

**CALLED FROM OBSCURITY:
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A TRUE SON OF TIBET
GERGAN DORJE THARCHIN**

Volume Two



H. Louis Fader

Excerpts from Dalai Lama XIV's Foreword to
Called from Obscurity:

Tharchin Babu-la was a man of many [commendable] qualities and in his long life was an inspiration and example to many other Tibetans. My predecessor, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, counted him as a friend and it was my privilege to regard him in the same way too.

I met Tharchin Babu-la a few times. What I admired in him was his independence of mind and his quiet integrity. Here was a man who had decided that, even though most of the people around him were Buddhist, the Christian faith was best for him. As a result he put a great deal of effort into revising the Tibetan edition of the Bible.

Another of Tharchin Babu-la's qualities that I greatly appreciated was his unshakable loyalty to Tibet and the Tibetan people. He was farsighted enough to understand right from the beginning the tragedy that was befalling Tibet and launched his own fierce campaign to protect our freedom through the pages of [his] *Tibet Mirror* newspaper. I take encouragement too from his later philosophical view that nothing lasts forever, no tyranny is eternal and eventually Chinese rule in Tibet will come to an end.

After 1959 and the establishment of the Tibetan community in exile, Tharchin Babu-la became something of a model and inspiration to a new generation of Tibetans who wished to reconcile aspects of the modern world with a Tibetan outlook, particularly in the realm of secular literature.

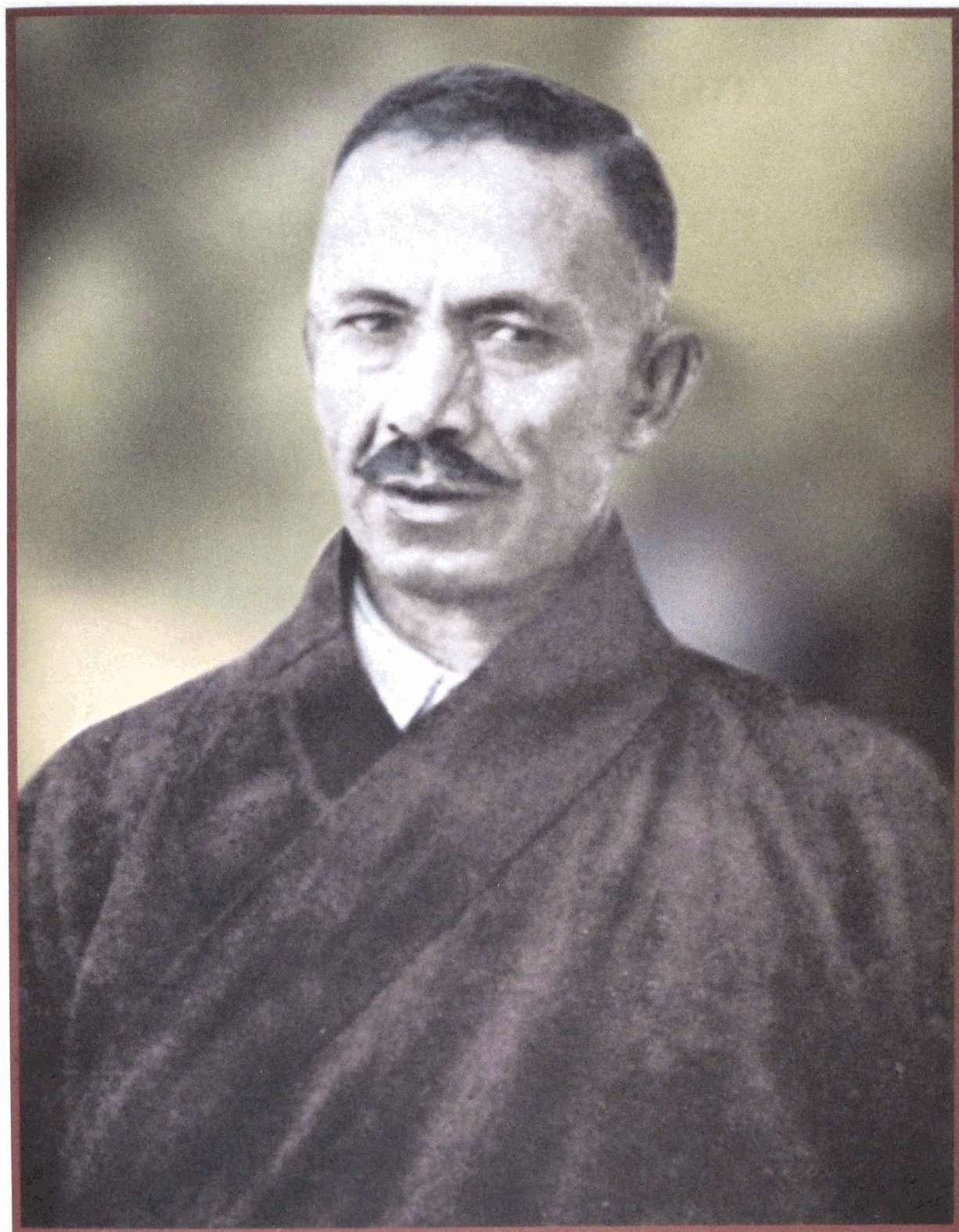
[The Babu] made an important contribution to Tibetan affairs and in his long life observed most of the significant events of the twentieth century in our part of the world.... I welcome the publication of this exhaustive account of his life and achievements, which no doubt will enthral readers eager to know more about Tibet.

**CALLED FROM OBSCURITY:
The Life and Times of Gergan Dorje Tharchin
II**

**CALLED FROM OBSCURITY:
The Life and Times of Gergan Dorje Tharchin
In Three Volumes**

Volume

- I. Chapters 1 – 11
- II. Chapters 12 – 20
- III. Chapters 21 – 30



GERGAN THARCHIN (1890-1976)
Circa in the early 1930s

In Tibetan garb when in his early 40s

CALLED FROM OBSCURITY:
The Life and Times of a True Son of Tibet,
God's Humble Servant from Poo

GERGAN DORJE THARCHIN

With Particular Attention Given
to His Good Friend
and Illustrious Co-Laborer in the Gospel
SADHU SUNDAR SINGH
of India

II

By

H. LOUIS FADER
Washington DC USA

With a Foreword by
His Holiness
DALAI LAMA XIV
of Tibet

And

An Introduction by
DAWA NORBU
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi

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To
The Tibet
That Will Yet Arise:
Unshackled
At Last
in
Body
Soul
and
Spirit

A True Son of Tibet

WHEN ASKED by a Western anthropologist on fieldwork assignment among Tibetan refugees in India during the 1970s, “What do you mean when you say, ‘I am a Tibetan’?,” an eleventh-grade English class student in one of India’s Tibetan schools gave as his answer to this probing English composition exercise the following revealing response:

In my opinion, to be a Tibetan means firstly one should be a Tibetan by birth, or his parents should be Tibetans. One should know what are his/her duties towards one’s motherland. He should love his country. He should know the precious culture and traditions of his nation and should respect them. He should make some changes in the field of culture and tradition which suit the modern way of living. One of the most important things is that we should know our Tibetan language and literature. It is really shameful and unbecoming to a Tibetan if one doesn’t know his language perfectly, being a citizen of Tibet. We should try to unite ourselves to make our nation strong. Even if our country is not independent these days, we should preserve our religion, culture and traditions and should respect them at any cost. We should never forget that we are Tibetans and we will get our country back from the clutches of the Red Chinese, since Tibet belongs to Tibetans.*

Given this set of self-defined credentials, this Tibetan youth, had he thought to say it, would have had no hesitation in adding to his statement as did another student in his own response, the singular declaration: “I am a true son of Tibet.”

Let it be said here that in all respects save one—that of religion—Gergan Tharchin’s long and eventful life, when measured against the above criteria, proved to be a deep reflection of what in the best definition of the term constitutes a Tibetan. Though born in Indo-Tibet and early converted to the Christian faith from his family religion of Buddhism, he was nonetheless a Tibetan through and through, as the pages of this biography will abundantly demonstrate. Babu Tharchin loved the Land of Snows, became an enthusiastic student of her language, culture and traditions, sought at all times the highest and best for her people, and stood—in the hour of greatest peril to her freedom and independence—as one of Tibet’s strongest advocates in his near-legendary journalistic defense against the machinations of the frightful Invader from the East: the aggrandizing hordes of the so-called People’s Liberation Army of Communist China. And for these and other noteworthy contributions to the welfare of Tibet this humble-born Tibetan from Northwest India eventually came to be respected, loved and admired by all and sundry among his fellow ethnic countrymen—whether ruler or ruled, rich or poor, educated or ignorant, Buddhist or non-Buddhist. He was even a friend of the two most recent ruling Pontiffs of the Tibetan Buddhist Church: the Great Thirteenth and the currently reigning Fourteenth Dalai Lama. As one of his younger Tibetan admirers was wont to say about Rev. Tharchin, his Christian affirmation never

* Quoted from anthropologist Margaret Nowak’s remarkable study, *Tibetan Refugees: Youth and the New Generation of Meaning* (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1984), 87-8.

seemed “to get in the way [of his] relations with all sections of the Tibetan Community,” who “held him in such high esteem.”* His was a life lived for all, but especially for those whom he counted his blood brethren from the Roof of the World.

In short, then, it can be asserted without fear of contradiction whatsoever that Gergan Dorje Tsering Tharchin was indeed A TRUE SON OF TIBET!

Important Note to Readers of Volume II

For the benefit of those readers who may lack Volume I of the present narrative, the Publishers felt it would be helpful to repeat here the Foreword by His Holiness Dalai Lama XIV and the Introduction by Professor Dawa Norbu. These appear immediately on the next four pages.

However, because of the already lengthy content of the current volume, it was decided *not* to repeat here the following seven elements, which the reader, if he or she so wishes, may consult within the opening pages of the present biography’s initial volume:

Note of Appreciation by Tharchin Babu’s Son

Author’s Preface

The Tharchin Unpublished “Memoirs”—Further Clarification

Recognition of Particularly Useful Published and Unpublished Source Materials

American Library Collections Consulted

Special Thanks (to certain individuals and/or institutions for unusual kindnesses and services rendered)

Abbreviations Used in Documenting Various GT-Related Materials Housed in the Archiv der Brüder-Unität at Herrnhut, Germany (no longer relevant to the content of the remaining Text of the present work)

* Dawa Norbu, “G. Tharchin: Pioneer and Patriot,” *Tibetan Review* (December 1975):20. Dr. Norbu was the then editor-in-chief of the *Review*, is currently Professor of International Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, and is the author of the highly-acclaimed semi-autobiographical work, *Red Star over Tibet*, first published in 1974. †

† Where full publication details are not given in the footnotes, these will be found in the Bibliography at the end of the present volume.



THE DALAI LAMA

FOREWORD

Tharchin Babu la was a man of many qualities and in his long life was an inspiration and example to many other Tibetans. My predecessor, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, counted him as a friend and it was my privilege to regard him in the same way too.

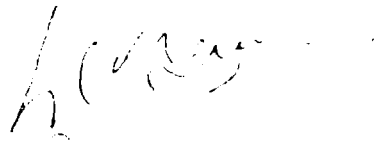
I met Tharchin Babu la a few times. What I admired in him was his independence of mind and his quiet integrity. Here was a man who had decided that, even though most of the people around him were Buddhist, the Christian faith was best for him. As a result he put a great deal of effort into revising the Tibetan edition of the Bible. Perhaps it was these literary endeavours that led to his other major achievement, the launch, in 1925, of one of the first newspapers to be published in Tibetan, the *Tibet Mirror*. Among the readers of the fifty copies of the early editions that he sent to Lhasa, was my predecessor the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. He was sufficiently impressed to write personally to express his appreciation of the news of the world outside Tibet contained in its pages. He went on to encourage Tharchin la to continue his efforts, because it would greatly improve his understanding of world events. Not only was the *Tibet Mirror* almost the only source of news in Tibet, but, in a country whose entire literature was mostly devoted to religious affairs, its publication represented the beginnings of secular writing in Tibetan. This was a major and significant development in our relatively conservative society.

In due course, with my own recognition as Dalai Lama, I inherited my predecessor's subscription and I remember that my childish enthusiasm for the puzzle page soon matured into a fascination for its description of events in the fast changing world beyond our borders.

Another of Tharchin Babu la's qualities that I greatly appreciated was his unshakeable loyalty to Tibet and the Tibetan people. He was farsighted enough to understand right from the beginning the tragedy that was befalling

Tibet and launched his own fierce campaign to protect our freedom through the pages of the *Tibet Mirror*. I take encouragement too from his later philosophical view that nothing lasts forever, no tyranny is eternal and eventually Chinese rule in Tibet will come to an end.

After 1959 and the establishment of the Tibetan community in exile, Tharchin Babu la became something of a model and inspiration to a new generation of Tibetans who wished to reconcile aspects of the modern world with a Tibetan outlook, particularly in the realm of secular literature. He made an important contribution to Tibetan affairs and in his long life observed most of the significant events of the twentieth century in our part of the world. Therefore, I welcome the publication of this exhaustive account of his life and achievements, which no doubt will enthral readers eager to know more about Tibet.



December 15, 2001

Introduction

The Rev. G. Tharchin was a pioneer in several fields: the first Tibetan journalist in the entire Tibetan-speaking world, a towering *modern* man of letters in a field traditionally dominated by lamas, a lone modernizer in a tradition-bound society, and above all the most articulate spokesman for Tibet's freedom. It is no exaggeration to say that if the ruling classes in Lhasa and New Delhi had heeded what Tharchin Babu was saying, Tibet's modern fate might have been different.

In the long course of his multi-faceted career, Gyegyen (or Gergan) Tharchin was to explode several Tibetological myths. Tibetan literature has been so much associated with Buddhism that it is almost impossible for the general public to conceive of any secular Tibetan literature independent of that religion. He exploded that myth. As a modern man of letters, he was interested primarily in non-Buddhist, yet Tibetan, areas of inquiry: secular literature, especially journalism, grammar and poetry—to which he immensely contributed; and history and politics, which since 1925 he propagated with skill in his pioneering newspaper, the *Tibet Mirror*. He remained right up to 1950 the sole Tibetan window to the outside world for the isolationist Tibetans.

At a time when Lhasa remained a forbidden city to most foreigners, Tharchin Babu managed to make four or five trips to the Tibetan capital. As a result of these and other shorter visits of his to Tibet and no less through his numerous publications in Tibetan, he became a close friend of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. The Lama greatly appreciated the publications of the Tibet Mirror Press and showered extraordinary favors on this Tibetan pioneer from the cis-Himalayas.

Tharchin Babu exploded another Tibetan myth: that in order to be a man of Tibetan letters and a fighter for Tibet's freedom, one had to be a Buddhist. He was neither a lama nor even a lay Buddhist. He remained a profoundly sophisticated Christian throughout his life, despite his love for Tibetan literature and culture. He was perhaps the most eminent Christian in the Tibetan-speaking world. He was one of the revisers of the Tibetan translation of the Bible—especially the New Testament section—and the immediate pastoral successor to the founder of the Kalimpong Tibetan Church.

How he reconciled the diverse sources of his complex personality—a practicing Christian yet a lover of Tibetan language and literature, an Indian national by birth yet a relentless fighter for Tibet's freedom, etc.—into a harmonious integration might appear a modern mystery. But to those of us who knew him intimately this was not so difficult to fathom. Seeing was comprehending; seeing was believing.

I recall rather vividly my first visit to Tharchin Babu in the mid-1960s when I was a young student at Dr. Graham's Homes, Kalimpong. He was already quite advanced in age, being assisted by his son S. G. Tharchin. The Babu at once welcomed me with open arms before I could even properly introduce myself. He said he was glad that a new generation of educated young Tibetans was in the making. "This," he added idiomatically, "is a good effect of the bad event"—the latter an allusion to the Chinese takeover of Tibet.

Tea and Tibetan cookies were quickly served. What I remember most about this act of hospitality was the extempore grace which he improvised for the occasion. He offered it up in modern literary Tibetan, of which he was a master, but with a deep sense of conviction, sincerity and straightforwardness that comes through an activist approach to religion. Tharchin Babu had truly integrated into the Tibetan cultural fabric into which he was born those Christian values he had adopted. There was neither any sign of identity crisis nor confusion of values. He was at peace, and shared peace and wisdom with whomever he came in close contact.

In his drawing-room there hung a huge portrait of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. Tharchin Babu told me with a smile while pointing towards the picture, "He was a great friend of mine. I, of course, considered him the King of Tibet, but not a Lama [to be revered or worshiped]. I am Christian, you know."

The Babu was an institution in and of himself during his lifetime. In his adopted home town of Kalimpong he was to the Tibetan or Bhutia community what Paras Mani Pradhan was to the Nepalese.* However, in this age of information explosion, even Gergan Tharchin's remarkable achievement faces the danger of popular forgetfulness. We—all the Tibetan-speaking peoples in the Himalayas and Inner Asia—are deeply grateful to H. Louis Fader. Mr. Fader has resurrected the saga and legend of Tharchin Babu for our own generation and posterity. Here was a great Christian soul in his charming native Tibetan costume who felt his calling was to educate the larger community to which he belonged into the ways of modernity. Otherwise, he concluded, his beloved tribe would vanish from the fast-changing modern world.

There have been attempts in the past to set down Gergan Tharchin's biography by Indian and Tibetan writers but they never really got around to completing his long life-history. Now, though, I am glad to say that this important task has gracefully fallen into the able and careful hands of Mr. Fader. The author had free access to the entire Tharchin family records and the pertinent Christian missionary documents on Tibet that had scarcely been researched before. He has also spared no pains to engage in extensive research on Tibetan history, culture and politics, within whose broad context he has empathetically placed the life and times of Tharchin Babu. The result is not only a highly *researched* biography as manifested by the fact that roughly one-fourth of the three volumes consists of learned footnotes and copious documentation; it is also a significant contribution to Tibetan Church History, woven around the spirit and activity of a great Tibetan Christian. Truly, Fader's work is a labor of love and piety.

The author is an American writer, but the model of his prose is not Hemingway as is the usual case today in the United States. His literary style belongs to an universal tradition of pious literature that is rare in our materialistic and secular world. Thus he begins each chapter with an appropriate quotation from the Christian Bible. It is also interesting to note that Mr. Fader's initial interest had been centered around the life of a famous Christian convert from Sikhism, Sadhu Sundar Singh of India, which opened the door to the author to the world of Tharchin Babu.

Such a style not only suits the sacred subject matter of the present work; it is also highly appropriate in revealing the Tibetan character that fascinates the author. After all, literate Tibetans used to express themselves with care, dignity and seriousness—and with a ceremonial slowness. Although Tharchin Babu may be considered one of the pioneers of modern Tibetan language, he was certainly no exception to this *genre*; for example, many of the Babu's letters, quoted in the present work, amply illustrate this. Hence Fader's convoluted style beautifully reflects the slow-moving times in traditional Tibet. In so doing, it lends an Asian authenticity to the fascinating and inspiring life story of Gergan Tharchin.

As a Tibetan, I personally thank the present author for resurrecting the life and times of this eminent Tibetan Christian. As a fellow writer, I congratulate Mr. Fader for his wonderful book.

Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi
December 1999

DAWA NORBU, Ph.D. (UC, Berkeley)
Professor of International Studies

* Indeed, like the Babu, Dr. P. M. Pradhan had been a printer and publisher in Kalimpong, too, having founded the well-known Mani Press that is still flourishing today. Dr. Pradhan was also a prominent literary figure in Kalimpong and the rest of the Darjeeling hill area, having authored a number of school textbooks in Nepali as well as several volumes of fiction. Unlike the Christian Babu, however, Dr. Pradhan remained a staunch Hindu throughout his life.—*The Present Author*

Abbreviations Used in Documenting Gergan Tharchin's Unpublished "Memoirs"

As pointed out and discussed at some length in the introductory pages of Volume I, Tharchin Babu had set down in narrative form by his amanuensis what to the latter he had narrated of his life story. For a variety of reasons this two-part typeset/typewritten biography was never published. Some ten years later, however, it was made available to the present author in preparing his own greatly expanded biographical treatment of the Babu's life, one important facet of which was to draw considerably upon this unique unpublished resource in creating the present narrative. Accordingly, most of what is found in the earlier unpublished document—nearly all of which first required substantial editing, refining and rechecking by the present writer—has been incorporated into the present larger work in either direct quote or paraphrastic form, the latter being the case in the overwhelming majority of instances. But as stated in Volume I's introductory pages, the author has been most careful throughout this multi-volume work to give proper credit whenever use has been made of this dictated material that had been prepared as a biography some twenty-five or so years ago now by Rev. Tharchin's faithful aide.

The reader should therefore be reminded of the following abbreviations which have been employed in the Footnotes and End-Notes for documenting the use that has been made of this unpublished document in the present Text. The first of these two abbreviations listed below has reference to the initial sixteen-chapter *typeset* portion of the Tharchin "memoirs"; while the second has reference to the concluding twelve-chapter *typewritten* segment:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| GTUM TsMs | Gergan Tharchin's Unpublished "Memoirs"—Typeset Manuscript (covering continuous typeset pagination of pp. 1-176 and cited in the Footnotes and End-Notes documentation only by typeset page(s) and not by chapter as well; e.g., GTUM TsMs, 22-3) |
| GTUM TwMs | Gergan Tharchin's Unpublished "Memoirs"—Typewritten Manuscript (covering Chs. 17-28, typewritten, separately paged within each chapter, and cited in the Footnotes and End-Notes by both chapter and page(s); e.g., GTUM TwMs, Ch. 2, p. 4) |

Abbreviation Used in Documenting Gergan Tharchin's "Brief Biography of the Editor of the Tibetan Newspaper..."

As also indicated in Volume I's introductory pages, the Babu had attempted to write and publish a life story of himself sometime between 1946 and 1955, but it was quite brief, incomplete, and never got beyond the typewritten stage. Yet it has proved quite helpful in supplying data on his early years. The following abbreviation has been employed in the Footnotes and End-Notes for documenting the use that has been made of this additional unpublished material in the present Text:

- | | |
|---------|--|
| BB TwMs | "Brief Biography of the Editor of the Tibetan Newspaper <i>Yul-chhog-So-soi Sangyur Melong</i> Printed and Published at Kalimpong, District Darjeeling"—Typewritten Manuscript (composed in the third person by Gergan Tharchin and consisting of five long pages) |
|---------|--|

*Abbreviation Used in Documenting the
Collected Papers of Gergan Tharchin, Kalimpong*

As stated earlier in Volume I, the present author is greatly indebted to the S. G. Tharchin family for granting unlimited access to all the private papers of Gergan Dorje Tharchin, which are identified whenever referenced in the present work by the abbreviation, ThPaK.

*Abbreviation Used in Documenting Materials Quoted
That Are Part of the Moravian Church House Archives, London*

As stated earlier in Volume I, when material from these Archives is quoted, such will be referred to by the abbreviation, MCHA. Whatever the particular documents consulted and used from these Archives, they were either photostated or transcribed for the author and kindly sent him by John Bray of London and Tokyo.

*Abbreviations Used in Documenting Materials Quoted or
Referenced That Are Part of the Papers of Sir Charles A. Bell
and the Rev. Dr. John A. Graham*

An extensive collection of the papers of Sir Charles are housed in the Oriental and India Office Collection at the British Library, London, and cataloged as Ref: Mss. Eur. F. 80. There is also a collection of the papers of Rev. Dr. Graham housed in the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh and cataloged as Acc. No. 6073, Box 1/3.

Whenever in the present work any material from either of these Collected Papers is quoted or referenced, such will be identified by the shortened designation of either: Bell Papers or Graham Papers, respectively.

Furthermore, it should be clearly understood that whatever the particular documents consulted and used from either collection of these Papers, they were photostated for the present author and kindly sent him by John Bray of London and Tokyo.

*Abbreviation Used in Documenting the Minutes of the
Eastern Himalayan Mission Council Meetings*

One of the valuable sources consulted is a bound volume found among the Tharchin Papers entitled *Minutes of the Meetings of the Eastern Himalayan Mission Council of the Church of Scotland Foreign Mission for the Years 1921-1935* (Darjeeling: Gorkha Press; Kalimpong: Mani Press). These meetings of the Council, each usually lasting over a two-day period, were held on a rotating basis at such venues as Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong and Siliguri.

Whenever in the present work material is cited or quoted from this source, the latter will be referred to by the abbreviation, EHMC Minutes 1921-1935.

Romanization of Tibetan Words

This issue has more often than not presented a knotty problem for writers on Tibetan themes. The opinion and practice put forward on this matter by three well-known scholar-writers on Tibet have thus proved helpful to the present author. In one of his many valuable works Giuseppe Tucci observed that the spelling generally adopted in his book “differs widely from the strict transliterations of Tibetan orthography which are used when writing for specialists familiar with the written language. These more scientific forms give the uninitiated layman no guidance to pronunciation.” Scott Berry explained in one of his books that he had tried to employ “the most conventional spellings” he could find “for common words, place names, and personal names, but often there seems to be little agreement about what is ‘correct’.” As but one example of many he could have cited, Berry pointed out in *A Stranger in Tibet* that the word for the Tibetan ceremonial greeting scarf is “commonly romanized as variously as [*khadar*,] *kata*, [*khata*,] *khatag*, or *khatagh*.” What the author has therefore generally done in the present work is to adopt the simple practice which Alexandra David-Neel, in her book *My Journey to Lhasa*, enunciated with regard to the romanization of Tibetan terms and names. There she wrote: “I have merely given them phonetically, without trying to follow the Tibetan spelling, which is very misleading for those who are not acquainted with that language and [therefore not] capable of reading it in its own peculiar characters.” As an instance which she cited of the problem that would otherwise confront the general reader, Madame David-Neel added that “the word pronounced *naljor* is written *rnal byor*, the name of *dolma* is written *sgrolma*, and so on.” Indeed, the practice she followed in her volume was little different from that which Tucci opted to pursue for his own work, *Tibet: Land of Snows*, where he concluded his statement of explanation to his readers by saying that they would find “that most Tibetan names and terms used” in his work were “spelt phonetically, utilizing an approximation to the spoken values of standard Central Tibetan.” This, then, is what the present author has attempted to do wherever possible throughout the three-volume work on the life and times of Gergan Dorje Tharchin.

Finally, a word needs to be appended here in deference to a worthwhile observation which the British writer Patrick French made in his brilliant biography of Sir Francis Younghusband (1994): “Words and phrases which now sound offensive (“coolie” and “Native State” for example) have been retained in my writing, since I felt it would be inaccurate to substitute later alternatives.” As much as possible, and for the same reason, this very practice has been adopted throughout the present narrative.

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unless otherwise indicated.*

C H A P T E R 12

Training and Service at Kalimpong

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; yea, with all thou hast gotten get understanding.

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth.

Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, ... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.

Proverbs 4:7; 2 Timothy 2:15 AV;
Matthew 28:19, 20

BACK IN GHOOM fresh from his travels in Sikkim with the Sadhu, Tharchin carried on as usual his profession of teaching, giving instruction in the Hindi and Tibetan languages to the pupils in the Mission school. He discharged his duties not with an eye-service but with joy and fidelity. He evinced keen interest in imparting an education to the children.

In those days—in accordance with the regulation of the Government's Education Department—schools in India were visited two or three times annually by inspectors, known as Sub-Inspectors of Schools, to check on the schools' normal operations in order to standardize correct procedures, and to assess the teaching ability and experience of the instructors. Accordingly, Ghoom Mission School was visited every year by the inspecting authorities from the Darjeeling District Committee of Public Instruction. On each visit the Government Inspector of Schools evaluated, and frankly admired, Tharchin's subject-matter and method of teaching the lesson. Through the years the Inspector entered remarks of excellence in the record book on Tharchin's cumulative performance, as he was deeply impressed by the teacher's aptitude in the teaching profession. In addition, the Inspector subsequently recommended that Tharchin should be deputed to teacher training at the earliest moment, and if so, he would be awarded a Government scholarship. The Mission was in favor of implementing this recommendation of the educational authorities and shortly resolved thereafter to send him eventually to the Teacher Training School that had been for some time in operation at the Scottish Universities' Mission Institution (SUMI) in Kalimpong. This would afford a timely opportunity for Tharchin to improve his academic qualifications which in turn would enhance his salary and command other financial benefits upon successful completion of the training period.

At this point in the narrative it may perhaps be helpful to digress a few moments and provide some historical background surrounding the establishment of this Institution. To do this, however, it will be necessary to lay out a brief sketch of the origins and development of the Scottish Mission in the Eastern Himalayan region of India. For it will be seen that during its nearly first half century of existence this Mission exerted a profound influence upon the entire Kalimpong area and was now about to play a central role in the future life and ministry of Gergan Tharchin in the years and decades which lay ahead.



As was intimated in Chapter 7, the foundation of the Church of Scotland's endeavors in the so-called Darjeeling "wedge-district" had initially been laid by William Macfarlane. He was the earliest Scottish missionary to come to the area for more than merely an investigative visit. One recorder of these events has noted that Macfarlane "was first challenged by the soaring Himalayas and the unevangelized sister nations when he visited Darjeeling" for the first time¹ in the late 1860s.* As Scots Mission historian Rev. D. G. Manuel has observed with respect to this visit by Macfarlane to the Darjeeling District: "there, the information obtained regarding the tribes, the absence of any competing Mission, the Christian welcome he received from the tea-planters, Scottish and English, all convinced him that *here* was the right place for a new Mission ..."² Yet actually his initial place of missionary activity in India had not been here but to the far-distant southwest on the plains of what is now Bihar State at the famed town of Buddha Gaya some 290 miles west of Calcutta. A Scots Mission work had already been established there in 1859, whose original purpose had been to test "how a mission conducted chiefly on the basis of preaching would prosper in a stronghold of Hinduism."³ Macfarlane, fresh from Scotland, had joined the work six years later at the age of twenty-five.

* Macfarlane, of course, was not the first missionary to attempt to present the Christian message to the hill peoples of Darjeeling. That distinction must go to Rev. William Start, an independent Baptist (but formerly Anglican) missionary from England, who three decades earlier, shortly after the hill station area had been acquired by the British, made a visit to Darjeeling in 1841. Almost immediately he resolved to found from his own private resources The Darjeeling Mission for reaching the Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali peoples with the message of Christ and to undertake it, noted an 1899 handbook on Darjeeling, along the lines of "the Moravian system of self-support." And according to another but much earlier Darjeeling handbook, Rev. Start the very next year (1842) "located [i.e., placed] several German missionaries [whom he had brought out from Germany] at Tukvor (a spur to the west of Darjeeling station ...)." Numbered among these Germans were such men as Mr. Treutler, Mr. Stoelke, Mr. Wernicke, and the Rev. C. Gottfried Nieble; "but the experiment did not succeed," said the earlier 1862 handbook. All but one of the Germans left the Mission, explained the later handbook, they continuing in the private occupations they had assumed earlier, with only Rev. Nieble remaining with Rev. Start, who himself, unfortunately, "was obliged through old age to retire to England" in 1852. On the other hand, Rev. Nieble, who like Start was a Baptist, continued his own gospel labors in Darjeeling, working "chiefly among the Lepchas," till his death in October of 1865, just five years prior to Macfarlane's transfer up to Darjeeling from the northern Indian plains. At about this same time, however, the Rev. J. C. Page of the Baptist Missionary Society, an Anglo-Indian who had been educated in Britain and appointed a missionary in India, arrived on the scene and carried forward the work for some seven years more, he having established Christian bookshops and preaching houses in the Darjeeling bazaar and at Lebung before he returned and left the area in 1875. *Sources*: G. S. Bomwetsch (Principal of the Darjeeling Boys' School), *The Glory of the Snows; a Handbook to Darjeeling*, 50 (wherein he himself quotes from Captain Hathorn's earlier *Handbook of Darjeeling*, published in 1862); and C. L. Perry, *Nepali around the World*, 31-2.

L. S. S. O'Malley, I.C.S., in his book *Darjeeling* (one of the Bengal District Gazetteers), provides additional information on these same early efforts. Among other things, he notes that Rev. Start's Darjeeling Mission had been headquartered at Tukvor and describes what happened to the Germans who had attempted, with Start, to implement the Moravian system of self-support by endeavoring "to maintain themselves by [secular] labor." But "the scheme," he notes, "was soon found impracticable, as they were unable to compete with cheap labor." O'Malley adds that many of these Tukvor Germans "took to the more lucrative employment of tea planters, and their descendants are now [in 1907] among the oldest planters in the district." *Darjeeling* (1907; reprint, 1989), 51. Others of them, according to Perry, "had variously connected themselves to other mission societies ..." Yet in his discussion of Rev. Start and the Germans, O'Malley appears to have erred when he referred to these

Prior to his departure for India he had laid stress on the primacy of evangelizing by the verbal proclamation of the gospel. Indeed, his very going to India had been conditional upon his serving as an evangelist and not as a teacher. This attitude of Macfarlane's should not be too surprising to later generations of missionaries once it is understood that for several decades just prior to the particular time period under discussion the philosophy of Christian Missions had not yet embraced the concept of educational work as an acceptable part of Christian missionary endeavor. On the contrary, in those earlier days, writes missionary historian Jonathan Lindell, missions work had meant "only evangelistic preaching, instruction of converts and church development. Missionaries and their managing boards had long, hard discussions over the question of whether or not they should engage in school work for the general public."

Gradually, however, the idea of incorporating education within the narrower framework of missions activity began to take hold so that there eventually came to be the inclusion of a school program as "an accepted and even expected part of the total missionary endeavor." The thinking on this subject, Lindell further noted, followed along several interwoven lines:

Christian people and their children, so ran the thinking, should not be illiterate and ignorant. At the very least they should be able to read the Bible and the song-book and other Christian literature so as to nourish their faith and grow in Christian life. Many converts came from poor and ignorant members of society; these should be helped to be educated, to learn new things, get better jobs and make a better living. Further, God does not want people of the earth to be ignorant and mentally half-asleep; He wants people to be knowledgeable, learning, mentally active and creative; God is such a Being and He has created mankind in his own image; knowledge should be shared, and the opportunity to learn and grow mentally should be given to all people. Hence schools should be opened.

As it turned out, Macfarlane would himself stand in the forefront of those pioneers who would help to carry this line of thinking and to push it vigorously forward. He would soon

Germans as "Moravian missionaries," which stands in contradiction to the statement of Bomwetsch's (and to a similar statement made by Perry) and cannot be supported by the known historical fact, well documented, that *no Moravian missionary ever came to the Darjeeling area prior to Heinrich Jaeschke's lengthy scholarly visit in 1865* (see Volume III, Chapter 28 of the present narrative for the details). It would seem that in preparing his gazetteer O'Malley, who most likely consulted at least the above-cited 1899 *Handbook*, misread or misinterpreted the Bomwetsch statement relative to Baptist Rev. Start's adoption of the Moravian self-support principle for missions as thus meaning, incorrectly, that these Tukur-Darjeeling Germans were Moravians.

Finally, it should not be overlooked that Start and Nieble labored diligently in producing translations of various Bible books into the Lepcha language as a way of spreading the Christian gospel among the Rong people. These efforts resulted in the following publications: (a) *The Gospel of St. Matthew*, trans. by both men, published 1846; (b) *The Book of Genesis and Exodus I-XX*, trans. by Nieble, 1849; (c) *The Gospel of St. Matthew*, rev. ed., 1849; and (d) *The Gospel of St. John*, trans. by both men, 1849, reprinted 1872. See P. Klafkowski's symposium paper, "... a Few Words on the Rong (Lepcha) Heritage," in Ernst Steinkellner and Helmut Tauscher, eds., *Contributions on Tibetan Language, History and Culture*, Proceedings of the Csoma de Kőrös Memorial Symposium Held at Velm-Vienna, Austria, 13-19 Sept. 1981, vol. I (Vienna, 1983), 166 note 7. In addition, British and Foreign Bible Society records indicate that these two missionaries had also translated and published in Nepali *The Gospel of St. Luke* and *The Book of Acts*—both separately and together on several occasions from 1850 onwards, and that Rev. Nieble published a revised edition of both these Scriptures in 1861. See Perry, *Nepali around the World*, 38 note 36. Perry adds that all these works of translation served as "the foundation on which William Macfarlane and his colleagues of the Church of Scotland's Darjeeling Mission later built."

emerge, in fact, as one of the primary figures in the movement among Christian Missions to proceed in the direction of utilizing the school and its environment, in the words of Lindell, “as a place and means for teaching Christianity” by placing religion “as a fixed subject in the curriculum and schedule” and thus enable “Christian and non-Christian students” alike to receive “teaching in the Bible.”⁴

In Macfarlane’s case, however, it was the force of circumstances in which he found himself at Buddha Gaya that finally altered his own approach to mission work. For his Gaya experience now convinced him that, given the circumstances of place and time there, preaching was not practical as a missionary method for he could point to no results from it whatsoever.⁵ But there was one element of the work at Buddha Gaya which *had* demonstrated to him some possibilities; what he had in mind was an orphanage that was there. Yet its promise was not to be found among the local Hindu boys enrolled in it but among the hill-children who had been sent down to the plains by a socially-concerned tea-planter (Captain J. Jerdan) near Darjeeling. “The liveliness and intelligence of these children, their religious simplicity and receptiveness made a great impression on Mr. Macfarlane, with the result that when the brave decision was made to close down the work at Gaya, and move to some more responsive spot, Darjeeling was chosen” (Macfarlane having visited the hill-children’s home area himself earlier—as noted above). “To it, or near it, in June 1870, Mr. Macfarlane went, taking with him the Nepalese children from the Gaya Orphanage.”⁶

As the head of this new Scots Mission at Darjeeling Macfarlane not surprisingly soon founded a school for Nepali boys there,* and by 1874-5 he had his first converts, the outstanding ones of whom turned out to be a fourteen-year-old Nepalese Newari youth from Kathmandu, Ganga Prasad Pradhan, and a Nepalese Gurkha by the name of Sukhman.† Prasad, whose father had been a government servant at the King’s palace in the Nepalese

* In fairness to Revs. Start and Nieble, mentioned in the previous footnote, it should be pointed out that it was they who had made “the first attempt to reach the hill people [of Darjeeling] by education.” So observed O’Malley in his work on Darjeeling already quoted. He briefly delineated the educational situation with which these Baptists and Macfarlane were faced in their initial endeavors to lead the hill peoples out of their gross ignorance, illiteracy and superstitious faith. Writing in 1906-7, O’Malley (in *Darjeeling*, 170-1) explained as follows, giving credit to all three for beginning to tackle the problem:

When the British took over the District, popular education was practically unknown. A few of the better classes had, spasmodically, private tutors for their boys; a few, who themselves could read, tried to hand on their gifts to their families; and in Buddhist monasteries, novitiate monks were taught to chant Tibetan texts.

But of education in general there was none and no schools worthy of the name were in existence. The first attempt to reach the hill people by education was made more than half a century ago by the Rev. W. Start, a private missionary, who added to his record of good work in Darjeeling by opening a school for Lepchas. After him came a band of German missionaries, one of whom, Mr. Nieble, devoted himself especially to school work, prepared some Lepcha primers, and gathered some boys together into schools.

But it was not till the advent of the Rev. William Macfarlane ... that any broad scheme of vernacular education was devised for the District. Mr. Macfarlane soon saw that the one thing required for the development of the District, for raising the people in the scale of civilization, and incidentally for obtaining a powerful lever for his Mission work, was some statesmanlike scheme of education. A highlander himself, he set himself to devise for these Indian highlanders a system of education based on that of which he himself was an admirable product, the system of his native land, which aimed at putting some opportunity for even the initial stages of learning within the reach of every child.

† It is somewhat ironic that these very first converts, now to be united in Christian love towards each other as members of a new faith, were a Newari and Gurkha; ironic, because each of these boys’ forebears had been

capital, had, upon the death of his mother, left Nepal with his father in 1870. They together trekked the 200 difficult miles to the Darjeeling area to begin a new life for themselves. Later, against the wishes of his father, and after the latter's unexpected death, the young Prasad became a Christian and grew to become a staunch follower of the Lord Jesus.⁷ The extent and duration of Ganga Prasad's influence could later be seen by the fact that even as late as the early 1930s, this famed Nepali Bible translator, who by 1910 had become an ordained minister, was still in active service as "a revered pastor in Darjeeling."⁸ He was hailed as the first Nepali minister, but who also "gave to his countrymen God's word in their own tongue."⁹ And Sukhman, having been baptized in 1875, became the Mission's first catechist,¹⁰ was sent to Kalimpong the next year as the first indigenous preacher, and in 1892 volunteered to go as the first foreign missionary of the indigenous Christian community.¹¹

While always casting a watchful eye on nearby Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan and Independent Sikkim, Macfarlane continued his labors among not only the Nepalis but the large Lepcha population in Darjeeling as well. What open-air evangelism could not do (he had tried once again, but futilely, to engage in bazaar preaching at Darjeeling),¹² the slow but gradual impact of the schools did do. It was from them, in fact, that the first converts mentioned above had come. And what had started these two future Christians on their road to conversion was something quite simple but most effective. In the various schools which Macfarlane established, one of the books which the teachers would invariably place in the hands of students like Ganga Prasad and Sukhman was a small, thin, thirty-page volume that was bound with thread and whose thin-papered red cover was held onto it by glue. Its non-descript title was simply *School Questions and Answers* and quite innocently provided the students with their very first lessons in Christian teaching. In the book were sixty-four questions and their answers, examples of which were the following:

- Q: Who created the heavens and the earth?
 A: God created the heavens and the earth and everything that is on it.
 Q: What is God?
 A: God is a spirit who is eternal and almighty, holy, righteous, all-knowing, all-merciful and all-loving.
 Q: How do we learn about God?
 A: We learn about God from our own reason, from his wonderful works of nature, and from the old and new testaments of God's Holy Book.

There followed many other questions, too, such as:

- Q: How does God show his love to us?
 Q: Who is God's Son?

hostile enemies of each other. The Newars, originally semi-aboriginal to Nepal, had at one time been the ruling race of that land until ousted from power by the Gurkhas in the 18th century under their leader and future king of all Nepal, Prithvi Narayan Shah. Originally, a Gurkha was the term to identify an inhabitant of the central Nepalese town and district known as Gorkha; and Newar was never actually the name of a caste in Nepal but the name of a nationality, since Newar and Nepal are two forms of the same word; and thus, explains O'Malley, Newar "means simply a member of the community which inhabited Nepal proper prior to the Gurkha conquest." The caste known as Newar, he adds, bears the title of Pradhan. See *ibid.*, 43.

- Q: How did the Lord Jesus Christ become our Savior?
 Q: Why is it necessary that we should be saved?
 Q: What is the thing called sin?
 Q: What does God do to those who repent and believe?
 Q: What is a sacrament?
 Q: What is prayer?
 Q: What are the ten commandments?
 Q: What is our duty towards the church?
 Q: What is our duty towards the country?
 Q: What should be our chief concern in this life?
 Q: What hope do God's people have for the life hereafter?¹³

By this simple means, then, was there first created within the hearts and minds of Sukhman and Ganga Prasad an interest in the Christian faith and which led to their eventual conversion a few years later. And what had happened in the lives of these first two converts of the Scots Mission would be duplicated in many others.



Now Macfarlane, a constant traveler, was always on the lookout throughout the districts around Darjeeling and Kalimpong for the best places to plant his village schools and evangelistic centers. "Over there," he soon wrote from Darjeeling, "is the place for planting another branch of the Mission to operate chiefly among the Lepchas. I marked a spot, at a place called Kalimpoong [*sic*] ... that will do admirably for a Mission station. There are many Lepcha villages in the neighborhood, and we could from there visit all the country round about, as well as cross the Teesta to visit the Lepcha country on the other side."¹⁴ As early as 1873, in fact, Macfarlane was found opening a small school there, the first in Kalimpong, bringing with him two teachers. In addition, he visited the Duar tea plantations and isolated hill-crofts (small hillside farms); and, as will shortly be seen, in later years he even made an exploration—when finally permitted to do so—into Sikkim.

Within just a short time after his arrival in Darjeeling Macfarlane was instrumental in establishing within or near this hill station not just one but many Primary Schools and two Teacher Training Schools, all of which demonstrated further his sense of the value of education. But whether at Darjeeling or at Kalimpong, Macfarlane, in the words of L. S. S. O'Malley, had in these early years of his experience among the various hill peoples of District Darjeeling

grasped the fact that the Nepalis were people of a stronger character than any of the other hill tribes, and he soon found that their language was so akin to Hindi that he could use many Hindi textbooks as a means of instruction. He also found that the Lepchas and Bhotias, from their contact with Hindi- and Nepali-speaking peoples, were soon able to converse in this [i.e., Hindi] language. So he fixed upon it as the *lingua franca*, and in it prepared textbooks ... He

himself taught hour after hour in the face of many discouragements, great difficulties, and the frequent disappearance of the most promising pupils.¹⁵

The missionary himself explained in some detail why this was the case. Writing just three years after his arrival in the hill district, Macfarlane made the following observations:

It is hard to say which of the two classes forming the mass of the hill population—the village agriculturists and the tea plantation coolies—presents the greater difficulty as regards education. Among the villagers, little Nepali boys, almost as soon as they can distinguish between a goat and a sheep, are employed to look after their parents' flocks; and the teachers find it, as a rule, exceedingly hard work to collect half a dozen of them and keep them regularly at school. Again, on the tea plantations, from the end of March till the beginning of November, a little boy with scarcely strength enough to carry two or three seers on his back gets Rs. 3 a month in wages, so that during that period the plantation schools are almost entirely deserted. All that the hill people care for their boys to learn are the merest elements of reading, writing and arithmetic. It is so easy to learn to read and write Hindi, that a sharp boy acquires a fair knowledge of both by the time he has gone through the Hindi primer. Accordingly we find that many boys, as soon as they have gone through the primer, consider their education finished. They can read and write to their own and their parents' satisfaction, and that is all they care for.¹⁶

Nevertheless, despite the difficulty of instilling in the minds of these hill tribes the benefits of even a very basic education, the British Government of India in Bengal soon began to support Macfarlane's plan to establish primary schools throughout the District, providing him and his Mission liberal grants-in-aid. But the missionary was also successful in enlisting the sympathy of the tea planters, and "so won his way to the hearts of the cultivators and village headmen," O'Malley has noted, "that soon many of them offered to build school rooms, if he would only supply the teachers." Some of the tea planters and indigenous cultivators even began to contribute regularly to the support of the teachers whom Macfarlane was eventually able to raise up from among their very own populations.¹⁷

In the meantime the Church of Scotland's Foreign Missions Committee—in response to a letter by Macfarlane asking for help—sent the Revs. Archibald Turnbull and W. S. Sutherland to join him in the work in late 1879. Upon their arrival a meeting was held among these three missionaries at which they agreed to divide up the work among them along geographical lines: Turnbull would concentrate on Darjeeling; Sutherland, on Sikkim, but be based at Darjeeling; and Macfarlane, on Kalimpong. Shortly thereafter Macfarlane decided to open another Scots Mission center in Kalimpong, as one of his reports at the time—containing the following significant words—clearly indicates:

On the whole the Lepchas seem to be the most hopeful people for us in the hills; and Kalimpong seems to be the best center from which to operate upon them in the scattered localities in which they are settled on both sides of the Teesta. The Mission has obtained from Government, for Mission purposes, the lease of a piece of land at Kalimpong, and I am anxious now to see suitable premises erected there and a missionary permanently settled in them for pushing on the work among the Lepchas.¹⁸

With this in mind, Macfarlane removed himself thither, at the same time transferring some elements of the Darjeeling Mission to this new place of endeavor, and leaving Darjeeling in

the care of his two new colleagues in the work. But when in 1881 Macfarlane went to Scotland on a long overdue furlough, Rev. Sutherland took up the responsibility for the center at Kalimpong, with Darjeeling now solely in the care of Rev. Turnbull.



Unexpectedly the furlough in Scotland was to last three years because of the recognized effectiveness in the eyes of Church leaders of Macfarlane's deputation work there on behalf of the Church of Scotland's foreign missions activities everywhere. (In 1882-3 alone he addressed 329 meetings in Scotland!) As one foreign missions historian of the Scottish Church noted concerning Macfarlane's deputation activity during these furlough years: "The influence of his words and of his character did much to create and increase confidence in the mission work of the Church."¹⁹ Moreover, it was during this same furlough period that this stalwart missionary—though still remaining identified with the Scottish Eastern Himalaya Mission at Kalimpong—now came to be sponsored and appointed the first missionary by the newly-formed (1883) Scottish Universities' Mission (SUM). The members of the individual Missionary Associations of the four Scottish universities (Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Glasgow and Edinburgh) had been so deeply moved by the addresses Macfarlane had delivered before these bodies that while he was still in Scotland the four Associations unitedly resolved to form the SUM as an agency of support for his work along the Eastern Himalayas. (The SUM would work under, and jointly with, the Church of Scotland.) Furthermore, before Macfarlane left Scotland for India again, he was asked by the Committee of the SUM to determine the most promising aboriginal area in which to carry on its work.²⁰

Upon his return to the Subcontinent in 1884 Rev. Macfarlane traveled extensively during that year and the early part of 1885 in Assam, Central India and even West India seeking out one unoccupied field for mission work among aboriginals; but in each place visited the climate proved to be unhealthy and the probable cost involved in establishing a new mission because of inaccessibility would be prohibitive. Upon receiving such negative reports the SUM Committee instructed their missionary to visit Independent Sikkim, where on his first and only visit there he spent two months traveling more than 700 miles by foot. This experience in 1885 in a land previously forbidden to Western Missions now convinced Macfarlane that Sikkim would be the most suitable field for "adoption" by the SUM.²¹

Soon a very positive detailed report—"a voluminous document of 88 octavo pages and a letter of 15"—was dispatched by Macfarlane to the Committee in Scotland, augmented as well by letters of support on the subject from his colleagues Sutherland and Turnbull. In his own lengthy communication, Macfarlane among other things "warmly" recommended "Independent Sikkim as territory to be claimed for Christ."²² In summary, these various dispatches from the three missionaries on the field in effect stated that Sikkim had not yet been carved out by any Mission, and that the country had the following advantages over all other aboriginal areas thus far visited: (a) it was close to Darjeeling; (b) a Training Institution established in Sikkim for indigenous catechists and teachers—such as the four united

University Missionary Associations had desired to see founded—would serve not only that region but also Darjeeling and Kalimpong; (c) the climate was quite acceptable and the cost of a mission would doubtless be less than in the other areas visited; and (d) the languages spoken in Sikkim were those Macfarlane was already proficient in, and thus he could begin work immediately. After due consideration, the SUM Committee sanctioned the creation of a mission to Sikkim.²³

Now the ruling Maharaja had had no objection to Macfarlane's itineration in his land but *had* refused to permit the erection of any mission buildings on his territory.²⁴ Nevertheless, still determined to pioneer the land, Macfarlane went to Darjeeling to set up the Training Institute there,²⁵ where he began "to train twelve Lepchas to return to their homeland with the gospel."²⁶ Thus catalyzed, he set about the founding of the Institute at Darjeeling, which was soon opened in early 1886 for the purpose of serving as a training center to prepare men as preachers and teachers of the Christian Scriptures, looking to the day when a thriving Church could be served by its own ordained clergy and when nationals of the region—both catechists and teachers of the faith—could be sent over the border into Sikkim and perhaps even into the other Himalayan homelands then closed to Western missionaries. It would also serve as a center for the preparation and training of schoolteachers.



Not long into 1886, however, it was decided by Rev. Macfarlane and his colleagues to begin a transfer of the Training Institute to Kalimpong that it might be nearer to inland Sikkim. In anticipation of its eventual wholesale transfer, the foundation stone for this new Kalimpong facility was laid by Macfarlane and Sutherland on 19 April 1886, with the twelve Lepcha students now being enrolled in the first class there. These twelve, a number which soon increased, had necessarily come from Darjeeling and Kalimpong, with some of them beginning their training under a promise to go when trained to Sikkim. "I have no hope," declared Macfarlane at the time, "of being able to influence the people of Sikkim except through having efficient native agents, and such can be got only through this Institution." It needs to be borne in mind, he added realistically, that "it must be slow work building up an efficient Institution from the foundation. The only lads we have got, have, as a rule, to begin with the Hindi alphabet, and it must be the work of years to get them so thoroughly instructed as to be able to teach others."²⁷ Nevertheless, even at this early stage in his thinking, it was Macfarlane's firm belief that such individuals, when properly trained and empowered to serve, would be "more efficient both as Ministers of congregations and as Missionaries than any Europeans can be," since they were "of the people themselves" and knew the people as no foreigners from the West could know them.²⁸

Now it was this devoted missionary's intention to focus part of the year upon the work of the Training Institute and the rest of the year on visiting Sikkim. And although death intervened before he could re-visit that land, nevertheless, by the end of 1886 Macfarlane had raised more than two thousand English pounds for the construction of the Institute at Kalimpong: an

amount sufficient for allowing the building operations to begin late that same year under his supervision.²⁹ By June 1887 eighteen houses for teachers and students, a temporary schoolroom and the necessary outhouses had all been erected, with even a home for the missionary started. It could even be reported that by the close of that same year thirty-six students were enrolled in the Institute—"14 being trained for the Universities' Mission work in Sikkim, 13 for the work in Darjeeling, and 9 for Kalimpong."³⁰ With the total transfer of the Training Institution from Darjeeling having taken place in the same year of Rev. Macfarlane's untimely passing and the completion of its construction having been done by other Scottish missionaries at Kalimpong (especially by Rev. Sutherland), the Institute could begin to receive yearly support from the SUM from that very year onward. And when, as a result of the war with Tibet in 1888, the British by treaty finally gained control of Sikkim as a protectorate in 1890—thus transferring ultimate governmental authority from the Maharaja to the British, the Scottish Mission at Kalimpong was now in an excellent position to begin work in "complete freedom" within that strategically-located territory itself. For instance, it was after this change of rule that Sutherland found in Sikkim a suitable center for mission work at Chidam,³¹ a community located some twenty miles from Kalimpong just to the north of the river Rangit which had served as the border between that heretofore closed land and British India.

Rev. Sutherland, of course, was in charge of this new outreach; but when in 1892 he left for home on a brief furlough, Scots Mission missionary Rev. Robert R. Kilgour, who had originally been sent out from Scotland in 1889 and had been based at Darjeeling ever since, was now asked to take temporary charge of the Sikkimese work. He and his wife would be based at Rhenock just inside Sikkim and only a two days' march from the Jelep La, and from whence he would trek here and there preaching the gospel by means of his magic lantern. The year 1892 also saw another Scottish missionary sent out to join in the work of the Eastern Himalaya Mission. His name was Rev. John Macara; and within a year after his arrival at Darjeeling he was able to be posted to Chidam and took charge of the work in Sikkim. This left Rev. Sutherland, upon his return from furlough, free to devote his whole time to the Training Institution at Kalimpong.³²

Thus was the dream which William Macfarlane could never see come true in his own lifetime fully realized by others within only a few short years of his passing. For by the end of the nineteenth century there were already four catechists of the faith at work in Sikkim as well as a thriving Church of 206 believers there. Moreover, it was reported that the Director of Public Instruction had expressed "in the strongest terms his surprise at the educational results." This was because there were now twelve schools in existence in Sikkim taught by eleven qualified teachers—all of them Christians and all of them trained in the SUM Institute at Kalimpong—with a total of 304 scholars enrolled in the schools!³³

Yet the thrust of Rev. Macfarlane's interest in education and training at Kalimpong not only included academic instruction for the hill area boys but for the girls in the District area as well. For the Boys School which he had inaugurated in the building adjacent to his Kalimpong residence would in time become the first structure to house his Girls School. But it needs to be observed that this missionary was confronted from the very beginning with strong opposition from both parents and guardians when he attempted to initiate an educational program for

the girls in the area. A description of the difficulties which he encountered has been sketched out briefly in the Centenary Memoirs Magazine of the Kalimpong Girls High School (the eventual successor to this Primary School for Girls) that was published in 1991 to help celebrate that institution's first one hundred years (1890-1990). It reads:

Girls of the family were to serve the family; they were to help the family in bringing up the little ones, to look after the house while parents went to work for their livelihood. Rev. Macfarlane met with opposition even from the tea planters, who did not like the idea of being deprived of the cheap labor of the young girls. Hence it took more than a decade after the light of education started in Kalimpong for the inception of [what would ultimately become the] Kalimpong Girls High School to take place.³⁴

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By the time of Macfarlane's death, the Kalimpong Mission compound itself had become quite substantial under the direction and supervision of both the founder and his colleague of a few years, Rev. Sutherland. But then, the latter had not only assumed full charge of the SUM Institution but also the beginning of the work in Sikkim, besides, as well, having been in charge of the Kalimpong Mission itself since 1880! This was obviously too much for one man, and hence Rev. Sutherland looked with anticipation to the soon arrival of Young Men's Guild³⁵ missionary John A. Graham from Scotland, who would shortly thereafter replace the older missionary as the one in charge of the Kalimpong Mission,³⁶ henceforth to be known as the Guild Mission*—leaving Sutherland in charge of both the SUM, with its evangelistic and educational thrust into Sikkim, and of course the Training Institution.

Although in charge of the schools, as well as having assumed the general administration of the Mission since 1880, Rev. Sutherland in time was overshadowed by the arrival of the younger Graham. The relations between the senior missionary at the Mission and his younger associate Graham, though cordial at first, soon became marked by bitter differences of

* It should be understood that with the passage of time there came to be at least four main divisions of what was known as the Eastern Himalaya Mission of the Church of Scotland which Macfarlane had founded under the aegis of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Church at Edinburgh: (1) the Darjeeling Division that included Kurseong and the Terai of District Darjeeling; (2) from (1) had developed the Kalimpong Mission (including the Duars under its jurisdiction) which, prior to its transference to the Guild Mission, had been supported by the Foreign Missions Committee but which after the transference came to be known as the Guild Mission, so called henceforth because, while nonetheless part of the entire Eastern Himalaya Mission of the Church of Scotland, it was to be largely if not entirely supported by the Young Men's Guilds of the Church that had first been created in 1881 but which by 1897 had grown to 681 Guild branches worldwide with a membership of nearly 26,000; (3) the Universities' Mission, whose works—centered in Sikkim and at the Training Institution in Kalimpong—were supported by the Scottish Universities back home; and (4) the Ladies Zenana Mission based at both Darjeeling and Kalimpong, whose works were conducted among the hill girls and women. See O'Malley, *Darjeeling*, 51. It should be added here that with its formation in 1891, the Women's Guild would begin medical work and a Girls' High School in Kalimpong. "With the advent of the Grahams," writes Cindy Perry, "Kalimpong became known as the 'power house' of the ... Mission." And the above-outlined basic organizational structure of the Mission, adds Perry, would hold "throughout the rest of its active involvement in the Eastern Himalayas." *Nepali around the World*, 43.

opinion and quarrels that over the years finally ended in a wide breach between the two. "Sutherland felt, probably correctly," wrote Graham's biographer James Minto, "that the young missionary constantly overstepped his position." "An older Graham," he added, "would perhaps have been able to cope with the situation better." Yet Sutherland's "pioneer work," Minto observed, "should not be overlooked. A big powerful man," he "never spared himself, and his school in Kalimpong was often quoted as a model by school inspectors. He was an excellent headmaster and turned out first-class material." In addition, wrote Minto, "the Training School produced efficient teachers, all of whom were Christians, because Sutherland foresaw a day when the missionary from Scotland would be eliminated from the scene altogether."³⁷

Moreover, the Eastern Himalayan Mission Council, meeting at Siliguri in early 1921 and, having taken note of the soon-retirement of Rev. Sutherland from the mission field, expressed its "deep appreciation of [his] devoted and distinguished missionary service ... It is over 41 years since Dr. Sutherland joined the Eastern Himalayan Mission ... [where] he has labored with remarkable success in the Kalimpong District or in Sikkim with Kalimpong as his headquarters.... The Council rejoice[s] in the recent recognition by [the British Indian] Government of his educational and social work in the award of the Kaiser-i-Hind Medal of the First Class." And three years later, upon the news of Dr. Sutherland's death back in Scotland on 9 May 1924, the Council once again highly praised him and took the opportunity to elaborate much more fully than before on his extraordinary missionary accomplishments: "... with pride and gratitude [the Council recalls] his valuable pioneering work in Sikkim and in the Kalimpong District after his arrival in Darjeeling in 1879; his splendid contribution to the building up of the Church in the Eastern Himalayas; his great work in the training of missionary agents; his scholarship and distinguished educational gifts; his genius in developing new methods of teaching in the Training School; his special interest in the work for Tibet and Bhutan; and his wise counsel and deeply spiritual life."^{37a}

That the Foreign Missions Committee of the Church of Scotland back home thought highly of the work and service of Sutherland is confirmed by what they declared in their Report of 1889, just ten years after his arrival at the Himalaya Mission: "... your Committee would desire to express their deep sense of the noble service which Mr. Sutherland has rendered to the cause of Missions during the nine years he has been in charge of the Kalimpong Mission. Building upon the stable foundations of Mr. Macfarlane he has built up a Mission which in numbers, organization, Christian intelligence, activity and character is his 'joy and crown'."³⁸

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Now in recounting those days just prior to Guild missionary John Graham's arrival at Kalimpong in mid-April 1889, Rev. Graham's biographer Minto has outlined what the plant facility and its environs looked like in that period:

The Mission compound consisted of 16 acres and the rent for this sizable piece of ground was a nominal Rs. 11. The compound was triangular in shape with the base at the northern side and the apex at the northwestern end of the Kalimpong bazaar. The highway to Tibet was the southeastern boundary, although the term "highway" is a trifle misleading as two mules found it difficult to pass at certain places. West of the East Ridge Mr. Sutherland built the new Universities' Mission House. Behind it was the burial-ground which contained the Rev. Macfarlane's grave. Below the Universities' Mission House were two buildings which were long and narrow. One became the Guild Mission House³⁹ and the other the new Training School for Catechists. On the east slope there were two rows of one-roomed houses (eighteen in all) which were for teachers and students at the Training School. These were the surroundings of the Mission which stood on a ridge overlooking the struggling, untidy bazaar.⁴⁰

In fact, the construction of the two long and narrow buildings mentioned by Minto had been started by Macfarlane himself. As one historian of the period has described them, these two structures were "low-roofed one-storied long houses," one of which had originally been built as a hostel for students, and the other as quarters for teachers. In particular, the long and narrow one-storied hostel, in its pristine state, had been divided into separate rooms each of them occupied by two or three students who cooked their own food in the room. Macfarlane "had supervised the construction of the houses, brought materials, and went to the forest to employ woodcutters and sawyers for timber" in their construction.⁴¹

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In sum, the fruit that flowed from the initial efforts of William Macfarlane and the Mission he founded in the Eastern Himalayas of India was nothing short of phenomenal when compared with other similar endeavors. Mention has already been made of the success among the Lepchas and the Sikkimese. In addition, by 1890, just three years after Macfarlane's death, the indigenous Christian community within the entire Scottish Mission area had grown to 1192 believers, a figure almost exactly double the number in 1885 of 599.⁴² Moreover, in 1886, a year prior to the founder's death, there was shown to be on the roll of the Church at Kalimpong a total of "446 baptized Christians in the area," of which "94 had been baptized the previous year" alone.⁴³

Hence, besides the spiritual fruit that was garnered from the steadily enlarging system of schools in the area, there had also been an ingathering of converts from the labors of the Scottish Mission's evangelists and teachers who had been trained and put to work. So that through the preaching and teaching of God's word many baptisms had occurred as well as the formation of congregations of the faithful; with the result that rather substantial church buildings were erected in the more populous communities and smaller meeting places elsewhere, and there had been the emergence also of little house meetings everywhere.

Although these believers would regularly gather for worship services in the various church edifices which began to dot the municipal and more rural landscape of Darjeeling District, it was the little and more numerous house meetings everywhere which, in the view of Jonathan Lindell, were "the heartbeat of the Church." In his recounting of the development of the

Scots Mission before the turn of the century, this missionary historian has provided a quite fascinating description of such house gatherings. He writes:

Folks left their shoes at the door, sat on the floor, and gave themselves to personal meditation and prayer. There was nothing formal to follow here. Everyone could say something, ask questions, and take a turn at prayer about the things on his heart. People could get personal and intimate with each other and with God. They sang songs, read the Bible and listened to it explained, and prayed; everyone prayed, taking turns. And when they prayed they prostrated themselves, with the knees and feet under them and their heads to the floor. They prayed about all kinds of things because they believed that God was with them and loved them and helped and saved them.⁴⁴

Yet there was another dimension to the life and ministry of these Christian saints besides worship and prayer, as vital as these motions of spirituality were in their walk with their God. For this predominantly indigenous Church community by 1891 had itself caught the missionary spirit that had only recently brought its own members to birth in Christ. Within but a scant four years of Founder Macfarlane's death, this precious community of Christians had instituted on its own initiative "the Kalimpong Foreign Mission to Bhutan," it being able the following year to commission two nationals, Karnabir and Jitman, to the southern frontier of Bhutan to do itinerant evangelism. Unfortunately, nothing came of it due to Jitman's subsequent death from cholera and Karnabir's old age.⁴⁵ (Had he survived a cholera epidemic himself that year (1892), Sukhman the Nepalese Gurkha would have been the very first itinerant evangelist to Bhutan. Already having been consecrated for this work in that neighboring land at a meeting of his Church, Sukhman nonetheless died of the dread disease before he could go forth.)⁴⁶ Moreover, by 1905 two representatives of the Church community were finally "allowed to *settle*" in that heretofore closed land.⁴⁷

Overall, as one chronicler of Macfarlane's and the Mission's efforts has noted, by 1899, less than thirty years after the Scotsman's arrival at Darjeeling,

there were 2390 Christians [of all ethnic or national backgrounds], 95 schools, 2492 scholars, and, five years later, 7 ordained Indian ministers and 20 catechists. And the two missionaries of 1870, Macfarlane and Campbell, had become by 1904 a band of eighteen men and women. Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong all had their church buildings [whose congregations would ultimately become self-supporting], the last one [Macfarlane Memorial] with its version of John 3:16 painted on its inner walls in the ten languages spoken in the area.⁴⁸ It is little wonder that Mr. W. P. Livingstone calls this "one of the wonder missions of the world."⁴⁹

By the turn of the century, then, the Church of Scotland Mission had assumed a prominent and quite significant role within the District's general community. Indeed, L. S. S. O'Malley, writing in his gazetteer on Darjeeling published in 1907, had with undoubted authority asserted that no assessment which might be made about the progress of education in District Darjeeling "would be complete or accurate which did not accord the first place of honor to those Christian missionaries who have been pioneers in this as in much other good work." Not only

* These two were doubtless the evangelist Choten Bhutia and the teacher Choda Lepcha. See the following chapter for the details.

have these Scottish missionaries been the pioneers of education among Darjeeling's indigenous population, he added,

but for the last generation practically the only organization for meeting the primary educational wants of the people of the hills has been the Church of Scotland Mission. Government ... has had such confidence in the Mission—a confidence which public opinion, as voiced by municipalities following the lead of Government by planters and by Indians of different classes and creeds, has emphasized as not misplaced—that up till this year (1906) all the Government contributions to primary education, as well as those of the two municipalities of the District, have been entrusted to the Mission for expenditure; for it has been found that practical solid educational work on broad wise lines has been obtained through the Mission at a minimum cost to Government.*

A statistical review of Macfarlane's and the Mission's accomplishments in the field of education can perhaps provide an even better perspective on the success these pioneers achieved in such a relatively short period of time. In 1873, a mere three years following the founding missionary's arrival in Darjeeling, his system of education had so taken hold of the District that the Mission's primary schools numbered 25, boasting an enrollment of 615 scholars of both sexes, though of course mostly boys. By 1906, however, an even greater phenomenal growth than this had been realized: 70 schools (of which 55 were being used for both day and night instruction), with 2420 boys and 300 girls enrolled, and an average attendance by these pupils of 1880.

O'Malley, who had documented the above figures, could provide still further evidence of a spreading educational system geared to the needs of a District bereft for the most part of towns and cities. "A recent return," he wrote in 1907, "showed that very few centers of population are now without some school situated within a reasonable distance, in many cases within a mile or two. The schools are scattered throughout the whole District, in the towns, in the villages, and on the tea gardens; and the help rendered by Government, villagers and tea planters, has gone on steadily since Mr. Macfarlane's day." Moreover, added O'Malley, by 1906, six missionaries were spending part of their time "in superintending the schools of the tracts allotted to their charge, arranging for new openings, appointing and looking after teachers, and regularly examining their work. Each charge has been mapped out into parishes under the immediate supervision of the pastor or catechist, who regularly inspects the schools in his parish, thus introducing the old Scottish parochial school system."⁵⁰

So valued and respected were the Mission's enviable achievements and salutary influence upon many facets of the District's community life that they prompted a former Lieutenant Governor of Bengal (Sir Charles Elliott?) to cite with distinction the contributions which William Macfarlane's missionary organization had made towards the uplift of the entire hill area of Darjeeling:

... the assistance given by this Mission to the work of civilization has been considerable. It has been the agent of Government in the spread of education. It has cooperated with the District

* Incredibly, in fact, Cindy Perry points out that as early as just six months following the arrival of Rev. Macfarlane at Darjeeling in June of 1870 the responsibility for establishing vernacular schools in District Darjeeling "was turned over by the government to the Mission by the end of [that] year"! *Nepali around the World*, 40.

Officer in keeping order in the villages, and in putting down drunkenness, gambling and other vices. Turning to the more definitely religious side, the missionaries have been unusually successful in converting the simple tribes from their animistic or Buddhistic beliefs to the Christian faith.⁵¹

Thus was the rich legacy of this faithful missionary of the Cross and his early efforts on behalf of the kingdom of Christ. The day before his death Macfarlane had spent a long and arduous day in the neighboring forests supervising the cutting and collection of timber for one of the houses he was constructing at Kalimpong for the SUM. The next morning he was found dead in bed by his servant, "lying as if asleep."⁵² The cause of death had been the rupture of a blood vessel in the brain. Only forty-seven when he died on 15 February 1887, William Macfarlane had literally worn himself out by the pace of life he had lived and by the wide variety of labors he had undertaken during his twenty-two full and eventful years as a missionary. The inscription on the founder's tombstone monument, which still lies in what was once the Kalimpong Scottish Mission's burial-ground already mentioned (and called God's Acre), reads as follows:

In Memory of
Rev. William Macfarlane, M.A.
Missionary of the
Church of Scotland
Born at Dunkeld 5 Jan 1840
Ordained 24 Jan 1865
Died at Kalimpong 15 Feb 1887
* * *
"And His Servants Shall Do Him
Service: and They Shall See His Face."
This Monument Is Created by
His Sister
Margaret Ann Macfarlane⁵³

It is worth pondering further the impact of this man's life upon what followed after his passing. Commenting on the incredible results which issued forth from this one missionary life, one of Macfarlane's colleagues in the work, Rev. Kilgour, upon whom, incidentally, O'Malley had depended for much of the account about education which appeared in his gazetteer, had this to say in his 1899/1900 Report from Darjeeling:

A generation has now passed since ... the first representative of the Church of Scotland laid the foundation of the work which has now extended over hills and plains as far north as Sikkim and as far east as the borders of Assam...., humanly speaking, the result of the little seed sown by Macfarlane thirty years ago. [Then, after a summary of statistics indicating growth of the Scottish Mission's work in many fields, Kilgour went on to declare the positive consequences of this one man's labors as perceived in another dimension:]

But figures are only indirectly a measure of progress. There is growth far deeper and more important than that. One visible token may be mentioned: a changed attitude towards Christianity and the Mission over the whole district. Speaking generally, we might say we have conquered the enmity of non-Christians, and have largely overcome the scruples

of those who looked askance at our work. There are new ideals of right living, new thoughts of what a Christian ought to be, even amongst those who are still without the pale of Christianity. Not that all, or even the large majority, are Christians or even inclined to Christianity, but that their views have been changed. The new religion is no longer to be ignored, its disciples no longer to be despised because of their creed. In every important department of local life, positions of high responsibility are now in the hands of Christians. They are no longer an obscure sect in these hills. They are a body of people recognized by all best capable of judging as a growing power in the land.⁵⁴

It was into such a promising and positive milieu as this in the Eastern Himalayas, created in part by the vigorous foundational endeavors of William Macfarlane and those other earlier pioneers, that Dorje Tharchin would now enter and add whatever contributions he, too, could make to the furtherance of the influence of the Christian faith in the region, and particularly among the Tibetan people both within and along the fringes of the still Closed Land of Tibet.*⁵⁵

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Now at the time when Tharchin was making his way to Kalimpong from Ghoom to enroll in the Teacher Training program, the SUM Institution, still under Rev. (later Dr.) Sutherland's able direction as Principal,⁵⁶ was continuing to train in its classes the future teachers, catechists and preachers for the Church of Scotland Eastern Himalaya Mission area. Concomitant with this goal, the SUMI was gradually developing within its overall program at Kalimpong a Higher Secondary School that would serve not only the educational needs of the children of various nationalities in and around the area but would at the same time also serve as a higher grade training laboratory for those who would be prepared in the Teacher Training School to be the future Secondary schoolteachers throughout the District and elsewhere.⁵⁷ For many years previously, of course, the Training School had already been enrolling would-be teachers of primary school education and providing them with theoretical lessons as well as practical

* Interestingly, Tharchin would himself have the opportunity of offering his own encomiums in honor of the founder of the Scottish Mission in these parts. The occasion was the Centenary Year of Rev. Macfarlane's arrival in District Darjeeling for the purpose of establishing the Mission and its work. While writing up a summary of Church news for the year 1970 relative to Kalimpong's Tibetan congregation which he by then had been pastoring for decades, Rev. Tharchin waxed eloquently in memory of the long departed founder:

We remember this year 1970 as the Centenary Year of the Church of Scotland Mission work in the Eastern Himalayan Church Council area with a sense of deep gratitude and great affection to Rev. William Macfarlane who came to this area a hundred years ago as the first missionary of the Church of Scotland and brought among us the message of salvation. Though we did not see Rev. Macfarlane, yet by his dedicated service for the welfare of this area, we can imagine his love for the people and faith in God. We can see him even today by his deeds, as we are told in the Bible that those who have seen the Son can also see the Father. We thank God, by whose Holy Spirit [was] raised up for us such a leader, teacher and founder like Rev. Macfarlane. Let us pay him our best tribute by dedicating ourselves to follow in his footsteps.

As the remaining chapters of the present biography will amply demonstrate, Tharchin—by his own life and labor—himself more than admirably lived up to this very admonition with which he concluded his tribute to the sterling pioneer of the Eastern Himalaya Mission. See Tharchin, "Church News of the Tibetan Congregation, Kalimpong, for the Year 1970," a three-page typed document submitted (early 1971?) for eventual publication in the *Eastern Himalayan Church News* (UCNI), p. 1, ThPaK.

training in classroom settings. Moreover, all teachers in the Primary Schools of the Scots Mission were gradually being sent to Kalimpong's SUM Institution for refresher courses.⁵⁸ Statistically, in fact, the enrollment for the various schools of the Institution in 1917 (the year Tharchin himself became a student at the SUMI) was quite impressive: Training School, 45; Primary School, 211; and Middle and High School, 91.⁵⁹ Truly it could be stated without any possibility of contradiction that the SUM Training Institution was having a widely-felt educational, cultural and even religious impact throughout the entire Darjeeling "wedge-district." As one Scottish Church Missions historian of the period had declared in 1914, by means of the work of the Training School at Kalimpong,

efficient teachers have been placed in all the schools, and an elementary education in the native language given to a very large proportion of the rising generation. Almost the whole education of the hill-district is in the hands of the Mission with the sanction and ever-increasing help of the Government. While the instruction given includes a Bible lesson as a *sine qua non*, no school is ever used as a proselytizing agency; and the confidence of the people in the work is admirably shown by their willingness to send their children to the Mission schools.⁶⁰



Returning, now, to the present narrative, it needs to be understood that from a purely psychological perspective the Ghoom missionaries themselves were interested in deputing Tharchin to the Kalimpong Training School temporarily because they thought this would divert him from his already premeditated intention to bid goodbye to Ghoom and either pack himself off to his beloved Simla or else settle *permanently* in Kalimpong. Concerning his eventual enrollment in the SUMI's training program, Tharchin remarked, "I am sure this was the leading of the Lord. My admission into the Training School bettered my status as a teacher, as the subsequent events bear out." He, like others in the program, was to be trained in modern methods of teaching. "Besides taking part in the ordinary schoolwork, including religious teaching," observed the Scotland-based Foreign Missions Committee in its Report for 1913 about the work at the SUMI, "all the students in training received special instruction in the methods and principles of education."⁶¹ Dorje Tharchin would be no exception to this overall program for those enrolled.

A very good idea of what student life must have been like for the twenty-seven-year-old Tharchin in 1917 can be gleaned from a thoroughly detailed description that was given by Principal Sutherland some eighteen years before—a description that the Scottish Church historian, D. G. Manuel, has observed had undergone little change by the time he himself visited the SUMI in 1914, just three years prior to Tharchin's own enrollment there. It will not be without some interest to the reader to quote a few lengthy extracts from Sutherland's vivid observations:

... Between thirty and forty are always under training. Their ages range from fifteen to thirty-five, their acquaintance with books being commonly in inverse proportion to the number of years....

Every student receives a scholarship of from 5 to 7 rupees, equal to 6s. to 9s. a month, out of which he has to provide himself with food, clothes, books, and everything else he may require.

After three or four years' study, the period varying according to the capabilities of the student and the exigencies of outside work, they return to preach and to teach in the districts whence they came.

The worldly goods of a student at the beginning of his theological career consist mostly of a meager suit of clothes to wear by day, and which he may not put off at night in cold weather; two blankets for bedding—one to lay on the floor as mattress, the other for covering; and a brass pot wherein to cook his rice. A fresh student has no furniture of his own, and none is provided for him. The floor serves him as table, chair, and bed.... He obtains possession of English illustrated papers, and adorns the gray mud-plastered walls of his room with pictures of Her Majesty, the Empress of India, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the other members of the Royal Family available, members of Parliament, Moderators of the General Assembly [of the Scottish Church], generals of the army, etc., varied by photographs by Mrs. Graham of the local celebrities. In process of time the room becomes really attractive, and acquires a certain amount of culture.

The students are all Christian, and the object of all the teaching is to fit them to be wise Christian teachers and preachers. The first and constant textbook is the Bible. Above all things, the care is that they may know and appreciate the Scriptures, that they may be filled with the Word of God. The day begins with a Bible Class at seven in the morning, after which they go to their houses to cook and eat breakfast and refresh their memories against half-past ten, when schoolwork begins. In all the classes, the first forty-five minutes is devoted to Scripture, and again the last half-hour before school closes at four in the afternoon. Besides Grammar, Geography, History, Arithmetic, Euclid, Physics, etc., they have Old and New Testament History, Church History, Pastoral Theology, and Apologetics, with special reference to Hinduism.

On Saturday school is closed. This is the great bazaar day in Kalimpong, when thousands assemble from far and near to buy and sell, to meet their friends, to hear and tell the news, and to make holiday. At noon, students and teachers go down to the preaching-hall which opens on three sides.... And for two hours or more the old, old story of Jesus and His love holds sway.*

On Sunday morning, about 7 o'clock, about a score of the students, two by two, go out to the villages round about Kalimpong to teach Sunday schools.⁶²

Manuel himself adds that "details such as these ... tell of the way in which many who are now pastors and catechists and teachers were trained and fitted for the life-work which they are doing so well." Manuel then goes on to tell of the few changes he noted when visiting in 1914:

* Of this bazaar Preaching-Hall or -House, Rev. Graham had this to say: "Advantage is taken of the great concourse of people to proclaim the gospel from the Preaching-House built for the purpose. Mr. Sutherland and his training-school teachers and students draw the crowds by their singing, and at intervals addresses are given in different languages. By this means many from near and far first hear the gospel, and others attend from week to week. The direct conversions from such bazaar preaching are not numerous, but the method is one—and an important one—of a number of agencies, all of which seek to bring the gospel message to bear upon the people." *On the Threshold of Three Closed Lands*, 53-4. During the years and decades of Gergan Dorje Tharchin's lengthy residence in Kalimpong, he would himself frequently engage in such evangelistic activity from this same Preaching-House; see further on this in Chapter 16 of the present volume.

... The present writer had an opportunity of seeing somewhat minutely the altered conditions amid which Dr. Sutherland now carries on his work. During the month of February of this year the handsome Training School over which he presides was occupied by 57 students, preparing for some form of Christian service, and by 238 pupils, who were attending [the Primary School and] the Middle English School. The students in residence were housed in two large dormitories above the classrooms, one of which contained 24 beds and another 20. Over each of these dormitories a senior student, chosen specially for his outstanding qualities, is appointed prefect.... Each student must still bring with him, when he begins his studies, three blankets and two suits of clothes; but he has not to create his own furniture. Each student may still have to do his cleaning up and his cooking; but on a well-wrought-out principle of division of labor the work is carried on. On the Saturdays, committees are appointed for work throughout the week, and each student has to take his turn in cleaning or cooking as the case may be. The Scripture lesson may now be given at half-past six o'clock in the morning instead of seven, but it means that those of the boys whose turn it may not be to cook the breakfast may spend some time in gardening.

Perhaps more significant than all is the common meal which at breakfast-time Dr. and Mrs. Sutherland share with the boys. All partake of the rice and dhal which the boys have cooked, and all seem thoroughly to enjoy it. It was the writer's good fortune to join in the morning meal, and ... it was his to see for himself how substantial could be their repast. Everywhere and in everything feelings of happiness preponderated, and everywhere and in everything did the best of training seem to be given....

... Of the 57 students in training, all of whom are Christians, 5 are Mechis, 5 are Tibetans, 22 are Nepalis, and 25 are Lepchas. Of the 238 pupils in the [lower schools], the following figures represent their nationality and religious profession. The Nepalis number 153, and of these 30 are Christian and 123 Hindus; Lepchas number 36, of whom 31 are Christian, and 5 Animistic. Tibetans number 21, of whom 3 are Christian and 18 Buddhist. Marwaris, and others from the plains of India, number 17, of whom 14 are Hindus and 3 Mohammedans. Chinese number 11, all of whom are Confucians.⁶³

In the Teacher Training School Dorje Tharchin—as a consequence of his having received a Government scholarship—was offered Rs. 7/- as a Government stipend, no different from the student stipend indicated by Sutherland in his description of student life for 1899. Out of this, he used to spend Rs. 5/- for defraying the boarding expenses, and earmarked the other Rs. 2/- to be set aside as pocket money for himself. “I still remember,” recalled Tharchin, “that with such a small amount available we used to purchase one seer of fine village rice for four annas that now costs Rs. 4/- for exactly the same quality.” Apparently the cost and quality of rice and dhal for breakfast had also little changed.

Prior to his actual entrance into the Training School, a difficulty arose out of Tharchin's aversion to accepting the above-stated financial proposal because his income from the Government stipend came to only Rs. 7/- per month while in the Mission service he was drawing Rs. 17/-. This therefore meant that once enrolled in the training program he would have incurred a loss of Rs. 10/- per month as compared to his original income of Rs. 17/- from the Ghoom Mission. The Mission tried to increase its contribution, but he was not satisfied with the slight increment it initially offered, and rightly so. Ultimately, however, after considering all facets to the question, the Mission decided to pay him a monthly Rs. 10/-. Thus from both Mission and Government sources he managed to exact his previously regular monthly income of Rs. 17/-. This incident revealed Tharchin as a businessman in the making.

In accordance with the normal procedures, of course, he had to execute an agreement with the Mission which obligated him to serve in its school back in Ghoom for the stipulated period of five years after the termination of the training course at the SUMI.

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It should be mentioned at this point in the narrative that by the end of 1916 at Ghoom, the year just prior to his enrollment in the Teacher Training program at Kalimpong, Tharchin had succeeded in compiling a second primer of the Tibetan language entitled, *The Tibetan Second Book*, his first ever publication of many that were to follow. (The first primer, entitled *Tibetan Primer with Simple Rules of Correct Spelling*, had already been compiled by Rev. Waismaa, and published at Ghoom by the Free Church of Finland Mission—the Finnish Department of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission—in 1912; by the early 1960s it had gone through several revised editions, with the Fourth and Sixth ones having been printed by Gergan Tharchin himself at his Tibet Mirror Press, Kalimpong, in 1954 and 1962, respectively.) In his Preface to the First Edition of the *Second Book* dated 7 August 1917* Tharchin explained that “the need for the Second Tibetan Reading Book based on modern methods” had often been mentioned to him “by missionaries and other friends.” Eventually the Secretary of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission’s Upper Primary School at Ghoom, where Tharchin taught, “formally requested” him “to undertake the composition” of such a book. Realizing the great importance, wrote Tharchin, of a volume like this “for the Tibetans, my own people, I gladly assented to the proposal.” And like everything else he ever set his hand to accomplish, he made the book, to use his own words, “as useful and efficient” as it “lay within my power” to do. It should be noted in passing that Tharchin acknowledged in his Preface his “indebtedness” to two individuals who have already been mentioned in the present narrative—Headmaster Karma Sumdhon Paul and Ani Kempe—for the great help they gave him in the production of the volume.

Before submitting this second primer to the press for printing, however, the Ghoom Mission as publisher first had to obtain the Education Department’s acceptance of it as a prescribed textbook for the schools. And like the Waismaa primer before it, the Tharchin one, once it had gained the requisite acceptance of Bengal’s Director of Public Instruction, was also printed by the Baptist Mission Press in Calcutta.

* Since Tharchin’s preface to the book is dated thus, conceivably he may have finished work on its compilation during the early months following his relocation to Kalimpong. For it is known from Tharchin himself that he transferred to the latter place at the beginning of 1917. This is made clear in a passage from a report prepared by Jesuit Fr. Henry Hosten of a conversation he had with the Tibetan at Darjeeling in June 1925: “At the beginning of 1917 the [Ghoom] Finnish Mission sent Tharchin to Kalimpong to the school for the education of teachers ...” Hosten had conveyed his report to Swiss pastor Oskar Pfister, who in turn included its contents in a volume the pastor would later publish entitled *Die Legende Sundar Singhs*, 213.

Conceivably as well, the long lapse of time between 1 Jan. 1917 and the date of publication shortly after 7 Aug. 1917 can perhaps be accounted for by the fact that the Ghoom Mission had to delay the book’s publication till Bengal’s Education Department gave its approval. See later in the Text above for an explanation.

Before proceeding further with the narrative, a few words ought to be interposed here regarding what eventually became of this primer, for it came to play an important role in the education of many Tibetans: including those many who fled their homeland to India and elsewhere among the Himalayan lands in the 1950s and '60s. It will be of interest to note, first of all, that this second primer ultimately went through three successive Revised Editions at the hands of Tharchin: in 1953, 1962 and 1968, respectively, all three having been printed and published by Tharchin at the Tibet Mirror Press he had established in Kalimpong. The printer-publisher explained in his Preface to the 1953 edition the circumstances which impelled another edition and how the rights to the book itself henceforth came into his possession:

The Book was out of print for several years and the demand for the same increased very much from the schools and students alike by which the Mission felt the necessity of republishing it, but due to various reasons they could not undertake the work. After mutual settlement, the Mission granted me the permission to republish it as my own and at my own cost and for which I am much thankful to them....

Now I felt that this Book needed a thorough revision according to the modern style. So I have ventured to revise this Book by adding and changing a few lessons.

By the time of the Third Revised Edition of 1962 Tharchin could report in his Preface that the second primer had come to be used and appreciated in the following school systems: those of the Darjeeling District, Sikkim, Bhutan, Leh in Ladakh, and Himachal Pradesh. And by 1968 with the Fourth Revised Edition it was being distributed freely to the schools established among the Tibetan refugees who had in the meantime come to India in the tens of thousands as a result of the cruel retribution meted out to Tibet in response to the uprising in 1959 against her foreign Chinese masters.



Returning once again to the present narrative, it should be pointed out that as a sequel to the publication in 1917 of Tharchin's *Tibetan Second Book*, the then Principal of the SUMI Institution, Dr. Sutherland, noticed this second primer of Tharchin's listed in the catalogue of Government-approved books prescribed for the Indian educational institutions. Immediately Sutherland sent for K. D. Pradhan,⁶⁴ who was then serving as an assistant teacher in the same school, and inquired of him as to why Tharchin had not intimated this publishing achievement at the time of his joining the SUMI Training School in that same year of 1917.* Dr. Sutherland had obviously been left in the dark regarding Tharchin's command of the Tibetan language. It should be explained that prior to this, in 1915, a trainee at the SUMI from Lachung in northern Sikkim had been engaged to teach Tibetan during one of the free hours within the training program but that later he had left to enlist in the army (the Great War was then in progress). Still faced with this vacant hour, Dr. Sutherland, upon learning of Tharchin's

* This year date is per GTUM TsMs, 93-4. John Bray is in error in stating that Tharchin had found his way to Kalimpong "in the 1920s." See his brief sketch of the Indo-Tibetan's life in his study on "Christian Missions and the Politics of Tibet, 1850-1950," in W. Wagner, ed., *Kolonien und Missionen*, 185.

ability, was reported by the Tibetan later to have personally asked him if he was indeed the author of the *Second Book*; “to which,” said Tharchin, “I replied in the affirmative.” Whereupon Sutherland, who according to Tharchin had been “on the look-out for an English-knowing Tibetan teacher” for the free hour, “asked [me] to give lessons in Tibetan to the Tibetan and Bhutanese boys in addition to [pursuing my] own work in Teachers Training.” And when Tharchin said he would, SUMI’s Principal immediately requisitioned and appointed him to teach the Tibetan language during that hour. “I was very much pleased with this new assignment,” observed Tharchin. “I endeavored to fulfill my responsibilities and duties as a Tibetan teacher as conscientiously as possible and, I hope, to the best satisfaction of the Principal.”⁶⁵ As can plainly be seen from Manuel’s numerical breakdown of the SUMI Institution’s various student bodies into ethnic groups in 1914, Tharchin could quite easily have had by 1917 as many as twenty-one or more Tibetan (and Bhutanese) scholars to instruct who were enrolled in the lower school grades and, depending on their ages, as many as five or more Tibetans who were in the Training Program. Quite a responsibility indeed!

*

Decades later, incidentally, Tharchin would speak with fond affection in recalling Kristo Das Pradhan, the assistant SUMI teacher whom Sutherland had sounded out regarding the second Tibetan primer and its author. In reminiscing about his dear friend Pradhan, the Tibetan had this to say:

In those days he was the hostel superintendent [as well, of course, as teacher]. It was customary then for the students or the hostellers to attend the regular prayer meetings every day both in the morning and evening. Besides this normal routine, K. D. Pradhan—who was a very spiritually devotional personality—used to gather a few select students to teach them from the Bible. In those gatherings he used to encourage them in meditating for about fifteen or twenty minutes, and then he would call upon someone to pray. He also used to pray with the students. He was indeed a very spiritual Christian.*

Tharchin also recalled having attended his friend’s wedding that was held in the local Macfarlane Memorial Church, and that was followed by a fine wedding feast held in K. D.’s home, which at that time was on the way as one goes to Durpin. After his marriage Pradhan left the hostel work and in his place Tharchin was appointed a superintendent of the hostel by the SUMI Principal Dr. Sutherland.

* If Tharchin thought highly of K. D. Pradhan, the latter would come to think equally as much of Tharchin in the years which lay ahead. In an interview in early 1995 with K. D.’s son P. R. Pradhan, the present writer was told by him his father’s quite succinct but laudatory estimation of the Tibetan. As he was growing up in Kalimpong during the 1920s, ’30s and ’40s, reported P. R., his father’s continual “one-line assessment” of his friend Gergan Tharchin, and which he “heard over and over again” fall from his father’s lips, was the brief sentence of praise: “He is a *wonderful* man!” Born in 1923, P. R. Pradhan had first come to know his father’s dear Tibetan friend in the 1930s when still a teen-ager, and would himself go on to serve, as did his illustrious father K. D. before him, as one of the SUMI’s Principals (1965-early 1988). Interview, held at the Allan Manse (residence of the SUMI Principals, where even now P. R.’s elder son serves as Principal), Kalimpong, Jan. 1995.

Pradhan had joined the Staff at SUMI in 1913/14 and, according to one authority, came to be “known by all students as NAYA SIR.” Moreover, he “was the right hand of Dr. Sutherland in the office and outside.” Furthermore, as to his teaching, “it is impressive,” he also having “patience for defaulters.”⁶⁶ K. D. Pradhan would ultimately serve as Principal of the SUM Institution between 1952 and 1957. Concomitantly with this responsibility he would also serve, from 1952 onwards until his retirement, as the acting Principal of the local Christian college. From among all the local Christians in Kalimpong, Pradhan had the distinction of being the first person ever to have obtained an M.A. degree in philosophy, which he secured privately from the University of Calcutta. Throughout his long and distinguished career he was a contributor of thought-provoking articles to well-known periodicals. In addition, he was instrumental in the revision of the Nepali New Testament up to the book of First Corinthians, K. D. following in the footsteps of his illustrious maternal grandfather, Ganga Prasad Pradhan—the “Father of the Nepali Bible” himself who was mentioned earlier in the present chapter. As one of his former students in the Christian college afterwards recalled, he well remembered Principal Pradhan “for his simplicity of life, clarity of thought, exactness of expression and depth of knowledge, as well as his sincerity and piety.”

Furthermore, at the Farewell Ceremony for Professor Pradhan on the occasion of his retirement from teaching and hosted by the Principal and Staff of the SUM Institution, Tharchin, as one of the main speakers at the function, offered up highly appreciative remarks on the character and Christian testimony of this dear saint. Found among the Tharchin Papers was an outline of his speech in honor of Pradhan. This was listed on the verso of the invitation sent to the Indo-Tibetan that announced the upcoming Ceremony. He prefaced his kind remarks on the beloved Professor by saying: “I knew him since 1917 and was his student till May 1921.” Tharchin then went on to cite for those assembled ten distinctive traits or characteristics that he who had known him so well had observed in K. D. Pradhan: (1) a God-fearing man; (2) one whose religious faith had been truly *bhakti* in character: faithful devotion and prayerfulness to his personal Christian God; (3) a tireless laborer for his Lord and His people; (4) long-suffering towards other people’s troubles and problems; (5) a lover of Christ; (6) a humble man; (7) a just man; (8) one who was equal and fair to all; (9) not prideful; and (10) one whose life served as a pattern for others to emulate.

