who the Goloks went to see for medical care in Lhasa. See Bruno Beger, Mit der Tibetexpedition Ernst Schäfer 1938/39 nach Lhasa, Wiesbaden: Dieter Schwarz, 1998, 184–185.
29. Uncovered upper body parts, whether male or female, were apparently quite normal for Tibetan nomads in general and no cause for shame.
30. Schäfer mentions in his notes that he was only able to enter the Golok camp through the intercession of the Prince of Gotsa, whose home territory was close to Derge in Kham, thus not far from Golok. We also learn that some Goloks were unwilling to be photographed. See Schäfer, Diaries, BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 29c, 32d.
31. See Schäfer, Diaries, BA Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 32d.
32. See Ernst Schäfer, Fest der weissen Schleier, Braunschweig: Vieweg.
34. See Wilhelm Filchner, Bismullah, Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1938, 49. Filchner is probably referring to the attacks in 1932 and 1933; see also Li and Li, Anduo zangzu shiliü, 201–202.
35. See Clark, The Marching Wind, 142. Clark is apparently referring to an attack by the Ma clan, which occurred in 1948–49. I am not aware of further sources for this event. However, there is evidence of a large-scale military campaign against the Goloks in 1941, with thousands of victims. See Li and Li, Anduo zangzu shiliü, 204.
36. See, for example, Schäfer, Dach der Erde, 284–285.
37. See Peter Grieder, Tibet, Land zwischen Himmel und Erde, Düsseldorf: Patmos, 2000, 85. Unfortunately, Grieder does not provide his source regarding the account of the Golok queen meditating naked. There is no such reference in Schäfer, who Grieder otherwise often quotes as his source.
39. See Rock, The Amnye Ma-chhen Range: 123–124. The designation “Golok queen” was probably transmitted by the British explorer George Pereira, who skirted Golok territory when traveling from Xining to Lhasa in ca.1922. However, Leonard Clark remarks, “Other explorers, including Pereira, knew of this woman and referred to her as the ‘Queen of the Ngoloks’; this was very likely an overestimate of her rank, since these Moslems claimed she was merely a clan leader.” See Clark, The Marching Wind, 143. Pereira also assumed that Amnye Machen was higher than Mount Everest. See Rock, The Amnye Ma-chhen Range, 1.
40. See (Anonymous), 45 and Don grub, Mgo log lo rgyus, 158.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF TSARONG AS TOLD TO RAPTEN KAZI. INTERPRETER FOR THE SCHÄFER EXPEDITION

1. This text is located among a jumble of manuscripts entitled “Tibetan handwritings of the interpreters (English),” in the Bundesarchiv Berlin. R

2. According to the Hobson-Jobson Dictionary: almirah (almari, almyra, from Portuguese almario), wardrobe, chest of drawers; a word in general use in Anglo-Indian households.

CATALOGUE

2. Personal communication; thanks to Jamyang Norbu. According to Schäfer, Fest der weissen Schleier: 177–178, the young dungpa played their instruments also on the third day of the New Year during the archery contest on the festival grounds, rdzong rgyab, near the Lhalu [lha klu] family mansion.
5. BA, Berlin, R 135/39, fol. 89a. Cf. also Schäfer, Fest der weissen Schleier, 184–186. See also Richardson, Memoirs, Oxford Bodleian Library MS. Or. Richardson 2, fol. 27.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plate 1</th>
<th>KA-04-035</th>
<th>Plate 2</th>
<th>KB-16-033</th>
<th>Plate 3</th>
<th>S-16-22-08</th>
<th>Plate 4</th>
<th>KB-16-038</th>
<th>Plate 5</th>
<th>KA-01-056</th>
<th>Plate 6</th>
<th>S-06-21-10</th>
<th>Plate 7</th>
<th>S-07-04-32</th>
<th>Plate 8</th>
<th>S-06-21-32</th>
<th>Plate 9</th>
<th>S-06-22-26</th>
<th>Plate 10</th>
<th>KB-14-079</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**SOURCES FOR ILLUSTRATIONS**

261
| Plate 42 | S-12-08-03 | Plate 71 | KB-06-038 | Plate 100 | S-11-08-32 | Plate 129 | S-17-20-12 |
| Plate 43 | S-13-14-37 | Plate 72 | KB-06-044 | Plate 101 | S-12-17-04 | Plate 130 | S-15-38-15 |
| Plate 44 | S-12-49-17 | Plate 73 | S-12-37-20 | Plate 102 | S-14-13-14 | Plate 131 | S-14-01-06 |
| Plate 45 | S-12-37-06 | Plate 74 | S-15-48-19 | Plate 103 | S-14-13-33 | Plate 132 | KB-15-057B |
| Plate 46 | KA-08-053 | Plate 75 | S-15-48-23 | Plate 104 | S-16-02-07 | Plate 133 | KB-16-029 |
| Plate 47 | S-13-13-14 | Plate 76 | S-15-48-13 | Plate 105 | KA-09-058 | Plate 134 | S-11-20-03 |
| Plate 49 | S-13-04-23 | Plate 78 | S-10-17-15 | Plate 107 | S-15-10-14 | Plate 136 | S-17-18-05 |
| Plate 50 | S-13-02-39 | Plate 79 | S-13-07-45 | Plate 108 | KA-09-044 | Plate 137 | S-17-18-30 |
| Plate 53 | KA-08-078 | Plate 82 | S-13-06-01 | Plate 111 | S-15-24-13 | Plate 140 | S-14-03-25 |
| Plate 54 | S-13-25-17 | Plate 83 | S-13-10-35 | Plate 112 | S-15-19-17 | Plate 141 | BB-004-02 |
| Plate 56 | BB-099-04 | Plate 85 | S-11-07-17 | Plate 114 | S-15-14-30 | Plate 143 | KA-10-020 |
| Plate 59 | S-16-22-17 | Plate 88 | S-12-44-15 | Plate 117 | S-15-25-20 | Plate 146 | S-18-10-29 |
| Plate 60 | S-13-02-14 | Plate 89 | S-12-44-31 | Plate 118 | KB-10-096 | Plate 147 | S-18-07-16 |
| Plate 64 | S-15-43-30 | Plate 93 | KA-08-049 | Plate 122 | S-16-11-20 | Plate 151 | KA-10-098 |
| Plate 66 | S-13-05-28 | Plate 95 | S-12-17-20 | Plate 124 | BB-177-09 | Plate 153 | BB-208-02 |
| Plate 67 | KB-06-028 | Plate 96 | S-11-04-37 | Plate 125 | S-16-14-05 | Plate 154 | S-19-13-11 |
| Plate 68 | KA-08-037 | Plate 97 | S-16-08-13 | Plate 126 | S-17-17-11 | Plate 155 | KA-11-008 |
| Plate 69 | S-13-05-39 | Plate 98 | S-14-12-22 | Plate 127 | S-17-26-30 | Plate 156 | S-18-10-22 |
Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford:


Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (Bavarian State Library)
Munich:

Plate 11 Cod. tibet. 536/1
INDEX

Aba region, 94
abbot’s cloak, 69
Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, 14
Acharas, 42
Ache Lhamo (Ahyung Choezang) tribe, 101, 102
Akyong Wonmotsang (Akyang Tribe with Female Leaders), 101
almirah, 104, 257n.2
American expeditions
diplomatic mission and, 64
Schäfer’s participation in, 13, 14
Amnye Machen mountain range, 15, 92, 95, 97–98, 256n.5, 256n.7, 256n.24, 257n.39
Andrews, Roy Chapman, 15, 60
Ang Bao, 32, 36
Anglo-German relations. See also Britain; Germany
competition in Tibet, 58–59, 83–84
expeditions and, 74
tensions in, 12, 253n.173
threat of war and, 59
animals. See also birds
birds, 49, 56, 60
donkey caravan, 53–54
expedition collections, 56
living fossils, 24
post rider’s mule, 13ff
Sikkim research, 23–24
taxidermist preparing skulls of, 226f
thread cross (do) and, 213f
Tibet as origin of species, 15
anthropology, 254n.1
expedition results, 55–56
photographs, 78, 80, 86
race and, 18, 66, 76, 250n.45
Sikkim research, 23–24
anthropometry, 55–56, 66, 124, 125f
archer’s thumb ring (trakor), 236f
archery contests, 37, 180f, 257n.2
arrows, 236f
Summer festival, Gyantse, 236f
architecture
monastic buildings, 45
oldest house in Tibet, 47–48
Phari Dzong, 25
photographs of, 70
Rinpung Dzong, 51–52
scorpion motif on house, 215f
“sloping lines,” 45, 51
aristocracy
Chinese textiles worn by, 69
expedition contact with, 33–39
importance of portraits to, 89
in Lhasa, 47
medical services to, 34–35, 36–37
photographs of, 68, 72, 86–87
armor
chain mail, 71
historical. cavalry officer, 190f–191f
Iranian armaments, 71
lamellar, 191f
Asia
Central, 15, 16
as cradle of mankind, 15
High, 66
Atlantis, 249n.27
Aufschnaiter, Peter, 63
axial stick, sandalwood, 213f
INDEX 265
Ceremonies of the Lhasa Year (Richardson), 75
Chagpori རྟོ་འཕྲི་, medical college, 146f–147f
Chagpori Lingkor, 145f
Chagsam མགྲ་སམ, ferry, 138f–139f
Chagsam Gompa, 104, 108
chain mail, 71
Cham dancers, 68
Chang, 160f
Chang, 108
Changpa, 42
Changthang, 49
Chang Wei-pei (Zhang Weibai), 38, 168f
Chapman, Frederick Spencer, 63, 84, 255n.9
cine film shot by, 90
as court photographer, 89
photographs, 81f, 82, 87, 88f, 89
charm box (ga'u), 171f
Cha-Te [Sa]-Lha Khang གཞི་རྩ་བོ, (bird resting temple), 49
Chenresig རྣམ་རྒྱ་སི་, 42, 48
Chense Nangang གཞི་རྩ་བོ་བོད་, 103, 108–9. See also Tsarong
Chang Kai-shek, 39
Chib thur ཤི་བ་ཏུར། (horse’s headpiece), 131f
children
actors, Ache Lhamo, 207f
of blacksmith, 220f
dungpa (buglers), 185f
Goloks, women with, 169f, 170f, 220f
Chiling-shamo རྟོ་མཛོད་(felt hat), 214f
China
access to Tibet from, 16, 18
clothing, 69
expeditions, 14
giant panda, 24
Goloks and, 95, 96
Manchus, 69
Qinghai province, 93
Red Guards, 70
surrender of armies to Tsarong, 107–8
textiles imported from, 68, 69, 70
Tibetan attitudes toward, 39

Tibetan culture vis-à-vis., 80
Tsarong’s battles against, 104–9
Western, 14, 24, 39
wooden neck collar (cangue, go), 220f, 257n.9
Chinese cemetery. See cemetery, Chinese
Chinese clothing, 69
Chinese Cultural Revolution
destruction of buildings under, 70
destruction of dzongs under, 53
Chinese Muslims (Hui),
Goloks and, 95, 97, 100–101, 102
Chinese representative
Chang Wei-pei (Zhang Weibai), 168f
at Gyalo Losar festival, 41
Schäfer’s contact with, 38–39
Chinese signboard, 41
Chingachgook, 98
Chitisho Dzong ཏི་གས་གཤེགས་, 87, 90, 214f
Ache Lhamo actors in front of, 206f
Ache Lhamo actors with child actors, 207f
Chontse Tenzin གཞི་རྩ་བོ་བོད་(bird resting temple), 138f
Drago Kalin, 143f
green, Samye monastery, 199f
Jampaling, 212f, 213
near Samye monastery, 198f, 199
near Tradruk, 203f
Samye monastery encircling wall, 197f
chuba clothing
aristocrats, 69
Goloks, 100
tsagpa, Golok woman wearing, 170f
Chumbi Valley, 122f
Chushul (also Chushyol) གཞི་རྩ་བོ་, 104, 105–6, 138
cine photography, 82, 90
Clark, Leonard, 97, 257n.35, 257n.39
clay bricks, 70
climate zones, 23, 24
climbing. See also hats; jewelry; textiles
of British expedition members, 87
brocade belt (serke), 182f, 183
chuba, 69, 100, 170f
culture and, 68–70
dagam (warm coat) of Dalai Lama, 41, 43
of Dalai Lama, 50
expedition members in Tibetan dress, 239f
gyalche patterned style, 182f, 183
gyanshi (brocade dress), 188f
helmets, 187f
holiday dress, 182f, 183f
jachen (rainbow boots), 158f
Japanese robes, 68
khalkha zug (Qalqa Mongolian style dress), 182f, 183
of lamas, 71
Manchu, 69
New Year’s dress, 182f, 183
photographs of, 68, 72
Qalqa Mongolian style, 69
of Schäfer expedition members, 59, 87
shown in thangka, 70
Tibetan officers’ uniforms, 186f
Tibetan vs. Chinese, 69
tsering shamo (quilted cap), 167f
women’s costumes, 69–70, 72
Coktre dbang rgyal ཐོ་ཐུད་པའི་རྒྱལ་འཁྲུལ།, 26–27, 132f
Coktre rnam rgyal tshe sgron འཁྲུལ་འཁྲུལ་ཐོ་ཐུད་པ་མར
26, 132f, 251n.75
Colombo, 18
comparative anthropology, 254n.1
construction worker, woman with quilted
cap (tsering shamo), 167f
Cooper, James, 13
Cooper, James Fenimore, 98
copper bugles (madung), 185f
coracles (yak-hide boats), 70, 72, 138f–139f, 144f
costumes, 35
cotton fabric, 68–69
court photography, 89
criminals, 72
crops, frames for drying, 122f
Cultural Revolution. See Chinese Cultural
Revolution
culture(s)
clothing and, 68–70
influence on photography, 8
photography as record of, 8, 80–81
race and, 66
Cutting, Suydam, 20

dagam རྩྭ (warm coat), 41, 43
Dagg, Sidney, 82
daily life, photographs of, 11, 64, 70, 86
Dainelli, Giotto, 18
Dalai Lama, 42, 47–48, 50–51
body guard regiment wrestlers, 71
clothes, 50
dagam (warm coat) of, 41, 43
eleventh, 30
fifth, 51
Goloks and, 95, 96
photographs of, 72
politics and, 36–37
rebirth of, 28
thirteenth, 29, 83, 103–9, 109, 255n.14
throne of, 41
zingako (door-keepers) of, 42–43
damaru, 150f
dance
Ache Lhamo dance troupe, 50
dam dancers, 68
drebuling, 42
eagle dance, 71
Gyalpo Losar festival, 42, 54
photographs of, 72
darchen རྒྱལ་མཚན (prayer mast), 184f
Dathang bskal bzang rinchen རྒྱལ་མཚན, 152f–153f
defensive systems, palaces, 45
Dekyi Linka (Dekyi-Linka), 50, 89
demons བོད་
ram’s skull trap for, 70–71
thread cross (dō) and, 213f
Demo Rinpoche, 39
Depon title, 107
derge བོད་, 256n.30
descriptive anthropology, 254n.1
DFG. See German Research Foundation
(Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG)
Dhera Dun, 57
Dingia rdo je rgyal mtshan རྒྱལ་མཚན་, 46
Dzongpon of Shigatse, 40, 188f
diplomacy
ethnology and, 63–64, 75, 78
photographs and, 71, 72, 80, 86–89
Djugomba, 97
dō གཟུང་ (thread cross), 213f
doenchen དེ་ལེགས, expedition members and
Tibetans, 244f–245f
Dolan, Brooke, 14, 18, 63
Dolma statue, 48
donkey caravan, 53–54
Dopta, Tibet, 19, 127f
Doring bstn ‘dzing tha’i ji ཡིག་ཐམས་ཅད་, 175f
Dorje Tsering Kazi ཁམག་ཉིད་, 239f
Drako Kalin བོད་, 143f
dragon robes, 69
Dranang དྲན་ངོས, 213f
Dratang དྲང་ངོས, 49
drebuling བདེ་ལེགས་པོ་, dance, 42
Drepung དཔེ་ལྟེ་ཤུགས, 35
Drib དྲི་布, 140f
Dungkar Gonpa སྲུང་ཀར་, 106
Durbar, Sikkim, 22
dungpa སྲུང་པ་ See buglers.
Dzasak སྲུང་པ་, 41
dzong བོད་ (administrative district, fortress),
25, 26, 27, 51–54, 70, 205f
Ache Lhamo actors in front of, 206f
architecture of, 51–52
destruction of, 52–53
Gyantse, view from, 232f–233f
Gyantse, view of, 240f–241f
independent, 51
photographs of, 11
Shigatse, military parade below, 217f
Shigatse, view toward, 216f
dzonggyap སྲུང་གྱི་ (festival grounds), 37
Dzongpon Coktre of Gyantse. See Coktre
Dzongpon Dingja of Shigatse, 40, 188f See Dingja
Dzongpon Parkhang སྲུང་པ་, 50–51
Dzongpön, 50, 51
German medicine and, 34
eagle dance, 71
East Asia, access to Tibet, 17–18
Eastern Tibet, 9, 11, 1f2, 14, 15, 16, 21, 60,
91–102
Edgar, James H., 15
Edwards, Elizabeth, 78
Eher Verlag, publisher, 17
electric lights, 29
Engelhardt, Isrun, 8, 73, 86–89
England. See Britain
ethnic stereotyping, 102
ethnography, 254n.1
photography and, 63–32, 75, 82–84, 86,
89–90, 255n.8
race and, 66
Schäfer expedition photographs and,
63–72, 89–90
ethnological objects
bargaining for, 127f
photography and, 66, 74
ethnology, 254n.1
expedition results, 55–56
diplomatic mission and, 63–64, 75
museum collections, 12, 66, 67, 68
Europeans, Tibetan imitations of, 43
Everest. See Mount Everest
Federal Archives, Koblenz (Bundesarchiv),
7, 11
felt hats (chiling-shamo), drinking beer
from, 214f. See also hats
ferries, 70, 138f–139f. See also boats
Fest der weissen Schleier, Festival of the
White Veils (Schäfer), 40, 71
festival grounds (dzonggyap), 37, 257n.2
festivals. See also King’s New Year festival
(Gyalpo Losar); Losar (Tibetan New Year); Mönlam (Great Prayer Festival);
New Year’s Festival feast invitation, 37
King’s New Year festival (Gyalpo Losar),
40–43, 176f, 177f
Losar (Tibetan New Year), 11, 13, 37,
40–43, 84, 85f, 176f–181f
Mönlam (Great Prayer Festival), 38,
39–43, 59–60
photographs of, 11, 13, 84, 85f, 176f–181f