It may finally be of interest to note that one of the principal thoroughfares in Kalimpong, K. D. Pradhan Road, was named after him. It is along this very hill-road that Gergan Tharchin would build his home and, with his wife, establish the Himalayan Children’s Home—both of which still exist today.

*

The years 1917 and 1919-20 proved to be extremely busy ones for Dorje Tharchin due to a number of travels he would make to Sikkim and to Bhutan. An entire chapter—Chapter 13 to follow—has been devoted to detailing for the reader the journeys he made to the latter country, because these were major undertakings having more than usual significance both

for Tharchin and for the Bhutanese state itself. Just here, however, the shorter and less significant visits he made to Sikkim can be narrated more briefly.

The first of these occurred in less than a year of Tharchin's arrival at SUMI, it taking place in December of 1917, just after the beginning of the academic winter vacation. This particular journey would be to the western part of Sikkim, an area of this small kingdom which had not been traversed by the Tibetan when he had trekked through Sikkim's eastern and southern districts three years earlier with Sadhu Sundar Singh. Now Dr. Sutherland had effected an arrangement whereby Tharchin (as an interpreter) was to accompany four members of the Calcutta University Commission, one of whom happened also to be Bengal's Director of Public Instruction, Mr. W. W. Hornell. The latter was already acquainted with Tharchin's work, having reviewed and approved as a prescribed textbook for Bengal's schools his second primer of the Tibetan language mentioned earlier, *The Tibetan Second Book*, before it had been published and circulated for use. Hornell's acceptance of the work, incidentally, had occurred only a few months prior to this proposed trek into Sikkim, since Tharchin's Preface to the *Second Book* was dated 7 August 1917.

Now the contemplated trip for these four Commissioners was primarily cultural in character, with the centerpiece of the tour being to visit the oldest monastery, Padma Yangtse, in western Sikkim.⁶⁷ Spelled also as Pema-yangtse and meaning "The Sublime Perfect Lotus," it is not only one of the oldest but also the most important of the Sikkimese monasteries, since among other reasons this monastic institution—at least up through the 1940s—was still only accepting candidates for the priesthood from the upper classes. Not only was this monastery the official center of religion in the State but also near its precincts could still be found ruins of the ancient palace of the former maharajas. Situated at a height of 6840 feet, the monastery provides a panoramic view of the stupendous Kanchenjunga range of snow peaks that glitter in the morning sun. Built in 1705, this gompa of the Nyingmapa Red Sect of the Buddhist Church was at one time presided over by the Royal priest who once officiated the coronation of the earlier maharajas. Very modern in its appearance, its beauty, wrote David Macdonald in 1943, was now "marred by a corrugated iron roof, a testimony to the march of progress in the Himalayas!" In this monastery is housed a large Buddha's image as well as an image of Padma Sambhava, the founder of the Nyingmapa Red Sect of Buddhism in Tibet.⁶⁸

But of far greater spiritual significance, according to Nikolai Roerich, was the old monastery of Tashiding, which was but one day's march distant from Padma Yangtse and which the Commissioners and their interpreter Tharchin must have also visited while in the district. Tashiding, noted Bip Pares, was "like a fairy city among the clouds that float over and beneath it and cling to its every side." Crowning the summit, as it did, of a steep conical mountain that is washed on three sides by different rivers, a climb of 2500 feet up from the riverbed is required to reach the gompa. Nevertheless, this six- or seven-hour ascent to the hill's 4800-foot summit follows along a pleasant trail that takes one through fields and cardamom groves, giant bamboos, and orange gardens. Near the gompa stands even today an old chorten which reputedly contains the remains of the mythical Buddha who preceded Gautama. Considered so holy by the local inhabitants, this sacred erection is known as the *Thong-werang-to*—"The Savior by Mere Sight." For it is believed by thousands of pilgrims who yearly come here for the Bhum Chu or Water Pot Ceremony that all sins shall be cleansed

by merely contemplating this great sacred chorten of Tashiding. And thus Tashiding, whose name itself means in Tibetan, “The Elevated Central Glory,” is deemed to be the holiest of all holy hills in Sikkim. Wrote Pares of Tashiding gompa’s appearance and ethereal atmosphere:

As it rises, as if from out of nowhere—for mist surrounds the base of the mountain and the riverbed—one realizes what an eye for beauty these ancient lamas had who founded their temples and monasteries always on some site where, not only are the immediate surroundings beautiful, but from which there is always a magnificent view of the mountains above the clouds. This place seems to symbolize what one’s first childish impressions of Heaven used to be—a golden-roofed city floating amidst white clouds.

The lamas, he added, were wise enough “to find an outlet for their souls when for a lifetime their bodies must be imprisoned within these precincts.” It would have been much more difficult for them, Pares concluded, to have spent year upon year secluded away in some shut-in-valley than on some spur from which mountains could be seen.⁶⁹

Such, then, were some of the sights Tharchin must have enjoyed as he and the four Commissioners toured throughout the area. This lasted for about a week, after which they finally returned via Namchi to the southeast. From there the party proceeded across the Sikkim-Indian border to Darjeeling Town where they put themselves up in the Planters’ Club. Tharchin reported that the Commissioners had given him an excellent certificate of merit. And indeed, found among his personal papers was a note of commendation handwritten in ink and signed by Mr. Hornell, D.P.I. Bengal, under the embossed logo and letterhead of the Calcutta University Commission. Dated 30 December 1917, it read:

Tarchin [*sic*], a Thibetan schoolmaster, went with a party of the Commission to Pemionchi, as an interpreter. He was very useful to us. His knowledge of English is good and I can confidently recommend him as a man of excellent disposition and capacity. He recently went with Dr. Sutherland and me to Bhootan.

More than a year would elapse before Tharchin would make another trek into this same neighboring state, but this time into *northern* Sikkim. It will be recalled that in late 1912, not long after he had first arrived in Ghoom, the Tibetan from Poo had made his very first journey into Sikkim. And at that time his destination was the Christian mission station at Lachen in the north and the Christian congregation that was there. At Kalimpong, however, there would arise an opportunity to travel to Lachen’s sister station at Lachung that was situated to the east but along a different mountain valley by which to get there from the south more directly. This visit would occur in January of 1919 during the winter break at SUMI that had begun in December of the previous year. The primary purpose of the journey was to offer at respective stages along the way a Life of Christ show on the magic lantern as well as recently developed and mounted pictures of Bhutan, and those also of the Great War, whose hostilities had just been concluded by the Armistice that was signed in Europe on 11 November 1918.

Having gone back in December to Ghoom early on in the 1918/19 winter break to visit with old friends and to prepare for the contemplated tour, Tharchin, now equipped with the magic lantern and slides, departed from there with his fellow-companion in the gospel—a brother James—on 30 December and headed for the river Rangit. After staying overnight at

the familiar dak bungalow that was there, the two trekked into Sikkim the following day up to Namchi village and onward the next day to Temi. Upon arrival here on New Year's Day 1919 they were met by Dr. Sutherland, who was most likely staying at the Mission bungalow where five years earlier Tharchin and Sundar Singh had enjoyed a lunch with a missionary couple and where the Sadhu had delivered a sermon before a small assembly of saints on the bungalow's veranda (see again Volume I, Chapter 9). Now according to a penciled note in Tharchin's expense diary he had kept of the journey, the Tibetan that very day received from the SUMI Principal a gift of Rs. 20/-.

It is not too much to assume that on the second of their two-night stay at Temi Tharchin and James were asked by Dr. Sutherland to show at the Mission bungalow the Life of Christ on the magic lantern before a group of assembled believers and other interested folk, as well as perhaps the Bhutan and War slides. Whether that was the case or not, it is known for certain that they presented these latter slides at Singtam, the next halting point in their travels together towards Gangtok. For included in the travel diary, to which apparently both travelers contributed entries, is an unfinished inked draft of a letter dated "Singtam, 4-1-19" in what appears to be the handwriting of brother James and that reads:

Dear Sir,

We did not go to Sang [a neighboring village] because the teacher was not at Sang and the villagers told us that there cannot be a great assembly, so we stayed at Singtam. The first night [i.e., 3 January, which was the night of the day they left Temi and descended easily to this large bazaar village of Singtam] we showed the Bhutan and the War slides, and the second night [that very night of the 4th on which James still later that night wrote this letter] we showed about Bhutan.

From Singtam's familiar dak bungalow on the 5th, the two travelers now headed for the Sikkimese capital along an arduous, mostly uphill, and quite lengthy trail of 18 miles which they nonetheless negotiated all in one day. Here they would remain for four days and five nights. Without question the highlight of their stay in Gangtok occurred on the 6th of January when they "had the honor," Tharchin would later write, "of showing the pictures at the Sikkim Durbar for the entertainment of the newly arrived Maharani and the mother of the Maharaja who was then absent, being away in Delhi."

Continuing on their tour north and showing the magic lantern at various other places along the trail (they halting at such villages and towns as Dikchu, Ringam, Mangam and Chungthang), Tharchin and James finally reached Lachung on the 13th of January, a town some 40 to 50 trekking miles north northeast of the Sikkimese capital. And as was the case when at Lachen six years earlier, here at Lachung Tharchin was able to have sweet fellowship with a local body of Christians that had likewise been established by the missionaries of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission shortly after the turn of the twentieth century. And at Lachung, as elsewhere on the trek, these two evangelists would show the lantern presentation on the Life of Christ, which must have pleased the saints and attracted as well the interest of some if not all of the non-Christian inquirers there—who were doubtless present at the show too.

After a number of days had passed, the Tibetan and his companion bade goodbye to their Christian hosts and retraced their steps down to as far as Gangtok and Singtam. From the latter place, however, instead of trekking back to Ghoom Tharchin and James journeyed to

Rangpo and on to Kalimpong. Here the Tibetan language teacher arrived in late January, well in advance of the time in March of 1919 when a new academic year would begin at the SUM Institution.⁷⁰

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By the end of 1919 Tharchin had successfully passed his Teachers Training examination, “a four-year course,” he long afterwards recalled, “but which,” he added, he “took less than three years to finish.” As required by the agreement he had signed, Tharchin went back to Ghoom, where he was reinstated in his previous teaching posts. “But no sooner had a month passed,” he later noted, he “was called back to Kalimpong.” Dr. Sutherland had contacted the Ghoom Finnish Mission to ask that it release Tharchin in order that he might serve permanently as a full-time teacher of Tibetan in the SUM Institution itself. Furthermore, Sutherland also indicated that if he wished, and without any fees or charges, Tharchin, as the latter himself phrased it, could “side by side to his Tibetan Teacher post prosecute his studies” at the Kalimpong Institution “up to the Matriculation standard ... of Calcutta University.”

When the Ghoom Mission authorities kindly consented to cooperate with the proposal of Dr. Sutherland, the Tibetan from Poo, being the ambitious person that he was, was quick to grasp the offer, he taking full advantage of the opportunity to better himself professionally and academically. Thanking his Finnish Mission superiors for their willingness to abrogate the agreement for his sake and for SUMI’s, Tharchin resigned his position at Ghoom almost immediately and went back to Kalimpong to take up the Tibetan teaching post in the Institution. At the same time he commenced his program of attending classes as a regular student in preparation for eventually passing the Calcutta University Matric examination (a program, however, which he would never complete out of deference to an opportunity that arose for him to go to Tibet). Tharchin worked hard on teaching Tibetan but applied himself even harder to learning more about other school subjects. Commenting later on this, he said:

I desired to improve my compass of knowledge and therefore I utilized every moment to master the school curriculum. I tried my level best to acquaint myself with the particulars of the modern sciences as they were taught in the school. I am thankful to the school authorities for granting me special consideration to attend the classes regularly and even to appear for the periodic examinations as though I were a regular normal student. I am, above all else, thankful to the Lord for this occasion to equip myself educationally.⁷¹

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It ought to be mentioned that at the opening of the school year of 1918 (which was a year after Dorje Tharchin had initially commenced his program at SUMI) the Institution had had

just six classes operating. Every year thereafter, however, it upgraded itself by one additional class until by the year 1921 it had become a full-fledged high school. Tharchin had the unique privilege of teaching Tibetan to the first batch of Tibetan students at the secondary level ever to enter the SUMI. He prepared these students for the High School's final examination for that academic year (1921), but left at the end of April that year* before the actual examination period had arrived because by that time he had received a long-awaited chance to go to the land of Tibet.

In Tharchin's absence one of his brilliant students, Chhotuk by name, stepped into the shoes of his master and assumed the task of a Tibetan teacher for the remaining months of the 1921 school year; indeed, he would continue on the Staff of SUMI through 1926.⁷² (Chhotuk, incidentally, would go on to become the Rev. C. T. Pazo, the longtime but later retired indigenous Lepcha minister of the CNI local church at Gangtok.†)⁷³ When asked further about the *number* of students who had enrolled for the examination, Tharchin paused, then smiled and said, "I coached only two students, yet both of them passed and therefore none failed. So my result," he added with a twinkle in his eye, "was still cent percent!" This would not be the last time this inveterate word-player of languages would pull the proverbial pun!



Reflecting back upon these school days when he was both student and teacher, Gergan Tharchin had this to say:

Those days were quite different in many respects compared to the more modern times of today. The students then were simple and loving. They were not cunning or crafty as we find them today. Besides, they were peaceful, and obedient to their immediate superiors. Their respect

* The source for this date is the Pfister volume cited a few footnotes earlier, *Die Legende Sundar Singhs*, 213. The pertinent passage there indicates that after being sent back again from Ghoom to Kalimpong, Tharchin "studied [and taught] here until the end of April 1921."

† Young Chhotuk had the distinction of being the first student at SUMI to have matriculated in Tibetan, "which was an important factor in his later acceptance by the [Sikkim] Maharaja as the spiritual leader of the Christians in Sikkim." Indeed, it was because of his Tibetan studies that Rev. Pazo would in time receive many good offers of employment— both in Tibet and from the Sikkim government. "But he decided that his first desire was to do God's work." Of further interest is the fact that though a Christian, Rev. Pazo came to be regarded by his Buddhist friends as "Rimpoche," "Geshe La" or "Lopen La" (Great Teacher) in view of his great knowledge in Tibetan language and literature. See C. L. Perry, *Nepali around the World*, 101, 105, 125 note 98. Rev. Pazo remained ever and always a very close friend of Tharchin's, would serve, like him, on the Guild Mission Council in the mid-1930s, and would serve as one of Tharchin's two Examiners when he himself was preparing to be ordained a national pastor in 1952 (see Volume III, Chapter 25 for details). It would appear that all who interacted with Rev. Pazo were the better for having met him. Even non-Christians appreciated his lovable nature. Indeed, the Sikkimese Buddhist aristocrat Sonam T. Kazi, who knew C. T. Pazo and knew even better his son Pasang Obed, said of Pastor Pazo that "everybody loved him." Interview with the Kazi, Oct. 1991.

and devotion towards their teachers was genuine, and they truly evinced heartfelt veneration for their mentors. In those days the preceptors were regarded with high honor and position and were considered as important as, if not more than, the parents in the formation of a child's character and career.*

* Unbeknown to Tharchin at the very time of making these observations while preparing his so-called memoirs, his much younger Tibetan friend and future scholar-author, Professor Dawa Norbu, was in the process of setting down some of these very same sentiments in his first major publication, *Red Star Over Tibet* (London, 1974, page 122). For in the course of describing his teacher's strong discipline and modes of corporal punishment meted out at the lay school he attended in his Tibetan community of Sakya, Norbu was moved to comment as follows:

We feared our teacher, not because he was a tyrant, but because he was our guru; so we respected and loved him as well. When I had escaped to India [1959] and went to school in Kalimpong [1963], I was surprised at the resentful manner in which the students took even a gentle admonition from their teachers. Small as we were in Sakya, we took every thrashing from the teacher as an act of kindness, and never felt hurt mentally. We consoled ourselves with the thought that, because the teacher cared for us, he took pains to thrash us for the sake of discipline. In Kalimpong I found that this attitude was quite beyond the comprehension of Westernized students.

C H A P T E R 13

The First Evangelist of Christ to Bhutan: First Lord's Supper There

He called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; ... And they went out, and preached that men should repent.... And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught.

As often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come.
Mark 6:7, 12, 30; 1 Corinthians 11:26

IN THE YEAR 1917 Dorje Tharchin was for the first time privileged to journey through the mountain-locked State of Bhutan lying to the north of India in the eastern region. There has always been an air of mystery surrounding this "hermit kingdom" in the clouds, a nation that historically has been even more exclusive than Tibet. The mystery is perhaps best explained both by its geographical isolation and the fiercely independent spirit of its Mongolian and Tibetan mountaineer farmers. Bhutan, said one Britisher, would have been a fitting region in which author James Hilton might have easily set his Shangri La when writing his celebrated novel, *Lost Horizon*. "Tibet," added this Britisher, who knew the region well, "is remote; and the civilization of Bhutan had come to it from Tibet across the great mountain range of the Himalayas." The Land of Snows, in fact, had for long been her main trading partner and source of news and cultural interchange, and Bhutan's only other intercourse with the outside world had been along narrow mule trails of trade with northern India.

Yet within this land of mystery can be found one of the loveliest, most beautiful landscapes in the world. So lovely and so beautiful, indeed, that this same Britisher, Sir Basil Gould, was wont to say, "I know no other country so fine, so fertile and so unspoiled."* This unspoiled character reminded him so much of Switzerland:

More than any other country that I know, and certainly more than Kashmir, Bhutan makes me think of the Swiss countryside as it may have been some hundreds of years ago. But it is a countryside without a single town; and if there is a shop in the whole of Bhutan I have not seen it. Away from the bold rain-soaked hills clothed with deciduous forest, which overlook the plains of Bengal and Assam, the country becomes less steep, the rainfall is moderate and the natural vegetation is chiefly pine and fir of many kinds. These in turn give place to rhododendron and to maples, which in late autumn set the valleys and hillsides aflame with tongues of red, russet and gold. Above the tree-line are rock slopes where sheep and yaks graze in summer. Above all towers a mighty range of snow mountains. A hundred peaks await the first challenge of man.

This tiny "forbidden kingdom" embraces but 19,000 square miles, stretching about 200 miles west to east along the eastern section of the Himalayas. The climate varies with the

* An observation not unlike that of another but earlier British visitor to the land, Sir Thomas Holdich, who traveled there during the nineteenth century. Enthused Sir Thomas: "Throughout the long extensive width of the Himalayas between the Indus and the Brahmaputra, there is no country so remarkable for the grandeur of its natural features as is Bhutan." Quoted in A. P. Agarwala, ed., *Tourist Guide to Darjeeling, Sikkim and Bhutan*, 69.

altitude. Within a single day's journey the traveler can easily pass from summer to winter, "and from a cold snow-clad height look down on a valley sweltering in the sun." With mountains plunging from a snowy 24,000 to a warm 5,000 feet, the land is well watered and most of the inhabitants—concentrated primarily in the rich central valleys and uplands—have long practiced terrace farming in the raising of rice, wheat and barley. Rainfalls in Bhutan of 200 to 300 inches a year, mostly occurring within the space of just a few weeks, are not uncommon—at least on the southern faces of the outer ranges of hills. Farther north, however, and especially on the northern faces of the hills, there is less heavy rainfall until, upon reaching the elevated Tibetan plains which lie between the primary eastern Himalayan range and the Tsangpo River, there is but a few inches a year. Apart from Nepalese immigration into the southern foothills during the years which followed World War Two, most of Bhutan's inhabitants have dwelt above the 8000-foot line. This is the so-called middle zone that ranges in altitude from between 4000 and 10,000 feet. In the valley of each large river as the latter passes this zone there was built a *dzong* or fort that served as the official residence of the Governor of the district. Any journey from west to east, which had been for long the primary transit way in the country, always involved a climb of transverse ridges, crossing them at altitudes of between 9000 and 14,000 feet, with a long and sometimes steep descent to the valley, where could be found the dzong or castle which commanded the surrounding area. This, in fact, would be the pattern of transit across the country followed by Tharchin on his own travels in the land.

In the 1920s the population of Bhutan was about 300,000; in 1971 it was estimated at around 900,000. Not as monolithic as they like to appear to outsiders, the Bhutanese of today are round-faced Orientals of Mongolian origin comprising several ethnic and language groups. According to Sarat Chandra Das, the name of Bhutan was derived from the name Bhotanta, that is to say, "the border land of Bhota," thus signifying "the end of the Bhot country"—the ancient name, it will be recalled, for Tibet. Indeed, "the original inhabitants of Bhutan, the Tephus, were subjugated, several centuries ago, by a band of military colonists from Tibet." This may help to explain why the predominant part of the population is today the Sharchops or Bote tribes of the north; these, presumably having come from Tibet, are now deemed to be the indigenous inhabitants and form the main strength of Lamaist Buddhism, for Tibetan-style Lamaism has exerted a powerful influence in Traditional Bhutan (see below). The Nepalese in the south make up the largest minority element and had comprised until recently roughly about twenty-five percent of the populace*. Smaller minorities include Tibetans from Kham in eastern Tibet, Lepchas from nearby Sikkim, and Santal descendants of Bihari migrants from India.

* Having felt increasingly threatened over the years—religiously, economically and politically—by this growing ethnic Nepali Hindu minority, the Bhutanese government, predominantly Lamaistic Buddhist in character, outlook and privilege, commenced in the early 1990s the expulsion of all those among this ethnic minority whom it arbitrarily deemed to be "non-nationals." As a result of this anti-Nepali agitation, huge refugee camps began springing up across the border in nearby East Nepal as a way to accommodate tens of thousands of Nepalis who have been forced out of what had been for many of these displaced persons over several generations their own natural homeland. The vast majority of these refugees have refused to be integrated into the citizen society of Nepal; on the contrary, they continue to nurse the hope of once again returning to their confiscated property and resuming the relatively prosperous life, so rudely disrupted, which they had

Historically a martial people feuding among themselves, the various tribes in the land were ultimately united by a militant Tibetan Buddhist priest in the mid-sixteenth century. A treaty signed in 1730 with Tibet recognized Bhutan's independence. But fighting between the British in India and Bhutan's semi-religious "god-kings"—provoked by the occupation of Assam by the British—led to a long series of battles in the early nineteenth century. Eventually Bhutan made peace overtures and signed the Treaty of Sinchula with the British in 1865. This in time led to the creation of the present hereditary dynasty of the maharaja (since 1963 known as the *druk gyalpos*—kings) that resulted from British recognition in 1907 of Ugyen Wangchuk as an absolute ruler with complete authority and absolute supremacy above all lesser chiefs and even the powerful lamas in the land. In 1910 a new treaty—inspired, championed and negotiated personally by none other than Gergan Tharchin's future friend, Sir Charles Bell—was signed between the British and Bhutan which amended several of the provisions of the Sinchula Treaty. Under this revised agreement the British Government of India agreed not to interfere in Bhutan's internal affairs, while the latter consented to be guided by the advice of India's government with respect to her foreign affairs. Until 1959 Bhutan's royalty had continually looked northward to Tibet for trade, cultural intercourse and religious inspiration. Since the fall of Tibet to the Chinese, however, the "Kingdom of the Thunder Dragon" now looks to India for advice and succor in the face of any threat from Communist China.



Throughout Bhutan's history this almost totally Buddhist State had been closed to the gospel of Christ, subjected as its people continually were to what, in the opinion of Western observers generally, was the tyrannical power of its lamas whom one British envoy to Bhutan prior to the war of 1864/5 had described as "the most immoral of the most immoral people on earth." Not to be outdone by this statement, a former Lieutenant Governor of Bengal and later Governor of Bombay, Sir Richard Temple, writing in 1887, was wont to characterize the inhabitants of Bhutan as on the one hand, "a dark, powerful, finely made race, Tibetan in features, language and religion"; but on the other hand, as "of a very unpleasing character, being described as vain, rude, inaccessible, sulky, quarrelsome, turbulent, cowardly and cruel, and grossly immoral and drunken withal." And a decade and more later, uncomplimentary observations about the Bhutanese were still being voiced, a case in point being a handbook

led back in Bhutan. On again-off again negotiations, in an attempt to resolve the refugee crisis, have been carried on for many years now between the Governments of Nepal and Bhutan; however, they seem to be going nowhere, despite the mediating assistance of third-party Governments (India conspicuously not one of them, though) and even that of the United Nations Refugee High Commissioner. Meanwhile, with a great deal of time on their hands and nothing much else to do day after day, the original refugee population, through the natural process of human reproduction, has increased to a number that well exceeds a hundred thousand. Indeed, the camps have become virtual refugee cities in themselves. As the present volume goes to press, there seems to be renewed hope that a way out of the impasse may soon be forthcoming.

on Darjeeling that was published in 1899. Wrote the author, G. S. Bomwetsch, Principal of the Boys' School at this British hill station:

... the big mountaineers from Bhutan are active and industrious, but turbulent, quarrelsome and fond of drinking "muruwah" (a native liquor made from millet)... They are the most immoral and dirty race to be met with in the Himalayas. Marriage ties are little respected, one woman may at the same time have several husbands, and she is often the wife of all the brothers. Like the Afridis and other frontier tribes in the northwest of India, the Bhutanese are born robbers and thieves.... Several embassies were sent at different times [to Bhutan] with the object of establishing friendly relations but as the Bhutanese are morally unable to keep their word, nothing has come of these missions; the ignorance and superstition of the race has barred their land to strangers.

It should be pointed out, however, that a century earlier George Bogle of the British East India Company had this to say of the Bhutanese in 1774: "They are strangers to falsehood and ingratitude: theft and every other species of dishonesty to which the love of money gives birth are little known." And F. M. (Eric) Bailey, the British Political Officer for Bhutan of a later day, after quoting these comments of Bogle's, himself went on to say: "It is well to remember these early impressions, which have certainly been confirmed by later travelers, for there was a period in the middle of the last century [the time of Temple and the envoy quoted earlier] when our relations with Bhutan were such as to color unfavorably the opinion held of the people."

Yet, even well into the twentieth century there were still widely differing opinions regarding the moral and social state of the country. For example, some said they had never known a people "so degraded" as the Bhutanese; others, that they were "a fine race," albeit "often dirty in their habits and persons." The lower classes were reported to be little better than "slaves" of the higher officials, and throughout the land, "might was right"—which as a matter of fact seemed to be "the whole and sole law and custom" of the country! A certain degree of honesty among the people was indeed acknowledged, but it was safe to assert, said one observer in 1931, that "economically, socially and morally, the ... people of Bhutan are probably the neediest in the whole Himalayan range."



The all-powerful role which religion has traditionally had in the life of Bhutan's people is everywhere to be seen. The conversion of the people to Buddhism took place in the eighth century through the instrumentality of the traveling Buddhist saint, Padma Sambhava. As alluded to earlier, the country's many tribes were first united by Shepton La-Pha, a traveling lama from Tibet who skillfully wielded both temporal and spiritual power. Ruled as a Buddhist "theocracy" for the next 300 years—when by 1930 there were about two thousand lamas and many nuns—the Bhutanese tended to associate their religion with their national identity so strongly that Western missionaries (such as the highly respected Revs. Sutherland and Graham) were seldom allowed even to visit Bhutan, let alone to proclaim the Christian

gospel there. In recent years, however, it would seem that some Christian influence has been able to make inroads; nevertheless, the open preaching of the gospel is still forbidden today by the authorities. Because Buddhism of the Tibetan variety has remained the State religion, by the mid-1970s one fourth of all revenues were said to be earmarked for the support of four thousand lamas residing in eight monasteries.

Yet Buddhism in Bhutan, as in her sister Himalayan kingdoms, thinly veils an all-pervading Animism which controls the lives of the masses. To give but one example of what a vast array of evil spirits the people had to appease by means of the propitiatory rites which are performed by the priests of the Red Hat Buddhist Sect, it is instructive to quote from a letter that was written on 27 December 1864 by the religious head of the country, called the Dharma Raja, and sent to the English General during the Bhutan War of that year: "But if you will take possession of my country, which is small, without fighting, and attach it to your own kingdom, which is large, I shall send the divine force of 12 gods, as per margin, who are very ferocious ghosts. Of this force 7,000 stop at Chamarchee, 5,000 at Doorma, 9,000 at Buxa and 102,000 at Dhalim Duar"! From the worship of relics of a devil-worship cult to the belief in ghosts, witches and "clawing spirits" to again the calls for witch doctors for assistance in illness: all are elements in an animistic faith that, coupled with Mahayana Buddhism and Hindu Tantric meditation, recitation and incantation, forms the core of Bhutanese religion to this day.¹



Now the very first journey which Tharchin made into Bhutan took him there in the capacity of interpreter for both Mr. Hornell, identified earlier as Bengal's Director of Public Instruction (i.e., education), and Dr. Sutherland, the Principal of the Scottish Universities' Mission Institution in Kalimpong. According to one authority on the subject, Dr. Sutherland had the distinction of being the first missionary of the Kalimpong Scottish Mission to have been officially permitted inside Bhutan, and this thus constituted the initial opening of the door to a more direct foreign missions influence upon the country.² These three travelers to Bhutan would be on an Education Mission that would require them to be away from India for well over two months, for as best as can be determined the trio left Kalimpong in late August of 1917 and did not return to the hill station till early November.³ Needless to say, the Tibetan from Poo counted it a privilege to have been selected for this important endeavor. Dr. Sutherland had taken the initiative, in response to a request by the Maharaja of Bhutan, to establish schools and provide the necessary qualified teaching staff to man the resultant educational institutions. Just here, however, some facts revolving around Rev. John Graham's association with certain Bhutanese political figures—especially the Raja Ugyen Dorjee, his son S. T. Dorjee, and the very first (1907-26) Maharaja of Bhutan (Ugyen Wangchuk), dating back all the way to 1890—will be helpful in understanding how it was that the Maharaja broke somewhat with the past isolationist policy of his country and extended this unusual invitation.

Almost from the beginning of his years at Kalimpong, Graham had shown great interest in Bhutan and its people. At first, though, that interest had been based on a desire to convert the people to the Christian faith. But as it developed, the influence he ultimately did come to exert on the nation was more political than religious in nature. For as it turned out, Graham virtually assumed the role of "an intermediary between the British Government and the Maharaja of Bhutan."⁴ It all came about as a result of the friendship Graham made in Kalimpong with a Bhutanese Raja by the name of Ugyen Dorjee, a "progressive and enlightened nobleman"⁵ who was "a kinsman of the Maharaja and his chief henchman in unifying Bhutan,"⁶ and was the longtime First Minister of State to the Maharaja. But as official Agent for the Bhutan government *vis-à-vis* the Government of India (with all official correspondence between these two Governments passing through his hands), he was required to spend at least half of his time in Kalimpong rather than live on the vast estates he maintained in his homeland where he spent only the summer months.⁷ And as a consequence Graham and the Raja struck up a friendship that was to last for twenty-seven years until the latter's death in late 1916.

An interesting description of the Raja dating from 1891 has been provided by a British traveler, Florence Donaldson, who with her husband journeyed through parts of the eastern Himalayas that year, including a stopover at Kalimpong. In those early days Raja Ugyen Dorjee was also known as Ugyen Kazi or the Kazi (Headman) of Kalimpong, since at that time this hill station served as the capital of British Bhutan. One day Ugyen Kazi came to pay the travelers a visit at the Manse of Rev. and Mrs. Graham where the couple were staying in Kalimpong. Writes Mrs. Donaldson of the Raja on this and another occasion:

He was invited into the room where we were sitting, and shook hands in orthodox fashion when presented to us. He was a Bhutanese and of most handsome appearance. Tall, good-looking, with high aquiline nose and clear, dark complexion; and dressed in a long garment of rich claret-colored silk, with a turban-shaped hat of black felt, and English patent leather boots that creaked with every step in a most imposing manner.... [On another day he again] turned up at the Manse ... Smarter than ever in another silk robe striped in various colors, long boots, and handsome inlaid sword and Tibetan fire pouch; seated on a fidgety gray pony, gorgeously caparisoned with scarlet trappings, and led by a smart syce; followed by an equally grand attendant carrying the *pán* box, he looked and felt a very superior person indeed, and I was delighted at the opportunity of seeing and photographing the Kazi of Kalimpong thus dressed in gala array.⁸

Now it so happened that Ugyen Dorjee's son, Kumar Sonam Tobgye (b. 1897 or 8), eventually came to receive part of his education with Rev. Graham's daughters, had even come to be one of the family,⁹ and, at the subsequent request of the Raja, was allowed to attend the Graham's Homes Establishment school as a day scholar so that he might receive a sound English education. Kumar S. T. then went on to Darjeeling for further instruction at St. Paul's School. From such contact with this nobleman family, Graham's interest and involvement with Bhutanese affairs was bound to grow, since among other things Raja Dorjee would often consult him on various state affairs. In fact, the Maharaja, in a letter to Graham after the death of the Raja, noted that the latter had often mentioned Graham's

name to him and used to tell him that the missionary had been his adviser concerning many different matters of state.

Upon the death of the Raja, Graham took it upon himself to write the Maharaja requesting that he appoint Sonam Tobgye—now 19 years old—as successor to his father in all matters between Bhutan and the British government. To which the Maharaja agreed, declaring far more than just that in his reply to the Scottish missionary: “During the Raja’s lifetime you were his trusted friend and I hope you will help and guide his son. Should he err sometimes I hope you will try to advise and correct him. I hope you will teach Tobgye as much as you can in all matters.”¹⁰ And as year after year followed upon each other, Graham gradually came to act quite openly “as an ambassador for Bhutan”¹¹ in its affairs, to the apparently mutual satisfaction of both Governments concerned, even though the Bengal government would not have normally taken kindly towards missionaries becoming involved in any kind of political affairs.

Now one of the chief interests Graham had continually had towards Bhutan was the inauguration of an education program for its people, a matter he emphasized more than once with both Raja Dorjee (father and son) and the Maharaja himself. So that it was not too much of a surprise when eventually in early 1914 the invitation by the Maharaja came to Dr. Sutherland requesting that educational assistance be extended to India’s more backward neighbor.¹²



This had all come about before the elder Raja Dorjee’s death and had been communicated to the SUMI Principal through the Maharaja’s Minister of State in Kalimpong. Specifically, the invitation was a request for Dr. Sutherland to send teachers to Bhutan to open a number of schools. The Principal at first “consulted teachers and took advice from others,” who counseled him that “it would be a very noble service to Bhutan if teachers were sent to Bhutan to spread education.” Whereupon Sutherland met again with Ugyen Dorjee and announced afterwards that two teachers would be sent to Ha-Dzong where they would open a school that, under an ingenious arrangement, would operate “for six months at Ha and six months at Kalimpong.”¹³ The plan—as described more fully seven years later by a Scottish Churchman who visited Kalimpong in December 1921 and found that it was still very much in operation—called for the school’s students to attend their classes in Bhutan “for six months in the summertime, taught by teachers from the Mission; and in the cold months they migrate [to Kalimpong] with their teachers, to be for six months boarders in a Christian hostel.” Added the Churchman, these boys “are not Christians, but how much it means for them and for the future of Christianity in Bhutan, that here and now they are being penetrated by Christian ideas, and shaped by the loving hands of Christian missionaries!”¹⁴

Accordingly, in the latter half of 1914 the first educational institution to be founded in the kingdom of Bhutan under the auspices of Western Christian Missions was opened in Ha-Dzong, well known for being the residential headquarters and center of the home district of

Raja Ugyen (and later his son S. T.) Dorjee. Located in the lovely Ha Valley of Northwest Bhutan that runs parallel to the better-known and larger Chumbi Valley in neighboring Tibet, this baronial dzong or castle, some 40 miles west southwest of Punakha, was situated on the right bank of the Ha Chu at an altitude of well over 9000 feet. Though its construction had been begun by the Raja two years earlier, it would not be completed for yet another year. (The old dzong at Tumphiong a half-mile down the river had become unsafe with age.) The layout of this new fortress, wrote one visitor a few years later, was simple: “a large square keep in the center of a square courtyard formed by the inner walls of the surrounding building.”¹⁵

Now the two teachers chosen by the SUMI Principal and sent from Kalimpong were Ugyen Tshering (Chhiring or Tsiring) and Dawa Namgya Targyen who had themselves been students of SUMI but were currently on the teaching staff.¹⁶ Additional information on this new development and these two schoolmasters has been provided by a Church of Scotland minister, Rev. D. G. Manuel, in his well-known volume on the early history of the Scottish Himalayan Mission, *A Gladdening River*. He had twice visited Kalimpong, once on a short visit in 1905 and a much longer stay in 1914 for several months at the beginning of that year. Published in late 1914, the book’s preface was dated November of that year and penned in Scotland by the author upon his return from the Himalayan hill station. At the very end of his volume Manuel quotes from an article which, as he was finishing the text of his book, he had just learned had appeared in a recent issue of the English-language newspaper *Eastern Himalayan News*. The article contained the following intelligence:

Arrangements have been made with the Prime Minister [Raja Ugyen] to the Maharaja of Bhutan by which schools will be opened on his estates in Bhutan. For this work of opening one of the closed lands for Christian education, two young men in the Training College at Kalimpong have been chosen. One of them, Ugyen Tsiring, is a Bhutia by birth, and though his parents are Buddhist, was sent to Kalimpong for his education. Some years ago he became a Christian; and for the last three years he has taught in the school at Kalimpong and done very good work. His companion, Dawa Namgye, is a Lepcha, belonging to Sikkim, who recently completed his training as a teacher. They were dedicated for their work at a special service conducted by the Rev. Dr. Sutherland before setting out on their nine days’ journey to their new home.

Manuel added that since the publication of the above article “a letter of thanks for the teachers has been received from the Maharaja of Bhutan.”¹⁷

This first Mission school in Bhutan headed by these two SUMI schoolmasters prospered so well that the number of students increased with each passing year. Moreover, as one of the initial consequences of the school’s success, during its first year of existence the Training Institution at Kalimpong received in late 1914 “the first batch of forty-five students” who, while there, would have their own teachers and their own classes.¹⁸ This latter feature of the arrangement—that is to say, schooling to be also at Kalimpong—was a proposal which, in the words of Lord Ronaldshay writing a few years later, had won “the enthusiastic support of His Highness the Maharaja, and ... the cordial advice and cooperation of Drs. Graham and Sutherland ...” It was the hope of the Maharaja, as reported further by Ronaldshay, that these boys might eventually obtain in several educational institutions in British India (beginning, of course, at SUMI) “a training in various professions such as medicine, teaching, engineering,

and so on," and might then return to Bhutan "to form the nuclei of training establishments in their own country." What this would mean to the future of Bhutan, thought Ronaldshay, "it is easy to foresee." And, he added, "while it would give a great impetus to the development of Bhutan, it could not but increase the intercourse with, and the friendly relations between, this picturesque mountain state and its powerful neighbor."¹⁹

Now it so happened that twenty to twenty-five of the students at Ha were the sons of the Maharaja's chief men of the realm. These sons had been sent to the school by command of the Maharaja himself. This was because, as was reported to the *Sunday-School Times* in the spring of 1915 by the Scottish missionaries, these first "two Christian ... teachers at Ha" had at the outset "created such an impression" for good on the Bhutanese ruler. Furthermore, during the ensuing winter of 1914/15 these same sons, as part of the above-mentioned arrangement, were scheduled, along with the others numbered among the forty-five, to be sent south "to Kalimpong and be under the influence of the missionaries also."²⁰ According to Rev. Manuel, they would be housed in the Robertson Hostel, a facility of the SUM Institution whose lower rooms were normally used as a school of practical training for its students and the upper rooms fitted out as dormitory space for students attending the Institution's Middle English School. Manuel added, significantly, that "it can hardly be expected that they will return to their native land without knowing something of the Christian life, or without being in a position to tell their fellow-countrymen something with regard to it."²¹

An interesting sequel to all this occurred, which ought to be recited here. As reported by the Scottish missionaries, "when some of the older students at Kalimpong heard of the Maharaja's determination," they, "of their own initiative, spent nearly the whole night in prayer over the matter." And because of that, "or for some other reason, the Maharaja later [in the spring of 1915] requested that a teacher be sent to his capital [at Punakha] to teach his own family!"²² As a consequence of the positive response and enthusiasm on the part of the Bhutanese authorities, additional teachers were selected to teach those at Punakha and other new students elsewhere. Indeed, by 1917 the contingent of schoolmasters who accepted the call to go had increased by five more: Kiran (Kidron) Kumar Sarkar (Sirkar), Ribu S. Karthak, Samson Sitling, Harkadhoj Pradhan, and Joseph Stein.²³ Moreover, the "six months in Bhutan-six months in Kalimpong" arrangement could by 1921 still boast as many as fifty Bhutanese students enrolled in the program!²⁴ Indeed, in that very year Bhutan's Maharaja had written a letter to British India's Viceroy that among other things acknowledged the significance of this educational program for the betterment of his country. Making it quite clear that Bhutan's greatest impediment to her development had been the ignorance of her people, he went on to observe, as Peter Collister has reported, that "no one outside the monasteries had been able to read until in 1914 the forty-five boys had been sent for education at Kalimpong in the winter and at Ha in the summer." Collister further reported that the Maharaja had gone on to point out in his letter that now, "seven years later" (1921), "four of the Kalimpong boys had reached Indian university entrance standard and the others were ready to go on to further training." The issue now, concluded the Maharaja, was, in his own words, "how best to utilize these lads for the development of Bhutan."^{24a} That was in 1921. By 1924 it could be reported by the British Political Officer Sikkim, Major Bailey, that by the mid-1920s eleven of the original forty-five students sent to SUMI had passed their

Indian matriculation examinations (and would go on, incidentally, to study successfully medicine, forestry and animal husbandry) and that, furthermore, the very first qualified Bhutanese teacher was even then conducting classes at the Bumthang Durbar School as one of its teachers. In fact, Collister has noted that this latter school at Bumthang, through the assistance of Ugyen Dorjee, had been opened in 1915, just a year following the successes achieved at Ha and Kalimpong. Here at Bumthang, the boys would be taught in both English and Tibetan. This was in line with what Charles Bell, the Political Officer at the time, had observed when he commented that Raja Dorjee “appears to have made himself responsible for imparting English education to Bhutanese boys.”²⁵



Now when Dr. Sutherland, Mr. Hornell and Tharchin began their 1917 Education Mission to Bhutan, they traveled from the Jelep Pass into “the Chumbi Dagger” of Tibet: the celebrated Chumbi Valley that as “a deep depression” is situated in the midst of “the most titanic mountain chain on earth”—the Himalayas. Chumbi was in those days a beautiful, well-watered mountain valley covering about 700 square miles in the western Assam Himalayas and located within the wedge-shaped section of southern Tibet between Bhutan on the east and Sikkim on the west. At an altitude of about 10,000 feet it extended for some thirty miles north northeast to Tang Pass and was watered by the headstream of the Torsa River. It was traversed by the main India-Lhasa trade route and had as its main towns those of Chumbi (37 miles northeast of Kalimpong), Yatung (only a few miles farther) and Phari. Although part of Tibet, it nevertheless had its own dialect, and preserved customs entirely its own. Just a decade or so before Tharchin had arrived on this trip, the valley had been thoroughly occupied by the British for nearly four years (1904-08) as a consequence of the Younghusband Expedition to Lhasa of 1904 (and briefly related in Chapter 16 of the present work).

A rich agricultural region, it produced barley, wheat, vegetables and fruits. “Chumbi Valley ... with its profusion of pines, dark firs, apple, peach and apricot orchards in bloom, ... is as beautiful as any of the famous spots in Switzerland.” So observed Tharchin’s host companion, Theos Bernard, when the latter, with Tharchin, was making his way through the valley on a pilgrimage to Lhasa from Kalimpong in 1937. That was in the late spring-early summer. The valley’s summers, however, all too soon disappear. Winters here, said one writer, are some of the worst on earth. “In this deep, narrow valley,” she wrote in 1909, “and shut in by precipitous mountains rising from two to three thousand feet, the sun has hardly risen above one mountain when it sinks behind another, making the days short and intensely cold. It is this intense cold, combined with the icy wind, blowing from sunrise to sunset and bringing with it a fine penetrating dust, which makes the climate of the Chumbi Valley one of the worst in the world.” And as the soldiers of the Younghusband Expedition were wont to remark, a winter experience here was a trying affair for them, one, they had said, “not fit for civilized beings.”²⁶

Fortunately for Tharchin and his fellow companions, they would not have to experience such hardships, since they were passing through its precincts in the late summer and traveling

quite rapidly. For on emerging from the Jelep La not far from the towns of Chumbi and Yatung, the three travelers immediately turned in a southeastward direction towards Bhutan. Once inside that land, the trio visited Ha-Dzong, Paro and Thimphu, then returned to Ha, and from there back home to Kalimpong. A number of interesting things happened, however, along the way.



It should be pointed out that the town of Ha, like many other key Bhutanese towns, had a *dzong* where the landlords of that day lived. This Bhutanese term possesses a variety of meanings but all of them are closely connected to each other simply because the dzong in those days had been the focus of religion, government and defense all combined into one. And hence, in its usage the word came to signify either a castle, a fortified town or district, or a monastery, built often to command strategic mountain passes and around which the Bhutanese citizenry frequently tended to cluster—much in the way the European peasantry used to live in the shadow of medieval castles. And as was the case in Europe, and also in Tibet, it was the duty of the castle, fort or dzong, writes Sir Charles Bell, “to defend the villages within its jurisdiction”; but it was “equally the duty of the villagers to feed the fort.”²⁷ Built in the ancient Tibetan manner but with some stylistic differences of their own, Bhutan’s dzongs were so impregnable that no invader has ever been successful in subjugating the country. In fact, Bhutan has never successfully been invaded throughout its long history.

The district of Ha to which Dr. Sutherland and his party had now come included several subdivisions. As indicated earlier, by the time of this visit in 1917 the young Raja S. T. Dorjee, who like his father was an eminent citizen of that area, had succeeded his father as the official Bhutan Agent of his Government to the then British Government of India. And by that time he, as his father had done before him, had settled down in Kalimpong where, inheriting the hilltown estates of his father, he had established an auxiliary office and residence—called the Bhutan Durbar House,²⁸ where he now spent much of his time away from Ha. He not only had inherited his father’s estates in Kalimpong and in the Ha district of West Bhutan but had also inherited much of his character as well. The new Raja, wrote Harold Fletcher, was “wise and far-seeing,” and “had the future progress of Bhutan very much at heart.” He soon came to realize “that the medieval system of Government was doomed and that his country must open her doors wide to contacts with the outside world.” Like Raja Ugyen before him, improved education headed the list of projects Raja S. T. Dorjee would begin to develop and maintain over the next several decades, and would additionally include medical services, the development of the country’s forestry resources, as well as the introduction and planting of fruit trees from Kashmir and the stocking of Bhutan’s rivers with Kashmir trout. Consequent upon his being elevated to his father’s post of Bhutan Agent in 1916 there was then bestowed upon S. T. Dorjee—by the British Government of India—the designation of Assistant for Bhutan to the Political Officer in Sikkim. He thus combined the quite unusual and double role of serving two Governments simultaneously! (He would remain in these two posts for thirty years, retiring from them in 1946 in favor of his eldest son, Jigme Palden

Dorjee. S. T. Dorjee would himself be made Deb Zimpon or Chief Minister to the Maharaja of that day, Sir Jigme Wangchuk, for whom he would serve with distinction till the Bhutanese ruler's death in 1952. The Raja would himself die the following year.)²⁹



Now two of the five additional schoolmasters identified earlier, and whom Tharchin decades later would describe as “faithful Christians,” must have replaced the original two teachers at Ha-Dzong by late 1917 inasmuch as Sarkar and Karthak were the ones whom Tharchin found teaching there when Dr. Sutherland and his party arrived at Ha to inspect the school.³⁰ (As will be learned below, Ugyen Tshering, one of the two originals, had been transferred to Bumthang to open a school there.) According to Tharchin, even at this time, three years after its founding, the roll-strength of the school at Ha-Dzong still consisted of thirty to forty pupils. And according to Peter Collister, there were still twenty-eight students in attendance in the year 1919-20.^{30a} School was here to stay!

On this particular trip in 1917 Dr. Sutherland and Mr. Hornell were unable to meet the Bhutanese Maharaja since his place and palace at Bumthang were a distance of some nine or ten days' journey away. Whereas Bumthang was famous for being the residential headquarters of the Maharaja, the then official residence of His Highness was located in the prominent town of Punakha. From the viewpoint of evangelistic endeavor this trip was not of much significance. One thing Tharchin recalled, however: “Mr. Hornell gave me an excellent meritorious certificate.” Indeed, once again, found among the Tibetan's personal papers was another Note of Commendation which the grateful Hornell had penned, this one similar to what he wrote a month later on Tharchin's behalf and which was quoted in the previous chapter. This current note was dated Calcutta, 19 November 1917 and written on good quality paper that was embossed with the logo of the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal. It read as follows:

Tharchin, a Tibetan teacher who works at Ghoom,³¹ accompanied Dr. Sutherland and myself on a tour in Bhutan. Tharchin was most useful in many ways and especially as an interpreter. He can speak Hindi fluently, and he has good working knowledge of English. Throughout a long and arduous tour he showed himself most reliable.

(Signed)
W. W. Hornell
D. P. I. Bengal



Late in the year 1919 Tharchin again accompanied Dr. Sutherland on a second Education Mission to Bhutan.³² This time the Principal was requested by the Maharaja to come all the way over to Bumthang to inspect the school that was there, and Sutherland gladly accepted

the royal invitation. On this occasion, however, Raja S. T. Dorjee also accompanied the traveling party. They had the good fortune to have the young Raja accompanying them, if the commendable words of Tharchin's friend of later years, Rev. Graham, are any indication. The Scottish missionary spoke highly of Raja S. T. as a companion on the road when the Raja was his and Political Officer "Eric" Bailey's official fellow traveler to Punakha a few years later (1927) in their joint attendance at the coronation of a new Maharaja. Said Graham: "He was our guide, philosopher and friend, . . . well known in the Darjeeling District; and a kinder or more unselfish traveling companion it would be hard to find."³³ It will be recalled that this was the same S. T. Dorjee who as a young lad growing up in Kalimpong had become almost a regular member of the Graham household.

In the initial stages of their journey Dr. Sutherland and his party followed the same route previously taken in 1917. From the Jelep La (14,390') they descended some four thousand feet past the timber line to the first Tibetan village of Rinchengong, situated where the track from the Pass meets the Chumbi Valley proper. It was a large village located along the main Valley river, the Amo Chu (the latter term a Tibetan word for river, stream or water), at the Amo's confluence with the river Yatung. The community possessed at that time "many fine double-storied houses, the property of wealthy wool traders." Moreover, the houses were "deep-eaved and chalet-like" with "gaily painted window frames actually set with glass"—an unusual phenomenon in Tibet—and "set about with tall prayer flags and mani walls."³⁴ It was at one time an old Chinese village, but long since those days it had been abandoned to the Tibetans who had made it over into a thoroughly Tibetan community. Similar to the other larger villages of the Chumbi Valley, Rinchengong was nevertheless "cozier but dirtier, being snugly tucked up against a hillside and sheltered from the purifying winds that sweep up the Valley."³⁵ After a most comfortable night's lodging here Sutherland and company veered southeast towards Bhutan riding on their ponies ten miles along the Amo Chu—a river that, after coursing its way across the now familiar Tibetan valley and onwards through Bhutan, is called the Torsa as it flows through the rich plains of the Bengal Duars tea district and finally encounters the mighty Brahmaputra.



Once crossing into Bhutan the traveling group had to traverse the two passes of Kyu and Ha (13,100') to reach their destination. They arrived once again at Ha-Dzong where the party halted for a few days; and then they proceeded northeast to Paro, the home of the Paro Penlop or Chieftain, a close relative of the Maharaja. Paro was a fortified town just two days' march from Ha-Dzong some thirty miles southwest of Punakha. Situated along the right tributary of the Raidak River at an altitude of 7500 feet, Paro was in those days—after Punakha—the chief town of western Bhutan. The dzong here, impressive for its size and solidity, had originally been built during the last half of the sixteenth century, but was reconstructed at around the turn of the twentieth century. Described as one of the strongest dzongs in the entire country, the castle at Paro, wrote Rev. Graham of his visit here in 1927,

was “a massive stone structure built for strength on the side of the river, supported from behind by three strong towers placed high up the mountainside to guard the roads leading to the dzong.” Inside its walls, continued Graham, was housed “a large population of officials and servants and soldiers and lamas. Between the two courtyards of the laity and the clergy is the central ‘keep,’ which is the dominant feature, and towers above the other buildings. The chapel is a large, lofty, handsome and highly decorated apartment.”³⁶

The dzong itself, called the Rinchen Pung, is a treasure trove of sacred Buddhist scrolls, religious icons, and manuscripts of all sizes, and on its many walls hang incredibly beautiful Buddhist *thankas* and murals of the most vivid sort; for it must be noted that it was here, in Paro’s “Valley of Profound Peace”—the most attractive of Bhutan’s many valleys—that the famed eighth-century Indian Guru, Padma Sambhava, came from his native land to preach his brand of Buddhism to a receptive Bhutanese people. But below the dzong, across a covered medieval bridge, was built a Royal Palace called the Uggem Pelri where, in the words of one writer on Bhutan, “the architect’s imagination reached to hitherto unattainable heights in Bhutanese architecture.”³⁷

Interestingly, the Paro Penlop, in the words of Sir Basil Gould, “excelled as a patron of dancing,” the scene for which at Paro always took place, he reported, in “the open, stone-flagged courtyard of the dzong.” Political Officer Bailey, a visitor at Paro some fifteen years earlier than when Gould as Political Officer was there, confirms this penchant on the part of the longtime Penlop for the encouragement of the dance among his people, an art form which Sutherland, Raja S. T. and Tharchin could not have at all avoided witnessing. Major (later Lieutenant Colonel) Bailey pictured his own entry into Paro as being “like a dream of the Middle Ages.” He went on to describe the colorful arrival he and his party experienced in 1922 and what he, like Sutherland’s party, saw there:

Some miles away we were met by the picturesque soldiers of the Paro Penlop’s bodyguard, some indefatigable dancers and the usual gaily decorated mules for us to ride.

As you ride the mule the servant runs along addressing the animal by name at all difficult places—such warnings as: “Tashima! Mind the stones!” “Be careful of the mud!” “Go slowly!” “Look out!” etc.

The life of one of these Bhutanese chiefs is reminiscent of our own England in Norman times. The baron lives in his castle with soldiers dressed in gay silks and steel helmets, while they carry a shield made of rhinoceros hide, painted black and red, and wear two swords, one in a silk bag in reserve.

The dancers are wonderful men, and I have known them to dance continuously five miles along a rough road. In our camps they would sit on the ground outside our tents, and dance in front of us if we went out for a walk. The Paro Penlop even kept a jester whose jokes kept his retainers in roars of laughter.

The Paro Penlop lives in an enormous room in the dzong with spotlessly clean walls and floors of beautifully polished pine. Round the walls are hung firearms of various makes: tower muskets, matchlocks, Chinese rifles, and modern sporting weapons; the bolt or hammer of each is sealed down. There are also numbers of swords, shields, bows and arrows.³⁸

Days later, from Paro the Sutherland party departed eastward. On the way they came across some small villages. For example, in the town of Wangdu Phodrang, situated along the Sankosh River at an altitude of 4600 feet, they saw a huge castle, reputed to be one of the oldest dzongs in Bhutan. There was also a sizable monastery here. From this community the travelers proceeded farther eastward towards the town of Tongsa (Trongsa) which is also famous for a huge dzong. This fortress, the site of the former headquarters of the eastern part of Bhutan, is an old and historical one. The first castle-fort, which is not the present one, is believed to have been constructed well over a thousand years ago by a king named Chushi Myngur. The one which Tharchin and his companions witnessed is one of the finest in all of Bhutan. In appearance this dzong is large and white with round-towered outworks, and sits atop a hillside along the precipitous, densely wooded valley of the Tongsa Chu. The ruling family, beginning with the first Maharaja, came from Tongsa, where at the time of his being selected as the Maharaja of Bhutan he had been the Tongsa Penlop (or Governor). All the sovereigns of this hereditary line have retained this position in their own hands, this office having been merged into that of the Maharaja. For this reason the Maharaja was accustomed to spending a few weeks of each year at the Tongsa castle-fort. Because the dzong at Tongsa was so very strongly situated, with the highroad passing right through the fort and therefore allowing for no easy way round it, the dzong maintained an excellent control over the country.³⁹

After passing through these villages and dzongs Raja S. T. Dorjee guided the party towards Bumthang—from this point only a two days' march away—where the Maharaja had his permanent residence. Along the way the group came across some gorgeous Himalayan evergreen forests and absolutely stunning landscapes. These have to some extent been described by Major Bailey in the delineation of his own journey he once made to this same region in 1922: "... we were traveling along through lovely forests when we suddenly came on the most magnificent sight I had ever seen. The road was cut out of the hillside, and on the slopes we were amazed to come upon acres of the most beautiful lily (*Lilium nepalense burmanicum*). This wonderful plant had a very open bell, the center of which was deep crimson, with the outer half of the petals a greenish-white. We had this lily all along our road in patches for the next two days.... There were also many orchids on the trees."⁴⁰

*

Besides being the place where the Maharaja resided, Bumthang's fame also stemmed from the fact that among the nearby lamaseries there is a temple regarded as the holiest spot in Bhutan; for it was here that the eighth-century Indo-Tibetan Buddhist saint Padma Sambhava, who as learned earlier had introduced Buddhism into Bhutan, had meditated. The temple, known as the Kuje (or Kytchu-Lakhang) and meaning in the honorific language

of Bhutan, “body print,” is the site where the saint had for some time lived in a cave, coming out for long periods and in meditation sitting up against the rock. Legend has it that as a result a deep imprint of his body had been left against the rock, up against which Kuje Temple had subsequently been erected, with the cave and imprint positioned precisely behind the altar. This eighth-century temple’s wooden floor “tells the tale of the years upon years of prostration performed by its devout monks, for gouged into the heavy timber are footprints as clear as though they had only been freshly made.” In addition, above the temple can be found a large juniper tree which tradition asserts grew from Sambhava’s staff that he had stuck in the ground.⁴¹

At an altitude of 9700 feet, Bumthang (meaning the “plain of spirits” and shown also as Byakar Dzong on some maps) is situated in east central Bhutan on the left tributary (the river Manas) of the larger Tongsa River just fourteen miles east northeast of Tongsa. Now the Maharaja did not live in the dzong at Bumthang; rather, his royal palace was separately situated in the valley community a few miles from the castle-fort. Moreover, special residential buildings had been constructed elsewhere for his Cabinet Ministers. During their stay at Bumthang Dr. Sutherland inspected and checked over thoroughly the operations of the school as had been requested by the Maharaja. In this particular educational facility the children of the noble families were also admitted as students. In fact, it was later reported by Scots Mission medical missionary Dr. Albert Craig that the Maharaja had requested the SUM Institution to send teachers to Bumthang for the specific purpose “to open a school for the sons of the chiefs.”⁴² Even the heir apparent to the throne⁴³ was being taught in this new institution of the Maharaja’s. It had all the appearance of a royal school, which indeed it was, it invariably being referred to as the Durbar (or Court) School.



On this journey Dorje Tharchin had taken along a magic lantern. Wherever they lodged the optical slide show was presented to the gatherings regardless of their size. It was mainly the Life of Christ and a few slides of the recently concluded Great War that would be shown. And Bumthang proved to be no exception to this practice. Tharchin would conduct these entire meetings by himself as he knew the language of Bhutan very well; for it was not only a form of Tibetan but was closely related to the tongue prevailing in Sikkim; furthermore, the Tibetan of Lhasa, with which Tharchin was very familiar, was spoken by the Bhutanese ruling classes.⁴⁴ This that the Tibetan from Kalimpong had undertaken to do was quite clearly the first country-wide gospel evangelization ever mounted in the land of Bhutan. In view of this, therefore, Dorje Tharchin—as he himself had concluded when preparing his “memoirs”—may rightly be regarded as the first Christian evangelist to the nation of Bhutan.*

* The operative word here is *country-wide*, in that it is fairly certain that Tharchin was indeed the first evangelist of Christ to spread the Christian message through much of the Bhutanese land (as is described in the remaining pages of the Text above). Heretofore, there *had* been preachers of the gospel among the Bhutanese people who had preceded him a few years earlier: their area of gospel endeavor, however, had almost entirely been along, and exterior to, the southwest, southern and eastern frontier regions lying between Bhutan proper and Bhutanese

Now in conjunction with what Tharchin was doing at Bumthang, Rev. Sutherland felt led to conduct an indoor Sunday service here in a private residence. This "congregation" consisted of Sutherland, his Lepcha cook, Tharchin the interpreter, and the two schoolmasters from the Mission Durbar School there. Following the regular Sunday worship in the morning Rev. Sutherland officiated at the Lord's Supper. And thus Tharchin had a second privilege: that of being a participant witness of the first Christian Communion service ever held in Buddhist-dominated Bhutan.*

British India, with none of these Christian workers having penetrated inside Bhutan itself with the gospel prior to Tharchin's labors *except* evangelist Choten Bhutia who settled down just inside the country at the southwestern village of Bara Bhutan (and who sometime before 1913 had been bitten by a mad dog there and had shortly afterwards died of hydrophobia) and possibly two others: a teacher, Choda Lepcha from the British Bhutanese village of Primtam (whose gospel service, centered at Bara Bhutan, spanned the years 1902-18) and Takse (or Takchy) of Chyobo village in British Bhutan (who likewise labored at Bara Bhutan and its immediate vicinity between the years 1919 and 1930). These all had been sent forth by the indigenously-composed Bhutan Foreign Mission Committee (BFMC) that in 1891 had been created during an evening prayer meeting held in Kalimpong's Macfarlane Church building. "As it was solely a native church project, they decided to raise money voluntarily from all the 14 Kalimpong district churches and bring [these contributions] into the Bari Panchayat (Kirk Session) at Kalimpong monthly for the BFM Fund. Even some of the District Women's Guilds brought contributions faithfully." So writes Rev. P. S. Tingbo, "The Echoes of the Gospel Bell in the Land of the Thunder Dragon," in D. K. Khaling, ed., *Macfarlane Memorial Church (Kalimpong) Centenary Souvenir 1st November 1891-1st November 1991* (Kalimpong: H. D. Subba, 1991), 21-3.

On the other hand, with regard to *foreign* or non-local evangelists of the Christian gospel, as far as the present writer could ascertain, only one person—Lady Sigrid Gahmberg of Finland—had successfully penetrated the border of Bhutan proper to bear witness to the Christian message in more than perfunctory fashion. By perfunctory here, this writer has in mind what had occurred with the very first recorded instance of anyone from Christendom having entered Bhutan. This was when two Portuguese Jesuit priests, Cacella and Cabral, in 1626, were en route that year to Tibet. But in the words of Cindy Perry, "Just as the early explorers and colonialists looked on Bhutan largely as a route to Tibet, so it was with [these] first Christians who entered Bhutan." Indeed, though they were to meet the then Dharmaraja of Paro who promised to build a home and church for them and even granted them freedom to preach if they would remain in Paro, these two Catholic missionaries ended up deciding to advance immediately towards their original goal of Tibet and never returned. It was not to be till some two centuries later that any attempt to establish evangelistic work inside the land, this time by Protestants, would occur. Even so, not until Finnish missionary Gahmberg's experience was there any success in penetrating the frontiers of Bhutan proper. As leader of a group of three or four people at any given time she had crossed the border on several occasions from her and her colleagues' mission station at or in the vicinity of Buxa Duar in British Bhutan. These incursions, termed "brief visits" by Perry, had taken place during the spring of 1897 and possibly again in 1898 and 1899, before Lady Gahmberg's death in 1900 of malaria. See Perry, *Nepali around the World*, 136, 138 and cf. 421-2.

That having been said, however, if the operative word *country-wide* can be accepted once again as the yardstick by which to determine the identity of the first Christian evangelist to spread the gospel of Christ widely in Bhutan, that distinction cannot go to missionary Gahmberg, despite what she and those with her had done in making limited entrance somewhat frequently across the Bhutanese border from their nearby base at Buxa Duar. Hence, it is not incorrect to describe Dorje Tharchin as Christ's first evangelist to Bhutan in a more general sense.

* This claim, like the previous one, is as was stated by Gergan Tharchin as part of his so-called memoirs narrated by him several years prior to his death. This, too, is probably an accurate assertion, although on page 22 of Rev. Tingbo's article cited in the preceding footnote one finds the following curious statement included, under the heading, "Choda Lepcha (1902-1918)": "The pastors Namthak (Mungwa), Chirring Simick (Dalapchan), Anambu Luksom (Todey), Naiman Nagpuri (Looksan) and Mashidas (W. Doars) were invited to perform holy sacraments, weddings in these areas." Of the five areas mentioned, three of them are clearly identifiable by the present writer as being outside Bhutan proper. If the other two (Dalapchan and Looksan) are likewise exterior to Bhutan, then this second claim of Tharchin's is a correct one. On the other hand, is there any evidence that having been invited to perform, let us say, the "holy sacrament" of the Lord's Supper, these two pastors, or any of the others, ever

Next day Tharchin visited the residence of these same two schoolmasters. Although never identifying by name either one of these two teachers when decades later he reported the incident while preparing his “memoirs,” it becomes quite clear, when comparing Tharchin’s statements with information from other sources, who the name of one of them was; namely, it was Ugyen Tshering. It will be recalled that he, together with Dawa Namgya Targyen, had originally been selected by Dr. Sutherland as the first two Christian teachers of the Scots Mission to be posted to Bhutan for opening the school at Ha-Dzong. As it turned out, Dawa had only remained in the program through 1915, but Ugyen had subsequently been transferred from Ha to Bumthang, where he was asked to open the Durbar School and where, as it happened, he was to remain for some twelve years.⁴⁵ Now it was to the residence of this teacher and the other unidentified Christian schoolmaster that Tharchin paid the said visit the day following the Communion service. It was, to say the least, an eye-opening experience for the visitor.

To his dismay, Tharchin long afterwards reported, he found that these two teachers were burning butter-lamps to the graven images of Buddha in their place of abode just as the Buddhists around them were doing. Evidently these schoolmasters had completely backslidden in their Christian faith and had returned, privately at least, to Buddhism. Now when the visitor beheld their conduct, he upbraided them in very strong language: “You are hypocrites! You say you are Christians. Yesterday you even participated in the Lord’s Supper!” Without any hesitation he spoke with them quite vigorously since both of them were younger than he. When telling of this incident decades later, Tharchin—again without citing any names—added that one of these backsliders was ultimately appointed as Agent of the Bhutan government at Buxa on behalf of the Bhutanese citizens who had settled there to engage in trade and commerce.⁴⁶ This would have been Ugyen Tshering, who was indeed “appointed [by] the second King of Bhutan, His Majesty Jigme Wangchuk, . . . as his Kuchhap (Agent) of Buxa,” where “he served . . . till 1954.”⁴⁷ The other of these two backsliders, noted Tharchin, had been a Christian from childhood and had even been brought up in the Ghoom Mission Orphanage. “It is indeed a sad commentary” on this young man’s life, Tharchin would much later regretfully note, that “he went back to Buddhism.” “The fate” of both these teachers, he added, “ended in a great spiritual tragedy.”⁴⁸

did so? It would appear that the statement, from its rather odd construction, should be understood as referring only to weddings; i.e., the prospective couples “invited” these pastors to unite them in the Christian holy sacrament of marriage. And thus the word “weddings” here must be understood as being in apposition to the words immediately preceding the comma. Otherwise, the Tingbo statement leaves the reader confused as to which holy sacrament of three which obtain in the mainline Protestant Church denominations (like the Scottish Presbyterian Church, for example) the author had in mind here: Lord’s Supper, Baptism, or Marriage; or two of three; or all three? Given the Tingbo statement’s rather vague, even perhaps tenuous, character, therefore, the present writer is inclined to accept at face value the Tharchin claim of having participated in the first “breaking of bread” or Communion service ever held in Bhutan proper.



While at Bumthang the traveling party visited a paper factory. During this same period Dr. Sutherland had audiences on several occasions with the then Maharaja, Ugyen Wangchuk. He was also invited to supper at the sovereign's royal palace. It is unclear whether Raja S. T. Dorjee or Tharchin served as the Scottish missionary's interpreter at these functions; more than likely, though, the Tibetan did so on at least one of these occasions.

This first of the hereditary line of Bhutanese Maharajas had already cut quite a figure in domestic and foreign politics well prior to his coronation thirteen years earlier—some of his actions and activities having been highly commendable, others not so praiseworthy, depending on whose assessment of this Bhutanese ruler one might come upon. In the view of Dorje Tharchin's friend Rev. Graham, there was no finer man than Ugyen Wangchuk. Soon to be able in 1921 to pay a visit himself to this incumbent Maharaja at Bumthang, after many years of friendly correspondence back and forth, Graham would be struck by this ruler's unusually excellent qualities of character. In an article authored by the Scots missionary several years after the visit, he gave a thumbnail sketch of Sir Ugyen that is most laudatory:

I have seldom met one who impressed me more by his manliness, his quiet unassuming dignity, his severe simplicity of life, his anxiety to serve those who were dependent on him, his interest in things in general insofar as his isolated home and limited opportunities allowed him, his generosity and his love of his land and his people.⁴⁹

But in the opinion of Patrick French, author of the highly researched and brilliantly written recent biography of Colonel Sir Francis E. Younghusband, a somewhat different portrait of this first Maharaja of Bhutan must be sketched if one wishes to be faithful to the truth. Younghusband, of course, was the leader of the celebrated Diplomatic-Military Mission that had advanced all the distance up to Lhasa in 1904. This British officer, in search of anyone who could reliably aid him in convincing the Tibetan government of his sincere desire for peaceful negotiations to create better relations between India and Tibet, found in the would-be first Bhutanese Maharaja what appeared to the Expedition leader initially to have been just the ally he needed for this purpose. Yet, though there were obvious assets to having Ugyen Wangchuk as Younghusband's associate, in the estimate of French there were also some serious liabilities:

Ugyen Kazi ... was now acting as a representative of the Tongsa Penlop Ugyen Wangchuk, who was, effectively, the ruler of Bhutan. Realizing that the British advance offered the chance to boost his own political status, the Tongsa Penlop proffered his services as a mediator. This was an important coup for Younghusband. A crucial neighboring state with intimate cultural and religious links to Tibet had become a potential ally. Ugyen Kazi agreed that the Tongsa Penlop would send a letter to the Tibetan government encouraging them to negotiate....

One character who did well out of the Younghusband expedition was that tough, sharp Bhutanese go-between, the Tongsa Penlop, Ugyen Wangchuk. If unswerving devotion to national self-interest is the hallmark of the good diplomat, he can scarcely be faulted. He exploited the Tibetans for his own benefit, allowing his entourage to loot their way to Lhasa in a fashion which astounded even the British. For his pains he was given a healthy reward. By 1907 he was the unchallenged ruler of his country, a Knight Commander of the Indian Empire

and the proud possessor of an annual subsidy of 100,000 rupees. His position became hereditary; his great grandson is the present king of Bhutan.⁵⁰

Doubtless, the whole truth concerning the character and leadership qualities of this Bhutanese ruler lies somewhere between these two assessments. Nevertheless, there is no gainsaying the fact that the Maharaja had come to share wholeheartedly Rev. Graham's vision of a Bhutan that must establish a modern educational system, including professional training institutions within the country's own borders, if his nation were ever to be in a position to cope successfully with the outside world, and particularly with its powerful neighbor India. That this vision caught the imagination of Ugyen Wangchuk's immediate successor on the Bhutanese throne likewise speaks well of his leadership.



On the return journey the trio traveled west by northwest, along the trail of what is normally a seven days' march, to the picturesque town of Punakha (elevation: 5150'), at that time the country's administrative capital, where the said Ugyen, the very first (hereditary) Maharaja of Bhutan, had been coronated in 1907.⁵¹ This fortified town, founded in 1577, is located on the upper Sankosh River about 105 miles northeast of Darjeeling. Main access routes run from India via Buxa Duar and from Gangtok via the Natu La. The dzong here, one of the oldest in the land, is a huge structure and "strongly situated," noted Colonel Bailey, "on a spit of land at the junction of two rivers." One of these, the Pho (or Po), "was perfectly clear and designated male; while its neighbor, the Mo, was rather dirty and said to be female!" So observed Margaret Williamson when there in 1933 with her husband, Frederick W. Williamson, the then Political Officer for Bhutan. She added that both rivers were spanned by lovely roofed bridges. But the Punakha fortress which these Political Officers and Tharchin's party saw on their visits here was not the original structure but one which had been rebuilt on the ruins of the castle-fort previously there. For a fire had burned out the historic dzong in 1827 and an earthquake in 1897 destroyed what was left.

Tharchin must nonetheless have been happy to find that this dzong had a large courtyard, too, that could serve as a venue for sharing the gospel by means of the magic lantern. In fact, the Punakha fortress possessed a number of both large and small courtyards. But according to Mrs. Williamson, it also had a great hall that measured about 130 square feet and had "gaily decorated columns and galleries."⁵² But whether in one of the courtyards or in the great hall, Tharchin was able, as he had done at every previous dzong visited, to show the Life of Christ at this castle also. It was a timely occasion, spiritually, because many monks were assembled to watch the magic lantern show, for it was during the winter months that these clerics always proceeded to Punakha whereas during the summer months they turn, even today, towards the much higher elevated city of Thimphu (7900'), which is today the official capital of the Bhutanese government.⁵³

At this period in his life Dorje Tharchin was a young man of nearly thirty years. At this age and on these journeys in the closed land of Bhutan he must have been quite a venturesome fellow. As he himself confessed:

Spiritually I was burning for the Lord. That is to say, His zeal as it were had eaten me up.⁵⁴ I am thankful to the Lord that He was able to use an unworthy vessel like me to proclaim His soul-saving gospel in the land of Bhutan. I am happy to know that many Bhutanese could have a unique and golden opportunity to hear about Christ. I am glad. I am happy. Later, some of the many Bhutanese boys who came down for schooling here in Kalimpong recognized me as the person who had shown the magic lantern in Bhutan. Some of them became my students in the Tibetan class at the SUM Institution. Even the [older] Bhutanese citizens who came to Kalimpong recognized me and jovially tried to mimic my accents and my way of speaking the Tibetan language.



That the nation of Bhutan and its leaders greatly appreciated the educational and cultural contributions which the SUM Institution would over the years make to that country is amply evident from the various letters and speeches by Bhutanese officials which marked the Institution's Centenary celebrations that were held over a three-day period in April 1986. Too numerous to quote from all of them, the following are nonetheless representative of the encomiums of praise which poured forth from Bhutan's elite on this auspicious occasion.

Bhutan's Ambassador to India, His Excellency Dr. Tashi Tobgyel, and himself an alumnus of the School (1937-47), was a member of the "third batch of Bhutanese students" to come to India for study at SUMI. Formerly a medical doctor, the Ambassador, after expressing thanks for having received a solid educational foundation in "knowledge and sound values" which were instilled in him during his formative years at the School, went on to say that it was this kind of inspiration which "guided me through my career in the service of my King, country and people and ... helped me attain this present rank of Cabinet Minister and ... Ambassador of my country ..." He went on to add that it was because of this kind of foundation imparted by SUMI to its students that accounted for why "quite a few" graduates of the School are "holding very important posts" in the Government of Bhutan today.

Bhutan's Ambassador to Bangladesh (His Excellency D. K. Chhetri), although himself no SUMI alumnus, noted, in his letter of commendation sent to the Principal, that "I hold your Institution in high esteem as it has made valuable contributions to us" in Bhutan.

Observing that "the happiest period of my life" was at SUMI, Major General Lam Dorji, in a letter written to the School's Centenary Observance Committee from Bhutan's Royal Army Headquarters at Thimphu, had this to say about his Alma Mater:

It is a matter of great pride for me to state that SUMI, of which my late father, my son and myself are grateful and proud alumni, has, since the beginning of this century, been the pioneer in the promotion of awareness, and the rapid growth, of education in Bhutan. "Sumites" are today found at every level of our administration, and the success that they have achieved in various fields in the service of the Kingdom is a clear manifestation of the role that SUMI has played

towards accelerating the process of Bhutan's socio-economic development. Needless to add, SUMI today enjoys a unique position in Bhutan.

One of the most succinct yet meaningful statements made by any Bhutanese government official was voiced by Dasho R. B. Basnet, the Deputy Secretary of Bhutan's Budget Bureau. "I learned a lot in this School," he said. "I am what I am today because of this School's profound influence on me."

And finally, Rigzin Dorje, the Secretary of the Bhutan government's Special Commission for Cultural Affairs and also Secretary of the Government's Ecclesiastical Department (or Monastic Secretariat), delivered a speech at SUMI on the second day of its Centenary three-day observance. The following are but a few of his noteworthy remarks:

As you are aware, Bhutan is very near to Kalimpong, and this fact, along with the renown of this Institution, was instrumental in linking SUMI inextricably with the exposure, for the first time, of many of my countrymen to modern education. It may interest you to know that many senior officials of the Royal Government of Bhutan, including Ministers, were molded at this very place ... If one of the primary roles of education is nation-building, then it is certain that SUMI has played its role [in Bhutan] with great success and distinction. For this it deserves our admiration as much as it does our gratitude.*⁵⁵

Although he was only on the staff of the SUM Institution for a few short years, Dorje Tharchin could nonetheless take some satisfaction from having played a role in this School's contributions to the upbuilding of Bhutan as both a nation and a people. He could also take some satisfaction in his having contributed to the spiritual uplift of that country as well.



Near the end of the return journey from Bhutan, which was early in 1920, the Sutherland Education Mission halted in the Chumbi Valley of Tibet at Yatung. Situated along the upper Torsa River (called the Chumbi in Tibet), just where it runs into the Amo Chu, Yatung is located some 43 miles east northeast of Gangtok on the historic India-Tibet trade route. In fact, the trade route passed right through Yatung's bazaar and on, then, directly past the British Trade Agency House that was situated on the eastern side of the Amo Chu. Ever since the treaty of 1893 this town had served as the residence of the British Trade Agent;

* Significantly, it should here be indicated, Rigzin Dorje had himself been molded and shaped at this very Institution, with Tharchin having played a major role in his life. For while in attendance for several years at SUMI Rigzin Dorje lived within Gergan Tharchin's very own family compound during that entire period, the Babu, he gladly acknowledged to the present author, having become "like a father, teacher, guide and adviser to me. I can never forget those years when I lived in his home and worked at his press." Indeed, he candidly added, "Whatever success has come to me in my Government service, all credit must go to the late Babu-la." Interview with Drasho Rigzin Dorje, Dec. 1992. One is tempted to speculate here, incidentally, whether Tharchin had partly been inspired by the example of Rev. Dr. Graham's "adoption" of Bhutan's Raja S. T. Dorjee into his own household and assuming the role of surrogate father, guide and adviser to the young lad—all for the good not only of the "adoptee" himself but the latter's homeland of Bhutan as well. See Chapter 16 below for a fuller discussion of the remarkable "father-son" relationship which developed between the Babu and the Drasho.

and in Tharchin's traveling days into Tibet Yatung had remained an important commercial center trading in such products as wool, barley, salt, borax, yak tails, wheat, and cotton goods. Originally known by its Tibetan name of Sharsing-ma (Shashima), the town had its name changed to the present Chinese one of Yatung during the Chinese Empire's rule over Tibet and when the Chinese governor of that day had had his headquarters there.

Although the town has an elevation above 10,000 feet, it boasts a climate very similar to England's. Yatung has been described by one Western traveler in Tibet as "a long, narrow strip of a village squeezed between two barriers of wooded mountains on the banks of the river ... Its houses were all of wood with stone roofs, but one and a half mile before entering the village we had met the first towering Tibetan houses, as stout as fortresses, with broad windows encased in richly carved wood framings—an advanced wave of Chinese architectural patterns lapping at the shores of India...."⁵⁶

During the somewhat lengthy stopover at Yatung Dr. Sutherland was lodged as a guest in the Trade Agency House with the family of David Macdonald, who at this time was still the British Trade Agent. It was a lovely home, described by one visitor to it a year later as a "beautiful one-storied Western-style house ... It was painted brown and white and had a long, glazed veranda; the main door was surrounded by climbing roses.... Roses grew all over the garden and apples were hanging on the trees." Tharchin himself most likely stayed at the dak bungalow located on the opposite (western) bank of the river Amo from the Agency House and reached by a wooden arched bridge that was "so narrow and frail" that ponies could only cross "one at a time at a walk" but which even with these precautions "swayed ominously."⁵⁷ The dak resthouse was sheltered under a hill and commanded a sweeping view up and down the picturesque valley on either side.



The Scottish missionary-educator would now conduct a Sunday morning service here and baptize some children of the Christian families resident in the area, one of whom was the Macdonald family itself—the latter being, incidentally, quite a mixture of many races and nationalities. As will more fully be discussed below, the ethnic background of David Macdonald was part Scottish, part Sikkimese (or Tibetan); but his wife, too, was of mixed blood: the daughter of a Scotsman and a Nepalese woman; and therefore, the Macdonald children were part Scottish, Nepalese and Sikkimese-Tibetan!⁵⁸ Writing in the Preface to his autobiography that was published in 1932, Macdonald provides a thumbnail sketch of himself, part of which deserves to be quoted here:

My father was a Scot, my mother of a Sikkimese family of good standing. The Sikkimese are closely allied to the Tibetans, and thus the circumstances of my birth have given me a peculiar sympathy, affection and understanding for the Tibetan people and their country....

... Naturally sympathetic towards the Christian missionary movement in the hills in which I was born, and profoundly impressed by the good work the missionaries were doing, I took great pleasure in assisting them whenever opportunity offered.

Macdonald, as the reader by this time must know, had not always been an adherent of the Christian faith. In fact, early in his primary education at Darjeeling, where he was born in 1873, he was first introduced not only to “the arts of reading and writing in the language and script of Sikkimese” but also in the religious “tenets” and “form of Buddhism, known as Lamaism, which is practiced in the Eastern Himalayas.” As was noted earlier in Volume I, Chapter 5, it was not until 1894 that he became a Christian, a year after his marriage at Ghoom, where he had lived till he went off on the Younghusband Expedition of 1903-4. Tharchin himself, commenting much later in the 1970s, provides some interesting background information on Macdonald’s subsequent Christian “missionary” activity and service. He, along with David Woodward, could report that

Macdonald was led to Christ ... by Fredrik Franson of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission ... Macdonald immediately went to work for the Mission, serving with them until [1903] and assisting [for five years at Ghoom] with the revision of the [Tibetan] New Testament. [During that same period, incidentally, he was also associated with Rev. Graham in the revision of the Lepcha New Testament.] Following that he was guided of God to accept a post [in 1905] as British ... Trade Agent at [Yatung and] Gyantse, within Tibet itself, where he and his wife gathered large groups of Christians and non-Christians in [Yatung] ... each week for Sunday services [such as the one mentioned above]. Preaching at these services was actually done by Macdonald’s head clerk, Y. Isaac, a national Christian from the SAM mission work at Ghoom.* ... Macdonald was criticized by the British for proselyting the Tibetans and was asked to stop. But the meeting of Christians continued.†⁵⁹

*According to research scholar and author, Dr. Cindy Perry, Y. Isaac, a Tibetan-speaking Bhutia from Pedong village of District Darjeeling’s Kalimpong subdivision and located very near the Sikkim border, was one of the first converts to Christ as a consequence of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission’s evangelistic outreach towards and into Sikkim back in the 1890s (and would go on to become “an ancestor of the contemporarily well-known Isaac family” of Christians in Pedong of the 1990s). In fact, he had been baptized during SAM’s first annual autumn Conference at Ghoom that was held in 1897. Further, in fact, he and his wife Rebecca became the very first indigenous mission workers to labor on behalf of the Christian gospel in and around the important community of Ringim (later called Mangan) situated along the trail north out of Gangtok on the way towards Tibet. For just two years following his baptism, Isaac and his wife had accompanied Rev. Kaarlo Waismaa and wife Hanna on these Finnish missionaries’ first evangelistic outreach and other gospel labors at Ringim in 1899. (Rev. Waismaa, it will be recalled from Chs. 4 and 5 of the present narrative, was the one who later, as the In-Charge of the Ghoom Mission, would offer Dorje Tharchin the opportunity to join that Mission’s teaching staff in 1912.) Isaac would soon master not only his native tongue of Tibetan but the Nepali and Lepcha languages as well, and in addition would eventually learn to speak both Hindi and English. But in time he also came to “know the Bible well.”

Following their period of labor with the Waismaas at Ringim, the Isaacs moved down in 1901 to help in the work of the mission station which the SAM had established at the southern village of Song not far inside the Sikkim border across from Pedong in District Darjeeling. Here they built two houses, opened a school, and were joined in the mission work there in 1905 by two Finnish missionaries, Rev. and Mrs. C.A. Tjäder. Not long after the latter two’s arrival a simple dispensary for the health of the inhabitants in the area was also inaugurated. Rev. Isaac and his wife (by this time he had been ordained) would subsequently go to Yatung to where he had apparently been called by British Trade Agent Macdonald to serve as his head clerk but also to undertake the preaching and pastoral responsibilities among those who gathered for the Sunday services which the Macdonalds had been instrumental in establishing at this Chumbi Valley town. It is not known for certain how long after 1921 Rev. Isaac remained at Yatung before returning with his wife to his native community of Pedong. More than likely, though, he would remain at Yatung till the time in October 1924 of Macdonald’s departure from Tibet and retirement from Political Service there and the latter’s permanent resettlement with his family at Dorje Tharchin’s hill station of Kalimpong. See Perry, *Nepali around the World*, 107, 120 note 10, 129 note 142, 425, 439, 441.

† It should be pointed out that this Christian service was conducted at a neutral site—that is, in the privately-owned and -operated school which Mrs. Macdonald had herself founded at Yatung some years earlier—and not

It will be seen that not only did Dr. Sutherland conduct a Sunday service at Yatung but also Sutherland's younger Mission colleague and Tharchin's future friend, the Rev. John Graham, would likewise do so the very next year (1921). And interestingly enough, Tharchin would be present for that occasion as well (see the next chapter). Moreover, in 1937, Tharchin would have a time of fellowship and prayer with the same aforementioned Christian congregation that for the longest time had continued meeting in the town (see Chapter 20).



Following their stay at Yatung, the members of the Education Mission to Bhutan finally returned to Kalimpong. From the viewpoint of gospel evangelism the Tibetan from Poo had had a fruitful ministry in the Kingdom of the Thunder Dragon. Subsequent to Tharchin's and Sutherland's visits to Bhutan in 1917 and 1919-20 but before 1930, the Scottish Mission out from Kalimpong had been able to establish through its indigenous workers a large congregation and missionary dispensary on the western frontier that exerted "a considerable influence in western Bhutan" and thus enabled at least "indirect" Christian contact to be established. And just as Tharchin had himself intimated earlier, one observer in 1931 could note that "many lads have been educated outside Bhutan." Alexander McLeish went on to comment that work among these and other outside Bhutanese was being carried on by means of bookshops in Kalimpong, Darjeeling and elsewhere. For it must be recognized that by 1930 there were already 2000 reported living in Darjeeling who spoke the familiar "Lho-Ka" dialect of Bhutan, with nearly 2150 more at Jalpaiguri as well. These outside Bhutanese were also being evangelized by those missionaries who would meet them on the well-traveled roads and in the highly frequented bazaars, and were therefore "not quite without a witness." A certain number were even being treated in Kalimpong at the Scottish Mission's Leprosarium located near the Charteris Hospital. Yet McLeish went on also to acknowledge that "they are hard to rouse to any interest, and remain for the most part indifferent and incurious. The deadening effect of Buddhism is always in evidence, and little or no progress can be recorded."⁶⁰

in the Macdonalds' Trade Agency home, which was of course British Government property. American missionary Lillian Carlson is incorrect in stating that these services of the Macdonalds were conducted "in their home each Sunday." See Carlson, "The Story of Christian Missions to Tibet," in Carlson et al., *If the Vision Tarry*, 13. That these Christian services were held elsewhere is made clear in one of Tharchin's other writings, wherein, after noting that both Macdonalds were "keen Christians," he adds that they "had a large gathering of Christians and non-Christians in her school for Sunday service." See page 2 of "The Story of the Christian Mission to Tibet (Compiled by Rev. G. Tharchin and Others)," an undated typewritten document that from internal evidence dates it sometime after 1962, ThPaK. (It needs to be noted that the word "school" in the phrase "in her school" quoted above was an inked handwritten insertion onto the typed document by Tharchin himself as a replacement for the crossed-out word "home," thus indicating his intent that the document be as accurate as possible.) That the services continued despite British Indian government criticism exemplifies the boldness of the Macdonalds and the courage of their Christian convictions. Further, it demonstrates that they could not be intimidated by pressure emanating from higher British authorities who had "asked" that Macdonald "stop proselytizing the Tibetans." *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 14

First Visit to Tibet: the School at Gyantse

How shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring a gospel of good things!

Romans 10:14-15 mgn, quoting in part Isaiah 52:7

IN MAY OF 1921 Dorje Tharchin embarked on his first journey to Tibet. By way of reminiscence he had this to say:

I had an ardent desire within my heart to visit Tibet in order to witness for the Lord there. This strong desire turned into an ambition when Sadhu Sundar Singh and I were stopped by the political authorities at Gangtok in Sikkim from proceeding to Tibet to preach the gospel. Furthermore, I had a powerful yearning within my mind to learn more of the Tibetan language and literature because I felt I lacked proficiency in the language, at least insofar as the technical aspects of philology were concerned.¹ Beyond all this, though, I had an inborn ambition to commence the printing and editing of a Tibetan newspaper of my own once I returned from Tibet.

Learning of my plan to give up my studies in the middle of the SUMI term, some friends tried to warn me not to make [what they felt was] a silly mistake of discontinuing the studies. They thought that since I was receiving a golden opportunity to obtain full and free education in the SUM Institution, I should not make the foolish mistake of losing the chance. But despite their ... well-intentioned advice, I had made up my mind not to miss the trip at any cost. The above-stated reasons were motivating me at the very depths of my subconscious and it was not possible for me to resist those reasons. Hence I resolved to leave my studies and push forward towards Tibet.

Tharchin's offhand mention of Sundar Singh here is not without some significance in the decision by the Tibetan from Poo to go at this time to Tibet. As a matter of fact, by piecing together various other items of information besides that given by Tharchin in the above reminiscence, it is not too much to say at all that the Sadhu had a great deal to do with Dorje Tharchin's willingness to forego the continuance of his SUMI studies and be off to the Great Closed Land.

For one thing, it is learned from the Tibetan's own "memoirs" created near the end of his life that he "had last met" Sundar Singh "at Agra in early 1921"—which obviously means that this encounter occurred well prior to Tharchin's departure for Tibet in the month of May.² And it is also known from these same "memoirs" (but on a much earlier page of them) that this meeting of the two evangelists had occurred at that time when Tharchin was returning to Kalimpong from a trip to Delhi, doubtless made by him during the SUMI winter holiday break of 1920-1. In his so-called memoirs the Tibetan relates the fact that he took this occasion to share with his close friend and colleague in the gospel his increasing burden and desire to evangelize among his ethnic countrymen in Tibet, a land which he well knew was high on the Sadhu's own agenda for continued evangelism. Although the pertinent passage from Tharchin's "memoirs" was quoted earlier for a different purpose (see the end of Chapter 9 in the first volume of the present work), it bears repeating in part here:

... I ... discussed with him my plans to avail myself of the opportunity to visit Tibet. I told him that we had both attempted to enter Tibet to preach the matchless name of Christ, but we could not realize our plans. Now, though, I might have an opportunity to visit Tibet. Sundar Singh was glad to hear of this opening to enter Tibet. This was in the great providence of the Lord.

It would not be presuming in the least to say that Tharchin must also have apprised Sundar Singh of all the other considerations which were then weighing heavily upon his heart—those which were addressed by him long afterwards in the lengthy “memoir” reminiscence with which the present chapter opened, especially the subject of his SUMI studies at Kalimpong. For it has come to light from another source that the Sadhu did indeed have a role to play in the Tibetan’s voluntary forfeit of these free-tuition studies for the sake of the gospel in Tibet. The source is a letter that was written to Tharchin three years later from Poo by Moravian missionary Fred E. Peter. As will be learned more fully at the end of the next chapter, the Tibetan had inquired of Rev. Peter by letter about the possibility of his going to Poo to labor in the gospel there. At the same time, he had apparently asked Mr. (later Rev.) William Mann of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Mission in India, who had likewise had a burden to reach Tibetans for Christ, to send to Rev. Peter a personal recommendation that would undoubtedly include any observations Mann might wish to offer concerning Tharchin’s character and his Christian service. Citing in his response to Tharchin’s inquiry “the good reports about you received from Mr. Mann,” Rev. Peter went on to make the following interesting comment: “If I understood Mr. Mann right, and if he was informed fully [by you?], I believe you left your studies for evangelistic work influenced and helped by Sadhu Sundar Singh.”³

Doubtless, then, it was the encounter at Agra with the Sadhu that served as the venue for Tharchin to solicit advice from his valued friend and confidant which could help him to chart out a course of Christian endeavor for the foreseeable future. Not only did Sundar Singh provide advice and counsel that apparently “influenced” the Tibetan in the direction of quitting his SUMI studies and going off to Tibet for evangelistic and other purposes; the Sadhu also, it would appear, and in keeping with his well-known generous nature, “helped” Tharchin in a financial way as a means of assisting him to make the transition from student and teacher at Kalimpong to evangelist and linguistic scholar inside the Forbidden Land of Tibet. The Sadhu would likewise support his friend with his prayers as Dorje Tharchin now made preparations for entering at last the land of his dreams and fancies. In fact, so eager was he to reach Tibet without delay that in a letter sent five months later from Gyantse he would write to say that “I left my good [teaching] post and the good opportunity of my study and ... did not [even] settle anything about my pay etc.” from SUMI.⁴



Although to the cultural outsider (especially if he be a Westerner) the politics and religion of Tibet might appear most inhospitable and at times even hostile, its physical environment could be such to *anyone*—whether insider or outsider. For this highest country in the world

that so often in the past has been shrouded in mystery is a vast plateau or tableland ranging in altitude from 11,000 to 17,000 feet (with the average above 14,750) and "enclosed by the largest mass of rocks in the world"—it being bounded at the four points of the compass by four different mountain ranges. The Himalayas to the south, however, constitute the most gigantic in mass and height, peaking up to over 29,000 feet and extending in a broad curve some 1500 miles to form the border with the Indian subcontinent. And on the north the Tibetan plateau is enclosed by the similarly long Kunlun (Tien Shan) mountain chain, with peaks exceeding 20,000 feet in elevation that "form a forbidding bastion against invaders." It is little wonder, then, that to Tibetans themselves their country is known as *Bhod Gangchen Jong*: the Land Surrounded by Snow Mountains. In fact, Tibetans like to refer to their country as the Snowy Land.