INDEX 267
Filsch. Wilhelm, 12, 20
folding table, 67
foot soldier (zimchungpa), 191f
Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 80
fortresses. See dzong
frames, for drying crops, 122f
fur hats, 167f, 182f, 183, 185f. See also hats

Gebos, 14f (charm box), Germany. See also Anglo-German
German Research Foundation (Deutsche
German Scientific Party. See Schafer
Giant panda. See also
giants, 24
Gobshi
Golok Autonomous Prefecture, 93, 256n.3
Golok Queen, 101-2, 257n.37, 257n.39, 257n.41
Goloks
Beger's description of, 99
Chinese Muslims and, 95, 96, 100-101
chuba clothing, 100, 170f
Clark's description of, 97
code of honor of, 95-96
cruelty of, 91, 92-93, 95, 100, 102
entering territory of, 97, 98, 256n.5
ethnic stereotyping about, 102
folk songs, 96
Huc and Gabet's description of, 93
inaccessibility of, 92
man wearing large charm box and
man wearing tshagpa chuba and
circular mandala, 171f
marauding by, 93
medical services for, 99
military campaign against, 257n.35
peaceful contact with, 94, 99-100
photographs of, 11, 72, 99-100, 255n.8, 256n.30
pilgrims, 171f
pilgrims' camp, near Lhasa, 99-100, 169f, 256n.30
robbing expeditions, 91
Rock's description of, 92-93
Schafer's description of, 98-99, 99-100
self-descriptions by, 95-97, 102
Tibetan accounts of, 94-96
Western reports on, 94
Western travel to territory of, 93-94
woman wearing tshagpa chuba, 170f
woman with child, 169f
woman with headband, 170f
Golok Serthar, 256n.24
Gandhi (gong beam), 224f-225f
Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas, 13

Gould Mission, 82-84, 252n.127, 255n.9
ethnographic nature of, 89-90
Mission Diary, 89
photographs, 75, 88-89
presentations, 89
samples collected, 83
Schafer expedition and, 82-84

time spent in Tibet, 89
Great Britain. See Britain
Greve, Reinhard, 13

Gyalpo Losar (King's New Year).
See also Losar (Tibetan New Year); New Year's Festival
photographs, 176f, 177f
Rapten Kazi's description of, 40-43
gyaltsen (holy umbrella), 42
gyaluche (patterned style, 182f, 183
Gyaltse Thubten Gyatso, Dalai Lama (13th
Dalai Lama)
Tsurang and, 103-9 (See also Dalai Lama)
gyanshi (brocade dress), 188f
Gyantse, 20, 25, 26, 35, 45, 46, 70, 103.
photographs, 107-8, 132f, 134f
descriptions, 26-28
dzong, 240f-241f
giant thangka, 234f-235f
Kyielpu hermitage, 243f
monastic head of, interview, 27-28
Pelkhor Chode complex, 246f-247f
police (kargyengpa), 237f
Summer festival, 236f