Hidden behind this immense mountain-wall ("which Nature has built up to guard its secrets"), the world's most elevated country is swept not only by intermittent snowstorms but also by some of the fiercest winds imaginable. Indeed, one Tibetan explorer has commented that this land's galestorms "are generally regarded as the most terrible and devastating *steady* winds known anywhere in the world." These winds have gained immense notoriety from the stories which so many explorers of Tibet have brought back regarding them. It is the vast, bare and open formation of the land that affords these wind currents such unparalleled opportunity to sweep along unchecked, often reaching and maintaining speeds of a hundred miles an hour. Oddly enough, these gales grow much stronger during the afternoon hours. On a given day the entire morning may remain quite calm, but at about 1:30 or so a breeze will suddenly arise and commence to increase in velocity, until at about 4:00 p.m. it will have taken on hurricane force and then only die down shortly after sunset, but with it sometimes continuing till far into the night. One traveler, however, reported a peculiar phenomenon about Tibet's winds, the knowledge of which helped him to evade their worst features. One day during a fierce windstorm he noticed that the sand on the ground "was singularly little disturbed, that for the most part the wind swept along two or three feet above the ground," and that thus a gale could be blowing but if a person lies down on the earth it would scarcely be noticeable!

One consequence of these gale-force winds for the land's inhabitants has been that down through the centuries Tibetans have adopted as a mode of protection against the penetrating coldness a method which to most visitors in the land has appeared obnoxious, repulsive and even loathsome. Because these cutting winds are so easily able to penetrate every form of clothing and to dissipate the tiny layer of warm air which ordinarily surrounds the body, thus making frostbite a very real and constant threat, the Tibetans as a race of people decided long ago to retain on their skins layer upon layer of dirt and grease as a means to counteract this threat. As one writer has observed, this method adopted by the Tibetan "is really the finest natural clothing he could secure."⁵ Moreover, recent research has revealed that Tibetans have been able to live at high altitudes for far longer than the South American Indians. This is because the inhabitants on the Roof of the World have developed a genetic factor that permits them to utilize oxygen more efficiently than other high-altitude dwellers who up till now have lacked such a refined mechanism.

As a country Tibet is so cold that the common dress of Tibetans must be a sheepskin, and is for the most part so barren that its citizens have had to rely upon other nations for many of their comforts and necessities of life. Nonetheless, Tibet's ice age glaciers have from time immemorial been the source of many great "rivers of life" that extend their way throughout much of Asia: those legendary waterways such as the Indus, the Ganges, the Sutlej and the Brahmaputra, as well as the Kali Gandaki, Trisuli, Yangtse, Salween, Mekong and Yellow Rivers. Surely the ninth-century Tibetan poet was correct when he wrote of his homeland:

The center of high snow mountains,
The source of great rivers,
A lofty land,
A pure land.

Yet how did Tibet, geologically speaking, come to be this "dizzy land, towering above all its neighbors"? In answer, one journalist has declared that the Roof of the World "provides a dramatic example of the power which is released by colliding continents." Indeed, Sven Hedin once described Tibet as "the most stupendous upheaval to be found on the face of the planet." For a long time, now, it has been believed—at least as a generally accepted theory—that the Himalayas had been formed as a result of the collision between India as a former gigantic island and the continent of Asia. Originally a part of the super continent called "Gondwana-land" that was located in the southern hemisphere some fifty million years ago, India broke away from it and floated over the Indian Ocean towards its present location. And about twenty million years ago this floating island-mass collided with Asia creating in the process what geologists have heretofore considered but one seam that joined the much smaller island-mass of India with the huge landmass of Asia, thus forming today's Indian subcontinent and thrusting up what we now know of as the Himalayas.⁶

Not long ago, however, a joint French-Chinese geological expedition discovered what appears to be not one but *two* seams that if true would go a long way in explaining more fully how the Roof of the World was formed. This new supplemental theory now holds that there was a *second* island floating in the ocean, and situated between the India continental isle and Asia. Journalist Robert Walgate reports that through some highly technical seismographic research conducted by the expedition, it has been determined that the second seam lies about 200 kilometers "north of the seam which was already known"; and that "the enclosed block, the Lhasa-block, is in fact present-day Tibet." According to this supplemental theory, in the time of the dinosaurs, this second isle was located at the level of the Equator and must have therefore been "a whole tropical continent with its own flora and fauna." Most interesting of all, these geologists claim there are indications that the Lhasa-block had consisted previously of different parts, and that hence one could speak of "an island archipelago which was caught, jammed between India and Asia."⁷

Now Tibet in the past had traditionally been viewed as comprising three distinct geographic regions, latitudinally speaking: a southern zone consisting of relatively fertile valleys (minimum elevation 12,000 feet) and pasture lands, and populated by people following agricultural pursuits (with good crops grown of barley, wheat, peas, beans and buckwheat) and where the majority of Tibet's population has always lived; a central zone that for the most part constituted grass country and served as home for nomadic tribes; and, covering one-third to

one-half the country, a vast northern treeless waste zone known as the Chang (meaning "northern") or the Changthang where during nearly the entire year an Arctic-like climate prevails, where seldom more than an inch of rain annually falls and snow normally only "breaking the sky" during the last two months of the year, and where "no human activity relieves the desolation" except during the autumn season when the air is clear and traders and pilgrims could traverse the area from the east to Lhasa. So rarified is the air over the Changthang that the traveler can see an occasional nomad ten miles away. Interestingly, a Captain Wellby, after traversing the Chang during the summer of 1896, could report that for this period of time he could find "no vegetation higher than an onion" and could see "no sign of human creature for fourteen weeks." Indeed, the Tibetans themselves derisively call the Changthang "the land of no man and dog"—making it the least inhabited and most inhospitable region of the world's roof: the part of Tibet which one former resident of that country has aptly termed "a misanthrope's heaven"! Yet surprisingly, this same bleak and desolate region of Tibet could in the past provide pasture for herds of wild horses, yak, sheep, asses, goats and antelopes—with most of the grazing grounds lying between 15,000 and 17,500 feet in elevation! To traverse the country of Tibet in those days the average traveler was required to make a succession of arduous ascents and descents, to struggle through snowy passes at incredible elevations, cross and recross swift, icy streams and rivers—spanned only by homemade bridges of hemp rope or else absolutely bridgeless, make camp in terrible storms, and do battle with the worst features of the elements imaginable.

Long fabled as a very snowy country, Tibet's total precipitation nevertheless averages but ten inches per year. This is because of the unrivaled barrier of lofty mountains and glaciers on Tibet's underbelly which keeps the heavy monsoon rains to its south and southeast, thus precluding humidity developing in the land which otherwise would be "eternally sheeted in ice." As it is, there is practically no snow under 20,000 feet, even in winter. But what it lacks in snow much of the year it makes up for in frigid temperatures. For although its capital of Lhasa is in the same latitude as Cairo in Egypt, the country, as indicated above, can be almost as cold as arctic Siberia. In fact, tremendous atmospheric changes, even in a given day, are not uncommon, with "the thermometer in some places showing 120° F. at mid-day, and sinking to [thirty] below zero at night"! The heat, though, is only felt under the sun's direct rays inasmuch as the heat in Tibet's rarefied atmosphere does not radiate; on the other hand, noted one Western traveler in the Shigatse area, during the hottest time of the day he and his companions were frequently finding that their tea "would freeze to a solid block of ice inside of a dwelling." Little wonder, then, that Tibetans say "cold-warm" when referring to temperature; for as another Western traveler once remarked, "One can literally get sunstroke on one side of the face while the other is being frostbitten, so great is the difference of temperature in sun and shade."⁸

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Originally Tibetan society had been nomadic in character; nevertheless, it slowly developed into a socio-economic system wherein the land belonged to the State but was held in estates

by the Government, monasteries or the aristocracy. True, the land was worked by tenant farmers, many of whom were bound to the estate; yet some of the terms which have been used by historians and others to describe facets of medieval European society—those such as “serfdom” or “slavery”—never seemed to have applied to any of a number of relationships by which the tenants in Tibet paid taxes to their landlords.* As a matter of fact, in East Tibet’s Kham and Amdo provinces, where there existed fewer sizable estates and where there were more large free peasant holdings, a greater number of individuals actually owned their land and therefore paid taxes directly to the Government. Moreover, various other lifestyles could be found in Tibetan society: nomads, of course, but also merchants, traders, craftsmen, and semi-nomadic peasants.

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Now as to one’s knowledge with regard to the dating of Tibet’s beginnings, an oral tradition traces it to the second century b.c.; the land’s reliable *written* records, however, give its history only from the seventh century a.d. This was when Tibet’s first great king, Songtsan Gampo (who ruled in 627-49), had his able, young and brilliant scholarly minister, Thonmi Sambhota, adapt the Gupta script of India, “with a number of ingenious changes,” to the Tibetan language of his time.⁹ The earliest known allusion to the land of Tibet in Western

* “Some point out that these terms ‘serfdom’ and ‘slavery’ seem rather more likely to be Chinese inventions designed to justify their armed occupation of Tibet which began in [1950]. Mrs. D. Choedon, a Tibetan woman classified by the Chinese as a serf, whose writings make this designation doubtful, gives a portrait of a rather easygoing society which was more or less self-sufficient. ‘We never had any difficulty earning our livelihood. There was not a single beggar in our area.’ Her writings have been described as ‘wholly credible’ by Chris Mullin, a journalist who is considered by many to write sympathetically of Chinese rule in Tibet. Various travelers in Tibet such as Mme. David-Neel, George N. Patterson and Heinrich Harrer [all of whom are cited as source authorities in the present biography] have generally confirmed Mrs. Choedon’s observations.” Paul Ingram, *Tibet: the Facts; a Report Prepared by the Scientific Buddhist Association for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights* (1990), 3. See also Franz Michael, *Rule by Incarnation: Tibetan Buddhism and Its Role in Society and State* (1982), who thoroughly discusses these terms and comes to the same conclusions as Ingram has presented.

One scholar-writer (but there are no doubt others, including Marxist Chinese writers) who thus far is not swayed by the equally scholarly views of writers on the subject such as B. Aziz (1978), P. Dargyay (1982), F. Michael (1982) and B. Miller (1986) is the historian Melvyn Goldstein. Despite his allowance for “substantial mobility in Tibetan society,” Goldstein continues to insist that “this flexibility is not incompatible with the presence of a system of serfdom” that in his view obtained in Tibet. He argues that though the traditional society on the World’s Roof unarguably included opportunities for social and physical mobility, “there was an intrinsic element of *control* by lords [of the land] over the labor of their hereditary serfs.” Goldstein, “Reexamining Choice, Dependency and Command in the Tibetan Social System: ‘Tax Appendages’ and Other Landless Serfs,” *TJ* (Winter 1986):79. For rejoinders to Goldstein by Miller and Michael, see Miller’s letters to the Editor in *TJ*: (Summer 1987):65-7 and (Autumn 1987):64-6, and Michael’s letter to the Editor in *TJ* (Autumn 1987):78. Goldstein has continued to amplify on his thesis with new data, and has concluded that “what appears clear ... is that the essential attributes of serfdom were present in Tibet, and that the similarities between Tibet and Europe are significant.” Goldstein, “On the Nature of the Tibetan Peasantry: a Rejoinder,” *TJ* (Spring 1988):65. See also his further article, “Freedom, Servitude and the ‘Servant-Serf’ Nyima,” *TJ* (Summer 1989):56-60. And finally, for a still more recent counter-argument to the thesis put forward by those like Goldstein and other “sincere as well as dogmatic individuals of the left,” see David Patt, *A Strange Liberation: Tibetan Lives in Chinese Hands* (Ithaca, 1992), 22-9.

literature was that made by the fifth-century b.c. historian Herodotus in his famous *History*. In it he told of a great desert north of India inhabited, as rumor asserted, by giant ants who tossed up gold nuggets as they burrowed beneath the earth's surface. Travelers, Herodotus wrote, would periodically try to make away with the gold on horseback, but the ants would hotly pursue them and kill the thieves if caught.*¹⁰ A visit in 1867 by the Survey of India Department's "Chief Pundit," Nain Singh Rawat, to the fabled goldfields of Thok Jalung provided some support for this "curious story" in Herodotus. For here on this ceaselessly windswept 17,000-foot plateau (located, incidentally, just north of the river Indus in that portion of southwestern Tibet opposite the Bashahr district in India where Dorje Tharchin was born and grew up), this Bhotian explorer in disguise came upon numerous small piles of earth-like anthills. What he discovered were not giant ants but a considerable number of goldminers who were dwelling with their families in a more or less permanent underground status. And as he watched the diggers unearthing plenty of gold, he beheld one nugget that weighed at least a kilogram!¹¹ A hardy lot, these Tibetans were indeed, despite the privations of such uninviting terrain.

In the fifth century b.c., of course, the "father of history" had not identified by name the people who lived in the geographical area he had briefly described and within which his "curious story" had taken place. That would come several centuries later when "the native ethnonym of Tibet" itself—as Professor Christopher Beckwith has more precisely defined it—was first referenced in both Western and Eastern historical sources. In his superbly composed volume on the Tibetan Empire of the early Middle Ages, Beckwith explained that the term *Bautai* or "Baut" was the name which first appeared in the writings of Hellenistic and Greco-Roman authors to denominate the people of Tibet. At about the same time in which these Western writers were composing their works, Chinese written sources of the late classical period were employing a name for the inhabitants of Tibet which when pronounced in classical times had sounded something like "Puat": a term, asserts Beckwith, which "was undoubtedly intended to represent Baut, the name that became pronounced by seventh-century Tibetans as *Bod* ..." The American scholar went on to point out that there is significance in the fact that the Indic form of Baut is *Bhautta*, which, he adds, "is phonetically comparable to the classical Western and Eastern transcriptions of the name of *Bod*."¹²

There is, then, a close connection between the term *Bod* and the derivation of Tibet as the name in English for this area of Central Asia. For it may be recalled from the early portion of the End-Notes for Chapter 1 of the present narrative that the actual term "Tibet" or its near equivalent first appeared in about 950 a.d. in the works of the Arab writer *Istakhri*,

* "Generally hailed as the 'father of history,' Herodotus (485-425 b.c.) has also been labeled 'king of liars' by more severe critics. Some historians think the 'ants' sprang from his lively imagination, others suggest more tolerantly that he simply put the best possible gloss on the enthusiastic accounts of the travelers of antiquity. Alexander the Great and Suleiman the Magnificent, plus a horde of anonymous adventurers and learned men, tried to track down the mysterious gold diggers across the centuries. Indian, Chinese and Tibetan literature abounds in references to the strange insect prospectors. Their legend was as well known in the West in the Middle Ages as the tale of Jason and the Golden Fleece in Greek mythology." See "Explorer Locates Gold-Digging Ants of Legend," datelined Paris, Dec. 5 (AFP), in *The Kathmandu Post*, 6 Dec. 1996, p. 5. The well-known French explorer and author, Michel Peissel, believes he has solved the mystery as to the identity of these mythical creatures: they belong to a genus of the burrowing squirrel known as the marmot which inhabits certain areas of the Himalayas even today; see the present chapter's End-Notes for the details.

who called the country “Tobbat.” The word Tibet in English is therefore the European form of the term *to-bhod*—that is to say, the “Highlands of the Bhod people”—from which Istakhri must have derived his name of Tobbat.*

*

Now the reader will recall from an earlier discussion that prior to the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet, the indigenous religion already present for ages past had been a gross form of devil worship. Yet even down through the centuries of Tibetan history since the beginning of this religion’s replacement in the seventh century of the Christian era, this ancient shamanistic faith has so substantially tinged Tibetan Buddhism that it has given the latter a special color of its own. Thus the Roof of the World, a later generation Tibetan wrote from London, “took unto itself the religion of India and the culture of China, and planted these seeds in its own soil, a soil different from that of any country in the world. The genius of the Tibetan people then acted upon it, and flowered forth a civilization that is unique.” But it led, Tsewang Pemba added, “to strange paradoxes and contradictions: side by side with the most abstruse and pure philosophies, there was a web of superstition; the killing of any living thing was condemned, yet the justice meted out to wrongdoers was barbarous in the extreme; there was hardship, but there was happiness and an exuberance of vigorous life; there was backwardness, but freedom to lead a gay, carefree existence; there was ignorance, but there was wisdom too. Such was Tibet.” Another writer on the Roof of the World, but not a Tibetan, has amplified further on these and other qualities in the Tibetan character. David Bonavia, together with photographer Magnus Bartlett, have in recent years produced an insightful and extremely handsome volume on the Land of Snows and its people entitled quite simply, *Tibet*. In it Bonavia has a passage—worth quoting in full—on the character of the inhabitants who have peopled this remarkable country:

Numerous travelers have remarked on the peculiar amiability of the Tibetan people, their tolerance of foreigners (few of whom have actually succeeded in penetrating the country before the Chinese occupation in 1951), and their love of life and fellowship. They revere nature, and respect and cherish animals even when they must kill them for food. Their life-style is aimed at achieving a harmonious balance between their daily chores and the spiritual forces which they believe to exist all around them.

The Tibetans are naturally likable people, but they are as prone to human weakness as anyone. Throughout their history, bandits, oppressive rulers, and profligates, often sheltering behind the badge of the monk or lama, have clashed with the high ideals and abstruse philosophy of Buddhism. Their likableness stems from their way of offering open and direct friendliness to strangers and to each other, and preserving a sense of humor—side by side with a strong

* Yet even more common, it was noted earlier, has been the use of the term *bhod-yul*—the “Land of the Bhod people”—to designate this particular geographical area. And finally, it ought not be overlooked that the Tibetan-speaking inhabitants of this Central Asian mountainous region have themselves been given to calling themselves by the name of *bhod-par*, or the “Bhod-people.” See Friedrich Heiler, *The Gospel of Sadhu Sundar Singh*, trans. Olive Wyon (London, 1927), 66.

belief in the spiritual nature of man, while recognizing the inevitability of human foibles. Their intimate contact with soil, mountain, beast and bird also bestows on them an air of spontaneity and inner freedom.... For all the exotic characteristics of Tibetan culture, the fundamental sense of a striving after man's proper adjustment to the natural world lies at its base.¹³

Some of these very characteristics of the Tibetan race the reader has already become acquainted with; others will manifest themselves as the present narrative continues to unfold in the pages to follow.

As to the origin of the Tibetan people, Western scholars have generally sought for it in early nomadic non-Chinese tribal peoples of eastern Central Asia.* In this connection, it has been pointed out that this very background has been reflected for centuries in the ability of the Tibetans to handle horses, yaks and other animals, in the delight they have always taken in the open spaces and open air, in their endless penchant for traveling great distances, and in their strong individualism. About his people the current Dalai Lama of Tibet has himself recently made these observations: "Tibetans are a distinct and separate race. Our physical appearance and our language† and customs are entirely different from those of any of our neighbors. We have no ethnological connection with anyone else in our part of Asia."¹⁴

* But at this point in the research no one can be absolutely certain that this is true. An excellent summary of the results of the scholarship done in this area of inquiry can be found in Beckwith's work alluded to above, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, 3-8. In these few pages the author has set forth the following observations and/or conclusions as a consequence of his own and others' research:

The mystery of the origins of peoples has fascinated scholars for generations. It is now generally accepted, however, that it is difficult, if not impossible, to identify preliterate archaeological remains with specific linguistic groups of today. So it is with the Tibetans. Recent archaeological discoveries have shown that the land of Tibet has been occupied by humans from remote prehistoric times ... To which ethnic group these early Tibetans belonged is unknown. Theories of Tibetan ethnic affinity, as with those of most other peoples, are back-projections derived from conjecture about the linguistic relationship of Tibetan with other languages of Asia.

... By its very location [surrounded as it is on all sides by a variety of different linguistic-speaking peoples] ... it would seem that whatever language group (if any) Tibetan is to be connected with, the choices are not limited to Chinese....

The first historical reference to people later identified—rightly or wrongly—as Tibetans are to be found in ... the references on the Shang Chinese oracle-bone inscriptions, from around four thousand years ago, to a people called Ch'iang. They are supposed to have been nomadic—the name Ch'iang is a Chinese word that combines the signs for Sheep and Man—but extremely little is known about them. Their successors in the Chinese records are known as the Chiang, who lived in and around the area of present-day Northwest China, but were considered to be non-Chinese. They spoke foreign languages and dressed differently from the Chinese. Then, in classical antiquity, the Ch'iang reappear under their earlier name, and are firmly established on the eastern marches of Tibet....

During the Great Migration of Peoples, which affected the classical East as well as the West, Ch'iang leaders were among those who established more or less ephemeral states on Chinese territory. It seems fairly clear that these Ch'iang were ethnically unrelated to the Tibetan-speaking people who founded the Tibetan Empire in the seventh century of our era. In any event, Tibetans and "Ch'iang" from the early seventh century onward were and are without question linguistically—and, apparently, culturally—unrelated peoples....

More to the point, it is stated in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* that [Songsan Gampo's father] ... and his people conquered the region of "Rtsan-Bod." This is generally believed to be the equivalent of modern U-Tsang, the south-central heartland of Tibet. In other words, the Tibetans of [Songsan Gampo's father]—who never call him "king of Bod" in the *Chronicle* but always "king of Spu," and refer to themselves as poor southern farmers who conquered the rich northern herders—did not originally have the ethnonym Bod, but acquired it by conquest. In sum, the Tibetan people are probably as autochthonous as any other people of Eurasia. But knowledge of where they originally came from, and to which other peoples they are related, is now lost in the mists of time.

† The dominant theory constantly being put forward by the Chinese concerning the linguistic affinities of the Tibetan language—though discredited for some time now by Western scholars—has been the so-called "Sino-Tibetan" one which, Beckwith writes, "attempts to force Tibetan into a 'family' along with Chinese, Thai, and

It may be of interest to note here that it has been claimed that Nazi Germany's racist fuhrer Adolf Hitler had been an admirer of the supposed racial purity of the Tibetans, the Nazis having seriously entertained the theory that Tibet was possibly the original Aryan homeland and another equally bizarre notion that the Tibetans were themselves a lost Aryan tribe. Because of this kind of groundless thinking, both Hitler and his SS henchman Heinrich Himmler made approaches to Tibet. In 1938, for example, Himmler had dispatched to Tibet an expedition under Captain Ernst Schäfer that was chiefly sponsored by the SS, openly Nazi, and ostensibly scientific in its mission but which carried with it secret instructions to locate the Aryan homeland. So imbued with the "Master Race" concept were the Nazis that the members of the expedition were instructed "to measure Tibetan head sizes and ascertain that the Tibetans were not Jews but true Aryans." Moreover, a propaganda movie was eventually made about the Schäfer expedition that was entitled, "The Enigma of Tibet." Lasting into 1939, the expedition would ultimately alienate itself from the Tibetans because of conduct that offended their Buddhist sensibilities. On the other hand, it is believed that Hitler had made contact with the Tibetan government in the early 1940s. If true, it was probably the snow mountains in the Snowy Land which had first drawn the Fuehrer to take notice of Tibet and her people, since in the 1930s "mountain symbolism" had commenced to take hold of the popular imagination in Germany. "The pure white, solid power of snow mountains," writes one authority, had exerted a powerful influence upon the Nazis. Indeed, so affected was Hitler by Tibet and its culture that he is reputed to have even had a group of Lamas brought back to Germany, where they were instructed to perform special chants aimed at altering the weather patterns as a prelude to the Fuehrer's ill-fated invasion of Russia!¹⁵

Burmese. Although numerous revisionists have eliminated Thai from their systems, contemporary political-racial considerations (rather than linguistic ones) seem to be keeping Tibetan bound to Chinese." He goes on to point out that the verbal system of Tibetan is very much "reminiscent of Germanic tongues," but that the language displays "systemically entrenched proto-Indo-Iranian vocabulary." These features together would reflect a relationship with the *divergent* "Indo-European" group; however, "the agglutinative grammatical structure, among other features (especially of modern spoken Tibetan), indicates a relationship with languages of the *convergent* 'Altaic' group." Beckwith acknowledges that vocabulary and a few other features show a probable relationship of some kind with Burmese, but that "any divergent relationship with Chinese is unlikely—although still conceivable for the remotest prehistoric times—for just about every possible reason. (That modern Central Tibetan dialects have phonemic 'tones' is only indicative of Tibet's physical location in an area of the world—Eastern Eurasia—where nearly all languages that have been there very long ... have tonal systems.)" As the most perceptive linguist who has discussed the matter has shown, adds Beckwith, "the most strenuous recent efforts expended in demonstrating a relationship have been quite unsuccessful. The fact is, even if the Tibetan and Chinese language families were ultimately divergently related, they would have had to have split into two distinct groups many thousands of years ago, long before the creation of any linguistic remains that could help prove or disprove such affinity." In sum, concludes Beckwith, "it is uncertain what languages Tibetan *is* related to, but anyone with a knowledge of both comparative-historical linguistics and the Tibetan and Chinese languages (the pillars of the 'Sino-Tibetan' theory) has great difficulty imagining that two such radically different tongues could be genetically related." *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, 4-5. This categorical statement of Beckwith's finds supportive elaboration in the observations of another Tibetan scholar, Robert Turman. He has noted that on the one hand the Tibetan language lacks ideograms—being written in an alphabetical form, is polysyllabic, inflected with case, declension and gender structure that has been adapted from Sanskrit, and is not semantically tonal. On the other hand, the Chinese language is written in ideograms, and is monosyllabic, non-inflected and tonal! Turman, "An Outline of Tibetan Culture," *Cultural Survival Quarterly* (1988):65.

Tibetans themselves have long claimed to have been descended from a rhesus monkey god named Halu Manzur who was an incarnation of Chenrezi, the Divine Protector of Tibet. This monkey god, so say the Tibetans, married a mountain ogress or demoness who—said to be the manifestation of Dolma, “the liberating goddess”—had lusted after him. This assignation is believed by Tibetans to have occurred at Mount Conpori (or Gonbo), near Tsethang (a two days’ journey southeast of Lhasa), and that the caves which were said to have been inhabited by these monkey ancestors can be seen even today. The ogress ultimately gave birth to six children, all born with long hair and tails. But the father—the good Spirit of the mountains, Chenrezi—miraculously fed them sacred grains, causing their hair and tails to gradually grow shorter till they fell away entirely. The six progeny of the Monkey and the Ogress were said to have originated the six tribes and founded the twelve states of prehistoric Tibet. According to the Tibetan chronicles, some of these six children had the virtues of their father, the monkey god (love for religion, piety, gentleness, good manners, etc.), whereas others had the vices of their demoness mother (ferocity, cunning, deceit, greediness, etc.), “yet all possessed strong bodies and courage,” as are indeed the Tibetans of today. This version of the origin of the Tibetan race was subscribed to by the famed Indian pundit Atisha (982-1054 a.d.) who claimed he had discovered a document inscribed to this effect on a pillar in the Central Cathedral of Tibetan Buddhism at Lhasa. Interestingly, in a Sherpa version of this legend,¹⁶ a monkey that was converted to Buddhism took up the hermit life in the mountains where he was loved and married by a demoness. Their offspring too had long hair and tails, but they became the *mi-teh kang-mi*, the “man-thing of the snows”—the *yeti* or Abominable Snowman of current notoriety.¹⁷

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Unsatisfactory as these legendary and mythological explanations for the origin of the Tibetans and other possible inhabitants of the Land of Snows may appear to us of a later and more rational day, it nevertheless cannot be denied that more than thirteen centuries ago these same strong-bodied, aggressive and courageous Tibetans—under the leadership of Songtsan Gampo (617-49), their “Noble Tibetan King,” as he has often been called—had forged one of the mightiest military empires the world has ever known. Yet who in the West today, asked one Western historian of modern Tibet, “has ever heard of Songtsan Gampo?” Nevertheless, his name, wrote Michel Peissel, “deserves to stand beside those of Alexander, Caesar, Genghis Khan and Napoleon as one of the greatest conquerors of all time.”

This Tibetan chieftain—a mere teen-ager!—“set out on horseback” in 634 a.d. with the intention of unifying all the wild tribes of Central Asia, and within just fifteen years he had created “one of the fiercest armies of all time” and had conquered most of Central Asia and had penetrated far into China as well. Animists by religion and savage by nature, Tibetans noted one authority, rejoiced in war and conquest. In this short span of time the armies of Tibet under their youthful but fierce warrior-king had marched northward and established control over the vast steppes of the Mongolians (from whence, incidentally, there appeared

some seven centuries later another great soldier on the world scene, Genghis Khan), had added the territory of India as far south as the Bay of Bengal (giving it the surprising name of “the Tibetan Ocean”!), and had extended Tibet’s borders as far as to Samarkand in Turkestan and even deep into China, exacting tribute from that country’s emperors for several centuries thereafter. A rapacious people who seemed to delight in plunder and cruelty, the Tibetans came to be dreaded all over Central Asia as the Vikings a few centuries later came to be greatly feared throughout Europe. So threatening, in fact, did Tibet then appear to some of its neighbors that Harun al-Rashid, the all-powerful Caliph of Baghdad (he of a “Thousand and One Nights” fame), felt compelled to enter into an unlikely alliance with China’s T’ang Dynastic Emperor and to dispatch his best armies in an attempt to contain those of the Tibetan kings. “The very fact,” observed Luciano Petech, “that nothing less than the coalition of the two most powerful empires of the early Middle Ages was necessary for checking the expansion of the Tibetan state, is a magnificent witness of the political capacities and military valor of those sturdy mountaineers.” So powerful was the Tibet of those times that when, in 763, the Emperor of China had refused to pay the tribute owed the Tibetan court (50,000 rolls of silk annually), the great-great-grandson of Songtsan Gampo (Trhisong Detsen) invaded the Celestial Empire, captured its capital of Chang’an (present-day Sian) and even deposed the Emperor, replacing him temporarily with his own brother-in-law! At this time Tibet was occupying and actually administering virtually the entire territory then comprising China’s provinces of Kansu, Szechuan and Yunnan; indeed, Tibet went on to maintain its control over this sizable portion of the Han Empire for nearly a century! Eventually these two proud empires—Tibetan and Han—signed what in essence was a pact of nonaggression in 821-2. Details of this treaty were in fact inscribed in both languages upon a stone pillar that was erected in Lhasa very near the Holy Cathedral of Tibetan Buddhism. Treaty pillars were also erected at the Sino-Tibetan border and at Chang’an outside the Emperor’s Palace gate. Among other things the pact defined the boundaries of both nations, declared that “all to the east is the country of Great China and all to the west is, without question, the country of Great Tibet,” and affirmed that “Tibetans shall be happy in the land of Tibet and Chinese in the land of China.”¹⁸

The immensity of the Tibetan military achievement is almost too vast to contemplate: from northern Burma to Afghanistan, from Siberia to India, from what currently is known as Russian Turkestan to deep inside China, it came about that this “Noble Tibetan King” and his Choegyal or “Religious King” descendants on the Tibetan throne ruled for some four hundred years over the greatest empire of Central Asia, an empire that was simply called Tibet! Yet as Peissel has noted with justifiable emphasis, “of *all* the great conquerors of history, Songtsan Gampo is perhaps the one who has left the most lasting imprint on the world.” This is because, explains this historian of Tibet,

he not only established military control over territories vaster than Europe but also spread there his culture and language, along with the Buddhist religion he adopted from his Chinese and Nepalese wives, and which in his domains took a special form known as Lamaism. But what is most remarkable is the fact that today, thirteen centuries later, the traditions, culture, language and religion of Songtsan Gampo have survived practically unchanged throughout what were his vast domains.

But an even more remarkable phenomenon must be mentioned here. For in one of the most unusual transformations of imperial and martial character in all of human history, these vast domains that were well on the way to becoming the basis for an enduring Asian empire were soon relinquished, and the fiercely aggressive trait which had effected their acquisition and which, it was anticipated, would fuel still further conquests, gradually disappeared from the Tibetan psyche until what had so noticeably characterized the social fabric of seventh-century Tibet (its militaristic and expansionist tendency) was no longer recognizable among Tibetans from about the tenth century onwards. In fact, said one writer on the Great Closed Land, "For over one thousand years, Tibet invaded no one and asked only to be left alone." The operative word here is: Tibet *invaded* no one; and the distinction is an important one, even as one Indian academic student of Tibet made when he observed that the people of Tibet "may have been violent within the Tibetan system, but there is little evidence of the Tibetans going out and toppling other people."¹⁹

To say the least, this change in national character was an incredible *volte-face*, the awesome dimensions of which have only in recent times come to be appreciated for what they truly signified: a phenomenon which may very well be unique in all the annals of man.²⁰ For because Tibet's king-emperors—beginning with Songtsan Gampo himself at the latter end of his reign—became adherents of the pacifistic teachings of the Buddha and his followers,* this vast Central Asian empire, in the words of one novelist-historian on Tibet, "sheathed its sword and picked up the prayer wheel"; or as the Tibetans themselves phrased it, the people "laid their weapons at the feet of the Lotus Throne"—the throne, that is, of the Buddha.

As was mentioned earlier, heretofore, the Tibetan kings, noblemen and soldiers during the age of Tibet's military expansion had all been shamanistic and animistic in their religious proclivities that had for centuries fostered a primitive magical religion built around the phenomenon of ecstatic trance. But when this archaic religion was gradually displaced by Buddhism, a radical change appeared in the very character of Tibetan life, attributable almost entirely to Buddhism's prohibition against the taking of life, which meant that with few exceptions the raiding, fighting and plundering of former times ultimately came to an end.²¹ Buddhism, "with its genius for drawing the sting from the warlike lusts of peoples," seemed also, said another writer, to have even "softened in sympathy" the Tibetan language that previously had "bristled with harsh combinations of sounds." Within but a little over two centuries the immense and once-powerful Tibetan Empire of Songtsan Gampo and his successors was no more. For as Buddhism's influence had increased, it had wrought, by degrees, "a real change of heart among Tibetans." As Sir Charles Bell has so perceptively declared, Tibet literally "gave up conquest and worldly power, yet not—as happens with most empires—for economic reasons or lack of military strength, but for religion, and religion only."²² Her soldiers faded away, explained Bell elsewhere, and were gradually replaced by

* Most likely Tibetan Buddhism had first begun as a court religion during the latter years of Songtsan Gampo's rule. It was fostered (a) by his two devoutly Buddhist foreign wives—a princess each from Nepal and China—along with each's respective retinue, (b) by various visiting embassies and merchants, and (c) by certain of the King's ministers. The two foreign princesses had been secured by the Tibetan sovereign in two marriage alliances he had more or less forced upon the rulers of Nepal and China after having subjugated much of each country's land as his Tibetan Empire expanded. See again Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, 26.

priests. And so it continued like this for all those many centuries, he added, until shortly after the turn of the twentieth century, when the late Dalai Lama felt compelled reluctantly to raise a small army chiefly in the hope that Tibet might protect herself against invasion by China who continued to have aggrandizing designs upon her far weaker neighbor. “Had Christianity,” inquired Bell rhetorically, ever “succeeded in effecting a change of heart at all comparable to this among the nations of Europe or America?” The answer was obvious.²³

Now as a long-term consequence of the infusion of the non-violent Buddhist ideology, by the early part of the twentieth century Tibet, though still quite extensive, had been reduced from a territory far vaster than the whole of Europe to an area of only about 700,000 square miles: that is to say, a land mass no larger than France, Spain and Germany combined. Today, however, it is probably only about 470,000, with a substantially reduced *indigenous* population (by the mid-1980s) of most likely about two million (exclusive of the conquering Chinese who since their invasion of 1950 have allegedly brought in many millions of their own countrymen to settle in the land).²⁴ It would be a far smaller Tibet to which Gergan Tharchin would now make his way than what even he glimpsed at across the border from Poo when but a small lad growing up in Northwest India.²⁵



Little if any traveling difficulty would be encountered by Tharchin on this first major journey of his life into the Land of Snows. This would not be the case, though, in every instance thereafter; for as will be learned in Chapter 19, Tibet’s unpredictable weather and sometimes frightfully inhospitable terrain was to engulf him ten years later in one of the most harrowing and unforgettable experiences of his entire life. With respect to the current journey, however, all would go fairly smoothly.

Now when all the necessary preparations had been made, Tharchin, full of anticipation for what might lay ahead, left Kalimpong town on the 2nd of May 1921. It ought to be explained how this trip had come about in the first place. Upon hearing that the British Trade Agent’s wife, Mrs. David Macdonald—who at the time had been staying temporarily in Kalimpong—was planning to return to Yatung in Tibet, Tharchin quickly went to her to tell her of his “keen desire to go to Tibet and master the Tibetan language”: a desire, he further told her, which had “again been sharpened when [I] heard of your [planned] return to Yatung.” According to the Tibetan, Mrs. Macdonald “gladly consented to take [me] with her party.”* He was overjoyed at this prospect, and had soon thereafter made himself ready.

* All quoted material and information in this paragraph have been derived from BB TsMs, p.3. Also, the date of departure can be found in GTUM TsMs, 105. It can also be found in Oskar Pfister, *Die Legende Sundar Singhs*, 214. Swiss pastor Pfister had received a report from Jesuit Fr. Henry Hosten summarizing a lengthy conversation held between himself and Tharchin at Darjeeling in June 1925, during which the Tibetan had recounted events surrounding his first experience in Tibet that had begun four years earlier. Actually, the credit for the ability of Tharchin to make this first major journey to Tibet must go to Mrs. Macdonald’s husband, the British Trade

Part of the way he accompanied Mrs. Macdonald, as well as some other friends who happened also to be proceeding in the same direction. The entourage passed through the villages of Algarah Bazaar and Pedong still in District Darjeeling, Rhenock just inside Sikkim, and finally the village of Aritar, another Sikkimese town. While most members of the party remained behind at Aritar, intending later to go on to Gangtok, Tharchin followed the route alone the next day to Fadamchand beyond Gangtok on his way to Yatung. Interestingly enough, at Fadamchand Tharchin met David Macdonald himself, who was coming down from Yatung on his way to Gangtok. As British Trade Agent he was normally stationed at the Tibetan centers of Yatung and Gyantse; at that moment, however, Macdonald was proceeding to the British Residency at Gangtok the capital of Sikkim State to continue his duties as Acting Political Officer—a position he had been temporarily posted to assume there in late March 1921 for the short duration of three months. He was merely filling in until Major F. M. (Eric) Bailey could arrive on the scene to replace the departed Colonel (later Colonel Sir) Frederick O'Connor. Macdonald would ultimately hand over permanent charge of the Residency to Bailey on 21 June, just a month and a half hence.²⁶

It needs to be explained that the term “trade agent” was in those days somewhat misleading, for in actuality the British Trade Agency had little to do with trade matters, the Agent having acted more in the role of a vice-consul or even a consul general. Yet, though these were his duties, the person serving in this capacity was given the title of Trade Agent because he was appointed by the India Office and not by the (British) Foreign Office due to the indefiniteness of the political relations between China and Tibet. This rather odd title of Trade Agent had in fact survived from the days of the 1904 Treaty signed between Tibet and Britain that served as the event which terminated the Younghusband-Macdonald Diplomatic-Military Expedition to Lhasa. And as a consequence of the Treaty the British were permitted to maintain one

Agent, who also at this time was Acting Political Officer for Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet (see a few Text pages hence for more details on this). In fact, Tharchin himself gave much of the credit to Macdonald. Writing in the third person, he, along with David Woodward, could report: “Tharchin was finally admitted into Tibet ... through the instrumentality of David Macdonald, another unsung hero of Tibetan evangelism.... Through his contact with Macdonald, Tharchin’s life was changed....” Tharchin and Woodward, “Tibet,” in D. E. Hoke, ed., *The Church in Asia*, 652. Since he was Acting Political Officer during the critical months of March to June 1921, Macdonald had the authority—in concert with Lhasa—to determine who among foreigners from India and elsewhere could and could not enter the Forbidden Land. Another confirmatory source for this credit to Macdonald is Lillian Carlson, at one time an American missionary in Kalimpong. Contributing a chapter to a retrospective account on Christian Missions to Tibet published in 1988, she could report the following piece of information, based as it was, by her own acknowledgment, on material gathered through “close contact with Rev. G. Tharchin and Mr. Macdonald”: “... the desire to visit Tibet and Lhasa was still there, and in 1920 [it should read 1921] when David Macdonald became Acting Political Officer ..., Mr. Tharchin got his first opportunity to go.” See Carlson, “The Story of Christian Missions to Tibet,” in L. Carlson et al., *If the Vision Tarry*, 12-13.

It should be pointed out, incidentally, that the basis for much of this chapter by Miss Carlson was, in fact, an undated typewritten document which the present author discovered among the Tharchin Papers. It is entitled “The Story of the Christian Mission to Tibet (Compiled by Rev. G. Tharchin and Others).” and from internal evidence it can be dated sometime after 1962. A comparison of a number of passages found in the Tharchin document with similarly worded ones found in the 1988 published chapter confirms that the former is the basis for the latter. Doubtless, too, it can safely be assumed that one of the “Others” meant by that word in the title of the unpublished document must have been Miss Carlson, who was present for many years in Tharchin’s hill town and worked very closely with him among the Tibetans there.

trade representative in Tibet; and even into the 1930s the latter was still the only British official allowed to reside in the Forbidden Land, although he was permitted to have a bodyguard by virtue of his position. For this purpose, therefore, there was always present in Tibet one company of Indian infantry with two British officers in charge, with the majority of these troops stationed at Gyantse but merely a small detachment of them kept at Yatung. Nevertheless, the Trade Agency's headquarters itself was situated at Yatung and not at Gyantse, despite the fact the latter was a much larger town.²⁷



Now in their chance encounter at Fadamchand both Tharchin and Macdonald exchanged best wishes with Macdonald instructing his friend Tharchin "to wait at Yatung till he came back from Sikkim."²⁸ These two then followed their respective itineraries.²⁹ At Yatung, Tharchin found that besides the Trade Agency House, which was situated in the main part of the town and consisted of a large single-level dwelling painted black and white with many window panes and surrounded by gardens, arbors and cobbled pathways, there was also a small hospital, a post office, the guard-room for the platoon of the company that formed the Trade Agent's escort (with the main body of troops, as mentioned previously, stationed at Gyantse), and a large playing field where polo was played. (Indeed, by the 1930s, if not earlier, football and hockey were two other sports played here; even a miniature golf course, tennis court and ice-skating rink were in time also provided for the British and others to enjoy!)³⁰ Tharchin himself was taken in by Mr. Yeshay Isaac,³¹ the one identified by Tharchin at the end of the previous chapter as Macdonald's head clerk and also described by him there as "a national Christian" from the mission work at Ghoom of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission. Doubtless this housing arrangement for the visitor from Kalimpong had been made by Mrs. Macdonald and forwarded ahead in advance of her own arrival in the Tibetan town. The visitor must have been made quite happy at the prospect of having fellowship with another Christian brother and with one whom he had already met on his previous travels through this part of Tibet to and from Bhutan.

Shortly after his arrival in Yatung Tharchin, having no "fixed work,... helped Mrs. Macdonald here and there" by availing himself of an excellent opportunity to teach temporarily and honorarily in the primary day school that had been founded in Yatung by Mrs. Macdonald. Called the Alicia Private School, it was named after its founder, whose maiden name, it may be recalled, was Alice (Curtis).³² At the time, it was "the only modern school in Tibet," observed Tharchin long afterwards, and had been established "with a view to impart a primary-level education ... to the children of the employees of the British." Between forty and fifty Tibetan children from round about the Chumbi Valley attended the school here. Tharchin assisted in this school for a period of three to four months.³³

It perhaps may be well to pause a moment and inquire a little into the Tibetan school system, such as it was, which actually was not very much in those days, it being extremely

limited. What education there was had little changed over the centuries, given the past predominance of the monastic element within Tibetan society. Education was therefore the monopoly of the ubiquitous monasteries, which provided the necessary training for the elite to lead the country and for those who were to enter upon ecclesiastical careers. This meant that for the most part secular education did not exist. Observed one scholar on Tibet: "Educational policies [before 1951] were viewed first and foremost in light of their bearing on the well-being of religion, which provided the philosophical and theoretical foundation for the educational system."³⁴ One Tibetan, who had grown up at Lhasa in the 1940s and early '50s under this quite limited educational system, has provided a useful description of it and what it was like to be educated within a curriculum where Religion and Rote were queen. She writes:

There was no such thing as a school system in Tibet unless one counted the monastic schools where the young monks were taught to read and write, and where those with ability continued on to study grammar, theology and philosophy. In addition, there were two establishments in Lhasa which were operated by the Government to train young administrators. One was clerical, the other temporal. But whether the pupils were to become monks or lay officials, they were almost all the sons of noblemen or landowners, whose business in life was to govern and fill the high offices of state.

Apart from this, schools were small private affairs run by individuals who had considerable knowledge within the extremely narrow range of the curriculum. Some of these teachers found secure employment as tutors in the homes of great men, instructing their families and also the children of the numerous servants and retainers. Others set up schools on their own in the large towns, hoping to attract a sufficient number of students, both boys and girls, to make a living. It was to one of these that I was being sent....

To begin with we put in a couple of hours memorizing and reciting prayers.... After this period of religious training, we were sent home to get our breakfasts [school began in the very early morning] ... Then, except for another break at lunchtime, classes went on till about six in the evening, giving us ample opportunity to work at the other two subjects taught, reading and writing. It was a restricted curriculum, no grammar, no arithmetic, no science, only reading, writing, and the memorization of prayers....

I am afraid that, on the whole, my Tibetan schooling was both dull and sterile. There were long days, weeks, and months of monotonous repetition in which there was very little intellectual stimulation. Our learning was a narrow tunnel, blocked at its further end so that it led nowhere. New thoughts and new ideas were not for us, our only fare was the mechanics of reading and writing. The emphasis was placed not on training the mind, but on achieving a mere technical accuracy. It did not matter whether we understood what we read or wrote, but only that we read and wrote it well. Basically, I suppose, it was a system designed to produce clerks for a medieval society, but certainly not trained men and women for a modern world.³⁵

Echoing some of these very sentiments was another Tibetan, Tsewang Y. Pemba. Born at Gyantse and educated during his childhood years at Yatung and Lhasa during the 1930s and in 1940, he then went off to the English school called Victoria School at Kurseong in Darjeeling for his secondary education before going off to London for medical school. Interestingly enough, Dorje Tharchin had had as one of his students at the Ghoom Mission School the father of Tsewang, Rai Sahib Pemba Tsering, whom he would meet later at Lhasa when there with Theos Bernard in 1937 and would meet both father and son again in 1940 on a return visit to the Tibetan capital (see Chapter 21 in the final volume of the present

work for more on this family). In his fascinating volume entitled *Young Days in Tibet*, Pemba the son complained of the Tibetan school “system” he had experienced, noting—as had the Tibetan lady above—the limited curriculum of its schools:

In the Tibetan schools they only taught the rudiments of the three R’s and considered that a beautiful handwriting was the finest education one could possess. Thus they wasted years of a boy’s life in trying to make him write in an exquisite fashion.* Discipline was very strict, and the punishments meted out to the boys in these schools were severe. Tibetan schools and monasteries had nothing at all to teach in such subjects as geography, history and science. All they taught were the rudimentary things mentioned above and some literature. In the monasteries they taught theology, philosophy, magic and metaphysics.³⁶

It is not surprising, then, that over the centuries the absence of any basic science, history and geography instruction in Tibet’s educational system, combined with the country’s willful insularity in its relations in more recent times with the outside, helped to create among its people—both ruler and ruled alike—an incredibly antiquated and ignorant cosmological view of the world that bordered on the superstitious.† So deeply entrenched and pervasive was this view that even shortly after the turn of the twentieth century the then ruling Abbot of Trashilhunpo Monastery had still been insisting that the earth was flat! And Trashilhunpo, situated at Shigatse in south central Tibet, just happened to be the ecclesiastical seat of the second most powerful spiritual (and sometimes political) leader in the Great Closed Land after the Dalai Lama. Not only was the earth flat, insisted the supposedly learned Abbot to British Colonel Younghusband in 1903, but also that it was “triangular” in form, “shaped like a shoulder of mutton”!³⁷ Then, too, the Chicago *Daily News* foreign correspondent Arch T. Steele, when on assignment in Lhasa for two weeks during the summer of 1944, encountered the same disbelief in the earth’s spherical shape, declaring that “most Tibetans believe that the world is flat.” As though to underscore this observation, Steele noted that in his interview with the Tibetan government’s chief seer, the Nechung Oracle, the latter appeared “sceptical” when told by the correspondent that “America could be reached by traveling either in a westerly or easterly direction.”³⁸

* About this undue emphasis on calligraphy Dawa Norbu has been most critical. Describing the monotonous routine of his own lay schooling at the monastic town of Sakya during the decade of the 1950s, Norbu comes down hard in his account of his learning how to write. From about ten in the morning till late in the afternoon, he writes, his schooling was devoted to nothing but calligraphy. “The Tibetan intelligentsia,” he remarks with frank acerbity, “had an idiotic obsession about handwriting, and would judge a passage by the way it was written rather than by its contents. The creative energy of the pupil was channeled towards the painstaking imitation of his teacher’s handwriting. This system had a damaging and unwholesome influence on our language, which lacked fresh, original expressions. Even our best work contained clichés and platitudes.” *Red Star Over Tibet*, 121.

† So antiquated and out-of-touch with the real world beyond its borders had Tibet’s educational system been for centuries that in the opinion of both the current reigning Lama-King of Tibet and India’s late Prime Minister Nehru, it was this lack of a forward-looking approach to education in Tibet which greatly accounts for why the Land of Monks and Monasteries fell so easily in the 1950s to its present overlords: the Chinese Communists. Having jointly conceived the educational system for the exiled Tibetan community in India in the critical early 1960s, these two leaders, writes Dawa Norbu, based their original purpose in creating a modern system of education for the huge influx of Tibetan refugees on their perception that “Tibet fell because Tibetans had failed to cope with the changes in the modern world due to the absence of modern education.” See Norbu, “Motivational Crisis in Tibetan Education System: Some Personal Reflections,” *TR* (May 1994):13-14.

Even as recently as the mid-1960s the then reigning King of Mustang still firmly believed in the ancient myth concerning the flatness of the earth. This was the testimony of Michel Peissel, the very first foreigner ever allowed to visit this small Tibetan Himalayan kingdom that is tucked away in a remote corner of Northwest Nepal along the latter's border with Tibet proper. In his book published in 1968 which recounts his visit there four years earlier, the author relates in stark terms this line of ignorance concerning the world that was made known to him in a lengthy conversation he had with Angun Tenzing Trandul, Mustang's ruler of that day.*

Asked by the King from whence he hailed, Peissel replied that he was from the country of France. To which the Mustang ruler inquired whether that land was to be found in the area of Lhasa or was it situated near the Island entity the King referred to as America! In his book the Frenchman observed that the King's interrogatory response revealed the obvious fact that he had never seen any kind of atlas of the world, and added that "like most Tibetans he didn't know that the world is round." Instead, to the Tibetan mind, as reflected in the Mustang ruler's misconceived understanding which he now related to his foreign visitor, the earth appears flat like the half of a plate whose rounded edge sits southward and whose straight edge looks northward where the sun, moon and stars are located. The world or "Universe of the South," which is surrounded by water that flows outward in all three directions from the land, has several Island nations—such as England, America and Japan—that are situated in the South World's seas. "The Tibetans," writes Peissel, "had heard about the existence of such uncivilized places as England and America, and hence they think these lands must be small islands" that are deserving of no other better location than where the Tibetans believed they were! Lhasa, on the other hand, as might be expected in a Tibetan cosmogony, "is the center point of the world," its position being at the middle point along the east-west axis that forms the northern limit of the half-plate's straight edge boundary already described.

Given this kind of warped imagination of the world in the Mustang ruler's mind, Peissel was hard put to convey to his Tibetan host the geographical position of France; and hence he was compelled to tell the King that his homeland lay in the area of the uncivilized Island of England; but, the visitor added, he was careful to say that France "is different" from that uncivilized Island country so as to allay his host's Tibetan sensibilities! And with that, concluded Peissel, the King of Mustang "was satisfied with this answer."³⁹

Needless to say, the day school which Mrs. Macdonald had established would seek to rectify such a superstitious ignorance of the outside world among its Tibetan pupils, for her school was patterned after its counterparts in India, and which therefore had a much more

* The line of Rajas or Kings of Mustang still continues today as one of several local rulerships that were permitted to retain their titles and limited autonomy by the founder of modern-day Nepal, King Prithvi Narayan Shah, who unified the country back in the late eighteenth century. Lying at an altitude of over 4,000 meters along the arid Tibetan plateau just beyond the Himalayas, Mustang's isolation "has kept the region and its Tibetan Buddhist culture frozen in time" even up to the present. The ruler today (1996), the 25th Raja of Mustang, Jigme Parbar Bista, is concerned that the limited tourism which the Nepalese government recently inaugurated (an annual 1,000-tourist quota, each to pay a hefty \$US 700 fee for a 10-day visit to Upper Mustang) will not be the beginning of the end of his kingdom's ancient heritage that still embraces as well a pre-Buddhist animist culture. See Ramyata Limbu, "Mustang's Tibetan Buddhist Culture ..." *Everest Herald* (Kathmandu), 1 Nov. 1996, p. 2.

modern outlook in its curriculum than that just described. Some of the subjects offered, such as reading and writing in the Tibetan language, arithmetic, geography, rudimentary science, history and singing were taught here exactly as they would have been taught in the Indian schools. The school was housed in a stone building which, erected for this purpose in 1912, was still in good condition some ten years later. Children from both humble and noble families were admitted into the institution. The teaching staff consisted of assistant teachers and the Headmaster. Two of these assistant instructors were two of the Macdonald daughters, Vera and Vicky, who taught English; and two others were Nepalese who taught Nepali and Hindi.⁶ Tharchin himself was merely a voluntary helper in the curriculum during his short stay in Yatung. Every attempt was made, observed Tharchin, to impart honest and thorough education to the children. High standards were maintained and the school's curriculum timetable, noted Tharchin, was observed with strict adherence. Moreover, those students for whom their parents desired further education were sent off to Kalimpong's Guild Mission Boys' and Girls' High Schools. Of further interest is the fact that during the four months he remained at Yatung the Indo-Tibetan also "opened a night school for the grown-up men and taught them Tibetan."⁴¹ No doubt this was in line with his long-held strategy that the more literate the Tibetans would become, the more of his ethnic countrymen would be able to read his future Tibetan newspaper as well as the Christian Scriptures and thus facilitate the spread of the Christian message throughout Buddhist Tibet.

But during this same four-month period at Yatung, Dorje Tharchin would become directly involved in communicating the Christian message—at least on Sunday mornings if not during the rest of the week. This activity, it may be recalled from the previous chapter, was always conducted within the premises of Mrs. Macdonald's privately-owned and -operated school—a neutral site, to be sure—and not in the Macdonalds' Trade Agency home that was of course British Government property. In the course of this Christian activity Tharchin would be assisting Rev. Y. Isaac who, it may again be recalled from the previous chapter, was Macdonald's head clerk in the Agency but also the one to whom for many years the Trade Agent had entrusted the preaching and pastoral responsibilities among the large group of Christians and non-Christians that assembled for the weekly Sunday service which the Macdonalds on their own had established at Yatung.

Now in the letter he would write from Gyantse that was referenced early on in the present chapter, Dorje Tharchin eagerly described for his correspondent his involvement in gospel preaching, prayer, and teaching on temperance at this important Chumbi Valley town. But the letter also alludes to the limitations within which the messenger of Christ was compelled by the politico-religious circumstances of the time to observe in laboring for the gospel in this Closed Land. Here, then, with only some minor editing added for greater clarity, is a most interesting passage from this Christian evangelist's letter:

Every Sunday I preached in Tibetan and Mr. Isaac in Nepali, because [during my stay at Yatung] he always speaks only Nepali. When the people heard that on every Sunday at the school [there now was] preaching in Tibetan, then more people began to attend the church: sometimes 70, sometimes 60. Thus I had very nice opportunity to testify for the Lord. But I was very sorry that during weekdays I could not do this, as we cannot go out and preach openly. And thus because there was not much to do [along this line], I spent much time in prayer.

But then, for about three weeks, I spoke on the subject of temperance because there are many who drink, even among the Christians. The Lord has used me, many having been touched by the word [preached]. One Christian brother, for example, who used to drink much, promised before the small church that he would never drink in future; so we are very glad, and up to this time he is holding to his promise, and in future we hope he will continue to stand firm. But we must pray that he may not fall back into the same pit.^{41a}

Despite the limitations imposed on openly preaching the gospel, Tharchin would undoubtedly do here at Yatung what it is definitely known he would later do—and quite effectively at that—at both Gyantse and Lhasa: engage in quiet personal evangelism which at other places in the Forbidden Land he would conduct on rather an extensive scale. This little known facet to Gergan Tharchin's lengthy experience in Tibet will be appropriately enlarged upon in subsequent chapters of the present biography. Suffice it to state here, however, that this messenger of the Cross had by this time well learned, from the remarkable example of his dear friend and fellow Christian evangelist Sadhu Sundar Singh, not to allow oneself to be circumscribed by human proscriptions whenever these were in direct contravention of Heaven's mandate to preach the message of Christ to all nations, but especially to the peoples of those lands where that message had barely, if ever, been heard. And for Gergan Dorje Tharchin, Tibet stood as a clear and prime example of this very thing. Here at Yatung, then, he would speak privately and quietly to as many of his ethnic countrymen as were willing to lend him their ears.

That Tharchin would make many friendships with the Yatung citizenry which proved to be longlasting is made quite evident by what occurred sixteen years later when he made a return visit in 1937. That year he had accompanied as guide and interpreter an American Buddhist scholar, Theos Bernard, who was journeying all the way to Lhasa. Wrote Bernard afterwards concerning their stopover at Yatung: "While I lay in the dak bungalow resting, Tharchin made calls on his many Tibetan friends in the village. They no sooner heard that he had arrived than a steady human stream was coming and going ..."⁴²



There was one facet to his experience at Yatung, however, which must have been most disconcerting to the visitor from Kalimpong. For while marking time at this Chumbi Valley community in advance of his traveling farther inland up to Gyantse, Dorje Tharchin became totally penniless. In a letter he wrote shortly afterwards from Gyantse Tharchin laid out the sad details of his plight:

Mr. Macdonald came back to Yatung, but then even he did not go to Gyantse for about two months more. So still I had to wait in the same condition of being without any fixed work and pay. I had about fourteen rupees in my pocket, but that was taken away by somebody [apparently an indication of theft], and I became so poor that not a single paisa was left to me. Moreover, I could not write letters to my friends [no money for postage], and I was ashamed to ask from Mrs. Macdonald.

This dire predicament in his life not only brought upon him great disappointment but even pangs of doubt about the wisdom in having left India: “I thought that I had made a mistake to give up my work at Kalimpong and to come up here; and so, I was much tempted.”

Fortunately for this stranger in the land, however, the Yatung school’s founder, also his Christian brother the head clerk, and others were to befriend the Indo-Tibetan in this very serious situation. For his extreme poverty was soon to be transformed by a touch of prosperity which quite providentially came his way. Here is how this Christian from India would just a few months later describe his surprising change of fortune at Yatung:

[Though left penniless] I did get all my food from Mrs. Macdonald, and also Mr. Isaac helped me very much, they being very kind to me.... Then the Lord was very good to me. He sent me some money through Mr. Ferrie, 5/- rupees; through Miss Kempe, 5/-; then Mrs. Macdonald, 5/-; and Mr. Isaac, 5/-. I had not asked from [any of] them, and I got all this money in just one day! I was much surprised and gave thanks to the Lord, who is faithful.⁴³

As the narrative further unfolds, the reader will learn that Dorje Tharchin’s faith in his God’s provision would be greatly tested once more, this time at Gyantse; even so, never again would any more doubts assail him about his having left the secure and familiar surroundings of Kalimpong for the unknown circumstances of life in a “foreign” land. He now knew that this first venture into his ethnic homeland was without question the event and place of his God’s appointment for him at this juncture in his life.



In his end-of-life “memoirs” Tharchin was wont to describe the environment and people of Yatung in this way:

The natural scenery of the region was quite vivid and lively. The landscapes around Yatung were charming and beautiful. The people in the locality were simple and honest. They are a hardworking race. The population was not then contaminated by the corroding influences of modern civilization. I noted a great difference between the peoples on both sides of the Sikkim-Tibet border with respect to language, culture and mode of living. Everywhere the general atmosphere was calm and peaceful.

Tharchin continued in his “memoirs” with his reminiscence on having been able to come to Yatung and Tibet:

After crossing the [Jelep] Pass, I thanked the Lord for opening the door so wonderfully so that I could have the unique opportunity of entering the land of Tibet. I thought of Psalm 23 in a special way in view of Sadhuji’s [i.e., Sundar Singh’s] and my disappointment in 1914 in not being able to enter Tibet. My heart was overjoyed, and I was very happy indeed to enter the Land of the Lamas. I stayed for three to four months—that is to say, from May to August—in Yatung, and then, in the middle of August, I turned my face towards Gyantse.

Prior to Tharchin’s departure for Gyantse, however, he had twice met fortuitously his friend Rev. John Graham. For both before and after experiencing his first visit ever to Bhutan,

Graham had halted at the Chumbi-Yatung area before proceeding on his way to and from the Kingdom of the Thunder Dragon. In a letter from Gyantse sent shortly afterwards Tharchin would spell out in some detail what had happened on each of these two very interesting occasions. It reveals as well something of Tharchin's Christian philosophy and his hopes for the enlightenment of Tibet through the spreading of the Christian gospel there. But it also includes a cautionary remark of David Macdonald's—and Tharchin's echo of the same—to the effect that the recipient of his letter (believed, though not absolutely certain, to have been Rev. Evan Mackenzie on an apparent missionary furlough in Scotland) should carefully adhere to the advice given concerning any possible public dissemination of information on the Christian activity in the Great Closed Land now being described. Here is what Mackenzie's informant related, with only some minor editing added for better understanding:

... On [Friday] the 5th of August [1921] Dr. Graham came up to Chumbi [the village nearby to Yatung] on his way to Bhutan. He stopped [at Yatung] on Saturday and a half day on Sunday the 7th, and on that day he had the good opportunity of baptizing 12 persons in number, 7 children of Christian parents and 5 new converts. We had a very nice time, and after both the [Sunday morning] service and the baptism we had the Lord's Supper [the Christian Communion or Eucharist]. We sensed that the Lord was among us and He blessed us all. Then Dr. Graham left Chumbi for Bhutan on the same day [i.e., on Sunday afternoon the 7th of August].

Just here it ought to be noted again in passing that all these Christian services on Sunday had been conducted on neutral grounds, as it were, at Mrs. Macdonald's private school premises,⁴⁴ thus avoiding any conflict of interest on the part of the British Trade Agent Macdonald.

Again, on his returning from Bhutan Dr. Graham came to Yatung via Phari Dzong, on 16th Sept. He once again had the same opportunity to baptize 10 persons in number. That took place on Saturday 17th Sept. [again conducted at the private school]. As he had to reach Kalimpong soon, he could not stay with us for the day on Sunday the 18th. On Sunday morning he left Yatung and I went with him up to Old Yatung.

We were very glad that Dr. Graham came up here. Really, we believe God has sent him. Now the church at Yatung is growing up and up, and I believe now that the no. of Christians are [*sic*] about 65—perhaps more than that, but I am not quite sure. Praise the Lord that though this country is quite dark and closed, yet He is working very wonderfully through His chosen ones [i.e., through His earthly servants]. He has kept Mr. Macdonald, Mrs. Macdonald and Mr. Isaac there for to shine God's light. And though they are serving under the worldly government, yet, at the same time they are serving under the heavenly government.

Also, I am glad and thankful to the Lord that He brought me to serve Him and to help them [serve the Lord] directly, inasmuch as [in the gospel work] they [in particular, the Macdonalds] could not work [with the Tibetans] directly. This news about the Lord's work at Yatung Mr. Macdonald told me not to write anything in any papers, also not to write about it to friends. But I am writing to you that you too may enjoy this news with us and give thanks to the Lord, but please do not write in any paper about the Lord's work which is going on in Tibet, for this might hinder the work.⁴⁵

Interestingly enough, so important was it to Tharchin that the shared news concerning the Christian activity then occurring at Yatung be kept confidential by Rev. Mackenzie that he employed an additional means of emphasis to underscore the point. For in his letter he had taken the further precaution of ink-marking a series of long perpendicular slashes on both

left and right margins immediately adjacent to the warning lines of text. Just as Jesus their Lord had long ago instructed His disciples to “be wise as serpents but harmless as doves,” so Trade Agent Macdonald had cautioned Dorje Tharchin, who in turn had cautioned the recipient of his letter: all for the purpose of not doing or saying anything which might inadvertently hinder the gospel work from continuing in the Forbidden Land. Happily for Tharchin and his fellow laborers in the gospel at Yatung, the Christian work would continue to prosper as long as their God’s servants remained there, which would be the case at least through 1924.

One significant aspect to Tharchin’s encounter with Rev. Graham he had failed to mention in his letter sent from Gyantse. This had to do with what had transpired between these two while on the trail together to Old Yatung. On the good reverend’s departure from Yatung, wrote Tharchin later, “I had the privilege to accompany him for about eight miles” back towards the border in the direction of the Jelep Pass. And as he and Graham rode along on their ponies together, the latter, explained the Tibetan, “gave me much valuable advice.” But when they had reached the village of Old Yatung, the two of them dismounted from their ponies at the place where each of them would separate from the other. Tharchin could still remember quite vividly in the early 1970s what then happened. Rev. Graham, he said, “firmly held my hands together and prayed for me as well as for Tibet.” Indeed, at a later point in their prayer together, Rev. Graham had placed his right hand on Tharchin’s shoulder and had proceeded to pray the prayer of hope that God might some day open the closed land of Tibet and that the gospel of Christ might be freely preached to the Tibetans everywhere. After this momentous event, the two of them bade a mutual goodbye, with the Scottish missionary and his servant galloping off towards the Jelep La while the man from Poo retraced his steps back to Yatung, where he remained for but two days more.⁴⁶ He would in fact depart for Gyantse on the 20th of September.⁴⁷



From Yatung, then, Tharchin went on to Gyantse, located some 140 miles north along the main trade route that was dotted every ten or fifteen miles with the comfortable British-built dak bungalows that were available for use by both travelers and officials.⁴⁸ This strategic trade route was jointly administered at the time by both British and Tibetan Trade Agents, in accordance with the Treaty of 1904 at Lhasa that brought to a close the brief hostilities between the two forces in 1903-4 that were highlighted by the Younghusband Expedition. David Macdonald, longtime authority on this part of Tibet, has given a brief but enlightening sketch of Tibet’s landscape through which Tharchin was to wend his way on numerous trips he made north from Kalimpong in the years that lay ahead. Writing in 1943 when even by that later date little in the terrain had changed, Macdonald described the environment as follows:

The Chumbi Valley, of course [from whence at Yatung Tharchin would always launch forth], lying on the southern side of the great Himalayan Divide, presents much the same physical characteristics as Sikkim, to which country, geographically speaking, it belongs.

Once on the plateau [north of Yatung], however, the scene is completely changed. Wooded slopes and deep valleys give place to a series of flat basin-like plains, obviously old lake beds, separated by low ranges of weathered hills. These latter, of course, are low only in comparison with the plains they border.

Along the trade route followed by the traveler, however, the eye is held [to the right side of the trail] for several days of the march by the immense mountain mass of Chomo-lhari, the Queen of the Divine Hills, a mountain sacred to all Tibetans [and situated along the Tibet-Bhutan border at an elevation of nearly 24,000 feet].

The fascination of Tibet lies in its utter bleakness and wildness, and . . . once the traveler has climbed onto the plateau [which really is not a tableland at all, as is made clear above], not a bush, let alone a tree, breaks the monotony of the windswept plains, until he reaches the town of Gyantse. Only a few stunted willows are to be found in sheltered places where they are prized as providing windbreaks to the local people when the latter are picnicking, a form of diversion of which the Tibetans are very fond.⁴⁹

Tharchin's journey up to Gyantse was for him a fascinating experience, because it brought him deeper and deeper into the land of his ancestors that had heretofore never been traversed by him. One particular place along the trade route, however, he might have wished to avoid had he been able to, which he was not. This was the community of Phari, located about a third of the way up to Gyantse above the Chumbi Valley's northern limit. It was an "eerie town" consisting of a rude collection of stone and sod houses "dominated by a huge grim-looking fort" which rose some two hundred feet above the surrounding level land. "Though ideally situated as a market town" and always bustling with activity "even in the most appalling weather," added the Japanese spy Hisao Kimura, "it seemed an altogether discouraging place to live." This was because, as one Tibetan has commented, this community was either "famous or infamous for its dirt." According to Lowell Thomas, Jr. and his famous father, who were there in 1949, Phari "has been unanimously described by travelers as 'the highest, windiest, dirtiest town in the world!'"—an opinion, he immediately added, "with which we were heartily inclined to agree." Situated at an elevation of well over 14,000 feet, this bleak town was *always* cold, even during the summer. So cold, in fact, that "despite the refuse of hundreds of years in the narrow spaces between houses, there was little or no odor because of the dry, bitterly cold climate."⁵⁰

The Thomases first noticed the physical appearance of the residents of Phari and came away with the distinct impression that they seemed to be dirtier than all other Tibetans they had encountered anywhere else in this Country of the Unwashed. Thomas, Jr. described their costumes as "colorless, drab, greasy and smudged from yak-dung smoke." The longer a Tibetan lived at Phari, he lamented, "the darker his complexion got, apparently because more dirt had worked its way into his skin." As mentioned earlier in the present chapter, layers of dirt on Tibetans' bodies serve as a protection against the winds and the cold, but apparently because the winds were extremely ferocious in their blasts across the quite level but elevated Phari plain, especially during the winter, the people here, even more so than at other Tibetan communities, allowed the dirt to accumulate on their skin without letup. "Phari folks," said Thomas, Jr., "did not seem disturbed that water rarely touched their bodies." Indeed, another visitor to the town was moved to call its residents "Phari's soapless citizens!"⁵¹

It is obvious as well that they were not in the least disturbed that sanitation was at a premium when it came to their streets and lanes. The Thomases were appalled to find them *literally* “piled with the dirt and garbage of centuries”—so high, in fact, that “it was almost impossible to pick one’s way through the muck.” As a matter of fact, it was the observation of Kimura, after traveling through its unappealing precincts on numerous occasions during the 1940s, that the refuse was so deep “that most people preferred to walk along the roofs of the interconnected houses and enter through upper-story windows”! “It seems quite appropriate,” the younger Thomas noted, “that the translation of Phari is ‘Hog Hill’”! Observed the Tibetan quoted earlier, who had been born and reared in Tibet, Phari to her had been nothing less than a putrid scene of narrow streets “half blocked with piles of rotting manure and filth.” And although an early nineteenth-century traveler in Tibet, Thomas Manning, readily echoed the severe verdict of these and other visitors upon the town’s extremely unsanitary conditions, he did find at least one good thing to say about Phari: “Dirt, dirt, grease, smoke. Misery, but good mutton.”⁵²



Now Gyantse, the seat of an important Tibetan administrative district, had always stood strategically at the junction of three chief travel routes that met “like the limbs of the letter Y much flattened out.” Up from the south was the leg of the Y which led north from the Chumbi Valley and was the road over which the Tibetan from Kalimpong had traveled to reach the country’s third largest city (population, some 5000 inhabitants); the western leg of the Y, down along which the river Nyang flows even to Gyantse, led four marches away to Shigatse, Tibet’s second city and nearby to which served as the site for the monastic seat of the land’s second highest ecclesiastic, the Panchen Lama; while the eastern leg, leading as it did over the 16,600-foot Karo La, took the traveler along a route nine marches’ distance towards the fabled city of Lhasa, Tibet’s first and most sacred community. (A march would in those days have been a day’s trek of some fifteen miles in length.) Some two years hence would find Dorje Tharchin traveling over this latter leg in his quest for more knowledge of Tibet and its culture as well as for more opportunities to share the gospel.

Near to the city of Gyantse in Tharchin’s day could be found numerous farms and villas surrounded by fair-sized groves of poplar and willow trees and “acres of dwarf iris.” Situated in the middle of a fertile valley which was entirely surrounded by hills (reaching to 16,000 feet) and that was crisscrossed with irrigation channels, Gyantse (itself over 13,000 feet high) had from time immemorial quickly become one of Tibet’s leading communities inasmuch as through its portals passed all the trade from the east on its way to Northwest Tibet and Ladakh and to Nepal, India and Bhutan.

Crescent-shaped in its appearance, the town was notable for an isolated and precipitous mammoth rock that rose right out of the center of the plain and was crowned at its 600-foot summit by an ancient large-scale stone *dzong* or fortress that dwarfed the community below with its hundreds of white, flat-roofed dwellings clustered around the base of the rock. “So

great is the mass of masonry and sun-dried bricks with which the steep and isolated hill is crowned that it is a matter of some surprise that it has received scanty or no attention from the few travelers who have passed beneath it." So cabled from Gyantse the London *Times* correspondent just a few months before the fortress fell to the British in 1904. Thomas Manning, he noted, had indeed referred to it in 1811 as "a sort of castle on the top of a hill," but that meager observation, continued the *Times* correspondent, was "a somewhat inadequate description of a pile of buildings hardly less in size than that of Mont St. Michel [a fortress-like cathedral complex on the French Normandy coast]. Ruinous the Gyantse hilltop castle now actually is, but this is hardly perceptible at a distance, and the apparent strength of the huge towers and curtains which overhang the almost precipitous rock would, one thinks, have impressed the most incurious of observers, among whom Manning, the only Englishman who has ever reached Lhasa, is, unfortunately, to be placed." Even in its present condition, he added, "a week's siege and a couple of hundred casualties would be the price of any attempt on our part to take the successive defenses by storm in the face of the slightest real opposition."

Deemed by many to be the most impressive—and certainly one of the most imposing—of all Tibetan fortresses, and easily deserving to be ranked with any of the medieval European castles, the dzong had at one time been considered impregnable. Indeed, according to a British officer (William Ottley) who had assisted in the capture of it in 1904, an old tradition among Tibetans held that Gyantse Dzong served as "the key to Tibet," and that "if it ever fell into the hands of a conqueror, further resistance was useless." Down through Tibetan history the Gyantse fortress (well named, since Gyantse signifies "the Peak of Victory") had never once been captured despite the fact that Tibetans had waged wars with the Chinese, Mongolians, Sikhs, Gurkhas and Bhutanese. True to the tradition just mentioned, however, once the Younghusband Expedition of 1904 had in only one day and with few British casualties overpowered its seven thousand defenders (who had been armed with obsolete weapons), this defeat, noted Major Ottley, "practically put a stop to further fighting in Tibet" and paved the way for the British advance onward to Lhasa where but a short time later, after lengthy negotiations between the parties, a treaty between Tibet and Great Britain was signed in the Potala Palace. (Chapter 16 has more to say about this Expedition.)



The dzong not only dwarfed the community of Gyantse with its busy marketplace and teeming irregular streets and lanes, it also overshadowed—but to a lesser extent—the nearby Palkhor Chhode, the great lamasery of Gyantse. At its height in Buddhist history, Gyantse had in reality always been two communities: a secular town and a monastic city. The latter's name, Palkhor Chhode, was derived from (a) *dPal 'Khor*, the name of the important guardian deity Samvara, and (b) *chos sde* (pronounced as chhoide), a title meaning a "religious place" and a term which had especially been applied to temple-monasteries within villages or towns. Born in 1389, Palkhor Chhode's builder was a Tibetan who became the second prince of his

period at Gyantse, and who, under the inspiration of the Sakyapa order of Tibetan Buddhism, founded the main temple in 1418 and the nearby celebrated chorten a few years later. Well before Tharchin's day, of course, the temple had come to belong to the Gelugpa or Yellow Hat Sect, the Tibetan Buddhist branch of the Dalai Lamas, even though among the statues to be found in its sanctuary there were several of Red Hat personages.

Now the chorten already alluded to, five stories in height below its gilded tower and representing the five steps to enlightenment, is deemed to have been one of the highest achievements of Tibetan architecture and is considered one of the most beautiful structures in all of Tibet. Constructed in 1427 purely for worship (no monks live in it), this immense chorten eventually came to contain a significant series of frescoes in its 108-chapel interior, but it also was richly painted and detailed on its outside, with the top of it—the tower with its thirteen rings signifying the stages of advancement towards Buddhahood—ornamented with brass heavily gilded with gold leaf. Among its other exterior features were the famous painted eyes located on all four sides just below the top of the gilded tower and said to represent the Buddha's eyes that continually look in every direction in his concern for all mankind. Now the center of this "highly symmetrical edifice" consisted of one mammoth Buddha that reached upward from the ground to a height of over a hundred feet. This great gilded shrine, most likely the largest chorten in the land and popularly called "the Golden Pagoda," had over the centuries become the object of pilgrimage by the peasantry for hundreds of miles around. Powell Millington, a pseudonym for an individual who accompanied the Younghusband Expedition to Tibet, has described this singular edifice and its Buddha monument in a most engaging and informative manner:

Round the giant Buddha are built tiers upon tiers of small shrines; each tier contains one less shrine than the tier below it. The shrines are of equal size, so that the general effect of the whole edifice is that of a pyramid. You rise from tier to tier by a narrow hidden [spiral] staircase. Each shrine contains one idol. If you start at a certain point on any of the tiers, and go round that tier, you will first enter the shrine of a perfect Buddha, for whom you will feel at least some reverence. The next shrine will contain an idol that impresses you less, and has about it some taint of the world. The next is a thoroughly worldly idol, the next is ugly, the next is obviously wicked, and the next a demon. The demons grow in demoniacal qualities till suddenly you arrive again at the Buddha from whom you started. The tiers above are all arranged on the same principle, except that, the number of shrines decreasing by one in each case, the gradation from Buddha to demon grows more abrupt as you ascend.⁵³

As one leaves the pagoda-like chorten and enters the immediately adjacent central temple of the Palkhor Chhode Monastery, an "exquisitely-painted 'Wheel of Life'" (or "Wheel of Existence") confronts the visitor immediately to the left of the doorway leading from the Temple's vestibule to its central apartment. The Wheel pictorially explains the Buddhist conception of life, death and rebirth. In this pictorial delineation of the life cycle of all sentient beings a wheel is held, as it were, in the clutches of a demon who symbolizes impermanence. In the wheel's hub is a drawing symbolic of Buddhism's cardinal sins: lust, anger and ignorance. In the segments of the wheel itself can be found representations of the different worlds of rebirth. And in the outer rim are to be seen twelve scenes that dramatize various stages through which man passes following birth.

Concerning the particular replica of the Wheel of Existence which met the visitor's eye upon entering Palkhor Chhode's main sanctuary of worship, the *Times* correspondent quoted earlier considered it to be one of the finest examples of man's artistic talent with the painter's brush. "It is difficult," he explained, "to convey any idea of the minute finish of this piece of work. A few will realize it when I say that it is probably the only product of man's brush which rivals the *Book of Kells* or the *Lindisfarne Gospels*." The *Times* "art critic" went on to say that although he found, in the balcony level above, some other "exquisite work" by the same Tibetan artist; even so, it was his opinion that upon the Wheel of Life "the artist has lavished an obvious affection and care which must be seen to be believed. In style it resembles thirteenth-century illuminations, but, for example, no vision of hell was ever drawn with such amazing delicacy and strength of line as are the quaint tortures of the damned in this representation of the Buddhist Sheol [the hellish realm]."

Within the central hall itself, which was crimson-pillared, the only conspicuous object to be seen was the great seated figure of the Maitreya or Coming Buddha. He was, as could be expected, seated in the European manner, a tradition, the correspondent remarked, that was "more suggestive than most modern Buddhist legends, and instinctively recalled the belief of Lamaism that the end of the present age will be in the hands of the Piling or Western foreigner."

The *Times* visitor noted that there were many more temples and apartments on the grounds of the Gyantse Monastery, "from the inspection of few of which," he added humorously, "we were excused by the talkative and, apparently, perfectly friendly lamas." Indeed, the extensive compound of the Palkhor Chhode Lamasery covered the entire southern slope of a lower rocky hill that was situated a mere 1300 yards to the north-northwest of the dzong and actually leaned smack up against the town's huge fortress. This sacred center's crescent-shaped crimson-colored walls some thirty feet high, and known as "the Dragon's Back," encompassed a heap of buildings (including altogether eighteen temples in some twenty or more structures) which rose up in tiers to the top of the hill some three hundred feet above the plain. Even from a distance one could easily catch a glimpse of the gold-plated roofs of these buildings as they glistened in the brilliant unimpeded sunlight. The entire monastery, wrote another visitor to its precincts (Riencourt), was surrounded by "a thick ribbon of fortified masonry reminiscent of the Great Wall of China and running along the crest of the hill."⁵⁴



As will be seen, Tharchin would often have occasion during his lengthy stay at Gyantse to engage in conversation with some of the lamas of Palkhor Chhode (who numbered from fifteen to eighteen hundred at this time), even as he would with officials at another equally important institution in town: the British Trade Agency. The latter was located to the southeast a thousand yards away from the dzong on the outskirts of the city some one hundred yards from the right or east bank of the Nyang Chu. To the British this was known as the New Fort

area of the town, but called by the Tibetans “Changlo Sarpa.” Within a few years following the Younghusband Expedition to Lhasa it had been built up and fortified by the British for their own use as the Gyantse headquarters for their Trade Agency as a consequence of the peace treaty which had been signed that had brought the Expedition to a close. Inside the Agency’s compound could be seen a cluster of Tibetan buildings constructed of red brick: barracks, a dispensary, a post office, living quarters for the Trade Agent and one or two British officers in command of the Indian troop detachment based there as the Agent’s escort to prevent any attempt on his life “by any of the fanatical peasantry”; and at the front of its main gate was to be found a large parade and playing ground. Isolating this British outpost from the many surrounding suburban villas were long lines of poplar and willow trees. Because of the Trade Agency’s presence at Gyantse, Tharchin had opportunity to have social intercourse with a variety of interesting individuals: British, Indian and Tibetan officers, both military and civilian, as well as with other visitors to the city.

Still another feature of the town and one which must have become a fixture in Tharchin’s weekly if not daily schedule for visiting was the bazaar. Tibetans here shopped “in the age-old-way”: they would go to a central market to buy whatever they needed and to sell whatever they themselves had brought along. Being a center of the Tibetan wool trade, Gyantse possessed a particularly “busy and elaborate” bazaar—one that was “rich in color, human interest and activity,” wrote one visitor in 1949. “The goods are spread out on the ground or on rough tables,” he added, “and the merchants often sit under large umbrellas or awnings, where they enjoy gossiping as much as making sales.” Here one could find “Chinese brick tea, Tibetan salt and soda, dried fruits, jewelry, dyes, handwoven Tibetan rugs and bowls made of silver birch transported from Bhutan.” Utilizing the diaries of two Americans who visited the town in 1942, Rosemary Tung has provided a further picture of what Gyantse’s central market must have been like even in the 1920s. She writes:

The market was held within the monastery walls—in fact, the spaces for the merchants’ stalls were rented from the lamas. Outside the monastery walls there was a special area where traders from other cities and farmers from the countryside could leave their horses and other pack animals while they displayed their wares inside. The color and the noise were considerable. The horse blankets were bright with traditional Tibetan designs, and old friends called out to each other as they unloaded their animals.... There was nothing necessary to Tibetan life that one couldn’t buy in the stalls of a market like Gyantse’s.... Above it all, the ancient wall of the [monastery]—called the Dragon’s Back—dominated the horizon.⁵⁵



It was on 25 September 1921, then, that the Indo-Tibetan, in company with British Trade Agent Macdonald, finally reached the place where Tharchin had intended to stay on a more permanent basis, circumstances permitting.⁵⁶ Exclaimed Tharchin in the letter he wrote just ten days later: “At last I got the opportunity to come up to the land of my dreams, i.e., Gyantse!”⁵⁷ For here he hoped, career-wise, to establish himself firmly for the foreseeable future.

Now upon his arrival at Gyantse Dorje Tharchin immediately arranged to rent an empty house in the Old Fort area of the town known as “Changlo Nyingpa.” For nearly the first month, though, he could find no work.* In fact, during those first few weeks it would be touch-and-go whether he would even be able to remain at Gyantse. Already, after just ten days in the town, there was talk of his having possibly to return to Yatung and work there if nothing promising developed soon. So bleak did the outlook appear initially that Tharchin was moved to offer up the worst possible scenario of all: that he would have to return to Kalimpong and Ghoom! Such were the stark options which confronted him so soon into his stay at Gyantse. This he made clear in his letter of 5 October previously referenced several times earlier in the present chapter.

Nevertheless, it is also clear from the letter that well before arriving at Gyantse both Tharchin and his benefactor David Macdonald had been intent on establishing a school there much like the one at Yatung; that this would be the means of livelihood for Dorje Tharchin as its Headmaster; and that, further, the school could serve as a way to reach both children and adults with the gospel of Christ. Accordingly, almost immediately after their arrival, the Trade Agent, wrote Tharchin, “is trying to tell [i.e., convince] the Tibetan officers to send their children to [the] school and also telling every [other] parent.” But the lengthy passage in the letter about the school project was also full of unanswered questions on how the expenses of the school—in particular, teacher salaries—would be met. One of the primary decisions facing the future Headmaster and Agent Macdonald was whether to charge fees or provide free education.

Macdonald was holding out for charging fees and thus this would amply provide for the Headmaster’s pay and eventually that of the Assistant Teacher. Tharchin, on the other hand, feared that if fees were charged, few parents would want to send their children to the school since, he frankly remarked, “they do not want to pay”; and hence, he wished to teach free and depend on gifts in cash or kind from parents and local well-wishers. Another possibility would be to try obtaining the necessary support from one or several Christian Mission organizations or else attempt to interest a number of well-wishers back in India and Europe. His own needs would be simple, said Tharchin in his letter: “It is not how much I get [that matters], for I do not want much but only [what is required for] any necessary things.” He added, hopefully: “How nice if I could get some help from a mission for my support and [so] the school could teach free ... and [then] I am sure that I may be useful in the Lord’s service.” In fact, he had already written to Ghoom Mission, admitted Tharchin, but he did not know if they could support him or not.

Yet the would-be Christian Headmaster readily acknowledged in his letter that whatever support came his way and whatever form that would take must ultimately be the result of divine providence. Additionally, he greatly coveted the prayers of his letter’s addressee, who is thought to have been Rev. Evan Mackenzie, who at that time was believed to be in Scotland on missionary furlough. At this juncture, Tharchin concluded, “I do not know anything about my future here, only, I trust in the Lord.”⁵⁸ As matters would turn out, it would prove

* This fact is known from Tharchin himself, and is sourced in Oskar Pfister’s work cited in an earlier footnote to the present chapter, *Die Legende Sundar Singhs*, 214.

to be a combination of various means of support which would enable Tharchin to establish his school and provide an education to its students that in large part would be free.

Indeed, the rather somber picture about the school's prospects which the Indo-Tibetan had candidly sketched out in his letter would soon change for the better within a relatively short period of time. For having heard of Tharchin's teaching qualifications and having apparently been convinced by the recommendations which Macdonald had conveyed throughout the town and countryside to those interested, the more prominent personalities of Gyantse and its surrounding area had requested him to establish there a private English school similar in type to the one founded at Yatung. To this request he responded positively, even though, he would later say, "there was no financial help forthcoming—not even in the shape of a promise!" He would establish his school mostly for the sons of the Trade Agency staff as well as those of the aforesaid prominent Tibetans who in time would become some of his closest friends there. Tharchin thus became the Founder-Headmaster of the first Primary School on the British Indian model ever to be established at Gyantse. Indeed, it would be Sundar Singh's assertion two years later that his Tibetan friend's school constituted the first *Christian* school in all of Tibet (see more on this a few pages hence). Moreover, as will shortly be seen, some of Tharchin's pupils would go on to assume high posts in the Tibetan government. He was very happy to grasp hold of this opportunity. He believed that apart from the request which came from the local citizenry and others who were here from Lhasa (see below), he had already received wisdom and guidance from Above to do so and he was therefore quick to offer his sincere thanks to his Lord. He was grateful to Him for His great mercy and grace.⁵⁹ Undoubtedly Tharchin must have also had in mind Rev. Graham's parting prayer only recently offered up on his behalf and for the sake of the gospel in Tibet.

Besides his normal school duties at Gyantse he began to drink at the fountainhead of Tibetan language and literature. He continued to learn from the Tibetan scholars regarding the various phases in the development of the Tibetan language.

The new Headmaster was later to describe the private school he had founded at Gyantse along Western lines in the following words:

I opened the school with an admissions register. Initially fourteen children were enrolled for the opening class.⁶⁰ ... I myself prepared benches, desks, blackboards and other essential school paraphernalia. The school was [unofficially] opened at the end of September [1921].* Gradually the roll-strength continued to increase until the number reached from fourteen to twenty.† I taught the pupils kindergarten songs and dramas. Subjects which were taught in the

* This month of September, stated by the Tibetan in his "memoirs" at the end of his life, could not possibly be correct in view of the fact he had only arrived at Gyantse on 25 September—this per the previously referenced letter he had written from Gyantse just ten days after his arrival. The month indicated above for the unofficial opening should have read October: 28 October 1921 to be precise, a date he communicated to Jesuit Fr. Hosten in his conversation with the priest at Darjeeling in June 1925, a conversation held not even four years after the school's creation and therefore a much more reliable date than that given in his so-called memoirs of a half-century later. See Pfister, *Die Legende Sundar Singhs*, 214, as the source for the correct date.

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On the day of formal inauguration, the school was named "Kun-Nang-Od-Sel." Translated, the name in brief meant as follows: Kun—all, Nang—to shine, Od—light, and Sel—bright; which is to say, "the lighthouse." In the true sense of the word this humble institution founded by a humble servant of Christ Jesus was a lighthouse of knowledge and learning. The official inauguration day of the school was observed in the month of January, 1922; in fact, it was held on the English New Year's Day.

For this New Year's program Tharchin invited parents, guardians, high officials and noblemen. On the occasion, the children successfully staged a drama which Tharchin—with the help of Dr. (later Rai Bahadur) Bo Tshering—had painstakingly taught them. They also sang some action songs jubilantly, loudly and enthusiastically. The performance of the children must have been a great joy to their parents and even greater joy to Tharchin, the proud Headmaster. At the conclusion of the function, subscriptions were solicited from the audience for the further development of the school in terms of providing needed equipment such as furniture, a clock, a school bell and other needy items. It would also provide, reported the Headmaster long afterwards, a much needed future resource for helping "to meet the recurring monthly expenditure of the assistant teacher's salary" (see later below). "I still remember," said Tharchin, "that we raised a donation of over Rs. 100/-. With this amount we were able to purchase teaching aids such as maps, charts and textbooks for the children. The school, in short, was properly equipped with the essential requisites for an ideal institution. The school, by the way, consisted of two classes" at the beginning, but by the end of its second year the school would have increased to five classes.⁶¹

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Four of the invited high officials (they were actually military officers, all but one of whom were of the Tibetan aristocracy) had only recently arrived from Lhasa, from whence—having been selected this same year (1921) by the Tibetan government for eventual military training in India—they had been sent to Gyantse by the Dalai Lama to study the British military system. Some Tibetan troops had also been dispatched to Gyantse with these officers that they might be trained by the British who had been stationed here as the "Trade Agents' Escort" to protect the Trade Agents and the Trade Marts that were there and at Yatung, as called for in the various agreements that had been struck between the two Governments. This arrangement whereby British officers, both English commissioned and Indian non-commissioned, were allowed to give the Tibetan soldiers direct courses of instruction had

to be a combination of various means of support which would enable Tharchin to establish his school and provide an education to its students that in large part would be free.

Indeed, the rather somber picture about the school's prospects which the Indo-Tibetan had candidly sketched out in his letter would soon change for the better within a relatively short period of time. For having heard of Tharchin's teaching qualifications and having apparently been convinced by the recommendations which Macdonald had conveyed throughout the town and countryside to those interested, the more prominent personalities of Gyantse and its surrounding area had requested him to establish there a private English school similar in type to the one founded at Yatung. To this request he responded positively, even though, he would later say, "there was no financial help forthcoming—not even in the shape of a promise!" He would establish his school mostly for the sons of the Trade Agency staff as well as those of the aforesaid prominent Tibetans who in time would become some of his closest friends there. Tharchin thus became the Founder-Headmaster of the first Primary School on the British Indian model ever to be established at Gyantse. Indeed, it would be Sundar Singh's assertion two years later that his Tibetan friend's school constituted the first *Christian* school in all of Tibet (see more on this a few pages hence). Moreover, as will shortly be seen, some of Tharchin's pupils would go on to assume high posts in the Tibetan government. He was very happy to grasp hold of this opportunity. He believed that apart from the request which came from the local citizenry and others who were here from Lhasa (see below), he had already received wisdom and guidance from Above to do so and he was therefore quick to offer his sincere thanks to his Lord. He was grateful to Him for His great mercy and grace.⁵⁹ Undoubtedly Tharchin must have also had in mind Rev. Graham's parting prayer only recently offered up on his behalf and for the sake of the gospel in Tibet.

Besides his normal school duties at Gyantse he began to drink at the fountainhead of Tibetan language and literature. He continued to learn from the Tibetan scholars regarding the various phases in the development of the Tibetan language.

The new Headmaster was later to describe the private school he had founded at Gyantse along Western lines in the following words:

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only been reached recently. This was a result of Sir Charles Bell's diplomatic mission to Lhasa in 1920-1. Indeed, the consequence of his successful negotiations at the Tibetan capital now ensured not only temporary British influence in Tibet but also that the Tibetan government would be supplied by the British with mountain-guns, machine guns and rifles; a million rounds of small-arms ammunition annually for the next several years; an offer to train batches of Tibetan soldiers in drill and musketry as well as the training of officers in the Tibetan army; and the education of Tibetan mechanics by their British counterparts in the manufacture and repair of weapons at Indian ordnance factories.⁶² Taking advantage of the favorable Gyantse situation (without the necessity of a special importation of British officers for the purpose) the Tibetan government had commenced sending down from Lhasa a group of fifty soldiers at a time, with their officers; and once this group would be fairly well trained, it was then brought back to the capital and replaced by a fresh batch of troops dispatched to Gyantse. "With only a few intervals," explained David Macdonald, "Tibetan troops were being thus trained up to 1924."

It needs to be understood that modern army drill had hitherto been unknown to these Tibetans, but because of an ever-present threat of a Chinese invasion, as well as for other reasons, drill and other army tactics would now become a part of Tibetan military training. This would be in keeping with the Dalai Lama's current policy of modernizing Tibet in various ways as fully and as quickly as his conservative clergy and Government might allow without their overriding opposition. (It will be learned later, however, that the Dalai Lama, under severe pressure, would reluctantly revert to a conservative policy of suspicion towards outsiders and strict isolation once again.) With respect to modernizing the military, an experiment had been launched in the early 1910s to determine along which foreign national lines the Tibetan army would ultimately be modeled. In his notable political history of Tibet, W. D. Shakabpa—as corrected where necessary by more recent research provided by Scott Berry in his fascinating book on the Japanese in Tibet—has recorded that (i) the military system of the combined Chinese and Mongol army was to be incorporated into the training of one Tibetan regiment; (ii) a Buriat Mongol officer who had been trained in Russia would be given command of another Tibetan regiment, which he would then discipline and drill according to the Russian system; (iii) a Japanese officer would assume the training of a third regiment;* and (iv) a Tibetan who had been trained in India would be placed in charge of another detachment of Tibetan soldiers who were to be instructed according to the British system.

* The employment by the Tibetan government of Yasujiro Yajima as a military instructor created a good deal of consternation among some highly sensitive pro-British Tibetan officials, who were troubled lest the British Government of India might interpret this use of so well known a Japanese as constituting a pro-Japanese statement by the Tibetan government. See Tokan Tada, *The Thirteenth Dalai Lama*, 70. The British had for some time suspected that Yajima had been sent as a spy to Tibet by the Japanese government. Whether or not a spy, he was certainly a non-conformist. Tharchin's very good friend of a much later day, Hisao Kimura, who was a Japanese spy, has described Yajima thus: "With his shoulder-length hair and handlebar moustache he had begun his travels toting a sign on his back declaring that he was the 'Head of the World Traveling Society (Without Finances),' and eventually he became the first Japanese to marry a Tibetan." Kimura explained that the hiring of Yajima had come about through the efforts of another but earlier Japanese visitor to Tibet, Teramoto Enga. He had first met Tibet's Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama during the latter's Mongolian exile in 1905, and later he became one of the Thirteenth's trusted advisers. "Although an ordained monk, Teramoto kept his thoughts far more on worldly and political matters than spiritual ones and bent his efforts towards establishing relations between

Berry has pointed out, however, that since “the Tibetan language was short on modern military terms, [Chinese,] Russian, English and Japanese were employed respectively for commands by each troop section, which must have led to some confusion when they were later amalgamated”!

These four Tibetan troop detachments would be trained and disciplined for some two to three years at various designated sites in and around the Tibetan capital. Finally, a review was held there in the late spring of 1916. Here at Lhasa, wrote Shakabpa, during four days of military display they “were made to parade before the Dalai Lama, officials of the Government, and the public. In fact, what turned out to be a great military parade that included “the display of troops and weapons, which the people had never seen before,” brought out the entire city’s citizenry to witness this unusual event that took place very near Norbu Linka Palace, the Dalai Lama’s summer residence. In the end, and despite the fact that in the eyes of the Dalai Lama the Japanese-trained troops were by far the best, the British system would win the nod from Tibet’s ruling circles, with the Tibetan army henceforth to be modeled along British lines, including even the adoption of the British style of uniforms.⁶³

Now among the four officers sent down from Lhasa to Gyantse in 1921, Changlo Chen Gung Kusho (born 1898) and Doring Thaiji (born 1900) were two who were of very high rank and respect in the Tibetan government. Indeed, the title *Gung* (or *Kung*) attached to the former’s name was equivalent to the elevated British title of Duke, which had been given to this near relative of the previous Priest-King of Tibet, Dalai Lama XII,^{63a} by the Thirteenth

Japan and Tibet—to the advantage of Japan. Partially as a result of his efforts, a flamboyant soldier of fortune named Yasujiro Yajima wound up training part of the Tibetan army.” Kimura, *Japanese Agent in Tibet*, 104-5.

In fact, according to Scott Berry, there was another Japanese in Lhasa at this time who most likely assisted Yajima in his efforts to train and strengthen the Tibetan army. This was Bunkyo Aoki, another person from the Land of the Rising Sun on whom the British down in India had focused much attention, they having believed him to be a spy for the Japanese as well. Indeed, while Aoki was studying the Tibetan language at Ghoom, Political Officer for Tibet Charles Bell had informed the British authorities in nearby Darjeeling to have their special agent at Ghoom keep an eye on him. Aoki, however, would give the latter the slip by secretly entering adjacent Nepal with two companions, all having disguised themselves as Tibetan mendicant priests. Eventually making his way to Lhasa, Aoki would in time be directed by the Dalai Lama himself to write the military in Japan requesting that some Japanese military manuals be sent. Upon their arrival five months later, Aoki spent much time translating them into Tibetan.

Berry went on to point out that Yajima, believing his troops were without question the best in the competition (see further in the Text above), was greatly disappointed at the outcome. Categorically declaring “We won a complete victory,” he felt that the British had won out only because of “behind-the-scenes maneuvering and favoritism.” Berry believes that may very well have been true in the light of Bell’s comments published in 1924 to the effect that the other foreign-trained detachments had been put into competition for the nod at a time when the attitude of the British was in doubt and possibly unfriendly; but that with the restoration of friendliness, the Tibetan government had ceased experimenting with the other national military systems and had decided, after subjecting all of them to a formal inspection, that the British system was the best one to be adopted throughout the Tibetan army. Yet, notes Berry, there remained something inconclusive about the British victory, for long after Yajima had left Tibet for Japan in 1918 “he was still making attempts to get Japanese military advisers to Lhasa—attempts that were successfully blocked by the British in China.” *Monks, Spies and a Soldier of Fortune*, 135, 138, 125, 155, 158. Aoki, incidentally, on his own departure from Lhasa in early 1916, carried a letter from the Tibetan *Kashag* for the Japanese government requesting arms be sent Tibet, especially artillery and machine guns. On his way home he conferred with Bell at Gangtok. He would never return to Tibet. *Ibid.*, 151, 155. Years later, interestingly enough, Aoki would carry on a correspondence with Gergan Tharchin. They may even have first met each other at Ghoom when both were there during the early to mid-1910s.

Dalai Lama in 1919; and with respect to Doring Thaiji (whose personal name was Tenzin Norbhu, and aka: Gab-shi-wa), he, too, had received an unusual title, and a very high one at that. According to the introduction of *Who's Who in Tibet*, "Dzasa" and "Thaiji" were titles "awarded sparingly to distinguished officials." Those who received the title of *Dzasa* (which was similar to an English earldom) were third rank officials just below the second rank Ministers (called *Shapes*) of the *Kashag* or Cabinet of the central Government (the Dalai Lama himself being of the first rank, along with the Panchen Lama), and those of *Thaiji* ranked just below the *Dzasa* but were still considered among third rank officials of the Government.* It was in fact while on a much earlier military training assignment at this same fortress city that Doring had been granted the title of *Thaiji* in 1915 at the rather tender age of only fifteen.⁶⁴ Hence both these Tibetans—though even now only in their early twenties—were those who at this time were held in high esteem by the ruling circles in Lhasa and elsewhere in Tibet. There will be several occasions later to say more about these two officials and their relationship with Dorje Tharchin and his friends.

The other two officials among these four from Lhasa, Kyipup (born 1904) and Dingja (born 1897), were at this time quite young officers, too, but of lower rank when compared with the first two. Nevertheless, both of them would in a few years' time be promoted to the military rank in the Tibetan army of *Depon* or Commander (all *Depons*, who each headed a battalion consisting of about five hundred soldiers, were considered fourth-rank officials in the Tibetan government). With regard to Kyipup, for example, he would be appointed in that rank in 1932, after which he would be sent to east Tibet on military assignment. Furthermore, in a 1938 British publication, Kyipup (whose personal name was Sonam Tobgye) was by that time classed as "able" and one who "promises to rise to higher rank." As if to underscore this observation, it also noted the fact that by 1935 he had entered Government service at Lhasa with the rank of *Rimshi* (title below that of *Thaiji*), where he became the Dalai Lama's Palanquin Officer.⁶⁵ One other facet to Kyipup's life which deserves to be mentioned has to do with his older and more famous brother Wangdi Norbhu, who, like his younger brother, was also known as Kyipup. He it was who was numbered among the four young Tibetan boys whom Dalai Lama XIII had in 1913 sent off to England to secure a European secondary and University education.⁶⁶

Dingja, too, would be elevated in rank, but much more rapidly than Kyipup. In fact, by the time these four officers had concluded their training at Gyantse in 1923, he would be appointed a *Depon* in his own right. He was known more familiarly as Dingja or Ding-bya than by his personal name of Dorji Gyaltsan (or more formally *rDo rje dgra hdul*) since he was one of three brothers who took their territorial title from the family estates of, respectively, Dingja, Lholing and Dele Rabden. Interestingly, Dingja—like Kyipup's older brother—had originally been selected as one of the four boys to be sent by the Dalai Lama to England for education, but his name was scratched upon his appointment as Keeper of the Wardrobe of His Holiness. At the time of Tharchin's stay at Gyantse, Dingja, even at this young age, was one of the two

* "These comparisons of official rank are inevitably somewhat arbitrary. Tibetans share the British obsession with position and hierarchy, which gave India Office officials the opportunity to draw up detailed tables of comparison: *dzasa* for earl, *kung* for duke, and so on." Patrick French, *Younghusband*, 412 note 2.

Dzongpcns (a fourth-rank position) of that fortress city. When in future years he would become one of the two City Magistrates or *Mipon* of Lhasa he would simultaneously be placed in charge of the Police Department. By 1937 Dingja would be occupying the highest post among all the Dzongs of Tibet, that of *Tsi-Dzong* or Dzongpon of Shigatse. He would in time marry the sister of Tsarong Shape, Tharchin's very good friend of future Lhasa days. The 1938 British publication on Tibetan leaders quoted from earlier termed Dingja "very intelligent, jovial and sociable," one who "promises to be a great man" in Tibet. As a matter of fact, in future years Dingja would come to be frequently consulted by the Kashag or Ministerial Cabinet of the Tibetan government, a body with whom he would in time have considerable influence. A promising leader of Tibet, indeed!⁶⁷

Later on, these four Tibetan officers requested Tharchin to teach them the Hindi (Hindustani) language. This is made clear by the teacher in a brief biographical sketch he wrote of himself in 1942, wherein he stated that "at Gyantse ... I opened a private school. Several Tibetan officials' sons came to my school, to whom I taught English and Hindi." Sometime following New Year's day, they commenced coming to Tharchin daily after their physical drills to take lessons from him in Hindi. The reason "they took great interest to learn ... Hindustani," the Headmaster explained later, was because at the British Fort nearby "the military instructions [by which he meant drill and other commands to soldiery] were imparted to them through the medium of Hindustani."⁶⁸ And hence, these officers were quite eager, with Tharchin's tutorial help, to develop their skill in this language as quickly as possible. In his autobiography David Macdonald discusses this aspect of the Headmaster's activities at Gyantse on behalf of these four men: "Several of the army officers who were in training at that place invited a teacher, by the name of Tharchin, a man from Kulu, who was then in the city, to hold a daily class for them. He undertook this work, his pay being subscribed by his [officer] pupils ..."⁶⁹ (Macdonald was mistaken, of course, in identifying Kulu as the Indo-Tibetan locale from whence Tharchin originally came.)

Still further light has been shed by Tharchin on his private instruction of these officers and on the accomplishments of his star pupil, Doring Thaiji. For in a letter to Sir Charles Bell which the Tibetan teacher was to write much later from Tsarong House at Lhasa while on a visit there in 1937, Tharchin discussed his experience with these men in some detail:

When I was in Gyantse in the years 1921-23, where I started a private school, at that time, Doring and Changlochhen Kung Kusho and some other officers came to Gyantse to get Military instructions with some others. I used to teach Hindustani as well as English, and Doring Thaiji worked very hard and did very well in reading Hindustani. Then I ordered for him many books on Army training in Hindi and also in English. We translated [together?] many books into Tibetan.... During that time Doring bought many books on Military and spent over 1,000 [rupees] for them. He thought [of a] lot of things to do in future for the development of the Army in Tibet.⁷⁰

That the young Headmaster's instruction of these four officers in Hindi proved to be effective is corroborated by what the already-cited British government publication in India, printed in 1938, had to say about two of his pupils. Under the entry for Kyipup in *Who's Who in Tibet* there is found the following assessment of this officer's language abilities: "Speaks Hindi

well and also a few words of English.” And for Dingja, the entry reads: “Speaks Hindustani quite fluently, a few words of Chinese and a little English.”⁷¹

It is clear from Macdonald’s account that Tharchin’s non-Buddhist faith did not present any obstacle to these Tibetan Buddhist officers being willing to receive instruction from this Indo-Tibetan Christian. For in reporting further on the young Headmaster’s teaching relationship with these adult pupils, the British Trade Agent, after noting that “Tharchin was a Christian,” added that “he spoke and wrote Tibetan and English quite well, and was able to teach the rudiments of the latter language to his pupils, who, it will be noticed, had no prejudice on the matter of his religion.”⁷² This quite tolerant attitude on the part of these men towards Tharchin’s Christian faith would continue to evidence itself quite remarkably in other situations which were to occur later when they—both Buddhist officers and Christian Headmaster—would be together for a lengthy period of time down in India. All in all, it spoke well of the winsome testimony Tharchin apparently bore wherever he went and in whatever context he might find himself.



Meanwhile, the work of the school grew and the small institution began to show signs of development. Its fame spread abroad in no time. Yet due to the pressure of increasing responsibilities, Tharchin was compelled to request an additional teacher; and so he communicated the problem to Mrs. David Macdonald at Yatung. She kindly dispatched to Gyantse a new teacher, Habbu by name, a Sino-Tibetan who had been raised in Kalimpong and had been a former SUMI student there. With the arrival of this additional teacher from Yatung the burden of the school on the Headmaster was much alleviated.⁷³

At first, however, the salary of the assistant schoolmaster proved to be the most difficult problem for the Headmaster to solve. Nonetheless, Tharchin—who himself had to be satisfied with very little income—managed to pay from his own resources the initial remuneration of Rs. 20/- per month for the additional teacher. Later on the salary was paid out of a donation received from Sadhu Sundar Singh who from time to time faithfully helped his friend in this manner.⁷⁴ Indeed, found among Tharchin’s personal papers at Kalimpong was the Headmaster’s month-by-month “Daily Income – Daily Expenditures” ledger for much of 1923 that showed an interesting inked handwritten entry in the “Income” column of February’s record that reads:

2.2.23 Received from Mahatma S. Singh Rs. 20/-.

What had prompted the Sadhu to begin donating funds in support of Tharchin’s school was what appears to have been the Tibetan Headmaster’s first written report sent from Gyantse to his friend and spiritual “Guru.” According to Jesuit Fr. Hosten, who learned of all this from Tharchin himself two years later, the Sadhu, in response to the Gyantse Headmaster’s report that was sent him shortly after the formal inauguration of the school on New Year’s Day 1922, had replied that

he wished to help; that if poor children were there who couldn't pay (a Rupee per month was demanded from those with a better standing), he would want to support them; he would send 10 Rupees a month and at times 20, but nothing instead when he was on a [preaching] journey.*

Interestingly, in his end-of-life "memoirs" Gergan Tharchin had indicated that during his two-year period as Gyantse Headmaster he himself received virtually no pay. On the other hand, in his remarks to Fr. Hosten in 1925 the Headmaster had opined that "he could make a living from the 33 students who jointly paid 15-20 Rupees, since two [of the] Tibetan officers from Lhasa ... paid him 20 Rupees as well for the teaching of Hindustani."⁷⁵ These two statements are reconcilable if the two figures mentioned represent in each instance—as is more likely the case—grand totals received over the *entire* period of Tharchin's stay at Gyantse, rather than that they represent *monthly* payment amounts. According to custom prevalent in ancient Tibetan times, school children would bring several useful articles as gifts to their teachers, which were more than sufficient for their personal needs. But in Tharchin's days at Gyantse he would sometimes have nothing to eat, yet the Lord, he remarked, always miraculously provided his "daily bread" both "wonderfully and marvelously." During that period he must have had frequent occasion to recite the Lord's Prayer by heart in times of need. All his personal requirements were met by his God's grace and mercy.



A case in point were three particular students of Tharchin's whose gifts helped to meet the latter's needs. Two were the sons of Taring Raja and a third was a son of a Tibetan nobleman. Much more needs to be said about the former. Born in 1878, Taring Raja, who was the eldest son of Thutob Namgyal, the then reigning Maharaja of Sikkim (1874-1914), had had a Sikkimese nobleman uncle, named Lhase Kusho, who had escaped to Tibet during the war between Sikkim and the British during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Lhase Kusho,⁷⁶ thereafter electing to stay permanently in Tibet on his landed estates along

* This is a summary by Fr. Hosten of information gleaned from Tharchin in their lengthy conversation together about the Tibetan's relationship with the Sadhu and held at Darjeeling on 4 June 1925. This summary had been forwarded by the priest to Swiss pastor Oskar Pfister, who in turn published extracts of it in his *Die Legende Sadhu Sundar Singhs*, the particular extract quoted above appearing on page 214. It should be observed that on page 215 Hosten, as informed by Tharchin, is quoted as reporting that ultimately the Sadhu's monthly contribution of 10 Rupees was given to Habbu on a regular basis.

The remark quoted above about the fact that the Sadhu would not be able to send any funds while on preaching tours is further borne out in the contents of a letter from the Sadhu to Tharchin which the present author found among the ThPaK. Among other things, it is quite indicative of the Sadhu's willingness and desire to assist financially in his Tibetan friend's ministry for Christ. The document in question is a one-page handwritten letter in Urdu sent from his home at Subathu in the Simla Hills. Part of the page is torn away, the upper-right section where the date would be located also having been torn away, with only the day of 28, showing; thus one cannot be absolutely certain that it was sent during Tharchin's stay at Gyantse, though it is this author's opinion that it was. Nevertheless, enough of its contents remain for the reader of it to know where the Sadhu's heart truly lay with regard to wanting to help his Indo-Tibetan friend with funds if he at all could: especially since it would appear, from the fact that Tharchin had sent a *telegram* to his esteemed friend, that the need—most likely at the

the Lhasa road just outside Gyantse, was ultimately succeeded by his nephew as head of the family, most likely due to the fact that though he had a son, the latter was declared an incarnate Lama and in the end came to reside instead at Lingbu Monastery near the Taring estates at Gyantse.⁷⁷ The offspring of the nephew Taring Raja,⁷⁸ and what eventually happened to them, presents a most interesting study of an intricate interconnection by marriage among five Sikkimese, Tibetan and Bhutanese families of high nobility and rank, a not uncommon phenomenon in the countries of Central and Southeast Asia even as it was not uncommon in Europe.

These families figured prominently in the society and politics of their respective three countries during the first half of the twentieth century, and their influence is still felt in some measure even up to the present day. Moreover, Tharchin's own life was to intersect with the lives of nearly all of these personages on a number of occasions in the years that lay ahead. It might therefore be helpful to spend a few moments reviewing the lives of most of the key personalities involved before continuing further with the narrative of Dorje Tharchin's life.



At the time when two of the three sons of Taring Raja were students of the Tibetan Headmaster, Taring's youngest half-brother (Tashi Namgyal) was the reigning Maharaja (1914-67) over the land of Sikkim, even though Taring himself had been by descent and circumstance the rightful Raja to assume the throne. But owing to his failure to return from

Gyantse school—was most urgent and may even have been sent by the Headmaster in response to the need of having to pay the salary of his assistant teacher Habbu. Here, then, is what the Sadhu wrote, as translated by a friend of the Tharchin family who is an expert in the Urdu language:

Greetings. Am in receipt of [your] telegram and [herewith] is its response. I do not have much money, otherwise [I would send you some?—torn away].

I don't know if any cash is in the L.I.C. Bank [i.e., the Life Insurance Corporation Bank where the Sadhu's account was kept].... I had left it [there] for the work of my ministry and am spending it accordingly....

Sometimes the money is not available, in which [case] I also have to suspend work.

And now I'm going to Saharanpur, Ajmer and Ratlaum [sp?] for KONON SAKUL [meaning undecipherable] and I also need [my] money [for this].

I'm praying to the Lord that He will take care of everything and help [you].

After this [preaching] mission is completed I shall write you again. However, I hope to hear from you also about your ministries.

Now may my salaam [i.e., greetings] reach you.

God bless you.

Yours obediently,
Sundar Singh

It may very well have been, in fact, that the follow-up letter promised by the Sadhu subsequent to his preaching mission conveyed the commitment, alluded to above by Tharchin, of eventually undertaking to support Habbu on a regular basis.

To round out the picture of Sundar Singh's charitable involvement in Tharchin's school further, Pfister also published the fact—again gained from the Tharchin-Hosten conversation—that at the Christmas season of 1922 the Sadhu "had sent two packages with second-hand clothes for boys and girls and also [other] garments, and in addition a picture of the Lord Jesus. In this way a small Christmas celebration was instituted."

the Land of Snows, he had relinquished his place to his half-brother. In Tibet where he now lived, Taring Raja and his family grew into one of the most powerful families in all of the land and ranked high (a fourth-ranked official) among the nobility, the title of Raja also being conferred on him in 1922. By this time, noted one visitor to his vast Gyantse estates, Taring Raja had “adopted the peaceful life of a Tibetan squire” and seemed “to bear no envy towards his younger brother immersed in the cares of government” in far-away Sikkim. The visitor, Sir Charles Bell, was returning to India from a most fruitful one-year diplomatic mission at Lhasa, and had stopped off for an overnight stay with the Raja at his spacious country villa. This had been in October of 1921, just a few weeks after Gergan Tharchin had himself arrived at Gyantse. While with the Raja the British Political Officer discovered that his host had taken up painting and music and noticed that his skills in both were “beyond the ordinary.” These artistic achievements aside, however, to his neighbors, Bell wrote, the Raja would always be looked upon as “Gyal-se Kusho, ‘The King’s son’.”⁷⁹

Now besides the two sons who were students of Tharchin, Taring Raja had sired one other son and four daughters. The eldest of these four girls in time married into a famous Lhasa household, the *mDo mkhrba* family, but more generally known by the name Rakasha (or Ragashar). It was one of the two oldest and important peerage families in all of Tibet, having in the past given several Chief Ministers to its Government. Indeed, it was one of the purest lines to be found there, tracing its roots back in a more direct course than any other house. In fact, all were descendants of the most celebrated of all kings of Tibet, the so-called “Religious Kings” of the seventh through ninth centuries. Because of their unique historical ancestry, the heads of these peerage families—of which the Rakashas were the second oldest—would always receive both civil and religious honors on all State occasions including the Installation of the Dalai Lama. Moreover, the peasants working on the estates of these illustrious families always greeted their heads with the kind of obeisance only accorded high religious dignitaries and monks in memory of their ancestors.

Now Rakasha Depon, a general in the Tibetan army, was at that time the head of this most prominent of Tibetan households. And the Rakasha son in question (born in 1904) whom Taring Raja’s eldest daughter married happened also to be the full and eldest brother of Kunzang Dechen Rakasha, the Maharani or Queen Consort of Sikkim’s Maharaja, the half-brother of Taring! This had come about because for centuries now the Rajas, and especially Maharajas, of Sikkim had gone to Lhasa for their brides, and this practice underwent no change in the case of the Maharaja who was reigning at this time. And thus the head of the great Rakasha clan in Lhasa was in October 1918 to provide, in the person of his thirteen-year-old daughter, the bride for Sikkim’s ruling monarch, and, in the person of his fourteen-year-old son Phuntso Rabgye, the groom for Taring Raja’s eldest daughter.⁸⁰

Another prominent Tibetan family into which a member of the Taring household would marry was the Tsarongs, in the early days the wealthiest and certainly one of the largest and oldest truly indigenous noble families in all of Tibet. But early in the second decade of the twentieth century, the head of the Tsarong family of that time—along with his married son—were cruelly liquidated. This had occurred when rumors, though never substantiated, spread abroad that they both, accused of being pro-Chinese and of revealing State secrets to them, had thus plotted together to betray Dalai Lama XIII⁸¹ while he was in exile in India during

the years between 1910 and 1912.⁸¹ Upon his return to Lhasa, however, His Holiness, who had esteemed the Tsarongs greatly, gave “his favorite and most promising friend [and] young attendant,” Chensa Nang-kang, to the bereaved family as its new head. Whereupon Chensa (the word for favorite, literally meaning “visible to the eyes” because the favorite remained in the presence of the Dalai Lama continually) not only married Tsarong’s eldest daughter (who as the new Mrs. Tsarong later became known more familiarly as Tsarong Lacham) but also married two of her sisters (including the later well-known Mary La). As *Makpa* or resident son-in-law, Chensa now inherited all the estates, family rights, and retainers of his deceased father-in-law.⁸²

Born in about 1885 of extremely humble origins (his father a maker of arrowheads), Chensa Nang-kang was to have the good fortune of rising extraordinarily rapidly to prominence in the Tibetan government. At first, though, Chensa had been employed in a most menial position among the Dalai Lama’s household. He was then, however, noticed by His Holiness and selected to become his young attendant. It was a wise choice inasmuch as the young man was one of the devoted few who accompanied the Dalai Lama in his flight to Mongolia in 1904 and during his long exile in China thereafter (and described elsewhere). Because of his bravery in 1910 when leading a small party of Tibetan soldiers in successfully beating back a larger force of Chinese troops (at the Chaksam Ferry crossing on the River Tsangpo two days ride south of Lhasa) who were attempting to prevent the Dalai Lama’s flight to India, His Holiness by early 1913 appointed Chensa as the Tibetan army’s Commander-in-Chief and gave him the rare title of Dzasa that same year.⁸³ It was in July of 1913 that he married into the Tsarong family with the blessing of His Holiness, was granted his own estate, Lhanga, in recognition of his bravery during the Chaksam battle, and in the following year after the Simla Convention was made one of the four Shapes or Ministers in the Tibetan Cabinet to replace the late Sechung Shape. He was also put in charge of the *Drapchi Ngukhang* or Government mint the same year. As a consequence of these honors, Chensa Nang-kang was ever afterwards to be known as Tsarong Shape, Tsarong Dzasa, General Tsarong, Tsarong II, or simply Tsarong. (It would be in the Lhasan home of this newly-constituted Tsarong household, incidentally, that Gergan Tharchin and his traveling American companion Theos Bernard would stay for some time during 1937; see Chapter 20 for the details.)

Now it would be into this reconstituted Tsarong family that Taring Raja’s elder son would eventually marry. It was this latter son, along with his younger brother, whom Tharchin was currently teaching in his school at Gyantse, which happened to be just six miles from the Taring estate.⁸⁴ This elder Taring son had a very bright future ahead of him. Born in 1912 and named Kumar Jigme Sunchen Wangpo Namgyal Taring, he was only around ten years old when Tharchin first had him as a pupil. He would be sent later to Darjeeling for further education at St. Paul’s school, where he not only learned to speak English fluently but also received a much-prized European training. During the Darjeeling school’s annual holidays, Jigme (which in Tibetan means “Fear Not” or “Fearless”) would spend the greater part of it each year at the Macdonald home in nearby Kalimpong, this family being close friends to the Taring Raja household—and to Tharchin as well, for that matter.

Upon returning to Tibet Jigme served as “a Tibetan military leader” for “about twelve years” before ultimately “becoming Treasurer to the Tibetan government,” a fourth rank government post in which he served for eighteen years. In the meantime, in 1930, when in his early twenties, Kumar Jigme married the “daughter” of the new Tsarong Shape who, though no longer the Tibetan army Commander nor a Kashag Minister, nonetheless continued to exert power and influence upon the ruling circles. Jigme’s bride, who had been born in 1910 and was next to the youngest of the daughters of the original head of the Tsarong family (and hence next to the youngest sister of Tsarong Lacham), had come under the care of Chensa Nangkang when as the favorite of Dalai Lama the XIIIth he had assumed headship over the Tsarong household. Her name was Rinchen Dolma. Her upbringing is a fascinating one.

In 1921 General Tsarong decided to send Rinchen, who by this time was nearly twelve years old, to an American Methodist boarding school in Darjeeling: the Queen’s Hill School atop Mount Hermon. However, Tsarong requested his friend David Macdonald to take her into his family at Yatung for some six months prior to the upcoming Indian educational experience (that would begin in March of 1922) so that “by association” with the Trade Agent’s daughters she “might acquire some knowledge of English and become acquainted with European manners and customs.” It so happened that it was the Macdonald family that had come to give her the nickname by which to Westerners and others she ever afterwards came to be known: “Mary” or “Mary La.” This name had been selected inasmuch as it was the closest English equivalent to her Tibetan name, Dolma, which means “Protectress.”⁸⁵

Mary quickly adopted European dress and manners, and, like her future husband Jigme, she did well with English both in the Macdonald home and especially at the Western school in Darjeeling. But because she progressed so well and so quickly at Queen’s Hill. Mary needed to stay but three years there—March to December, 1922 to 1924—for her to become the only Tibetan girl up to that time to have been educated along Western lines. (The same, incidentally, was true of Jigme, as the first Tibetan boy.) And on returning to Lhasa in 1925 she became confidential secretary to her “father,” an important post not previously held by a Tibetan woman. Within a year or so, “father” and “daughter”—for various reasons—were married in 1926, though Tsarong was twenty-five years older than Mary and even though the latter with great reluctance entered into the marriage. On his part, however, Tsarong, wrote Mary in her autobiography, “assured me ... that I could marry again whenever I came across a suitable young man.” This she did in three years when it was agreed that Prince Jigme Taring would indeed make a “suitable” husband for Mary. After these two were married in 1930, they settled down at Taring outside Gyantse where, whenever not on assignment with the Tibetan government, Jigme assisted his father in the management of the family estates.

But by 1937 when Theos Bernard (for the first time) and Tharchin (once again) made his acquaintance, Jigme, now around twenty-five years old, had already risen in a very short time to high military and Government posts—all of which enabled him to exercise considerable influence in the Tibetan government. In fact, it was Jigme and Mary and Mary’s older sister Tsarong Lacham (along with Tharchin, to be sure) who “had played considerable roles” in “obtaining the invitation” from the Tibetan government for Bernard’s visit to Lhasa in 1937. For it was because Jigme in that same year had coincidentally been deputed by the Lhasan authorities to receive at Kalimpong a consignment of arms for the Tibetan government that

he and Mary and the Lacham were at the Indian hill station at the time and could therefore be in a position to render such assistance to Bernard. One of Jigme's other duties, which he performed quite well because of his English-language educational background, was to serve as interpreter to high Tibetan government officials during important negotiations.

Both Jigme and his wife ended up escaping separately to India, along with other refugees, at the time that the current Fourteenth Dalai Lama had made his own way to India in 1959 as a result of the Tibetan uprising against the Chinese.⁸⁶ Mary was the first to flee to India via Bhutan, whereas Jigme did so at a subsequent period. By the time His Holiness finally established his exile residence north of Delhi—first at Mussoorie, and ultimately at Dharamsala in mid-1960—both Jigme and Mary Taring had become highly useful in the Tibetan government-in-exile. Significantly, Jigme in time was appointed Education Minister in the Cabinet of His Holiness and served until his retirement in 1975; while Mary involved herself in educational projects for Tibetan refugee children both at Kalimpong and later, with her husband, at Mussoorie. Tharchin was himself later to meet Jigme in Mussoorie when summoned there by His Holiness in connection with the furtherance of the education of Tibetan refugees in India.⁸⁷ Indeed, they were to serve there together for a brief time as fellow-participants in an educational advisory committee that had been convened by the Dalai Lama.⁸⁷

It should finally be mentioned that an aunt of Jigme's, Rani Choni Wangmo La (born 1897)—who was the full sister both of Jigme's father Taring Raja and of his uncle Tashi Namgyal, the Maharaja of Sikkim—became the wife of Raja S. T. Dorjee, the popular Prime Minister of Bhutan and former "protégé" of Tharchin's friend Rev. John Graham when the Bhutanese Raja was in his teens pursuing his education at Kalimpong. It was at the latter's residential headquarters at Ha-Dzong, it will be recalled, that Tharchin and SUMI principal Sutherland had stayed as guests, both in 1917 and 1919-20 on their Education Missions to Bhutan commissioned by the Maharaja of Bhutan himself. It will also be recalled that Raja Dorjee, who was staying at Kalimpong at the time, himself accompanied Tharchin and Sutherland, he traveling the entire journey with them to and from Bhutan on the 1919-20 journey.⁸⁸

It should be pointed out that the third notable pupil in Tharchin's school was a son of Chokte Kusho, a Tibetan nobleman (who was himself to come down to India as a refugee in 1959). This son, whose personal name was Dorji Wangyal, also took the family estate name of Chokte, and when grown to manhood was addressed, like his nobleman father, as Chokte Kusho (the latter term being equivalent to the English title of "Sir"). Born in 1910, Dorji Wangyal would have been eleven or twelve years old at the time he became a student of Tharchin's in 1921. Not too many years hence, in 1925 to be exact, young Chokte would enter Government service, and later become Dzongpon (District Officer) of Namling. And by 1937 he would rise to become one of the prestigious Gyantse Dzongpons.⁸⁹

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Returning now to the events at Gyantse, it soon became the practice that the children of Taring Raja, the elder Chokte Kusho, and of other noblemen would from time to time bring

tsampa, meat, butter and cheese for the teachers—just as in ancient times, as mentioned earlier, disciples used to bring essential commodities for their *guru* or teacher. In other words, the tuition fees at the school were paid in both cash and kind. These the Headmaster and his Assistant Teacher would receive with much gratefulness.

As a result of Tharchin's considerable contribution to the community, Doring Thaiji and Changlo Chen Gung Kusho became especially friendly with him. The latter, an aristocrat who was a senior Tibetan officer in rank and honor, extended an invitation to Tharchin to stay with him. He accepted the invitation and spent some time with him although most of the time the Headmaster stayed with Doring Thaiji at his family's ancestral home near Gyantse known as "The Four Joys."⁹⁰ It had come to have this name in a most unusual way that requires a little storytelling which Sir Charles Bell, who himself more than once had visited this country estate, has recounted in his most interesting volume, *The People of Tibet*:

The most distinguished ancestor of the Do-ring family, and known, because of his great learning, as Do-ring Pandita, had been Regent of Tibet for a few months during the minority of the Seventh Dalai Lama. In fact, he was the first layman ever to hold this high position in Tibet [it almost always having been filled by a high ecclesiastic]. Moreover, the Regent's son, only 22 years old, had served as a minister of State at the same time.... Now the first known ancestor of the Do-rings was the incarnation of one of the religious ministers (*cho-lon*) of the Great Teacher (Padma Sambhava), who had foretold that this minister would be reborn in a salty, sandy plain where there would be four kinds of happiness: that of the fish to the north, the birds to the east, the human beings to the south, and the wild animals to the west.

The first head of the house to attain wealth and fame, Do-ring Pandita, received as a grant of land from the Tibetan government this estate, Gab-shi. Its name means "The Four Joys," and its situation bears out the prophecy. To the north is the river with the fish, in the east the birds cluster, to the south stretches the whole plain of Gyantse with its fertile crops for the sustenance of the human kind, and to the west rise the hills, the home of the wild sheep (*burrhal*) and gazelle.⁹¹

Some idea of the charm and graciousness of this latter host of Tharchin's—and of the hospitable surroundings of that host's estate—is provided by Mrs. Henrietta (Sands) Merrick, an American traveler and explorer of some repute. She had traveled in Tibet as far as Gyantse in the spring and summer of 1931. While there she had called on Doring Thaiji at his nearby estate, accompanied by none other than Gergan Tharchin himself whom she had engaged in Kalimpong to be her guide and interpreter on the journey. Little would have changed with regard to Doring or his estate from what Tharchin was even now experiencing in the 1920s at the hands of his good host and friend. Here, then, is what Mrs. Merrick had to say about her visit with this Tibetan nobleman just outside Gyantse a few miles to the north:

When an invitation came from one of the most prominent nobles in Gyantse, I forgot entirely that I had determined never to partake of another Tibetan meal, and accepted forthwith.

One of the most delightful experiences I have ever had was at Gabshi Kusho's, who in Lhasa is known as Do-ring, and is one of the greatest nobles of Tibet.... He still holds the title of Major General, and is Jongpen [Dzongpon], or Commander, of a fort on the borders of Nepal....

A very charming gentleman is Gabshi Kusho. One might meet him in the most distinguished social circles of any country and be impressed with his culture. His thin face was not handsome according to Western standards, but with all its Oriental guardedness, could never be inexpressive. One felt a responsiveness and a keen intelligence ... [in] our conversation.

From Gabshi Kusho's left ear hung a long pointed turquoise with large pearl atop; his fingernails were long, denoting as in China, one who is a stranger to manual labor; on his right thumb was a jade ring a quarter of an inch in width and an inch thick ... a relic of the days when bows and arrows were weapons of war. "General" in Tibetan means literally "Lord of the Arrow."

Gabshi Kusho's robe hung long, and was of fine plum-colored brocade embroidered at the neck and on the cuffs. It was somber compared to the vivid green brocade worn by his young son....

We lunched under an open skylight that ran up funnel-wise, decorated inside with religious paintings. On two sides of the room were elaborate altars, gleaming with gold, and heavy with red lacquer.

From twelve little bowls each one helped himself with chopsticks, and after luncheon Gabshi Kusho's wife, who had taken little part in the conversation after the first greeting, showed me through their spacious house, where beams were hand-painted and frescoes adorned most of the walls.

There were student officers bending over books; around the porches sat rows of little boys writing lessons on long slates; and down in the courtyard dozens of women were spinning with tiny hand wheels. On the roof, carpets of beautiful design and workmanship were in the weaving.

I had brought simple gifts to this prosperous home, and the night before my departure from Gyantse an enormous bundle arrived for me, containing small rugs and yards of wool cloth and table delicacies.⁹²

With respect to Gung Kusho, who was a descendant of the family of a former Dalai Lama,⁹³ besides being a senior officer in the Government he was also considered one of his country's foremost writers of Tibetan prose in his day and a greatly renowned scholar in the field of Tibetan language and literature. Especially was his scholarship unquestioned in the fields of poetry and grammar. But Changlo Chen was likewise viewed as an extremely gifted speaker. One who came to know him much later in Kalimpong has written that "people flocked to hear his tales of corruption and intrigue among the Lhasa nobles." It was some measure of his speaking skills, adds the former Japanese spy in Tibet, Hisao Kimura, "that he was able to hold his audiences despite all his teeth having been yanked out under torture."⁹⁴ In exchange, therefore, for instructing Gung Kusho further in Hindi (the more usual literary form of Hindustani, which, as has been seen, Gung Kusho spoke fluently), the Headmaster endeavored to learn from him some of the salient features of Tibetan literature. Tharchin later observed that "his style was both simple and sweet at the same time." The young educator tried to learn as much as he could from this scholar, and would have the opportunity of benefiting still further from him some thirty years hence when Gung Kusho, as a matured scholar living at that time in Kalimpong, would provide Tharchin with a Tibetan translation of several chapters of Charles Bell's highly-praised biographical work, *Portrait of the Dalai Lama*, that would appear in serial form in the Tibetan newspaper which Tharchin published. Now, though, the young teacher sought to profit as much as he could from still other scholars at Gyantse, which was partly his aim in visiting Tibet in the first place.



While Tharchin was Headmaster of the school at Gyantse, Rev. Evan Mackenzie, who had been a longtime missionary to the Tibetans, came to the town while on a trip through parts of Tibet. The trip had been prompted by an invitation to attend the wedding at Yatung of British Trade Agent Macdonald's eldest daughter Anne to the Trade Agent's former colleague in Tibet, F. W. R. Perry, who had served for some three years as the commander of Macdonald's military escort. Possessing the distinction of having been "the first, and only, European wedding ever held in Tibet," it turned out to be quite a popular event, it attracting a number of other guests from India besides the Scots missionary. After the wedding, which was held in August of 1922,⁹⁵ Mackenzie traveled farther north to Gyantse, where he visited Tharchin's school and was very much pleased to see the good work the Headmaster was carrying on among the children for the sake of Christ. The pupils sang several Christian songs and hymns, which delighted the missionary a great deal. After the program Mackenzie and the Headmaster prayed together. "It was a blessed time of fellowship in the Lord," Tharchin recalled. (Much more regarding this outstanding servant of the Lord is recounted in Chapter 16 below.)

There were other marks of a Christian orientation which Mackenzie had been able to observe at the Indo-Tibetan's Gyantse school. Indeed, Tharchin's description of his multifarious Christian administration of the school was communicated to his dear friend and colleague in the gospel, Sadhu Sundar Singh, prompting the latter to declare in a letter to a friend of his in July 1923: "Now we have a school in Tibet with 33 boys and a Tibetan Christian teacher. This is the first and only Christian school in the 'Forbidden Land'."* For Tharchin included in his school's daily session both morning prayer, Christian hymns and Bible readings. He also conducted a Sunday school every week. The school walls in fact were decorated with Bible texts and posters. Scripture verses and texts were displayed at those vantage points where students, monks from the local gompas or monasteries, and others could readily see them; and, judging from their outward appearance at least, they all seemed pleased to read them. As a matter of fact, these various gospel displays, Tharchin reported later, "evoked

* This quote from Sundar Singh's letter—which admittedly nowhere mentions Tharchin or Gyantse but which obviously refers to the latter identities—was a part of a two-paragraph section in the letter which prompted the Sadhu's arch nemesis, the Darjeeling-based Catholic Jesuit Fr. Henry Hosten, to publish it as an example of the Sadhu's dissimulation and imposture. The Jesuit priest, first seeing it in a Ceylon newspaper, now reprinted it as part of an ongoing attempt by him to discredit Tharchin's friend as a true Christian and servant of God. Believing from the outset that the Sadhu was a charlatan, Hosten latched onto every shred of "factual" evidence he could ferret out to support his accusation of imposture; and this assertion by the Sadhu about a Christian school in Tibet was one such instance that contributed to the controversy about Sundar Singh which raged in Europe and India during the 1920s (for the details see again Chapter 11 of the present biography's first volume).

Not privy to the facts which validated the Sadhu's assertion here, the Catholic priest launched an unmerciful attack out of what proved to be ignorance and unwillingness to give the Sadhu the benefit of the doubt. "Note the magic number 33 for the pupils of his bogus Tibetan school," began Hosten uncharitably. "Where is it? [And what is] the name of the schoolmaster?" he inquired presumptuously. "How much money has been collected for the Tibetan school already and spent on this side of the Himalayas?" he further charged. "No wonder that S. S. [Sundar Singh] can manage to pay for comfortable traveling to Conventions and Conferences and has leisure to write a new bogus book. The money from the sale of his books ... could make him and others live in ease; but he

many questions and discussions,”⁹⁶ which very thing he had hoped would happen. For as he made clear in a conversation he had with Catholic Jesuit Fr. Henry Hosten in Darjeeling two or three years later, it was his aim “from the very beginning to conduct [my] school in a religious spirit.” And though the Tibetans, he had added, “did not understand this purpose at first,” they “later did not make any objections. Lamas came out of curiosity and wanted to discuss religious questions, yet were always friendly by assuring that Christianity and Buddhism were ultimately one”^{*}—a sentiment with which, of course, he did not agree.

As intimated here by Tharchin in his talks with Hosten a year or so after his return from Tibet and as he would much later assert in his “memoirs,” there was no Tibetan objection or protest of any sort from any quarter to such an outright presentation of the Christian religion in what was an overwhelmingly Buddhist country. Indeed, if there was any objection registered

never accepts money, we are told *ad nauseam*,” the Jesuit went on in his unjust diatribe. See letter, Sundar Singh to K. R. Wilson, Simla Hills, 19 July 1923, reprinted in Hosten, “Sundar Singh’s 40 Days’ Fast . . .,” *CHI* (4 June 1924):369.

Later, another harsh critic of Sundar’s, Swiss pastor Dr. Oskar Pfister, carried on the controversy over the Sadhu’s character and ministry and published his own volume on the debate, utilizing in a collaborative way much of the Hosten “findings” as well as the results of his own research. In his book, cited in earlier footnotes to the present chapter and denigratingly entitled *Die Legende Sundar Singhs*, Pfister devoted more than ten pages (210-20) to just this one issue, designating an entire section of inquiry as “6. The School of Gyantse” and extensively quoting in the process not only Hosten and other participants in the debate but also Gergan Tharchin himself. In the opinion of the present writer, however, it was much ado about nothing.

At the outset, Pfister accused the Sadhu of indulging in “gross lies,” charging the Sadhu—in the school issue—of having claimed the following: (a) that he himself had founded the school in question; (b) that it was “an Evangelical School for Tibetan youngsters and Buddhist priests”; (c) that it was his “first school in Tibet”; (d) that it was his “Bible School in Tibet”; and (e) that he had asserted that “it had to be closed on the order of the Tibetan authorities.” As it turns out, though, each and every one of these so-called Sadhu claims and assertions were not made by him but by his close friends and admirers—and without his authorization or instruction. Indeed, any careful reading of Pfister’s highly unfair critical account of this issue surrounding Tharchin’s Gyantse school, including the author’s various but flawed attempts at documentation, will bear out such a conclusion.

Even the statement made by the Sadhu in his July 1923 letter to his friend Wilson and quoted in the Text above—“Now we have a school in Tibet with . . . a Tibetan Christian teacher . . . the first and only Christian school in the ‘Forbidden Land’”—is found to be accurate in every respect when carefully considered in light of the relationship which had existed from the very beginning between the Sadhu and Tharchin in connection with the evangelizing ministry which these two had engaged in over the years together. For example, Sundar’s use here of the editorial “we” in the phrase “Now we have a school in Tibet” is not, as the good Dr. Pfister would probably have described it, a “pompous announcement” (*Die Legende*, 211). For was not the Sadhu the chief contributor to the School’s maintenance? But more importantly, both Sundar and Dorje Tharchin had looked upon their relationship in gospel evangelization as that of “teacher-student”; even as E. Sanders and E. Judah, on page 5 of their Sadhu biography, *Sundar Singh, the Lion-hearted Warrior* (London: S.P.C.K., 1923), had inferred: the royalties from their book were “sent through Sundar Singh to the only Christian school in Tibet, where over 30 boys are educated through a student of the Sadhu.” Nowhere and at no time did Sundar Singh ever personally claim or assert that he himself had been to Gyantse and founded the School there or that “with bold exaggeration” it was “his school” (*Die Legende*, 215)—as Pfister, in collaboration with Hosten, had attempted to establish as proof of the Sadhu’s dissimulation.

But finally, on the entire matter, it has been thoroughly shown, in the course of the lengthy discussion thus far about Tharchin’s Gyantse school in the Text above, that so far as the Tibetan Headmaster was concerned, it was indeed a *Christian* institution he had established, even as he had so reported to his mentor in the Christian gospel, Sadhu Sundar Singh. In short, therefore, what Pfister and Hosten had tried to create was a mountain out of a molehill: yet what they ended up producing was the merest of anthills.

* Such were the thoughts and observations which Tharchin communicated to Fr. Hosten in the oft-mentioned lengthy conversation held between these two at Darjeeling on 4 June 1925, subsequently reported on by Hosten to Swiss pastor Pfister, and summarized by the latter in his aforementioned work, *Die Legende Sundar Singhs*, 214.

at all, it was found among the British! This the Tibetan Headmaster made plain long after the event in a paper he and others prepared on the history of Christian Missions to Tibet. At the point in this historical sketch where his evangelizing efforts by means of his Gyantse school were touched upon, Tharchin unapologetically asserted that during those years while “in his school, it was his experience that the chief opposition to Bible teaching and witnessing came not from the Tibetans but from the foreigners (British) who were afraid of giving any offense to Tibetans.”⁹⁶ One particular and quite prominent “foreigner” whom he unquestionably had in mind here was none other than British India’s Political Officer for Tibet, Major “Eric” Bailey. According to Tharchin, in 1923 while still at Gyantse, he “heard that the British Resident at Gangtok did not like the Christian character of [my] school, although the Tibetans themselves had raised no objections.”*

Some of the other “foreigners” he most likely had in mind when commenting long afterwards about this matter were members of a so-called British Buddhist Mission that had been stalled at Gyantse for a month in the fall of 1922 awaiting what proved in the end to be a negative decision by Lhasan authorities on the Mission’s request for permission to advance onward to the Tibetan capital. These foreigners from London were quite sympathetic to the Buddhist faith and, having the time and opportunity for an entire month to observe the Headmaster at work, it could very well be that they were upset by, and took exception to, Tharchin’s endeavors to spread the Christian faith among the Buddhist Tibetans through his school and in other ways. Certain it was that the Mission’s leader was quite critical of Tharchin personally but unjustifiably, as will be discussed a few pages hence. It is not too much to say, however, that given British Trade Agent Macdonald’s Christian predilections, there would have been no attempt on his part to thwart Tharchin’s gospel-spreading activities at his private school so long as no protest arose from the Tibetans themselves—which never occurred. (Macdonald, incidentally, did not himself look too kindly on the members of this British Mission; see below.)

Accordingly, Tharchin took advantage of many opportunities to witness for his Lord Jesus Christ. As but one of the more dramatic examples, one day the Head of the Gyantse Monastery, who was a learned and scholarly lama, happened to inquire of the Christian educator regarding the original source for the references which he always displayed immediately beneath the Scripture texts. Whereupon Tharchin showed him the Tibetan New Testament from which he had quoted the Scripture verses. The Head Lama borrowed the Testament and, after thoroughly reading it through, passed the Christian Book on to others who had seen it in his hand and were interested to look through it. Only after a lapsed time of three or four months did the copy of the Tibetan New Testament, now tattered, find its way back to its owner! Tharchin so prized this Testament that decades later he could write that he still had it among his most valued possessions.⁹⁷

But besides the Head Lama of Palkhor Chhode, some of the latter’s other lamas would frequently make visits to the Headmaster’s quarters. The lamas at this celebrated lamasery

* This observation about Political Officer Bailey’s attitude towards his school’s character the Headmaster had shared with Fr. Hosten in 1925 as recounted in Pfister’s published work. *ibid.*, 215. See a few pages hence in the Text above for further on the Bailey-Tharchin relationship when the two of them met at Gyantse later in 1923.

were noted for their tolerance, at least within Tibetan Buddhism with its various sects or branches of the Doctrine. Although because Palkhor Chhode was subject to Lhasa and therefore nominally a Gelugpa or Yellow Hat institution that followed the majority branch of Lamaism to which the Dalai Lama himself belonged, nevertheless the Gyantse monastery contained representatives of nearly all the recognized Lamaist sects, which were numerous and oftentimes jealous of their own distinct existence—though not essentially opposed to each other in doctrine. An example, however, of their mutual tolerance of each other at Palkhor Chhode could be seen in the fact that whenever the Red Hats would worship with the Gelugpas in the monastery's central temple, they would make, in the words of one Western visitor there, "the not inconsiderable concession of wearing the yellow cap instead of their own distinctive red one"!⁹⁸

Tharchin's frequent visitors from Palkhor Chhode would often ask pertinent questions of him. "What is your religion?" "Whom do you worship?" They put these and other such inquiries to him when they noticed the absence in his room of images, incense, water-offerings, and pictures of gods and goddesses. Now it was customary for them to designate Buddhists as *Nangpas* (the Inner Ones) and the non-Buddhists as *Chipas* (the Outer Ones). At one point Tharchin remarked to them, "I am a Nangpa." To which they responded, "You have no images as we have, so how can you call yourself a Nangpa?" He enigmatically answered, "I am a Nangpa but you are Chipas." This paradoxical statement, reported the Tibetan from Kalimpong, puzzled them no less than it pained them.

What most likely accounted for the pain they suffered at Tharchin's remark can perhaps best be explained by referring to a passage from one of Sir Charles Bell's writings. Shortly after retirement from his many years of service as Political Officer for Tibet, Bell once made the observation that travelers in Tibet hardly ever failed to notice the people's lack of cleanliness. The Tibetans themselves, he acknowledged, viewed the matter from a far different standpoint, they dealing with it by means of one of their many short, simple, yet most incisive proverbs. Before quoting it, however, Bell first explained that Tibetans, as mentioned already, divide humanity into two classes: Buddhists, whom they refer to as "the inside people" or *Nangpas*, and non-Buddhists, whom they refer to as "the outside people" or *Chipas*. And hence, reported Sir Charles, their proverb, as translated, ran like this:

"The outside man is clean outside;
The inside man is clean inside."⁹⁹

By Tharchin having perhaps naïvely denominated these local lamas, who must have been quite familiar with this proverb, as *Chipas* or Outside People, he was in so many words saying to them that not only were they not Buddhists but also they were not spiritually or morally clean inside! And thus one could well understand how they must have been terribly pained inwardly by the remark. Tharchin, the converted Christian, proceeded, then, to provide his own singular interpretation of the puzzling statement he had just voiced to them. He explained the apparent contradiction by boldly declaring: "I do everything from inside my heart or spirit, so I am a Nangpa. You do everything with the help of external objects such as images or prayer wheels¹⁰⁰ or water-offerings—so you are *Chipas*."¹⁰¹ This sort of

conversation must have often sparked a debate, but let it be said right here that Tharchin could be a very forceful debater!

Some of the religious leaders observed what appeared to them to be a few peculiarities about the Headmaster's way of life. They pointed out, "You do not touch drink at all when you are invited to a feast by the noblemen. We see that you are different from other people." Tharchin replied, "This is my religion, and I try to conform to the social practices and religious tenets of my faith. My conduct should be in conformity with my Christian creed." The lamas seemed to be satisfied and pleased with this reply. Tharchin was also doubly happy to know that in this way he could avail himself of the opportunity to testify through his life and conduct on behalf of his crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ.



Many people invited the Headmaster to various social feasts. As a consequence of these invitations he developed many contacts and acquaintances. His circle of friendship began to grow wider and wider day by day. This brought more social functions for him but with them as well some trying temptations. For on these occasions drinks were always served, especially a favorite intoxicant of the Tibetans, *chang*, described by one later Western resident in Tibet, Robert Ford, as "a rather flat and yeasty beer made from barley that looks like cloudy lemonade." Tharchin, however, refused to partake of such drinks. Although the girl-servants, called "chang girls," who were particularly chosen for both their beauty and powers of persuasion, tried to coax him by their beguiling smiles into drinking, he still declined to touch the goblet—whether it held wine, whiskey, brandy or beer.

Tharchin may have been faced here not only with what he perceived to be a moral issue but a religious one as well. For at some festive gatherings in Tibet the guests are expected to participate in the traditional ritual of offering *chang* to the gods. On such occasions one of the *chang* girls would explain the merits of propitiating the "Evil One" by sprinkling a few drops of beverage into the air as an offering to the "Merit-Accumulating Ones"! This sprinkling ritual was accomplished, wrote Ford, by "dipping the third finger of the right hand into the *chang* and flicking a few drops upward with the thumb. The third finger was considered the cleanest as it was said that babies are born with it in their nostrils."¹⁰² The converted Christian schoolmaster was not about to indulge in such idolatry and denial of his Lord; he stood his ground.

Even so, when their beguiling smiles proved ineffective with Tharchin, these *chang* girls now resorted to force: if jogging his arms did not produce the desired effect then they proceeded to prick him with needles or sharp pins! It was said in Tibet, in fact, that these girls had the right to run a long pin into any guest who might hesitate to drink at their urging. Apparently, this was not an uncommon practice in Tibet, since Ford noticed the same thing happening at large parties in Lhasa to which he had been invited. If by jogging the guests' arms and saying "*tunda nang-ro-nang*" ("Empty it, please") the girls were unable to coax them to drink or drink quickly enough, then out would come the pins. "I have seen *chang*

girls,” he reported, “sticking pins into senior officials who drank too slowly.” (Indeed, British Political Officer Basil Gould could report after his visit to Lhasa in 1936 that even the Tibetan Prime Minister was not immune to such prickly treatment!) Such a tactic at large festive functions, Ford noted, “was regarded as great fun, and it was reckoned bad manners to stay cold sober.” On the contrary, a state of intoxication demonstrated to the host that the guest found his chang or other alcoholic beverages so good that he could not refrain from indulging. Moreover, if the guest drank himself to such an extent that he was unable to rise, “he was presented with a white scarf as a compliment.”¹⁰³

Despite all these attempts at manipulation, however, Tharchin’s resolution did not falter. He remained strong and adamant in his determination. Later, he was left to himself and nobody bothered him any longer over the drinking of these intoxicants. Surely, this Tibetan’s end-of-life “memoirs” was careful to note, none but Daniel and his companions of old¹⁰⁴ could have empathized with the schoolmaster and his problem in such a critical and “face-losing” social situation. What a testimony for his Lord in a strange land! Thereafter, Tharchin would later remark, he was served instead with tea, and he drank it by the thousands of cups! Though this may admittedly be a case of hyperbole on Tharchin’s part, it should nonetheless be pointed out that Tibetans have been notorious in the past for consuming enormous quantities of their famed butter-tea. A London *Times* article in 1898, for example, reported that Tibetans, whom it had earlier described as “a people which drinks tea morning, noon and night” and whom it now deemed as probably the world’s greatest tea drinkers, were consuming twelve to fifteen million pounds of the beverage every year. “Tibetans,” noted Heinrich Harrer (traveling in Tibet in 1944), “often drink as many as sixty cups in a day,” with another writer stating it was as many as eighty cups!¹⁰⁵

By way of explanation of his conduct in this entire affair, Tharchin humbly observed that “once we yield to a temptation, it makes it doubly difficult for a person to withstand the second one next time. I can testify that only my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ enabled me by His grace to triumph over these trials and temptations to stand true to Him; otherwise, I am no better than other individuals.”



In the light of this very strong testimony which Dorje Tharchin bore before the whole watching world at Gyantse, and in the light also of his having earnestly taught for three weeks on Christian temperance in the church down at Yatung just a year ago, it is most difficult to understand and incredible to think that George Knight could have reported such outrageous behavior as drunkenness and bad-mouthing of British officials on the part of Gergan Tharchin at Gyantse. Knight had been the self-styled leader of a British cultural expedition to Tibet in the fall of 1922, whose party—dubbed by themselves the British Buddhist Mission—was “stalled” at Gyantse for a month (most likely late September-late October)¹⁰⁶ as it sought permission unsuccessfully to proceed to Lhasa to make a film of the capital. These accusations made by Knight can be found in his short volume on the Expedition’s

experience inside Tibet. Although this Buddhist Mission was denied access to Lhasa, nevertheless, by requesting and ultimately securing an extension of their passes from the Government of India, the group managed to remain in Tibet for nearly three months total. Though the Buddhist party leader did not identify the Gyantse school-founder by name, it is obvious who the particular target of his poison pen was. Knight showed little restraint when he wrote the following:

The native schoolmaster at Gyantse, who spoke English rather well, and taught little Tibetan boys and girls to sing Tibetan songs to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne," "Mother McCree," "Molly McIntyre," etc., was always on the *qui-vive*, and his reports to the Tibetan officials on our conduct in general were not couched in very favorable terms. This, however, did not trouble us greatly, since we afterwards learned that he never thought well of anyone outside of his own race, and his opinions of Mr. Macdonald, the British Trade Agent, and Major Bailey, the Political Officer, are unprintable. He was engaged to spy upon us during our month's stay in Gyantse,* and he was candid enough to admit it while under the effects of a strong dose of Indian whisky, the worst in the world, which everyone is strictly forbidden to drink in Tibet, although all the Tibetan officials with whom we came into contact admired its flavor exceeding much.

Knight, who otherwise possessed high credentials as a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a Corresponding Member of the Royal Botanical Society of London, sank to a very low level in aiming these charges at Tharchin that had no basis in fact—especially the supposedly unprintable opinions of his friends Macdonald and Bailey.† Interestingly enough, Bailey had himself been warned by the Indian Office that the Mission, whose members were mostly Oxford University graduates, "are a queer crowd ... [who] ... clearly show the cloven hoof."

As it turned out, Knight and his British Buddhist party's future intentions in Tibet, now that they had been denied permission for farther advance into the country, were little better morally or ethically than was the character of the unfounded charges the Expedition's leader had brought against Tharchin. That there must have already been sufficient warrant for the Gyantse authorities to suspect potentially unauthorized conduct on the part of the so-called British Buddhist Mission is borne out by what Macdonald himself reported concerning the incident a decade later. In the autobiographical account of his years in Tibet, the former British Trade Agent wrote: "Towards the end of this period" at Gyantse the Mission members "became impatient, and I had to watch their movements very closely, for I feared that they might make a dash towards the capital." Furthermore, by his own admission Knight made it

* Although the rest of Knight's accusations were patently false, this one about having been engaged to spy upon the Buddhist Mission for Tibetan officials may have had some validity to it in the light of Tharchin's known intelligence-gathering activity on behalf of the British that had begun to evidence itself by the mid-1920s and which is referenced at a number of places elsewhere in the present narrative, especially in greater detail in Chapter 24a of the final volume.

† Sonam T. Kazi, who was almost like a son to Gergan Tharchin and therefore knew the Tibetan very well, when informed of the above statements by Knight, had this to say by way of testimony about this schoolmaster's character: "Gergan Tharchin spoke very highly of David Macdonald on a number of occasions in my presence. Moreover, Tharchin would never do or say anything bad or demeaning against anybody; on the contrary, he was very kind towards all." And hence, the Kazi concluded, the Britisher's charges are "not at all correct." Interview with S. T. Kazi, Oct. 1991.

clear in his book that even “before leaving London for the East,” he and his group “had determined” that “if the Governments of India and Tibet refused to grant” them “permission in a gentlemanly way” to advance to Lhasa, they “had an alternative course of action” which was, to say the least, devious in the extreme. “Disconsolately,” wrote Macdonald, “they returned to Darjeeling, and I prematurely concluded that I had seen the last of them.”

But as Knight himself explained it, upon receipt at Gyantse of the negative decision rendered by Tibet’s National Assembly requesting, as its telegram to Major Bailey read, that “the Mission ... return the same way as they came,” “we deemed it expedient to quit Gyantse for our base at Darjeeling, and make an assault of Lhasa without the knowledge and permission of the Indian and Tibetan governments.” Although the group as a whole did not follow through, it yielded to one of its own number to implement the plan. He was the American, William McGovern, a lecturer at the School of Oriental Studies in London and the Scientific Adviser of the Expedition, who later recounted his successful venture to the Secret City and back in his now celebrated volume, *To Lhasa in Disguise*.

“It appeared,” noted the Trade Agent, “that when the British Buddhist Mission arrived back in Darjeeling they were laboring under a sense of deep injustice at having been denied passports to Lhasa.” In finally deciding that one of their members should attempt to reach the capital in disguise, the selection, wrote Macdonald, “naturally fell to Dr. McGovern, a profound Buddhist scholar, as he knew a certain amount of Tibetan.” It was at a place just below Gangtok that the American adopted the guise of a lowly Tibetan, and, accompanied by several coolies and a local Sikkimese Bhutia teacher, McGovern managed to get by Gangtok into northern Sikkim without detection. His disguise was to act as the servant of his “teacher,” nominally the leader of the party. “To complete the deception,” continued Macdonald, “McGovern himself carried a small load.” In rounding out the story of the American’s adventure and his own involvement, the Trade Agent explained as follows:

Several weeks had passed since the Buddhist Mission had left Tibet when I was informed that Dr. McGovern had reentered Sikkim, and all trace of him had been lost. It was presumed that he would attempt to reach Lhasa, and orders were issued to stop him if he came to Gyantse or Yatung, or at any other point on the main Indo-Lhasa trade route between the two towns. McGovern, however, avoided these marts. Later, when he passed through Yatung from Lhasa, he told me the tale of his experiences.¹⁰⁷

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The Tibetan officers who had come from Lhasa had by this time (in 1923) completed their tenure of training after having been at Gyantse for the space of about two years. On several occasions they suggested, even encouraged, Tharchin to begin a school at Lhasa for the general public welfare. They promised every possible assistance for the establishment of such an educational institution. In commenting about these officers and their hopes for such a school in the Tibetan capital, David Macdonald wrote: “They were so well satisfied with their progress” in their private studies with the Headmaster “that these officers, their military

training in Gyantse over, persuaded Tharchin to return with them to Lhasa, so that they could continue their studies there."¹⁰⁸

Encouragement to Tharchin along this line came from another though quite unexpected quarter. Just about this time Major (later Lieutenant Colonel) Frederick (Eric) Bailey (1882-1967), at that period the Political Officer for Sikkim, Tibet, and Bhutan, came to Gyantse. He had assumed this sensitive office in 1921. Born the son of a Lieutenant Colonel in the Indian Army, and a member of the Indian Political Department from 1905, he was made a C.I.E. in 1915 in recognition of his invaluable discoveries in exploration. Bailey, read one of his obituaries in 1967, was "a man of many parts," excelling in such numerous capacities as soldier, explorer, naturalist, diplomat, intelligence officer and linguist.¹⁰⁹ Portrayed by his close friend, George Taylor, as "an unassuming man of handsome appearance and military bearing," the Political Officer normally "spoke in a soft voice," "was modest and gentle mannered, with immense charm and persuasiveness," and possessed "a fine sense of humor" that earned him the nickname of Hatter. "Although he sometimes defied authority," a friend acknowledged, the results of Bailey's actions "usually justified his resolve";¹¹⁰ though as will be learned shortly, in the mid-1920s he made a colossal error in judgment in not so much defying as ignoring that authority altogether when it came to his actions in Tibet involving one particular episode in Anglo-Tibetan relations.

As a noted explorer and traveler, the Major had participated in some extraordinary ventures, not least of which had been the Rawling Expedition between Gyantse and Simla that had brought him and his party through Tharchin's home village of Poo decades before and which was recounted in Chapter 3 of the present work's first volume. Having spent many years in Tibet and the northeastern border areas of India, Bailey may in fact be one of the few individuals in the world—whether from the East or West—who has viewed the entire length of the mighty Tsangpo River in Tibet, from its source near the Sacred Lake in the far west to where it leaves the Land of Snows and eventually becomes the expansive Brahmaputra in India's extreme Northeast.¹¹¹ This had taken place in 1913, the consequence of which for geographical knowledge was, in the view of Charles Allen, that Bailey and his fellow explorer Henry Morshead had "effectively settled the last doubts about the exact course of the Tsangpo."¹¹² *No Passport to Tibet* (1957) was Bailey's personal account of this feat that has been described as one of the longest and most remarkable journeys of exploration ever undertaken on foot in the twentieth century.

But perhaps an even more exciting and certainly more colorful adventure awaited him after his active military service in Mesopotamia during the Great European War of 1914-18. For in the late summer of 1918 Bailey, in the words of one historian, went

on a highly adventurous journey to Tashkent in Russian Turkestan, which the Bolsheviks were trying to bring under their control. In order to evade imprisonment and possible execution, Bailey, disguised as an Albanian deserter from the Serbian Army, audaciously enlisted himself in the Soviet Secret Service, remained at large in Turkestan for many months and finally made his way out through Bokhara to Meshed in Persia in January 1920.¹¹³

The story of this extraordinary adventure is told at length in Colonel Bailey's own book, *Mission to Tashkent* (1946), as well as in Sir Fitzroy Maclean's *A Person from England*. It should be noted that twice he visited Lhasa: in 1904 as a member of the famed Younghusband Expedition, and in 1924, the very next year following Tharchin's encounter with him here in

Gyantse. On this latter visit to Lhasa, the Major “was well received by the Dalai Lama,” having become “a personal friend” of His Holiness, “with whom he could converse freely.”¹¹⁴

Had the God-King on Tibet’s Lion Throne known, however, what his British guest had been up to behind the scenes back at the Residency in Sikkim, he would not have welcomed him in the least; in fact, it is extremely doubtful the British Political Officer would have even been permitted to step foot inside Tibet, let alone inside the Tibetan capital. For as the next several chapters of the present narrative will intimate in greater detail, it is strongly believed by one or more recent historians on Tibet, who have meticulously researched the matter, that for nearly a year prior to his arrival at the Tibetan capital in mid-July 1924 Bailey had been clandestinely directing a plot from Gangtok, in association with the Tibetan military at Lhasa, to overthrow the Dalai Lama and his court and place Tibet’s temporal power in the hands of the country’s Army Chief, Tsarong II. So secret had his plotting been that for the longest time Bailey—one of Britain’s most renowned secret agents, and who by virtue of his present position as Political Officer was able to tightly control the reporting of events and to conceal evidence—had successfully kept any knowledge of its existence from even his political superiors in both Delhi and London.

Nevertheless, the planning and plotting proved of no avail, the coup attempt having petered out following a series of unforeseen events at the Tibetan capital during May 1924 that ultimately overwhelmed the Lhasan participants in the plot. But as historian Alex McKay has observed, no real proof of *Bailey’s* involvement prior to these unfavorable May events would have been available to His Holiness just two short months later when he and the Political Officer, as alluded to above, had held cordial conversations together on various state matters. Several years would need to elapse, McKay notes, “before versions of events began to emerge publicly.” As these details commenced to surface, however, the Dalai Lama “must have gradually come to suspect that Bailey had been involved.” It turned out to be a monumental miscalculation on the part of this otherwise astute, talented frontier officer in having misjudged the strength of the conservative opposition in the country and, more importantly, where Tsarong’s deepest and truest loyalties ultimately lay: *with* and not against his longtime benefactor, His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Now when the chronology of events surrounding Bailey’s alleged clandestine activities are taken into account, one is better able to understand his interaction with Gergan Dorje Tharchin at Gyantse. Thanks to McKay’s recent research, it is now known that by the time of the Political Officer’s visit at Gyantse during the late summer of 1923, plans for the coup were already taking shape in Bailey’s mind if not yet in the mind of his soon-to-be agent at Lhasa, Sonam Wangfel Laden-La, Darjeeling’s celebrated Police Inspector. Having been dispatched to the Tibetan capital by the Political Officer, Laden-La would depart Darjeeling Town on 27 August¹¹⁵ bound for Lhasa where he would do Bailey’s bidding by establishing contacts with the Tibetan military—especially its younger officers—and where gradually he would commence to encourage and assist in the implementation of the attempted coup.¹¹⁶ Well aware of Tharchin’s close friendship and language tutorial activity with four of Tsarong’s key young Army officers, Bailey, not surprisingly, would prove to be most accommodating towards Tharchin, once his initial fears concerning the Headmaster’s Christian activities had been removed (see below). In particular, the Political Officer would prove most

accommodating towards Tharchin's proposed plan to open another Western-style school, this time at the Tibetan capital. Bailey probably viewed the school's establishment as that which could contribute further to the Dalai Lama's program of modernization and to the progressive faction's hoped-for orientation of the country towards the outside world. These latter developments, Bailey believed, could aid in tying Tibet more closely to British India, thus advancing British interests in the entire region *vis-à-vis* what this experienced "forward school" frontier officer had come to perceive as a growing challenge in Central Asia from Bolshevik Russia. Bailey also may have considered Tharchin's current involvement with these officers at Gyantse and his future association with them at Lhasa as possibly useful in some way in helping to ensure the success of the plot.

Though the four officers were probably at *this* moment completely oblivious to the plot's existence, most likely at least three of them, as would many other officers already in Lhasa, would eventually become privy to it sometime after their arrival with Tharchin at the Tibetan capital the following month. The Headmaster, however, would probably never have knowledge of Bailey's involvement in the plot, nor would he become aware of the coup attempt itself until sometime after its failure and the resultant punishments flowing from its discovery had been meted out upon its known and suspected Tibetan participants. It will be learned at the end of the next chapter that three of the latter would turn out to be three of Dorje Tharchin's four officer friends. All this, though, lay in the future following Bailey's visit to Gyantse and his interesting interaction with Gergan Tharchin.

Now during this visit at Gyantse the Political Officer was quite positive when he heard about the future school plan for Lhasa and about a proposed visit by Tharchin himself to the Tibetan capital. But it may be recalled from a few pages earlier that prior to his current visit to Gyantse the Political Officer had questioned reports he had received at Gangtok concerning the Christian character of the Tibetan's school that was only now allayed when upon asking Tharchin face to face "about his teaching methods" Bailey "received an open reply" from the Headmaster "and did not make any disapproving remarks." Apparently the Political Officer was reassured by Tharchin's explanation that no objection or opposition had arisen from any of the Tibetans themselves—lay *or* clerical. The Indo-Tibetan "then asked for the favor, and received the authorization, to go to Lhasa and further teach the officers."^{*}

Then, too, Major Bailey was very surprised but happy when Tharchin recalled the Officer's one-time visit to his home village of Poo so many years ago. At that time, of course, the Headmaster was a mere adolescent youth of fourteen and Bailey but a Lieutenant and only eight years older than the Tibetan at that! The revival of old memories such as this and other aspects of that long-ago event had an electrifying effect on the stern-looking Political Officer with whom the young Headmaster at Gyantse was now reminiscing; and for a moment the British officer relented. His heretofore stony attitude—no doubt a result of his earlier suspicions about the Gyantse teacher's Christian activities at his school—was completely changed by this reminiscence, and he instantly became warm and friendly towards Tharchin.¹¹⁷ Happily commenting on the Headmaster's proposed trip to the fabled capital of Tibet, the Major was

^{*} This exchange is, once again, as confided by Tharchin to Fr. Hosten in his conversation with Hosten in 1925 at Darjeeling, and is recounted in summary fashion by Pfister in *Die Legende Sundar Singhs*, 215.

heard to say to him: “Be sure to teach the students horse polo at Lhasa!” For anyone who might have known the British officer during his younger days at Gyantse where off and on between 1905 and 1909 he served as Trade Agent, such a statement now would have come as no surprise. Bailey in those earlier days, noted his biographer, was only too glad “to find that members of the escort to the trade agency were organizing games of polo on shaggy little Tibetan ponies.”¹¹⁸



It will be learned in the next chapter that Tharchin, while revisiting Gyantse on his return journey back to Kalimpong from Lhasa in early 1924, felt impelled for various reasons to close down his school. Unquestionably, the primary reason for this action was the news from both Lhasa and London that as a result of joint efforts by the Tibetan and British governments a new school that would admit boys of twelve to twenty years of age was to be opened in 1923 at Gyantse and was already in session when the Tibetan Headmaster arrived back in Gyantse.* Long before this, of course, Tharchin had already heard of this new development; for in a brief biographical sketch of his early life that couched in the third person he had written decades later, the Tibetan educator had noted that “before his departure [to Lhasa from Gyantse], he had understood that an English school would be opened at Gyantse by the Tibet government ...”¹¹⁹ Moreover, as early as July 1922—at the height of his teaching experience at Gyantse—there had appeared a brief article in the London *Times* entitled, “An English School for Tibetans,” which read:

A notable indication of the realization on the part of the Tibetan authorities that the permanent isolation of their country from modern influences is impossible is afforded by the decision of the Lhasa government to start a school on English lines in Tibet for the education of the sons of officials.

The boys will be given a sound education in both English and Tibetan. The Headmaster probably will be an Englishman, and an assistant master will be selected from the educational service in India. At first the number of boys will be small—perhaps not more than about thirty—but the school will expand as time goes on, and the boys will be kept at school for terms ranging from five to eight years, according to requirements, and afterwards will be sent to European schools in the Indian hill stations. The school is to be at Gyantse, where there is a British Trade Agent, and there will be an opportunity to mix with a few English people.¹²⁰

More than likely, Tharchin had even been apprised of this information about the English school nearly a year earlier. It must be mentioned that Sir Charles Bell, who had officially retired in March of 1919 as British Political Officer in Sikkim (and hence for Tibetan affairs

* That this was indeed the primary reason for Tharchin to shut down his own institution of learning is made very clear from the information about this matter which the Tibetan had shared with Fr. Hosten at Darjeeling: “The school was not closed at the order of the Tibetan authorities, but as a consequence of the competition of a British government school” at Gyantse. Thus did Swiss pastor Pfister summarize this part of Hosten’s report of his conversation with Tharchin which the Catholic priest had shortly afterwards communicated to Pfister who then published it in *ibid.*, 211.

as well), was asked by the Government of India a year later to return to public service one final time to head up a diplomatic mission to Lhasa that required him to be there almost a year. The Government of India, alarmed by the news of the arrival at the Tibetan capital in January 1920 of China's Kansu Provincial Mission, called Bell back from retirement to accept the Dalai Lama's longstanding invitation to be his guest at Lhasa.¹²¹ He was accompanied to the Forbidden City by Trade Agent Macdonald who, however, did not stay long at the Tibetan capital—he only being there about a month from late December 1920.* While at Lhasa Bell saw a great deal of the Tibetan ruler and other Government officials, to whom he personally made several proposals for their consideration. One of these concerned “the establishment of an English school for the sons of leading Tibetans—to be opened at Gyantse; and moved later on, if desirable, to Lhasa.”

This proposal of Bell's had not just then been conceived freshly in his mind at Lhasa; on the contrary, he had been pushing the idea ever since he had attended the lengthy Conference proceedings held at Simla and Delhi between October 1913 and April 1914 among Great Britain, China and Tibet that had been convened to settle the political position of Tibet and which resulted in the so-called Simla Convention of 1914. While in attendance, he had conversed with Tibet's Prime Minister (Lönchen Shatra) and other leading Tibetan officials about the idea of establishing such a school in Tibet as a small yet prudent means among others of ending the Snowy Land's isolation from the rest of the world. Bell had long recognized, as stated in one of his studies on Tibet, that the upper-class Tibetans “were averse” to “sending their boys and girls to schools in India for an education, and wished to see a school established at Gyantse or even in Lhasa itself.” Yet interestingly enough, all with whom he was to discuss the matter from 1913 onwards “insisted that the Headmaster should be British.” This included not only Lönchen Shatra but also all whom Bell would now be conferring with at Lhasa on this and other matters of state.

Now it so happened that as the diplomatic mission was returning from the Tibetan capital to India during October of 1921 Bell and his party made an overnight stop outside Gyantse at the estate of his good friend Raja Taring, the father of Jigme, one of Tharchin's students. Bell would have also made an even longer stop for his caravan at the British Trade Agency headquarters in Gyantse itself before proceeding onward to the Himalayan passes on the Tibeto-Sikkimese frontier, which he at last reached in November.¹²² And hence, the Tibetan Headmaster, himself having arrived a month earlier at Gyantse, would have heard something of what had been decided but not yet officially announced from those nations' capitals concerned.

This assumption can be asserted with certainty since not only had the Tibetan from Kalimpong heard of this decision, as noted already above, he had even applied for the post of Assistant Master in this new educational center. This is known not only from Tharchin's

* Macdonald had been privately invited by Political Officer Bell to join him at the Tibetan capital for Christmas 1920, but without having requested permission from Delhi to do so. Hence, because the Indian government was reluctant at this sensitive period in Anglo-Tibetan relations to allow very many officials to visit Lhasa, Delhi, upon discovering where Macdonald was, ordered him back to Yatung. Before departing Lhasa, however, the Trade Agent was able to have several meetings with the Dalai Lama, talks which no doubt furthered the Bell agenda, one item of which included the establishment of an English school in Tibet. Alex McKay, *Tibet and the British Raj*, 68.

end-of-life “memoirs” but also from his reported talks with Catholic priest Hosten at Darjeeling a year or so after the event. For after explaining to Fr. Hosten how there was to be a new Government-established school at Gyantse “for Tibetan young people, under a European teacher and his assistant,” the Tibetan Headmaster had gone on to add that when the Political Officer for Tibet had arrived at Gyantse, he had immediately “applied for the [assistant] position with the Government school to be founded . . .” God, it appeared, had other plans for Gergan Tharchin, however, since the latter now “received the answer” from Major Bailey that he had requested the position “one month too late.”* The Political Officer went on to remark to him, “You applied for the teaching post, but it has already been given to a teacher from Darjeeling. In the future we shall keep your application in mind.” With no sting in his words at all Tharchin reacted to this development by saying, though somewhat hyperbolically: “I helped to open their eyes to the need of education and the necessity of establishing a school in Gyantse.”

Now it is known from the brief biographical sketch of Tharchin’s alluded to earlier that this Darjeeling teacher was a Tibetan, for in his sketch the Gyantse Headmaster, after noting that “he [Tharchin] had applied for the Tibetan Assistant Teacher,” added that “it was too late, as the post had already been filled by an English-knowing Tibetan from Darjeeling.”¹²³ Although the identity of this teacher from Darjeeling cannot with absolute certainty be determined, it was most likely Khenrab Wangchuk, who was seven years younger than Tharchin. As a matter of fact, he would later become Abbot of the very same Gyantse Monastery mentioned earlier whose lamas had put interesting questions to Tharchin concerning his Christian faith. Khenrab Wangchuk had apparently been sent to Darjeeling for either further education or to receive a teaching post there, or both. In any case, when once the Headmaster, Frank Ludlow (1885-1972), had been selected for the new school,¹²⁴ Wangchuk had also been chosen to serve as the Tibetan Assistant Master to handle the younger-aged classes.

Possessing a three-year contract with the Tibetan government, Ludlow would arrive at Gyantse in October of 1923, a month after Tharchin would depart the town and head northward for Lhasa with his Tibetan officer friends. And though the British Headmaster was most eager to start the school, it would require several months to make the necessary furniture and assemble sufficient students to begin classes. Yet even when the school did open officially in December, only thirteen boys presented themselves for schooling—well below the originally anticipated enrollment, although the number would eventually double. Further disappointing news came when in less than a year into the school’s operation, in August of the following year, Ludlow began hearing rumors that the school would close down! That would not be the end of bad news, however. Alex McKay, who gained access to the British Headmaster’s personal diary, has summarized part of what he found in it concerning the conduct of some of the students which was cause for shock to Ludlow a mere month later:

September brought further shocks. One of his pupils turned out to be a stand-in whom the parents of the real pupil were paying to fill-in for their son. Two other pupils, aged 14 and 15,

* See Pfister, *ibid.*, 215.

were found to be suffering from venereal diseases. When Ludlow proposed expelling them, the Tibetan authorities told him that if he did, "other boys will voluntarily get these diseases in order to escape being sent to school."

Tharchin's friend, David Macdonald, has devoted extensive space in his autobiography to this school, providing an informative and interesting profile of its founding, its teachers, its daily schedule, and—its ultimate demise. In contrast to the earlier and less pretentious institution founded by the humble scholar from Poo, it would seem that this Government school had less success in its endeavors overall than Tharchin obviously had had in his private facility. Macdonald writes:

... [This] school at Gyantse [established] in 1923 [was] for the sons of the Tibetan officials and wealthy landowners. The school was opened with forty Tibetan youngsters [an obvious discrepancy here with Ludlow's own figure cited above], whose families had received orders from the Dalai Lama to send their sons for education. Most of the lads came from Lhasa, and were accommodated in the paper factory, and the dak bungalow was lent for classrooms, pending the erection of suitable buildings by the Tibetan government.

The first, and only, Headmaster was Mr. F. Ludlow, a member of the Indian Educational Service, who was lent to the Tibetan government, which undertook to pay his salary.... Eventually the new school buildings were erected, close to the paper factory. As far as was possible, Mr. Ludlow endeavored to organize his school on the lines of an English public school, but from the beginning there was constant friction between the English head and the Tibetan master, the latter having been appointed by the Tibetan government without consulting Mr. Ludlow....

Mr. Ludlow was enthusiastic about the venture, and his one thought was for his boys. So as not to tire his pupils he would not allow them to study long at one subject. The Tibetan master thought nothing of keeping the boys working for seven hours at their Tibetan lessons. In Tibetan schools it is usual to keep the pupils constantly at work from dawn to dusk, with the result that the boys and girls detest their school. At Gyantse games formed an important item in the curriculum, as Mr. Ludlow wished to create in his young charges an early appreciation of the team spirit. This noble aim met with considerable resistance, for the lads were required to attend Tibetan classes for several hours after their games, which resulted in fatigue and poor work the next day. Eventually a compromise was arrived at, by which the boys should study English in the mornings, and Tibetan in the afternoons up till four o'clock, after which they were to be free for organized games. After dusk, not more than two hours were to be spent in study.

Unfortunately, this government-sponsored school for the sons of aristocratic and middle-class Tibetan families had to be closed three years later (at the end of 1926), but not before at least Doring Thaiji, if none other of Tharchin's officer friends did so, had had the opportunity of attending the Ludlow school. Apart from other, more official reasons put forward by the Tibetan government for abandoning the project, Macdonald identified the following additional explanations for the school's early demise: (i) the parents were opposed to sending their sons so far away from home; (ii) the lamas were against the school because they reasoned that if there was a division in the use of the boys' time between English and Tibetan they would not learn either language properly; and (iii) the Tibetan government was unable to maintain regular payment of the Headmaster's salary.* Macdonald ended his discussion by commenting,

* Alex McKay's research has uncovered the fact that during the school's operation, the British Headmaster had discovered why the Dalai Lama's personal representative at Gyantse, the Kenchen (or Khenchung) Lama,

in a note of finality, as follows: “There is no likelihood of this school being reopened.” Long afterwards, incidentally, Tibet’s current ruling Dalai Lama, the Fourteenth, would comment critically about this school’s failure, but tinged with extreme regretfulness: “The obstacles to . . . modernization were created by narrow-minded people. This was something the Thirteenth Dalai Lama fought against all his life. The failure of his attempt to establish a British school is something very regrettable.” Indeed, if his several attempts to increase Tibet’s modern educational opportunities “had continued,” he remarked on another occasion, “I think the Chinese would have found it more difficult to invade Tibet” in 1950.

Yet in reality, behind all the apparent reasons noted above for the school’s closing at Gyantse lay the virulent opposition of the conservative ecclesiastical establishment that was so deeply entrenched in power and privilege within the country. The well-known modern Tibetan historian W. D. Shakabpa has explained, for example, that the shutting down of the British school was “because of objections from the monastic groups, who felt that it would prove harmful to the religion.” Furthermore, the monks, as another historian, Bina Roy Burman, has pointed out, had a near monopoly on education in Tibet and therefore felt that this English school at Gyantse was a serious encroachment on their rights. Even more to the point, Dr. Tsewang Y. Pemba, a Tibetan whose childhood education in the 1930s had been received at Yatung and Lhasa, was wont to observe the following:

For a long long time the monks opposed any modern influence in Tibet. The reason for this is obvious. The power of the monks depended upon their grip on the mind of the country. The reins of education and knowledge were in their hands. So long as this lasted the people would not question the religious teachings of the monks. In the ways and the knowledge of the modern world they saw the seeds of destruction. Modern knowledge was something pernicious, something that could tear away the twin pillars on which they based their power and security, ignorance and superstition. The monks were clever, and knew that revolutions were not the only things that produced changes in the world. Things can be wholly altered by seemingly paltry happenings. Something trivial and innocent that is new may contain the seeds of future revolutions. They knew what the thin end of the wedge was.

Nevertheless, although the conservative monastic community was indeed opposed to the school, they would probably not have taken the step they ultimately did of pressuring the Government to shut down the Gyantse school had not the Chinese bribed and instigated powerful ecclesiastics at Lhasa to do so as a way of cleverly exploiting the situation to their own national advantage. Certainly there was ample evidence of the existence at this time of

Lobsang Jungne, who also was the Tibetan Trade Agent there, was so implacably opposed to the school. Explains McKay: “Ludlow discovered that the Tibetan administrator had good reason to want the school to fail. The Lhasa government, lacking the funds necessary for investment in such projects, had instructed the Kenchen to pay for the school himself [including, no doubt, the Headmaster’s monthly salary!] and he wanted it to close so he could take over the school buildings.” In fact, Ludlow confided to his diary at the time that he laid most of the blame for the school’s demise at the feet of the Kenchen (although historical scholarship since that time has shown this to have been but one of several factors contributing to the school’s closing). First describing the Kenchen in his diary as “a cunning fox with pro-Chinese tendencies,” Ludlow added this biting observation: “He knows I hate him, [and] I know he hates me.” See McKay, *Tibet and the British Raj*, 117. And for additional information about the Kenchen Lama, see Chapter 19 of the present volume.

a pro-Chinese, anti-British party in Tibet on the one hand, and of a pro-British party on the other. William McGovern, the American earlier mentioned as having reached Lhasa in disguise in early 1923, had noticed this pervasive division of loyalties at the Tibetan capital and of the Chinese-Tibetan priestly connection just now alluded to. For in his book on his Tibetan travels published the following year he wrote:

The country is sharply divided into two actively partisan groups. One is the court cabinet and is supported by a considerable portion of the lay nobility and of the peasantry. The other, represented by the [*Tsongdu*—the] so-called National Assembly, is largely composed of [monks—] the nominees of the priests of the three large monasteries in the vicinity of Lhasa. Both these parties are largely autocratic, but the priestly party is by far the more reactionary [whose steady policy it has been to check the Dalai Lama and Tsarong Shape in their efforts at reform and reorganization]. The court party consists largely of persons who have dwelt long enough abroad to absorb new ideas and is comparatively progressive.... The court party is pro-British, while the priestly party is strongly anti-British and pro-Chinese.*

Now the possibility of Chinese interference in the Gyantse school situation was asserted by one Tibetan scholar, Dawa Norbu, who wrote that it was said “that Chinese bribed the abbots of Drepung, Sera and Ganden monasteries” which were located in the vicinity of Lhasa “to force the Tibetan government to close down the school.” And in a much earlier writing of his, Norbu had categorically stated this: “No sooner were the two English schools opened, one at Gyantse and the other at Lhasa, than they had to be closed down. Disguised as monk-scholars, Chinese and Russian spies used to stay at the Lhasa monasteries and spread the rumor that any Western influence (presumably Christianity) would be detrimental to the Buddhist *Dharma*. Under their influence the Lhasa monks compelled the government to close these primary schools.”

As a final commentary on the demise of the Ludlow school at Gyantse, David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson made a telling observation, that though written in hindsight was without any doubt quite true:

* This portion of McGovern's volume on his surreptitious travels in Tibet especially nettled British India's frontier officers like Major Bailey. “Any evidence,” writes Alex McKay, “suggesting that any Tibetans, particularly in Lhasa, in any way favored the Chinese rather than the British was always denigrated.” So “criminal” from their perspective was this and other claims made by McGovern that Political Officer Bailey requested the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society to arrange for that Society's prestigious Journal to publish “as strong an attack on McGovern's reliability and reputation as was legally possible.” Adds McKay, subsequent references to McGovern by various members of the British frontier cadre “were inevitably derogatory.” Nevertheless, much, if not most, of the observations made by the American scholar in his book and articles on his experience in Tibet have proven to be valid and/or accurate, including the one quoted in the Text above concerning divided loyalties at Lhasa; and this, despite Hugh Richardson's expressed opinion that “descriptions of this or that official as ‘pro-British,’ [or] ‘pro-Chinese,’ [are] too facile: the only thing the Tibetans have been ‘pro’ is the preservation of their Religious State.” See McKay, *Tibet and the British Raj*, 106, 115 for all the above details and quoted material. The present author says “despite” here in regard to Richardson's comment, for as R.D. Taring (Mary La) once observed about her “father” and ex-husband, Tsarong Shape II, he was without question pro-British but only because he was even more so pro-Tibet!—more than likely signifying that General Tsarong saw closer ties with British India as that “alliance” above all other possible ones available to the Tibetans which in his view could best ensure the preservation of Tibet as a viable entity. Much the same could probably be said about other leading individuals in Government and/or Buddhist Church at the Tibetan capital.

If that school ... had continued to develop, there would have been available in the 1940s and thereafter a number of Tibetans able to understand the thoughts and ways of the non-Tibetan world, and come to terms with them on their own ground. Now, when they were needed as never before, such men did not exist or were so rare as to be totally discounted. The [world] war years provided the Tibetan government the last opportunity to make its case for independence known to the outside world, but through the sheer force of past circumstances it just did not possess the human means for establishing the necessary contacts. Seldom can the law of *karma*, the inevitable effects of past actions, have operated with such terrible transparency.

But it was left to the British Headmaster of the Gyantse school himself to offer up what unquestionably was the most searing judgment ever expressed on the closing of this educational institution; it was quite prophetic as well. Warned Ludlow in his diary at that moment: the Tibetans “will regret this decision one day when they are Chinese slaves once more, as they assuredly will be.”¹²⁵



As it turned out, Gyantse was not to see another school opened in its precincts until some ten or twelve years later, when after having established a Chinese primary school at Lhasa in 1937, the Chinese Nationalist government, through its Commission for Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs, and with the apparent acquiescence of the Lhasan government, set up a second primary school at Gyantse. The time was probably sometime in the very late 1930s or very early 1940s. Both these schools had been founded for educating the children of mixed Chinese and Tibetan parentage; in fact, in early July 1937 Tharchin had written to Sir Charles Bell from Lhasa indicating that in this Lhasa school there were already between 60 and 70 half-Chinese, half-Tibetan students enrolled, all of them studying the Chinese and Tibetan languages;¹²⁶ both, however, would have a none too long existence, being terminated in July of 1949 and their teachers deported back to China in the face of the impending Communist triumph over the Nationalists in China.¹²⁷ Interestingly enough, though, in yet another letter to Bell from the Tibetan capital, this one in late July 1937, Tharchin would intimate that in his judgment “an English school was badly needed in Lhasa or at Gyantse.” Indeed, “all the officers [officials?] ... are very anxious to learn English and they asked me to start a private school in Lhasa and they would send their sons to study.” He went on to frankly admit, however, that he himself might not “be able to do so unless” he obtained “some help from someone.” Tharchin countered instead with an alternative proposal. It would “be very good for Tibet,” he stated, if someone else, having “a good and strong character” and knowing both English and Tibetan, could secure “some help privately” from elsewhere and establish “a private school in Lhasa.” But he made it clear that the person “must be loyal to our Government [of India]”; if so, he concluded, “I think he could do a lot of good for both Governments.”¹²⁸ Unfortunately, nothing of any consequence along this line ever materialized either at the Tibetan capital or at Gyantse.