Tibetan carcase of pig (pukhog) presented
to expedition, 222f
Hindus, 8
Harris, Clare, 8
Horlemann, Bianca, 9
Himalayas. See also specific mountains
Horkhang Dzasa
Horbiger, Hanns, 16
Hitler, 12
Hitan Asia, 66
hermitage, meditation, 243f
helmets, 187f
Hedin, Sven, 12
headbands, Golok woman wearing, 170f
headdresses
coral, turquoise, and pearl, 69
mutik thugkhok, 35
pakor, of Tsang, 166f, 242f, 253n.160
patrick, 30, 166f
pearl, 30, 35, 69, 166f
types of, 69
heaven of wealth, 42
Hedin, Sven, 12
helmets, 187f
hermitage, meditation, 243f
High Asia, 66
Himalaya Club Calcutta, 54, 74
Himalayas. See also specific mountains
biological zone, 24
expeditions to, 18, 23, 74
Himmler, Heinrich, 249n.27, 253n.170
expedition concerns, 14–17
political support from, 17
Hindus, 23
Hitler, 12, 64
Reting Rinpoche’s letter to, 31
Höbiger, Hanns, 16
Horkhang Dzasa
Horlemann, Bianca, 9
houses. See also architecture
Phari Dzong, 25
scorpion motif on, 215f
Huc, Evariste, 93, 256f.7
Hui (Chinese Muslim) warlords, 95. See also Muslims
Illustrerter Beobachter, 17
India
access to Tibet through, 18
flight of thirteenth Dalai Lama to, 105–6
Indian Colonial Service, 75
India Office Library, London, 12
Indo-Europeans, origins of, 16
interpreters, 20–22
inter-visibility, 76
intimacy, in Schafer expedition
photographs, 86–89
Iranian armaments, 71
iron filings, near Rinpung Dzong, 51
jachen 雅·chen (rainbow boots), 158f
Jampaling 赤松贛那: Chötrten, 49, 213f, 213
Jampa Maitreya, 50
Japanese Maitreya, 68
Jay-Kubum 賽康 (building material), 227f
Jokhang, 84. See also Tsuklakhang Temple
Jomolhari 貴生山 (mountain, 25, 128f–129f
Jyekundo 聖安德鈕寺, 94
Kaiser Bahadur Thapa, 113f, 114f, 115f, 137f.
250–51n.63
background, 21–22
expedition role, 21–22
Kala 貴·拉, 131f
Kalimpong 貴·拉 (courtyard, Lhassa, 149f
Kalön Lama 大·拉 (Kalon Lama)
bkar·s khang thub bstan shakya 大·拉 (Kalon Lama)
30, 50, 152f–153f, 155f, 157f
Kampabazi 河姆絨, 135f
Kampa Dzong 貴·拉, 210f, 211
Kanchenjunga 貴·拉 (Kanchenjunga), 24
Kanjur 貴·拉 (Kanjur), 35
Kant, Immanuel, 15
Kaphopa, Tsipön chos rgyal nyan ma lhun ‘grub 赤松贛那: (police, 237f
karma, 14
Karoo-La (Karo La), 25, 27
Karsten, Joachim, 251n.136
Kashag 貴·拉 (Kashag), of Tibet, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33.
253n.145
entry permission letter from, 19–20
letter to Schafer from, 121f
Kashag ministers, 40, 152f–153f, 193f.
250n.55
Kashmiri representatives, 41
Khar-Khakar Khakhors, 103
khalkha 赤松贛那: (Qalqa Mongolian style dress), 182f, 183
Kham 貴·拉 (Kham), pilgrims from, 137f
Khambar (Khambas), 90, 107
Khampa woman, 81f, 82
Khar 貴·拉 dance, 42
khatak (khatka) 西-拉 (offerings, to Yaso generals, 189f
King’s New Year (Gyalpo Losar), 40–43,
176f, 177f. See also Losar (Tibetan New Year); Mönlam (Great Prayer Festival);
New Year’s Festival
Kiss, Edmund, 16
kitchen
open-air, 179f
for royalty and lamas, 178f
Klu 貴·拉 (Nagas), 42
Klu chen 貴·拉 (dance, 43
Koblenz photographic archive, 255n.15
Koukou-Noor (Koko Nor), 93
Kozloff, Peter K., 96
Krause, Ernst, 18, 20, 24, 66, 90, 113f.
244f–245f
INDEX 269
catching bees, 221f
with Tibetans, 133f
Kunsangtse kun bzang rtse tsho dbang don grub ཟྣ་གྲོི་དཔྱིན་པོ་(full body-length prostrations), 28–29, 136f, 137
Kyibu dbang dus nor bu བློ་འཛིན་འབུམ་(god of birds), 42

Labrang ཐོང་མོ་(treasurer), 38
Labrang Kunge ཐོང་མོ་གཉིས་, 27–28
Lachag ཐོང་མོ་, 38
Lachen ཐོང་མོ་, Northern Sikkim, 25, 117f, 123f, 124, 125f
Lachenese people, 23, 55, 56
Lachung ཐོང་མོ་, people, 23, 24, 55, 56
Ladakh, 49
Laden-La [legs ldan la ཐོང་མོ་ནས་ཐོག་], Sonam Wangjel, 60, 252n.114

ladze ཐོང་མོ་, 25
Lama [musical] band, 41, 43
lamas
clothing of, 71
dragging stones for new buildings, 53–54
to Yarla Shampo mountain, 48
Labrang Kuno, 27–28
meditation cells, 243f
thread cross (dö) and, 213f
for Tzarong’s army, 107
Lamprey, J. H., 76
Langchung spen pa don grub འྱི་འགྲོ་, 29, 152f–153f, 156f
Langdun srid blon yab gzi glang mdun dbang phyug kun འྲ་ཡི་ེ་, prime minister, 29, 87, 154f
with family, 88f
Laychen-Ba ཐོང་མོ་, 103–4
Leicke, 46
Leica camera, 87
Lepchas, 18, 23, 24, 55
letterhead, for Schäfer expedition, 17, 250f.38
Lhalu tshe dbang rdo rje ཡོག་ེ་, 37
Lhalu Lhacham རྒྱལ་འཁྲོད་མ་, 252n.117
Lhama རྒྱལ་, (godness queen), 42
Lhasa
archery contest, 180f
aristocracy of, 47
Barkor, 146f
British Mission, 12
capital transferred to, 46
Chagpouri, medical college, 146f–147f
Chinese armies in, 108
Chinese settlers driven from, 108–9
courtyard of Kalön Lama, 149f
daily life in, 64
Drago Kalin chörten, 143f
elderly woman, 151f
entry permission, 19–20
expedition arrival in, 20
expedition stay extended in, 29
Golok camp near, 99–100, 169f
Golok pilgrims, 171f
Golok woman wearing tsagpa chuba, 170f
Golok woman with child, 169f
Golok woman with headband, 170f
Kashag ministers, 152f–153f
kitchen for royalty and lamases, 178f
market stand, 148f
monk traveling to, 150f
New Year’s Festival, 11, 64, 71, 177f–193f
official German invitation to, 12
photographs, 59–60, 70, 71, 72, 84
pilgrims in and near, 11, 64, 99–100, 136f,
137, 150f, 169f, 171f
police force, 31–32
portraits photographed in, 152f–176f
Potala, 142f, 179f
ragyapa tent, 153f
Schäfer expedition encounters in, 29–39
to, 25–29
view of city, 140f–141f
Western travelers in, 63
women on pilgrimage, 150f
wool transport by yak-hide boats, 144f
Lhasa Kanjur, 35
Lhatot-Shika རྒྱལ་འཁྲོད།, 104
Lhoka རྒྱལ་, 51

lingkor འབྲུག་པ་(circumambulation route), 228f, 229
Linlithgow, Viceroy (Lord Victor Alexander
Jon Hope, and Marquess of Linlithgow),
18–19, 54, 57, 250n.49
Liotard, Louis, 94, 256n.8
“Living Buddha,” 101
living fossils, 24
London, 12, 18, 89
loom, backstrap, getag ཐོང་མོ་, 123f
Losar ཐོང་མོ་(Tibetan New Year). See also
Gyalpo Losar (King’s New Year); Mönlam
(Grreat Prayer Festival)
description, 40–43
photographs of, 11, 13, 84, 85f, 176f–181f
Lüde ཐོང་མོ་, 101–2, 257n.41
Lufthansa JU52, 57
Lungshar family, 37, 252n.114
Lungshar rdo rje tsho rgyal ཐོང་མོ་, 36
Lungshar bstan ’dzin sgrol dkar འབྲུག་པ་་, 36, 163f