Not until the academic year of 1955/56 did Gyantse see another school opened, once again by the Chinese. This was when the new masters of Tibet, the Chinese Communists,

established an institution created ostensibly to teach its pupils to read and write Tibetan. But according to the school's faculty head and teacher of Tibetan grammar and poetics, its real purpose was "to indoctrinate Tibetan youth in Communism."¹²⁹ Ironically, three years later, this same "headmaster," Lama Losang Khyongla by name, was befriended in Kalimpong when a refugee by none other than one of his Gyantse predecessors, Gergan Tharchin! And coincidentally as well, they both then went on to serve Dalai Lama XIV as participants in refugee educational work at the Grand Lama's exile headquarters in Mussoorie, Northwest India.¹³⁰

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Dorje Tharchin's mind and heart now looked forward to Lhasa and whatever would await him there. Upon "entrusting" the school he had founded at Gyantse to the "charge" of Habbu, his Assistant Teacher,¹³¹ Tharchin, along with the four Tibetan officers, left the town in the first week of September (1923) bound for the City of the Gods and the Vatican of Tibetan Buddhism.

* This Communist strategy would not change one iota over the next decades. For by 1990 it could still be reported that "the main aim of education in Tibet seems to be to Sinocize the Tibetan population and indoctrinate them with political dogma." What has grown even worse since the mid-1950s has been the further denigration of the Tibetan language to the point where "the written language has almost disappeared and in many places spoken Tibetan cannot be understood"! Paul Ingram additionally explains that Chinese is now the official language in Tibet which thus "discriminates against Tibetans in every sphere of life." Promises which were made by Tibet's Communist masters in 1988 that from July of the following year onward Tibetan would be employed throughout China's artificially constructed Tibet Autonomous Region were never fulfilled. While teaching of Tibetan has been permitted in some village schools the best schools have continued to employ Chinese as the medium of instruction. In any case, Ingram concludes, there is today "little incentive to study Tibetan as no jobs are available unless one is well versed in Chinese." *Tibet: the Facts; a Report Prepared ... for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights* (1990), 39.

C H A P T E R 15

First Visit to Tibet (Concl'd): Finding a Wife in the Sacred City of Lhasa

He looked for the city which hath the foundations,
whose architect and maker is God.

Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth
favor of the Lord.

Hebrews 11:10 mgn; Proverbs 18:22

DURING THE FIRST WEEK of September (1923) Dorje Tharchin left Gyantse on the forward journey to the sacred city of Lhasa some 155 miles away to the northeast. In terms of travel time it would require a minimum of seven days by horseback to reach Tibet's ancient capital. "Lhasa," wrote one distinguished Tibetan, "is by no means the only city or town in Tibet, yet in Tibet, as in the world outside, to hear people talk you would think that Lhasa *was* Tibet. It is the one place that every Tibetan yearns to see at least once before he dies. Many [pilgrims] walk over a thousand miles across snow-covered mountains and windswept plateaus to fulfill their desire, and many die in the attempt. They die happily, for they believe that the effort to achieve a goal is almost as important as the goal itself, or its achievement—in some ways more so. I was no exception, and in fact Lhasa was the first city I ever saw, apart from the monastic city of Kumbum where I was educated, [a three-month's caravan trek away]."¹

So wrote Thubten-Jigme Norbu, the eldest brother of the current Dalai Lama and himself a former Abbot of one of the most important temples within the famed Kumbum Monastery in East Tibet. Now though Dorje Tharchin was by no means a pilgrim in the Tibetan Buddhist sense of that term just described, he nevertheless was a Tibetan by race, and it was only natural that this true son of Tibet would wish, like all others, to gaze upon this legendary city of his ethnic homeland. He was not unlike the famed explorer, Sven Hedin, who twice wrote to a friend who had achieved what he was never able to do, that Lhasa had always been "the destination of my old dreams.... You have reached the city of my dreams."² Said Tharchin, upon achieving his goal: "This was a real answer to my prayers for years. For this I thank the Lord from the inner core of my being." For many years he had longed to see Lhasa,³ the "hermetically closed capital of Tibet" (as Sven Hedin was wont to describe it), the city about which he had read and heard so much.

Perhaps he had read, for example, the book by Isabel Robson published in 1909 in which the authoress had waxed philosophical about sacred cities and the significance such places have played in the fortunes of nations and their religions. And not surprisingly, Lhasa had been chosen as one such sacred community to illustrate her point. "It has been said," noted Robson,

that in the history of all great nations of the earth and of their religions, it is commonly found that their fortunes and aspirations are held to be interwoven with the possession of a stronghold symbolic of their power, a sacred city which, so long as they can guard it faithfully, is as it were an invincible talisman against the downfall of their fortunes. Towards it all the religious and

patriotic feeling of the race converges, and it remains a source of strength and inspiration. So Mecca symbolized the purity of the Mahommedan faith; so Jerusalem of old united the races of the Jews; so Lhasa enshrines the mysteries of Lamaism, and in its invasion by foreigners Tibetans have always seen some foreshadowing of disaster, a menace to their faith.⁴

And perhaps musings of this sort may have indeed occupied Tharchin's mind while eagerly traveling towards the object of his journey, the city whose foundations had been laid by Tibet's first great so-called Religious King more than thirteen centuries before.

Moreover, as he drew nearer to the Mecca of Lamaism, Tharchin must have witnessed along the roadway scenes similar to that which Sir Charles Bell had witnessed as he, too, just two short years before, had traveled along this same route. One such scene was of many pilgrims who were going and returning. Some whom Bell had seen had covered every inch of the way by having prostrated themselves onto the ground and then moved forward in unforgettable fashion. Describing afterwards what he saw, Sir Charles wrote:

Lying on his face the pilgrim makes a mark with his fingers a little beyond his head. Rising, he brings his feet to this point and again, muttering a prayer, prostrates himself. We met a Mongolian pilgrim who was traveling thus from Lhasa to the Yambu Chorten, a sacred Buddhist shrine near Kathmandu, a distance of some 700 miles. He had already been three and a half months on the road, and would take at least two years more to reach the goal of his pilgrimage. Slabs of wood were fastened to his hands to prevent them from being torn to shreds on the stony ground. Pilgrims from eastern Tibet, seeking the sacred lake of Manasarowar in western Tibet, have been known to traverse 2000 miles in this manner, a journey which takes them from seven to ten years.

Perhaps some of our party, more than three-fourths of whom were Buddhists, were inclined to envy these pilgrims on account of the amount of religious merit which they were amassing by these mortifications of the flesh. But we were entitled to consider that we too were not entirely without religious merit. We had come to Lhasa ... over the high Tibetan passes and tablelands.⁵

But so, also, had Gergan Tharchin, who now must surely have been overjoyed at the first sight of the ancient community, whose very name had become synonymous with Forbidden City. Like those first visitors of 1904 from British India on the Younghusband Mission, he must have felt the urge, upon his first glimpse of it, to exclaim with unabashed fervor, as some of them did: "Here at last was the object of our dreams!—the long-sought, mysterious Hermit City, the Rome of Central Asia, with the residence of its famous priest-god—and it did not disappoint us!"⁶ Its glittering roofs in the far-off distance—especially the gleaming golden ones of the Potala Palace that is deemed by some to be a display of the Tibetans' highest architectural skill—must have lifted Tharchin's thoughts to even more sublime heights as is often the case when one encounters such an object of supreme artistry. As a matter of fact, upon his first glimpse of this unique hilltop palace, Perceval Landon, special correspondent on assignment with the Younghusband Expedition, was moved to hail the Potala as "a new glory added to the known architecture of the world."⁷ And Thomas Manning, one of only three Westerners to have visited the Forbidden City during the entire nineteenth century, readily acknowledged what "a magnificent effect" the Potala, "a majestic mountain of a building," had had upon him when there in 1811.⁸

Sublimity does indeed exert its intrinsic elevating effect upon the human soul which is thereby lifted upward into the realms of purity and truth. In the words of Edmund Candler, another of the Younghusband Mission's special correspondents, who telegraphed to the *London Daily Mail* from Lhasa in 1904 his impressions of this awesome sight: "The Potala surpassed the greatest expectations. The golden domes shone in the sun like tongues of fire, and they must strike with awe and veneration the hearts of pilgrims from the barren tablelands."⁹ And though himself no pilgrim from the barren Tibetan tablelands, Perceval Landon, quoted from earlier, when traveling towards the Rome of Central Asia, could not contain himself when later he described the tense anticipation which he and the other members of the Younghusband Expedition exhibited in straining to be the very first to behold from a distance the Potala's roof:

The hour teemed with a fierce interest of a kind no man will perhaps ever feel again.... Here there was to be seen a gleam of gold in the far distance, and we thought that Lhasa was at last in sight.... [But] we had to possess our souls in patience.

However, when Landon finally did glimpse in all its splendor the Palace of the Tibetan God-Kings, he was overwhelmed by the extraordinary panoply. Indeed, wrote one chronicler of Landon's reactions, for him it was nothing less than "a numinous event." "The light waves of mirage dissolving impalpably," exclaimed the *Times* correspondent, "just shook the far outlines of the golden roofs...." They stood forth, he declared, as an "image of that ancient and mysterious faith which has found its last and fullest expression beneath the golden canopies of Lhasa." And at this supreme moment, beamed Landon, "life seemed very full."¹⁰ But then, too, Frederick Spencer-Chapman, who saw the unusual structure that is the Potala for the first time in 1936, was likewise deeply affected by the sublime quality of its appearance. "In common with the few unquestionably perfect buildings of the world," he mused, "it has some transcendent quality derived neither from the inspired skill of some master builder or craftsman, nor from its historical association, nor from the fact that it is the cynosure of innumerable religious devotees." On the contrary, the transcendent quality which Spencer-Chapman saw in the building was derived instead from what he was wont to call its "divine excellence."¹¹ Be that as it may, for the lowly Tibetan from Poo there doubtless welled up within him similar elevating impressions as he, too, caught his first glimpse of the majestic edifice, whose Sanskrit name itself means "High Heavenly Realm."¹²

This winter palace of the Tibetan kings was unquestionably a breathtaking sight to behold, especially if one approached the city of Lhasa from the same direction as had Tharchin. C. Suydam Cutting, the Trustee of the American Museum of Natural History in New York and who was well-acquainted with many of the world's architectural wonders, had nothing but the highest praise to heap upon the Potala as he himself neared the Tibetan capital along the same route that Tharchin had traveled. Recalling that moment when in 1935 he too had had the joy of witnessing for the first time the Residence of the Divine Kings of Tibet, Cutting described the unfolding scene before him as follows:

Finally a bend in the long valley brought into view the great Potala, seven miles away. Few cities, in fact, offer such a dramatic approach as Lhasa, with the Potala looming out of the blue and enticing distance. It was indeed an awe-inspiring sight. Just as Shigatse is dominated by

the Lamasery of Trashilhunpo, so Lhasa is by the Potala; but of the two the latter is by far the more beautiful. It is indeed devastating to behold; and the spectacle increases as one approaches. Towering above the city, supreme now and forever, it is possibly the most magnificent building in the world, including the Taj Mahal. Although it has general shape only, with no balance of its component parts, it seems to wear better on intimate scrutiny. What a building, and by full moon! Its architecture, purely Tibetan, reminds one definitely of no other style.... It could make one dream of ancient Persepolis, for perhaps this is what Darius might have lived in. There is room for much delightful speculation.¹³

But in the opinion of two other visitors from the West the Potala holds its viewers in its spell not only as they approach the city but ever afterwards as well upon entering through Lhasa's Western Gate. Said Major Laurence Waddell, after seeing it for the first time in 1904: "From first to last, from far and near, this imposing pile on Potala Hill dominates the landscape and catches and holds the eye. Wherever else we might direct our gaze for a time, we invariably found our eyes involuntarily returning to this towering mass and resting on its fascinating outlines." And declared Lowell Thomas, Jr., who with his famed American father visited the Tibetan capital in 1949, the winter palace is truly "the real spectacle in Lhasa." "You cannot be in the city for a moment," he observed, "without feeling its perpetual presence." For "when you enter the city gates you do what everybody does—you look first at the Potala, up at its white walls, its red upper stories, its multitude of windows. From then on the Potala dominates your attention as long as you stay."¹⁴ In fact, during his stay at Lhasa in 1904, correspondent Landon had wired his employer at the British capital, the *Times*, to say that this monumental building "would dominate London" even as "Lhasa itself is almost eclipsed by it"; while his fellow correspondent at the Tibetan capital, Candler of the *Daily Mail*, asserted with equal confidence that the Potala was "not a palace on a hill, but a hill that is also a palace"¹⁵

Without any question, this incredible structure—"built in the colossal monastic style of Central Tibet"—must indeed be classed as one of the Wonders of the World; and only because Tibet had until recently been so successful in keeping Westerners from traversing her frontiers has it not even yet today received the recognition which the Potala so undeniably deserves. It was Major General (later Lieutenant General) Sir Philip Neame, visiting the Tibetan capital in 1936 as military adviser to a Mission to Lhasa that year, who unabashedly recalled years afterwards in his memoirs that "the Potala is, to my mind, one of the wonders of the modern world. I say so, without exaggeration. It is a majestic building—immense, strong, impressive—standing on a great whale-backed, cliff-like hill, rising sheer from the 11,000-foot Lhasa plain. With its stark lines, immensely tall sloping walls, battered and buttressed, rows of hundreds of openings and windows, and the shining, golden pagoda roofs on top of all, standing up in the crystal air of these uplands of Central Asia, the whole thing is unique and purely Tibetan, with no likeness to anything else in the world."¹⁶

Constructed in its present form some three hundred years ago, the Potala at Lhasa had largely been built by the Fifth Dalai Lama, who chose a site on which previously there had been a fortress-residence belonging to the early kings of Tibet but which had been destroyed by the Mongols during one of their invasions. When Dalai Lama V had first begun construction of the Potala in 1641, huge stones had been carried to the site by donkeys or on the backs of men and women—one stone per person lashed to the back with yak thongs; then to be hewn

by skilled masons—but without the benefit of any technical devices—into a gigantic edifice which now rose sheer right out of the rocks. The faithful were willing to do all this heavy labor, and without payment, for and in the name of their living god. But when in 1682 the Great Fifth suddenly died, there was fear that the work would remain unfinished. The Regent at the time, Sang-gye Gyatso, who could not depend on the people's loyalty to himself to complete this challenging task, kept the news of the Grand Lama's death away from them. First announcing that the Dalai Lama was seriously ill and then that he had gone into isolation to meditate, this Regent's deception was to continue on for nearly ten years until the Potala was indeed successfully completed! It required a total of fifty years to construct.

Eventually the Palace contained a monastery with five hundred monks (whose duty it was to pray for the welfare and long life of the Dalai Lama), a College of Statecraft (School of Civil Service), the Treasury, the National Assembly, a State prison, the mausoleums of previous Dalai Lamas (located at the summit of the Potala, with golden pagoda-like shrines covering these tombs), the nation's archives, the personal treasury of successive Dalai Lamas, the private quarters of His Holiness to be found in the main, central portion called the "Red Palace," and the Throne Room. It is also said to have more than a thousand rooms, ten thousand altars and two hundred thousand statues! Indeed, the story has been told of how the current Fourteenth Dalai Lama's Court Chamberlain, Phala, needed a full fifteen minutes to walk from his own living quarters in the vast Potala to the Grand Lama's private apartments! So vast, in fact, is the Potala that even the Fourteenth Pontiff, after having lived in it for years, was wont to confess that he himself "could never know all its secrets."¹⁷

This magnificent architectural gem, 600 feet in height, stands atop 400-foot-high Red Hill against the backdrop of distant snowcapped mountains; and hence the golden roof of the Potala gleams in the sunlight some 900 feet up from the ground level—an elevation, incidentally, that is two-thirds the height of the Empire State Building in New York City! Moreover, the length of the Palace is an imposing 900 feet, with its width somewhat less if one does not include the massive staircases which extend at the front of the building down the side of the hill. The bulk of the Potala appeared so tremendous, in fact, that one Western visitor to Lhasa, when contemplating its "Cyclopean" dimensions and mentally comparing its size to the other great palaces of the world, concluded with a slight tinge of humor that "Spain's Escorial or England's Windsor are small shacks compared to the stupendous Vatican of the Buddhist world."¹⁸ Yet as one writer has observed, though the Potala appears to be one single building, it actually consists of several that nonetheless have been perfectly blended into one magnificent structure.¹⁹

Once a year, if possible, the Tibetans freshly whitewash most of the walls (that is, the massive wings of this the world's largest palace);²⁰ but in the upper central stories which comprise what had been the early central portion of the structure where the royal chapels, shrines and chortens are situated (and appropriately called the "Red Palace"), the walls are of crimson color, signifying their special sanctity. (This is a color which absorbs heat in the winter and sheds it in the summer.)²¹ Even so, what enhances the natural appearance of the entire edifice is the peculiar characteristic of the windows: they are wider at the bottom than at the top, "so that the higher one raised one's eyes," noted Noel Barber, "the more the building seemed to recede" to a height more immense than it actually possessed.²²

Yet in the opinion of Thomas what strikes the viewer most about this physical spectacle “is the perfect union of the Potala and its setting,” because until one draws closer “it is very difficult to tell exactly where the hill ends and the building begins.” This feature was in keeping with Tibetan architecture as a whole, one that as Rosemary Tung has remarked “blends with the landscape in a way not often found among other cultures.” Tibetans, she observed, saw their world as a whole, and “their aim was to keep it organic and harmonious”²³—a concept no better realized and no more magnificently displayed than in the majestic castle of Buddha’s Vice-Regent on earth. For in the words of Spencer-Chapman, “The Potala gives the impression not of having been built by man but of having grown there, so perfectly does it fit in with its surroundings.”²⁴ As Thomas pointed out, however, this illusion “is accentuated by the inward slope of the walls, which seem to be an extension of the hill tapering towards its summit.” But no hilltop, exulted the American visitor, “ever gleamed with pure gold!”²⁵ With such a sight as this before him of the dazzling Potala and the rest of the fabled city, Dorje Tharchin must assuredly have felt moved beyond telling.



The towering Potala may have indeed dazzled the eyes of the low-born Tibetan from Poo as he neared the goal of his lifelong dreams of one day beholding the fabled Abode of the Gods; yet to be completely frank in the telling, one must acknowledge that there was also a dark side to the Tibetan capital which, by its centuries-long build-up of mystery caused in part by its own willful and determined isolation, was little known or reported to the outside world.* “If,” wrote Edmund Candler in 1905, “one approached within a league of Lhasa,

* In this connection, it is worth noting here what P. Christiaan Klieger has observed in his review article of Peter Bishop’s book, *The Myth of Shangri-La* (Berkeley, 1989). The book is a seminal study of the minds of those Westerners who during the past 200 years have written on Lhasa and on Tibet as a whole. Klieger agreed, first of all, with Bishop’s conclusion that there has been an incredible “distortion” of truth in much of this writing. This has been due in large part to the formation of a Shangri-La image in the mind of the West on account of the oft-surreal presentations in Western writing on Tibet.

But then the reviewer went on to point out that this creation of Shangri-La in Western Tibetan writing had “not been without Tibetan cooperation.” It is Klieger’s view that at certain periods in their history Tibetans have consciously presented an image of themselves which “corresponds to a perceived projection of Shangri-La anticipated” by Westerners. And hence, Klieger might argue that Tibet’s strict isolation during much of the country’s recent history could be construed—in part at least—as a Tibetan response to this perceived notion in the imagination of the West; namely, that Tibetans only “exist by the grace of Western fantasy—noble savages who are unable to exist in the glare of an encroaching modern world.” As a possible reflection of this feared inability for Tibetans to exist *vis-à-vis* an encroaching modern world, Sir Basil Gould, one of the last British Political Officers for Tibet, has been quoted as having declared, in the presence of Gergan Tharchin at Lhasa when both were there in 1940 on the occasion of the most recent Dalai Lama’s enthronement as Priest-King of Tibet, that “all the Powers ought to keep Tibet as a museum for the world.” Letter, Tharchin to Gould, Kalimpong, 7 July 1950, ThPaK.

It is Klieger’s contention that because living cultures like the Tibetan one constantly change, “a more complete understanding of the sacralization and imprinting of Tibet in the Western mind” ought to include “a thorough discussion of inter-cultural dynamics”—something which is absent in Bishop’s otherwise highly commendable volume. Tibetan culture, he adds, “was not created *sui generis in vacuo*.” See Klieger, “The Tibet That Never Was,” *TR* (June 1990):19-20.

saw the glittering domes of the Potala, and then turned back without entering the precincts, one might still imagine it an enchanted city." But once the traveler crossed the threshold of its Western Gate, as Tharchin himself was about to do, and passed along its main thoroughfare, he would find himself, in Peter Fleming's starkly worded phrase, "surrounded by a nauseous squalor." For the capital city of Tibet's ancient Priest-Kings was nothing short of "an insanitary slum."

In his full account of the British Expedition of 1904 Fleming went on to describe what the members of the invasion army found upon their entrance into the holy territory of the Vatican of Tibetan Buddhism. "In the pitted streets," he wrote, "pools of rainwater and piles of refuse disrupted the march-discipline of the British Fusiliers. The houses were mean and filthy, the stench pervasive. Pigs and ravens competed for nameless delicacies in open sewers." Even Candler, despite a special place he had in his heart towards Tibetans, had to acknowledge that the Sacred City of Tibet possessed little in it which would appear attractive to anyone from the West. Duplicating Fleming's observations almost totally, the British journalist was compelled to report the following: "We found the city squalid and filthy beyond description, undrained and unpaved. Not a single house looked clean or cared for. The streets after rain are nothing but pools of stagnant water frequented by pigs and dogs searching for refuse." As a matter of fact, Thomas Manning's own verdict on the condition of the City of the Gods, delivered up some ninety-odd years earlier, would reveal by comparison with what has just been said that the state of the Tibetan capital had little improved during the long interval:

There is nothing striking, nothing pleasing, in Lhasa's appearance. The habitations are begrimed with smut and dirt. The avenues are full of dogs, some growling and gnawing on bits of hide that lie about in profusion, and emit a charnel-house smell; others limping and looking livid; others ulcerated; others starved and dying, and pecked at by ravens; some dead and preyed upon. In short, everything seems mean and gloomy, and excites the idea of something unreal.

Yet not only Occidentals were put off by the squalid and unsanitary state of this most sacred city of Mahayana Buddhism. Even a well-known Oriental from Japan, the celebrated monk Ekai Kawaguchi, was likewise appalled, as when there in 1901 he witnessed both men and women defecating publicly into open cisterns. So appalled was he by Lhasa's squalor that he entitled a chapter in his book of travels into Tibet and to Lhasa as "A Metropolis of Filth"!

But there was a further facet to the "shadow side" of the Tibetan capital and, by extension, to the entire Land of Monks and Monasteries which, whether apprehended correctly or not, greatly offended the sensibilities of most Western writers on Tibet at this time. In 1903, for example, the French explorer Fernand Grenard, in his book on Tibet published that year, succinctly pinpointed the matter for his readers when he wrote that "the Lhasa government is not a tender one."²⁶ By which he meant that though a sacred city, the Tibetan capital, for all its supposed spirituality, represented in his mind, to borrow a phrase from Peter Bishop, "the center of a dictatorial police state." In Lhasa the Mysterious and the rest of the Forbidden Land, outsiders firmly believed, one could discern numerous and perplexing contradictions which with apparent ease co-existed there. Explains Bishop:

Here was to be found a mix of confused filth and imposed order; childlike innocence and also petulance; ignorance and ancient wisdom; sexual chaos (polyandry, polygamy, monogamy co-existing) and monastic renunciation; benign governance with cruelty; a center of repression alongside a source of creative, spiritual, vitality.... [In sum, there was a] split between monastic wealth and power on the one hand, and the pure, sublime essence of Buddhism on the other.²⁷

Yet leaving aside, of course, the opinions of Kawaguchi, it is the view of Jamyang Norbu that the various Western, especially British, accounts of Tibet, such as those quoted from already, had purposely “played up” this darker side of the Tibetan capital, as well as the country’s general backwardness, peasant ignorance and monkish fanaticism. It is Norbu’s belief that just like present-day Communist Chinese propaganda to some extent, such accounts, particularly by the British, served as “a contrived moral justification for the armed invasion of a peaceful neighboring country.” Because of the particular political climate at the time, it was apparently felt necessary by these writers to do this even though it would be “at the expense of the ... romance, adventure and mystery” about Tibet which they and many other Westerners had quite willingly believed and embraced for a very long time. But once the land had appropriately yielded “to imperial supremacy,” writes Norbu, Western reporting on Tibet, especially by the British, “seemed to take on a more congenial tone.” Contributing to this, admittedly, was the increasing information now available about Tibet and the sympathetic writings of knowledgeable colonial officials such as Sir Charles Bell. Nevertheless, adds Norbu, “the fantastic, magical elements never quite disappeared.”²⁸

One person, however, who refused to be taken in by this lingering nostalgia and romance regarding Tibet long after 1904, would give voice once again, to a more candid, realistic view about Lhasa upon seeing the Tibetan capital for himself in 1922. For just a year before Tharchin’s visit to the sacred city, General George Pereira, whom the Tibetan schoolmaster had met at Gyantse, was most glad to depart its precincts, deeming the Mecca of the Lamaist World to be a rank disappointment as the conclusion to his monumental trek from far-off Peking. Other than remarking favorably in his diary on the splendors of the Potala and “the very nice villa” which had been provided him as his temporary residence, the General, echoing the sentiments of other Western travelers before and after him, could only pronounce the Divine Abode on earth “a rather dirty city” indeed.²⁹ He had still more unfavorable comments to make about Lhasa upon his arrival at Gyantse not long afterwards, where not only Tharchin had met him but also the Tibetan schoolmaster’s nemesis there, George Knight, the leader of the so-called British Buddhist Mission. Knight recorded in fulsome detail what the General had to say concerning the City of the Gods which the Buddhist Mission members had themselves, ironically, so much sought to visit but had been denied the privilege (except, of course, William McGovern’s surreptitious visit). The General’s report on the Tibetan capital was far from flattering. “Pereira was not very favorably impressed by Lhasa,” wrote Knight,

and he could not understand those people who have weaved a web of romance, quite unwarranted, round the capital. As a matter of fact, there is little doubt that he was happy to turn his back upon the city. He was not to be envied, he told us, for having visited Lhasa, one of the least interesting places he had seen. What struck the General about the place was its filth! After two or three days, he said, it began to pall, he felt confined, he loved the free and

open-air life of the country, he could not understand why men live in monasteries, twirling prayer wheels and counting their beads. The General was a Roman Catholic. He was fond of shooting.... What gave the capital of Tibet its romance? Possibly its inaccessibility, coupled with the fact that the traveler has to traverse the most glorious mountains in the world to reach it. But Romance, no, it is not to be found in Lhasa! So thought Pereira.*³⁰

* Peter Bishop has perhaps gone a long way in explaining what perplexed General Pereira so much about those who have indeed portrayed Lhasa and the Land of Snows as possessing an aura of romance about them that, in the General's words, is "quite unwarranted." Unlike much of the Western writings on Tibet during the past two centuries, the four Western writers just now quoted from above had not hesitated to describe for their readers aspects of the Sacred City which were most *unromantic* in character. Yet their observations and sentiments would have to wait some little while before they would be echoed in such analyses as are found in Edward Said's book, *Orientalism* (published 1979 and described below) and more recently still Peter Bishop in his volume published a decade later and cited already in the footnote immediately above. Far from romanticizing Lhasa to the exclusion of its seamier aspects, Pereira and the others had told it like it was, warts and all.

As one reviewer of Bishop's book has written, in that author's psycho-social analysis of the phenomenology and history of the "seemingly endless caravan of slick, contemporary Western accounts" of Tibet's land, people and culture, Bishop has implied that the "distortion" which has often accompanied these accounts by various travel writers, adventurers, missionaries and mercenaries has not been due necessarily to "bad scholarship." Rather, and more significantly, it has been because "surreal presentations of Tibet have been perpetuated by literary paradigms which favor a view of Tibet that is hidden, mysterious, and forbidden": necessary elements, of course, for creating romance. As a matter of fact, writes Klieger the reviewer, in Bishop's analysis—which is concerned primarily with the creation of Tibet in the minds of Westerners—the author has found that what was created of Tibet in their imagination was "a mythical landscape" which was at once "forbidden, lost, occulted." The remote Land of Snows has therefore existed in the Western mind more often than not "as a vision of the last link between the modern world and the civilization of the ancients." It is the opinion of Bishop—and readily documented in his work—that "two centuries of travel writing on Tibet tell as much, if not more, about Western *fantasies* than they do about a *literal* Tibet" (p. 8, emphasis added).

Far from Lhasa—and Tibet in general—having been a genuine culture of romance, the West's obsessive imagination about it, representing, as it has, what the reviewer has described as "the dreams and aspirations of particular Western eras," was "transformed through the very act of traveling to Tibet into 'truth'." Indeed, Klieger continued, over time "Tibet and the outside world" came to correspond "to such categories as sacred/profane and natural/civilized." And just as it has been with the British in their discovery of Tibet in the late 18th century, so, by the following century, "the Russians, French, Italians, and other expansionistic Western powers were to create their own mythical versions of Tibet." Quotations, as noted, have been taken from Bishop's book, *The Myth of Shangri-La*, and more particularly from Klieger, "The Tibet That Never Was" (book review), *TJ* (June 1990):19-20. See also a more recent writing by Bishop on this same general theme but more from the perspective of western perceptions of the palace of the Tibetan God-Kings: "The Potala and Western Place Making," *TJ* (Summer 1994):5-22.

Continuing in this same vein of Klieger's and Bishop's that goes to debunk much of what Westerners in their writings during the 18th and 19th centuries and much of the 20th have imagined Tibet as having been, Donald Lopez, Jr. has noticed and traced what has occurred in the *late* 20th century. This Tibetan and Buddhist Studies Professor at the University of Michigan first describes for his readers the heritage of "Orientalism" as documented by Edward Said in his now famous study referred to above and defined by him as an Occidental—i.e., a European—technique by both scholars in Europe and colonial officials in Asia to acquire authority over the Orient and thereby control Orientals both epistemologically and politically, they speaking for and representing the Orient because, they sincerely believe, the Orient was incapable of doing so for itself. This very kind of thinking, in fact, may have been what in part had prompted colonial official Gould to have said what he declared at Lhasa in 1940 that was quoted in the preceding footnote; namely, that "all the Powers ought to keep Tibet as a museum for the world."

But Professor Lopez then proceeds step by step to trace the emergence during the last three or four decades of the 20th century of a variety of new myths about Tibet that have come to be espoused by an increasing number of Western devotees of Tibetan Buddhist culture which are highly romanticized portrayals of a traditional

There was no doubt that at this time the Snowy Land known as Tibet had had about it “a symbolic value in the Western mind” that had extended “way beyond any experiential reality.” Her longtime diplomatic isolation and physical inaccessibility, adds Patrick French, had indeed helped the legend of romance to develop. Closed to all but a comparatively few representatives of the outside world, “fantastic tales,” he explains, had multiplied in the imagination of much of the West: stories—some true, some not—of “flying yogis, peculiar tortures, polyandrous practices, lecherous lamas, rare jewels, strange reincarnations, excrement pills, astral projection and even (myth of all myths) no wheels—except the prayer wheel of course.” At the beginning of the twentieth century, and for a long time thereafter, asserts French, the Roof of the World had “represented the ultimate in pure, virgin territory.”

Few public figures of the time were willing to acknowledge this land’s “symbolic lure” and to explode “the glamor of the myth.” There was one, however, a Liberal politician in London, who, French discovered from his research, was willing to do so. For in December 1903 Sir Henry Cotton gave an interview with the London *Daily Mail*, the result of which, notes French, “stirred up a hornet’s nest of imperial outrage” for having questioned the motives for the soon-to-be-realized Younghusband Expedition’s entry into Tibet and its military advance upon its capital. He had been to India, said Cotton, and while there he had become keenly aware of numerous young men

to whom the glamor of the Forbidden City was irresistible, to whom the romance attaching to the unknown formed the great temptation of their lives, and whose curiosity to trample out the

Tibetan society of the past that like the much earlier myths are for the most part grounded in gross misperceptions of Tibetan cultural and political history. Here are some of those at which Lopez takes gentle but needful critical aim: (1) that the lineage of the plethora of autochthonous Tibetan Buddhist literature, made widely available to Western universities as a result of the Tibetan diaspora following the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet and heretofore unstudied, can be traced back to the Buddha himself; (2) that the corollary to this claim is also true, namely, that Tibetan Buddhism is itself the original and pristine Buddhism; (3) that the pre-1950 Tibet had been a land free from all strife ruled by a benevolent Dalai Lama; (4) that this pre-1950 Tibet had been an ideal society devoted to the practice of the Buddha Dharma; (5) that its people had been devoted to the preservation of the environment and that therefore it “was a kind of ecological paradise” where animals ran free without fear of the hunter and where mining was prohibited to avoid disturbing the earth spirits; (6) that this same pre-1950 nation had needed no police force since her citizens were voluntary observers of karma’s laws; and (7) that pre-1950 Tibet had been a society “where a peasant boy could become a great lama through the workings of an ‘inner democracy’.” See Lopez, “The New Age Orientalism: the Case of Tibet,” *TR* (May 1994):16-20; cf. his later larger work, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, 1-13. This needful debunking of many of these myths, especially those mentioned in numbers (4) through (6), has begun to be addressed by other scholars; e.g., cf. Toni Huber’s fine article in *TJ* (Autumn 1991):63-77, entitled “Traditional Environmental Protectionism in Tibet Reconsidered.” In his various reconsiderations, Huber points out the glaring discrepancy between the ideal and the real in relation to the issues of mining, the hunting and killing of animals, and certain deficient human aspects of the Tibetan social system—all of which, in his scholarly opinion, goes a long way in demonstrating that Tibet was far from constituting an “environmentally friendly” pre-modern society. For some further de-mythologizing, cf. also Jamyang Norbu’s fine article, “Tibet in Film, Fiction and Fantasy of the West,” *TR* (Jan. 1998):18-23. And for one very plausible explanation of what and where might have been the inspiration for James Hilton’s *Lost Horizon* novel of the 1930s which had coined the term “Shangri-la,” see Wu Jiachun’s article that appeared in *China Daily*, 16 Oct. 1998, and was reprinted as “Shangri-la Revisited” in *TR* (Nov 1998):25. In the article the author states that many researchers have speculated that Hilton’s novel had been inspired by the Viennese-born American Joseph F. Rock’s series of ten articles on China’s Yunnan Province which had appeared in *National Geographic* between 1924 and 1935, accompanied by scores of exotic photographs.

secrets of the Grand Lama's palace was only one degree less burdensome than their desire to go simply for the fun of knocking the stiff-necked old exclusivist off his perch and humbling him before their "march of civilization" merely because he just chose to be exclusive.

Many letters to the *Daily Mail* denounced Sir Henry's views but a raw nerve had clearly been touched, for there had undeniably existed a "romance attaching to the unknown" that had for long gripped the British public's imagination. And even though many of the publications which almost immediately followed upon the invasion of Tibet attempted to uncover the "magic and mystery" of the World's Roof (those now well-known volumes entitled, for example, *Lhasa and Its Mysteries*, *Tibet the Mysterious* and *The Unveiling of Lhasa*), such so-called unveiling did little to destroy the "web of romance" which over the centuries had enveloped the land.

Far from eliminating the myth, wonder and mystery, the latter continued to flourish even to the very end of the twentieth century; thus cutting short John Buchan's expression of disappointment when he had confessed in his book *The Last Secrets* (London, 1923): "It was impossible for the least sentimental to avoid a certain regret for the drawing back of that curtain which had meant so much to the imagination of mankind ... With the unveiling of Lhasa fell the last stronghold of the older romance." Throughout the decades since the Younghusband Mission's penetration to Lhasa, "countless traveling writers," French accurately points out, "have continued ostensibly to uncover, discover and unveil this island in the sky." And so, the mystique of Tibet and its people has lingered on.³¹



Be all this as it may, however, the teacher from Kalimpong now accompanied the Tibetan officials who had previously come to Gyantse for undergoing military training but who today, with its completion, were returning to Lhasa, the military as well as political headquarters of the Tibetan government. And as they were nearing the capital the military officials first went straight to the Norbu Lingka (meaning "Garden of Jewels"), the summer palace of His Holiness the Dalai Lama³² a mile or so southwest of the winter palace and outside the city's limits, to pay their respects to him. This was the usual custom—nay, almost a requirement—for all government and military officials to perform upon returning to the Tibetan capital. As temporal ruler of Tibet and spiritual head of Tibetan Buddhism, the Dalai Lama is unique among all earthly rulers in that he is chosen when discovered and identified as the rebirth of the previous Dalai Lama. Although fourteen Dalai Lamas have been recorded in Tibetan history, their followers deem them all as one Dalai Lama reincarnated in fourteen bodies.

In addition to being a secular and spiritual ruler, the Dalai Lama is revered by Tibetans for a third reason: he is their protector, the manifestation and presence on earth of Chenrezi (*sPyan ras gzigs* in Tibetan; to the Hindus he is Padmapani, and in Sanskrit he is Avalokita Ishvara), the Tibetan Buddhist personification of divine mercy, compassion and grace and, as was learned in the previous chapter, the one deemed by the Tibetans to be the founder of

their race. This thus upholds the ancient tradition that affirms that this patron deity descends periodically to the Land of Snows for the specific purpose of watching over the spiritual destinies of its inhabitants. And he does this by personally selecting one among its people, namely, the Dalai Lama, to carry out his mission of salvation; in other words, the mission of what Tibetan Buddhists call a Bodhisattva: one who, having achieved the threshold of eternal bliss, nonetheless chooses to reenter the wheel of life by means of constant reincarnations that he might assist others to attain perfection.³³ And hence, Tibetans believe that “whereas the physical body changes” from one Dalai Lama to the next, “the essential deity of compassion remains.” Now since, as one writer on Tibet’s rulers has observed, the Dalai Lama manifests an active spirit or being that is dedicated to the salvation of all sentient beings from the wheel of suffering, he is involved in both temporal and spiritual affairs of men; and thus, writes George Woodcock, the Dalai Lama represents the combining of religion and state, “theocracy in its purest terms,” although this explanation, he adds, can be no more than approximate since even among Tibetans themselves “there are many subtly varying views of the exact nature and function of a Dalai Lama.”

Now as one of those most highly revered in Mahayana Buddhism (that branch of Indian Buddhism, it will be recalled, which became the faith of Tibetans), Chenrezi—by means of his manifestation through the Dalai Lama as a Bodhisattva—“renounces the opportunity of vanishing into indefinable *nirvana*; so that by taking human form and undergoing birth, death, all the vicissitudes mankind is subject to, he may illumine with words and example the creatures he protects, and thus swiftly lead them to that state of spiritual perfection which assures them paradise or liberation, within the bounds of their ability, keenness and *karma*.”

But after a Dalai Lama’s death—which, for the above reasons, “is justified as an accommodation to the human lot, since men are susceptible only to a teacher who divests himself of any transcendent character and goes through the same life as themselves”—the patron deity returns to his heavenly home to determine “in what place, family and condition he should be reborn.” (In fact, the Dalai Lama may be found in any family, regardless of social rank; indeed, if there be any democratic element to Tibet’s theocracy, it is this very point: that any male child, no matter how lowly his birth, has the possibility of becoming the ruler of his land and people; and interestingly enough, most of the Tibetan pontiffs, including the two greatest ones, the Fifth and the Thirteenth, were born into poor families; accordingly, there has developed no hereditary ruling family, and measures have continually been taken to prohibit relatives of the ruling Dalai Lama from obtaining too much power.) Here, then, can be seen a fresh repetition of the event told of in the story of Gautama Buddha himself, when, according to the legend, before being incarnated as the son of his father Suddhodana at his birthplace of Lumbini, “he cast his gaze over the world eight times to determine where he should descend.” It thus reproduces a pattern “to which faith and scriptural authority give the status of dogma” among the Tibetan people.

It is for this third reason, therefore, that titles such as The All-Knowing Presence (or simply The Presence), The Precious Sovereign, The Precious Protector, The Inmost Protector, The Powerful Ruler, The Holy One, The Tender Glory, The Mighty in Speech, Of Excellent Intellect, Of Absolute Wisdom, The Noble One of Soft Voice, The One Without Equal, The

Invincible One, The Holder of the Thunderbolt, and Holding the Doctrine (The Defender of the Faith) are used in Tibet more often than Dalai. Indeed, "it is not for nothing," asserts one writer on Tibetan affairs, "that the Dalai Lama is called by Tibetans: *Kundun*, The Presence. His function in the eyes of his people is not primarily either to teach or even to rule but simply to be *present*. They believe that by his Presence the protective power of the Lord of Mercy is made active in their midst."

Yet the line of Dalai Lamas can be traced back only as far as to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries a.d. and is explained by the Tibetans from their tradition as follows, beginning in the time of the Great Reformer Tsong Khapa who had founded the distinct school of Tibetan Buddhism with which the Dalai Lamas themselves from the very outset have been identified:

Tsong Khapa's closest disciple was Gedun Truppa, the son of stockbreeders from the high plains of western Tibet. Tibetan legend has it that Gedun Truppa's first encounter with the outside world was when a gang of brigands burst into his village one cold night when the place was howling with gales. Gedun Truppa, then a newborn baby, was hidden by his mother behind some stones until the danger had passed. The villagers later found him smiling under the guard of a crow. They concluded that there was something special about the boy.

Such thoughts were justified. The young Truppa displayed a great talent for studying religion and, when his father died, entered a monastery to train as a monk. He was seven years old at the time.

At the age of twenty, Truppa met Tsong Khapa and was tutored in the mysteries of the tantras (Buddhist mystical and magical writings) by his followers.

Gedun Truppa [who long after his death would be designated posthumously as Dalai Lama the First; see below] was to live eighty-three years. On his deathbed, he declared that he would return to continue his work. As his spirit left his body, the physical remains began to glow and turned gold without decomposing.

Some years later, the high dignitaries of the Drepung monastery in Lhasa claimed that Gedun Truppa had returned to them in the body of Gedun Gyamtsho. Gedun Gyamtsho [who likewise would be posthumously declared a Dalai Lama, the Second] lived until 1542 and, one year later, another young monk, Sonam Gyamtsho, was proclaimed the reincarnation of Gedun Truppa [and would have the title of Dalai Lama conferred upon him during his rule; see below]. Sonam Gyamtsho thus marks the official beginning of the Dalai Lama in Tibetan records.

Now as noted above, neither Dalai Lama I (1391-1474) nor Dalai Lama II (1475-1542) was ever referred to by the title of Dalai during his lifetime. It was not until Sonam Gyamtsho, Dalai Lama III (1543-88), that Dalai as title was conferred, and done so by the Mongol Prince Altan Khan who in 1578 had invited him to Mongolia. Whereupon the Lama converted the Khan and his followers to Buddhism and in turn received from the Prince the Mongol title of Talai (written as "Dalai" by others): it being the Mongolian word for "ocean," with Gyamtsho being the Tibetan equivalent. And hence, an appellation meaning "Vast As the Ocean" (in terms of the Lama's wisdom) or "All-Embracing Lama" became the new title of the Grand Lama of Tibetan Buddhism.* The title of Dalai Lama was then extended

* This had all taken place at the ancient Mongolian site known as Huhehota (which in that language means "Blue City") but which has always been known among the Chinese as the town of Suiyan. Tharchin's close friend of a much later day, Hisao Kimura, the Second World War Japanese spy sent to Mongolia and Tibet, has provided a description of the place. For it was there in March of 1941 that he and others began in earnest their study of

posthumously to the Third's two predecessors and later to all of his so-called incarnate successors from Dalai Lama IV (1589-1616) onward, the latter being the great-grandson of Altan Khan and the only non-Tibetan in the long line of Dalai Lamas.

It was the forceful leader Dalai Lama V (1617-82), called "The Great Fifth," who actually became the first spiritual and secular ruler of Tibet in 1642 when he induced the Chinese Mongol Emperor Gushri Khan to capture Tibet from the Dalai Lama's opposing forces and to enthrone the Grand Lama and make a religious present of the land to him. When in Peking, he was indeed acknowledged by the Emperor of China as an independent Sovereign. And it was Dalai Lama V who then held himself to be a god-incarnate, presenting himself as the incarnation of Chenrezi, patron deity of Tibet; and in keeping with this conception of himself, he had set about building the massive palace-temple, the Potala, on one of the two hills that directly overlooked his capital. It was given this name, as explained elsewhere, after the Sanskrit name of the mountain abode of his divine prototype Avalokiteshvara, "The Lord Who Looks Down from On High [with Compassion]." And once moving the Fifth's residence to the Potala from Drepung Monastery which had been erected on the outskirts of Lhasa by his much earlier predecessor Dalai Lama the Second, this more central Lhasa palace-temple has ever afterwards remained the seat of the Tibetan government.³⁴



Now it was only after the four Tibetan officials had paid the customary respects to their supreme ruler at the latter's summer palace of Norbu Lingka that they and their small caravan (with Tharchin accompanying them) could then head for their own residences in Lhasa proper—nearly another hour's journey away. But in order to reach the immediate precincts of the capital one needed to pass through a narrow opening between two hills which stood guard at the western approach to the Secret City and which could be seen some distance away to the west of Lhasa: on the right the smaller and more pointed hill called the Chakpori or Iron Hill, upon which sat "a quaint, square, tower-like building"—the Lama College of Medicine, or Mentsikhang; and on the left, of course, the larger and more rounded

the Mongolian language and culture, although he himself began it even more seriously within the precincts of the Tsagan Tologai-in Khural (or Monastery) of Mongolian Buddhism that of course had originally come from Tibet. He writes (in *Japanese Agent in Tibet*, I, 5-6):

The first and last image was that of space, of endless windblown plains: snow-covered, parched, or brilliant-green depending on the time of year. Away from the borderlands there were no cities at all and what gathering places existed were located in the monasteries, the only permanent dwellings in the grasslands.

... Since all of us were studying Mongolian rather than Chinese it was natural for us to think of the town [to which we had come] not as Suiyan, but to use the Mongolian name of Huhuhota ... Although Mongolians are never really at home in cities, preferring their nomadic encampments or monasteries, this romantic old market town was a good place to begin our studies. There was a feeling of antiquity here, and of a continuity with days gone by. It was not hard to imagine it as the place where a high lama from Tibet had converted the Mongol chieftain Altan Khan to Buddhism in the sixteenth century and received the Mongolian title of ... Dalai Lama in return. The very dust pervading the air seemed to have been there for centuries. [And] ... the Mongolian nomads who camped right outside the town ... were just close enough—as was the escarpment leading to the grasslands—to be mysterious and intriguing.

Marpori (Red) Hill that was surmounted by the many-splendored Potala Palace. So narrow was this opening between these two hills that a huge chorten had easily been placed over it, necessitating travelers, however, to dismount, and people and caravans to pass single file along a tiny roadway running *through* this shrine or stupa. This archway thus formed was the famed Western Gate, whose Pargo Kaling Chorten had been built over a thousand years before. Beneath its gilded spire for these many centuries had coursed the western entranceway into Tibet's Vatican City. This Great Chorten had contained the relics of the Buddha Mindukpa, but the shrine no longer stands today. During the massive shelling of Lhasa perpetrated by the Chinese Communists shortly after the clandestine departure of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama from the capital, the Pargo Kaling Stupa with its ancient archway "was reduced to an anonymous heap of rubble." That was in March of 1959.

For Gergan Tharchin in 1923, however, what a sight lay before his eyes once he filed through the Chorten Gateway! According to William McGovern, who had just left the Fabled City six months before, "a long and magnificent avenue" led the would-be visitor a mile or so farther eastward to the city of Lhasa itself, the main buildings of which could easily be seen looming in the distance. But immediately on the left Tharchin would now come face to face with the gigantic structure of the Potala—covering as it did the entire face of Marpori Hill—and at its base the historic village of Shö. McGovern has described this avenue which Tharchin and his friends now eagerly traversed to reach the latter's residences:

Although, of course, unpaved, the avenue was remarkably pleasant, not only on account of the breadth and evenness of the road but also on account of the park-like pleasure-gardens which lay on either side of it. These pleasure-gardens were private property, partly belonging to the Dalai Lama and partly owned by other aristocratic families, and were separated from the road by high, well-constructed walls; but they were filled with trees, willows mostly, ... which reared their heads high over the walls, [and] lent to the great avenue a remarkable sense of beauty and grace....

A little later the road turned to the right, and we soon came to a canal, which was formerly the main stream of the Kyi River but which is now only a stagnant backwater. But this stream was crossed by a famous bridge, the Yutok-sampa, or Turquoise Bridge, a curious structure which has walls and a roof, making it look like a long corridor. Here there was supposed to be a guard to examine all travelers seeking entrance to the city ... The city proper began some two or three hundred yards farther on and was entered through a low Chinese archway.

Lying well out on the Plain of Lhasa, the capital proper was graced along its southern outskirts by the "Waters of Felicity or Pleasure," the meaning in Tibetan of the river Kyi already mentioned: a major tributary of the Tsangpo, Tibet's principal waterway that in Tibetan means "Purifier" and which becomes the mighty Brahmaputra much farther east.³⁵ Flowing from the north past Lhasa into the Tsangpo farther south, the Kyichu had been well-named, for her waters in those days did indeed bring pleasure and felicity to the Tibetan capital's inhabitants; for besides the avenue-lined trees described earlier, Lhasa was itself surrounded by groves of willow and poplar trees that were well watered by the Kyi. (It must be noted that the entire Lhasa Plain was very marshy, and that at no point did one have to go lower than four or five feet to strike water.) And amid these groves—whether situated along the banks of the river or elsewhere—were to be found several other parks (*ling-ka* in Tibetan) that the local populace, so fond of outdoor life, were eager to frequent. Especially

were these grove-parks popular with both rich and poor for summer picnics, an activity which in the opinion of the American, Charles Cutting, the Lhasans “had raised to the status of a fine art.” For a jaunt into the open would sometimes require ten to twenty servants to carry the food and games and to transport and erect the tents. And once ensconced amid these gaily-colored, beautifully embroidered tents that were set up everywhere in the parks, many days at a time would be spent, wrote Sir Charles Bell, “in singing, dancing, and gambling.” Moreover, between the elaborate meals which would be served, the picnickers might play mahjong, tell stories or walk under the trees. But they would also indulge in one of their favorite pastimes of all: bathing in the nearby river Kyi. In fact, so delightful for the Lhasans were these summer outings that they were wont to term the summer bathing and picnic season *lingka*, the same word in their language for “park” or “garden.”

Many homes of the capital—particularly among citizens of the better class—were large and solid, with flat roofs, and generally with a courtyard formation; they also were whitewashed, and had two or three stories to them, made very often of stone below and, because no brickkilns existed, of sun-dried bricks above. As was customary in most Tibetan towns, the lower level would often be used for sheltering the family’s livestock, although around the Lhasa bazaar area it might accommodate a shop instead. Within the upper story(ies) would be the living quarters and on the flat roof was where such goods as animal feed and fuel would be stored.

Situated as it is on the right bank of the river Kyi some thirty miles east of that stream’s confluence with the Tsangpo, Lhasa lies at an elevation of nearly 12,000 feet above sea level; yet its climate is dry and the latitude is approximately that of Delhi, Cairo in Egypt, and America’s New Orleans. On the eastern side of the city the large Lhasa Plain stretches away for about six miles before it is once again closed in by mountains, as is the case on its western exposure. Occasional manor-houses could be seen dotting the Plain, and through it ran the great caravan route that leads beyond the horizon to distant China and Mongolia. At this time, entrance to Tibet from China was prohibited, but Mongolians were permitted in for pilgrimage to Lhasa; and their caravans were quite recognizable because of the large Mongolian two-humped camels, since in Tibet itself camels are never used. As stated already, on the southern exposure to the capital ran the river Kyi; and on the stream’s other side the Plain continued for another mile or two until it too gave place to mountains, the southern range of east to west hills. And finally, Lhasa’s barren Plain “stretched away desert-like towards a great mountain wall, forbidding and mysterious to the beholder”: the massive range of mountains called the Nyenchentanglha towering upward to nearly 24,000 feet above sea level. The city of Lhasa itself, only half a mile square in olden days, had been surrounded by a wall “in true medieval fashion,” but in Tharchin’s day only small portions of it could still be seen, the rest of it having been destroyed. By the time of Tharchin’s visit, however, the Forbidden City had grown in size to some two miles long east to west and about a mile in length north to south.³⁶

Now even though the sacred city ranked first in size, holiness and importance of all Tibetan communities, its local population in 1923 was most likely no more than had been the case in 1904 when British forces had ever so slightly opened up its “forbidden” precincts to the outside world. Then as well as later Lhasa’s citizenry scarcely numbered more than

20,000 people (about two-thirds of them women, wrote one Britisher), although the number at any given moment might have appeared to be much greater due to the proximity of three large monasteries (which would obviously up the number of males in the city), numerous visitors who continually made their way into the capital from elsewhere in Tibet, as well as the flocks of worshipers who were drawn to its holy shrines and objects from other Lamaist lands. And during the New Year's celebrations the population could easily swell to more than five times as much as in ordinary days, it fairly well exceeding a hundred thousand.³⁷

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Tharchin lodged with Doring Thaiji at the well-known Doring House, the ancestral Lhasan residence of this Tibetan officer's family and that was situated right in the heart of the capital. It is told by Charles Bell that an earlier head of the Doring family had been dismissed from the service of the Tibetan government many years before on the allegation of having been involved in a conspiracy against the Dalai Lama. At the same time, said Bell, he had been degraded in rank, and his best estate, the one near Lhasa, had been confiscated.³⁸ But in the Tibetan capital itself the Doring family was able to maintain the house into which Tharchin had now been welcomed. It was a large mansion of three stories with a central courtyard in the middle. On all four of its sides the Doring House was surrounded by streets or lanes, except on the east, where it overlooked a small square on which, among other things, was located the famed stone Treaty Pillar, described in the previous chapter, on whose columns had been inscribed in both Tibetan and Chinese the text of the peace pact of 821 a.d. between these two Central Asian empires. This four-sided pillar monument, about fourteen feet high, had been erected in that very year to commemorate the event and has stood ever since at this same spot where it can still be seen in Lhasa to this day (although it is now enclosed within protective brick walls, making it nearly inaccessible to the public). It will be of interest to the reader to learn that the word for stone pillar or ancient stone in Tibetan is *rdo-rin* (it can also be translated long stone), and hence this explains how the more common name Doring was derived for the noble house of Gab-shi-wa (*dga'-bzi*)—the other and less well-known personal name for Doring Thaiji's ancestral family, the meaning of which was explained in the previous chapter.

Overhanging this Pillar or Tablet of Unity (as the Treaty Monument is sometimes called) was a large willow tree of very great age and deemed to be thrice holy because of its reputedly having sprung from a hair of Lord Buddha that had been brought and planted here. And thus it is known to the people of Tibet as *Cho* (or *Jo* or *Jowo*) *U-tra*, that is, "The Lord's Hair." Tradition claims that the hair had been personally planted by a Chinese princess as a symbol of friendship between China and Tibet, and the resultant tree is said today to be well over a thousand years old, though the tree nowadays would appear to be dead. As a matter of fact, David Macdonald once reported that in 1924, a year after Tharchin's first visit to Lhasa, the tree had been seriously damaged during a severe storm, losing in the process many of its branches. "The superstitious Tibetans," he wrote in 1932, "took this as

an indication of troublous times to come.” Whereupon the Government made sure that all broken branches were tied back onto the tree and ordered that special religious rites be conducted in every monastery and temple as a means of averting or lessening the oncoming misfortune.*

Beneath this same tree, incidentally, and close by the Treaty Pillar, stood a second dooring, or edict pillar, of stone. This one also had an inscription upon its face, consisting, however, of published regulations governing the segregation of smallpox cases, the terrible disease which through the centuries had ravaged so many at Lhasa. Looked upon by Tibetans as a kind of fetish or talisman, this edict monument had become by the 1920s so badly disfigured, because of the countless small cuts and marks made by those who petitioned for its presumed protective powers, that the pillar’s face had nearly been worn away. Included in the disfigurement of this stele’s face had been the formation over time of numerous concavities as a result of Tibetans having rubbed their heads against its stone “in the hope of magical intervention.”³⁹ These three celebrated objects could not fail to be noticed by Gergan Tharchin during his months-long stay at Doring House.



Nearby to these objects could also be found, in the words of one traveler, “the heaving and bustling bazaar” for which the fabled city of Lhasa was justly famous. The chief street along which the market ran was called the *Barkhor*, which actually was a narrow lane of stalls and shops that circled the city’s central Cathedral-Temple. Because Lhasa was the Tibetan capital, this street naturally attracted goods in huge quantities from far beyond the country’s boundaries. A Western visitor here in 1947, Amaury de Riencourt, has left an incredibly vivid description of this facet of everyday life in the Sacred City of Tibet, which deserves to be quoted. As he himself was led to comment, nothing had really changed about the bazaar in over a thousand years of Tibetan civilization. Here is how Riencourt painted his lively picture of it as during a golden summer visit in Lhasa he witnessed in all its color and vitality a bazaar that could not have been at all different from Dorje Tharchin’s own experience of it some twenty-five years earlier:

* Tibetologist Siegbert Hummel and other scholars on Tibet have confirmed what Macdonald had asserted. Summarizing approvingly what another German scholar, E. Schäfer, had observed, Hummel pointed out that this very tree was supposed to preserve Lhasa’s “good fortune” and thus no one had the right to break its sacred branches. Moreover, should it ever suffer damage in, for example, a lightning storm, “prayer ceremonies were held.” But various scholars, including Hummel, have invested this ancient willow tree with further significance. Hummel first described the ancient three-tiered cosmography of pre-Buddhist shamanistic Tibet that consisted of the earth as the middle region, the sky as the upper realm of the gods, and the underworld as the lower realm dominated by the dangerous lords of the waters and earth. Given this conception of the world, writes Hummel, “the famous willow tree close to the [holiest Lhasa] temple acquires a profound meaning. It is the World Tree related to the shamanic tree, and the pole with umbrellas, found on top of every *stupa* (*mchod rten*). The World Tree represents the Great Willow..., the Royal Willow..., the King of Trees..., the Tree of Life ...—which reaches into the underworld with its roots, into the domain of men with its trunk, and into the sky with its branches.” See Hummel, “The Construction Site of the Lhasa *gTsug lag khang* and Its Cosmological Significance,” *TJ* (Winter 1997):72-3, 77 note 10.

Pots of flowers decorated many windowsills and from protruding and multicolored wooden beams hung cages with many singing birds. The motley crowd of the bazaar was made up of men from the far corners of Central Asia: turbaned Moslems from Kashmir and tarbooshed Turkis from Sinkiang, short and brisk Nepalese, shaven-headed Bhutanese, silk-gowned Chinese traders from Yunnan or Kansu, lanky Mongols and Buriats from Soviet Russia and Mongolia. The variety was just as great among the Tibetans themselves, between the giant Khampas and the small, wild Mishmis and Abhors of the Assam frontier, the filthy Pharisiens [from Phari] and the barbarian Goloks from Amdo, between Tibetans from Tsang and Tibetans from U.

"All roads lead to Lhasa" says a Tibetan proverb. The main street of Lhasa was a living demonstration of it. In this most forbidden city on earth, the last representatives of doomed civilizations meet as they met a thousand years ago and though the bazaar can sell anything now, from Singer sewing machines to cameras and Parker fountain pens, nothing has really changed. Here is still a living past, so alive and powerful in fact, that one doubts if time is anything more than a convenient symbol invented by modern man, that one even doubts if the outside world exists at all.

All the wealth and luxuries of Central Asia were spread out in the bazaar or jealously guarded in dingy shops; leopard, sable, lynx and bear skins; furs and multicolored brocades and silks hanging from the ceiling, colorful cloths, rugs and carpets spread out on tables. Brass lamps and candlesticks, shining bowls and jars were intermingled with delicately chiseled Tibetan furniture. In the food market, bricks of tea brought over from Tachienlu, the great tea center in western China, piled up in the streets. For the first time since I left India I saw baskets full of appetizing fruit: peaches, gooseberries and mulberries. Plenty of perfume and highly worked metal saddlery from Eastern Tibet, carpets from Gyantse, spices, indigo, coral, pearls and brass-work from Nepal, porcelain and silk rugs from China, leather saddlery, coral and amber from Mongolia, sugar-balls, musk and rice from Sikkim, all these highly appreciated goods from the four corners of Asia were displayed for the benefit of wealthy Tibetans. But foreigners who came to exchange these goods could purchase and load their yaks with products for which Tibet is famed: wool and cloth, rugs, furs, drugs, musk, salt and silver. Also amazing quantities of gold from the fabulous goldfields of Central Tibet most of which, reputed to be the richest in the world, have never been seen by the Westerners: Thok Jalung and Thok Daurakpa on the edge of the Chang Tang, Mani Serkha southeast of the Yamdrok Lake, near the sources of the Subansiri River. For religious reasons, nuggets of gold, though plentiful, are carefully left untouched and only gold dust is collected.

Business discussions are violent, and short-tempered customers often appeared ready to choke with rage. Men's pigtailed flew in all directions as they argued back and forth. But as soon as their business deal was completed, jokes and laughter came into their own with the help of large glasses of *chang* at a nearby restaurant.⁴⁰

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But dwelling at Doring Thaiji's residence also placed Tharchin close to another famous site in the fabled city of Lhasa. For just to the east a very short walking distance was to be found the holy cathedral called Tsuglag Khang. Built just before 650 a.d. (though restored and added to since then),⁴¹ this holy site has long been regarded as the center of Tibet from which all the main roads and caravan routes radiated, connecting the Holy See of Tibetan Buddhism to the most distant provinces of the Land of the Lamas and to the lands of the Buddhist world

surrounding Tibet. Commonly known as the Jo-khang because it enshrined an alloy cast of a famous image of Lord Buddha,⁴² it is deemed the most sacred temple of Buddhism in all the land of the Tibetans.⁴³ Believed to be the oldest image of the Buddha in the world, this cast of the Buddhist saint is said to have been modeled from a sacred alloy of five metals (gold, silver, zinc, iron and copper) and “five precious celestial substances” (presumably diamonds, rubies, lapis lazuli, emeralds and *indranila*) during the Buddha’s lifetime while he was ministering his ethical teaching in the Hindu kingdom of Magadha (part of what is today Bihar State) in ancient India,⁴⁴ the land of his birth and personal philosophical development that ultimately gave rise to Buddhism. According to Tibetan tradition, the Jo-khang Cathedral⁴⁵ had been erected by the first Buddhist sovereign of Tibet, the seventh-century Tibetan king Songtsan Gampo,⁴⁶ for the purpose of housing this famed image of Gautama Buddha, thus making the Jo-khang the first place of Buddhist worship ever to be built in Tibet.⁴⁷ The Jo-khang still stands today in the city of Lhasa that had grown up around it.⁴⁸

Now this celebrated statue had been brought to Lhasa as a portion of her dowry by the Princess Wen-ch’eng Kungchu (Mun sheng Kongjo in Tibetan)—said by many to be the daughter, by others a family member—of the Tang Dynasty Emperor T’ao-tsung (and known to Tibetans as Gyasa, the “Chinese wife”), when she had arrived from Peking in 641 to marry the Tibetan king as a means of cementing an alliance between Tibet and China.⁴⁹ The story is told that the Princess had not at all wanted to go to Tibet. When compelled to do so, however, she set off with her Tibetan escorts on the long journey to Lhasa. But upon reaching a high pass just east of Kokonor, Wen-ch’eng, so goes the story, refused to go any farther, for she realized that this pass marked the point of no return. Not to be outmaneuvered by the Princess, her Tibetan escorts said to her that if she indeed wished to return home then her father would have to provide compensation to their King-Emperor: “the sun made in gold and the moon in silver”—their way of informing Gyasa that the only choice she really had was “to weep and cross into Tibet.” As a consequence, this pass has ever since borne the name of Nima Dawa La: “The Pass of the Sun and the Moon.”⁵⁰

Now besides the famed statue of Buddha, Gyasa had also brought with her several volumes of the Buddhist scriptures, along with a few treatises on medicine and astrology.⁵¹ This Chinese princess, together with the King’s first wife, a Nepali princess (see below), are credited with having been responsible for the conversion of Songtsan Gampo to the Buddhist faith and with having therefore brought Buddhism to Tibet.* Now the magnificent image

* Concerning these two princesses and the priceless Buddha statues which they both would bring with them. Dawa Norbu differs in a number of respects with the views of other writers and scholars on Tibet and whose publications have been sourced in the present chapter’s End-Notes. Writes Norbu: “The first recorded event in Sino-Tibetan relations took place around a.d. 635.... Songtsan Gampo married a Chinese princess, Wen-ch’eng, and then a Nepalese princess, besides his three Tibetan wives.... However, Gampo’s was not a politically motivated marriage [to either of the princesses]. The Tibetan chroniclers emphatically state that the king married two foreign princesses in order to get the two most venerable images of Buddha for Tibet.” *Red Star Over Tibet* (1974; 2^d ed., New Delhi: Sterling, 1987), 65. First of all, his date for the marriage to Wen-ch’eng is off considerably and second, contradicts the fact that the marriage to the Nepalese princess occurred *first*, some ten years prior to Gyasa’s arrival at the Tibetan king’s court. Cf. Hugh Richardson, “The Cult of Vairocana in Early Tibet,” in T. Skorupski, ed., *Indo-Tibetan Studies*, 273, wherein he states that Tibetan historians from the fourteenth century onwards have agreed that the King had “married first a Nepalese princess ...; and secondly that he married a Chinese princess ...” Moreover, Jack Finegan (and, for that matter.

which Gyasa had brought from China came to be known variously as the Sakyamuni Buddha⁵² or the Jowo Rimpoche (the Precious, Supreme One). As earlier indicated, it is believed that this image had been made during the lifetime of the Blessed One but in his likeness as he was when only a youth. It was a two-meter high (6.6 feet) life-size statue of him when but a young royal prince some twelve to sixteen years of age, handsome, robed in princely apparel, and seated in the lotus position. It soon came to be highly prized even though the statue was an image of Gautama when at this point in his life he had not yet renounced the world to become an ascetic and later the Enlightened One.⁵³ Moreover, it was said to have been sent by one of the ancient kings of Magadha to the Emperor of China as a deep token of appreciation for the assistance the Chinese Emperor had given him in his defense of his kingdom against the marauding Yavanas from the west.⁵⁴ Only much later had it found its

Richardson, p. 273, citing the Tun-Huang Cave Annals) has pointed out that Wen-ch'eng had to wait six years more in Tibet before actually being presented to the King-Emperor Songtsan Gampo for marriage, and then lived with him for only three years till his death in 649. She herself would live on till 680. *Tibet: a Dreamt of Image*, 43, 208. Yet according to other Tibetan scholars, the Chinese princess had been secured not for the Emperor but for his son (the one whom the Emperor had sired by the third of his three Tibetan queens), who ruled Tibet for only the few years between 641 and 646. Only then, upon the death of the son, did the father, Songtsan Gampo, take to wife Princess Gyasa. See Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, 23n.; and cf. W. D. Shakabpa, *Tibet: a Political History*, 27.

As to the view transmitted by the Tibetan chroniclers that the motivation for the Tibetan Emperor's two foreign marriages was the securing of the two Buddha images, it is doubtful to the present writer that the King-Emperor—at the time an adherent of the aboriginal shamanist religion of Tibet—had even been aware of their existence, let alone that he would have demanded that each be a part of the required dowry of both princesses. The aforementioned chroniclers, in their zealous devotion and near veneration of Songtsan Gampo as the first and noblest of the so-called Three Great Religious Kings of Tibet responsible for the initial development of Buddhism as the State religion, were most likely crediting their illustrious King-Emperor with more farsighted wisdom and piety than was warranted. Only after being exposed and then converted to the religion of his two foreign wives did the Tibetan king perhaps begin to see the value of having the two statues housed, safeguarded and venerated as part of his subsequent intention to introduce Buddhism into the land.

Yet such introduction of the foreign faith may not only have been because of his new personal religious preference but perhaps even more significantly because he may have perceived that there would be an extremely important political benefit that would accrue to him and his court were he to do so, as one author, a Tibetan, has asserted. Dolkar Tseten, who grew up at Lhasa in the 1940s and early '50s, reminded the readers of her book *Girl from Tibet*, 53, that the religion of Tibet at the time of this King's conversion had been chiefly characterized by "the worship of spirits and devils through magic rites presided over by a priesthood of shamans and wizards." Therefore, she writes, apart from the romantic influence of his two foreign wives, "there were probably good sound political reasons why such a strong-willed and far-seeing ruler as Songtsan Gampo wanted to supersede [the old indigenous faith] as the state religion, for its stronghold on the people made the position of king little more than that of a pawn in the hands of the priest magicians. For a leader who intended to unify and modernize his land, their reactionary power had to be broken, so ... he encouraged and welcomed learned and holy men from China and India to come and bring the new light of this higher and better religion to us."

Nevertheless, Dawa Norbu is on solid ground when he states in the later edition of his *Red Star* volume (page 257) that the period of Songtsan Gampo's rule and that of the two other supposedly Religious Kings did not see any extensive spread of Buddhism throughout Tibet but that such pervasiveness of the faith was to come much later. "There is a popular myth," writes Norbu, "that the so-called Tibetan religious kings during the seventh and eighth centuries were largely responsible for the propagation of Buddhism in Tibet. This myth has come down to us from the medieval Lamaist hagiographies and transmitted by the modern Western writers on Tibet. There is no historical foundation to this myth. During the so-called Dharma-rajya (Chos-rgyal) period only six or seven monasteries or temples were built. The vast majority of about 4000 monasteries were built after the disintegration of the centralized royal power (842-1249)."

way to Tibet in the manner described above. It was then enshrined initially in Lhasa's second oldest Buddhist temple, the Ramoche (see below) which had specifically been constructed to house this sacred image; and only upon the death of the King was it afterwards placed in the Jo-khang, where it has remained ever since.⁵⁵

Enshrined as it long ago came to be in the Jo-khang, this priceless Buddha figure had been carefully positioned behind a silver mesh screen, from whence the devout of the Land of Snows would be able to glimpse beneath its gilding, crown and robes "a physical seal," as it were, "on the adoption of the Buddha's teaching as the national religion of Tibet."⁵⁶ According to one young incarnate Lama from Kham in East Tibet, who beheld the Sakyamuni image for the first time in 1936, the figure "was seated on a high throne ["facing the west"—S. C. Das], wearing a tall crown of gold inset with jewels—diamonds, rubies, turquoises and pearls. At its back was a great gilded panel of copper covered with figures and Buddhist symbols. At the top of the panel, just above the Buddha's head, was a large sunbird, a garuda with outstretched wings. Jowo Rimpoche's face had been lacquered so many times with gold leaf ["by rich worshipers"—R. D. Taring] that one could not make out what it must have been like in the beginning."⁵⁷ Wrote one American visitor to Lhasa in 1923 who, disguised in Tibetan peasant garb, had gained entrance to the Jo-khang and viewed the holy image: "it is the object of the unbounded adoration of the Tibetan; and enormous wealth in the form of offerings is laid on its altar. The lamps [having cups "two-feet-high"] which burn before it are of pure gold ["and silver"], and everything about the image is covered with enormous, though uncut, precious stones."⁵⁸

Buddhist texts assert that the Sakyamuni Buddha had been fashioned by the artisan of the gods—an artist named Visvakarma (or Besho Karma)—under the guidance of the god Indra,⁵⁹ and the story goes that while the Buddha was yet alive in the early fifth century b.c. he had expressly forbade artists to make images of him. This artist, however, was said to have been so deeply moved upon seeing the Buddha sitting by the Ganges in Benares (then a part of Magadha), that he could not resist the desire to somehow draw the Buddha's likeness. He came up with the rationalization that if he drew the reflection of Gautama as it appeared in the waters of the Ganges, he would not violate the injunction against making images! And from this drawing thus achieved Besho Karma was then able to execute the alloy cast that now sat in the Jo-khang as the most precious object in all of Tibet.⁶⁰ One additional detail about this particular image ought to be mentioned here; which is, that the fabulous gold crown that rests on the figure's head and which was described above is reputed to have been the gift of the great Tibetan Buddhist reformer Tsong Khapa.⁶¹

Now the specific physical location within the Jo-khang where the Jowo Rimpoche was placed—a small enclosed area near the Temple's center and formed like a chapel that was partly open on three sides—soon became the brightest part of Tibet's holiest sanctuary. This was because the chapel area which housed this most sacred object was well lit up by the many lamps of the pilgrims who would daily come and stand in the long approaching line waiting for their moment of fulfillment to view, and to prostrate before, that which all the Buddhist faithful deemed to be a "holy 'self-created' Buddha image." Still in place in late March of 1959 after the Jo-khang had been shelled unmercifully by the Chinese during the unsuccessful Tibetan Independence Uprising days earlier, the figure of the young Prince

could still be seen inclined slightly forward from the tall, upright box in which it had always stood—a shrine which was shaped, said one Western journalist who visited Lhasa after the Uprising, “like an upended coffin.”⁶² (Soon afterwards, however, the atheistic Chinese occupiers peremptorily closed the Cathedral to all worship and other religious functions, converting “this most sacred of Tibetan temples into a cinema and dormitory for visitors.” Not until twenty years later, in March of 1979, was it restored to its original purpose and opened by the Chinese once again for worship. Almost instantly intense throngs of worshipers and pilgrims began to stream back to the Jo-khang’s holy precincts on a daily basis as before, the sanctuary now being open six days a week.)⁶³

But besides this celebrated Jowo statue of Sakyamuni when aged twelve, there was another image of Lord Buddha, though an image of him at the tender age of eight, which had also found its way to Tibet; and, like the other, it was understood to have been crafted by Visvakarma as well.⁶⁴ This one, however, had been carried to Lhasa in 632 by King Songtsan Gampo’s first wife, sometimes known as Balsa, but mostly known as Brikhuti of Thakuri Nepal: a devout Buddhist and a Nepalese princess and commonly referred to by the Tibetans as “the Nepalese.”⁶⁵ It so happened that the Tibetan king’s army had subjugated the land of Nepal, and Songtsan Gampo had wanted to cement the relationship between the two countries by means of a marriage alliance. According to Rinchen Dolma Taring (Mary La), when the Tibetan king asked the Nepalese king for the hand of this princess, her father (uncle?) commanded that she go to Tibet. As part of her dowry she was given this image of the Buddha, whose vacant seat, wrote Mary La, can still be seen today in Nepal.⁶⁶ This, too, was enshrined in the Tibetan capital, originally at the Jo-khang but later removed for enshrinement at the three-story Ramoche Temple (literally meaning “great she-goat temple”) that had been founded, ironically, by Princess Wen-ch’eng to house the Jowo Rimpoche and which came to be located on the northern periphery of the city.⁶⁷ In fact, when King Songtsan Gampo died in 649 the statues of these two tutelary deities were made to change places: the Nepalese queen’s Buddha image moving to the Ramoche and the Chinese queen’s Sakyamuni Buddha coming to the Tsuglag Khang, with the latter Temple’s name now becoming known more familiarly as the Jo-khang as a result of the presence within its precincts of the Jowo Rimpoche.*⁶⁸

* Though many historians and other writers on Tibet have subscribed to this explanation of how, when and where there came to be an apparent relocation of these two images, Hugh Richardson offers a different account of how these two venerated Buddha statues ended up being housed where they were and still are to this day. First of all, he notes that Tibetan historians from the fourteenth century onwards had been in agreement that the Jo-khang was established by the Nepalese princess to enshrine her Buddha image and that the Chinese princess Wen-ch’eng subsequently erected the Ramoche for her Jowo statue. But Richardson goes on to point out that only in the history of the Tibetan historian Bu-ston is “the changing of the places’ of the two images ... specifically mentioned.”

Next, though, Richardson posits the notion of there having been a *second* Chinese princess involved in the story who, however, was wedded not to the so-called First Religious King Songtsan Gampo but to the latter’s great-great grandson. For since, he argues, there are in Lhasa but two ancient royal temples—the Jo-khang and the Ramoche—and because further it is known for certain that the first of these two had been most closely associated with Brikhuti in its erection, and since also one of the Tun-Huang Cave documents “states that at a time which can only be the reign” of Songtsan Gampo’s great-great grandson, the latter had married a Chinese princess who then had built a great *tsuglag khang* in Tibet, where, the document further said, fugitive monks from Khotan had been given refuge. Now because the Ramoche is the only great temple in Tibet attributable to a Chinese princess.

Now both these images were reputed to have been blessed by Gautama himself and were therefore deemed by the Tibetans to be especially sacred and consequently deeply revered, if not worshiped, by them; but the Jo-khang Buddha brought by Princess Wen-ch'eng was to become the more famous and sacred of the two.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, whether these statues (which came to be known, respectively, as the Great Jowo and the Little Jowo)⁷⁰ really were of such early workmanship as has been claimed for them is, in the opinion of one respected Tibetan scholar, "open to doubt." David Snellgrove writes that "no qualified visitor seems ... to have had the opportunity of scrutinizing them carefully" at Lhasa to determine this, and adds that the strength of the tradition surrounding the origin of the Jo-khang Wen-ch'eng image "is no guarantee of accuracy." Snellgrove further noted that Buddhism practically disappeared from central Tibet following the murder of one of the later kings, Ral-pa-chen, the third of the so-called Three Great Religious Kings and brother of the infamous Langdarma,⁷¹ but that when the Doctrine returned to the ascendancy once more, "pious sentiment would willingly have associated the main image in the central temple with the earlier period."⁷²



Because the fame of the Jo-khang Temple had spread far and wide, Tharchin was naturally very eager to seek entrance into its precincts that he might view its fascinating interior. This he was able to do shortly after his arrival in the holy city. Just as in the days of old medieval Europe, the Jo-khang was surrounded by narrow streets and numerous houses that nearly abutted its very walls instead of it having been aesthetically zoned off, as it were, within the center of a large public plaza where visitors might view it with admiration in a more appropriate setting. Nevertheless, the Cathedral area was never without its visitors, who came in droves to experience its sacred ambience both within and without. Daily services at the Jo-khang Temple were always attended by crowds of worshipers, and the "circumambulation path"⁷³—called the *Barkhor* ("Middle or Intermediate Circle")—which encircled the main buildings of the Temple grounds and served also as a market street was continually packed with the devout who made the circuit as a deed of merit,⁷⁴ always doing so in clockwise fashion to ensure favor from the gods.

writes Richardson, it is therefore "probable that it was built by or for the second princess sometime after 710 a.d. and that the image" of the Brikhuti Buddha, "its principal deity, was installed at that time."

Yet if this be true, then what of the long-held tradition that the Jowo Rimpoche had first been set up in the Ramoche by Wen-ch'eng? That assertion, declares Richardson, had probably been "an attempt by later historians"—unaware of the erection of a temple by a second Chinese princess—"to attach the genuine Chinese connection of the Ramoche to the great name" of Songtsan Gampo. Thus, "it may well be," concludes Richardson, "that the image of the Jo-bo [Jowo Rimpoche], from whatever source it was received, was established" in the Jo-khang "at the time of its foundation, and that the *worship*" of the Buddha image brought to Lhasa by Brikhuti in the early seventh century "did not reach Tibet until the 8th century." Richardson, "Cult of Vairocana," in Skorupski, ed., *Indo-Tibetan Studies*, 273-4 (emphasis added). For a somewhat later, more complete discussion of the matter by Richardson, see his article, "... Two Chinese Princesses in Tibet," *TJ* (Spring 1997):3-11.

There were actually three of these Sacred Paths, Walks or Circles in the Holy City of Tibetan Buddhism, the Barkhor just mentioned constituting the second longest but which was not circular so much as it was square in layout. The most sacred of these three holy paths was called the *Nangkhor* ("Inner Circle") which, as the innermost of the three, encircled the Central Temple within the grounds of Tibet's religious center itself. This circumambulation is traditionally performed three, five or thirteen times. Then came the second or middle ring, the most popular of the three walkways and which enclosed in square-like fashion all the Temple's buildings and the shopping and business center of the city: the celebrated bazaar, with its many stores and outdoor booths and stalls. The outermost ring, called the *Lingkhor* ("Park Circle"), was by far the longest and for a distance of some five miles encircled the entire city of Lhasa together with a number of its parks as well as its two well-known hills that sat nearly a mile from the capital's center: Red Hill on which stood the Potala, and Iron Hill on which was located Tibet's Medical College. This largest circle would have been named the *Chikhor* ("Outside Circle") except for the fact that the word "outside" conjured up an inauspicious connotation and was therefore considered inappropriate for this highly sacred walkway of Tibet's most holy community.

The Lingkhor provides a fascinating study in extreme—one might almost say fanatical—religious devotion on the part of adherents of the Tibetan Buddhist faith. One former resident of Lhasa who grew up there in the late 1930s, Tsewang Y. Pemba, recalled what had impressed him the most about the Lingkhor when as a child of seven or eight he had first witnessed its many unusual sights of severe devotion by those who circumambulated its path. As a surgeon later in life in England, this son of Rai Sahib Pemba Tsering (whom Tharchin had taught at Ghoom), now recalled with obvious disbelief if not also disdain those sites along this sacred walk which reputedly had magical powers associated with them to effect miraculous cures of various physical disabilities in the anatomy of the faithful pilgrims who passed by. Here is Pemba's delineation of what from those earlier days in Lhasa he remembered witnessing along the Lingkhor:

One sees a great variety of people on the walk, most of them pilgrims. They all mumble prayers and spin their prayer wheels: *Abu-hwas*, Lhasa folk, and worshipers from far and near who have come to Lhasa, "The Abode of Gods" and the Mecca of Lamaism. Some devout fanatics believe that the more strenuous the walk, the greater the merit obtained. So instead of walking they prostrate themselves, get up, prostrate again and so on right round the Lingkhor. Some can be seen prostrating at right angles to the road, taking a side step and prostrating again, which makes the task extremely grueling. One saw many of these people, their faces dusty and bruised, their eyes tight with pain and their mouths set hard. It is said that a man once prostrated his way from Lhasa to Buddha Gaya where the Buddha obtained his enlightenment, a distance of almost a thousand miles, winding through snowbound passes and tropical plains. It is amazing into what paths religious devotion can drive human beings throughout the world.

For refreshments on the way there were delicious turnips to be bought. We came across a rock face with two large holes in it. These holes were polished and greasy, and I was told to rub my knees in these holes, as any pains and aches at these parts of the anatomy would be miraculously cured! Here is certainly a tip for harassed orthopedic surgeons who have patients with intractable arthritis of the knees! Send them off to the Lingkhor to rub their knees at these rocks.

At another place there was a slab of rock resting against a wall. One goes under the rock and

rubs one's back against its smooth surface, which is believed to cure all backaches. All this probably indicates the great incidence of rheumatic aches and pains in Tibet, for the Lingkhör certainly specializes in orthopedics! It thus draws as many patients as pilgrims.

Sir Basil Gould, who was Head of the British Mission at the Tibetan capital during the same period, has provided additional details of what one could witness along this famed circumambulatory walkway for the devoted Tibetan religionists: "In one place they have to turn several huge fixed prayer wheels; further on just below an immense painted Buddha carved on the cliff,⁷⁵ they must put their foreheads to the rock, which is now polished to marble smoothness by the attentions of the faithful. In another place they must crawl through a hole formed by a boulder which leans up against a cliff. Nearby there is a deep hole worn in the rock since each pilgrim, as he passes, must put his finger there." Actually, along the entire route of the Lingkhör there were more than just the few prayer wheels about which Sir Basil had remarked. According to David Macdonald, no less than two thousand of these wheels were scattered along the Park Circle, "with the mystical formula Om inscribed on each in letters of gold." And when coming across each of these huge praying (praising?) devices, the pious pedestrian would give it a couple of turns, "thus registering several millions of prayers to his credit."

Another writer on Tibet has drawn a vivid picture of the full prostration method (called in Tibetan *chang-cael*) for circumambulating the path by the religious devotee in his quest to accumulate greater merit for what he devoutly hopes will ensure the realization of his lifelong desire of achieving Nirvana after death. Writes Rosemary Tung:

If a pilgrim to Lhasa had traveled a long way and conceivably might never make the circuit of the Lingkhör again in his life or, at best, not many times, it was the custom to do the pilgrimage on the Lingkhör by prostration. This is a Tibetan practice in which the body is lowered to a totally flat position, face down, to indicate humility and devotion to a higher being. In this circumambulation, the easier way was to follow the road and measure progress by the length of one's body. This method took about three days [to cover the five miles]. Pilgrims often wore mittens to protect their hands, and knee pads.⁷⁶ The most serious devotees, however, made things more difficult for themselves by always prostrating in the direction of the Potala, which was to the right of the road. This meant that the progress was measured by the body's width. Doing it this way, the very devout spent five days circling Lhasa.

One ought to add here, finally, the testimony of one Western visitor to the Vatican of Tibetan Buddhism who in 1904 had himself joined the pilgrim faithful from the most distant parts of Asia in treading the Lingkhör's religiously arduous five-mile pathway. Perceval Landon, quoted from earlier, believed that he in fact was the very first non-believer ever to walk this unusual sanctified circuit. Writing that even a non-believer would be spared hell's fierce agonies were he to die while in the process of accomplishing Lhasa's sacred pilgrim route, Landon vividly described what he had witnessed that day as he circumambulated "this Buddhist *via dolorosa*": "From dawn to dusk along this road moves a procession, men and women, monks and laymen. They shuffle along slowly, not unwillingly now and then to exchange a word with a companion overtaken ...; but, as a rule, with a vacant look of abstraction from all earthly things they swing their prayer wheels and mutter ceaselessly beneath their breath the sacred formula which shuts from them the doors of their six hells."⁷⁷

Tharchin, of course, could not have avoided witnessing many of these pious acts just described, yet not only along the Lingkhör but likewise on the Barkhör and Nangkhor as he was now intent upon gaining entrance to the Jo-khang. Doubtless the Tibetan from Kalimpong had mixed feelings about what he had seen and must have offered up many prayers to his Living God for the liberation of these pious countrymen of his from such a terrible round of slavish observances which according to his evangelical Christian conscience that had been purified by grace could only be characterized as a reflection of “works-righteousness.” Given his religious predilection, this visiting Christian must have also wept inwardly if not outwardly as he witnessed manifestation after manifestation of hearts darkened towards the Light of Life as it is in his Lord Jesus Christ.



Gergan Tharchin now took note of the large flagstones situated at the main great entrance gate to the Temple, which was on the southwest side appropriately facing in the direction of Nepal. Polished to mirror-smoothness and hollowed out at many places, these stones have lain there as a silent witness to the deep piety and devotion of the Tibetans who, with only brief interruptions, have been falling to their faces at this spot for well over 1300 years, prostrating in adoration of the divinities housed within.⁷⁸ The Temple entrance was a huge and ornate affair, a gateway which, hung with black curtains, was set slightly back, and in front of which was the open space where, on the ground, had been placed the ancient flagstones just mentioned. Further enhancing the appearance of the entrance were finely carved wooden pillars which are believed to have been the artistry of Nepalese craftsmen who had been commissioned long ago by Princess Brikhuti to do such work. But also at the front of the Temple could be seen by the Kalimpong visitor one of four *sangkhangs*, large potbellied incense burners from whence smoke perfumed by juniper twigs would unceasingly rise “to please the Jo-khang’s protecting gods.”⁷⁹ These four *sangkhangs* have stood for centuries at the four cardinal points around the Barkhör. The famed Middle Circle, in fact, had its beginning at the particular *sangkhang* that stood at the entrance area of the Central Cathedral.

Near the entrance Tharchin took into view once again those two other noteworthy objects discussed earlier: the Tablet of Unity and the so-called Princess Willow (the latter the ancient tree alleged to have sprung from one of the Buddha’s hairs that was believed by the Buddhist faithful to have been planted here by Princess Wen-ch’eng). Before stepping inside the three-story temple, Tharchin must have taken cognizance as well of two other features of the Jo-khang: the “Lhasa pulpit” and the Cathedral’s impressive spires. Given the fact that, unlike the West’s predominant religious faith, preaching plays little if any part in the Buddhist faith of Tibet, the pulpit mentioned would appear to be an oddity, which it indeed was, it probably being the only one in all of Tibet.

This so-called pulpit was in reality a platform, “rather elaborately decorated,” rising four feet above the ground, and upon which was placed a throne that was five feet higher still. It was situated in the area of the open space on the Jo-khang’s south side that was closest to the Temple structure itself: and therefore it looked out southward upon the said open space

where thousands of people could in packed assembly gather together to hear whoever might speak from this elevated platform. As a matter of fact, this “pulpit-throne” was used by the Dalai Lama but once a year and always on the fifteenth day of the first Tibetan month, which, because of Tibet’s lunar calendar, was always the day of the full moon and therefore the most holy day during the chief religious festival of the entire year. On this occasion His Holiness, as High Priest of his people, would deliver a short discourse to the assembled Lhasa community that consisted of both priest and layman.

Seated on the platform but below His Holiness on the “pulpit-throne” would be the Prime Minister, the members of the *Kashag* or Cabinet, those Tibetans who held the titled ranks of *Kung*, *Thajji* or *Dzasa*, the higher Incarnate Lamas, the Abbots of the Three Great Monasteries of Lhasa, as well as the Enthroned One of Ganden who was an especially high ecclesiastical figure within the Tibetan Buddhist hierarchy. The service was called “The Spoken Religion” and was dominated by the presence of the Dalai Lama who, as Head of the Religion, would read from a book with yellow pages and black print that contained the commands of Buddha for both clergy and laity. With the conclusion of his reading, His Holiness would then preach to the assembled crowd, explaining the meaning of what had been read, since the book’s text was cast in archaic language and therefore difficult to understand.

William McGovern had attempted, when in Lhasa in 1923, to learn the origin of this “very quaint custom”—as he called it—of an annual sermon, but failed to find anyone who could explain how it had gotten started. McGovern carefully noted that pulpits and preaching to the common people are quite alien to Tibet’s religious system (with but this one exception already noted) simply because the peasants have always been quite willing to pay the priests to perform ceremonies for them which in propitiating the gods and demons would therefore obviate any necessity to listen to sermons; and because, further, the monks themselves over these many centuries have seen no good reason for delivering religious secrets to the masses. And hence the lone Lhasa pulpit!⁸⁰

The Tibetan convert from Poo must have longed for an opportunity to mount this singular pulpit-platform and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Buddhist pilgrims who thronged all about him. But it was just not to be. Gazing upward, however, Tharchin, on his way inside the Jo-khang, caught a closer view of the Cathedral’s glittering spires which he had seen from afar when first he glimpsed the Fabled City along the caravan route up from Gyantse. Now he saw how they shot into the sky high above all the surrounding structures. Rising to mere points at their upper extremities from the rather picturesque Chinese-style roof, these cone-like spires had been made initially of brass and were then heavily gilded; but it has been said by some that the principal spire had been made of pure gold.⁸¹ Still another feature of the Cathedral’s roof was the location there of four golden chapels, dedicated, respectively, to Tibet’s patron deity Chenrezi, the Lord Buddha Sakyamuni, the Jampa or Maitreya Buddha expected to be reincarnated in the Coming Age, and Tibet’s celebrated and highly revered (as a god) King Songtsan Gampo.*

* One explanation for why the Tibetan king has been revered, even worshiped as divinity, dates back to the year 649: the year in which both the Chinese Emperor T’ai-tsung—who had given Princess Wen-ch’eng to Songtsan Gampo in a politically motivated marriage alliance—and the Tibetan sovereign had died within only a few months of each other, T’ai-tsung having passed away first. Now the new Chinese Emperor, Kao-tsung,



While everybody else inside Tibet's most holy place was engaged in praying the Buddhist formula of worship, "Om! Ma-ni Pad-me Hum!";⁸² Tharchin reported that he himself was busily occupied in offering up his own prayers instead. Lest one might have misunderstood him, he was quick to clarify by saying: "I prayed *the Lord's Prayer*—and prayed it *loudly* too!" Other devotees prostrated themselves before the image of the Sakyamuni Buddha,⁸³ but he naturally refused to do this in keeping with his Christian faith that precluded bowing down to any graven images.⁸⁴ As he stood watching the stream of those who worshiped before this prized Tibetan holy image, Tharchin must have experienced feelings of sadness similar to those which Alexandra David-Neel (1868-1969) would feel some six months hence when she too would stand where he now stood witnessing the same scene. Disguised in the poor garb of a lowly Tibetan peasant, this first white woman ever to walk the streets of Lhasa would make her way to the Fabled City of the Gods by pony and by foot the entire distance from western China. Shortly after her and her Tibetan companion's arrival in February 1924 she too would make a point of visiting the Holy Cathedral of Tibetan Buddhism and observe with profound regret the scene which now gripped the attention of Dorje Tharchin.

Madame David-Neel was no stranger to Buddhism nor, for that matter, to the Tibetan variant of that faith. She had rejected the Roman Catholic religion of her youth and had joined the Theosophical Society in Paris, where lectures on Hinduism and Buddhism were an integral part of the program. What ultimately provided her the personal philosophical moorings she had sought for her life were the classical teachings of Gautama Buddha himself; and thus she became a practicing Theravadin Buddhist, to which practice she apparently remained faithful throughout her life.* Moreover, prior to her journey to Lhasa

installed on the throne exactly one month following his predecessor's death, was a fervent Buddhist, who proceeded to bestow upon the Tibetan king the title of Pao-wang. In Chinese Buddhism, notes Christopher Beckwith, *pao-wang* (which means "Precious King" or "King of Jewels") "is an epithet of the ruler of the West: it also appears to be a title of Buddha Amitabha, whose realm was thought to be in the West (as seen from China). Significantly, it is known that Songtsan Gampo was identified with Amitabha from very early times." Amitabha, of course, is the Sanskrit word for the celestial Buddha O-pa-me ("Measureless or Boundless Light") who is believed by Tibetan and other Buddhists to be presiding over the present world era, or *kalpa*, the fourth of five thought to constitute the entirety of cosmic history. Beckwith has observed that the hat on the statue of King Songtsan Gampo housed at the Jo-khang has on it an image of Amitabha. The Tibetan scholar went on to speculate that "this identification might have been one of the sources for the later identification of this ruler with Amitabha's emanation, the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, who was from later medieval times on considered the 'patron' [deity] of Tibet." *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, 24-6.

* See John Blofeld, "Some Thoughts Relating to Alexandra David-Neel's *The Superhuman Life of Gesar of Ling*," *TJ* (Winter 1982):94. Nevertheless, even though David-Neel was a lifelong adherent of Theravada (Hinayana) Buddhism, she published—beginning in the late 1920s with the very book which related her journey to Lhasa in 1923-4—numerous volumes on Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism that "give very friendly and even inspiring accounts of the more popular aspects of Tibetan religion." Indeed, "only very occasionally is her preference for Theravadin Buddhism brought to the reader's notice." As a consequence of these "zestful, colorful and highly entertaining" writings of hers, Madame Neel played a major role "in pioneering the entry of Buddhism in its Tibetan form to the West." In fact, her published works were "responsible for arousing the interest of readers whom she inspired to study under Tibetan lamas and, in some cases, they became notable Tibetan scholars." *Ibid.*, 96. Blofeld has himself been a longtime student of Mahayana Buddhism, having traveled extensively in the Tibetan border

she had made many other Asian journeys: to India (where at Kalimpong in 1912 she, the first ever white woman, had the unparalleled experience of interviewing at great length the exiled Thirteenth Dalai Lama whom the French woman journalist impressed quite favorably) and to the Buddhist lands of Sikkim, Nepal, Shigatse in Tibet, Ceylon, Burma, Japan, Korea, China and Kumbum Monastery in Northeast Tibet (where in the latter place she had spent three years furthering her knowledge of Buddhism and the Tibetan language under the guidance of the Pegya Lama there and deepening her determination to reach Lhasa). In the volume which recounts her incredible trek to the Tibetan capital, Madame Neel tells what she experienced when finally she entered the Jo-khang and saw what Tharchin was even now seeing—hundreds prostrating before the Sakyamuni Buddha and other sacred images: “I felt saddened at beholding the procession of worshipers, lost in superstition and exactly following the path that was condemned by the very one whose memory they worship.” She left the Temple with heaviness of heart, keenly disappointed at what she had witnessed.^{*85}

Now the Jo-khang has for centuries been the goal for not only Tibetan pilgrims but also for millions of other Buddhist pilgrims in Mongolia, China, India and elsewhere in Asia. To them it is as sacred as is the Kaaba in Mecca to the Moslems or St. Peter’s in Rome to

regions, Mongolia and China, where at Chengtu in western China in the mid-1940s he had his last meeting with Madame Neel when she was “only” 76. She would go on to live another 24 years!

But though she as an adherent of Theravadin Buddhism may have been tolerant of the Mahayana school of Buddhism, it should be noted that she was *intolerant* of the followers of Christ. A case in point is what she did during her time in Sikkim. Shortly after entering a Buddhist monastery at Lachen in the north of that land, Madame Neel reportedly incited the Sikkimese Maharaja against his Christian subjects, all of whom were summoned to his court for questioning (at that time there were not that many Christians). According to retired Finnish missionary to Sikkim Miss Vappu Rautamaki, Madame Neel, after becoming acquainted with the young King, “began her fight against Christianity, missionaries and believers in Sikkim.” Moreover, the Maharaja “had decided to expel the missionaries from the country, and gave Madame Neel permission to question the Christians and to persuade them to turn back to the Laman religion.” Furthermore, “the Maharaja himself,” reported Miss Rautamaki, in what she termed “the great opposition of 1912-1914,” actually went to the Lachen and Lachung communities to confront the new Christian converts and even made threats of punishment against them.

However, this “hopeless situation” for the Christians and missionaries had a surprising and ironic conclusion. Unexpectedly, the reigning ruler, the retired missionary could report, died prematurely, “and soon afterwards Madame Neel was expelled from Sikkim.” Whereupon, the new Maharaja, Tashi Namgyal, who had expelled Neel, now “invited the Finnish missionaries to his coronation on 15th May 1916, and missionary work could continue ...” Rautamaki, “The Free Church of Finland Himalayan Mission and the Nepalese,” translated out of the Finnish, her account appearing as Appendix F (pp. 420-42) in C. L. Perry, *Nepali around the World. Emphasizing Nepali Christians of the Himalayas*, 110, 131 note 166, 440.

* Her explanation for why superstition in relation to the Buddha continued to cloud the minds of the Buddhist masses in Tibet and elsewhere was due to what she felt was a serious distortion of Gautama Buddha’s teachings. This she made clear in one of her many writings, *Buddhism, Its Doctrines and Methods* (1939), where she criticized modern Buddhism for misrepresenting the true teachings of Gautama. It was Madame Neel’s understanding that the Buddha had taught doubt and continued questioning, not faith. Buddha’s ultimate goal was Knowledge, and the way to its apprehension was through skepticism that leads to research and which in turn brings one the sought-after Knowledge. It was her belief, however, that modern Buddhist practitioners had come to rely, as do nearly all adherents of every religion, on faith unquestioned. And that is why, she concluded, superstition had continued to becloud the thinking of the masses. She had come to this conclusion even as early as a year before her private audience with the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama (see earlier in the Text above) as published in French in a similar book, *Le Modernisme Bouddhique et le Bouddhisme du Bouddha* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1911).

Catholic Christendom. Furthermore, the Tibetan people in general entertain a superstition regarding the efficacy of this sacred shrine's blessing. It is believed that after visiting the Temple one's heart desire, whatever that might be, will be realized or fulfilled. Tharchin was equally quick to affirm his view on this matter also: "I do not subscribe to this sort of superstition. On the contrary, while there I prayed that some day this particular cathedral might be converted into the church of God and that the kingdom of Christ might reign in the hearts of men." Until then, however, the central court within the Jo-khang would remain as the site where thousands upon thousands, if not millions upon millions, of prayers (praises?) would continue to be offered to Lord Buddha. For on either side of the great interior court of the Temple were to be found hundreds of small cylindrical prayer wheels set on greased spindles so that as the monks and others strolled by they would instinctively spin each barrel-like prayer wheel until the entire row had been set in motion. Commenting on what it was like to hear all these cylinder devices in motion at the same time, an American visitor to the Temple court in 1949 remarked that "the rumbling of these wheels, transmitting thousands of prayers to Buddha simultaneously, sounded like the roar of a diving roller coaster"!⁸⁶

The visitor from Kalimpong sighted a shapely metallic bell hanging from the ceiling of a narrow passage that forms the entrance to the innermost part of the shrine. The bell, a "moving reminder" of a once fairly visible witness of Christendom in the Tibetan capital, was the only artifact remaining as evidence of the Catholic Capuchin Mission that after nearly forty years of constant labor had to be abandoned in 1745 due to lack of funds and harassment from the Tibetan Buddhist clergy.⁸⁷ Its pendulum was tied to it with a piece of leather cord. The people would ring the bell while stepping in and out of the *sanctum*. On the bell were inscribed in bold letters the Latin words *Te Deum laudamus*. The phrase, translated, means: "Thee, God, we praise," and forms the opening words to the well-known Christian Hymn of Thanksgiving and Praise.⁸⁸ In the past Tharchin had read a description of this bell in a book. Now his personal experience confirmed the truth of the statement, and he observed:

I felt the monastery was like a picturesque museum. Images of many noble and notable personalities are enshrined here. Moreover, several archaic and ancient artifacts are preserved in the monastery. Above all, though, the Christian bell hangs in this temple ever proclaiming the most powerful witness for Christ. God's word, though inscribed in Latin, silently continues to testify in the sanctuary of this sacred shrine of the Tibetans.

Unfortunately, this physical testimony to Christianity no longer hangs in the Jo-khang. The Austrian Heinrich Harrer, on a return visit to the Tibetan Holy City in 1982 after an absence of thirty years, greatly desired to see the bell once again. But upon stepping into the precincts of the Holy Cathedral of Tibetan Buddhism, he was immediately confronted with the disappointment:

I wanted to find the bell which had been left behind by the Capuchins in the eighteenth century and which bore the inscription *Te Deum laudamus*. It had once been suspended from a wooden beam in a passage leading to the shrine [of the Jowo Rimpoche], together with many other bells. Some of these were now hanging along the side of an ante-room, but that of the Capuchins had disappeared. A Tibetan suggested that, together with other historical objects, it was locked up in a room of the Norbu Lingka. The pilgrims now entering the shrine

therefore lack purification, for they believed that passing under a bell liberates a man from the wrong way.⁸⁹

Tharchin also reported another intriguing thing he witnessed in the Tibetan capital: "I visited the site of the small church which had been constructed by the early Roman Catholic missionaries to Lhasa. The building was no longer there, not even a sign of a mere stone of it.⁹⁰ However, the historicity of it does stand as proof that once upon a time" Catholic Christianity "had been preached to the Tibetan nation by [its] missionaries."⁹¹



At the capital every day for a month and more the man from Poo enjoyed sumptuous feasts and dinners with various officials. As was the case during the feasts in Gyantse so also here in the capital the hosts' chang girls tried to compel him to take intoxicating drinks; yet he resolutely refused to touch the stuff inasmuch as he was determined to testify for his Lord through his life even in the city of Lhasa. Very likely, as a result of enjoying the many fine preparations and the numerous dainty dishes, he may have put on some extra weight!

Yet, not only did Tharchin indulge in high society's dainty offerings of Tibetan cuisine; the maturing scholar from Kalimpong indulged as well in Tibetan literature, culture and learning. He himself, two decades later, gave further expression to what was cited earlier in the present narrative as to what he had purposed in his heart to achieve during these years abroad in the Great Snowy Land; and clearly, the emphasis lay upon learning as much as he could: "I ... went to Tibet to study the Tibetan [language] more.... During [my] time [at Gyantse] I tried to gain for myself more Tibetan knowledge. In 1923 I went to Lhasa and there I studied more Tibetan, where I also had the chance to make ... acquaintance with many high Tibetan officials."⁹² In short, Gergan Tharchin gained far more at Lhasa than merely some social standing and a larger waistline. He took advantage of every waking moment to better prepare himself culturally and intellectually for what might lay ahead in his life as that life more and more appeared increasingly oriented towards his ancestral land and its people.



Without a doubt the most significant consequence of this lengthy first visit to Tibet was the fact that Dorje Tharchin found his future wife in Lhasa. Of this romance he offers a charming explanatory version. "I was in Tibet for more than two years," he began, "and still I had given no thought to finding a companion for my life. Even the people around me noted my unconcern along this line." But the day finally dawned and Tharchin became the hero of this minor epic tale. After all, he was on the safe side since the Holy Bible records that

“Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a [helpmate] for him.”³

This story of romance began innocently enough for Tharchin. Two houses faced each other at about the distance of ten yards. The house on the opposite side of the Doring home had small windows. “One day,” he reported with some humor, “I happened to look in the direction of the house on the opposite side of mine. I saw a lady. She was looking at me. The stare did not intimidate me. I turned. She also turned. I hid. She also hid. I stepped forward. She also stepped forward.” Inevitably and unmistakably, this episode was repeated again and again. With every passing day these reciprocal exchanges between the developing lovers increased and the sentiment of love grew deeper and deeper. Tharchin termed it “Love by Look.” He sent for her through his servant whom he had brought with him from Gyantse. The damsel obliged and came. He conversed with her for a short while. He asked the woman, “Why were you looking over here?” She answered, “I have continually been trying to meet you but you always looked elsewhere.”

Then Karma Dechhen, for that was her name, recounted a strange experience. “Before your arrival in Lhasa I had dreamt of a person whose dress and appearance I could still later recall. Then, when thousands of people were cordially welcoming the Tibetan officials who had returned from Gyantse after their military training, I saw *you* in their company and recollected the dream.” A simple and sincere man, Tharchin later recalled his reaction to this revelation: “I believed her dream. In fact, now it is too late not to believe it! I proposed to her and asked her whether she would be willing to marry me and accompany me to the far-off land of India. She replied, ‘I am willing to go with you. Furthermore, I would like to advise you to obtain my mother’s prior permission, as this would be in keeping with our social custom.’”

After this, the would-be bride surprised Tharchin with the disclosure of still another strange experience. Its hypnotic effect on him was as captivating as it was mystifying. The young woman briefly recounted it for her future husband as follows: “In another dream I saw somebody from the sky and a book coming from the sky above and hanging above the roof. The book was approaching nearer and nearer to my forehead. I was trying to get hold of it but it was all the time trying to go away from me.” Now in conversation with her would-be fiancé, Karma Dechhen herself suggested to him that the book in the dream may have referred to the Holy Bible. And when she had seen Tharchin for the first time in company with the Tibetan military officials, she was at once convinced that this was the fulfillment of the predictive content of the first dream. In the light of all this, Tharchin asked her, “Will you walk with me through water, fire, river or any other critical situation of life? Will you follow my religion?” Karma answered these questions affirmatively and unreservedly. After this probing conversation and much prayer Tharchin, now thirty-three years old, made up his mind and determined to choose this particular woman—herself twenty-six years old—as the ideal, God-sent and God-willed partner for his life. The choice was made. The Rubicon was crossed.*

* The age of Tharchin’s future bride has been deduced from a letter he wrote in September of 1949 that gave a brief summary of his life up till then. In it Tharchin said: “Now I am 59 years old [which is correct according to Western reckoning] and my wife is 52 [which would mean Karma Dechhen was born in 1897, making her seven years younger than Tharchin].” Letter to Joseph V. Nunes, Kalimpong, 21 Sept. 1949, ThPaK.

The Headmaster consulted the Tibetan official with whom he was staying in Lhasa, Doring Thaiji. He wished to have his host's viewpoint on the matter. The Tibetan official was very happy about this development and welcomed the proposal wholeheartedly. On Dorje Tharchin's behalf he dispatched his chief servant laden with scarves and presents to ask permission of the mother, who agreed to the proposal readily and joyfully. Her consent was complete.

In this manner and in accordance with the standing social custom of the day, the explicit consent was obtained beforehand through consultation among the right parties. The young lady willingly offered to leave Lhasa and her loved ones and accompany her fiancé to the distant land of India. Her willingness reminds one, does it not, of Rebekah of old, who left her country and kindred to become the bride of Isaac.⁹⁴ These are miraculous cases, Tharchin explained, and the credit must be given to the Lord God alone. Although the couple would shortly in India have a marriage ceremony performed that was according to the Christian rite (see later in the present chapter), Tharchin makes it clear in the earlier of his two unpublished autobiographical documents that he and Karma Dechhen were in fact united in marriage before their departure together from Lhasa.⁹⁵ Nowhere in the document, however, is there any description of what took place publicly or privately in the way of a ceremony. On the other hand, there would be plenty he would say about the Christian events which awaited the couple down in India.



It will be recalled that in September of 1923 Tharchin had come to Lhasa from Gyantse on the initiative of and in company with four relatively young Tibetan officers who had wanted him to establish a school here. But these same gentlemen were now ordered by the Dalai Lama to proceed to India for even more specialized training, with one of them (Changlo Chen Gung Kusho) destined for Gangtok for a course in gunnery training and the other three bound for Shillong in Assam for the same purpose.⁹⁶ Whereupon these officers now suggested that Tharchin accompany them to India as their guide, interpreter and language teacher. The Indo-Tibetan agreed to their request, as is intimated in a letter of Tharchin's to Sir Charles Bell written from Lhasa in 1937. He writes: "In [early] 1924 when Doring Thaiji, Dingja and Kyipup Kusho came to India and went to Shillong for further military training, I was with them as an interpreter."⁹⁷ They advised the Headmaster to postpone his plans to found a school in Lhasa till after their return to Tibet from India. At about this same time, which would probably have been sometime in late December 1923 or very early January of 1924, the Tibetan received a letter from Rev. Graham. In it the Scottish missionary advised him to return to Kalimpong, he "asking me," Tharchin reported later, "to work as a Tibetan catechist" there in view of the fact that Rev. Mackenzie⁹⁸ had retired and no one had replaced him to look after the spiritual needs of the Tibetan congregation there.⁹⁹ It needs to be stated here that Tharchin was as much interested in the pastoral care of the Tibetan congregation in Kalimpong as he was in the evangelization of Tibet. These several considerations thus impressed upon him the need to return to India as speedily as possible.

Yet for this particular Tibetan, who had waited so long in life to see and experience the Sacred City of the Gods for himself, to now be required by necessity to depart from it so soon must have stirred within Tharchin feelings of regret not unlike those which the Italian scholar and leader of expeditions to Tibet, Giuseppe Tucci, had once described when he poignantly observed: "Leaving Lhasa is not like leaving any other town. It is easy to return anywhere else, but Lhasa is so inaccessible as if it were out of this world. Departing from it is like seeing a dreamt of image vanish, without knowing whether it will ever appear again."¹⁰⁰ At this point in time, Tharchin, too, knew not if it would ever appear again. Nevertheless, Kalimpong—and all that awaited him there—beckoned him with some urgency to return.*

Now since it would be the Tibetan officials who would determine the exact date of departure from Lhasa, the visitor from Kalimpong must of necessity be bound by what they decided. As it turned out, though, it would be another month and more before the party would leave the Sacred City.¹⁰¹ This was because Tibetans in those days were particularly superstitious about such matters; guidance needed to be sought. Indeed, Tibetans, explains George Patterson, have had "a history of 2,000 years of devising a complex system of divine and demonic guidance." He goes on to describe the various kinds of guidance sought by the Tibetan people from their numerous "expert practitioners" in guidance, much of it superstitious in nature:

There was the top-level guidance required to find the new reincarnation of the Dalai Lama after one "retired to the heavenly fields." Then there was the guidance sought through tantric oracles; the drawing of lots; mathematical divination; *mandalas*; trances and visions. Guidance was also sought for travel, trading, naming children, holding weddings, health, investments, choice of spouses. They even sought guidance by writing down the negative and positive aspects of any pending decision, putting each paper in separate balls made of barley paste; then the balls were put into a wooden or silver drinking bowl and, after a time of personal or group prayer, one of the balls was selected and the negative or positive decision made according to the choice.¹⁰²

With respect to guidance for travel and related matters, people did not leave on a major journey or commence any new undertaking on just any day of the week, or for that matter on just any day of the month. It had to fall on a so-called "lucky" day: either Monday, Wednesday or Sunday, and on one of the days of the month that was also considered auspicious—such as the 9th, 13th, 19th or 29th, which in the belief of the Tibetans had an especially good omen

* David Macdonald seems to paint a rather bleak and somber picture of Tharchin's first visit to Lhasa, and appears to imply that the "unhappy" experience he thus delineates for his readers was what sent Tharchin packing back to Kalimpong. If so, it does not stand up very well against what has been narrated in the present chapter, and may perhaps be misleading. Writing in his book, *Twenty Years in Tibet*, Macdonald asserts that when Tharchin accompanied the army officers up to Lhasa from Gyantse, "he remained for some time in the capital, but found life there very trying, and not very remunerative, as living expenses for a person not of the country are high. Finally, he tried to augment his income by trading in a small way, but still found that he could not make ends meet. He is now with me in Kalimpong, where he is employed as a lay teacher by the Tibetan Mission in that place." This passage is found on pages 223-4 of his book that was published in 1932. The reasons for Tharchin's return were as stated in the present narrative: the fact of his forthcoming Christian marriage rite, the re-assignment of the army officers to India, and the glaring need of his assistance among the Tibetan congregation in Kalimpong. Their cumulative effect upon Tharchin quite obviously demanded a speedy return to India.

about them. Even a particular hour, say, at 9:00 in the morning, was deemed more auspicious or lucky than others. Moreover, if any Tibetan were for urgent reasons compelled to commence a journey on an *inauspicious* day, then he would often dispatch his hat or some other personal article of clothing a mile or two ahead along the route by messenger on an *auspicious* day preceding “in order to beguile the gods into believing that that was when he departed.”¹⁰³ Needless to say, Tharchin himself never indulged in any superstitious practice like this, but on the contrary, entrusted his soul into the hands of “a faithful creator.”¹⁰⁴



Once the party of travelers had finally departed from Lhasa, which took place in late January of the new year, they headed immediately towards Gyantse. More than likely he experienced a twinge of sadness as on the road south from Lhasa he glimpsed the Potala and therefore the Sacred City for the last time. Perhaps his feelings at that moment were akin to those which Perceval Landon gave expression to when he wrote of his own departure from the legendary capital of Tharchin’s ethnic homeland. Wrote Landon of his reluctant departure some twenty years earlier:

... the last vestige of the Potala is hidden from our view forever. The road goes on, but for many miles the warmth had gone out of the sun, the light was missing from the distant slopes.... I went on, somewhat depressed at heart.¹⁰⁵

Whether Gergan Tharchin felt pangs of regret like Landon’s will never be known. In any event, the trip home would hold its own great interest for the Indo-Tibetan. For on the way, Tharchin, in company with Doring Thaiji, who had asked him in Lhasa before departing to do so, took a diversionary trek separate from the main party. These two had left the latter and traveled alone west and then southwest to Shigatse, with the understanding that they would eventually rejoin the rest of the officers and Karma Dechhen at Gyantse later. (Apparently Tharchin had left his wife in the care of Karma’s relatives who were presumably accompanying the newly-wedded couple down to India, though this is not clear from the available documents.) In both his end-of-life “memoirs” and his brief biographical sketch of his early years the Tibetan educator made mention of this first visit of his to Tibet’s second city, and by putting these two documents together one is able to gain a fuller understanding of why there was this side trip. It appears that Doring was traveling to Shigatse at this time because he was under military orders to go there and recruit more soldiers for the enlargement of the Tibetan Army. And before leaving the Tibetan capital he had purposely sought Tharchin’s companionship for the journey.¹⁰⁶

Doring was more than ten years younger than his companion from Kalimpong, yet the two of them had apparently struck up quite a close friendship, which nevertheless should not now be surprising when one recalls that the older Tibetan had stayed most of the time at Gyantse (when not teaching) with Doring Thaiji at the latter’s estate outside the town. Moreover, at Lhasa he was a guest the entire four to five months while there in the home of

the same host. And again, it was Doring whom Tharchin had sought out for advice and counsel during his "period of romance" with Karma Dechhen that ultimately led to his marriage to her at Lhasa. As still a further demonstration of their close friendship, there was found among the Tharchin Papers by the present author a telegram that was sent by the Thaiji from Lhasa in December 1944 which read: "Best wishes for Christmas and New Year"—proof, if any were needed, of their continuing friendship even some twenty years later. Whether Doring had now asked Tharchin to accompany him to Shigatse merely for companionship or for further study in Hindi and English (as well as in advanced Tibetan) is not known. It was probably for both purposes.

But a question arises, Wouldn't it have been far more natural and logical, and perhaps more effective, for there to have been at least *two* military officers ordered to Shigatse together on this recruiting assignment: Doring and one other of the four officers heading for Gyantse and India or Doring and one other officer not of these four? Yet if this be so, does it not raise speculation in one's mind that the purpose reported later by Tharchin for Doring to have gone to Shigatse—the recruiting of additional soldiers for the Tibetan Army—was but a cover to hide the real reason for this officer to have gone there: that perhaps he was on a secret mission alone? And if true, what was that mission? And why have Tharchin accompany him?

Historians Alex McKay and Melvyn Goldstein may have provided an explanation for why this young aristocrat Army officer had *really* been sent to Tibet's second city. It is now believed, on solid evidence, that at this time, that is, early to mid-1924, a failed plot had been brewing to overturn the Dalai Lama's secular power in favor of transferring the country's temporal authority to General Tsarong, Tibet's powerful, progressive-minded and influential Army Commander-in-Chief. The research into these events of the period undertaken by these two scholars have definitely uncovered this evidence with incontrovertible documentation. Yet it was also a plot which historian McKay believes, again on strong evidence—but of a circumstantial kind, had been hatched by none other than Political Officer Bailey and which was to be encouraged and ultimately fomented through the subversive activities of his agent at Lhasa, the Darjeeling Police Inspector Laden-La, and with the apparent assistance of another individual who during the early period of his time in Tibet had been in the employ of the British. But the latter had also been in the employ of the British earlier in India, for he had been hired as an interpreter/translator when during the early part of 1923 a group of Tibetan officers and men had been sent for training to the Quetta Military College in Assam. There he had trained with the men and then accompanied them when they returned to Tibet and more particularly to Gyantse, at which point McKay picks up the story in his study on the British frontier cadre *vis-à-vis* Tibet. Utilizing much of the material about this individual which Goldstein had previously ferreted out, McKay has a very intriguing paragraph concerning this person and the helpfulness he had subsequently rendered to Laden-La at Lhasa. Observing that there are still many unexplained events surrounding this failed coup attempt, the historian especially singles out the shadowy role played by Padma (or Pedma, Pema) Chandra (Tsendra):

He was a Bhutanese monk who had taught Tibetan at Calcutta University c.1922-23,* and was then briefly employed by the British as a translator for Tibetan troops training at the Gyantse Agency, which apparently earned him the rank of Major. Chandra then turned up in Lhasa, seemingly assisting Laden-La. The Tibetan authorities later accused him of being one of the prime movers behind the alleged coup. Pedma was accused of encouraging Tibetan military officers to gather their troops in Shigatse ["to fight the Tibetan government," he is reported to have said; for at Shigatse was] where there was considerable ill-feeling towards the central government since its tax-demands had [in November 1923] driven the Panchen Lama into exile.

Significantly, the time-frame for both Chandra and Doring at Gyantse generally coincide, which means that it was here where the two most likely made their initial acquaintance; but if not at Gyantse, then most certainly at Lhasa. For in the light of Goldstein's and McKay's findings on Chandra, it can be asserted with confidence that the timing of their presence at the Tibetan capital is precisely the same—at least in the early period of the plot's development: Doring having remained at Lhasa from about mid-September 1923 to sometime in late January 1924, and Major Chandra having been in Lhasa during much of the period of Laden-La's own lengthy stay there, the latter having reached the capital in the same month of Doring's arrival—September 1923—and not departing Lhasa south for India till early October 1924.

If, therefore, the accusations subsequently leveled against Chandra were in fact true, and if, further, as was later suspected by the Dalai Lama government, Doring Thaiji—a Depon in Tsarong's army and hence a Commander of some 500 soldiers—had himself become a secret supporter of the plot, then the following scenario involving Tharchin's friend could quite easily have developed. By late January of 1924, when Doring departed from Lhasa with the other three officers and Tharchin bound for India, Laden-La and the former employee of the British, Major Chandra, had become intimately associated with Tsarong's army leadership, especially the younger officers, many of whom supported Tsarong II's reform ideas for the country as well as for the military. Slowly but surely and ever since the preceding September, the outlines of Bailey's coup attempt began secretly to take shape at Lhasa among these officers as gradually advised and encouraged by the Political Officer's agent and the latter's assistant. Word of the plot spread clandestinely among those officers believed susceptible to becoming supporters of the coup, one of whom, it would appear, was Doring Thaiji.

Whereupon, when the time came for Doring to leave Lhasa for India, he may have been instructed by the plot's ringleaders among the Lhasa military, and perhaps even personally suggested by one of the later-suspected prime movers in the plot, Major Chandra, to take a diversionary journey to Shigatse on a highly secret mission involving the delivery there of messages, instructions, documents or whatever related to the activity with which Chandra would subsequently be charged: namely, encouraging military officers to gather their forces

* This monk, interestingly enough, had most likely been succeeded as Tibetan Lecturer at the University of Calcutta by none other than Dorje Tharchin's Ghoom Mission School Headmaster, Karma Sumdhon Paul. It may be recalled from Chapter 5 of the present narrative's first volume that through the good offices of the General Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal and member of Calcutta University's Senate, Johan van Manen, Sumdhon Paul had been appointed in late 1923 as Lecturer in Tibetan at the University. This new post for Karma Paul had followed upon the heels of his official dismissal earlier that year from the Christian Mission School's headmastership for having returned several years previously to his original religious faith of Tibetan Buddhism.

at Shigatse as preparation for opposing Tibet's central government headed by the Dalai Lama. If so, the invitation to have *munshi* Tharchin accompany Doring may have provided a further cover for the secret mission, thus projecting the impression of a benign journey by a Tibetan military officer to recruit more soldiers for the country's armed forces—certainly a legitimate activity at this period in Tibetan military history—and at the same time have that officer accompanied by a *munshi* who could continue to instruct him in the languages of India to where this officer was bound anyway for further military training. But to have had *two* key young officers of Tsarong's army—Doring and Dingja, for example—traveling together to a sensitive site like Shigatse had become and from whence the second highest ranking Lama in the land had so very recently fled (15 November 1923), would probably have drawn too much attention to this diversionary trek.

Nevertheless, whatever may have been the true purpose of Doring Thaiji's journey to Shigatse, it will be learned at the end of the present chapter that just a year later many military officers, suspected of having been a party to the plot, were either dismissed, as General Tsarong would himself be, or else demoted and/or dispersed to the provinces. In fact, Doring Thaiji would be one of those suspected of being a participant in the coup attempt and would be demoted from his military rank of Depon. And as for Chandra, in attempting to flee Tibet when the Dalai Lama commenced dismissing military officers suspected of being involved in the plot to overthrow him, the Bhutanese monk was hotly pursued and ultimately killed by Tibetan troops, who had caught up with him on the Gokhar Pass just a two days' journey from the Tibetan capital. "His head was brought back and exhibited in Lhasa," reports McKay, "with a notice accusing him of embezzlement and of speaking out against the Dalai Lama." Whether Chandra, McKay muses, was guilty of these and other charges brought against him, or was simply "a convenient scapegoat, remains a mystery."¹⁰⁷

Finally, if Doring Thaiji was indeed involved at Shigatse in more than merely recruitment, he would hardly have disclosed it to his *munshi* friend Tharchin. These two were certainly close at this time, but not *that* close. In any event, Dorje Tharchin must have enjoyed this first opportunity in his life to visit not only Shigatse but also nearby Trashilhunpo Monastery, the ecclesiastical seat of His Serenity, the Panchen Lama; although by this time, it must again be noted, this Second Highest Personage of Tibet was no longer there, having fled the country to China in mid-November 1923 in self-imposed exile (the reasons for which are explained in Chapter 18 below). Tharchin would not visit this area again till thirteen years later when he would do so as guide and interpreter for the American, Theos Bernard (see Chapter 20 for a description of that visit and what he saw while there).

Now once Doring Thaiji and Tharchin had concluded their business in Shigatse, they traveled quickly southeastward to Gyantse. Here the reunited party from Lhasa would delay their forward journey for several more days to afford the Tibetan Headmaster an opportunity to take stock of the school which he himself had founded two years before. He now decided to close down the institution for three reasons. First, he could not be there in person anymore to supervise the general administration;* second, he did not anticipate returning to Gyantse

* As a matter of fact, during his absence from Gyantse, the administration of the school under his Assistant Habbu's care had deteriorated considerably in a number of significant areas. This is known from what Tharchin had told Jesuit Fr. Henry Hosten in his conversation with the Catholic priest at Darjeeling in June 1925, as

to live and work again, at least not in the foreseeable future; and third, which was probably the overriding reason, because, as he himself would put it in his "Brief Biography" later (and couched in the third person): "he closed down his own school inasmuch as the Tibetan government English school was already functioning at Gyantse" as a result of the joint efforts by the Tibetan and British governments to undertake ways of modernizing Tibet. Indeed, shortly after his arrival back in the Tibetan town, Tharchin made a point of having "an interview with Mr. Ludlow [the English Headmaster of the new school] at the dak bungalow." And although having failed earlier to get a post with the new Gyantse school and doubting there would ever come to him the chance to be the Tibetan Assistant Teacher in the future, Tharchin nonetheless "requested" Ludlow "to remember him in case any vacancy occurred for the post of his Assistant." In the end, then, Tharchin's own school in Gyantse folded up and its doors of learning were closed in February of 1924. This action was most likely taken in the early part of that month, and either while the Tibetan Headmaster was still at Gyantse or just shortly after his departure south to India, but more than likely before his departure, which would thus enable him to handle these concluding affairs personally. As for Habbu, the deputed Sino-Tibetan Assistant Teacher originally sent by Mrs. Macdonald, he went back to Yatuang and resumed his former teaching profession there.*¹⁰⁸

reported by Hosten to Swiss pastor Oskar Pfister. Recounts the latter in his book, *Die Legende Sundar Singh*, 215: "His Chinese assistant [Habbu] could hold the school only for a brief period of time. He [Habbu] soon advised [Tharchin] that he had been asked by friends to suspend prayers, hymns and readings of the Bible; also, allegedly, the students did not progress as well as earlier. Moreover, he [Habbu] wished to assume work in the Government school."

* It needs to be noted here that in March of 1924 Tharchin apparently gave a variant explanation for why he closed down his school. For on the 7th of that month, and sent from Calcutta, he penned a letter to Moravian missionary Fred E. Peter, who for a few months that year was residing at Tharchin's birthplace of Poo attempting to dispose of the Mission property there in consequence of the decision by the London-based Moravian Mission Board to close down this station altogether. As will be learned a few pages hence in the present chapter, the Tibetan at this juncture had not yet fully decided to cast in his lot with the Kalimpong Scots Mission. On the contrary, he was keeping his options open and making inquiries in several different directions—one of which was Poo—as a means of determining what his future course should be in working among Tibetans for the sake of the gospel.

According to Rev. (later Bishop) Peter, in Tharchin's letter to him, a copy of which the present author was unfortunately not able to find among the Tibetan's papers, Tharchin mentioned he had only just returned from Tibet where he had been operating a school for Tibetan children. Missionary Peter alludes to Tharchin's letter in one of his own sent to Moravian Bishop Arthur Ward in London, from whom Peter was seeking counsel about the Tibetan's inquiry relative to working among his ethnic countrymen at Poo. To Bishop Ward Rev. Peter wrote the following concerning Tharchin: "He has only a few weeks ago returned from Tibet. It is interesting how he tells that his prosperous school in Tibet was not stopped by the Tibetans but by the British Political Officer in Sikkim [who at this time, of course, was Major Bailey], a state of affairs that quite coincides with what I learned from Mr. Mann." Rev. William Mann, a British missionary, was a member of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Mission in India, a committee of whose Society was about to propose the establishment of a work among Tibetans in the Kalimpong District, with Mann as its missionary. Much against the will of the Kalimpong Scots Mission, he was sent for this purpose in early 1925 to Pedong near Kalimpong, where he and his family remained for two years. Rev. Peter, who was on the Tibetan Mission field with the Moravians in British Northwest India for decades, immediately added here his own observations about British policy towards Missions: "It is of course the old trick of fearing that Mission work produces political unrest, whilst the latest news from doings in Tibet show clearly that prohibition of the Gospel does not help in stopping unrest, which is brought by our Western civilization to out-of-the-world places." Peter to Ward, Poo, 25 March 1924, MCHA.



On the return journey from Gyantse Tharchin must have been one of the most joyous men on earth. "I conducted a Bible school for my [bride]," he confided, "on the back of the pony; that is to say, while riding the pony I coached her concerning the important articles of the Christian faith! She could recite by heart the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Apostles' Creed."

From Gyantse the party proceeded to Kalimpong, where they arrived while it was still the month of February. From here they traveled down to Siliguri in the plains on their way to Calcutta, though it would appear from documentary evidence that before reaching the latter place they briefly stopped by at Shillong (perhaps to finalize arrangements for their training period there). Siliguri, located several hundred miles north of the Bengal capital, is the railhead

Now when this that Rev. Peter reported on of what Tharchin had written him is placed alongside all that has been related in the Text above and at the close of the preceding chapter, it would seem that there was a variety of considerations which conspired together to impel the Tibetan Headmaster to close down his school, not one of which by itself would have probably been sufficient to compel Tharchin to do so, except, of course, if Major Bailey had indeed *ordered* the Tibetan to cease his work at Gyantse because of it having taken on a Christian Mission character about it. Yet it is not clear from Peter's account if this in fact is what happened. Moreover, it must not be overlooked that Tharchin, though an ethnic Tibetan, was nonetheless a citizen of British India; and therefore, he could only have remained at Gyantse for the two years he was there at the good pleasure of not only the Tibetan government but also that of British India (read: the British Political Officer for Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet). The British were fully aware of Tharchin's educational activities, including their Christian character, throughout his stay at Gyantse. It is not too much to say, therefore, that had the British been unduly concerned over Tharchin's conduct of his school—especially if it had stirred up any kind of unrest, political or otherwise, among the secular or religious ruling circles at either Gyantse or Lhasa: something it is known never occurred—then he would most certainly have been ousted long before this. Furthermore, if Major Bailey had felt compelled to "stop" the Indo-Tibetan's school at Gyantse, and for the reason just described, then how could this same British Political Officer turn right around and commend him for planning to open another school at the very heart of Buddhist Tibet; and, moreover, grant him the requested authorization to go to Lhasa for this very purpose?

It may well have been true, of course, that when Tharchin and Bailey conversed at Gyantse, the latter may have *suggested*, perhaps even *strongly*, that because of the agreement forged between London and Lhasa, there would be no need to have *two* schools there, he leaving for Tharchin himself to conclude from this that it would be redundant for him to keep his institution open when almost next door to it there was in operation even then another, and Government-instituted, one that had every intention of drawing through its portals the very same student clientele as was presently the case in Tharchin's school. Moreover, this development may account for why Political Officer Bailey expressed enthusiasm and encouragement when he learned of the proposal—first broached, and then greatly supported, by Tibetan officials themselves—for Tharchin to open a school at Lhasa for these officials and for the general public welfare. For such a consequence would remove whatever competition might in time have occurred at Gyantse had Tharchin decided to keep his open. Additionally, as was intimated in the previous chapter, perhaps Bailey also viewed the creation of Tharchin's proposed Western-style school at Lhasa as contributing further to the desired modernization of the country that would aid in tying this northern-buffer state more closely to British India, thus advancing British interests in the entire region, especially in the face of what at this time Bailey perceived to be a growing challenge from Communist Russia in Central Asia. But to say as Tharchin apparently did, according to Rev. Peter, that his school was "stopped by the British Political Officer," may be too strong a statement for him to have made, if indeed he couched it in those terms, which is doubtful since nowhere in his several historical and biographical sketches of his life and ministry in Tibet, as well as in his lengthy talks with Fr. Hosten at Darjeeling, did Tharchin ever once take the opportunity to make such a statement; but without being able to peruse a copy of the Tibetan Headmaster's letter to Rev. Peter itself, the matter must be left at that.

in northern West Bengal which serves Kalimpong and Darjeeling. Besides trekking by foot or transport animals down to Siliguri, there were in those days two other means from Kalimpong: one of them a motorable road the entire forty-mile distance; the other involving the combined use (in either direction) of (a) the now defunct Darjeeling Himalayan Railway between Siliguri and the Guelle Khola (Jelle Kola) Station two miles west of the Teesta Bridge, and (b) that part of the motorable Kalimpong Road which takes the traveler the remaining twelve miles to Kalimpong due east of the said Station. It may be recalled from an earlier chapter that much of the railway just mentioned was totally washed out as a consequence of the massive landslides resulting from the cyclonic rains that wrought such devastating destruction upon Kalimpong and the surrounding area in June 1950; and it was never rebuilt afterwards.¹⁰⁹

The motorable road from Kalimpong to Siliguri provides a beautiful drive through some of the loveliest terrain in the lower elevations of the Himalayas. And doubtless Tharchin must have enjoyed serving as guide to his bride and the four officers as they made their way together through this lovely terrain down to the Siliguri plain. George Patterson, a one-time resident of Kalimpong, has described the scenery through which they must have traveled (though in the reverse direction) as follows:

... in Siliguri we hired a car to take us the forty miles to Kalimpong. The road ran out of Siliguri, across a flat plain, for almost ten miles, then entered the foothills of the mighty Himalayas. Far above, the eternally snow-covered Kanchenjunga provided an unparalleled backdrop to an exciting play of ever-changing greens and yellows and browns. The road curved and climbed between thick forests, laced by yellow sunshine across which exotically colored butterflies dipped and twisted, and sometimes along the face of a mountain above the green and rapid-frothed river Teesta far below. Well up the Teesta Valley an elegant bridge spanned the river, and crossing it the road tilted into an even steeper gradient and snaked its way across the face of the mountain in ten miles of acute bends to Kalimpong.¹¹⁰

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Upon reaching Siliguri Tharchin was to go on with the Tibetan officers to Calcutta (via Shillong, but only briefly) while Karma Dechhen was to remain in the Darjeeling District. (It is not certain at what point in their travels the four officers had been destined to split off—one and three. More than likely it had not already occurred prior to their reaching Kalimpong but was to take place after the officers and Tharchin would return to the Darjeeling District from Calcutta late the following month of March and as they would then shortly afterwards make their way from the District to their respective training sites, with Changlo Chen going off to Gangtok for a course in gunnery and the others to Shillong for the same purpose. See next paragraph.) Arrangements were thus made for his wife to stay, during this temporary separation, with Finnish missionary Miss Kempe¹¹¹ at Kurseong 20 miles south of Darjeeling, who kindly went down to Siliguri to receive the young lady from Tharchin's hands. Next day Ani Kempe and the new bride returned together up to Kurseong, where Miss Kempe, in

Tharchin's words, would "acquaint her with the Christian teachings."¹¹² In fact, the new Mrs. Tharchin would benefit from Ani Kempe's teaching for the equivalent of three months that stretched intermittently over a lengthy period between March and the end of July 1924, as will be explained below.¹¹³

Along about the end of March, Tharchin arrived back in Kurseong from Calcutta while the officials proceeded directly to Darjeeling. These officials and their party spent a few days in the hill station with the intention of later leaving with Tharchin for the Assamese city of Shillong for more military (gunnery) training. During the interval of their few days' stay in Darjeeling, arrangements were made for the water-baptism at Kurseong of Karma Dechhen and for "the marriage ceremony," said Tharchin later, that would unite them "according to the Christian rites"—both events to occur on the same day! Rev. J. Kelly, who conducted these rites for the Tharchins, was at that time the Tibetan Mission missionary who was stationed in Darjeeling.* On the appointed day—which was the 25th of March 1924—all preparations for the baptism were in order, and for the occasion several friends from Ghoom and Darjeeling arrived in Kurseong.¹¹⁴

Like many other communities which had sprung up along the slopes of the Indian Himalayas of the Northeast, Kurseong, whose own elevation is about 5000 feet above sea level, was at this time enjoying its heyday as a place to which Government officials and army officers' wives would come up during the hot season as a means of escaping the oppressive heat of the plains. At the time that a five- to six-mile-wide strip of hill territory had been ceded to the British by the Raja of Sikkim in 1835, it would appear that Kurseong—which was included in the ceded tract—was an insignificant village. But with the extension of the "toy train" to the place in 1880, thus bringing Kurseong into direct link with Calcutta, the town grew in popularity as a hill station from that moment onward. So that by the census of 1901 the town could boast a population of about 4500. Moreover, in 1891 Kurseong became the headquarters of a large subdivision of District Darjeeling that included the terai area of Siliguri and a portion of the Darjeeling hills. During this same period and on into the first decade of the new century, Kurseong saw the founding of a number of hotels and small guesthouses, several Mission schools and Government schools, a Jesuit church and seminary, a Scots Mission church, a Catholic convent, and an Irish Catholic industrial school.

* "... the Tibetan Mission founded by Miss Ferguson, a colleague of Miss Annie Taylor, ... works in Darjeeling ...". So wrote Church of Scotland missionary and future supervisor of Gergan Tharchin in the Tibetan work at Kalimpong, Rev. Dr. Robert Knox, in a letter he sent to a friend of his in Auckland NZ during the latter 1930s, a copy of which was among Tharchin's personal papers. "In Darjeeling a number of different missions and workers have labored from time to time. Rev. and Mrs. Kelly had a Tibetan mission there for many years, and one still meets people in the Darjeeling area who were influenced by their ministry. ... Rev. Kelly was also instrumental in bringing a British soldier, Mr. Mann, to the Lord. Later on Mr. Mann married one of the Finnish missionaries, and for some time they also did Tibetan work in Pedong." Lillian Carlson, "The Story of Christian Missions to Tibet," in Carlson et al., *If the Vision Tarry*, 16. On an earlier page (p. 13) Carlson noted that Karma Dechhen "was baptized at Kurseong ... by the Rev. J. Kelly." Mann, incidentally, is the same Mr. (later Rev.) William Mann mentioned in the previous note above and at the beginning of the previous chapter's Text. It may further be recalled that it was Rev. Kelly, having now become a friend of Tharchin's, who much later that same year figured rather prominently in supplying the arch nemesis of Sadhu Sundar Singh's, Jesuit Fr. Henry Hosten, and at the latter's request, information about the Sadhu and about Gergan Tharchin's relationship with the Punjabi evangelist. See the first volume of the present biography, Chapters 10 and 11.

Now besides many Tibetans, there were living here as well a sizable community of Mongoloid-featured Nepalis, Marwari Indians from the plains, a Chinese and a Moslem here and there, and of course, Europeans.¹¹⁵ Called by the Tibetans Karsang, meaning the “Good Castle,” this hill station was, and still is, the site of one vestige of Tibetan religious life: a small lamasery. Here is where one of the many divinities of the Tibetan pantheon—Karsang Gyepo, the “King Demon of the Good Castle,” the divine guardian of this little Buddhist shrine—has his dwelling place.¹¹⁶

But on this particular day in the life of this Tibetan community, Kurseong would play host instead to a remarkable gathering and fellowship of Christians, and not Buddhists, although some of the latter were present, too. Held against a superb background of incomparable beauty that combined District Darjeeling’s lovely Himalayan foothills and the much higher snow-covered peaks in the distance, this small assemblage of the faithful would be witness to one of the ancient and most significant rites of the Christian faith. For it was here in this well-nigh unparalleled beautiful setting that Dorje Tharchin’s spouse was immersed beneath the waters of a fast-flowing stream among the peaceful hills. “I believe,” said Tharchin, “that she was the first Tibetan lady convert from Lhasa proper ever to be baptized in India.” Much impressed—and naturally so—by the baptismal ceremony, he remarked that the occasion was incredibly inspiring. The four Tibetan officers were represented at the baptism by their deputies who, as Buddhists, witnessed the Christian rite of baptism for the first time in their lives.

Tharchin went on to describe the event in even greater detail:

A small tent was pitched in the vicinity of a running stream. After the lady had removed her old clothing, she put on a long white gown symbolic of the purity of the heart that has been washed by the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Small weights were attached to the border of the gown all around in order to hold it beneath the water and thus prevent it from rising to the surface. After a few catechetical questions and answers which the young lady assented to most affirmatively, she was immersed in the cool waters of the stream—the act of immersion reminding her of her conformity with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. The calmness of the contemplative hills was only once disturbed: the reverberating echoes of the Christian hymn,

“There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,”

which is traditionally sung after the emergence of the baptismal candidate up from the water. The ceremony was carefully watched by the deputies of the Tibetan officers and by many other representatives and friends, all of whom showered lovely presents and milk-white scarves upon the beautiful bride.

After the baptism Tharchin (a soon-to-be convinced Presbyterian) and Karma Dechhen (now a staunch “Baptist”!) were later that same day united in holy matrimony in a Christian ceremony that was performed by Rev. Kelly. The Christian wedding took place in the Kurseong residence of Ani Kempe. Karma was gorgeously attired for the occasion. She combed her hair according to the Tibetan style but did not wear any earrings. A lovely photograph was snapped.

Later when the Tibetan officials saw the wedding photo, one of them complained to their friend about the absence of earrings on the bride’s ears. To which the husband replied, “I did

not have any with me at the time.” Whereupon the Tibetan official flared up, saying: “Why did you not tell me about this earlier? If you had told me in advance I would have borrowed my wife’s earrings and given them to Karma Dechhen for the occasion.” Although it was obviously too late, nevertheless, the goodwill gesture on the part of this official was most touching and highly appreciated.



By now the Tibetan officers, who at this time were still in Darjeeling spending their leisure time as profitably as possible, decided to move on to Assam’s hill station of Shillong in the Khasia Hills for the more technical training in artillery and machine-gun warfare. It was most likely at this juncture in their Indian sojourn that the four officers and their respective retinues separated: with Changlo Chen and his party traveling to Gangtok while the other three and their retainers journeyed toward Shillong. This latter city was at that time the capital both of Assam Province and of the Khasia and Jaintia Hills District in British India some distance to the southeast of Darjeeling. Its population in the 1920s was estimated at around 25,000. With the three officers who were bound for Shillong went Dorje Tharchin, who also took along his wife. The newlyweds spent one month together at Shillong, after which Tharchin brought his wife Karma back to Kurseong in late April of 1924 and left her with Ani Kempe. He then proceeded back to Shillong again. Upon completion of their respective courses of studies towards the end of June, the four Tibetan officers (now reunited), together with Tharchin, reassembled once more at Darjeeling where the Tibetans from Lhasa lodged in a building near the railway station. These four, along with Tharchin, spent the month of July there where the four probably received further language instruction at the hands of their talented Indo-Tibetan linguist from Poo. Yet it is more than likely that during his stay with the Tibetan officers at Darjeeling, Tharchin took the opportunity now and then to slip away via the “toy-train” down to Kurseong to be with Karma Dechhen. But a day came at the end of July when Dorje Tharchin and his wife were reunited permanently and went on to Kalimpong to establish their new home.¹¹⁷



Before leaving this period in Gergan Tharchin’s life, one more event needs to be recounted. While walking through the streets of Shillong one day in early March of 1924 (which had to have been during the Indo-Tibetan’s brief stopover at this Assamese hill station in company with the four Tibetan officers on their journey together ultimately to Calcutta), Tharchin noticed some posters displayed announcing special Christian meetings at which Sadhu Sundar Singh was to be the featured speaker. A historian by taste and aptitude, the Tibetan noted the dates of the meetings carefully and recorded them in his diary. (Today, however, this diary

cannot be found.) He inquired from the local pastor about the details of the meetings and especially asked the current whereabouts of Sadhuji. As it happened the Sadhu had accepted some speaking engagements in the region of Assam which would occur prior to his launching a contemplated evangelistic tour into Tibet over the mountains from that vantage point. He had left Kotgarh in the Simla Hills sometime in October 1923, no doubt speaking and evangelizing everywhere along the way to distant Assam.¹¹⁸

February of the following year found the Sadhu spending five days among the Santals, an aboriginal tribe of northeastern India. Meetings at which he spoke were held at the town of Grahampur in the Goalpara District of Assam just to the north of Shillong. "His visit was an event of rare joy to the Santals," one of his biographers noted. During March of 1924 the Sadhu visited the Khasia Hills, nearby to Shillong, on the occasion of the Synod (Assembly) of the Presbyterian Church of India, which was held at Mairang. He was in this area, in fact, between the 6th and 21st of March, speaking at various meetings. By June, however, the Sadhu was back in the Simla Hills recuperating from the strenuous preaching tour he had just concluded in Assam and its environs from where, as noted, his original intention had then been to visit Tibet again with the gospel. But in a letter to Rev. H. A. Popley on 13 June 1924 he explained his failure to go there:

I returned from my tour last week. I have had very good opportunities of preaching the gospel but I am sorry to say that owing to the weakness of my lungs I could not cross over high mountains on my way to Tibet and so I had to return. Hard work and continuous speaking for years in large meetings have affected my lungs, but I am feeling better now.¹¹⁹

It would appear, then, that his physical inability to negotiate the high mountain passes along the Indo-Tibetan border of Northeast India now left him free to address additional and perhaps even larger public audiences in the Shillong district and elsewhere in Assam before departing the area to return to the Simla Hills. These additional gatherings, such as the one(s) which the Sadhu's old friend was to attend, would have occurred sometime between 6 and 18 March, and earlier rather than later in the period, given the chronology of both Sundar Singh's and Dorje Tharchin's movements.¹²⁰ What now follows delineates how these two fellow workers in the Christian gospel were able to meet up with each other again after several years of separation.

On the appointed day which Tharchin had noted in his diary Sundar Singh addressed a mammoth daytime gathering in Shillong's public *maidan*. The latter is a Hindi term that conveys the idea of a level or gently sloping grassy plot and usually signifies a municipal park, parade ground or esplanade, and is found in Asiatic and African towns and cities. The maidan at Shillong thus provided an ideal setting for accommodating a large crowd. Thousands upon thousands of people flocked to hear the sermon of the great yellow-robed Indian Christian saint. After the public address was over Dorje Tharchin met his old friend at the pastor's lodge. The date was 6 March 1924.¹²¹ He met him again, probably the same day, but in the evening at a church building where Sadhuji was conducting a prayer meeting. Both were very happy to see each other once more after an interval of three years since they had last met at Agra in early 1921. Ever since his first encounter with Sundar at Kotgarh in 1907 Tharchin had maintained regular correspondence with him, and as a result of this continual

contact by mail the Sadhu had come to know about the Headmaster's school at Gyantse and his marriage at Kurseong. In the course of their conversations in Shillong Tharchin told Sundar Singh that Rev. Graham had asked him to return to Kalimpong to help with the local Tibetan church work there; he surely also shared with the Sadhu the idea he had of perhaps returning to Poo to labor in the vineyards of the Lord there (see below, however, for the outcome); but he likewise informed Sundar Singh that he would not be going back to Tibet on a permanent basis. Here, then, was an unexpected opportunity for the Tibetan to converse with the Sadhu about the various options which now lay before him with regard to his future ministry and to receive from his friend whatever counsel and prayer fellowship he could have from this most valued co-worker in the gospel. But it also represented what was probably the last time these two friends ever saw each other again; and by April 1929 when the saffron-robed sadhu commenced his last known journey to Tibet, the rest of the world never saw or heard from him again either.



For various reasons Dorje Tharchin had now decided to stay in Kalimpong and not return to Tibet—at least for the time being. Hence he declined to accompany the Tibetan officials from Darjeeling back to Lhasa. Indeed, Tharchin must have breathed a great sigh of relief over his decision not to return with them when later he and everyone else concerned eventually came to learn what had awaited three of these four officer friends of his upon their return to the Tibetan capital. For had he gone back to Lhasa with these friends, it could very well have resulted in a serious case of “guilt by association” conceivably ending in the Indo-Tibetan's expulsion from Tibet and thereby dimming expectations of being able to return to his ethnic homeland any time soon. Here, then, is what happened, with more background detail provided than heretofore presented previously.

As was only briefly alluded to in the preceding chapter, of these four officers, three would be stripped of their high rank within a year of their return to Tibet. For in 1924/5 all three would be tainted by the charge of conspiracy that would be brought to the attention of Dalai Lama XIII against his very own most favorite official, the Tibetan Army Commander-in-Chief Tsarong, by the latter's powerful opponents at Lhasa. The allegation was to the effect that Tsarong was conspiring to “strengthen the Army to make himself ruler of Tibet.” While Tsarong was out of the country during most of that year on pilgrimage in India with his wife and Mary La, these opponents—principally (a) the ambitious poor nobleman Lungshar who, as one of Tsarong's rising rival favorites of the Dalai Lama, now “longed to have all the power for himself,” and (b) Dumpa (Bhrumpa) Dzasa, nephew of His Holiness who would ultimately replace Tsarong as Army Chief—were, it was said, “often” telling the Dalai Lama this story about Tsarong. In fact, it was reported to Mary La by her sister-in-law that the latter had heard “that Dumpa had shed tears in the presence of His Holiness, saying that he could not bear the responsibility if Tsarong succeeded in taking over the country and that Tsarong had already built a palace for himself,” a reference to a new Tsarong House in

Lhasa built in 1923-4 which, wrote Mary, "some malicious people said was even finer than Norbu Lingka," which it was not! She added that Dumpa had been taking opium and was very lazy in his work, and further, that it was rumored "that Lungshar had schemed to have such a weak person made Commander-in-Chief."

But besides these rivals for power, there were also influential monastic voices being raised against Tsarong because these ecclesiastics "suspected him of being pro-British" (which he was, but only because he was even more pro-Tibet!) and because they were fearful that if all the progressive reforms were implemented which the Army Commander (and for that matter the Dalai Lama himself) wanted to institute in many areas of Tibetan life, such a development "would lessen their own power." They were particularly resentful of the increased taxation of monastic properties as a way of supporting Tsarong's enlarging Army whose officers—then being trained by the British at Gyantse and the Quetta Military College—were already under suspicion of having embraced Western values which these clerics believed posed a serious threat to Tibet's Buddhist culture. Furthermore, their worst fears of how the Army could be used to curtail their traditional influence and power had already been demonstrated in 1923 when the Great Thirteenth had ordered the use of Tsarong's soldiers to suppress a threatened revolt by the aggressive inmates of the powerful Drepung Monastery nearby, and again in 1924 when Tsarong and a group of his young officers had made an unprecedented request of the *Tsongdu* or National Assembly (predominantly ecclesiastical in its representation) that a military representative be admitted to its hallowed monkish membership. Though the *Tsongdu* ultimately agreed to the request, Tsarong's enemies used this incident to further their intrigues against him. All these opponents now joined together to level against Tsarong Shape what on the surface appeared to be a false conspiracy charge but which, according to historian Melvyn C. Goldstein, now seems to have had a considerable basis in fact, though from his perspective not proven beyond a reasonable doubt. Nevertheless, Goldstein was compelled by the force of rather extensive and convincing documentation to cast Tsarong in quite an unfavorable light, stopping just short of concluding that there was indeed a plot by the military to usurp temporal power from the Dalai Lama, with Tsarong at the center of the plot.

As already pointed out earlier, a more recent research into the matter has been provided by another historian, Alex McKay, who presents a quite convincing case for believing that in 1923/4 a coup by young military supporters of Tsarong to wrest secular power from the Dalai Lama and transfer it to their top Commander had indeed been set afoot. It was a plot, though, which, surprisingly, seems to have been planned by one of British India's more prominent frontier officers for Tibet, Major F.M. Bailey. Having dispatched to Lhasa in August of 1923 the Darjeeling Police Inspector Laden-La to serve as almost his own personal agent, Political Officer Bailey, acting on his own initiative and outside British authority, commenced using his agent as the on-site catalyst in developing the clandestine scheme. Indeed, according to McKay's more recent research into the matter, it is believed that Laden-La, besides successfully carrying out the wishes of Tibet's government to create an effective police force for the Tibetan capital, was also being directed by Bailey to gradually assume an advisory role with the Tibetan military and commence by degrees to encourage Tsarong's military supporters, if not Tsarong himself, to move in the direction of implementing a coup.

McKay, like Goldstein, however, has given General Tsarong the benefit of the doubt (see Chapter 20 in the present volume for further details on this aspect).

Now because Tsarong's enemies, reported Mary La, "had been working hard against him" during his lengthy absence in India, their opinions ultimately prevailed, resulting in the reluctant removal by the Great Thirteenth of Tsarong as his top Army Chief. As Goldstein has written:

Although the Dalai Lama realized the importance of the military both for national defense and for control of the unruly monks, he had thought a strong and professional military, under the control of his trusted favorite Tsarong, would be completely subordinate to the Government. He now found this unrealistic. Goaded on by the Dronyerchemmo [the Lord Chamberlain, Temba Dargye, the then monk official who headed the Dalai Lama's personal staff and who shared the monastic party's fear of a large and powerful army], he chose in the end to weaken the military rather than risk their deposing him.

As a consequence, many of the younger Army officers who had supported Tsarong in his military and other reforms were removed from the Army, and other supportive officials, like Tharchin's three friends, were demoted. The announced reasons given at the time for these actions by the Government "were not sensible" in the opinion of Tsarong's "daughter" Mary La, who wrote that some of the younger officers had been removed on the flimsy grounds that "they had their hair cut short while training at Shillong" (!) where the heat was obviously extremely uncomfortable for any Tibetan. Though Tharchin's friends were not *removed* from the Army, Commanders Dingja and Doring Thaiji had nonetheless been demoted from their military rank of Depon and "were ordered to put up their hair again as soon as possible"! As for Changlo Chen, he was deprived of his titled rank of *Gung* (Duke) because of his alleged involvement in the same supposed plot of Tsarong's to usurp power at Lhasa. But even with Tsarong's dismissal from the Army, his rivals would continue to plot and spread rumors against him, still urging the Dalai Lama to depose him from the *Kashag*; but the Tibetan ruler "was always reluctant to be unfaithful to his hero." As a matter of fact, it would not be till 1929 that the Great Thirteenth would finally succumb to the relentless pressure and at last remove him from the Cabinet post of *Shape* "and leave him no power."¹²² Still further facets to this fascinating plot and Tsarong's alleged role in it must be touched upon in Chapters 18 and 20 of the present volume.

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Now as a result of Tharchin's decision not to accompany the four Tibetan officers back to Lhasa from Darjeeling, the proposal to found a school in the Tibetan capital as previously planned could never be achieved. In fact, the tense atmosphere present at Lhasa during the year of 1924/5, "with rumors of conspiratorial oaths and hidden weapons,"¹²³ would not in the least have augured well for the establishing of a school there modeled along British or Western lines. Indeed, the idea was abandoned totally. Tharchin managed instead to send another young man with the officials, who would now leave Darjeeling for good in early

August. This particular Tibetan, Sonam Tobgay, had read up to Matric; that is to say, he had finished the tenth class of high school, which in those days was considered a good educational achievement in India. His original home had been the village of Algarah near Kalimpong. Sonam Tobgay was to die much later in a catastrophic flood which overtook Gyantse in 1954.¹²⁴



On the 15th of August 1924, Dorje Tharchin entered upon a pivotal change in his life and service: he joined the Mission work of the Church of Scotland in Kalimpong. Yet it can be discerned from a perusal of the pertinent documents available that the final decision to cast his lot in with the Scottish Mission did not come quickly nor easily. For it came only after a period of soul-searching and waiting before his Lord God over a number of months. It also involved soliciting the opinion and advice from a number of individuals in several different directions—in particular, the Moravians in Indo-Tibet and his good friend Sadhu Sundar Singh.

As has already been learned, in early March of 1924 shortly following his return from his long stay at the Tibetan capital, Tharchin sent off a letter of inquiry to Moravian missionary at Poo, the Rev. Fred E. Peter. In it he sounded out the possibility of his going to his place of birth with his newly-wedded wife to settle down and commence a ministry among especially the ethnic Tibetans there; and with a view, no doubt, of later penetrating the borders of the Closed Land of Tibet itself at the appropriate moment. Although a copy of Tharchin's letter could not be found among his personal papers, enough of a summary of it has been preserved within the pages of a signed copy of missionary Peter's lengthy reply to it, as well as in two more letters the Moravian sent to others which discussed Tharchin's proposed project.

Interestingly, Peter's letters not only are informative about Tharchin's possible plan for his future; they also reveal, to some extent, the doubts and misgivings which apparently continued to lurk in the minds of the Moravians at the West Himalaya Mission about this "former Poo boy," as Rev. Peter was wont in one instance to refer to him. Consider these passages, for example, from this missionary's several letters sent from Poo:

Your kind letter of 7 March 1924 reached here ... I have read it with deep interest and have prayed to God to show me clearly what to answer, for this is a matter which may deeply affect the spread of His kingdom in these parts either for good or for evil. If you are induced to come here to Poo by the real desire to work here in your native village for Him and if you do so in the strength of Him who died that you may have peace with God, then it is all right and you will be a means of great blessing, though it will probably not be an easy place for you. If on the other hand you should come here for the sake of any worldly gain for which you might hope, I have no doubt that not only will you gain nothing in that respect, but that you will help to finish what good may be left here as a result of long years of work for the spread of His kingdom in these parts. A man like what I hope you have grown to be is just what is needed here at present. But I also hope you will let me say without offense to you that I scarcely know enough about you, even with this long letter before me, and with the good reports about you received from Mr. Mann, to judge confidently that you are the man we want here. I know from my own

experience that man's heart is so deceitful that one often deceives oneself. I pray that God may help you to understand and fix your own mind and show you clearly what to do in this important matter....

Remember that no financial aid from wherever it comes will make your stay in Poo a happy and fruitful one. The conditions for that are peace and power that Jesus alone can give and which He will give only to a man whose sins He has forgiven.... (Peter to Tharchin, 25 March 1924)

I beg to send you herewith copy of a letter of mine to Tharchin, a former Poo boy, who seems to have half a mind of returning to his native place. I wanted him years ago as a helper for Poo, but then he was not at liberty to come. If he could be settled here in Poo it might mean the saving of some of the fruits of our work here, but I am afraid that, after consultation with Sundar Singh or Mr. Mann, who spoke very highly of him, he will give up the idea....

... I learn that the Scottish Mission is more or less ready even to ordain him [as perhaps a lay catechist, at this point]. But I wish you to understand that I cannot say good for him, without knowing him more intimately.... (Peter to Bishop Arthur Ward in London, 25 March 1924)

The matter of Tharchin has meanwhile been settled. He has accepted a call for service with the Scottish Mission at Kalimpong, has married a girl from Tibet and is not likely to be available for work in connection with us. This is all the better, as Brn. Kunick and Heber were rather doubtful about the wisdom of helping him in any wise to settle here at Poo, which certainly would have required an extraordinary degree of strength from him, such as only the grace of Christ is able to work in man whom the Spirit of God has previously convicted of his sin. From what Mr. Mann told me about Tharchin, such seems to have been the case; but that is, as I told you, really all I know about him. Br. Kunick knows him probably much better than I. Anyhow, I think we can dismiss any thought of connecting him with our work for good and all. If he is worth anything, the Scots will keep him, especially as their pay is said to be very liberal; and if he is a fraud, we do not want him. (Peter to Br. Klesel, 20 May 1924)¹²⁵

Needless to say, in the light of all which has been narrated concerning the life and ministry of Gergan Dorje Tharchin up to this point since his departure from Poo in 1910, the Moravians should have no longer entertained doubts about him by 1924. Far from being a fraud or in search of worldly gain or lacking in God's forgiveness of sin, Dorje Tharchin was developing into a most useful, reliable and deepening spiritual servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. But because a great distance separated the West Himalaya Mission stations from those Mission centers of other missionary Societies working in the far-off Darjeeling District, it can perhaps be understood why there was such ignorance on the part of the Moravians about him. In time, however, these lingering clouds of doubt would quickly and forever be dispelled.

As intimated in the quoted passage from Rev. Peter's letter to Br. Klesel, the Tibetan from Poo had by early May of 1924 made his decision to lay aside any thought of settling at Poo and to accept, instead, the invitation which Dr. Graham had extended to him several months earlier to join the work of the Scottish Mission at Kalimpong. Even so, this decision to forego Poo did not come without Tharchin having first sought out the Sadhu's advice on the matter even as Rev. Peter himself had hoped he would have done. For the Moravian missionary had written in his letter to the Tibetan the following: "Sundar Singh ... has written to me also from Shillong on the same day as you [i.e., on the 7th of March 1924], and this makes me hope that, though you seem both to have written without knowing one about the other, you meanwhile will have talked with him about this project of going to Poo, and you will know that at one time [i.e., quite recently] he thought of settling down here himself."

Probably, though, Tharchin and the Sadhu *were* aware that each *would* be writing Rev. Peter at *some* future point, following their Shillong talks on March 6th. On the other hand, it is doubtful they knew both of them would be writing on the same date: the Tibetan writing from Shillong on 7 March concerning his Poo proposal, though now with only "half a mind," to use Rev. Peter's phrase, after having just learned of Sundar's decision *not* to settle in Poo after all; and the Sadhu also writing from Shillong on 7 March concerning his declination to make the Tibetan's home village his headquarters (see Peter's letter to Bishop Ward, 25 March 1924). It may not be too farfetched to assume, incidentally, that the idea which Tharchin had entertained about possibly going to Poo was perhaps partly inspired by his having most likely learned earlier through his correspondence with the Sadhu that the latter himself had been contemplating the same thing. It may well be, in fact, that when informed of this the Tibetan, with no doubt great enthusiasm, had immediately fancied the prospect of teaming up once again in gospel evangelism with his esteemed fellow worker of yesteryears, hoping by this means that he and the Sadhu could together further the spread of the gospel inside the very precincts of Tibet itself. Now, though, upon learning face to face at Shillong of Sundar's own final decision not to go to Poo, which is known he had made by at least 7 March when on the day after their talks he wrote to Rev. Peter informing him of it, the Tibetan had not long afterwards made a similar decision not to connect himself with Poo again.

In any event, by late April or early May, Tharchin had communicated his negative intention on Poo to Rev. Peter and had finally accepted the call for service with the Church of Scotland in Kalimpong. Indeed, well before Peter's 20 May letter to Br. Klesel that reported the Indo-Tibetan's final decision on Poo (see again a few pages earlier), Tharchin by letter had apparently conveyed a positive response to Rev. Graham's request to work among the Tibetans in Kalimpong. But wanting to keep Graham aware as well of his movements and activities, he had also apparently informed the Scots Mission leader in the same letter that he would not be available till after the departure of the four Tibetan officers from India back to their homeland. All this can be deduced most certainly from the contents of a letter which the Scotsman had written to Tharchin from Kalimpong. Dated 21 March 1924, it was Graham's reply to a letter he had received earlier that same month from the Indo-Tibetan which the latter, either during or shortly following his time with the Sadhu, had posted from Shillong or possibly from Calcutta. Found among the Tharchin Papers, the Mission Head's letter reads as follows:

My dear Tharchin:

I am very glad to get your letter & rejoice with you in the spirit and [in the] help you have received at the Sadhu's meetings. It is splendid to hear of the marks of [divine] Power present. I expect it is impossible for him to come here now, as his engagements will be made ahead. But we must all try to get him here before long.

We shall do all we can to keep the Tibetan Church work going till you come. Mr. Macdonald will be here for 2 months more, & I'll ask him to help.

And when your work with the Tibetans [i.e., with the Tibetan officers] is finished, you will get a warm welcome here.

Kind regards.

Yours Sincerely
J.A. Graham

Thus assured of “a warm welcome” and having finally bade farewell to his Tibetan military friends at Darjeeling in early August, Gergan Tharchin, with his newly-wedded wife, was now free to travel to Kalimpong and all which awaited him at the celebrated hill station. Joining the Mission work there on 15 August 1924, the focus of his Christian ministry would henceforth be—as he himself would describe it later—“Tibetan missionary work under the supervision of the Rt. Rev. John A. Graham.” In so doing, he also affiliated himself with the Church of Scotland itself.¹²⁶

Central Asian Geopolitics and the Tibetan Church at Kalimpong

Jesus ... saith unto him, Feed my lambs....

Tend my sheep.... Feed my sheep.

John 21:15-17

EVANGELISTIC ACTIVITY is the expression of the living Church. The evangelization of the perishing world has been one of the stupendous tasks which has confronted the Christian Church throughout the centuries. Repeatedly the Church, the Bride of Christ, has made attempts under the most trying of hardships and difficulties to take the saving gospel of Christ to the ends of the world, especially to the lands closed to the gospel of Christ. The great servants of God down through the ages have forsaken their motherlands and loved ones and with them the riches and the pleasures of the world for the single purpose of proclaiming Christ to people who from their perspective have been bound by the chains of superstition and false beliefs. No wonder, then, that Christian missionaries have struggled to preach the gospel even also in a land as remote and as harsh in climate and topography as Tibet!*

With this definite aim in view, the members of the Moravian Mission sent out by the German Moravian Brethren eventually established, as was already described earlier, four or five Mission centers along the Indo-Tibetan border areas of that day known as Ladakh, Lahul and Bashahr—those such as the ones at Leh, Kyelang and Poo. The border territory of Lesser Tibet where these Mission stations had been founded has been described as “rugged and pathless,” and whose “risks and dangers for a messenger of the gospel were in no way less than the dangers in Tibet proper,” which at that time had been “officially closed to Christianity.”¹ In fact, in 1909 one of the Moravian Christians had been martyred in the nearby Spiti region along this same area of the Indo-Tibetan frontier.²

The pantheon of great missionaries who labored evangelistically and in various other ways in these harsh regions were, as was learned earlier, such men as H. A. Jaeschke, A. W. Heyde, J. E. Pagell, Th. Schreve, R. Schnabel, H. Kunick, and Dr. Karl Marx. “It would be impossible,” observed Charles Andrews, writing in 1934, “to speak too highly of the Christian endurance of this tiny band of missionaries in their pioneer work.” Having been personally acquainted with many of them in the later generation of Moravians along the Indo-Tibetan frontier area, Andrews added that “for more than sixty years they persevered with undaunted courage.”³ Rev. John A. Graham, too, has noted with praise the willingness of these pioneer messengers of the Cross to endure many adverse circumstances that they might bear the message of Christ’s saving gospel to Tibet and the Tibetans. “The Moravians,” he observed in his informative history of the missionary expansion of the Reformed Churches, “were the first Protestants to begin the attack upon the closed land.” Writing in 1898 at a time when he himself was a part-time missionary to the Tibetans at the eastern end of the

* Except for some minor editing by the author, the content of this opening paragraph of the present chapter has been excerpted from a longer paragraph that served as the opening section of Chapter 14 of the unpublished Tharchin “memoirs.” See GTUM TsMs, 137.

Himalayas, Graham could empathetically add the following observations about their gospel efforts along the northwestern end of the Himalayas where the Indo-Tibetan frontier lay: “Very touching and heroic is the story of patient toil and painful witness of these Moravian pioneers in their isolated stations among the Himalayan Snows, where they suffered many hardships and had little cheer in the form of direct results. But they were preparing for the present extended attack on Tibet from many quarters.”⁴ And though in terms of numbers of converts there was never, as Graham and others have indicated, that much to show for all their efforts, the Moravians were highly respected nonetheless by all and sundry who witnessed their self-sacrificing labor of love on behalf of the Tibetans. As one British cavalry officer testified in the early 1890s following his journey across portions of the Land of Snows into Lesser Tibet: “Tibet is not a good field for missionaries. With a similar people even under British rule, where they are naturally not in the hands of the lamas as they are in Tibet, very little progress is made; as may be seen in the results of many years’ work in Lahul and Ladakh by the Moravian missionaries, against whom no one, not even the most anti-missionary sceptic, could say a word.”⁵

But though converts were few, even so, as a result of the various gospel centers which these courageous missionaries established and maintained over the many decades of their ministry, countless Tibetans had the opportunity to hear of the redeeming love of Christ. Moreover, the Moravian Mission enjoys the distinction of having given the Tibetans a translation of the New Testament into their own language which, with the subsequent translation of the Old Testament, resulted in a complete Tibetan Bible for the first time. Perhaps this is the greatest contribution of the German Church to the Tibetan nation, the narration of which is recounted in Chapter 28 of the final volume of the present work.



The history of the Tibetan church at Kalimpong is as interesting as the history of the fledgling Tibetan church among the Moravian missionaries along the northwestern Indo-Tibetan border. For it was in the “little neck” of India near the southeast corner of Tibet where Kalimpong is located that Christian activity among Tibetans gradually came to be centered after the first decade of the twentieth century, and especially after World War II and the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet. But it all began with the devoted labors of an independently-related missionary from Scotland, Evan Mackenzie, who may rightly be regarded as the father and founder of the Tibetan work at Kalimpong.

In commemoration of his and his wife’s original contribution, bronze plates have been inscribed and dedicated to the memory of both Rev. and Mrs. Mackenzie.⁶ The plates were placed inside the Macfarlane Memorial Church whose annex served as the venue for the Sunday morning worship⁷ of the local (Scots Mission) Tibetan church in Kalimpong which Mackenzie himself established. (Since that long-ago day, of course, the entire administration of the Tibetan church had meanwhile been brought within the jurisdiction of the Church of North India.)⁸ But a further way in which the Guild Mission had memorialized the founder of the Kalimpong

Tibetan Church, and in even more tangible form, would occur in 1936. Indeed, Rev. Mackenzie's successor as the supervisor of the Guild's Tibetan Mission, Rev. Dr. Robert Knox, had termed it a "noteworthy development" that year in his Annual Report on the Tibetan Work for 1936 (and found among Tharchin's papers). There he took note of the fact that in June of that year "a new house was opened for the use of the Catechist [Gergan Tharchin] who has been living in Polhill Hall for nearly 12 years. It is named 'Mackenzie Cottage' in memory of the Rev. Evan Mackenzie, the first Guild Missionary to the Tibetans."

Originally Rev. Mackenzie had arrived in India with the specific intention of seeking entry into Tibet in order to proclaim the Christian gospel there. At first he ministered as an independent missionary under the interdenominational Tibetan Pioneer Mission Band that had been founded, organized and led by Miss Annie R. Taylor and latterly administrated under the leadership of missionary Cecil Polhill-Turner.⁹ The story of how the Band's attempt to enter Tibet via Kalimpong and Sikkim ended in utter failure and even alienation by its members from their original leader is related later in the present chapter. Returning with the rest of the Band in late 1894 to Kalimpong in frustration and misgivings as to their future, the Mackenzies decided to station themselves at Pedong, the Indo-Sikkimese border village, it may be recalled, that was only thirteen trekking miles to the northeast from Kalimpong.¹⁰ "With great bravery" they settled into one of the indigenous houses there, and "with complete faith in God resolved to endure all the discomfort of such a situation if only they could do something for the advancement of His Kingdom."¹¹

It should be noted that the town of Pedong was situated along the great mule track from Tibet, and had thus become one of the more prominent caravanserais or resting-places for the Tibetan traders and muleteers.¹² Usually these late-arrivals from Tibet would halt at Pedong, on their way to Kalimpong, for overnight rest, food, and fodder for the ponies and mules. Kalimpong's bazaar in this early period of missionary activity was not nearly the trading center it was to become in just a few short years hence. Nevertheless, it was sufficiently important during the 1890s to motivate these Tibetan traders to bring to its bazaar from across the frontier (some fifty miles away) their wares of wool, ponies, musk, yak tails and other goods. At Kalimpong they would then sell these items to the two or three Europeans or the Marwari Indian merchants who were engaged in the wool and other trades, and in return take back with them to Tibet copper and manufactured goods.¹³

It was in such a caravanserai setting as Pedong that Evan Mackenzie and his wife thought they might usefully apply their knowledge of the Tibetan language, so recently acquired at Ghoom, in preaching the gospel to those who might in turn carry back with them to their closed homeland the knowledge of the Savior. "From many unexpected quarters they received support, and in many ways they were given to feel that their work lay in the place which they had chosen." They were there, in fact, for eighteen months.¹⁴ The conditions of life in Pedong, however, were in the end too much for them, and on the advice of Rev. Sutherland, the Mackenzies—after leaving Pedong to spend what proved to be nearly a year with the Polhill-Turners at Ghoom—decided to offer their services to the Kalimpong Guild Mission.¹⁵

By this time, of course, the missionary in charge of the Scots Mission in Kalimpong was the Rev. John A. Graham.¹⁶ It will be recalled that he had first arrived on the scene in 1889, and shortly thereafter had received the reins of administration of the Kalimpong Mission from the

hands of Dr. Sutherland his predecessor, who nonetheless continued to be in charge of the Scottish Universities' Mission and its Training Institution. Within but a few years Graham was concentrating most of his ministry upon the Lepchas,¹⁷ but he had observed with some degree of pain that little was being done to care spiritually for the Tibetans in the area. He would have to wait a few more years, though, before such a ministry could be launched.

Now the early part of 1895 found the Grahams taking their first furlough back to Scotland that would last for an unusually long three-year period inasmuch as it was felt by Church leaders there that Rev. Graham should visit as many Young Men's Guilds as possible and present a firsthand report to his numerous audiences on the work in Kalimpong.¹⁸ Meanwhile, in early to mid-1896 he began to receive letters from Sutherland which described in detail the entire situation concerning the Mackenzies and the advice he had given them. At the latter bit of news Graham was enthusiastically in support of the idea of their joining the Guild Mission; so much so that at the Guild Conference held at Stirling, Scotland, in October 1896, he pleaded with the Guild to accept the Mackenzies' services in the work at Kalimpong. With the result that funding towards the support of these new Guild missionaries was readily provided for by various elements within the Guilds.¹⁹



Graham through Rev. Sutherland now asked Mackenzie and his wife to come from Ghoom to Kalimpong and commence a ministry among the relatively neglected Tibetan or Bhutia population there. The latter term was commonly applied to embrace the whole of the *Bhot* race,²⁰ whether its members came from their original home of Tibet or from among the other closed border lands. In Mackenzie's and Graham's time there were four main groups of Bhutias: the Sikkimese Bhutias, who were a mixed breed descended from Tibetans who had settled in Sikkim and had intermarried with the Lepchas there; the Sherpa Bhutias or Bhutias of Nepal who had made their way across the border into the "wedge-district" from eastern or northeastern Nepal; the Drukpa Bhutias or Bhutias of Bhutan; and, of course, the Bhutias of Tibet or Tibetans.

Unlike during a later period, at this time the Bhutias were comparatively few in number, but they were easily distinguishable from the other tribal peoples in the Kalimpong area such as the Lepchas and Nepalese. Rev. Graham, in an early treatise on his missionary experience in northern Bengal, and written for the enlightenment of his many supporters back home, has described the Bhutias as

big-limbed traders from across the snowy passes. Their long, wide-sleeved red mantles which serve as their covering by night are in the daytime hitched up by a girdle, and within the capacious folds much gear can be stowed away. From the girdle hangs the inevitable knife. The long woven boots with thick woolen or leathern soles are suited to their rigorous climate. The "religious" among them may be seen carrying in one hand a rosary by which is counted the revolutions of the prayer wheel in the other, each revolution being supposed to make effective the sacred Buddhist phrase *Om mani padme Hum*,²¹ printed or written so many times on the scroll of paper within the prayer cylinder.²²

And Graham's biographer, who himself had spent many years in Kalimpong, has noted that the Bhutias, because they had never been a subject race, had "considered their religion sufficient for their needs." It was "colorful, full of pageantry, and to them satisfying," inasmuch as it "covered most aspects of their lives." He went on to observe that the Bhutias in the Kalimpong area

particularly liked the social organization of their religion which was not stringent like the caste system. The layman's duty was to support the lama and, by abstaining from sin, he might become a lama himself in his next incarnation. It was a gentle religion, inextricably mixed up with culture and customs, with nature and folklore. It was a religion which somehow was in keeping with the majestic grandeur of the surroundings.²³

Such, then, was the social and religious character of the Tibetans among whom the Mackenzies were now to set about working. Formally joining the Church of Scotland Guild Mission, they soon initiated the work at Kalimpong in early 1897,²⁴ resumed ministering the grace and love of Christ to the Tibetans in the area, and eventually organized the first Christian congregation of Tibetans there that subsequently began to be conducted in a special service that met and continued to meet in the Macfarlane Memorial Church. It will be recalled from Chapter 7 of the present narrative that this church building had been completely constructed and then dedicated only a few scant years earlier, in 1891. Led by a delegation of missionaries, European tea planters and other friends, along with some 700 local Christians from all over the Mission area, a great ceremony had taken place at its dedication. This had then been followed immediately by a huge baptismal service (134 candidates, mostly Lepchas) and the first Christian *mela* or fair ever held in District Darjeeling. Inspired originally by Rev. Graham, this fair would soon become a popular annual event that would draw a large gathering of people, including numerous Christians from all the surrounding district churches. By this time called "Isai Sammelan" (Christians' Gathering), this annual occasion—which was held not only in Kalimpong but also at Darjeeling and in Sikkim—provided times of Bible study, special speakers, sports and games, and also set aside an opportunity for "a multi-language song contest for new contributions to be added to the hymnals being compiled." Usually held during the Hindu festival of Dasain, the Isai Sammelan thus came to serve as an alternative gathering for the entire Christian community that included Christians and even non-Christians within the Tibetan community. And in Kalimpong, at least, the Christian *mela* became so popular that it would sometimes extend over an entire fortnight!²⁵

Now by the end of 1897 there had been the conversion of a Tibetan teacher, and the establishment of a school for Tibetan children in Kalimpong in which the missionary himself taught as well.²⁶ Yet the converted Tibetan teacher would not only be instructing *Tibetan* children to read and write Tibetan letters; gradually his Tibetan language class would come to include Bhutanese, Sikkimese and Chinese children too.²⁷

As a way of further encouragement to the Tibetan community Mackenzie undertook a home visitation program, with a view to helping the traders. In addition, he would often visit Tibetan patients at the Charteris Hospital. All this brought him good response from the Tibetan people as several of them had already been acquainted with him due to his residence and evangelistic activities among the Tibetans in nearby Pedong. They were impressed with his and his wife's good work and sacrificial service. The spacious Tibetan Mission House,

which still exists today though it no longer serves the needs of the Tibetan church community of Kalimpong, was at this early period in the work erected and set aside for their accommodation and ministry outreach. And as a consequence of new converts that were emerging from among the increasing influx of Tibetans and Chinese from Tibet (see below), a catechumen's class attended by both these national groups began to be held at this new Mackenzie house every evening except on Saturday and Sunday. Moreover, besides the ordinary morning Sunday service for the Christians, a magic lantern service that was held at the Tibetan Mission House in the evening came to be very greatly attended, producing good results.²⁸ Assembling together at 7:00 on a given Sunday evening, the men, women and children who desired to attend such a service would typically first be shown slides of Tibetan or Sikkimese landscapes, followed by various religious scenes; for example, a slide of Jesus as a baby might be shown, together with other scenes from the life of Christ. There would then be prayers and a sermon by the missionary that encouraged those in attendance to become Christians.²⁹



Yet besides these endeavors among the Tibetans at Kalimpong, Rev. Mackenzie—who in 1909 “was ordained to minister in India”³⁰—also labored elsewhere. According to Cecil Polhill, the new Guild Mission worker “made numerous evangelistic journeys among the Tibetans in Sikkim and [British] Bhutan.” Indeed, it was pointed out by another narrator of these events involving this newly-added Scottish missionary, that during the furloughs of other Darjeeling District missionaries Rev. Mackenzie gladly “spent two years in Sikkim and one in the Duars.”³⁰ He in addition had the privilege, along with British and Indian officials, of accompanying the Panchen Lama, the Vice-Pontiff of Tibetan Buddhism, at all stages of an historic pilgrimage tour of India he made in 1905-6. This was the first time in the history of Tibet that either of the two Grand Lamas of that Great Closed Land had ever stepped foot on Indian soil, the birthplace of the founder of Buddhism. Furthermore, it would be a journey which would culminate in the Panchen of Tibet being present at the Royal Reception and all other public events in Calcutta in connection with the visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales at the then British Indian capital.

Leaving his Tibetan monastery of Trashilhunpo at Shigatse on 8 November 1905, the twenty-three-year-old High Lama and his following traveled down by easy stages to Gangtok where they were guests of the Maharaja of Sikkim, who “placed his palace at their disposal.” Later that same month Rev. Mackenzie met the Panchen Lama—and “his company of some four hundred”—elsewhere in Sikkim, and thereafter, in the words of Polhill-Turner, “traveled with them stage by stage” from that point to Peshok, Ghoom, Darjeeling, * Kurseong, Siliguri and onward by train to various places in central and

* It was at Darjeeling, it may be recalled, that Tharchin's future Ghoom Mission School Headmaster, Karma Sumdhon Paul, had joined the Panchen Lama's entourage as one of its several interpreters. See again Volume I, Chapter 5 of the present narrative for the details.

northwest India as far as Rawalpindi, the party finally returning to Bengal via the Hindu and Buddhist holy places at Benares, Sarnath and Buddha Gaya on their way to Calcutta for the Royal Reception to which this high Lama of Tibet had been invited by the British Government of India. As reported by missionary Polhill, during the entire journey, Mackenzie had rendered invaluable assistance to the Panchen and his large entourage, "serving them in many ways and receiving from several officials warm invitations to visit them in Tibet and Bhutan."

Interestingly enough, it was one of Dorje Tharchin's unexpected but friendly visitors to Poo on Christmas Day 1904, Lieutenant "Eric" Bailey, who now served as the official British escort for the Panchen Lama during the remaining period of his historic journey. It was at Siliguri railway station on 13 January 1906, just two days after the Tibetan Lama and his party had departed Calcutta for the northern journey homeward, that Bailey assumed charge over the Panchen's welfare from the furlough-bound Captain Frederick O'Connor, the then British Trade Agent at Gyantse. In fact, as the latter's temporary replacement as Trade Agent, Bailey escorted the high Tibetan cleric "and his crowd of retainers" back to Trashilhunpo near Shigatse, where they all arrived safely by late January 1906.*³¹



Now the coming of the Tibetans to Kalimpong in large numbers in the early 1900s is attributable to certain historical events whose review may prove helpful here in better understanding what in time confronted Christian workers like Mackenzie and Gergan Tharchin who sought to help those of the latter's ethnic homeland who found their way to this particular hill station. But it may also prove helpful in understanding the incredibly complex international milieu within which Tharchin—the future Indo-Tibetan newspaper publisher, Tibetan educator, friend and confidant to various Tibetan political leaders and social reformers, and secret agent for the British—would from this time forth conduct himself as these facets of his life and work at Kalimpong began to emerge and take shape.

For such a review, however, one must go back to the late nineteenth century and even earlier. For at that time Tibet, though always apprehensive of China, had begun to look upon the British as the principal threat to her sovereignty. Having witnessed throughout the century the systematic absorption into the ever expanding orbit of Anglo-Indian influence of the various Himalayan principalities to her south and west, Tibet now viewed the British—with their army of Indian sepoy right at her borders—with far more alarm. And thus, "given the logic of imperial expansion," notes one recent historian of the period, "it was not hard" for Tibet's Dalai Lama "to conclude that his domain would be next."³² Seeking a counterweight

* Numbered among the Panchen Lama's "crowd of retainers" who accompanied Tibet's Vice-Pontiff all the way to Shigatse, and where he remained for nearly a year thereafter, was Karma Sumdhon Paul. The latter would also subsequently serve Lieutenant Bailey at Gyantse before returning to his home area of Ghoom, where he developed both a personal and professional relationship with Gergan Tharchin. Once again, consult Volume I, Chapter 5 for the details.

to this threat, it was not surprising that if provided the right opening the young Tibetan ruler would look elsewhere—to Tsarist Russia—for support should the situation from his perspective become dire enough. Meanwhile, India was to have a new British Viceroy, Lord Curzon, the kind of man who would not take kindly to such overtures when eventually apprised of them.

Now although when Curzon had assumed the Viceregalship of India in 1899 Chinese power in Tibet was already on the decline, the Viceroy soon came to realize that the concessions which Britain had earlier gained in Tibet at the hands of the Chinese would be meaningless unless implemented. These concessions, granted by China when she signed the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890 and the supplemental Trade Regulations of 1893, had failed to be implemented because Tibet herself had refused to recognize agreements which had been negotiated without her own participation. The convention of 1890, for example, had acknowledged the British protectorate over Tibet's southeastern neighbor Sikkim and had defined the boundary between the latter and the Land of Snows, while the 1893 Trade Protocol to the 1890 Convention had called for the establishment of a trade mart at the Tibetan town of Yatung in the Chumbi Valley which would be open to all British subjects for trade purposes. Reacting to these agreements to which it had not been a party, the Tibetan government actively attempted to obstruct trade at Yatung as well as the efforts which were being made to demarcate the frontier between Sikkim and Tibet.

Confronted, therefore, with this ongoing stalemate of many years, the new Viceroy of India concluded he would have to make a direct approach to Lhasa if this intolerable situation was ever to be eliminated. He thus made several attempts to send letters, "couched in the most complimentary terms," to the Dalai Lama by way of the Garpons of Gartok in far West Tibet³³ and of the Bhutanese Raja Ugyen Dorjee at Kalimpong. All letters, however, were returned unopened, the last one even having been taken to the Potala Palace personally by Raja Dorjee, actually delivered to the Dalai Lama, only to be spurned by him who refused to accept it, he returning it with its seals intact.³⁴ Compounding the disappointing news from Lhasa regarding his letters was the report which came to the Viceroy in late 1901 that a Tibetan Mission composed of "eight prominent Tibetan statesmen" had only recently been dispatched to Russia (where it arrived in June) and headed by a Russian Siberian subject, a Buddhist Lama from Buriat-Mongolia³⁵ by the name of Ngawang Lobsang Dorjjeff (or Dorjiev, Dorzhiev, etc.) who had already been residing at Lhasa for many years.³⁶

The Buriats, of whom Dorjjeff was one, were a talented tribe of Russian subjects whose indigenous religious faith had from time immemorial been Buddhism of the Mahayana school and who therefore, not surprisingly, would often find their way to Tibet on pilgrimage but also to study; and frequently, noted one authority, the latter would often arrive "with financial assistance from the Russian government." At the opening of the twentieth century, for example, there were some two hundred of them in Tibet. These acceptable visitors to the otherwise closed land of Tibet were the ones who supplied the Tibetans—both cleric and lay, ruler and ruled—with knowledge and information about Tsarist Russia, its Government, and that country's generally tolerant policy towards her Buddhist minorities, of which the Mongolian Buriats and Kalmucks were the most notable. And thus these Russian visitors to Tibet and to the Buddhist Vatican of Lhasa tended in the main to project to their hosts a most favorable

image of Russia and the benign character of her Christian Tsar's rule in having permitted these subdued minorities to retain their Buddhist religion.