Ma clan army, 101, 102, 257n.35
Ma Qi, 95, 102
madung འབྲུག་པ་(copper bugles), 185f
Maitreya (Chamba) statues, 47–48
Manchu clothing, 69
mandala offering, 41–42
mangia འབྲུག་པ་, 230f
Marlampa ‘jigs med dgra lha འབྲུག་པ་་, 152f–153f
Matthew, William Diller, 15
mayoral system, Lachen and Lachung,
24–25
McKay, Alex, 78
medicine/medical services
for Goloks, 99
provided by Beger, 34–35, 36–37, 61
provided by British, 84
Tibetan interest in, 39
meditation cells, 243f
Metcalfe, Sir Aubrey, 18–19, 58
mi འབྲུག་པ་(men), 42
mice, offered to Schäfer expedition, 127f
Migmar འབྲུག་པ་་, 221f

270 Tibet in 1938–1939
military contingent (zimjungpa), 185f
military leadership, by Tsarong, 104–9
military parades
below Shigatse dzong, 217f
New Year’s Festival, 186f, 187f
minimaiin (non-men), 42
mineral resources
gold, 95
iron filings, 51
Mishmi, 24
Mission Diary (Chapman), 89
monastic buildings. See also specific monasteries
characteristics of, 45
photographs of, 70
Mondro mkhyen rab kun bzang (K. K. Mondro), 31–32, 31–33, 36, 38, 40, 48, 51, 83, 152f–153f, 160f, 162f, 239f
with abbot, Tashilhunpo, 226f
sister of, 53, 166f
taking photograph, 172f
Mongolia (Sok-Yul), 60.103, 172f
Mongolian Naadam festival
- golden trophy, 217f
- happy New Year (harmony), 214f
- Kham, 171f
- New Year’s general (Yaso), 71
- parade, 213f
- parade with military officers, 71
- parade in front of Potala, 186f
- parade with military officers, 186f, 187f
- photography, 66.74
- review of Tibetan flag, 177f
- with rhinoceros horn (siru), 51
- taking photograph, 172f
- with Tsarong’s armies, 11
Mongolian wars, 71
Qalqa Mongolian style, 69
Mongolian Naadam festival, 71
monks
carrying tree trunks for jogiamb (building material), 227f
in Lhasa, 72
with rhinoceros horn (siru), 200f, 201
stone-throwing by, 254n.180
tea for, Tashilhunpo monastery, 230f
tread cross (do) and, 213f
traveling to Lhasa, 150f
Mönkyi Lingpa kun kyab bsod nams stobs rgyal (K. K. Mondro), 31–32, 31–33, 36, 38, 40, 48, 51, 83, 152f–153f, 160f, 162f, 239f
Mönlam (Great Prayer Festival). See also Gyalpo Losar (King’s New Year): Losar (Tibetan New Year)
description, 40–43
food preparation for, 38
monk traveling to, 150f
photography of, 39–40, 59–60
Morgan, William S., 82, 84
Mount Everest, 92, 97
Mount Kailas, 48
mule, post rider’s, 131f
Müller, Claudius, 9
Munich, 9, 12, 61, 66, 70, 71
Museum of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, 249n.12
Muslims, 49
Chinese (Hui), 95, 97, 100–101
Jekundo (Iyekundo) Muslims, 100–101
mustik thugkhok chenpo (headress), 35
Naadam festival, 71
Nagartse tshug-dpa’, 105–6
Nagás, 42
Nakpa priest, 76, 77f
Namgyal Pipón (god of war), 25
Namsray pag (god of wealth), 42
Nathu-la dzong, 20, 25
National Socialism. See also Gyalpo Losar, 186f
Native Americans, 68–69
natural science, 12, 14, 15–16, 24. See also science
Sikkim research, 23–25
Nazism
British opposition to, 58
propaganda, Schäfer expedition and, 14–15, 250n.46
race typologies, 66
Schäfer and, 17, 250n.46, 253n.169
Schäfer expedition photographs and, 65–66
Neame, Philip, 82
Nechung Oracle, 83, 162f. See also Ta Lama Losang Namgyal
Nedong (god of war), 50–51
view of, 208f–209f
Nepal, Nepalese people, 21, 23, 34, 56, 60
Nepalese representatives
at Gyalpo Losar festival, 41, 43
Bista, Hiranya Bahadur, 168f
Nepean, Evan, 82, 255n.9
Netong Dzong, See Nedong
New China, 39
newspapers
Illustrierter Beobachter, 17
Volkscher Beobachter, 17
“New Year’s Day at Potala” (Rapten Kazi), 41–43
New Year’s Festival. See also Gyalpo Losar (King’s New Year); Losar (Tibetan New Year); Mönlam (Great Prayer Festival)
archery contest, 180f
cavalry officer in historical armor, 190f–191f
celebration of, by Tsarong’s armies, 108
darchen (prayer mast), 184f
description, 40–43, 71
dried goat carcasses for, 176f, 177
buglers, 185f
feast invitation to expedition members, 37
foot soldier (zimjungpa) with ancient lamellar armor, shield, and spear, 191f
holiday dress, 182f, 183f
horseman (tapa), 191f, 192f
parade in front of Potala, 186f
parade with military officers, 186f, 187f
photographs, 11, 13, 39–40, 59–60, 71, 84, 85f, 177f–193f
pilgrimage to Lhasa for, 11, 64
Tibetan flag review, 177f
Trapchi Tsisher (inspection of cavalry), 192f
wrestling contest, 71, 181f
Yasó (New Year’s general), 183f, 188f, 189f, 192
New Year’s general (Yasó), 183f, 188f, 192
khata offering to, 185f
Ngoloks. See Goloks
nomadic peoples. See also Goloks
Goloks, 9, 11, 91–102
in northeastern Tibet, 11, 93
uncovered upper body parts, 99, 256n.29
Norbu, Jamyang (god of war), 96
Norbu, Namkhai (god of war), 96
Norbulingka dzong, 109
Northern Sikkim, 22–25
background information for, 8
black-and-white pictures, 57, 74
by British travelers, 74–82
candids, 86–89
color pictures, 57, 74
cultural influences, 8, 80–81
diplomacy and, 63–64, 78, 80, 82–84
documentary style, 87
ethnography and, 63–72, 75, 82–84, 86, 89–90.
155n.8
ethnological objects and, 66, 74
expedition results, 57, 86
historical conditions of, 65–66
interpretation of, 65–66, 66, 72, 78, 80, 90
moving pictures, 57, 74
museum collections, 74
reliability of, 65, 72
silence of, 65, 72
stone-throwing response to, 39–40, 59–60, 154n.180
Tibetan interest in, 39–40
Tibetan photographers, 39, 155n.14
as visual history, 74, 78, 80
Phunkhang yab gzi bka shis rdo rje
fying in front of, 39–40
Potala, 70, 72, 142f
New Year’s Festival parade in front of, 186f
open-air kitchen below, 179f
Tibetan flag review, in front of, 177f
prayer
holistic gesture of veneration, 145f
kyangchak (body-length prostrations)
race, 26–29, 136f, 137
prayer mast (darchen), 184f
prime minister, 29, 41, 87, 88f
pseudo-science, 14, 15–16
Public Relations and Advertising Council
of German Business (Werbeverband der Deutschen Wirtschaft), 17
pukhog (Tibetan pig, dressed carcass), 222f
punishment, with wooden neck collar
race
anthropology and, 18, 76, 150n.45
ethnic stereotyping, 102
typologies of, 66, 76
Ragya Gonpa, 94, 256n.5
ragyapa community, 84
ragyapa tent, 153f
Rai Bahadur Norbu Dündup, 26, 117f, 244f–245f
rainbow boots (jachen), 158f
Rai Sahib Sonam Kazi, 244f–245f
Rai Sahib Tashi Damdul, 22, 116f
Rapten