Now many of these Buriats were able priests whose ability and scholarship earned for them "the respect and confidence of the Dalai Lama."³⁷ One such priest was Lobsang Dorjieff (1854-1938 Western reckoning dates), who was destined to play a prominent if shadowy role in Tibetan politics for many years to come. "His personal qualities and religious erudition," wrote the former British Consul at Tachienlu on the Sino-Tibetan frontier, "had advanced him to the notice and favor of the Dalai Lama, who gave him a position in his immediate entourage."³⁸ Yet to the Dalai Lama Dorjieff would not only project a benign image of his homeland's tolerant rule towards her Buddhist subjects, which had been bestowed upon them by the Tsarist government in exchange for their loyalty; he would also make it clear to His Holiness that Tibet had far less to fear from the distant power to the north than from the Manchu power to the east and especially from British India to the south. And hence, concludes one modern-day scholar, "it needs no conspiracy theory to explain why Dorjieff encouraged the Tibetan government to offset the threat from Britain by contacts with Russia."³⁹

Yet Dorjieff's ultimate aim, it would appear, was never the preparation of Tibet for Russian occupation, as the British came to believe; rather, it was the realization of his dream to establish the semblance of a three-state Buddhist Confederacy headed up by the Dalai Lama which would assure a secured pan-Buddhist unity among that faith's numerous adherents in Tibet, Mongolia and Russia. Though the idea was barely formed in his mind at this moment, he seemed to have concluded early on that an essential first step must be a *rapprochement* between Tibet and Tsarist Russia, since only the latter, as he himself would later observe, "could be the protector of the Mongols and Tibetans against Chinese, Japanese and British oppressors."⁴⁰ It would thus appear that the Buriat Lama had come to perceive that the establishment of friendly political relations between Lhasa and St. Petersburg could not only serve to meet the long-term needs of Tibet but also serve as the best route by which to achieve his visionary religious conception of a vast Buddhist confederation stretching from Tibet to Siberia—a vision that throughout the rest of his life was apparently what governed his every action. For Dorjieff, a Tibeto-Russian political and, by extension, military arrangement would be the handmaiden to the fulfillment of this grand project. And all this the youthful Dalai Lama's confidant and adviser must certainly have at some point communicated to His Holiness, in whom he found a positive response, Dorjieff becoming the teenage Tibetan ruler's official emissary to Russia's ruling circles and remaining so over the next thirty years and more.*

* For nearly a century now, questions regarding Dorjieff and his work in Tibet and Russia have been argued about over and over again. But as new sources of information in both lands have become available, innumerable gaps in the world's knowledge about this unusual and seemingly inscrutable historical figure have today been filled, thanks to recently concluded scholarship. Yet one question in particular continues to defy a satisfactory answer: namely, that though Dorjieff was unquestionably a great political visionary and a great religious pragmatist, nevertheless, when one considers his multifaceted work in Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, what was he *primarily*: a politician or a religious figure? Or was it the case, added the Russian historian Alexander Andreyev, that politics and religion were absolutely inseparable for him in an imperfect materialistic world? As of today the present writer is of the opinion that Andreyev's "hunch" is correct. For in a paper delivered before London's Royal Academy of Arts in late 1992.

Now for the longest period, and even before assuming the position of Viceroy, Lord Curzon had been studying with deepening apprehension the growth of Russian influence in Central Asia and the unfavorable impact it might have on Britain's own economic and strategic interests in the region to the south of Central Asia: the Himalayan principalities and India. Indeed, Curzon had by this time become an unalterable advocate of a "forward policy" of government which in his view the British should pursue with all vigor within this vast region of the world. It was a policy which held that whatever possible intentions Russia might manifest towards the Subcontinent could only be contained by strong military power and the creation of a ring of strategically located buffer states. It was the resultant rivalry which developed between these two imperial powers and the partly clandestine intrigue that was attendant upon it which soon came to be known as "the Great Game," the ultimate issue at stake being the frontiers of empire in the Asiatic uplands.⁴¹

The new Viceroy of India was well aware, of course, that long before the end of the nineteenth century Tsarist Russia had extended herself to the Pamir plateau—the present-day territory of the former Soviet Union which borders upon the high mountainous Hindu Kush that forms the long, narrow neck of what is now northeastern Afghanistan. In fact, towards the end of that century there had occurred on the ground in this very territory an extraordinary encounter in this Imperial Rivalry between the respective agents of the Russian Tsar Nicholas and the British Queen-Empress Victoria. For just a short distance southeast of the Pamirs on the east side of the River Yarkand at an obscure place called Khaian Aksai there met in 1889 two of the most famous Great Gamers of them all: Captain (later Colonel) Francis E. Younghusband and Colonel B. L. Grombtchevski, both of whom were on special assignment for their two sovereigns.

Though both men were cordial towards each other (the Colonel even having invited his rival to dine with him at his tent table that served up delicious Russian "soup and stews, washed down with a plentiful supply of vodka"), Grombtchevski, in the course of their intense conversation together, insisted to his guest that up to a half million of his countrymen were prepared to plunge southward towards India at a moment's notice. For his part, Younghusband was equally forthright, acknowledging that they were "both playing at a big game" and that therefore they "should not be one jot better off for trying to conceal the

the Russian was wont to observe the following: "Today, looking at the mysterious Dorjiev Phenomenon, we perceive it as a curious combination of political ambitions and religious aspirations. . . . [Yet] I think at this point (and I am sorry to disappoint those of you who expected me to solve the mystery of Dorjiev), we still don't have enough information to pass a solid judgment on the man personally. I am tempted to look at Dorjiev still as someone for whom the political intrigues of his day served a religious purpose, but I'm afraid this is just a hunch." Andreyev, "Agwan Dorjiev's Secret Work in Russia and Tibet," *TR* (Sept. 1993):14.

The author of the first full-length biography of the Buriat Lama, John Snelling, has offered up a similar judgment with respect to the man personally. For on the concluding pages of his scholarly work the biographer was moved to observe that "in the last analysis the real core of Agwan Dorzhiev—the inner man, his spiritual life—remains an enigma. There are brief items that one could take as flashes of self-revelation in the memoirs. . . . but no completely satisfactory psychological explanation is possible on the evidence that we presently have." Indeed, like Andreyev, Snelling was compelled to acknowledge finally that "for all the quantities of research I have amassed, I . . . do not feel competent to write an obituary." *Buddhism in Russia: the Story of Agwan Dorzhiev Lhasa's Emissary to the Tsar*, 253-4.

fact.” But then, upon the parting of these two celebrated rivals to go their separate ways, Grombtchevski declared to his “alter ego”—who later reported his gracious host’s words—that “he hoped we might meet again, either in peace, at St. Petersburg or in war on the Indian frontier”; but that in either case Younghusband would “be sure of a warm welcome” even as had just then occurred!

Let it be noted here that in well over half a century of Great Gaming thus far this was the very first time that the two sides in this hotly-contested Imperial Rivalry had even encountered each other on the frontier, and that both of these “thrusters,” writes Patrick French, “must have been conscious that they were making history.” As a matter of fact, the Russian took the occasion to have a photograph taken of the combined spy-exploring parties with his box camera, as though to suggest the historical significance of the event. Indeed, the historian John Keay was wont to describe the picture taken as “the most representative and memorable vignette in the whole of the Great Game.” For in the photo (which still survives to this day) and standing ranged behind the two principal players in this high drama were to be seen all the members of both military escorts that had been recruited from some of the many races of Central and South Asia: Gurkhas, Cossacks, Andajanis, Ladakhis, Baltis, Kanjutis, Pathans, and Kirghiz—a memorable vignette in the whole of the Great Game, indeed!⁴²

But apart from what during the latter decades of the nineteenth century had occurred on the high western Pamir plateau and its adjoining territory, the Russians had even earlier expanded eastward to reach the western borders of Manchu China. North of India and Afghanistan at that time had lived a number of “backward” and nomadic tribes: a mixed lot of Mongols, Afghans, Turkomans and Tatars. This region, long crisscrossed with important caravan routes, boasted a few but strategically significant trading centers such as Samarkand, Bokhara, Merv and Tashkent. The Tsar had long been attracted to these centers, and when Russian forces finally plunged across the steppes north of the Aral Sea into this region of Turkestan, Tashkent—which lay the farthest east—was the first of them to fall, in 1864. By this military action against Tashkent, and by the Treaty of Tarbagatai with China in 1860 and the supplemental protocol agreed to in 1864 that among other things recognized the annexation of the Tashkent khanate, China’s western borders were realigned in favor of Russia, thus bringing the latter to the very gates of Eastern or Chinese Turkestan that in the 1880s would become the Chinese province of Sinkiang.

One Western writer on the history and exploration of Tibet has described how these Tsarist aggrandizements in Central Asia were being viewed among responsible circles in the Indian government. British military strategists, explained John MacGregor, could now reason that

not only was Russia in position to move southward into the Subcontinent across Afghanistan and over the Hindu Kush and through the Khyber Pass, but it now had the option to take a more easterly invasion route through Eastern Turkestan, bypassing Afghanistan altogether. This latter route could either lead southward through Karakoram passes into Baltistan and Ladakh, or run farther east along the traditional caravan route from Kashgar [modern-day Shufu, the chief town of Chinese Turkestan] to Gartok, which crossed the Aksai Chin desert and followed the western edge of Tibet to the Himalayan passes leading into Kumao., and India proper.⁴³

It should come as no surprise, then, that rumors of Russia's apparent diplomatic and political activity regarding Tibet, which had been circulating in India for some little while, would easily set off alarm bells in the minds of Lord Curzon and some of his closest advisers. The news in October of 1901 of the Dorjjeff Mission to St. Petersburg earlier that summer and its most cordial personal reception by the Russian Tsar and Dowager Empress now appeared to the new Viceroy to be just the proof required to demonstrate beyond any doubt Russia's definite interest in the Forbidden Land.⁴⁴ A year earlier, it is true, the Tsar had received the Buriat Lama at the head of the very first Tibetan embassy from His Holiness. But the scant press coverage given this visit and its seemingly insignificant character had led the British Viceroy, upon learning of it, to remark: "Tibet, I think, is much more likely to look to us for protection than to Russia." A year later, however, with news of yet another Tibetan embassy headed up by the same Mongolian Lama, Curzon's reaction to this 1901 visit by Dorjjeff had changed to one of deep concern. For in a letter to the Secretary of State for India at the Home Government in London he wrote the following: "... the head of the mission, though originally a Russian Mongolian subject, has been resident in Lhasa for many years and is no doubt familiar with the priestly junta who rule in that place ... I have not the slightest doubt that the result must in any case be unfavorable to ourselves." Especially might the mission have inspired fear among leaders in British India like Curzon when it was reported that one prominent Russian paper had editorialized in the following vein: "Under the circumstances, a *rapprochement* with Russia must seem to the Dalai Lama the most natural step, as Russia is the only power able to counteract the intrigues of Great Britain ..."⁴⁵

In addition, rumor had it that Dorjjeff, although not originally having any position in the Russian government, had joined the Russian secret service⁴⁶ and had even come to act as an emissary of the Tsar, Nicholas II, on whose behalf he had now invited the Tibetan ruler to St. Petersburg. It must not be overlooked that Dorjjeff, who was popularly known among the Tibetans at Lhasa and elsewhere as Tsen-nyi Khen-po, or "Master of Dialectics," had ingratiated himself greatly to all Tibetans by means of a short treatise he had written many years before but which by now had gained wide currency throughout Tibet. According to the Japanese Zen Buddhist monk, Ekai Kawaguchi, who, it will be recalled, had traveled and studied in Tibet for three years (including a fourteen-month stay at Lhasa) just after the turn of the twentieth century, this treatise of Dorjjeff's had propounded the notion that the Russian Tsar was the incarnation of the great Tibetan Buddhist reformer and founder of the Gelugpa sect of the ruling Dalai Lama, Jay Tsong Khapa, and that Russia itself was the Shambala of Buddhist prophecy: the mystical kingdom that would in time emerge as the great patron and defender of Buddhism against the hostile forces of a decadent world order.⁴⁷ Literally meaning "source of (all) happiness," Shambala had frequently been identified in the past with Russia.⁴⁸ And hence, Dorjjeff's treatise could quite naturally have exerted considerable influence on the foreign policy overtures of the Dalai Lama at this time *vis-à-vis* Tsarist Russia.⁴⁹ Wrote Kawaguchi:

I knew several priests who undoubtedly possessed copies of this pamphlet.... The one from whom I confidentially obtained the drift of the writing told me that he found in it some unknown letters. I concluded that the letters must be Russian.... Tsen-nyi Khen-po's artful scheme has

been crowned with great success, for today almost every Tibetan blindly believes in the ingenious story ... and holds that the Tsar will sooner or later ... found a gigantic Buddhist empire.

Moreover, Kawaguchi (who some historians have alleged was a secret agent in the service either of the Japanese or British—or both)*⁵⁰ reported having heard of a Tibetan commentary whose text located Shambala some three thousand miles northwest of the Buddhist holy city of Buddha Gaya, whose distance, if measured on a map, would site the location of the legendary kingdom in the vicinity of Moscow. It would not be too much to assert from this that the clever Dorjjeff probably used this text to buttress his contention that Russia and Shambala were one and the same. † Kawaguchi also reported in his diary witnessing the arrival in Lhasa of two separate caravans from the Russian Tsar bearing all kinds of gifts: the first consisting of 200 camels, the second, 300. But the Japanese visitor made special mention of the numerous golden brocades of monkish garb that were meant as a personal gift to the Dalai Lama, a present which conveyed more value symbolically than all the other gifts combined.⁵¹

Needless to say, these exchanges between the Land of Snows and Central Asia's restless empire to its north inspired great fear among the ruling circles in British India. The Viceroy

* One possible explanation for why the Zen Buddhist monk might have been deemed a spy for the British has to do with his relationship with the pundit-spy for the British, the Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Das. For it is known that both prior to traveling to Tibet and immediately after his return from there to India, Kawaguchi had spent considerable time with Chandra Das in the Darjeeling area. With respect in particular to Kawaguchi's return stay with Das for over a month (1902) in recuperating from malaria, the celebrated pundit, in the words of Scott Berry, had "picked his brain" for any and every piece of intelligence about Tibet. In fact, Berry adds, "since Das was one of the most important agents working for the British, it is a logical enough assumption that some of the information that led to the Younghusband Expedition came from Kawaguchi through him." *Monks, Spies and a Soldier of Fortune*, 50.

† So writes Edwin Bernbaum in his fascinating and highly-researched volume on the Shambala legend, *The Way to Shambala* (Garden City NY, 1980), 36. He adds that Dorjjeff convinced the Dalai Lama and other high Tibetan officials to believe that anyone who discounted his claim that Russia and Shambala were the same country and denied that the Tsar was the King of Shambala must be a heretic and Buddhism's enemy (p. 17). Moreover, according to Tokan Tada, Dorjjeff had also intimated to His Holiness that the Tsar, for the sake of expediency, was only pretending to be a Christian but that his true Buddhist identity would be revealed at the appropriate moment. See Tada, *The Thirteenth Dalai Lama*, 39. Bernbaum further notes that "there was—and still may be—a book in St. Petersburg ... that claims to trace the ancestry of the Romanov Dynasty of Russia back to King Sucandra of Shambala"—Sucandra being one of the many rulers who shall have ruled the mythical kingdom until Rudra Cakrin ("The Wrathful One with the Wheel"), the 32nd and final King, shall rise from his throne to lead a mighty and victorious army against the forces hostile to Buddha in one last Armageddon-like battle on earth—thus ushering in a golden age of perfect peace, enlightenment and happiness that will last at least a thousand years. Bernbaum cites as his source for the book tracing the Romanov Tsars to Shambala the work by Albert Grünwedel, ed., *Der Weg nach Sambhala* (a German translation of a Tibetan guidebook to Shambala) (Munich, 1915), p. 4. See Bernbaum, pp. 18, 22, 23, 271 with 270.

Actually, the first intimation about Shambala came from Gautama Buddha, and thus Tibetans ground their belief in the existence of this hidden kingdom on no less an authority than that of the Buddha himself. Since he had attained supreme enlightenment, it was presumed by them that he knew everything there was to know and was therefore supposed to know what he was talking about when he delivered certain sermons, now contained in what are known as the Kalacakra texts, in which the Buddha described Shambala and the role it would play in history. Whenever a Tibetan—whether lay or cleric—receives an initiation into the secret teaching of the Kalacakra, it is assumed that this will assure that individual a future rebirth in the golden age of Shambala that is even now, they believe, ripening in secrecy.

Besides Buddha's teachings, however, what gives additional weight to Tibetans' belief in the kingdom of

must have been extremely relieved to learn, therefore, that because of the strong opposition to the proposed visit of the Dalai Lama to Russia by the Tibetan National Assembly, which wished Tibet to avoid all contact with foreigners (especially Europeans), the trip was canceled despite the young Buddhist pontiff's own eagerness to travel to the Russian capital as evidenced by the fact that he had already sent his throne there in advance!⁵² Even so, the Dorjjeff Mission to Russia alone was sufficient grounds for arousing grave concern in the mind of Lord Curzon.

Aggravating this concern still further were rumors the following year (1902) of an even more ominous sort which, if true, would seriously threaten British interests in Central and South Asia: these were stories, unconfirmed, of a secret Russian agreement having been struck with China concerning Tibet and other Asian lands. According to these rumors, China had agreed to permit Tibet to orientate towards Russia in exchange for Russia's assent to permit China to take over several areas of eastern or Chinese Turkestan and eastern Mongolia. It was clear to the nervous British—at least to those in India—that any possible Russian influence in Tibet, coupled with support from China, would obviously pose a dangerous threat to the entire Himalayan frontier of British India. That the Indian Viceroy had put great stock in these unconfirmed rumors is confirmed by what he wrote in November of 1902. For at that time Curzon had indicated that he was “a firm believer in the existence of a secret undertaking, if not a secret treaty, between China and Russia about Tibet ...” and that he considered it his “duty to frustrate this little game while there is still time.”⁵³



Convinced that the only way to prevent this was to send a British mission to Tibet, Lord Curzon submitted such a proposal to the Imperial Government in London. It would have as its main objective, the Mission's leader later explained, “the establishment of our relations with Tibet on a regular and [more] neighborly footing.” The Viceroy was more direct. He proposed to dispatch “a pacific mission,” he wrote, that was intended to “conclude a treaty of friendship and trade with the Tibetan government”; but it would be supported by “a sufficient force” to ensure the safety of this “pacific mission,” while the Nepalese, he added, who reportedly were “itching to have a go at Tibet” themselves, would serve as part of the escort.⁵⁴

Shambala are recent events which appear to correspond to the predictions of the legend. Buddhism's near-total destruction in Tibet and the blatant spread of materialism all over the world, coupled with the twentieth century's many wars and much turmoil—all these fit well with what is supposed to occur before the final cataclysmic battle of human history takes place. Moreover, the rapid and dramatic advances in science and technology fit well, too, educated Tibetans believe, with that facet of the prophecy which declares that the barbarians who overspread the world with their evil will ultimately obtain the means and power to find the hidden kingdom. See Bernbauni, pp. 28-9 and for a discussion of various ancient and recent speculations as to Shambala's location, including those of the current Dalai Lama, see pp. 36-8, 87-90.

* Probably all scholars today would give assent to the conclusion that no such treaty or understanding had ever been agreed upon or even contemplated by the parties concerned.

In London the Curzon Proposal met with an unenthusiastic response; indeed, though concerned about possible Russian intrigues on the Roof of the World, the Conservative government of Britain—and especially its Foreign Office—was more concerned to maintain the status quo *vis-à-vis* St. Petersburg and Peking, and thus did not relish in the least the thought of a British presence on the Tibetan plateau, no matter how temporary; nevertheless, against the better judgment of the Home Government, the Viceroy did receive authorization from it to dispatch a mission—but only as far as to Khamba Dzong, a Tibetan fortress town just beyond the frontier from Sikkim. Here talks could be held with both Chinese and Tibetan officials. Appointed to lead this sensitive diplomatic mission was Lord Curzon's geopolitical ideological soul-mate, Colonel Francis E. Younghusband (1863-1942), with J. Claude White, the Political Officer for Sikkim, as second in command.* The mission, with its entourage, reached the Dzong in July of 1903. The talks failed, however, thus enabling the Viceroy to obtain reluctant permission from London to mount an expedition which, accompanied by a sizable protective military contingent under the command of Brigadier General J. R. L. Macdonald of the Royal Engineers, would proceed to Gyantse.⁵⁵ But after several serious engagements with Tibetan forces there, London was compelled by these unwanted circumstances to acquiesce to the wishes of Curzon and Younghusband: the Expedition received grudging permission to proceed to the Tibetan capital itself.†

In the face of the impending arrival of British troops at the gates of Lhasa, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama fled with Dorjjeff (and his young favorite Chensa) on 31 July 1904 to Urga in Chinese Mongolia, or as one writer of the period had described it, His Holiness went to Mongolia as “a voluntary exile, having fled there when the sacred city became polluted by the presence of English soldiery.” Indeed, Tharchin's later friend David Macdonald, who was one of the lesser official staff members of the Younghusband Expedition, reported later that as he and the others in the Expedition were marching into Lhasa and past the Potala,

*J. Claude White lived for twenty-one years in the Himalayan region. Trained as an engineer, he was appointed to the Public Works Department of the Government of India in 1877. He was promoted to the post of Political Officer in charge of the administration of Sikkim in 1889 and of Bhutan in 1905. Upon retirement he published *Sikkim and Bhutan*, an account of his political career. His photographic albums, *Sikkim* (1902) and *Tibet and Lhasa* (1908), were published by [the photographic studio of] Johnston and Hoffman, Calcutta, in both carbon and bromide print editions. These albums, which contain some of the most sublime and otherworldly images of Tibet and the Himalayan landscape, were oddly enough compiled as official documents of two armed British missions by a man who was disdainful of the Tibetans and their way of life and exasperated by their refusal to take part in ... ‘The Great Game’—British and Russian imperialism in Asia.” Martha Chahroudi, “The Photographers,” in *Tibet, the Sacred Realm: Photographs 1880-1950*, 155. White would remain as the very first Political Officer for Sikkim and Bhutan until 1908 when upon his retirement he was succeeded by Charles Bell. Born in 1853, White died in 1918.

† Interestingly enough, Patrick French has noted that Younghusband—as a way to buttress his and the Viceroy's views on the matter—had not hesitated to submit for consideration by his superiors “every conceivable reason why the mission should advance deeper into Tibet.” And among his accumulating list of reasons was a supposed bit of intelligence offered by missionary Annie Taylor who was based at Yatung nearby to Khamba Dzong. For in a letter he wrote to Sir Louis Dane, Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, the Mission leader had quoted Taylor as reporting the following: “The Tibetans are to attack India from Khamba Jong ... and twenty thousand Russians are said to be on their way to help the Tibetans.” It needs to be added that there was no substantiation the Colonel could produce in support of this alarming claim. French, *Younghusband*, 185. Annie Taylor is more fully discussed later in the present chapter.

from whose lofty and remote precincts the priests were doubtless watching the foreign entourage, he “wondered what was going on behind the blind walls, and imagined the lamas invoking all the aid of their magic to overwhelm the intruders who had destroyed the inviolability of their chief sacred place.”⁵⁶

A thoroughly non-worldly account as to why His Holiness left Lhasa has been provided in the text of the Dalai Lama’s official hagiography, *A String of Wondrous Gems*. Various reasons, all of a non-secular nature, are there put forward to explain the Great Thirteenth’s motivation for leaving the Tibetan capital at this time. All of them had to do with (a) holy places to be visited in the northeastern sector of Tibet and in western China, (b) a feeling “he was destined to re-discover” certain “religious treasures” in those same Buddhist areas which would be significant for “the future of Buddhism,” and (c) a realization that numerous monastic trainees there were “in need of his attentions.” “Therefore,” concludes this non-secular explanation for the Dalai Lama’s departure from the Sacred City, “when the British appeared at the bridge south of Lhasa he decided that the time had come for him to leave the Potala and travel to these faraway regions.”⁵⁷ Clearly, any fair-minded reading of the reasons given plainly reveals that they were nothing but a disingenuous litany of excuses to veil the *real* reason for his flight: in the words of Patrick French, the Dalai Lama “felt it would be unwise to risk direct dealings with Younghusband, while his advisers feared he might be taken hostage.”⁵⁸



Yet the question needs to be raised, Did the Expedition’s leaders find any indication of Tsarist intrigue in Tibet—for example, a cache of Russian rifles in Lhasa and the presence of Russian soldiery, and proof that Dorjjeff was indeed a secret Russian agent: notions which had been rumored and firmly believed by Curzon and Younghusband? Nearly all historians of the period are of the opinion today that despite the many rumors and stories about Russian agents and secret arms shipments to Tibet, no evidence whatever of any Tsarist activity along these lines had been perpetrated.* As to the first notion (Russian men and arms), Younghusband, writes his brilliant biographer Patrick French, “had to accept reluctantly that his detailed theories about Tsarist conspiracy in Tibet were mistaken: there were no Russian arsenals, no lurking Cossacks.... The Russian bogey had turned out to be a phantom.” And with respect to the Mongolian Lama being a spy, French offered the following assessment: “It is clear that Curzon’s fears about the ‘insinuating Dorjjeff’ [Younghusband’s phrase] were wide of the mark: there is no evidence that he was a Tsarist

* See, for example, Snelling’s *Buddhism in Russia* (1993), 108-9, 115; David S. van der Oye, “Tournament of Shadows: Russia’s Great Game in Tibet,” *TR* (Jan. 1994): 19; and Patrick French, *Younghusband* (1994), whose views on the matter are offered next in the Text above. As asserted by Russian historian Nikolai Kuleshov, though on its own initiative Tibet had itself chosen Russia as “a would-be guarantor of its traditional way of life,” Russia had “failed to respond—indeed, it actively sought to avoid becoming embroiled in Tibetan affairs. This failure is explained not by its obligations to Great Britain or China but rather by the absence of significant Russian interests in Tibet.” *Russia’s Tibet file*, xvii.

agent.* Rather he ... was ... a Tibetan agent seeking Russian support—a roving ambassador for the Dalai Lama who attempted to gain support for Tibet among the higher echelons of Russian society ...; support [however] which did not prove forthcoming.”⁵⁹

It would appear that French has been well justified in asserting that some modern accounts of the Expedition have been incorrect in implying that the origins of the Younghusband Mission “were rooted in invention, and that suspicions about Russian activity in Tibet were made up by Curzon and his allies as an excuse for a shameless act of imperialism.” Far from this having been the case, declares French, “the reverse was true”: namely, that their genuine though misplaced fear of Russian expansion “made them invent flimsy pretexts for sending Younghusband’s Mission across the border.” Both private papers and official correspondence, which French has amply cited in his work, clearly support this thesis, and “that by 1903 both Curzon and Younghusband had a firm but misguided conviction that Russia and Tibet had signed secret treaties which threatened British India’s security. The focus of their fear was ... Dorzhiev.”⁶⁰

It would seem, then, that Britain’s decision to send the Younghusband Expedition all the way to Lhasa had been influenced more by Lord Curzon’s obsessive fear of Russia than by any realistic assessment of Tsarist policy. Indeed, according to David S. van der Oye, Russia “never really had a policy for Tibet,” the Tsar even having failed to reciprocate the heretofore unprecedented step by the Dalai Lama of sending an emissary to St. Petersburg.⁶¹ In the end the entire episode surrounding Lama Dorjieff and the Younghusband Expedition up to Lhasa serves as a glaring example of gross misconceptions and miscalculations by one power regarding the foreign policy aims and intentions of another. In the words of exiled Tsarist diplomat Nabokov, who had been present at the negotiations between Dorjieff and the Tsar’s Foreign Minister and who would later make reference to British concern about Russia’s alleged subversion in Tibet, the latter had been “a comedy of mistakes based on fantasies but not on facts.”⁶² “Ironically,” writes French, “the result of the Expedition was further confusion about Tibet’s status, rather than a new stability in Asia. The most significant consequence was not Younghusband’s Treaty of Lhasa, which was largely disowned by the British government, but the precipitation of Curzon’s own resignation from office.”⁶³

Following the humiliating defeat suffered by the Tibetans at Gyantse and at the Karo La further north, the Expedition—whose “trail of soldiers, servants, advisers and coolies,” and composed of “Pathan, Parsee, Balti, Dogra, Sikh, Irish, English, Tibetan, Scottish, Sikkimese,

* When asked at a Tibetological Conference in 1992 by a Tibetan scholar from Tibet University at Lhasa whether Dorjieff was really a Tsarist spy, the Russian historian Alexander Andreyev’s immediate reaction was: No, certainly not. But upon further reflection the historian later asked himself: Can one assert this without some hesitation? How much do we really know of what he said or did behind closed doors at government offices and private salons? Yet to arrive at a positive answer to the Tibetan scholar’s original question, notes Andreyev, “evidence of recruitment is essential.” Though German Orientalist Wilhelm Filchner and other Western scholars have asserted that Dorjieff was recruited by Russian intelligence in the mid-1880s, the Russian historian acknowledged that he “could find no evidence in the Russian sources to either prove or disprove this fact.” He went on to observe, however, that the work Dorjieff carried out in Russia between 1905 and 1914, and “no matter how we label it, included basically a mediating service as well as a consulting one, provided for both the Tibetan and Russian governments.” Andreyev, “Agwan Dorjiev’s Secret Work in Russia and Tibet,” *TR* (Sept. 1993): 11. For some intriguing details, incidentally, about Filchner’s credibility himself, see Snelling’s *Buddhism in Russia*, 39, 275-6.

Bhutanese, Ladakhi and Gurkha,” stretched forward in a long line over a great distance—did finally enter Lhasa on 4 August 1904 in a subdued triumphal march.⁶⁴ It did so just four days after the Dalai Lama had felt compelled to flee its sacred precincts. And by 7 September a treaty known as the Lhasa Convention was duly signed in the Potala between British and Tibetan officials whose main features called for the following: the opening of new trade marts at Gyantse and Gartok with a British Trade Agent to be resident at each; no selling or leasing of any Tibetan territory or resources to any foreign power without prior British consent (aimed against Russia); British consent prior to Tibetans dealing politically with other foreign powers (again, aimed against Russia); the imposition of an indemnity on Tibet for Britain having had to invade her country, to be paid in seventy-five annual installments, with the Chumbi Valley to be occupied by the British until the indemnity was paid; and, by separate article attached to the Convention, the British Trade Agent at Gyantse to be permitted, whenever the need arose, to visit Lhasa. Although the Convention had been aimed at completely excluding Russian influence from Tibet, it had the effect as well of treating China as a foreign power.



Surely Colonel Younghusband had extracted a list of monumentally favorable concessions, both political and economic, from the defeated Tibetan government: a diplomatic achievement of the first rank, it would seem. Yet within a few short months after the signing, the Colonel—whose actions had sent shock waves throughout Europe and Asia—found himself censured by the London government for having deliberately gone beyond his instructions and for having caused it great international embarrassment by his 300-mile penetration to Lhasa. This latter situation had occurred because in late 1903 Great Britain had assured the various European powers concerned that there would be no permanent interference in Tibet’s affairs; yet Younghusband’s treaty terms had plainly suggested a long-term presence in the country by the British. As a consequence, the indemnity was almost immediately reduced, the period of its payment changed to a mere three years, and the attached article abandoned. In fact, many of the other concessions which Younghusband had won were in effect nullified by subsequent British actions over the next few years. For with the victory of the Liberals in Great Britain in late 1905, the policy of the new Secretary of State for India, John Morley, was now to be—“in a burst of anti-imperialism”—one of non-interference in Tibet that represented a complete reversal of British policy there!

In 1906, for example, an Anglo-Chinese Convention was signed in Peking whereby Britain, motivated in part by sensitivity to foreign criticism, now agreed not to interfere in the administration of Tibet and—stopping “just short of declaring the Manchus to have sovereign rights over Tibet”—recognized China’s special position there. All this was in exchange for Peking’s reluctant adherence to the 1904 Lhasa Convention, now greatly modified to the extreme advantage of China.

As yet another example of Lord Morley's retrenchment policy towards Tibet and much of Central Asia, an Anglo-Russian Convention concerning Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet was negotiated the following year (1907) as a result of repeated attempts by the British to end the "Great Game" politics of Anglo-Russian rivalry in the region and to preserve the status quo in Central Asia. (On the surface, at least, the rivalry in Asia seemed indeed to be ameliorated by this Convention; not, however, till the Russian Communist Revolution of 1917 did the rivalry cease altogether.) That part of the Convention respecting Tibet called for both rival powers to agree not to appoint any official representative at Lhasa (though this did not hinder "direct relations between British commercial agents and the Tibetan authorities," which in fact was specifically provided for by the Convention), mandated both powers to recognize China's "suzerainty" over the Great Closed Land (the first time ever that this word had been employed in any diplomatic document to describe China's relation to Tibet),⁶⁵ and also bound both signatories to refrain from interfering in Tibet's internal administration and to negotiate with Tibet only through Chinese intermediation. In so many words, therefore, this Convention in reality reflected the true, long-standing sentiments of Tibet's ruling circles, both ecclesiastical and lay, when it came to the country's external and internal affairs. As one important British official of the period, Frederick (later Sir Frederick) O'Connor, had well put it: "Tibet has never been averse to accepting China's rather shadowy suzerainty, but has always strongly objected to, and indeed resisted, any attempt at the assertion of sovereignty or control of her internal affairs" by anyone—whether China or European countries like Russia and Great Britain.⁶⁶

Two further contributing factors to the declining influence of the British in Tibetan affairs at this time were the withdrawal of all her troops from the Chumbi Valley in 1908 (though this did not terminate the British garrisons at the trade marts) and the signing by Britain that same year of new Tibet Trade Regulations with the Manchu government to replace those of 1893. Although a Tibetan minister had been present at these negotiations, his participation was minimal. These new trade agreements further strengthened Chinese economic influence in Tibet at the expense of the British inasmuch as all three trade marts at Gartok, Gyantse and Yatung would now be placed under the control of Chinese officials. (This Chinese control would last only till 1911, however, when her very presence in Tibet would be totally eliminated with the onset late that year of the Republican Revolution in China itself; see below.)

The effect of these various actions was now all too obvious: no longer was Chinese influence in Tibet in eclipse as before; to the contrary, the Manchu government, having been stunned by the ease of Younghusband's march through Tibet, quickly realized that the indirect rule of the past could no longer maintain Chinese influence in Central Asia and that only by direct administration could there be any guarantee of Manchu control of the frontier. And hence Peking not only began reorganizing the Tibetan administration and ridding the country of the remaining British influence, it even attempted to assert Chinese suzerainty over Nepal and Bhutan. Moreover, even before the two Conventions of 1906 and 1907 had been signed, Peking had also begun taking military measures to restore her control over Tibet; for with the Dalai Lama's absence from the country having created a political vacuum in Lhasa and the Tibetan forces having been soundly defeated by the British, Tibet was in no position to put up

much resistance to China's military advance which commenced in earnest in 1905 along the Sino-Tibetan border under the ruthless and efficient generalship of Chao Ehr-feng.* One significant consequence of these military actions was an influx into Kalimpong and other Indian and Sikkimese communities of large numbers of Tibetans ravaged and made homeless by the ruthless Chinese general and his troops as they steadily advanced through Tibetan territory from east to south to west. These resettling Tibetans would be joined by even more of their countrymen just a few years hence as a result of still further unusual events that were about to unfold.⁶⁷ Rev. Mackenzie and much later Dorje Tharchin would thus have their hands quite full in coping with the economic, social and spiritual needs of an ever increasing arrival of Tibetan refugees (and also even disaffected Chinese) in Kalimpong and its vicinity.



Meanwhile, in September of 1904 (after the departure of the Younghusband forces from Lhasa), the resident Chinese Amban at the Tibetan capital had posted on the streets an Imperial proclamation deposing the Dalai Lama for having deserted his country. The posters were immediately torn down by the Tibetan populace. Even so, during his stay for more than five years in Mongolia and elsewhere in East Asia, His Holiness was invited in early 1908 to Peking by the very same Manchu Emperor, Kwang Hsu, who had deposed him, and by his "evil-genius" mother, the old superstitious Empress Dowager Tzu Hsi; and after a brief sojourn there—during which both Emperor and Dowager, within one day of each other, died in November of 1908—he finally was permitted to take his leave of the Heavenly City and return to Lhasa, where he arrived in December of 1909.⁶⁸ By that time all of eastern Tibet had been brought under Chinese control, making it possible for General Chao to direct his forces westward towards the Tibetan capital.

Incredibly, for the second time in less than six years, the harried Grand Lama of Tibet would feel compelled to flee once more from before the enemy. Having fled towards Mongolia and China from before the advancing British in 1904, this time, ironically, he would flee to India and the protective embrace of the British in the face of advancing Chinese troops! For

* So savage was his ruthlessness, in fact, that he was known to the Tibetans as "Butcher Chao" because of his habit of beheading all who stood in his way. his beheadings. it was said, having reached into the tens of thousands in number. Later recalled, however, from Szechuan Province (the General never entering Lhasa but all the while remaining in the Sino-Tibetan area). Chao himself was put to death by beheading—the very kind of terrible death he had inflicted on numerous Tibetans. See Mullin, *Path of the Bodhisattva Warrior*, 78-9. In sharp contrast to "Butcher Chao's" strategy and barbaric methods was Colonel Younghusband's invasive expedition into Tibet. Whereas the Chinese under Chao had concealed their plans and showed every indication of remaining in the country, the British, notes Roger Hicks, "had announced their intention to invade, and the purpose of their invasion; they had invaded; and once they had secured their purpose, they had withdrawn." Moreover, Younghusband "had been careful to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, and of course had not permitted atrocities, looting or wanton destruction." So that when the Dalai Lama felt compelled to flee his land once more (see subsequently in the present chapter's Text), the British in India "seemed a safer bet" to His Holiness to flee to there rather than to China. *Hidden Tibet*, 55-6.

in early February of 1910 one to two thousand Chinese soldiers were within two days' march of Lhasa, into whose precincts an advance unit of forty cavalymen and two hundred infantrymen eventually entered on the 10th and made their presence known by firing on the Potala (where the chief officials of the Tibetan government were then residing) as well as plundering and burning parts of the city. Another thousand and more troops under the command of Chinese general Chung Yin arrived two days later.⁶⁹

Surely Valentine Chirol of the London *Times* had been most prescient when he prophesied in 1906 that "the end of it all will be that China will have climbed back into Lhasa on Younghusband's shoulders!"⁷⁰ In the wake of these events, at twelve midnight on the 12th, the Dalai Lama and his ministers, with a small following, rode out of the Potala undetected and fled south to India.⁷¹ There His Holiness spent the next two years and more as a refugee at both Darjeeling and Kalimpong,⁷² inasmuch as the British government in India—having already begun to reassess its recently-adopted reticent policy towards Tibet—had immediately granted him asylum.⁷³ On her part, the surviving Chinese Empress, Hsiao-ting, in the name of the new Emperor Hsuan Tung (the three-year-old nephew of her deceased husband and known more familiarly as Pu Yi), was not so kind: "in a pathetic gesture that only served to underline the myth of Chinese authority in Tibet,"⁷⁴ she issued from a throne already weakened by the deaths of both her Emperor husband and the powerfully intimidating Empress Dowager a proclamation formally deposing the Dalai Lama, just as her husband the late Emperor Kwang Hsu had done in September 1904 and for the same reason: for having deserted his country.

Now it was during his days of exile in India that the Dalai Lama became friends with Charles (later Sir Charles) Bell and, together with his close confidant and friend the future new Tsarong Shape, learned much about the modern methods of government and military science.⁷⁵ Also while in India, His Holiness visited the Viceroy (Lord Minto) at Calcutta; and during the winter of 1910-11 he made a religious pilgrimage to many holy places, including Buddha Gaya, Sarnath, Kushinagara and Benares in India and Lumbini in Nepal.⁷⁶



In the meantime, in China the Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist People's Party) revolutionaries under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat-sen (1867-1925) successfully toppled the centuries-long Manchu Dynasty (1644-1912) and founded a republic for China.⁷⁷ The Tibetans, emboldened by this upheaval in China, seized the opportunity to cast off the Manchu yoke in their country as well. The "patron-priest" relationship which had for so long existed between the Manchu rulers and the Dalai Lama had gradually lost its original meaning, it having developed instead into one in which China had more and more dominated and even finally exerted overlordship in both the domestic and foreign affairs of Tibet. This fact was nowhere more readily reflected than in the powers that by progressive acquiescence on the part of the Tibetan government had ultimately accrued to the Lhasa Amban, the Chinese representative who resided at the Tibetan capital. According to the *Li Fan Yuan Tse Li* (the

Board of Dependencies Regulations, 1816 edition), the duties of this Imperial official, whose title was *Chu Tsang Ta Chen* (High Minister Resident in Tibet), had empowered him with full authority over the Government and military forces of Tibet: that is to say, every higher ecclesiastical and lay appointment had required his confirmation; and furthermore, Tibet's relations with her neighbors—Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal—had been solely under the control of the Amban.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the Tibetans, having suffered such indignities for so long, reacted in the way they did to the electrifying news from Peking of the end of the oppressive dynasty of the Manchus. They now rose up in arms, routing the Chinese forces in a number of small clashes at Shigatse, Gyantse⁷⁸ and elsewhere and besieging the Chinese garrison at Lhasa for an extended period of time. Moreover, with the abdication in February 1912 of the recently-installed Manchu Boy-Emperor Pu Yi⁷⁹ and the establishment of the Republic of China under President Yüan Shih-kai, the Dalai Lama was free to return to Tibet that same year after the appropriate political, military and security arrangements had been made for his safe conduct back to Lhasa.⁸⁰ Moreover, the Imperial decree that had previously deposed him would be rescinded by Presidential mandate of the Republican government in October and His Holiness—together with the *Tsongdu* (the Tibetan National Assembly)—would issue a Declaration of Independence. Meanwhile, plans were afoot for the Chinese in Tibet to evacuate the land since they were going to be turned out of the country in droves.



According to the Three-Point Agreement (and its accompanying arrangements) that was signed on 12 August 1912 between Chinese and Tibetan representatives⁸¹ (and witnessed by five Nepalese officials including that country's envoy to Lhasa, Lieutenant Lal Bahadur), Chinese soldiers were to return to their homeland. This achievement of a peace agreement between these two unfriendly and suspicious Governments had not been an easy or speedy one. Only through the good offices of the Nepalese envoy at the Tibetan capital and the chief of the Ladakhi Moslem community there⁸²—both approached by the Lhasan Chinese officials—was it at all possible for negotiations to have begun and for a settlement to have been signed. Although the Tibetans did not object to the conciliation efforts of Nepal and the Moslems, and agreed to the Chinese request for a *rapprochement*, they nevertheless insisted on the prior condition that would require the Chinese to surrender all their arms and ammunition and immediately return to China.⁸³ Yet this bold demand, as well as Chinese fears about their safe passage through Tibet and what fate awaited them in their homeland if they returned unarmed—these three matters were the ones which for many months of negotiation posed the greatest impediment to achieving a settlement of the accumulated disputes which had festered between the two powers for many years.

It was perhaps the return in June 1912 of His Holiness to Tibetan territory, though only as far as Sam-ding Monastery some seventy miles south of Lhasa,⁸⁴ that according to one authority on Tibet and Central Asian affairs helped to break the logjam; for apparently it

created, in Ram Rahul's opinion, "the necessary climate for peace negotiations."⁸⁵ But it may very well have been due also to the presence in Lhasa of Sonam Wangfel Laden-La (1876-1936), the son of a long-established Tibetan-Sikkimese border family of the Darjeeling District. For this talented individual had been sent to the Tibetan capital—with the approval of the Dalai Lama—to assist in the negotiations.⁸⁶ Yet whatever the reason, in less than a month thereafter, an Agreement was indeed concluded, the consequence of which, in its impact on Sino-Tibetan relations during the next forty years, was profound beyond measure.⁸⁷ For as Rahul observed with regard to the significance of the Agreement of 1912: "A connection [between the two lands] which had been maintained without a break since [the 1720s], had been rudely snapped.... Chinese control was no longer a factor to be reckoned with." This was because the document had basically called for precisely what the Tibetans had demanded from the beginning: the immediate surrender of all Chinese arms and ammunition and the expulsion of all Chinese officials, military officers and troops from Tibetan territory. It of course also provided sufficient safeguards to allay Chinese fears about their safe conduct through Tibet. But the Agreement never addressed, because under the circumstances it could not, the other Chinese concern about the fate they might experience in their own country were they to return without any arms amidst a highly-inflamed and destabilizing revolutionary situation there. That concern was apparently to be left in the hands of the gods!

The Agreement made crystal clear, however, that the route by which the Chinese would return to their homeland would not be *eastward* through Tibet but would be via India to the south, and more particularly by way of the Kalimpong area. The surrendering commander of the Lhasan-based Chinese troops, General Chung Yin, had originally requested that his men be allowed to return to China via Kham to the east. This was refused, however, due perhaps to the fear by the Tibetan government that they would join forces with those Chinese troops still in Kham and thus be able to perpetrate a counterattack upon Tibet. And hence, the evacuation of the Chinese would have to take place through more friendly British India and mainly through the entrepôt of Kalimpong. Moreover, as further called for in the Agreement, all Chinese officials and soldiers were to be evacuated from Central Tibet "in three batches," with no delay to be tolerated in their departure. Indeed, all three contingents of troops and officials were to leave Lhasa beginning the very next day following the signing and sealing of the Agreement! In fact, the document called for the conclusion of all departures from Lhasa by no later than the 27th of August 1912! With respect to the departure of the first contingent, it left on schedule 13 August and included the Amban himself. Yasujiro Yajima, the Japanese military officer who had arrived at Lhasa in July and was therefore an eyewitness to the departure, has described what it looked like:

Beginning on 13 August more than twelve hundred people led by the Amban, on mules, horses and yaks, were escorted from Lhasa. Everyone was surprised to see how much they took with them. It was typical of the Chinese to think more of their possessions than of their lives.⁸⁸

As it turned out, however, the clever Chinese were extremely slow in fulfilling the provisions of the Agreement, their last "batch" (consisting of General Chung and his bodyguard) not departing the Tibetan capital till 19 December 1912.⁸⁹ He had remained in Lhasa hoping

reinforcements from Peking would arrive. Though they did not, General Chung, having replaced the departed Amban in that post, resumed ineffectual hostilities against the Tibetans. The latter, fed up with Chinese delaying tactics, retaliated with pent-up inclinations of brutality. The Japanese officer Yajima was an eyewitness once again to what happened:

The heads, legs and arms of five Chinese killed were displayed in the streets. Crowds gathered and shouted "Pigs, thieves!" as they threw stones at the gruesome remains. Several days later they became food for the wild dogs.⁹⁰

It was the intolerable delay in ridding the Holy City of this last contingent of Chinese military forces which kept the Dalai Lama waiting impatiently at Sam-ding for the moment to arrive at last when he could arise and return to the Lion Throne of Tibet within the sacred perimeter of his beloved Lhasa. Finally, though, he did set foot in the capital on 23 January 1913.



Now it so happened that as the Chinese soldiers were evacuating themselves, many Tibetans, who were either their friends or else their relatives by marriage, also came along with them. This occurred because it had been agreed that those Chinese who had married Tibetan women would be allowed to take their wives and children with them so long as their families were willing to go. However, in the case of the departing Chinese garrison from Gyantse, for which there had been a separate and earlier agreement negotiated between the two sides, if any Tibetan wives desired to remain in Tibet, the agreement had stipulated in its Article 2 that the Tibetan authorities would "undertake not to molest or persecute" them "in any way" for having married the hated Chinese.⁹¹ (Those Chinese, on the other hand, who wished to stay behind in Tibet would be able to do so under guaranteed protection of Tibetan authorities, provided they agreed to become Tibetan subjects obeying Tibetan laws.) In the process of evacuation the Tibetan government, in keeping with the Three-Point Agreement, deputed an official representative "to accompany the different batches" of Chinese troops and to "arrange to supply the necessary pack animals and riding ponies." The Agreement was also careful in stipulating (in its Point II) that the "Tibetans will supply on proper payment and according to local rates foodstuffs such as rice, flour, tsampa, meat, butter and tea to the Chinese at halting stages up to the frontier, through the Tibetans escorting them." In addition, it made clear that on their part "the Chinese shall not take by force any pack or riding animals beyond the frontier."

In China, meanwhile, the new Republic's President Yüan Shih-kai had in June 1912 requested of Britain's envoy Sir John Jordan that the Government of India should assist in any evacuation should it ever develop; and when it did, Yüan had gladly accepted Jordan's offer to provide the services of his outgoing Military Attaché, Lieutenant Colonel (later Brigadier General) M. E. Willoughby, as a liaison officer between the retreating Chinese and the Indian authorities.⁹² Willoughby had been a distinguished officer of the British Indian Army who had seen many years of service in China and along the Sino-Tibetan border. He

had later served as British Military Attaché at Peking and was there at the time of the eruption of the Nationalist revolution which quickly toppled the Manchu dynasty, thereby affecting dramatically events in far-off Tibet to which the departing Attaché would now give his attention. For within a few days following the signing of the Three-Point Agreement and of the arrival at Calcutta of the joint telegram of the Amban and General Chung to Viceroy Hardinge requesting permission for the troop withdrawal via the Subcontinent, Willoughby himself arrived at the Bengal capital and by early September he and his Chinese Repatriation Mission were ensconced at the frontier village of Gnatong just inside Sikkim across from the Tibetan border, where the Colonel and his Mission could receive the Chinese forces onto Indian soil and forward them on home.

This was much easier said than done, however, for as Willoughby was later to write: "It meant a good deal of arrangement; stages, accommodations, transport, supplies, medical arrangements, escorts, railway arrangements from Darjeeling to Calcutta, shipping arrangements thence to China, etc." It was the 10th Gurkhas of the Indian Army, he added, which were required to furnish the escorts on *this* side of the Tibetan border.⁹³ Between Willoughby's arrival at Gnatong in early September 1912 and his departure in late March 1913 nearly two thousand Chinese men, women and children (which included a little better than a thousand soldiers of the Lhasa garrison), along with a number of pro-Chinese Tibetans and Tibetan camp followers, would pass through the Mission's transit camp; yet even before the Mission leader had arrived, there had already been a number of Chinese troops from the Shigatse and Gyantse garrisons who had come down through Sikkim and Kalimpong to Calcutta.



It must surely have been a most disconsolate, embittered and bedraggled first "batch" of Chinese who in mid-September of 1912 finally did take to the trail that would lead them southward out of the Holy City, which they had so frightfully desecrated ("it looked like a heap of ruins," wrote Dorjjeff when he saw it later), and up towards the high-altitude exit from the Land of Snows. By means of slow-moving yaks, mules and ponies, and escorted by Tibetans who kept a wary eye on them, Chinese officials, officers and their troops—the latter "in poor health and with their clothes in tatters"—wended their sorry way up to the Tibetan-Sikkimese frontier point at the Jelep La. But as they made their way thus escorted, the Chinese soldiers could still not escape entirely the animosity which yet lodged in the hearts of the Tibetan people. At Gyantse, for example, Tibetan women were seen throwing dust after the departing Chinese troops and clapping their hands: a typical way exhibited among Tibetans of that day for expelling devils! For this reason alone the members of the Chinese "caravan" must have been quite relieved to reach—despite the difficulty in doing so—the relative safety of the Jelep La, from whence this vanquished and "sorry remnant" of an army of disarmed and frankly homesick soldiers passed on back to their own country. In fact, the Russian consul in Calcutta, having witnessed the departure through the Bengal capital from Indian soil of these returning Chinese, was moved to write: "The last remainder

of Chinese troops, representing a mob of wretched ragamuffins, in which one cannot possibly recognize soldiers, have been chucked out from Calcutta the other day.” “Chucked out,” notes historian Nikolai Kuleshov, because of “their turbulent behavior causing numerous troubles for the police.”⁹⁴ “Gratefully,” noted Lord Ronaldshay, the army and its Tibetan followers rested for a time “in a small enclave provided for them at Kalimpong.” In one of those unusual ironies of history for which the chronicles of human folly are famous, this resting place, he also noted, was “within sight of the very house”—the Bhutan Durbar House—where only a few years earlier the Dalai Lama had himself rested when, in being pursued by perhaps some of the same Chinese troops who now rested nearby, he had made his own, albeit much hastier, retreat from the Land of Snows.

But there was yet another ironic twist of fate to all this. When on the day after the Dalai Lama’s flight from the Tibetan capital in 1910 the senior Chinese Imperial Amban at Lhasa had learned of it, he became furious and immediately asked for, and got, two volunteers from his own security forces to bring back to him the head of His Holiness. Instantly, General Chung gave to these volunteers three hundred of his best cavalymen, who with the two volunteers then gave hot pursuit in what nonetheless proved to be an unsuccessful bid to please the Amban. As fate would have it, however, the Amban, Len Yu, would by 1911/12 be deposed by his own mutinying Chinese soldiers who disliked him on the two counts of being a Manchu and the one responsible for their overdue wages; and Chung, upon his return home with his evacuating troops, was himself executed by his new Chinese government as a way of placating the outraged Tibetans for the manner in which he and his undisciplined troops, in their unrestrained excesses at Lhasa and elsewhere, had treated the citizens of Tibet during the few short years of their presence in the Land of Snows.⁹⁵

Although all these Chinese forces (which has been estimated to have been about three thousand troops and officers) were in time removed from *Tibetan* soil, many of them, together with their Tibetan wives, children and friends, were either unable or unwilling to leave *Indian* soil and make their way back the long route to their far-off homeland. As it turned out, it was particularly from among the Shigatse and Gyantse garrisons that many Chinese manifested no desire to return to China but rather wished to settle in British India.* In the words of Ronaldshay again, the vanquished army left behind a “jetsam in the shape of those who found the actual conditions of life in Kalimpong pleasanter than the prospect of a return to the greater uncertainties of life in China.” Instead, receiving permission to remain in the Subcontinent, they ended up settling in India in substantial numbers: both at Kalimpong,

* A classic case in point has been documented by Twan Yang about his Chinese father and Tibetan mother. Twan Yang himself figures in the story of Gergan Tharchin’s intelligence-gathering efforts on behalf of the British that is related in a later chapter of the present narrative, Chapter 24a of Volume III. In his published autobiographical account of his life up to age 21, Twan Yang, who was born in Kalimpong in 1919, tells of his parents’ plight of a few years earlier back in Tibet (in *Houseboy in India*, 1):

My father served as a sergeant major in the Chinese army in Tibet where the Chinese ruled at that time. My father was from Szechuan, and was a Confucian. He married my mother in Shigatse. She was very kind-hearted and was a Kham-mo [a native of eastern Tibet] and also a Confucian. After her marriage she gave birth to a girl, my elder sister.

In 1911 the Tibetans rose against the Chinese and my father was taken prisoner. He escaped execution by the Tibetans and was sent alive to India with many other Chinamen. After a very hard tramp over mountains and hills, with my mother and baby sister, he came to Kalimpong... and there he settled down.

Darjeeling and Calcutta; and some also settled in Sikkim.⁹⁶ (Their descendants, incidentally, are still living in these places even up to this day.)⁹⁷



As for the many who stopped at Kalimpong, the Government erected some huts to accommodate them temporarily at the Kalimpong suburb of Topkhana⁹⁸ in the Eleventh Mile district.⁹⁹ Realizing the need of the people who settled down here permanently, Rev. Mackenzie had some dwellings built to give them timely shelter since they had no other place to stay. He had more than a dozen thatched huts erected just below the Scots Tibetan Mission Compound where the needy and deserving Tibetans and the others could shelter themselves from sun, rain and storm. Among these "others," of course, were the "disaffected Chinese" mentioned earlier. For besides laboring among the Tibetans, Rev. Mackenzie was called upon to labor among the Chinese as well. Having intermarried with the Tibetans, not a few of these evicted Chinese soldiers now became interested in the work that was being done for their wives and children. Accordingly, "to enable himself to widen his influence," wrote one close observer in 1914 after visiting Kalimpong that year, "Mr. Mackenzie is studying the Chinese language and bids fair to be soon as proficient in it as he is in Tibetan."¹⁰⁰ But whether they were Chinese or Tibetan evacuees from Tibet, all proved to be in need of much help in restoring themselves to economic well-being.

In this regard, some of the Tibetans were employed in the "industrial" complex that came to be known popularly as Kalimpong Arts and Crafts and which was founded in 1897 (under the original name of "Kalimpong Home Industries") by Katherine Graham, the wife of missionary Graham.¹⁰¹ In fact, nearly a thousand people from throughout the area would eventually be employed by this industrial institution.¹⁰² Some of the ones who were employed here were Tibetan and Chinese artisans who, among other talents, were quite skillful carpenters. One such was the father of Twan Yang, mentioned earlier. "My father," he recalled, "knew carpenter's work and could earn his living by making all kinds of wooden things. He got work in the workshop of the industrial school in Kalimpong."¹⁰³ Besides carpentry and wood-working, wrote David Macdonald, the Chinese settlers had also those who followed the bootmaking and cooking trades.¹⁰⁴ In addition, there was opportunity given to those men who wished to engage in blacksmith work and tailoring.¹⁰⁵ They even had among their number an artist, "whose pictorial genius," declared Ronaldshay, had already by 1923 "attracted the attention of connoisseurs from Calcutta," and whose talent bade fair "to excite interest in still wider circles."¹⁰⁶ Also, some of the Tibetan womenfolk were excellent weavers who engaged in carpet-weaving, knitting and lace-making. Others of those who were involved in Kalimpong Arts and Crafts worked in making and selling Tibetan eatables such as "khapses" and ground nut sweets known as "badam mitthai." In these and other ways part of the influx of this evacuating population from Tibet took to business and commerce. And as a consequence some of them became highly successful in their various occupations and garnered for themselves an excellent income, with some of them even becoming quite

rich and influential.* Another portion of the evacuees from Tibet sought work among the tea gardens around Kalimpong and Darjeeling rather than journey onward to China. These in particular were the mothers with their “half-breed” progeny that had resulted from the intermarriage of Tibetan women with the Chinese soldiery back in Tibet, they electing to remain in India rather than go on to China with their soldier-husbands.¹⁰⁷

Now those who lived in the huts built by the Mission worked in the industrial complex¹⁰⁸ and attended the Sunday church services regularly and voluntarily, for there was no coercion. From among these regular church attendees some forty or fifty persons were baptized on request and thus they were added to the fellowship of the church. Rev. Mackenzie looked after their spiritual needs. Numbered among those with such needs was Twan Yang’s family. The latter recalled the following:

When my father had settled in Kalimpong, he had great difficulties. Mother had been ill and he had no money to pay for treatment and none of his friends helped him much. But he had one friend who had become a Christian. He advised my father to become a Christian also because Christians give kind help in the troubles of life. So my father and mother became members of the Church of Scotland. When my mother was ill, the late Rev. E. Mackenzie, and Mr. Tharchin, and others, came to visit her and took her to hospital. I think I was baptized by Mr. Mackenzie but I am not sure. So my mother died in hospital and was buried in the Christian cemetery.... I think my father took me often to church.¹⁰⁹

Rev. Mackenzie was assisted by a Tibetan convert who belonged to a well-bred and respectable family in Tibet. As Peter of the New Testament had previously been called Simon, so this convert who had formerly been known as Jhola Ngodup was later christened Yishui (Joshua or Jesus) Jhola.



It was noted earlier in this narrative that Rev. Mackenzie, having founded and faithfully labored in the work of the Tibetan church, eventually retired from it in the very early part of 1924. So that by the time Dorje Tharchin came on the scene, Mackenzie had already long since departed on furlough for good. Indeed, as was pointed out in the previous chapter, Tharchin only joined the Mission work in mid-August of 1924. Thus during the rather lengthy final-furlough absence of Evan Mackenzie the spiritual condition of the Tibetan congregation had deteriorated to a deplorable degree. Many Tibetan believers became scattered here and there. They were, in fact, “as sheep not having a shepherd.”¹¹⁰ The previously mentioned Tibetan teacher (see near the beginning of the present chapter), who by this time was

* In this connection, Tibetan scholar and writer Jamyang Norbu has recently observed that the Arts and Crafts Center was “the first instance of the utilization of traditional Tibetan design to create ‘curios’ and artifacts for sale to tourists” and which since these earlier days has “evolved into a big business in the Tibetan refugee world, with organizations such as Paljor Handicrafts, Norbulingka Institute, Zi Tibetan Collection and other enterprises in Nepal, India and even the West, benefiting from Mrs. Graham’s initial inspiration and effort.” Norbu, “Graham of Kalimpong,” *Lungta* (Winter 1998):34.

employed in the SUM-Institution, remained in the church along with his family. As was seen earlier, originally Rev. Mackenzie had engaged this teacher in the school the missionary had founded which in those earlier days had been conducted in Pollhill Hall. Later the school was shifted and amalgamated with the SUMI, which action also automatically transferred the teacher as well.

Some Christians stopped attending the church services. Others became backsliders and totally went back to their original faith of Buddhism. The situation went from bad to worse. Some believers got into financial difficulties. Due to economic pressures one believer in particular, Mashi Das, had pledged or pawned his sewing machine. When Tharchin heard of this he was very much grieved in heart. He went with this Christian brother and retrieved the machine from the pledge and helped him to resume his business as before. At the time, brother Das was an elder in the Tibetan congregation who at times would preach in the church.¹¹¹ Yishui Jhola also used to conduct the services in the congregation since he was a catechist, but he had left the church fellowship long ago. Yishui Jhola had in fact left the Mission work even before the retirement of Rev. Mackenzie. Later he was employed as a copyist at the world-renowned “natural university” called Shantiniketan¹¹² near Calcutta that had been founded by the 1913 Nobel Laureate in literature Rabindranath Tagore,¹¹³ who himself often visited Kalimpong.¹¹⁴ Upon completion of this assignment Yishui was in time to return to the hill station.

Despite the painful state of affairs in the church, Tharchin nevertheless gradually encouraged brother Das who had earlier pawned away his sewing machine. By so doing, this believer was helped to return to the church fellowship. After much prayer and counseling brother Das and his family came back and continued to attend church services regularly. Later both this Tibetan and his wife died in the Christian faith. They had remained faithful to the end.

Tharchin began to conduct daily Bible classes in the Mission Girls’ High School for the benefit of the women and in the Arts and Crafts Industries for the benefit of the Tibetan workers there. On Sundays they would also attend the church services. From time to time Tharchin would present an old magic lantern show at both Topkhana and the Tenth Mile areas. The Topkhana area (Eleventh Mile) is vividly described a few pages further on in this present chapter. Unlike the Eleventh Mile, whose inhabitants in those days for the most part came from the poorer Tibetan classes, the Tenth, by contrast, had more or less emerged as the site for the offices, warehouses and shops of the well-to-do Tibetan merchants. But a few Marwari shops and the workshops of several Nepali silversmiths were able to insinuate themselves in between some of the Tibetan houses that were there. A later close acquaintance of Tharchin’s, a young Austrian Baron by the name of René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, has described “the most marvelous wares” which during this and subsequent periods could be found in the wealthy shops of these Tibetan merchants of the Tenth Mile district:

Thick bundles of reddish-brown joss-sticks lie alongside piles of blankets made from coarse Tibetan wool; Chinese rice bowls of paper-thin porcelain stand next to fat yak tails, used as ceremonial fans in Hindu temples. Bales of silk and brocade, of which wealthy Tibetans have their clothes made, little caskets full of turquoise and old silver coins, the rolled-up skins of Tibetan snow leopards, strings of artificial beads, and big white shells used by the lamas as

musical instruments lie cheek by jowl with tins of Chinese delicacies. Here, too, are Chinese chopsticks of ivory, or cheaper ones of plastic or wood, colorful Tibetan rugs and saddle-cloths, musk in little leather bags, triangles of brocade, with which Tibetan women embellish the corners of their gaily striped aprons, simple eating-bowls of wood and more expensive ones inlaid with silver. Men of rank prefer this type of bowl, for a sudden blackening of the silver gives them timely warning that poison has been added to their food. Turquoise or coral rings from the Eastern Tibetan town of Derge, bells for the leading animals of caravans, and long strips of white, blue, yellow, red, green and black linen, from which the lamas make prayer flags, are also for sale. Beside them lie Tibetan and Chinese medicinal herbs, brightly colored silk cords for decorating the pigtail or the sword, and other unusual goods.¹¹⁵

This Tenth Mile district may have appeared calm and unthreatening by day; by night, however, it wore a different face. Nearly undetectable during the daytime, after sundown its character would be transformed into what one Western resident in the hill station during the 1950s termed “the ‘casbah’ of Kalimpong.” Another Western resident during this same time-frame had also characterized Tenth Mile as having a double face, observing that its name came to have “a slightly objectionable flavor” to it among Kalimpongians in that besides the reputable shops and offices of the merchants and tradesmen, this Mile area was noted as well for having “the lodgings of numerous Tibetan ladies of easy virtue.” And what was true at mid-century had more than likely been true earlier in the 1920s and ’30s. The former Scottish missionary-turned-journalist George Patterson had described the Tenth Mile’s nocturnal appearance in the most colorful language:

Here are the caravanserais for housing and stabling the Tibetans and their animals after their months of travel across the mountain wastes of Tibet. Here are the great trading houses, wool godowns and multiplicity of shops catering to Central Asian trade. Here is the color of the native bazaar, the roaring area of beer shops, brothels, brawls and murders. Usually obscured throughout the day by a haze of dust thrown up by the feet of thousands of mules and absorbed in the intense activity of hundreds of brawny, sweating, grinning Tibetan muleteers loading their caravans, [the district] comes alive [at night] in a different way as Tibetans, newly-washed and oiled, with colored gowns and shirts of silks and brocades, leave their mules in the caravanserais and devote themselves to uninhibited enjoyment. To use the term “paint the town red” would be a misnomer and even understatement, for this is a usual process with the Tibetans at any time, who feel that it is due them after several months in the bleak wastes of Central Asia. Even the fearless Nepali policemen go into this part of the town in pairs and ignore everything but the most obvious violations of the border-town law. All Europeans are discouraged from visiting this section after dark....¹¹⁶

Now in the decades of Tharchin’s Christian ministry when he was showing the magic lantern, this Mile area as well as that of the Eleventh were full of Tibetans who came down from their homeland to Kalimpong during the winter as traders and pilgrims, a season of activity by these visitors that was described earlier in the first volume of the present narrative, in Chapter 7. Although there was some response to Tharchin’s gospel efforts here at Tenth Mile, there was a greater response to his gospel lantern shows at the Eleventh. Yet, whether at the one or the other of these two Mile areas, not only did the Indo-Tibetan—and later, he and the successor-missionary to Rev. Mackenzie in the Tibetan work, Dr. Robert Knox—regularly conduct magic lantern preaching among the Tibetans here and in the rest of the bazaar sector of town, but also, and particularly during the winter season just now mentioned.

a similar ministry was faithfully carried out farther afield among the many Tibetan campers who were marking time at their camps before taking their homeward journey.

In fact, writing in his Annual Report on the Tibetan Work for the year 1934 (and found among the Tharchin Papers), missionary Knox could report that “by means of literature, lantern addresses and personal interviews” a “large number of Tibetan residents and also travelers” from the Snowy Land itself “was reached” with the gospel. And in his Report for the following year, Knox more specifically indicated that much of the Christian literature thus distributed “was taken by [these] travelers returning to Tibet.” Still, the missionary was moved to confide in his Report for 1936 that “it is hard to estimate the results of such work among people who come and go constantly.” Nevertheless, he could add this interesting story: “One man who lived with us for a while and came under instruction but left because he was disappointed at not receiving great material benefit has now written from Lhasa asking for literature.” It was encouraging instances like this which impelled Knox to declare in the following year’s Report that the visitation among the Tibetan residents and especially the itinerant campers constituted “a work which, though showing little visible return, I regard as of the utmost importance.”

Indeed, on this point Knox had expressed himself even more strongly at this very same time in a letter he had written to a New Zealand inquirer preparing to become a missionary to Tibet. Describing in his letter first, however, the then current situation *vis-à-vis* British India’s stringent policy in regard to any thought of missionary penetration of the Great Closed Land and indicating continuing British mistrust of certain Christian missionaries in particular, Rev. Knox nonetheless had much to say of a positive nature with respect to the Scottish Mission’s evangelistic work among Tibet’s numerous border-crossing visitors into his district of India. “The Church of Scotland Mission, which covers a vast area and ministers to many different peoples,” he began,

has me at Kalimpong as its Tibetan missionary.... So far as our work is concerned, we are up against the fact that the British Government [of India] is anxious to keep on good terms with the Tibetan government and not to proceed too quickly with the opening up of Tibet. It therefore takes a strong line in preventing unauthorized travelers, especially missionaries, entering Tibet. If I thought that anything were to be gained by disregarding the rules laid down by the British government, I should not hesitate to do so, but the only result would be that one would be promptly deported from Tibet and one’s actions very closely watched in India.

On the other hand, in Kalimpong, which is *the* meeting-place par excellence between Tibet and India, we meet people from every district in Tibet and can touch a greater number and variety of people than we could reach, I believe, in any place in Tibet itself. So that, keen as we are to penetrate its fastnesses and great as the need is, we can do a better work for the Master [i.e., for Jesus] here, for the present at any rate.

I dislike the word “stealth” because it suggests dishonesty—though I know you do not mean that. However, the Government thinks it has had cause to suspect the honesty of missionaries in the past and there are some missionaries still living who would never be allowed to cross the frontier because the Government feels that they could not be trusted. Well, situated as we are on the border of the Forbidden Land and coming into contact with travelers of every class from every part of it, what we need most is to increase the opportunities of contact with them, i.e., by increasing the number of witness-bearers [to Christ] and the places at which they can be met.^{116a}

This last-mentioned desire Knox and his colleagues, such as Gergan Tharchin, would attempt to realize as much as possible over the ensuing years and decades.

In addition to these various avenues of ministry just now described, it became a regular practice that twice a week in the mornings, gospel meetings would be conducted quite successfully by Tharchin for the leprosy patients at the local Mission Leprosarium.¹¹⁷



Sometime towards the end of the nineteenth century, Cecil Polhill-Turner of the China Inland Mission (CIM) had donated a substantial sum of money to construct a gospel preaching hall, called in its earlier days the Tibetan Preaching House but which has subsequently come to be rightly named after him as “Polhill Hall.”¹¹⁸ During his first stay in District Darjeeling missionary Polhill had contributed these funds as a token of his appreciation for earlier kindnesses shown the Tibetan Pioneer Mission (the one originally created and led by Annie Taylor but latterly led by him) as its members had passed through Kalimpong on their way to Tibet but who were then subsequently required by circumstances to return and remain in the hill station for some little while.¹¹⁹ (As will be learned later in the present chapter, this had all occurred during 1894-5.) The Hall, now more than a century old, still stands by the side of the main road in the center of Kalimpong.^{119a} Appropriately it was dedicated for the ministry of the gospel among the Tibetans. In time Polhill would again visit Kalimpong in 1926.¹²⁰

Now as was mentioned near the beginning of this present biography, Cecil Polhill-Turner had been numbered among seven individuals who had together emerged in 1884 as that famed group of young missionary-minded men who came to be known as “the Cambridge Seven.” Two years earlier the well-known American lay evangelist, Dwight L. Moody, had been invited to conduct a mission on the Cambridge University campus; and as a consequence, this renowned British institution of higher learning had been stirred to its depths by Moody’s ministry. Five of its brightest and talented students (including the former stroke oar of the Cambridge boat, the Captain of the University Eleven, and Cecil Polhill’s own brother Arthur), together with Cecil himself and one other young man, D. E. Hoste (who would later become the General Director of the CIM), banded themselves together in a united commitment to devote their lives to foreign missions. And when the announcement came that these seven men had been accepted by the China Inland Mission, it created a great stir in Britain and America, since some of them not only were highly respected at Cambridge but were also socially prominent. One of them, for example, was a nephew of a member of the House of Lords, another was an officer in the Royal Artillery, and the two Polhill brothers were sons of a late Member of Parliament, while the two brothers themselves had been, respectively, prominent Eton and Cambridge cricketers. The one who became the most prominent among the Cambridge Seven was Charles Thomas (C. T.) Studd (1860-1931). Studd, whose name was already a household word “as perhaps the greatest gentleman bowler in England” and ex-captain of the Cambridge cricket team, would go on to found the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade (WEC) and became one of the outstanding missionary pioneers of all time. And

another of them, William W. Cassels, would in 1895 be consecrated the first Anglican Bishop in West China. By the end of 1884 they would all be enrolled with the CIM, the same year in which Annie Taylor had also joined that mission society and had gone off to China. Polhill and the rest of the Cambridge Seven would themselves leave for China early the following year (1885), sailing together on the same ship with the founder of the Mission, J. Hudson Taylor, who was returning to the mission field after a long-delayed and well-deserved furlough back home.

Although Cecil Polhill, like all the others of the Cambridge Band, was initially drawn to China, he, and later his newly-wedded wife, would in time settle along that country's border with Tibet. There they entered into an active ministry among the many traders and other Tibetan citizenry who continually traversed the border crossings. In fact, they had been in China for only three years when in July of 1888, following their marriage in the spring of that year by Polhill's fellow-Band member, Rev. Cassels,¹²¹ they removed to Sining in Kansuh Province not far from the famed (Lake) Koko-Nor and the equally famous lamasery town of Kumbum very near the Tibetan border village where the current Dalai Lama XIV would be born and shortly afterwards discovered. For several years thereafter the Polhills labored for the sake of the Christian gospel among the Tibetans and Chinese throughout this entire Amdo district. It will be of interest to the reader to learn, incidentally, that during this period copies of all the books and other literature in Tibetan which through the years up to this time had been lithographed by the Moravian missionaries working along the Indo-Tibetan frontier were being sent to the Polhills to assist them in learning the Tibetan language and in the colporteur work they were conducting. But it was also during this period that the Polhills became aware of the beleaguered state of affairs among the Moravian mission stations in Lesser Tibet which prompted the Polhills in 1890 to write the Tibet Prayer Union's Secretary of their intercessory prayer support on behalf of the spiritually barren situation at Dorje Tharchin's home village of Poo and the other Moravian outposts there.

By the spring of 1892, though, the Polhills resettled to the south at the town of Sun-p'an in the large Chinese province of Szechuan where they nonetheless continued to work among the Tibetans. But not long after their arrival, a most harrowing experience occurred which forced them to leave for England to recoup their shattered health. It so happened that a drought had for some time existed in the area; and when it would not end, a mob of superstitious people (none of whom were Tibetans, the Polhills were careful to report) ultimately accused the two missionaries of being the cause of the drought. On 29 July 1892 this mob attacked the Polhills physically, and badly treated them by tearing off part of their clothing, beating them and dragging them from the town. Only through the timely intervention of a military official were they rescued from a tragic demise and helped in their departure from the town by a military escort two days later.

But while recuperating in England from these terrible trials, missionary Polhill had time to assist his sister-in-law, Annie W. Marston, in preparing her book, *The Great Closed Land* (1893), which chronicled those various mission works everywhere whose aim was to penetrate the territory of Tibet with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This volume, as the reader may recall, proved to be an invaluable source of information in writing the opening chapters of the present narrative.



In the meantime, the near-legendary missionary Annie R. Taylor (b.1856), who had originally been attached to the CIM, had herself returned to England on 1 July 1893 following her own harrowing experience in unsuccessfully attempting from the China side to reach Lhasa with the gospel during 1892-3. (In his own missionary travels through the Chinese province of Kansuh, Cecil Polhill had in late 1891 met Miss Taylor and her now celebrated Lhasa Tibetan servant and companion Pontso at the town of Taochow, from which place she, Pontso (by this time a converted Christian) and others in her party had commenced their ill-fated journey towards the Tibetan capital.) Yet, despite Taylor's failure to reach Lhasa and to make her way down to Darjeeling for the purpose, as she had declared, of "claiming the country for the Master," her adventure in Tibet had not been in vain. As one well-known missionary in Little Tibet (F. B. Shawe) was led to exclaim, "Her marvelous feat drew universal attention to the people on whose behalf it was made."¹²²

Miss Taylor herself encouraged further interest in the Great Closed Land. For while back in Britain she spoke from many platforms concerning the urgent need for Tibet and Tibetans to be reached for the Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time she urged the formation of a Tibetan Pioneer Mission¹²³ composed of those who would accept God's call to serve as missionaries to the Tibetans in Tibet itself. With the help of the China Inland Mission's founder, Hudson Taylor, and Mr. R. C. Morgan, a proprietor of the British magazine, *The Christian*, she did indeed organize such an interdenominational Mission. It would consist of nine men from Europe (two Norwegians, one Swede, one Englishman and five Scotsmen, including Evan Mackenzie), together with Mackenzie's wife and infant girl ("the first Christian child to start for Tibet"), Miss Taylor herself, and her faithful Tibetan companion-servant Pontso and his wife. Although the work in Tibet would be an independent effort unaffiliated with the CIM (but with that mission society's "hearty sympathy and prayers"), those who had volunteered would be expected to labor in the gospel along the lines of the CIM, with whose methods and principles Annie Taylor was still in complete sympathy.

Miss Taylor and her Tibetan Mission members eventually set sail from England on 24 February 1894 bound for India, specifically heading for the Ghoom/Jorebungalow area in Darjeeling, but with Tibet as their ultimate objective. It was the group's intention upon their arrival at Ghoom in April to live there and also in Sikkim for some time that they might acquire the Tibetan language before making an attempt to enter Tibet via Sikkim where Miss Taylor herself had studied the language for a year in a Buddhist monastery at the village of Tum-Tum (Tumlong) back in 1890-1. (Just before this she had also studied the language for some five months while visiting with her married sister in Darjeeling and then living in a Tibetan hut among Tibetan settlers at Ghoom.) By the end of their stay in the Ghoom area, two of her Mission—most likely from among the Scandinavians—felt called to work among the Tibetans already in India, they doubtless wishing to join themselves to the members of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission at Ghoom by whom Miss Taylor and her group had been so warmly welcomed upon their arrival and who were even then engaged in similar work of learning the Tibetan language and ministering to the already established Tibetan community there. By September of

1894 Taylor and the remainder of her Mission were on their way to the border—a journey which by prearrangement took them through Kalimpong, where for a few days before proceeding onward into Sikkim “they experienced much kindness from Mr. and Mrs. Graham, Mr. Macara of the Universities’ Mission, and Dr. Ponder of the Charteris Hospital.” During these few days, in fact, they were graciously lodged at the Guild Mission House.



Now it so happened that shortly after Miss Taylor had first arrived in the Darjeeling area, she, as leader of the group, had received a telegram from Captain James, the British Political Officer in Sikkim.* In effect it intimated that she and her party could not be permitted to enter Tibet, that they must limit their gospel endeavors to the area south of the Himalayas, and that the missionary party could go no farther in their attempt to penetrate the Tibetan border than the Sikkimese frontier village of Gnatong. This village was the site of a British fort community perched some 12,000 feet above sea level (“perhaps the highest military post in the world held by Europeans” at that time—Laurence A. Waddell) and a mere nine miles from Tibet. Yet Miss Taylor would not be turned aside by this refusal of permits to enter Tibet from the Indo-Sikkimese side. As one of her biographers noted, to both the Government of India and the Government of Bengal she immediately wrote letters which, though “reasonable” and “respectful,” were “plainly and forcibly” worded and which explained her purpose in desiring to enter Tibet and “the impossibility of turning back at this stage.” In commenting about these letters, the *Indian Methodist Times* for July 1894 had declared:

In sentiment and phrasing there was a touch of Cromwellism, especially in the strong undertone of unflinching confidence in a power higher than that to which the letters appealed. They were documents the like of which are not often received by Secretaries of Governments. They were calculated to set them thinking. Especially strong was the protest against the order which, now that the law allows traders to go up to a certain point within Tibet [i.e., at Yatung], will exclude missionaries entirely, simply because of their profession.¹²⁴

Despite these appeals, however, the Indian governments concerned with the matter remained adamant in their refusal to budge from the official position earlier enunciated in the telegram from the British Political Officer in Sikkim.

It was at this point that Annie Taylor made a monumental strategic error in keeping the contents of the telegram to herself, because it ultimately cost her the allegiance of every member of her party. Keeping her own counsel and moving forward under false pretences, Taylor led her innocent young band of stalwart missionaries across the border into Sikkim and on up to Gnatong (“the forest meadow”) where she was determined to establish a

* Could this have been H.E.M. James of the Indian Civil Service (ICS) and author of *The Long White Mountain* (London, 1888)? The latter is an eyewitness account of Lieutenant (later Colonel Sir) Francis Younghusband’s extraordinary overland trek from Peking to Srinagar in 1887, a journey in which James was a significant participant. Evan James may have later entered the Foreign and Political Service branch of the ICS and may have been on temporary duty in 1894 for only a few months as an acting Political Officer in Sikkim.

mission station and wait for the opportunity, which did indeed come, to cross the frontier. In disobedience to the official order of Britain's highest authority in the region, she and her faithful followers plunged forward just beyond the border into Tibet proper.

When news reached Captain James of Miss Taylor's action, he immediately ordered her and her party to be returned to the fort at Gnatong where the Political Officer poured out his anger upon her for having disobeyed his order by telegram. "The sequel," wrote one narrator of the event, "was only natural." With other differences having already arisen between the missionary and her party, the Mission members, including the Mackenzies, now feeling that they had been betrayed and unfairly dealt with by their leader, all resigned in frustration and disappointment. It should be pointed out that William Carey, who later was to edit and then publish Annie Taylor's *Diary of her Tibetan exploit of 1892-3*, and who had himself visited her at Yatung during the summer of 1899, indicates that "all but one" of the Mission's members had "seceded from their leader." Most likely this was the Mackenzie daughter who obviously was too young to enter an opinion on the matter. Carey went on to comment about the "secession" of the Mission's members:

It was unhappy, but it was inevitable. There were incompatible elements in their mutual relations which ought to have been foreseen and more wisely adjusted. Some regrettable circumstances notwithstanding, it would be very unjust, I think, to blame them for the act of withdrawal. Separation was best in every way. It was doubtless a deep disappointment to all concerned, and not least to Miss Taylor, when the Mission dissolved; but God has given her a better thing than the thing she wanted to have. He has scattered the Band that he might use it in a wider sphere and fit it for better work.¹²⁵

"Henceforward," wrote the earlier quoted narrator, "there was nothing before the individual members of the party but to face the situation as best they could." In the event, all of them would initially end up spending a year and possibly more in and around Kalimpong. (For instance, this was the juncture in their lives when the Mackenzies decided to settle down in nearby Pedong for a year and a half working among the Tibetans who frequented the place, before finally joining the Kalimpong Guild Mission of John Graham's.) Here they would engage in further language study in Tibetan. By the very early part of 1896, however, all except the Mackenzies and one or two others, who would join them later, would be back at Ghoom/Darjeeling again for further study in the Tibetan language as they awaited action on their future status.¹²⁶

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In an attempt to recoup the situation as quickly as possible, Miss Taylor felt compelled, shortly after the debacle at Gnatong and with the willing agreement of the other members, to send an urgent request to Cecil Polhill, still back in Britain, to come to Kalimpong to assume the leadership of what was left of the Mission group, a responsibility which she realized she could no longer effectively handle. This urgent summons for help she had sent to Polhill in late 1894, and among other things it expressed the "hope that before long a door might open

into the Closed Land” of Tibet; though on what grounds Annie now based such sanguine anticipation, after what the Tibetan Mission had just experienced at the hands of stringent British policy towards Christian missionaries and its officials who uncompromisingly applied that policy, can only leave the knowledgeable observer somewhat mystified. Nevertheless, Polhill, always desirous of more Christian workers willing and able to evangelize among Tibetans, did indeed answer the call, came to Kalimpong by early 1895 ahead of his wife (who remained in England for another year of recuperation), and assumed the Mission’s leadership. He would return to England later that same year to fetch his wife and family, after which, “towards the end of December,” they both would depart together for the Darjeeling/Ghoom area to assist further in resolving the Taylor Mission debacle.

Polhill himself has left a record in several writings—both contemporary with, and subsequent to, these events—of what had occurred between himself on the one hand and, on the other, Annie and what he has described as Annie’s “party of young men who had gone to the Tibetan border and were staying at Kalimpong.” But this record also indicated that, apparently, besides having been “asked ... in the autumn of last year [1894] ... to go out to Darjeeling [District], and settle upon some course to pursue with reference to the *former* members of the Tibetan Pioneer Mission [emphasis added],” Polhill was confronted with the fact that, meanwhile, that same Mission at some point along the way had acquired some new members, who likewise were in need of leadership and guidance. Here, then, is what he reported in one of the above-referenced documents of record, in this case the well-known CIM publication, *China’s Millions*. Writing for publication therein during the latter half of 1895, Polhill—now poised “towards the end of December” to depart once again for Northeast India, “there to remain for a year studying the [Tibetan] language, etc.,” but this time to be accompanied by his wife and family—described in some detail what had transpired during his first visit to Kalimpong alone at the beginning of that same year of 1895:

Leaving England with the concurrence of the CIM council in January ..., I reached Kalimpong, where nine of the former members of the Tibetan Pioneer Mission were staying, and a few days subsequent to my arrival went on to Gnatong, distant three days’ journey, in order to confer with Miss Taylor. It was felt better that they [i.e., the nine, numbered among whom were the Mackenzies] should proceed independently [of the Pioneer Mission] in carrying on their future work, and my duty was to remain with the new members, seeking to help them to equip themselves for their prospective labors among the Tibetans.

Finding the missionaries at Kalimpong, it seemed the wisest plan to remain there, and avail ourselves of the quiet seclusion it afforded for [language] study, while not by any means without Tibetans whom we could get amongst, and utilize [in gospel evangelism] the [language] knowledge gained, especially during the colder months, when the wool carriers come and go.... On Sunday mornings and, when the wool carriers arrive, in the afternoons also, short services were held for the Tibetans, and we were thankful to notice real interest among them, especially of late.

According to another but much later record of these events, Polhill, apparently combining together the time-frame of both his 1895 and ’96 visits to District Darjeeling, related how he and most former and all new members of Taylor’s Pioneer Mission had “spent nearly a year together” at Kalimpong, receiving much assistance from the Grahams, Dr. Sutherland and others in the Scottish Guild Mission there. He further pointed out that he and his new group

of young Christian missionaries were fortunate to receive “splendid help from a young Lhasa Lama, Yeshe,” with whom “for about ten months” they and the helpful Lama (who before dying of consumption became a Christian) “had a famous time of Tibetan [language] study.”

Moreover, because of his abiding interest in the evangelization of Tibet, Polhill also made a point of mentioning that the Guild Mission, besides its many other works and structures which could be observed all about him, “now [has] a preaching Hall for Tibetans, and associated with this a Tibetan-Christian Church.” Yet it must be noted to his credit that missionary Polhill had humbly failed to mention the fact that he, from his own pocket, had contributed all the funds necessary for the construction of this gospel preaching hall. Indeed, it is only from other documentary sources, not from Polhill himself, that his much benefaction dispensed here in Kalimpong and elsewhere has come to light. In the present instance, for example, it is the so-called memoirs of Gergan Tharchin that one learns of missionary Polhill’s exceptional generosity. Wrote Tharchin: “[Mr.] Polhill donated a substantial sum to construct a gospel preaching hall which ... stands by the side of the main road in the center of Kalimpong. It was dedicated for the ministry among the Tibetans.... He was considered as one of the seven stars among the Christian missionaries sent out by the China Inland Mission”—a most touching and eulogistic reference, of course, to “the Cambridge Seven.”

One can safely conclude from this display of his charitable liberality that it was Polhill’s way of expressing his deep appreciation for having been helped by so many in Kalimpong’s Scottish Mission in relation to the traumatic disbandment of the Taylor Tibetan Pioneer Band. But even more so, perhaps, it reflects as well this missionary’s great desire to contribute in every way possible to the expansion of the work in reaching many Tibetans for Christ in this strategically-located hill station that even then was increasingly attracting Tibetans from everywhere.

Having now assumed the general oversight of these young men formerly under Annie Taylor’s leadership, Polhill would carry out this oversight not only while he remained in Northeast India but also upon his return to China and the ministry he would resume conducting along the Sino-Tibetan frontier. This was where the work of the Polhills among the Tibetans had so violently been interrupted at the town of Sun-p’an only a few years earlier. Polhill’s assumption of oversight would henceforth signify a new arrangement that would bring satisfaction to everyone.

Yet this new arrangement had come about as follows. By January-February of 1896 the Polhills had arrived in Northeast India; and they, along with various members—both old and new—of the soon-to-be defunct Taylor Pioneer Mission, had now established themselves at Ghoom where they continued Tibetan-language study and engaged in gospel work among the many Tibetans in that area of District Darjeeling. Then, shortly afterwards, Hudson Taylor and his wife appeared on the scene, having arrived at Ghoom on the 28th of February. Taylor, the celebrated founder of the China Inland Mission, had only recently fallen ill in China, and to recoup his strength he and his wife sailed for India in February where they hoped to gain some much needed rest and at the same time fulfill a speaking engagement by him at the first Christian Student Conference in Calcutta. But in addition, the founder of the CIM took the opportunity, in the words of one of his biographers, “to place his long experience at the disposal of others” if it could “serve any of the Lord’s people, whether connected with

the Mission or not.” Citing the trip to India as one example, Hudson Taylor’s biographer noted that while on the Subcontinent the famed missionary “took counsel with a company of workers on the Indian-Tibetan border” because “a critical situation had arisen in regard to their future work”—an obvious reference to what had happened to Annie Taylor’s erstwhile Band of missionaries. But another of Hudson Taylor’s biographers put it this way: “A former member of the [China Inland] Mission, Miss Annie Taylor, who had made a remarkable journey across Tibet, was urgently needing help with a band of inexperienced workers she had been the means of calling out. They were in northern India, hoping to gain an entrance from the Darjeeling District to that long-closed land ...”

Coming up to Darjeeling/Ghoom, therefore, and most likely at the behest of Cecil Polhill, the CIM leader and his wife—after a few days of needful rest—met with the Polhills and “all the rest of the Tibetan missionaries of these parts” on the 3rd of March 1896. The Taylors even stayed as guests for ten days with the Polhills at the well-known Evelyn Cottage in Ghoom that had now become the residence of the Polhills, the Mackenzies and other missionary families throughout the remainder of that year. The outcome of their discussions and fellowship together proved quite positive before the Taylors departed Ghoom for China once again in mid-March. A happy arrangement was struck between Polhill and Hudson Taylor, for in their meetings together it was “decided that six of the men who went out with Miss Annie Taylor should start to China, as associated with the China Inland Mission, definitely for work on behalf of Tibet” (with the remaining members, as it turned out, working either in British India or British Bhutan; but all of them, regardless the location, laboring, as one chronicler of these events observed, “entirely for Tibetans”). And thus a new company of workers was formed under the aegis of the CIM whose members would be Associates of that Mission; they would “work under its direction,” reported Mrs. Polhill at the time, “but under Cecil’s leadership.” Furthermore, no longer would this group of missionaries be known as the Tibetan Pioneer Mission but was immediately designated as the CIM Tibetan Band. And within a few days, the six new CIM Associates (one of whom, interestingly enough, was Edward Amundsen), all of whom were single, departed Ghoom for Shanghai on the 10th of March.

The ultimate destination in China of this new Band of workers formerly associated with Miss Taylor would be to the same area to where the Polhill-Turners themselves would eventually go back: the vast north to south Sino-Tibetan frontier region, and at first more specifically to the CIM station at Tachienlu in southwestern Szechuan not far from the Tibetan frontier in the south. According to Polhill, he and his wife and children eventually arrived there together in 1897* “in company with welcome reinforcements”—doubtless a reference to the members of the newly-formed CIM Tibetan Band, six of whom had preceded by nearly a year the Polhills’ arrival back in China from Ghoom. Here these Band members, along with the Polhills and others, would labor for the Christian gospel among the Tibetan

* The source for this date is according to Polhill himself in his “Tibet: the Land of the Lamas.” in M. Broomhall, ed., *The Chinese Empire*, 336, where he writes that after recuperation in England (from late summer 1892) and a visit to Darjeeling, he and his wife reached China in 1897. It is further sourced, with additional information, on p. 151 of Polhill’s unpublished memoirs, where he writes: “In 1897, leaving my wife at Chefu, China, I went on to find premises in Tatsienlu.” A photocopy of this page was kindly sent to the present author by Polhill’s grandson, Professor Doctor Victor Funnell.

traders who daily crossed the border as well as among the large numbers of Tibetans who lived just outside Tibet itself. And thus was the short-lived bizarre history of the Pioneer Mission founded by Annie Taylor brought finally to a close, to the satisfaction of all concerned.

As for Annie herself, after a year more at Gnatong, she was at last permitted to settle in the Tibetan town of Yatung, a mere twelve miles over the frontier (but still quite elevated, it being situated only 4000 feet below the 14,500-foot Natu La). This had come about as a result of a protocol to the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890 having been concluded in December 1893 which regulated trade, communications and pasturage between Tibet and the British protectorate of Sikkim. Among other things, this protocol, as alluded to earlier in the *Methodist Times* article, provided for the creation of a trade mart at Yatung that was opened in 1894. But only under the guise of a tradesperson was Miss Taylor permitted to go to this Tibetan town to live and work, having applied for and obtained permission to establish a medical supplies shop there. As one British scholar, Alex McKay, has most recently written about these events involving Miss Taylor: "While it was well known that she was a missionary, it proved impossible to refuse her a trading permit." Accordingly, here till late 1906 she ministered to Tibetans, British and Chinese in the capacity of both small shopkeeper and would-be nurse, the latter ministry carried out not only among the Tibetans on almost a daily basis but also among the wounded victims of the Younghusband Military Expedition up to Lhasa which occurred in 1903-4. For while passing through the Chumbi Valley the Expedition had established a camp and also a field hospital to which Annie, upon offering her services, was appointed a nursing sister. Miss Taylor would likewise sell a few useful things in her shop to the traders who passed to and fro as well as dispense medicines to the sick.

But above all she shared the gospel and distributed portions of Scripture and other Christian literature in an attempt to convert the Tibetans (and others, for that matter) to her Christian faith. Remarkably, noted one religious commentator about her work in 1899, "the opening of Yatung as a trading station for Europeans has thus far only resulted in the missionary trader [Miss Taylor] getting a footing there." Indeed, though two or three other female missionaries did join themselves to her on several occasions, none of them stayed for very long. And it would pretty much remain that way throughout most of her stay there, inasmuch as the mart was situated on a completely unsuitable site, located as it was within a narrow side-valley that ran down from the Sikkimese frontier towards the Chumbi Valley.

Furthermore, if missionary Taylor still harbored illusions of penetrating deeper into the Snowy Land for the sake of the gospel, she would have to contend with a wall that had been constructed from side to side just a few yards farther down this little side-valley and which was manned by Sino-Tibetan soldiery to prevent British traders, travelers and others from traversing any farther into Tibetan territory. Moreover, various official British documents of the period reveal that the Tibetans at Yatung, ever cautious about this invincible missionary's evangelistic efforts, made certain, in the words of McKay, "that her local assistant reported her activities to the Tibetan government at Lhasa."