Rampā

Ralung Ṛcču, 137f

Rampa Se rnam rgyal dbang phyug "āmaruṣamāya"

ram's skull, demon trap created from.

70-71

Rapten Kazi "āmaruṣamāya", 5, 58-59, 115f, 25on 60

description of Gyalpo Losar, 40-43

English records of expedition by, 13

impressions of Gyantse, 26-27

profile of Tsarong by, 109

role of, 20-21

Tsarong's autobiography, as told to, 103-109

Rapten Lepcha, 76, 78, 84

photography by, 76, 79f

record players, 40

Red Guards. See also Chinese Cultural Revolution
destruction of buildings by, 70
regent. See also Reting Regent Rinpoche
appointment of, 109

at New Year's Festival, 41-43

photographs of, 72, 87

as reincarnated Dalai Lama, 28

Western expeditions and, 83

Yarlung-Podrang and, 45, 48

reincarnation, 14

reliability, of photography, 65, 72

Religion of Tibet. The (Bell), 76

religious elites, photographs of, 68, 72

religious festivals. See also New Year's Festival
photographs of, 72

Religious motifs, 70-71

Reting Labrang, 109

Reting Regent Rinpoche thub bstan 'jam dpal ye shes bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan

Samādā yañwāra, 26

Samye ćamañwā mona$tari, 43-44, 46, 51

chörten on encircling wall, 197f

chörten on the way to, 198f, 199

green chörten, 199f

view from above, 194f-195f

view of, 196f

sandalwood

axial stick (tsaṅdān), 213f

gandi (gong beam), 224f-225f

Sāphugān Ṛcču, 26

scarf offering, 41-42

scavengers, ṛagṇa$pa tent homes of, 151f

photographs of, 87

Schäfer's meeting with, 30-31

rhinoceros horn (ṣiru), 200f, 201

Rhins, Dutreuil de, 256n.4

Richardson, Hugh E., 12, 19, 20, 58-59,

60, 63, 71, 82, 83, 84, 25on.55, 253n.145,

253n.169, 253n.177, 254n.185

interest in history, 78

photographs, 75, 79f

Rinchen Jam Ṛcču, 101

Ringang byang ngos pa rig 'dzin rdo rje 7a

Māya rgyal dbang phyug wu.4

Schafer's meeting with, 87

photographs of

Schafer expedition

accomplishments of, 54-57, 60-61

'Ahnenerbe' and, 13-17

appearance of, 59, 253n.177

British criticism of, 58-60

British entry permits, 14, 18, 74

clothing of members, 59, 87

controversy over, 11-13, 58-52

departure from Sikkim, 22-25

description of, 59

discussion of results banned, 90

encounters in Lhasa, 29-39

don of, 54-57

English records of, 13

INDEX 273
Schal'er Gould Mission photographs vs., diplomacy and, 63-64, 86-89
crowd opposition to, 59-60
camera used for, 87
aesthetics in, 76, 87
of aristocracy, 68, 69
daily life,
as ethnographic record, 64-65, 86
Gould Mission photographs vs., as ethnographic record, 64-65, 86
interpretation of, 75
intimacy of, 86-89
motifs, 70-72
Nazism and, 65-66
numbers of, 11, 86, 90
Rapten Kazi's comments on, 13
reliability of, 65, 72
significance of, 86
silence of, 65, 72
storage of, 7
surviving negatives, 11
understanding through, 7
Schapet, 24
Schlagintweit brothers, 18, 55-56
Schwieger, Peter, 7
science. See also anthropology; ethnography;
ethnology
anthropology, 23-24, 55-56, 76, 78, 80, 86
botany, 66
collective ownership, 82
ethnography, 12, 55-56, 63-72, 66, 75
82-84, 86, 89-90, 254n.1, 255n.8
ethnology, 12, 55-56, 63-64, 66, 67, 72, 74
127f, 254n.1
diplomatic mission and, 75
expedition goals and purposes, 12, 15-16, 23-24
expedition results, 54-57, 64-66
geography, 55
galactics
Gould Mission, 82, 90
natural science, 12, 14, 15-16, 24
politics and, 13, 18
pseudo-science, 14, 15-16
race and, 18, 66, 76, 250n.45
zoochemists
Shapet. See Shape (senior official)
Shay-Kundu, 108
sheep skins, chuba clothing, 69, 170f
Shigatse, 46, 51, 53, 54, 107, 108, 166f, 214f
blacksmith's children, 220f
Chinese cemetery, below dzong, 218f-219f
criminal with wood collar (go), 220f
Krause catching bees, 221f
Migmar drying and sorting bees, 221f
military parade below dzong, 217f
scorpion motif on house, 215f
taxidermist, 223f
view toward dzong, 216f
shing tsenpo (wood painters), 229f
shipping crates, 70
shodrung (aristocratic lay official), 192f
Siberia, 68
Sichuan (Szechwan), 24
Sievers, Wolfram, 16
Sikkim, Maharaja of, 19, 22, 23, 116f
Sikkim, Sikkimese, 21, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 75, 76, 84, 88
animal species, 24
anthropometric data from people in, 66
climatic zones, 23, 24
concerns about German takeover of, 250n.60
entry permits for, 18-19
expedition departure from, 22-25
Schäfer research in, 22-25
silk, 68
Silön Yabchi Langdün (prime minister). See Langdün
Simla, 54, 57
Sino-Tibetan border, 98
Sino-Tibetan conflict, 104-10, 109-10
sirus (rhinoceros horn), 200f, 201
"sloping lines," 45, 51
Snow Mountain, 44
Sok-Yul. See Mongolia, 103

entry permits, 14, 18-20
ethnography and, 63-72, 89-90
ethnology and, 12, 55-56, 63-72
financing for, 17
German foreign policy and, 14
goals of, 12
Gould Mission and, 82-84
Himmler and, 14-17
informants, 31-33
interpreters, 20-22
legacy of, 12-13
letterhead, 17, 250n.38
members, 16, 18, 84-85, 113f
native team, 21-22
natural history, 23-25
Nazi propaganda and, 14-15
planning, 13-16, 256n.25
political aspects of, 7
previous expeditions, 73-74
research in Sikkim, 22-25
route map, 10
scientific studies, 12, 54-56, 60-61, 64
significance of, 12
sources of information on, 13
SS and, 17, 250n.46
start of, 18-21
Tibetan attitudes toward, 59, 61
time spent in Tibet, 89
tavel to Lhasa, 25-29
war and, 54, 58, 90
Yarlung Valley visit, 43-48
Schäfer expedition photographs, 84-90
aesthetics in, 76, 87
of aristocracy, 68, 72, 86-87
Buddhism, 11
camera used for, 87
cine photography, 82, 90
crowd opposition to, 59-60
daily life, 11, 64, 86
diplomacy and, 63-64, 86-89
as ethnographic record, 63-65, 86
Gould Mission photographs vs., as ethnographic record, 63-65, 86
interpretation of, 75
intimacy of, 86-89
motifs, 70-72
Nazism and, 65-66
seeing Lhasa, 7, 8, 9
Senior Shape. See Langchungaserke (brocade belt), 182f, 183
Sershül (an armament), 256n.24
Shakabpa Tsonön dbang phyug bde idan shes (in gyaluiche dress), 183f
Shakabpa Depon blo gsal don grub (in gyaluiche dress), 183f
Shakya, Tsering, 107
Shapet. See Shape (senior official), 109, 152f-153f, 155f
interviews with, 29-30
Shay-Kundu, 108
sheep skins, chuba clothing, 69, 170f
Shigatse, 46, 51, 53, 54, 107, 108, 166f, 214f
blacksmith's children, 220f
Chinese cemetery, below dzong, 218f-219f
criminal with wood collar (go), 220f
Krause catching bees, 221f
Migmar drying and sorting bees, 221f
military parade below dzong, 217f
scorpion motif on house, 215f
taxidermist, 223f
view toward dzong, 216f
shing tsenpo (wood painters), 229f
shipping crates, 70
shodrung (aristocratic lay official), 192f
Siberia, 68
Sichuan (Szechwan), 24
Sievers, Wolfram, 16
Sikkim, Maharaja of, 19, 22, 23, 116f
Sikkim, Sikkimese, 21, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 75, 76, 84, 88
animal species, 24
anthropometric data from people in, 66
climatic zones, 23, 24
concerns about German takeover of, 250n.60
entry permits for, 18-19
expedition departure from, 22-25
Schäfer research in, 22-25
silk, 68
Silön Yabchi Langdün (prime minister). See Langdün
Simla, 54, 57
Sino-Tibetan border, 98
Sino-Tibetan conflict, 104-10, 109-10
sirus (rhinoceros horn), 200f, 201
"sloping lines," 45, 51
Snow Mountain, 44
Sok-Yul. See Mongolia, 103

274 Tibet in 1938-1939
INDEX 275
United States expeditions, 13, 64. See also
American expeditions
utensils, photographs of, 67
zoology
expedition results, 56
expeditions, 14
Nazi race typologies and, 66
Zunggar chörten ⁸⁴