At one point during her lengthy residence at Yatung, Miss Taylor made a return visit to England in early 1905, only to return to Tibet in December of that same year. Instead of returning to her shop to live and work, however, she made her way—after crossing the Sikkimese-Tibetan frontier without a pass—to the Yatung Customs House where she took

up residence but refused to pay any rent because, she argued, it was in need of repair! In fact, from this point forward things went downhill disastrously for Annie.

She having sent several letters of abuse to the British Indian government, Annie's sanity, writes McKay, began to be questioned. As a matter of fact, the British and Chinese authorities had already had some reason earlier to believe that Miss Taylor had begun to exhibit some mental instability. This was because she had registered an outlandish protest against the Chinese Customs Officer at Yatung, British Captain W. R. M. Parr, who was in the employ of the Peking government and had been posted to the Chumbi Valley in 1904. Not long into Parr's stay at Yatung, Annie made known her claim that the "hard-drinking" Captain had been in the habit, she charged, of "drowning his illegitimate children in my well" (an accusation, observes McKay, that was not taken seriously by either the British or Chinese there).

Regretfully, it must be stated, missionary Taylor's increasingly bizarre behavior, which, among other conduct, had inspired Captan Parr to label her an "intolerable nuisance," finally prompted her removal from Tibet altogether. This came about in October 1906 when, having been sent to England, she was placed in "a 'lunatic asylum'"; an action, explains McKay, that had "probably" been taken "by fellow church people." Whatever happened to Annie after this is not known—"not even," one chronicler of her life sorrowfully remarked, "the date of her death." Meanwhile, the British In-Charge over the Chumbi Valley at that time, Captain W. L. Campbell, had the unfortunate duty of having to dispose of her belongings "in the traditional frontier manner" of the British cadre there: "a public auction"—an ignominious conclusion, it must sadly be noted, to Miss Taylor's extraordinary career in Central Asia as brave explorer and zealous missionary.¹²⁷

And as for Cecil Polhill-Turner, it would be many years later before he would once again have the opportunity to come to Kalimpong. The intervening years, however, would see the Polhills back in England to stay, having survived the violent Boxer Rebellion of 1900-01 as well as having waited till their gravely ill child had recovered sufficiently to enable the family to endure the long journey home from China. They were later counseled by their doctor not to go out again to China to resume their missionary work. Not long afterwards Mrs. Polhill would expire—on the last day of 1904. Thereafter Cecil would be based in England where he remained closely associated for a while with the CIM, even serving on its Board for several years. However, because of doctrinal differences with the Mission, he eventually transferred his allegiance to the Pentecostal Missionary Union, for which he served as its first president during the years 1909 to 1925. Yet missionary Polhill's keen interest in furthering the evangelization of Tibet and among Tibetans never dimmed. In fact, over the ensuing thirty years following his return to England he would make five journeys, and possibly more, to China and India for the purpose of evangelism. His memoirs make this clear, for he acknowledged in them that "after the Boxer Year, 1900, the work that has fallen to me, not only in China but also in India, has mainly been evangelistic." And in the latter country Polhill finally paid a visit once again to Tharchin's hill station, the brief story of which must now be told.¹²⁸



On missionary Polhill's visit to Kalimpong in 1926, which was his second of at least three known visits to Tharchin's hill station,^{128a} he saw once again the gospel preaching hall for Tibetans. As learned earlier in the present chapter, this structure had been erected at his own expense during his first visit back in 1895/6. At some point subsequent to that date, however, the structure had taken on the name of the principal donor for its construction. In fact, Tharchin, when referencing in his "memoirs" this latest visit of the renowned missionary, had specifically remarked that the building "has rightly been named after him as Polhill Hall" in recognition of the fact that the Hall stands as "a concrete expression of his love for, and gift to, the Tibetan people." Most likely the time-frame for the inauguration of this current Polhill visit to the Darjeeling District area was late September-early October 1926. For in his diary for that year and found among the Tharchin Papers, the Indo-Tibetan had made several entries which indicated the following: that on 16 September he had reached Ghoom from Kalimpong, had delivered a "sermon at Ghum Church" on 25 September, had then "met Mr. Polhill at Ghum Station" on 28 September, had attended a Darjeeling Christian Convention on 29 and 30 September, and finally had returned "to Kalimpong from Ghum" on 1 October. One can safely assume that Cecil Polhill either accompanied Tharchin back to Kalimpong at this time or else made his way to Tharchin's hill station residence later on his own.*

The esteemed "Cambridge Seven" member, once ensconced in the home of his Kalimpong host, partook of some Tibetan food and tea with Tharchin and his family who were themselves then residing at Polhill Hall. There is no way of knowing for sure what the turn of conversation was like once the pleasantries of introduction were over. Were host and guest able to discern in the spirit that they had had a prior spiritual relationship which decades before had spanned the great expanse of the vast Tibetan plateau between its eastern and western borders and which now spanned the time between 1890 and 1926? One can only speculate whether by this time, or at any time thereafter, Dorje Tharchin was aware of his guest's intercessory involvement—as a local member in China of the Tibet Prayer Union—in effecting the turnabout in the moral and spiritual fortunes of his home village. But then, too, one can only speculate as well whether Polhill was by this time aware himself that his very host seated at tea with him represented in living tangible form the very firstfruits of that historic turnabout at Poo in terms of the spiritual rebirth and subsequent growth in Christ of Tharchin himself! If so, it must have engaged the rapt attention of both parties; but if not, they most certainly are privy to this knowledge now as they lie at rest in eternity's bosom.

Certain it was, however, that Polhill and the Tharchins did discuss—if not at this moment, then certainly on another occasion during what probably was a protracted stay at Kalimpong—an anticipated trip to Lhasa by the latter, which eventually took place the following year (see Chapter 18 for details). This would be a visit to the Tibetan capital that would very likely include an audience with His Holiness, the Dalai Lama. The Kalimpong visitor therefore

* It should be emphasized that besides the Tharchin diary entries just now cited, the other and primary source for the *fact* of the Polhill visit to Kalimpong in 1926 and the known details surrounding the visit as it pertained to Tharchin in particular is all per GTUM TsMs, 145.

took advantage of this bit of intelligence to request his host to convey to the Grand Lama of Tibet appropriate and expensive gifts from him. This, as the narrative will subsequently show, Gergan Tharchin was able indeed to do for his honored guest.

Now it is unclear from the pertinent documents available exactly how long Polhill remained at Kalimpong. An interesting entry within the minutes of one of the meetings of the Church of Scotland's Eastern Himalayan Mission Council that had met at Kalimpong in late January of 1927 may shed some light on the matter. After recording the fact that a long-desired missionary addition to the Mission staff at the hill station who would administer the evangelistic and social work among the Tibetans would most likely be forthcoming in the near future,* the minute went on to record the following further news:

In this connection, it was reported that Mr. David Macdonald [then currently living in Kalimpong] was willing to work ... with the Tibetan Mission temporarily and that Mr. Cecil Polhill had offered a sum of £100 as allowance to Mr. Macdonald while so working.† This matter was remitted to the [Kalimpong] Guild Mission Council with powers to appoint.¹²⁹

* The particular Western missionary who was eventually added to the staff for the Tibetan work was Rev. Dr. Robert Knox from Australia, who would arrive the following year and work most closely with Gergan Tharchin (see a few pages hence in the Text for more details).

† Polhill had no hesitation in proffering such a generous gift of support for Macdonald, inasmuch as back in 1896 at Ghoom the two of them had happily labored together on behalf of the Christian gospel among the Tibetans. In fact, both the English missionary and his wife had had much to say in praise of their younger colleague in the gospel during those much earlier days. It may be of interest to repeat here from the opening volume of the present narrative (p.199) what Mrs. Polhill had written in a letter from Ghoom dated 28 Aug. 1896:

There has been a great deal of interest [in the Christian gospel] among the Tibetans lately, though none have come right out. The young Eurasian Macdonald, who was till lately a devout Buddhist, is keeping on steadily, helping us in all the meetings.... The leading Buddhists write him threatening letters, warning him not to preach Christ, but he continues and is growing in grace. Another Tibetan, baptized some years ago, but a very cold Christian, if one at all, has come out very brightly and is very earnest. It is good to hear these two young men pray, and to see their fellow Tibetans listening to them.

And in a letter a month earlier from Ghoom, dated 26 July, and published in CIM's well-known periodical, *China's Millions* (1896):134, Polhill himself provided the following report on the Eurasian Macdonald and some of his other associates' praiseworthy Christian activities at Ghoom:

Since my last letter we have had some encouragement in our Tibetan work. For some time past our brother, Macdonald,... having such a command of the Tibetan language, has been giving great assistance, taking part in many of the [gospel] meetings. His having been a staunch Buddhist, too, gives additional weight to his testimony. During the past few weeks another Tibetan brother, Pents'og [the other person referenced by Mrs. Polhill above], an old school-fellow of Macdonald's, and also a former Buddhist, has been helping us materially, and the two are an aid to one another. Their schoolmaster, judging by their devotedness, had thought that in a former life they must have both been Buddhas; imagine his disgust then on learning that these promising disciples of Buddha had become Christians! Both these brethren are the fruit of the labors of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission [SAM]. Pents'og had grown cold, and therefore we are the more pleased to welcome him back.... His coming out is an encouragement to us, and an answer to prayer. More Tibetans, as a consequence, are listening to the Gospel; there seems a deeper interest among them.

At the same time the enemy is not idle. A learned Mongol Lama, Sheral Gyats'o, an old man over eighty, has been aroused to write a tract warning people of the dire consequences of listening to heterodoxy, and in addition has been actively engaged in going round reading his tract to the Tibetans. I saw the old man this morning opposite our home [Evelyn Cottage] visiting on this errand. The tract concludes with these words: "I, Sheral Gyats'o, say so." Will you pray for him? [This Lama, incidentally, was the same Mongol priest, it may be recalled, whom the renowned Indian pundit, S.C. Das, had kindly engaged four years earlier as the Tibetan *munshi* for the three SAM missionaries: Fredrickson, Shoberg and Gustafson. But it may also be recalled that this Lama Sherab Gyamtsho would likewise serve as the *munshi* for teacher Tharchin's Ghoom Mission School Headmaster, K.S. Paul, when the latter was but a lad, as well as for the famed Japanese monk-scholar and traveler to Tibet, E. Kawaguchi.]

The Schoolmaster has also approached our two brethren [Macdonald and Pents'og], telling them that

From this record it is not clear if missionary Polhill had remained in the Darjeeling District well beyond October of 1926 and had thus made the offer while physically present in the area, or whether his offer had been communicated from elsewhere after learning of Macdonald's willingness to fill in temporarily till the arrival at Kalimpong of the soon-to-be-appointed missionary for Tibetan work. If the retired Sino-Tibetan border missionary visitor did stay on for some months at Tharchin's hill station, as is very probably what happened, then more than likely he spent most of his time rendering invaluable assistance in the gospel outreach endeavors among the Tibetan community throughout the immediate vicinity of Kalimpong in association with Tharchin, Rev. Graham, Macdonald and others. For this would certainly have been quite in line with Polhill's own stated purpose for why, in the first instance, he had been making frequent return visits to Asian lands like India and China: namely, evangelism; and, as was earlier learned from other sources of information recently discovered, his efforts in evangelism were particularly targeted towards Tibetans and even the closed land of Tibet itself. For it must be noted here that ever since Polhill's initial visit to District Darjeeling, this missionary, like so many others before and after him at Ghoom, had longed for the opportunity to carry the gospel message deep into Tibet from that closed land's southern frontier with India-Sikkim.

In 1895, for example, after describing how he and his wife anticipated establishing themselves the following year at Darjeeling/Ghoom to engage in further Tibetan-language study concomitant with their desire to render assistance in resolving the thorny Taylor Mission problem, Polhill had then gone on to write that only "if Lhasa has not opened meantime" would he and his family "proceed to our old district in China" along the Sino-Tibetan border. Indeed, it was his hope that even should the gates of Tibet not swing open during his Ghoom stay that year, a "few" of the old and new members of Taylor's erstwhile Band would nonetheless "remain [behind] to continue the work commenced in Dajeeling and district, and take possession of Lhasa [for God's kingdom] when it opens." And "when that becomes the case," added this devoted Christian missionary, "we shall be delighted to move forward and occupy Tibetan territory" for the Lord Jesus.^{129a}

Yet even on this current and much later visit of Polhill's to District Darjeeling, his unflagging interest in Tibet continued to manifest itself and, on this occasion, in quite a remarkable way. For in a letter dated 5 December 1927 and forwarded to the Tibetan through the helpful assistance of the ex-British Trade Agent in Tibet Macdonald, missionary Polhill, and while most likely still in Kalimpong, had written Tibet's Dalai Lama of his desire to meet His Holiness; which signified, of course, that Polhill, the former leader of the CIM's Tibetan Band of missionaries along the Sino-Tibetan border, was now earnestly seeking—even at this late date in his missionary career—permission to enter Tibet and travel up to Lhasa. As will be learned two chapters hence in the present narrative, the Great Thirteenth, in his reply of 31 December, had responded in quite politic fashion that he would "keep in mind" all things the

Tibetan coolies will assault them on the street if they continue to preach there, and advising them not to associate with the missionaries in this work.

Macdonald's brother, also a Christian, and a good linguist, occasionally joins us in the preaching, though at present he has not himself taken part....

missionary had written about in his letter, but gave no immediate positive answer to Polhill's specific request for an audience with Tibet's spiritual monarch.

It must have been a keen disappointment to this zealous missionary of Christ upon receiving the Dalai Lama's less than encouraging reply. Yet conceivably, even before receiving the Grand Lama's response, which would not in any case be posted to the missionary till early the following year, Polhill may have already decided to depart Kalimpong that same month of December for either other locations of evangelistic interest in India or else, as is most likely the case, back to England. This is because the return address that was to be used by the Dalai Lama for any reply was indicated by Polhill in his letter as Bedford, England. And thus it would behoove the missionary to commence his long journey homeward almost immediately after giving his letter to Macdonald for delivery to the Dalai Lama so that he could arrive back in Bedford in time to receive any response from His Holiness. And if all this be true, it would mean that this esteemed servant of God had remained in the area of Tharchin's hill station for well over a year.

But regardless the length of his stay at Kalimpong on this current Asian trip, Cecil Polhill's generous offer of financial support provides further evidence of where his heart truly lay in regard to the ministry of the gospel: Tibet and the Tibetan people. Moreover, this generosity towards the Kalimpong Tibetan work was very much in keeping with what he had done repeatedly in years past while still on missionary duty in China laboring on behalf of the Tibetans. Indeed, it has recently come to light how back then this elite member of "the Cambridge Seven" had provided out of his own resources a great part, if not all, of the funds necessary to establish several of the CIM's Tibetan Mission stations that eventually came to be located at a number of key centers along the Sino-Tibetan frontier.¹³⁰ And even now with this current manifestation of Polhill's generous heart in having given of his substance to support Macdonald's labors with the Kalimpong Tibetan Mission, his benefaction still did not cease after leaving the area but continued to be displayed in concrete form. For after departing Kalimpong Polhill kindly sent a new magic lantern to Rev. Graham and the Scots Mission to be utilized for the ministry among the Tibetan people. Graham in turn handed over the device to Tharchin for that purpose.¹³¹ Many people, especially Tibetans, attended the magic lantern shows in the open air. Some of them became curious, wanting to know the mechanics of both the lantern and the accompanying hand-cranked phonograph-player and how a man could enter the machine to sing songs or preach the gospel message so clearly and loudly!¹³²



As was intimated near the beginning of this chapter, a major shift in the center of Christian activity among Tibetans began to occur following the Second World War, but especially following the arrival of Chinese Communist troops in Tibet after 1949. Prior to this period missionary labors had been concentrated along the eastern and western borders of the country. During the first half of the twentieth century, eastern Tibet, then under nominal Chinese control, provided Christian workers with a substantial area that was heavily peopled

by Tibetans. The workers were able, though admittedly with difficulty, to move about and even live among whole towns of Tibetans, Tibetan monasteries and encampments. Whereas missionaries in India had to content themselves with a smaller number of Tibetan traders and pilgrims who might cross over from Tibet, those missionaries on the China side of this closed land could actually settle among inhabited areas comprised of as many as ten or twenty thousand Tibetans.

With the Communist supremacy achieved in 1949 over the Nationalists in China, and its subsequent occupation of Tibet, the entire situation changed dramatically on Tibet's borders. Those Chinese as well as foreign missionaries with a call to evangelize in Central Asia and who had arrived in western China immediately after World War II had their freedom to witness suddenly curtailed or else entirely halted. The foreign workers were expelled and the indigenous Chinese missionaries restricted, although some Chinese Christians drafted into the army, oddly enough, journeyed as foot soldiers the entire distance to Lhasa and beyond, hopefully giving witness to the faith as they went.

With the cessation of missionary activity on the Sino-Tibetan border, "the place of major opportunity for witness to Tibetans," wrote Tharchin in the early 1970s, "has in the last [thirty] years reversed itself from the China side to the India side"—resulting in the shift of missionary workers to the Darjeeling "wedge district," situated strategically but a few kilometers from Tibet's well-traveled southeast "tongue" that is sandwiched in between the Sikkim state of India on the west and independent Bhutan on the east. "Here," Tharchin had added, "the major evangelistic and social work continues today with greater encouragement than ever before."¹³³

Yet frequently national Christians and missionaries have wondered why, with all this activity, labor and evangelistic effort among the Tibetans over the years, there has been so little spiritual fruit to show for it. In the past, missionary after missionary from different denominations have come to the Darjeeling hills to work among the Tibetans. Some have made a few converts here or there while others have left the field discouraged at seeing no tangible results of their prayers and labors whatsoever. The time and money involved in the venture did not justify their residence here any longer, so at least some of them thought. But there have been a few faithful ones who have carried on the gospel ministry as best as possible, looking to their Lord alone and remaining loyal to their original pledge. Such have walked not by sight but by faith in the promises of God, despite failures or slow results. They have continued to testify to the Tibetans in the hope that some day God will honor His word and reap a rich harvest for His glory and honor. Indeed, "the just shall live by faith."¹³⁴

When sharing his "memoirs" in the early 1970s, Gergan Tharchin was asked to comment on the causes of fruitlessness among the Tibetans as far as conversion to Christianity was concerned in view of the colossal efforts which up to that time had been put forth already in the evangelization among his people. His penetrating analysis may be of value to the subsequent generations in helping them to avoid the mistakes, pitfalls and disorders of the past and to adopt or adapt whatever measures or remedies which could bring forth lasting fruit for Christ from among the Tibetans.

In reply to the query, the wise and experienced Tharchin gave an extensive analysis of the situation:

First of all, the Tibetans are deeply rooted and grounded in the teaching and traditions of their original faith—Buddhism. The Buddhist philosophy, its way of life and thought patterns are deeply ingrained in the Tibetan temperament. Buddhism has certain strong rational and logical foundations which the average layman cannot easily resist or refute. Its appeal to their minds is captivating.

Second, any conversion from Buddhism to Christianity will [automatically] entail excommunication from social rights and privileges. This ushers in persecution which very few can face boldly in attempting to remain loyal to the Christian faith. Often threats and intimidations compel a person to change his place or locality which in turn involves certain difficulties.

Third, in general people can be divided into three classes: the rich, the middle class, and the poor. The rich neither care for their own religion nor for the religion of others. They are satisfied with external formalism and nominal ritualism. The middle class do not take religion seriously. And the poor readily accept any religion for material or monetary gains. They tend to compromise, saying that all religions are the same.¹³⁵

All this therefore implies that a Tibetan convert to the Christian faith should be grounded in the basic Biblical truths, that he should have an average permanent employment so as to maintain his livelihood, and that he should be engaged in evangelistic outreach which will develop the spirit of witnessing and thereby develop an attitude of taking one's religion seriously.



From the moment he returned to Kalimpong from his first major visit to Tibet Tharchin did all he possibly could to bring back the scattered Tibetan believers into a united Christian fellowship once again. Concerning this effort Tharchin, in his so-called memoirs, was given to quoting here a well-known Bible passage, "He that is wise winneth souls."¹³⁶ On the other hand, some complained against a few prominent personalities who were at the helm of the church's affairs. The lowly Tibetan from Poo reasoned with them and advised them not to pay any attention to human beings but to look to Christ alone because He is the Head of the church and the Captain of their salvation. Aimed particularly towards the Tibetans, he also introduced, and continued thereafter to conduct, open-air meetings on market days.¹³⁷

It was noted in an earlier chapter that Kalimpong's bazaar on any given day, but especially on the weekly market days, was jammed full with a multiplicity of races and religions from near and far. Baron Nebesky-Wojkowitz from Austria, previously identified as one of Tharchin's friends of a much later period, paints a vivid pen-picture of the bazaar on a market day that must have differed little from what it looked like some three decades earlier. Describing what he saw one day in the 1950s, he wrote:

On market days the bazaar presents an unparalleled sight. Its wide area is filled by an immense, jostling crowd. The vendors sit in roofed stands on both sides of the principal lane, which runs diagonally across the square. The majority are Nepali peasants from the district offering agricultural produce—corn on the cob, buckwheat, millet, beans, tomatoes, red peppers and above all rice ... Fruit of all kinds can also be bought in the bazaar, especially large and delicious oranges and bananas, while traders from the neighboring Chumbi Valley of Tibet bring tasty sweet apples.

A Nepali street-trader has taken up his position near the peasants, spreading out a bewildering plethora of wares on the ground. They include paraffin, lamps, little mirrors, brown and purple woolen caps, sticky sweets and dried up biscuits, buttons, balls of thread, needles, saucepans and gaudy silk scarves. A young Tibetan woman sitting close by has far less to offer: a heap of bent and rusty nails and a battery of bottles of all sizes stand in front of her. I wonder who on earth can want to buy such things, but I soon discover that the bottles, in particular, sell well among the Tibetans.

Directly beside the Tibetan woman sit two of her countrymen—from Lhasa, to judge by their clothes. They are selling undyed Tibetan wool. Tibetan wool merchants are a common sight in Kalimpong, for wool is Tibet's principal export. An old Lepcha with a horrifying ugly face, but the friendly and guileless eyes of a child, squats next to the Tibetans. He is modestly offering some of the products of the Sikkimese jungle for sale: bamboo shoots, which can be made into a dish resembling asparagus, combs of wild honey, dried medicinal plants and the tubers of rare orchids that he has gathered at the risk of his life from the topmost moss-grown branches of dead and rotting giant trees. Opposite the Lepcha sits a Tibetan herdsman. He has come to the market from the Almas of North Sikkim and is selling pieces of dried curd ... together with yak butter squeezed into little goatskin bags, and yak cheese that is cut into small cubes and then strung on a cord.

An Indian barber squats in the dust behind the stands. His lathered customers crouch in front of him. The turbaned Figaro goes through the operation of shaving with measured movements, as though performing a ceremony, before the admiring gaze of a mob of half-naked children. Not far from the barber, in the shade of a projecting roof, several Nepalis are busy breaking open bales of Tibetan wool tied up with yak-leather straps. Afterwards the wool will be picked, sorted according to color and quality, and taken to a warehouse to await transport to Calcutta....

With luck all sorts of interesting scenes can be observed in the marketplace. A Nepali wedding, for instance, with the barefooted bridegroom in the middle, a thick layer of rice grains stuck to his forehead as a symbol of good fortune and an umbrella—considerably the worse for wear—held over his head as a mark of dignity. Or a Chinese funeral procession may wind slowly past, accompanied by the howling of hired female mourners clad in white and the loud reports of firecrackers—the noise is supposed to drive away demons.¹³⁸

Although Tharchin was fluent in a number of other languages, he targeted his preaching especially towards his fellow Tibetans. "More often than not," he observed, "the gramophone was my best companion for singing songs or preaching the gospel messages to the crowds, which on market days might number into the thousands at any given moment. The machine never suffered from any shyness or nervousness, cold or cough."

But though he frequently relied on the gramophone for the spreading of the Christian message of salvation to these teeming bazaar crowds, Tharchin would also quite often be heard bringing forth to them himself the saving message of Christ. His preaching, said one of his co-evangelists of yesteryear, Victor Subba, himself one of the elders of the large Macfarlane Church congregation, "was the simple gospel of Jesus Christ dying to save sinners." Added this church elder, Rev. Tharchin "preached with full power, zeal, courage and boldness." These preaching traits Subba would many times witness in his fellow gospel-preacher not only within the bazaar area but also when the two of them would frequently go forth to "evangelize together among the villagers of the surrounding hill areas of Kalimpong." In fact, brother Subba and the Tibetan pastor served their Lord together in this manner for many years—doing so right up to very near the time of Rev. Tharchin's death in 1976.¹³⁹

Besides open-air preaching to the Tibetans (and others) in the bazaar area, Tharchin also conducted midweek prayer meetings at Polhill Hall in order to strengthen the believers in the Christian faith. He helped some Tibetan Christians obtain employment. He managed to secure free scholarships for children of poor families so that they might receive free education in the schools. In August of 1936 Tharchin, as Rev. Mackenzie had done years before, even established "a school for children of Tibetan-speaking people," with himself as one of its instructors. This he did in carrying out the recommendation of the Guild Mission Council's Kalimpong District Committee which the Council had approved a year or so earlier. In fact, the school was mandated to be opened in Polhill Hall. And though attendance would never be very large, it was looked upon "as an evangelistic agency among the young, a means of preparing future workers, and a factor in keeping alive the Tibetans' pride in their own culture."* The cumulative effect of these remedial measures was to kindle new life and unity in the Tibetan congregation; and once again the assembly became conscious of its importance and its responsibilities in the total program of the church.



The departure from the mission field of Evan Mackenzie on his final furlough in the very early part of 1924 meant that for the next four to five years there was no missionary working full time among the Tibetans to look after the spiritual needs of the congregation. During this period Rev. Graham, having full responsibility for the entire Scots Mission, managed as best he could the affairs of the Tibetan church. But when Tharchin appeared on the scene in mid-summer 1924 he carried on the work of the church in consultation with Graham, who served for over three years as the first moderator of the local Tibetan church kirk session in Kalimpong that the missionary had himself originally formed and that was then recognized in 1918. And upon the departure of Mackenzie, Rev. Graham assumed the office of moderator again and would continue as such for a number of years thereafter. Moreover, Tharchin would himself soon be ordained an elder of the Tibetan church.¹⁴⁰

Perhaps a word of explanation will be in order here. In the time of Graham, at least in his early years at Kalimpong, the kirk session (a Scottish ecclesiastical law term) in a Scots Mission church was a congregational *panchayat* or committee of the local church that was

* Some of this information about the school is according to two longtime residents of Kalimpong, who themselves—though not Tibetans—had attended this school during its early phase. One of them is P. R. Pradhan, an attendee for a few months when a boy of eight or nine, and sent there by his father, the illustrious K. D. Pradhan, Tharchin Babu's very dear friend of many years. The other is Gyan Jyoti, now living in Kathmandu, and son of the former locally-based prominent Kalimpong business family of Jyoti. For two years he had attended the Babu's school that he might polish up his Tibetan which he had already acquired because of his involvement even at an early age with the family business that had continuous dealings with Tibetans. Interviews with P. R. Pradhan, Jan. 1995; and Gyan Jyoti, Feb. 1993. The information and quoted words about the school's creation and meeting at Polhill Hall are per the Minutes of the Council's meeting, 16-17 April 1935, p.12, EHMC Minutes 1921-1935. The date of the school's establishment and the other quoted words are from Mackenzie's successor-missionary in the Tibetan work, Rev. Dr. Robert Knox, in his Guild Tibetan Mission Work Annual Report for 1936, ThPaK.

composed of all heads of families, the elders and the minister (or ministers). As early as 1876, during the days of William Macfarlane, it had been resolved that “a panchayat should be formed of members of the church for dealing with moral questions,” which was held, ultimately, every month. As the churches grew, the necessity for limiting the numbers became apparent. It was before the kirk session that all matters having any bearing on the membership of the congregation would emerge; and, if necessary, these were then referred to the central *Panchayat* or Presbytery, which was also theoretically composed of the heads of all the families of all the congregations in the Mission area, although in practice it was chiefly confined to the catechists and those elders who might travel with them when they came from their local churches once a month to Kalimpong. Now it was on 1 March 1925, less than seven months after his arrival in Kalimpong on a permanent basis, that Gergan Tharchin was ordained an elder and automatically became a member of the kirk session, as the following excerpt from the minutes of the pertinent ecclesiastical meeting on that date makes clear:

At Kalimpong, a meeting of the Tibetan Kirk-Session was held on the 1st of March 1925.

Present: The Rev. Dr. J.A. Graham, D.D., C.I.E., Mr. David Macdonald, Mr. J.D. Namgyal, and Mr. Tharchin....

2. As no objection was raised, the Tibetan Kirk-Session proceeded with the ordination of Mr. Tharchin as an Elder.

3. It was resolved to admit Mr. Tharchin to the Kirk-Session. He joined the Kirk-Session today....

Signed/D. Macdonald
Session Clerk. 1/3/25.

Signed/J. A. Graham
Moderator,
Tibetan Mission Kirk-Session.

In time Tharchin would serve as Treasurer and then as Session Clerk of the Tibetan kirk session under the moderatorship of Rev. Mackenzie’s replacement as the new Guild Tibetan missionary (see next below). And, of course, following his ordination as a Scots Guild Mission minister in the early 1950s, Tharchin himself became moderator.¹⁴¹



With the arrival in the hill station in the spring of 1928 of Dr. Robert B. Knox, an Australian missionary doctor, there was hope that the spiritual condition of the Tibetan congregation, already changed for the better through the faithful ministry of Gergan Tharchin, would bring about further improvement.¹⁴² Indeed, within two years of Knox’s arrival there was developed a formal “Policy for Tibetan Work” that was set forth in a brief position paper which the Australian missionary, with doubtless some significant input from Tharchin out of his own recent experience in Tibet, had submitted to Kalimpong’s Guild Mission Council for approval. Approved on 10 October 1930, it summarized the various activities and modes of evangelistic outreach which up to that moment the Mackenzies, the Tharchins and Dr. Knox had engaged in and which the latter would continue to undertake to do in the years ahead as opportunity

would allow. Found among the Tharchin Papers and marked “Confidential” due to some sensitive content, the paper makes for interesting reading because it not only relates how the Tibetan work in the Church at Kalimpong and throughout the surrounding District was to be carried on but also reveals the *modus operandi* for how the people and country of the Great Closed Land were to be reached for the sake of the Christian gospel. As one reads this document one can clearly discern echoes of what Rev. Knox’s predecessor and what his current catechist colleague in the work Gergan Tharchin had already been doing: both at home and abroad. What follows is the complete text as it appeared on Church of Scotland Guild Mission (for Kalimpong) letterhead stationery:

Confidential

POLICY FOR TIBETAN WORK

A. In Kalimpong and District

(i) Kalimpong. A catechist to be stationed in Kalimpong and to be responsible for pastoral care of the Tibetan congregation, evangelistic work in the town, and the management of the Press.

(ii) Butia Bustis. A colporteur (if possible, with a compounder’s qualifications) to visit. Tibetan schools may be opened but could not enjoy Government grant.

(iii) Traveling Tibetans. To be met in their camps and on the road, and literature distributed. Owing to the difficulty of any connected teaching, the centers at which contacts may be established should be increased. Arrangements may be made with other branches of the Guild Mission whereby Tibetan-speaking compounders and teachers should be stationed at the centers most frequented by traveling Tibetans for this purpose.

B. In Tibet

(i) Literature to be introduced through travelers.

(ii) Colportage work to be undertaken when and as opportunity offers.

(iii) The Tibetan missionary should undertake visits to Tibet, under the conditions laid down by the Political Authorities, as often as permission can be obtained—if possible, annually—to acquire a firsthand knowledge of conditions with a view to starting work in that country should it be opened to missionaries.

It may become possible to spend longer periods than are usually granted to tourists in Tibet, e.g., in Yatung, even before the door is opened for direct missionary work. Advantage should be taken of every opportunity to stay there even though definite missionary work may be forbidden.



Both Tharchin and the new missionary supervisor of the Tibetan Mission had specific new plans which they wanted to implement for the benefit of the local Tibetan church. First, they wanted to start an orphanage for the poor and deserving children but it did not materialize.¹⁴³ Second, they wanted to begin a Christian Inn for the Tibetan traders and pilgrims who could avail themselves of the shelter in the inn for a few days free of charge and could also hear about the gospel of Christ. In fact, it was announced at a meeting of the Guild Mission Council—no doubt by Dr. Knox who was present as a Council member—that

“a gift of about Rs. 1070/-” had come “from an anonymous Australian donor for building [such] a Christian *dharma*sala for Tibetans.” Yet this plan too failed.¹⁴⁴ Third, Tharchin wanted to settle the Tibetan Christians on a plot of land but this also, like the other plans, the Tibetan leader noted in his “memoirs,” could not be carried out “because of the lack of vision, faith and cooperation from the then higher authorities” in the Scots Mission.*



Knox and Tharchin were great assets to the Tibetan church. Knox deserves particular credit for pruning (and purging, where necessary) the church congregation roll itself. This becomes clear when reading the already referenced Annual Reports on the Tibetan Work for the 1930s which the new head of the Tibetan Mission had submitted. In the Report for 1931, for example, and under the heading of “Congregation,” the new missionary had not minced words: “The statistics appear disappointing. However, during the time [when] there was no Tibetan Missionary [i.e., between 1924 and 1928], the number of Christians on the roll was about doubled [from the more realistic 90 to 100 figure] by the inclusion of a large number of ineffectives. This is gradually being remedied by the transfer of some to other congregations and the removal of a few others.” He then could point to future prospects of the Tibetan church roll, stating in the next sentence that “two young people were admitted to communion on profession of faith; one very promising young man has been accepted as a catechumen; and we are in close touch with three other inquirers.”

The Tibetan Mission supervisor, in his report for 1932, provided some clarification as well as discussed further developments regarding the church roll. “Records show a large decrease in the number of members,” he began, “but this is more apparent than real, being due to a great extent to the transfer to other congregations or the removal of the names of members who had long ceased to have any connection with this congregation [the “ineffectives” he had cited a year earlier]. In addition, several names were removed by death and for disciplinary reasons. No adult baptisms took place during the year as it has been found undesirable to hurry catechumens on to baptism too quickly.” Nevertheless, Rev. Knox went on to report, “in spite of small numbers, we feel that there is a healthy spirit developing.” Indeed, by the time of the 1934 Annual Report, it could be stated that “four adults who had previously been accepted as catechumens ... were baptized.” In fact, over the next several years there would occur a steady increase in the number of both catechumens and those eventually baptized. So that by the end of 1937 the missionary could report the following: “... it is a matter for rejoicing that there have been no removals from our congregational roll by discipline, transfer, etc., and only one death. Baptisms ... and transfers in bring the number on the roll

* These two may have indeed “had the right ideas,” as Tharchin’s “memoirs” further state, but the Tibetan may have been too harsh and sweeping in his judgment of the Scots Mission that its failure to agree to these plans was due to its “lack of vision, faith and cooperation.” Were any of the Mission’s authorities of that day alive today, they would more than likely present a different explanation for their inaction on these proposals of Dr. Knox and Gergan Tharchin. For Tharchin’s discussion of all this, see GTUM TsMs, 149-50.

up to 91, so that it is gradually regaining the level from which it was reduced some years ago after drastic purging of the roll." Furthermore, by the end of 1938, the last full year of Rev. Knox's presence in Kalimpong, the missionary could report that "one of the younger [congregational] members is taking an interest in Sunday School work and there are signs that we shall have others following him." Unquestionably, a new and encouraging chapter had begun in the history of the Kalimpong Tibetan church under the guiding hands of both missionary Knox and catechist Tharchin.



But the missionary doctor especially deserves credit for having made another significant contribution to the Kalimpong Tibetan community—both Christian and non-Christian alike: Dr. Knox was chiefly responsible for having opened the Eleventh Mile (Topkhana) Tibetan dispensary. This was an area of town which certainly had need for such a medical facility, if one can accept the Austrian Baron's description of this part of Kalimpong as well. Situated only a short distance from where Gergan Tharchin's Tibet Mirror Press shop would in time be located, here is what in this earlier period Topkhana must have at least in part been like, to quote once again from Nebesky-Wojkowitz's account of the early 1950s:

... Only three hundred paces from the Tibetan press stands a long stone building. "Topkhana," the inhabitants of Kalimpong call it. Here the poorest of the poor live, Tibetans of the lowest classes, who cannot find shelter anywhere else. At night the interior of the Topkhana looks like a scene from hell. Twenty or thirty open fires burn in small enclosures erected along the walls. The high, bare room is filled with their acrid smoke. Dark figures wrapped in filthy rags squat round the fires and look fearfully, inquisitively or threateningly at the stranger who has ventured among them. Most of those who live here are beggars, but the Topkhana sometimes affords free shelter to a poor muleteer or mendicant monk. Over there four young priests are sitting round a fire. One of them is laboriously reading the grubby pages of a tattered book in the flickering firelight, while his three companions intone a prayer, clapping their hands in the rhythm of the verses. Outside the circle of light an old lama squats, leaning his back against the sooty wall, with glassy eyes and half-open mouth and beads of sweat on his leathery face. He wheezes as he draws air and now and again his hands flutter up as though he were trying to push something away. The priests observe my questioning glance. The man with the book shrugs his shoulders and says unconcernedly: "Fever. He often has it."

Each of the many fires illuminates the same melancholy picture. But even among these destitute people the gods of Tibet are at home. Here and there little altars of flat stones can be seen, on which stand amulet caskets and images. Even the poorest beggar has set up a clay image of the merciful Chenrezi, before whom a little butter lamp burns.¹⁴⁵

If in the 1920s and '30s the inhabitants of the Topkhana and the Eleventh Mile district were but half as impoverished, beggarly and destitute as is portrayed here from a later period, it could surely be said with great justification that Dr. Knox's medical dispensary was (no pun intended) absolutely indispensable to the well-being of these abject souls. This is the impression one receives upon perusing the various Annual Reports of the Tibetan Work that as mentioned earlier were prepared and submitted to the Kalimpong Guild Mission by Dr. Knox throughout

the 1930s, copies of which are a part of the Tharchin Papers. Concerning the medical dispensary, whose creation occurred in 1930 and constituted “the outstanding event” in Tibetan work that year, Knox went on to report for that period that “numbers of Tibetans, mostly birds of passage [vagabonds, wanderers], have called at the dispensary to get medicine or [Christian] literature.” The following year he could further report that the dispensary “remains our chief point of contact with visiting and, indeed, resident Tibetans.” And when an epidemic of malignant malaria broke out in Sikkim in 1931 it “resulted in the influx of a great number of infected Tibetans and kept us busy.” Insofar as possible, added the medical missionary, “all patients receive [Christian] tracts, and those who are very likely to appreciate them are given Gospel portions because very few are willing to buy.”

To give some idea of the immensity of the work performed at the small Tibetan dispensary, Dr. Knox could state that for the two years of 1931 and 1932, the number of treatments freely offered were 2328 and 2220, respectively. Indeed, he could assert two years later that this medical facility had become “busier than ever,” thus signifying that unquestionably the dispensary “fills a need among the Tibetan people besides increasing our contact with them” and, he noted significantly, “preparing a way for reaching Tibet itself.” By which the missionary meant that many of those treated at the facility were visiting Tibetans who had come down from the Roof of the World, a great number of whom, upon receiving at the dispensary either a verbal or written witness (or both) concerning the message of Christ, would at some point thereafter return to their homeland and hopefully share with their countrymen what they had learned about the Christian gospel.

In any given year, explained Knox in his 1935 Report, there was always a greater demand for medical assistance in the dispensary at the beginning and end of the year but always a considerable decrease during “the hot weather when this work is almost at a standstill.” This was because very few Tibetans, who generally found it extremely difficult to acclimate themselves to the much warmer weather south of Tibet, would ever venture forth down to India at that time of year. Even so, one “gratifying feature” of the Tibetan medical work, the missionary noted in his Report for 1935, was the fact of “the increased readiness of patients to contribute to the cost of running the dispensary”—always, of course, on a voluntary basis; and that, furthermore, “although the expenditure on drugs, etc., was greater than ever, income from patients, for the first time, exceeded it by a fair margin.” This was the case even though 1935 proved to have had the greatest number of treatments performed at the dispensary in any one year up to that time. Moreover, another record year in the number of Tibetans treated could be reported the following year, and in 1937 patient contribution “was higher than ever before,” and would remain about the same in 1938. All in all, these highly favorable developments must have been extremely heartwarming to both Dr. Knox and his catechist colleague Tharchin.

Nevertheless, despite the quite positive results which continued to evidence themselves from the services rendered at the Tibetan dispensary, some people, reported Gergan Tharchin later, had actually wanted to terminate this highly successful Mission-financed facility; but in the end, Dr. Knox prevailed against the opposition.¹⁴⁶ It was fortunate for the Tibetans that he did, especially after the flood of Tibetan refugees commenced to swell the Kalimpong Tibetan community from the late 1950s onward.



Another activity—this one sponsored by the Tibetan congregation itself—must also have warmed the heart of both these Christian servants, but especially Tharchin’s pastoral heart. Knox, in his Report for 1934, recounted how the Tibetan church assembly as a whole had been “learning to take up some social and evangelistic work.” And the result was that, on a holiday known in the hill station as Boxing Day, the church members had “entertained about 80 beggars with tea, presents and a lantern show” on the Life of Christ, which doubtless had ended with a short gospel message having been delivered by the Indo-Tibetan. And on another, similar occasion, this time “at or around the New Year,” reported the missionary in his 1938 Report, “the Congregation as a whole [rendered up] a united witness” to numerous destitutes in the hill town. In fact, it was “a record number—about 120—[who] turned up to enjoy the treat.” Sitting down in the yard of the Tibetan Mission House, the poor guests were first served tea, followed by a Tibetan pastry called “kab-ze,” next given oranges and, lastly, offered uncooked rice which they were to take away with them. But before the beggars departed, they were also treated to a magic lantern presentation on Christ’s life. “Last of all,” Knox concluded, “each was given a piece of soap with instructions to use it!”

A still further ministry, this one quite practical and for the benefit especially of the members of the Tibetan church themselves, was developed during the 1930s by the church leaders. Wrote Rev. Knox in his Report for 1934: “An attempt is being made to teach some of our Christians and others to become good and useful citizens by helping them in their work and in the proper use of their wages. In one [family] case particularly, the results have been very striking.” And in the following year’s Report, the missionary could assert that this Christian family “has made good under our care.” Yet not all attempts along this line of church social work yielded the kind of result just now related. For the Tibetan Mission supervisor had to acknowledge that another family, having arrived from Tibet that very year (1935), had come under the care of the Tibetan church and remained for some nine months learning a trade, only to have then disappeared before it could “benefit fully from the religious and social instruction received.”



Although Tharchin and Knox saw eye-to-eye on some matters, like those discussed above, there were others on which they could not at all agree. Especially was this the case as it involved the newspaper publishing efforts of Tharchin in the late 1920s and on into the 1930s. (See Chapter 19 for details.) This and other related matters in time created a strain in their personal relationship, but which nonetheless was repaired in due time. Through it all, Gergan Tharchin always held Dr. Knox in high regard.

Needless to say, like the Scottish missionaries Evan and Mrs. Mackenzie, Dr. Knox too deserved a bronze plate in the local Macfarlane Church. Its absence for the longest time was most surprising. Yet funds were finally collected by the Tibetan church for this purpose and plans to inscribe and install the plate to the sacred memory of Dr. Knox were at last implemented. All these missionaries have endeared themselves to the Tibetan church by their sacrificial service, and the Tibetan congregation has therefore honored them with glowing tributes.



Over the years the Tibetan church in Kalimpong, at first perhaps slowly but nonetheless steadily, grew and developed spiritually and organizationally. As the ordained minister of the congregation ever since 1952,¹⁴⁷ Gergan Tharchin at the time of his retirement from active ministry had for many years been ably assisted by the church elders¹⁴⁸ and by some of the members of his congregation. A classic instance of this was cited by Rev. Tharchin himself just a few years prior to his retirement. It concerned the spiritual welfare of one of the Kalimpong Tibetan church's very own elders and his wife, the Tshering Wangdis, and exemplified how the elders—one of whom was Tharchin's son Sherab—and others in the church rallied round and proved, in the estimation of the Tibetan pastor, the power of prevailing prayer "of the righteous" (see James 5:16 in the Christian New Testament Scriptures). At the time of the incident recounted by the Tibetan pastor the Wangdis had removed themselves from Kalimpong to the sister hill station of Darjeeling. "Our God is an answering God indeed!" began Tharchin in his account of the event, which was a part of his summary of "Church News" about his congregation for the year 1970 that he annually submitted for eventual publication in the *Eastern Himalayan Church News*. "Many friends prayed for Mr. and Mrs. Tshering Wangdi," he continued, "that they might repent and reenter the light." Their names, the pastor went on to explain,

were mentioned even in some papers for prayer. In the meantime, my son and others used to go to their place whenever they happened to visit Darjeeling and gave them fellowship. A couple of months ago they shifted from Darjeeling and settled down in our compound, as they are related to some of our church members living in the same compound. By God's grace and with our humble effort they have sincerely repented and made a confession before our congregation in the church. Praise the Lord! Let us rejoice for them, as written in the Bible (Luke 15:10): "... there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."¹⁴⁹

This incident, in fact, points up the truth and validity of a most perceptive observation that was made to the present author by a prominent Tibetan trader from Lhasa who with his family was to take up residence in Kalimpong from 1951 onwards. In speaking of his relationship with Rev. Tharchin, which had begun as early as 1945 with his first business trip to Kalimpong that year, Tashi Dorje waxed most eloquent concerning the Tibetan pastor's service to both the Tibetan church and the larger Tibetan community in the hill station. Interestingly enough, this merchant-trader from Lhasa singled out in particular the ministry

of reconciliation which he had been able to observe again and again in his friend Rev. Tharchin. Especially in the area of "domestic family disputes," this Christian pastor, he remarked, proved to be a very effective "reconciler." Yet this service, Tashi Dorje noted, "he rendered not only to Tibetan but also to non-Tibetan families." Moreover, whenever anyone, whether inside or outside the Tibetan church, fell into any kind of dire difficulty beyond that person's ability to cope with it alone—and "no matter if legal, financial, business or family in nature"—the Tibetan pastor, when made aware of the situation, "was always available to assist." But there was one additional and quite significant service which Rev. Tharchin abundantly provided to his ethnic countrymen from Tibet, and no matter if Christian or not, Tashi Dorje made clear. According to this prominent Tibetan, who himself never became a Christian, the Kalimpong pastor served

as a very good adviser to all Tibetans on all kinds of personal problems and everyday issues of life. Especially for those Tibetans new in India and who knew nothing of Indian culture, customs, ways and language, Gergan Tharchin helped them very much, and regardless their social rank, economic status or religious faith, including me myself!

Clearly, those within and without the Tibetan church at Kalimpong had, in the person of this remarkable Christian pastor, "a very faithful, honest and kindhearted man" as their benefactor, servant-leader, and constant friend in need.¹⁵⁰



Now the Tibetan church in Kalimpong regularly assembled every Sunday for prayer and worship. Important Christian festivals like Good Friday, Easter and Christmas were observed by this little flock with great joy, a sense of unity and in deep fellowship. Under Rev. Tharchin's direction the church members, as noted earlier, would take an active part in evangelistic work. Every year contributions were sent for the work of the Bible Society of India. Even the most humble believers would contribute their mite for the work of the church. The mothers in the congregation adjusted their own schedules to enable the monthly prayer meetings and fellowship to take place with their participation.

One particularly important development for the Tibetan church was the presence and assistance for many years of David Macdonald. This former British Trade Agent at Yatung/Gyantse in Tibet had retired from political service in 1924, had then settled down in Tharchin's hill town where he eventually joined in fellowship, membership and, subsequently, the leadership in the Tibetan church (he would become an elder) alongside Gergan Tharchin himself. In fact, according to various observers who were in a position to know and witness firsthand, these two came to be viewed "very much like two brothers in the flesh," they having become extremely close-knit in their relationship through the years. As one longtime Kalimpong resident remarked, "They were always teasing each other and hugging each other warmly and demonstrably"! Both of them would often conduct together the regular weekly Tibetan Sunday service, always held, of course, in the side annex of the main sanctuary at the

Macfarlane Memorial Church. “Alternating with each other,” these two church leaders would determine between themselves “who would be the one to deliver the morning sermon and who would be the one to lead the worship service.”

And at the time when Rev. Knox was still on missionary duty in Kalimpong ministering among the Tibetans, all three of these men would lead the Tibetan congregational Worship Service. For example, scribbled in ink on a slip of paper still preserved among the Tharchin Papers is the Order of Service which the three of them conducted together one Sunday morning. In this instance it was on the occasion of the Lord’s Supper or Communion and reads as follows:

Th: Hymn 148 – Prayer – Lessons: Mathew 11:28-30; Philippians 4:13; Acts 4:10-12 – Hymn 138 – Offering
K: Sermon – Confession of Faith – Exhortation – Hymn 67 – Lord’s Supper
Macd: Prayer
K: Hymn 38 – Benediction

Moreover, on those occasions when unexpectedly the one or the other of these two close-knit Christian friends could not be together in responsibility on a given Sunday morning, they would send messages to each other’s home at the hands of servants during the days preceding, requesting that the one or the other take overall responsibility for the upcoming Service. A case in point was what happened on 21 September 1940. Referring to Rev. William Scott, who by this time had replaced Rev. Knox as Guild Tibetan missionary, Tharchin began his Saturday-sent missive to Macdonald thus:

My dear Sir,

As Mr. Scott forgot to request, if it is not too late we [Scott and Tharchin] shall be grateful if you kindly help and take the Sunday Service tomorrow. If so, I am going to Algarah [a nearby community to where the Tibetan catechist would sometimes go to minister to the Christians there]. This was my mistake, as I forgot to tell Mr. Scott [about Algarah] in time. In case if you are going out [elsewhere on Sunday] and have no time, I will stay tomorrow [and hence will lead the Tibetan Service]. With respects.

Yours obediently,
 Tharchin

And so, in the lower left corner of the same note sent by Tharchin (and preserved among the Tharchin Papers), the recipient had written in return his brief but most welcome reply that was taken immediately back to the sender: “Very gladly. D. Macd.”

Or consider another, even more interesting, example of this kind of considerate—though in this case more urgent—communication back and forth which had occurred just prior to an Easter Sunday Service. The Pastor of the Nepali-speaking congregation at Macfarlane had asked the Tibetan catechist to speak before the combined Tibetan and Nepali Easter Worship Service that year. But for some reason Tharchin had felt it necessary to send a letter to Macdonald on either the day before or most probably very early on Easter Sunday morning itself, perhaps requesting that the Eurasian Christian speak in his place, though Tharchin himself would most likely still be present to help conduct the Easter Service. Very soon thereafter came Macdonald’s reply, either handcarried back by Tharchin’s servant or else delivered by Macdonald’s, and once again preserved among the Tharchin Papers:

My dear Mr. Tharchin,

Thank you very much for your letter. Will you please talk [i.e., give a message] to the people in the Church as the Pastor has asked you? Joe [Macdonald's son?] and I have arranged to go to the Homes' Church [i.e., the Katherine Graham Memorial Chapel at Graham's Homes] this morning. So I regret I cannot come to the Nepali Service. With kind regards.

Ever yours,
D. Macdonald

I will remember you in my prayers.

So, as was his habit in never wasting a bit of paper, Gergan Tharchin wrote on the reverse side of Macdonald's letter the following Scripture references which he then used in creating the Easter sermon he later that same morning delivered before the combined congregation of Tibetans and Nepalis at Macfarlane: Mark 16:6-7; Romans 6:23, 5:21; 1 Peter 1:4; and Romans 6:1-4.

Interestingly enough, those who had availed themselves of the opportunity to hear either one of these two men offer up the Sunday morning sermon would scarcely, if ever, have been disappointed. This was because, aside from the excellent content of their sermons, both these Christian gentlemen had a superlative command of the Tibetan language. Much, of course, has been written about Macdonald's proficiency in that language; but it needs to be noted as well what others have commented concerning the Christian pastor's own skill in Tibetan. For example, it will be recalled from the present narrative's first volume what Professor Dawa Norbu of Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University had to say about it: that the Babu was a master of modern literary Tibetan, both spoken and written. Then, too, B. C. Simick, Jr., a younger Christian friend of Tharchin's and longtime Lecturer in Tibetan at Kalimpong College, has observed that "there is no doubt he was an authority in the Tibetan language, he speaking perfect Lhasan Tibetan."

Still another friend, who by his own acknowledgment had previously been staunchly anti-Christian but had later greatly softened his stance towards Rev. Tharchin's faith, had nothing but the highest praise and profoundest respect to convey when commenting to the present author on the Tibetan pastor's speaking talents and his other life accomplishments, declaring unhesitatingly that Tharchin "was truly a great man." This friend's observations are especially telling in view of (a) his education, world experience, cultured background, and well-placed position in life, and (b) the fact that his comments shed further light on Rev. Tharchin's constant benefaction towards the larger Tibetan community that included the Bhutanese (or Bhutia) Tibetans. For this particular friend was none other than the late Drasho Rigzin Dorje, whose paternal great-grandfather had been Penlop (Governor) of Thimphu Valley contemporaneously during the reign of Ugyen Wangchuk, the very first Maharaja of Bhutan. Rigzin Dorje it was who in 1984 had been appointed Secretary of Religion and Cultural Affairs in the Cabinet of His Majesty's Government of Bhutan. But prior to this prestigious honor he had obtained his higher education at Australia's Sydney University and subsequent to this same honor had often been sent by Bhutan's King (now called the *druk gyalpo*) to other countries as a kind of roving ambassador. Having in his youth, along with his slightly older brother, been taken in by Babu Tharchin into the latter's family compound in 1957 when about 15 years old and enrolled for his secondary education at the Scots Mission's

SUM Institution, Rigzin Dorje had become like a son to the Babu, receiving, he explained, “my food, shelter, needful guidance, pocket money, the furtherance of my Tibetan language training, and even ... on-the-job training in the Babu’s Press.” This was all provided for him, added the Drasho, so that upon reaching maturity the young lad—in the words of the Babu to him—could “return permanently to your homeland of Bhutan and be able to contribute to the uplift of your people and assist in your nation’s Government.” And it was while experiencing this kind of highly personal upbringing in the Tharchin household for some four years, recalled the Drasho to the author, that “I regularly attended the Tibetan Christian service at Macfarlane Memorial Church” where “I greatly enjoyed listening to the Babu’s messages which he often gave there.” Noting what an excellent speaker Rev. Tharchin had proved to be in these Christian services at Macfarlane, Bhutan’s Religion and Cultural Affairs Secretary was most sincere in his laudatory expressions about Babu Tharchin, fondly recollecting, among other things, how “he had spoken flawless Lhasan Tibetan.”

In summary, therefore, these two “great friends,” Gergan Tharchin and David Macdonald, who by their common profession of the Christian faith had become “brethren in Christ,” had indisputably constituted a very great asset to the life and ministry of the Tibetan church in Kalimpong during its heyday.¹⁵¹ Indeed, Rev. William Scott, the substitute missionary in charge of the Tibetan work during 1939 and for several years thereafter, expressed his great indebtedness to both these gentlemen for their handling of nearly all the congregational responsibilities in the course of that year; and Scott’s replacement in mid-year 1943, missionary David McHutchison, praised these same two elders of the Kalimpong Tibetan church most highly for their Christian patience and faithfulness when in his Report on the Tibetan Work for 1943 he offered up the following encomium: “A great debt is owed to Mr. David Macdonald and to Mr. Tharchin for the admirable work they willingly and patiently continue to do. The fruit of their labors is not always encouraging but they overcome momentary fits of depression and carry on in faith.”



The present congregation consists of a small number of Tibetan Christian families and others. Though few in number in the total aggregate, they are faithful in spirit. Though small, they are alive. Yet some people in years gone by, Rev. Tharchin noted, had tried to obliterate the existence of the Tibetan church, but God preserved it.¹⁵² Some of the members of the congregation are scattered abroad. “This makes the Tibetan church worldwide,” observed Tharchin. Some of these believers are in Tibet, China, Nepal, Bhutan and even as far away as Hong Kong. From time to time letters of love and concern were received from some of these believers. Rev. Tharchin’s comment on this was typical of his continuing concern for all of his flock: “There are some with whom we cannot communicate nor they with us. For such we only pray and hope that they stand firm and strong in the Christian faith and that the Lord will protect them under the shadow of His wings. Some are scattered due to employment, transfer or some other reason.”



Interestingly, in the concluding remarks to the contents of the present chapter that appear in Gergan Tharchin's "memoirs" shared by him at very near the end of his life, the retired shepherd of the Kalimpong Tibetan flock had the following to say:

The prayers of Christians everywhere are earnestly solicited on behalf of the Tibetan Christian church worldwide that by God's grace it may continue to develop and grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁵³ May it turn out to be a great witnessing agency under the guidance and leadership of its ordained ministers both present and future. After all, it is hoped that the Tibetan church in Kalimpong will keep its eyes ever open and oriented towards the Land of Tibet whose evangelization must be effected should God in His mercy and goodness grant the people there a golden opportunity to regain their freedom and independence once again in the stream of history. May His will be done.¹⁵⁴

C H A P T E R

The Birth of the Tibetan Newspaper and Printing Press

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.
How beautiful ... are the feet of him ... that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings
of good, that publisheth salvation.

Isaiah 40:8, 52:7

THE PLACE AND IMPORTANCE of a newspaper and printing press in modern times can hardly be overestimated. Their incalculable service to the advancement of knowledge and technology scarcely needs any recapitulation here. The information and new ideas they disseminate to the ends of the earth and the education they afford to millions of people can be easily judged by the impact newspapers, periodicals, magazines and books have made upon the masses. Without the printing press the victorious advance of the Renaissance and Reformation would have been as slow as a snail's progress. But one example need be cited here to demonstrate the incredible step forward which was made in Europe as a consequence of the perfecting, if not the inventing itself, of the printing press by Johann Gutenberg in the fifteenth century: in 1400 one person could *copy* one book in a hundred days, but by 1500 a hundred books could be *printed* in just *one* day!

Like many inventions, the origin of the printing press was complex. Printing by means of carved wooden blocks (and even by means of movable type) had been known quite early on in China but failed to spread as far westward as Europe after its discovery. However, the knowledge of paper making (dating back, if not to the second century b.c., then at least to the first century a.d.) did spread westward to the Continent from that East Asian land by way of the Arabic world as early as the eighth century. But this art did not become common in European lands till the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. "It is scarcely too much to say," historian H. G. Wells has observed, "that paper made the intellectual revival of Europe possible." In this regard, few may be aware how critical in all this was the invention of the spinning wheel at around 1300. It greatly reduced the heretofore high price of cloth and expanded the latter's use by providing an extensive supply of linen rags for making a large and cheap paper supply available. And thus the replacement of the more expensive parchment with cheaply manufactured paper furthered the rapid spread of the printing press for the multiplication of books, and in time newspapers and other forms of literature, on an incomparably large and economical scale unheard of before.

Yet more than just paper was needed to make the printed book a success. Originally conceived in ancient China in about 600, the idea of so-called "block-books" had taken a long time to find its way to Europe, this kind of book only really coming into use on the Continent during the first half of the fifteenth century, if not a little earlier. Called xylography, in this method of bookmaking an entire page of lettering would in reverse characters be carved out of one wooden block from which multiple impressions could be taken. But "the great step beyond this," explained European historian Ernest Knapton, "was to devise some form of movable type, to develop the techniques necessary in order to have a good casting metal, good type faces, molds, matrices and inks, and to combine all these elements in a

workable printing establishment.” Such precisely appears to have been the achievement of Gutenberg in his print shop at Mainz in Germany around the year 1450.

This now famous printer had diligently studied the earlier woodcuts of European printmakers; these were engravings made on wood, after suitable inking had been discovered, for making prints and—by 1440—for printing the first book ever made with engraved wooden blocks, one for each page. His study of woodcuts in the end led Gutenberg to perfect a method by which individual soft-leaded letters were able to be placed in such a manner that they formed words and entire pages; and thus a movable metal type could be used indefinitely in making multiple numbers and kinds of books until after so much use the type would finally give out. Hence printing by this means was dependent upon successful type founding. On the other hand, European historians Thompson and Johnson have pointed out that “the problems of the press itself and of its manipulation were not so difficult, since the principles of the press were well known from its use in the making of wine.”

Within fifty years following the appearance of the first piece of printing which has been preserved from Gutenberg’s press—a religious document—all major European countries were in possession of the means for printing books using movable type. Almost immediately, it has been said, the prices of books dropped to one-eighth of their previous cost; and hence books were now within the reach of multitudes who formerly were not able to purchase them. Knowledge and new ideas were therefore able to be extended to a thousand times more people in a relatively short period of time; which meant that Europe’s, and later the world’s, intellectual life entered upon a fresh and more vigorous phase than ever before in the annals of man. Added Wells in his short history of the world: “It ceased to be a little trickle from mind to mind; it became a broad flood, in which thousands and presently scores of hundreds of thousands of minds participated.” In this respect, it would be difficult indeed to overestimate the effects of the printing press in this quickening of Europe’s intellectual life.¹



Yet it must be lamented that unlike these epoch-making advances on the European continent which impelled her peoples into the modern era, the Tibetan masses remained shadowed, if not altogether imprisoned, within a medieval world of their own which only a radical upheaval from the outside ultimately brought to an end. For the longest period, even up to the moment of the Chinese invasion of the Great Closed Land in 1950, Tibet never did possess a movable-type printing press of any kind. In fact, as far as is known, the only advanced kind of printing apparatus which she could claim to have possessed prior to 1950 was but one lone lithographic press. This device had been carried, dismantled, over the Himalayas from India on the backs of mules and coolies to Shigatse. There in early 1882 it had been introduced by Sarat Chandra Das to the Spiritual Adviser and Prime Minister of Tibet’s second highest ranking Buddhist prelate, the Panchen Lamā, who at the time was Lo-zan Choikyī Wang-chug.

Figuring prominently in this entire affair had been a copy of an Arithmetic volume which had been prepared in Tibetan by Heinrich Jaeschke, the Moravian missionary-linguist at

Kyelang, and which had been printed and published there on the mission station's now-celebrated lithographic press. Somehow, a copy of this school textbook had fallen into the hands of the famed British Indian Pundit, Chandra Das, who had brought it with him to Shigatse on an earlier visit in 1879. Having shown and then presented the copy to Sengchen Lama, the Panchen Lama's first minister, Das had almost immediately been drawn by his host into a lengthy conversation about Tibet's printing system, the most notable operating center of which was located a mere five to ten miles from Shigatse at the famed Narthang Monastery (see Chapter 20 below for more on this printing center). In his diary entry for 26 August 1879 at Shigatse, Das wrote:

He ... deplored the wretched block printing used in Tibet. I described to him the printing press and lead types used in India and Europe, and also gave a short account of lithography, of which the Kyelang Arithmetic was a specimen. He thought a printing press would be too heavy to be brought into Tibet, but that a lithographic press would answer his purpose just as well, and asked me to draw up an estimate of the price, packing and carriage of one to Trashilhunpo [the Panchen Lama's ecclesiastical seat just outside Shigatse]. In the evening, in the course of conversation with the Panchen Lama, the Prime Minister suggested the introduction of a lithographic press to supersede block printing. The Lama approved of the suggestion, and requested the Prime Minister to furnish him with the necessary estimate.

By the first of September, Das was "told that the Panchen Lama had approved [the estimate for the press], and would pay the money from his own private funds." The Panchen then asked that the lithographic press be brought from India by April of 1880; Das, however, was prevented from returning till late in 1881; but by January of 1882 the Panchen Lama and his Prime Minister had their press assembled and operating before their amazed but delighted eyes.² Whether this lithographic press ever did appreciably replace the block printing method at nearby Narthang is extremely doubtful; and whatever happened to the press itself is today unknown. Certain it is, however, that it was never put to any consistent use sufficiently enough to have caused the powers that be to effect a radical change in the techniques used for bookmaking throughout the land of Tibet as a whole or in the manner by which information and knowledge would be disseminated. Indeed, though it cannot be proven that there was any connection, the fact that a few years later (in 1887) the Sengchen Lama had become the victim of a State-ordered execution by the Tibetan government at Lhasa, reportedly on the grounds that he had "given refuge to foreigners in his monastery and betrayed the secrets of lamaism to the envoy of a foreign power," may have possibly contributed to dampening any further interest—at least in the Shigatse area—in seeing a more modern and *Western* printing device adopted as a replacement of the traditional block printing method.^{2a}

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As far as the Hidden Land was concerned, she and her people had for the longest while scarcely progressed beyond handwritten manuscripts that from the very beginning of her literary history had been the form of all Tibetan books. These had most likely been executed

on *patra* (palm) leaves imported from India, with the text sometimes written in Sanskrit, very occasionally in Chinese, and at times in Old Tibetan.* According to Jack Finegan, writing in 1986, some examples of these, “reportedly a thousand years old, were, at least until recently, preserved in the Potala at Lhasa.” These rare books, housed in the various libraries of the winter palace of Tibet’s ruling monarchs (but found also in a handful of the country’s monasteries), have been described by Noel Barber: “In the libraries were some of the books which the Dalai Lama studied from time to time—seven thousand enormous volumes, some weighing eighty pounds and written on palm leaves brought over the mountain passes from India centuries before. Nearby rooms housed two thousand illuminated volumes of the Buddhist scriptures. No books in all the world could ever match their beauty, for each line was written in a different colored ink, which the monks had made of powdered gold, silver, copper, turquoise and coral.”†³

Now these palm leaves served as the prototype of the more familiar oblong sheets of thick parchment on which the texts were later printed by means of the carved wooden block method already described above and mentioned as having been originally invented quite early in Chinese antiquity. In fact, the first *extant* printed book created by this means was the *Diamond Sutra*,

* The Tibetan written language came into being, as noted in a previous chapter, in the early seventh century by King Songtsan Gampo’s able and scholarly minister, Thonmi Sambhota. By adapting various Indian alphabets current at that time, he created a Tibetan script that is distinctly phonetic and not ideographic as in the Chinese form of writing. The script possessed forty signs, “all read in conjunction with the vowel ‘a’ (‘ka,’ ‘kha,’ ‘sa,’ ‘sha,’ etc.); other vowels are indicated by small signs written above or below consonants.” Commenting further, the well-known expert on Tibetan culture and history, Dongge Luosantselie, adds that “reading and writing Tibetan is very difficult because over the centuries the spelling has largely remained the same, while the pronunciation has evolved, mostly toward simpler solutions.” The same problem, of course, he notes, “is characteristic of English.” D. L., “Palaces, Monasteries, and Their Art,” in N. N. Jigmei et al., *Tibet*, 206. Formerly an Incarnate Lama, D. L., at the time of his article’s publication, was an Associate Professor in the Beijing Central Nationalities Institute.

Yet it needs to be pointed out that some Tibetologists have begun to raise doubts not only about the historicity of this ostensible founder of Tibetan literary culture, inventor of its alphabet and its First Grammarian but also, as Roy Miller has framed the question, “whether anyone in human history ever did what is attributed to Thonmi Sambhota, i.e., artificially create not only a grammar but the language that lies behind it”; or, as Miller has again framed the problem: How could Thonmi Sambhota have been the one “not only responsible for describing the Tibetan language” but also the one to have “made up the language that he was describing”? Until fairly recently, explains this Honolulu University Tibetologist, these matters “were never raised in Western (or in Japanese) Tibetology. Tibetologists have in the main been entirely content to accept this particular part of the Tibetan tradition precisely as they have received it from the Tibetans; and in the process they have if anything enhanced the cultural-historical role of Thonmi Sambhota far over and above its original proportions in the Tibetan tradition itself.” Miller, “On the Utility of the Tibetan Grammarians,” in E. Steinkellner, ed., *Tibetan History and Language*, 354, 361, 355.

† The former Incarnate Lama, Dongge Luosantselie, quoted from in the note immediately above, has provided a further description of these rare handwritten palm-leaved manuscripts: “The leading monasteries of the various sects all have complete sets of the 108-volume Buddhist scriptures, handwritten in gold and held to be masterpieces of the calligrapher’s art. Some are particularly celebrated, such as the five sets written in gold, silver, copper, iron, and cinnabar by order of the Regent Sangye Gyatso after the death of the Fifth Dalai Lama [doubtless the volumes to which Barber has made reference above]. At the time of the Tenth Dalai Lama the Religious Lord Pholuoding sponsored the copying of the [108-volume Buddhist canon] in letters of liquid gold. The set was later presented to the Ganden Monastery and is now preserved in the Potala Palace. At the Trashilhunpo Monastery the Fifth and Sixth Panchen Lamas each sponsored a set of the Buddhist canon, one in gold and the other in silver.” D.L., “Palaces . . .,” in Jigmei et al., *Tibet*, 207.

printed in 868, which was more than 250 years after the Chinese invention of the block-printing method. This book had been discovered among a great body of manuscripts found in 1907-8 by Aurel Stein on his Second Central Asian Expedition in a long-sealed cache within the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas at Tun-Huang in China's northwest province of Kansuh. Ironically, the *Sutra* had been printed by the Chinese during the time of the great Tibetan Empire's conquest and occupation of Kansuh for a hundred years in the eighth and ninth centuries. (Interestingly, even though the Chinese were the first to devise the movable type technique of printing, for the longest period in their history they continued to find the wooden block method quite satisfactory for their needs since their language consists not of an alphabet but of separate characters to represent concepts or ideas.)

Books like the *Sutra* would have their sheets engraved with text made from images cut in the wooden blocks; these loose printed pages would then be placed between oblong boards and tied together with usually a saffron-colored cloth to make up the volumes, hundreds of which found their way onto the library shelves of the great Tibetan monasteries. But even this cumbersome and quite laborious printing method did not arrive in Tibet for quite a few centuries following the production of the *Sutra* in China. For according to Tibetan records, it would not be till the late thirteenth century that wooden block printing would first occur in the land. It was only natural, of course, that the subject matter of these earliest productions by this method was religious in nature: a printing of the 108-volume Buddhist scriptures known as the *Kangyur* (the Buddha's original teachings), together with the *Tengyur*, the voluminous commentaries on the *Kangyur*.⁴

In time, block-printing centers were established throughout Tibet, each of which invariably was identified with a well-known monastery. Friendly artistic rivalry set in among these printing centers, and according to Dongge Luosantselie, "the highest level in the art of printing is held to have been reached by the Narthang and Trashilhunpo Monasteries, and by the Buddhist Scripture Printing House in Lhasa." Each of these centers, he added, could boast several experts who were not only skilled in the art of wood-block printing but also gifted in interpreting the Buddhist scriptures themselves. In addition, each center possessed its own distinctive printing style.

It was not until quite late, however, that the first printed editions of the *Kangyur* by the block-printing method had been produced at Narthang—in 1731. This was followed at the same Monastery by the printing in 1742 of the *Tengyur*. The blocks for such a work as the *Kangyur* or the *Tengyur* would have occupied several large buildings, with each set of blocks being housed on separate racks. Other editions of these two works were subsequently produced at Lhasa, at Derge in the eastern Tibetan province of Kham,* at the two influential Gelugpa monasteries of Kumbum and Labrang† in Amdo Province of Northeast Tibet, and

* "The wood-block printing press and library at Derge on the Tibet-Szechuan boundary are the largest of their kind on the Tibetan tableland. Vast numbers of engraved wooden boards are preserved there, including Buddhist scriptures and works of Tibetan history, literature, medicine, astronomy and astrology." Jampei Chinlei, "Tibetan Buddhism," in *ibid.*, 182.

† Samten Karmay has commented on the intellectual and literary richness of this particular East Tibetan monastic institution and its in-house printing establishment. Founded in 1708 south of Koko Nor in the Kansu region, the Labrang monastery, he notes, very soon became the largest center of learning in Amdo for monk-students hailing from not only Amdo and Kham but also Mongolia and Manchuria. Producing many outstanding Buddhist

elsewhere. David Macdonald, when writing one of his volumes on Tibet in 1932, had pointed out that there was “only one set of iron blocks, for the Kangyur,” in the entire land of Tibet, which were, “or used to be,” he added, “kept at Derge ...” In fact, Sir Charles Bell, writing in 1924, had remarked about these blocks at Derge made of metal that their “impressions are said to be clearer than those at Na-tang [Narhang].”

Besides possessing one set of the wooden blocks for both the Kangyur and Tengyur, Narhang—a hilltop gumpa situated between Shigatse and Sakya that was completely dedicated to printing—could boast in its Library a unique fourteenth-century hand-copied set of these same two voluminous works of Buddhist literature. During the terrible Red Guard rampage of the decade-long Chinese Communist Cultural Revolution (1966-76), all these materials—both the blocks and the hand-copied set—as well as the Narhang Monastery itself were reduced to rubble and ashes. To give some idea of the quantity of wooden blocks which had constituted the one set of the Kangyur and the other of the Tengyur, witnesses of the event reported afterwards that when these blocks had been piled up for destruction in an open field, all of them together resembled a small hill!*

The celebrated French explorer and writer on Tibet and Buddhism, Alexandra David-Neel, who had traveled widely throughout the Great Closed Land and related regions, tells of a quaint scene she had witnessed during her visit to Narhang Gumpa in 1915. After staying at nearby Trashilhunpo Monastery for a while, where she had been warmly received by the Panchen Lama and his mother, Madame Neel went on to Narhang. Reputed to have possessed the largest printing establishment in all of Tibet at the time, Narhang presented quite a contrast to what David-Neel had been accustomed to seeing in the West. She tells of finding monks seated on the floor inking engraved wooden blocks and cutting up beautiful rice paper, while all the time chatting quietly and drinking quantities of buttered tea. “What a contrast,” exclaimed the visitor from France, “to the feverish agitation of our newspaper printing rooms!”⁵

The Austrian Heinrich Harrer has described what it was like to work in the State printing center at Lhasa, which was located at the foot of the Potala Palace in the village of Shō. Known as the Shoparkhang (from Tibetan *par-khang*, monastic printing house), it was one of two main printing presses then existing in Lhasa. It was established by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama himself (1876-1933), and chiefly for the preservation of the original wood blocks which were used to create the so-called Lhasa edition of the Kangyur.⁶ Harrer had opportunity

philosophers and scholars, this monastic center, besides providing instruction in Buddhist philosophy, also taught astrology, medicine, poetry, painting and sculpture in the various colleges there. “It boasted about 3,000 monk-students and possessed a rich collection of rare manuscripts and printed books which were the object of envy of even the great monasteries in Central Tibet. There was also a large wood-block printing house within the monastery complex.” Karmay, “Amdo, One of the Three Traditional Provinces of Tibet,” *Lungta*, no. 8 (Dharamsala, 1994), 4-5.

* Narhang, however, was the scene of but one of many—perhaps countless—acts of this kind of pillage and destruction inflicted during the Cultural Revolution. Writes Heather Stoddard: “the vast majority of Tibetan monastic libraries, manuscripts, woodblock prints and the woodblocks themselves were burnt, buried, made into the soles of shoes, used for toilet paper, for building and so forth. The last great library burning was reported as late as 1978, in Phenpo, north of Lhasa, where the fire from burning books and xylographic woodblocks lasted for three weeks!” Stoddard, “Tibetan Publications and National Identity,” in R. Barnett and S. Akiner, eds., *Resistance and Reform in Tibet*, 132.

to visit this establishment during his several-years' stay at the Tibetan capital in the late 1940s. The printing shop was housed in "a high, dark building, from which never a sound issues into the outer world." As Harrer explained, "There is no humming of machines and only the voices of the monks echo through the halls." The Austrian continued:

Wooden blocks lie piled on long shelves. They are used only when a new book is printed. The preparation of a new book entails endless work. The monks must first cut out small wooden boards by hand, as there are no sawmills here, and then carve the squiggling letters one by one in the birchwood boards. When they are ready the tablets are carefully placed in order. Instead of printer's ink they use a mixture of soot, which the monks make by burning yak dung. Most of them get black from head to foot during their work. At last the separate plates are printed on handmade Tibetan paper.⁷ The books are not bound. They consist of loose pages printed on both sides and enclosed by two carved wooden covers. One can either order books in the printing press or buy them from one of the booksellers in the Barkhor.... The price of Tibetan books depends on the quality of the paper used. The Kangyur, with its commentaries [the Tengyur], costs as much as a good house or a dozen yaks.

There is another very large printing press at Narthang in the neighborhood of Shigatse, and almost every monastery has the [same wooden-block] apparatus for printing books on local saints and the annals of their lamaseries.⁸

Nevertheless, despite the ubiquity of this apparatus, it remained the only method of printing in Tibet right up to the time of the invasion and consequent occupation of Tibet by the Chinese Communists in the 1950s.⁹ Moreover, in terms of newspaper publishing in Tibet, and the dissemination of knowledge and information (in the modern sense of that phrase), prior to the twentieth century these activities, when all is considered, amounted to absolutely nothing. As Gergan Tharchin himself once observed, for the longest time "Tibetans never took any interest in newspapers and consequently they were quite ignorant about the importance of a newspaper."¹⁰ Indeed, the attitude displayed by most, though not all, among the ruling circles in Lhasa seemed to reflect a total unconcern about such matters and was an attitude which persisted right up until just before the Chinese invasion. As late as 1944, for example—and a mere six years before the Communist upheaval in Tibet began—a Western visitor to Lhasa, Arch T. Steele, an American journalist then covering the war in Asia for the *Chicago Daily News*, was quite bemused at the response he received from a highly-placed official in the Tibetan government to his question of why Tibet had no newspapers. The official, reported the correspondent later, "looked at me with surprise, and his reply was immediate and characteristic. 'Why, because nothing ever happens here.'"*

* Steele, "The Boy-Ruler of Shangri-la," *Saturday Evening Post* (13 Apr. 1946):14. Cf. Steele's book, *In the Kingdom of the Dalai Lama* (Sedona AZ USA: In Print Publishing, 1993), 84, where he mentions spending two weeks at Lhasa during the summer of 1944.

Despite the lack of newspapers, however, these same government officials would resort to other means by which to collect news for themselves. Steele went on to tell of being invited by the Regent (Taktia) to a party at his monastic residence a few miles outside the Tibetan capital. "These Lhasa parties are something to remember," the American journalist recalled. "They are a chief form of recreation and, in the absence of newspapers, serve as a clearing place for news." Furthermore, these were not short affairs, by any means. "They often began in the morning," he explained, "and go on into the night." In fact, he added, "the Regent's party was to be a three-day affair. I was invited for the second day." *Ibid.*, 79. Needless to say, then, ample time was provided for the exchange of news.

Steele, incidentally, would write a series of articles on his two-week Lhasa visit, several of which, if not all of



Such, then, has been the meager extent in Tibet of the printing and publishing legacy from its past, which by the time of Gergan Tharchin's adulthood had failed to be advanced any further by Tibetans themselves within the borders of the Roof of the World.* As will shortly be learned, however, there would be several attempts made by non-Tibetans both inside the Closed Land and just outside her borders to effect some progress in this vital cultural area. But it would be the efforts of the humble-born Tibetan from Poo, now based at Kalimpong, which would achieve the most progress in this field of endeavor. Accordingly, the name of Gergan Tharchin must indisputably rank first among all those who set their hands to creating effective, more up-to-date techniques and agencies for producing and disseminating newspapers, books and other literary works among the Tibetan people wherever located along the wide-sweeping Himalayan arc of nations, including deep within the Forbidden Land herself.

Now the utility and significance of such modern techniques and agencies as were gradually created at Kalimpong had been long recognized by Tharchin before his actual involvement in newspaper printing and bookmaking. Some evidence for this can be seen in the answer he gave when asked in 1964 what he had actually done in Tibet since his first visit there in 1921. It reveals a well thought-out understanding of the relationship between his educational efforts in Tibet and the subsequent ventures he entered into in the publishing field, both of which were to be utilized for the furtherance of the Christian gospel. Said Tharchin: "It was always a secret possibility for me to give faith messages there, [but] ... one had to be careful ... The main thing I sought was to establish a school [whether at Gyantse or Lhasa or wherever]. Then, after a person could read, the Bible would be open to him. I established in Kalimpong my small printing company. And with it, I sat, so to speak, before the door of my people—the Tibetans."¹¹ Indeed, possessing such a great vision and gospel burden for Tibet and Tibetans as he did, this would-be newspaper publisher turned out to be, in the opinion of one latter-day close Christian friend of Tharchin's, "the first Tibetan national pioneer ... to understand the place of literature in Christian evangelism among Tibetans."¹²

them, Tharchin would publish in his Tibetan newspaper during 1945 at the instruction of Major George Sherriff, the then Head of the British Mission in Lhasa. See letter, Sherriff to Tharchin, Kalimpong, 22 July [1945] ThPaK.

* Despite this failure to advance, however, Jawaharlal Nehru University Professor Dawa Norbu, after reviewing this chapter for the present writer, was quick to point out, and rightly so, that though the printing method employed for centuries had been by the wooden-block process, nevertheless, "for a pre-industrialized society, Tibet had more printing presses than others." (As Harrer had observed, nearly every monastery could boast possession of such an apparatus for printing hagiographic and other religious materials.) And thus, Professor Norbu added, "Tibet's high literate culture was made possible by such abundance of presses" of this kind, although as one leading modern Tibetan historian has recently observed, whatever literacy Tibet could boast of in 1950 "was primarily associated with Buddhism." As a matter of fact, adds Tsering W. Shakya, the new Red Chinese masters in Tibet, in their attempt during the early 1950s to saturate the country with Communist propaganda literature printed in Tibetan, "realized early on that the effectiveness of the printed media was limited by the [wide] extent of illiteracy in Tibet." And hence, he notes, "from the very beginning" the Chinese turned to radio broadcasting and other methods as alternative means of information and propaganda dissemination. See letter, Dawa Norbu to the present author, New Delhi, 28 Feb. 1992, and Shakya, "Politicization and the Tibetan Language," in Barnett and Akiner, eds., *Resistance and Reform in Tibet*, 158.

Tharchin, of course, had for the longest time envisioned starting a printing press of his own. Fortunately, the mechanical skills which through Daud Singh's help he had picked up in Ambala and Delhi (see earlier in Volume I, Chapter 4 of the present biography) assisted in helping him to realize his dream. And when the opportunity came his way, the future Tibetan publisher remarked with enthusiasm, "I caught it by the forelock."



It must be made clear at the outset, however, that there had already been three or four previous attempts at producing a Tibetan-language journalistic medium, but they were either in a magazine format or else quite short-lived in their history, or both. The first attempt, and one which Tharchin must have been thoroughly acquainted with,* was made by none other than that giant of erudite learning, the Rev. Dr. August Hermann Francke,¹³ later respected worldwide as one of the outstanding scholars in Tibetan studies—in particular, the languages, history and archaeology of Lesser Tibet. He it was who, himself serving as one of the Moravian missionaries stationed along the West Tibet border, founded and edited, commencing in 1904, a Tibetan monthly magazine called the *La dvags kyi ag bar* (in English, the *Ladakh Newspaper* or the *Ladakh News* or the *Ladakh Gazette* or the *Ladakh Times*).

At its inception Francke's journalistic creation had been handwritten and then produced by lithographic means at the Moravians' Mission press at Leh in Ladakh and was doubtless disseminated by various means throughout the Little Tibet region where the Moravians had their Mission stations and where the predominant culture was Tibetan. As one of the official historians of the Moravian Missions was subsequently to observe in 1923, "Francke was introducing a new idea. For the first time in the history of western Tibet non-Christian Tibetans realized that printed matter might be read, not for the purpose of acquiring [salvific] merit [one of four ways of which, according to the lamas, was to read, and to read as much as possible!], but because it contained interesting information." Indeed, it was Francke's intention that his publication be as broadly educational as possible with the hope that it would popularize a concept, heretofore unfamiliar to most Tibetans, of a secular—or at least a non-Buddhist—literature. Indeed, observed one exile Tibetan journal in 1999, "the fact that the first Tibetan-language newspapers came not from Tibet" herself "but from the British-administered borderlands, exposes the lack of popularity of secular writing in Tibet" when nearly all literature being published there had been religious in content. As Francke had himself explained at the time, unlike the European tradition of possessing a wide variety of novels and other non-religious writings, most Tibetan publications were Buddhist-oriented. And it was his view that Tibetans more often than not read these materials solely that they might gain religious merit without ever displaying much, if any, interest in their contents.

* That he was indeed acquainted with this initial attempt is made clear by the fact that when creating his "memoirs" near the end of his life, Tharchin, though only alluding to the matter in the briefest of terms, noted that "attempts" had been made "to publish a Tibetan newspaper from other places. First, in the year 1903-4 during the Russo-Japanese War, Moravian missionaries published a Tibetan newspaper, *Ladakh Akhbar* [i.e., *La dvags kyi ag bar*], from Leh in Ladakh by a Litho printing process ..." GTUM TsMs, 154n.

On the other hand, a news magazine would clearly not be read for the purpose of gaining merit; and to make certain that his readers would be sure to recognize that his publication was primarily secular in character, Francke, as explained by John Bray, “wrote the text in cursive Tibetan script as opposed to the *U-chen* script used in religious books. At the same time he employed a style of language which, while conforming to traditional Tibetan grammatical and spelling rules, was nevertheless as close as possible to the colloquial.” It was this editor’s hope that once his readership had become habituated to his journal it might be more open to the more identifiable Christian publications of the Moravians.

The very first number of the “newspaper-magazine” has been described in some detail by Moravian Bishop Benjamin LaTrobe, who, it will be recalled, had visited this Church’s Tibetan mission stations two years earlier. His description provides a good idea of its earliest format:

The first newspaper ever published in Tibetan lies before me. It is a little quarto sheet of four pages with double columns. The title at the head: *The Tibetan Newspaper*, stands out in bold Tibetan characters, such as are employed in religious books, both Buddhist and Christian ... The lithographed matter of the eight columns of this paper is written in cursive characters, such as are used in Tibetan letters. On the first page, the editor, our missionary Francke, tells his Ladakhi readers what is the purpose of this paper, and what it designs to bring them: 1—News of other lands and peoples; 2—Short, instructive tales; 3—Specimen letters, as a guide to letter-writing; 4—Passages of Holy Scripture, important for this life and for the life of the soul beyond the grave. Explanations are added.

This first number contains four articles. The first is a translation of an article in the *Bombay Guardian*, with respect to the advance of the British mission into Tibet, including the advice of the Nepal government to the Dalai Lama, to enter into friendly relations with the British. The second relates to events in Turkey, and shows how the Christians of Macedonia are oppressed. The third is a story. The last applies a Tibetan proverb to the religious condition of Ladakh, and leads up from the claims of very sinful men to be saviors to the truth that there is only one great Helper for this life and the next, Jesus Christ, in whom not even His bitterest enemies could find any fault or sin.

This is the realization of a plan long-cherished. It seems to have been started on fair business lines. The paper costs one “pene” a month (not 1d., but rather less than a ½d.), and it invites subscribers, old and young, Mussulman, Hindu, Buddhist, or Christian.

With respect to the Younghusband Expedition alluded to in Bishop LaTrobe’s description, it is of interest to note that Francke later remarked, in Bray’s paraphrase, that his readers doubted the journal’s “veracity” in reporting “that Tibetan troops, equipped with protective amulets, had proved vulnerable to British bullets, but subsequently local Ladakhis encountered Tibetan prisoners of war in Simla and the paper’s credibility was confirmed”!

Noteworthy news from lands farther afield proved difficult to interpret. For example, in preparing a particular issue of his monthly, Francke felt it necessary first to set about trying to explain to one of his Ladakhi assistants something about sea battles since these figured in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5 on which the missionary editor wanted to report. In the words of Bray, Francke “was rather taken aback” to discover that when his assistant approached the task of setting down the news story he employed the term for “river” rather than the one for “ocean,” thus “suggesting an image of battleships on the Indus”! Even with the correction of this mistake, however, Ladakhi readers nonetheless found the news report

difficult to understand: “even if the Russians and Japanese did wish to blow each other up,” explained Bray in his article on the *La dvags kyi ag bar*, “it was not entirely clear why they had to go to sea first.”

As an alternative to the folktales which the second section of his magazine would often include, Francke would at times substitute a series of extracts from the Ladakhi royal chronicles (the *La dvags rgyal rabs*) which had initially been studied by one of missionary Francke’s predecessors at Leh, Dr. Karl Marx, and which eventually formed the basis of Francke’s own later historical researches. Bray notes that the Moravian editor once remarked that the Ladakhis found enjoyment in these extracts because “although they were somewhat dry, they nevertheless recalled the past glory” of the Ladakhi Kingdom before the latter had been subjugated by the Dogras in the mid-nineteenth century and subsequently made a part of Jammu and Kashmir.

By the time Francke had picked up the editor’s pen to commence producing the *Ladakh Newspaper* in early 1904, he had already been collecting Ladakhi proverbs for future publication. The very first one in his collection, which happened to be the particular Tibetan proverb singled out by Bishop LaTrobe, ran as follows: “If the lama is himself not perfect, how can he guide the dying [to a better rebirth]?” Francke thus took up this well-known Tibetan saying and went on to explain in his news magazine’s final section—which was the most characteristically evangelistic—that “the only truly sinless great lama was Jesus Christ.”

Within a year or two the magazine would have only three parts to it: Part I had political information, focused mainly on Tibet; Part II always presented an old Tibetan story; and Part III featured a short sermon. (It shall become evident in the pages to follow that Tharchin was to model his own journalistic medium after these earlier formats, although it was to be far from *entirely* the case.) It was the express hope of Francke himself that “if the people read his magazine in order to gain instruction, they might some day read the Bible for the same purpose.”

Bray reports that with the very first edition of the *La dvags kyi ag bar* the press produced 150 copies but that “this soon settled down to a circulation of some 60 copies an issue, of which 20 copies were sent to Darjeeling for distribution by missionaries there.” The chief difficulty confronting the publisher of the news journal was the problem of how to distribute it in a mountainous region marked by an inadequate postal service. There were admittedly regular deliveries along the heavily traveled trade routes but not in the far less accessible villages. A solution to this problem soon came when Francke began selling the paper in the Leh bazaar to representatives from these more remote villages. Explained Bray: each individual copy “was passed to several readers and thus reached the most isolated districts of Ladakh and even crossed the frontier to Tibet itself.”

By 1906 the publication had become regularly subscribed to by about a hundred persons, though “it [was] read by a great many more,” thus “bring[ing] the influence of Christian thought to bear on a considerable number.” So declared one part of the reports that year from the Moravian West Himalaya Mission, the publisher of the magazine. Unfortunately, 1908, or at most 1909, would be the *Ladakh Gazette*’s final year of publication (Bray states that “it seems the paper folded” in 1908). Francke had moved from Ladakh to Kyelang in 1906 (from whence he departed on furlough in late 1908) and handed over the

paper's editorship to the Moravian colleagues he left behind at Leh. Sometime after the July 1st issue in the following year (1907) they decided to change the journal's name to the *Ladakh Herald* or *Ladakh Messenger*, that is, the *La dvags Pho nya*. (Their great Moravian predecessor on the West Himalaya Mission field, Heinrich Jaeschke, had used the word *Pho nya* for "angel" or "messenger" in his Tibetan Bible translations.) But the little magazine would continue for only another year or two before it met its demise, having lasted for but five or six years. Yet the very fact of its publication, though admittedly of short duration, may have been one of the things that sparked the dream within Dorje Tharchin to publish a bona fide *newspaper*, and to produce one which would have a more *lasting* impact upon its Tibetan readership.¹⁴



The second earlier attempt at newspaper publishing for Tibetans, and a little noticed event by the world outside, actually took place in Tibet itself at its very capital. In the words of one observer, this fresh attempt at newspaper publishing inside Tibet "is among the innovations which have broken in upon the conservatism of the Great Closed Land since the British expedition to Lhasa." In the wake of the Younghusband invasion of Tibet in 1903-4 and the consequent flight to Mongolia and China of the Dalai Lama from before the advancing British troops upon Lhasa, the Chinese made various efforts to reassume control over Tibetan affairs and introduce a modicum of progress. And the first order of business was to post a new, no-nonsense, senior Amban at Lhasa, Chang Yin-tang.*

Arriving at the Tibetan capital on 8 September 1906, Chang (whom the Tibetan authorities referred to as Tang Darin) immediately addressed the task of implementing the mandate he had brought with him from the Peking Emperor to reassert China's position. As Alex McKay has recently observed, the new senior Amban "set about establishing his authority in Lhasa and introduced various measures designed to modernize Tibet's institutions and bring forth their administration and cultural practices in line with Chinese custom."

According to the *Times* of London, these measures included the establishment at the capital of a Chinese-Tibetan school for students of both nationalities, the creation of lecture and reading rooms where the populace might receive instruction in the geography, history and industrial condition of the country, and the inauguration of "a native newspaper" for "the enlightenment of people in both inner and outer Tibet" about such matters as "the history and geography especially of their own land, and as to their commercial relations to surrounding countries." Furthermore, said the *Times*, "this newspaper will be the first in the Tibetan

* He it was, it may be recalled from Volume I, Chapter 5 of the present narrative, who, while passing through Darjeeling on his way to Lhasa, had selected as one of the English-speaking Tibetans to serve him as interpreter at the Tibetan capital the paternal uncle of Karma Sumdhon Paul, Tharchin's fellow teacher and Headmaster at the Ghoom Mission School. See again K. S. Paul's personal narrative in Peter Richardus, ed., *Tibetan Lives: Three Himalayan Autobiographies* (London, 1998), 108.

language.” The British daily was, of course, incorrect in this latter observation, as one of the Moravian news organs was moved to point out when, in referring to this unusual news story, the editor of the missionary magazine reminded his readers of the following information: “It is well to remember that this is by no means the first newspaper in Tibetan. *Moravian Missions* has repeatedly referred to the *Ladakh Gazette*, published at Leh by our missionaries.”

Now the announcement regarding the newspaper was made by the Amban at Lhasa in the summer of 1907. By March of the following year implementation of this design to communicate the news was already being acted upon as reflected in a news report from Calcutta that “officials [Chinese?] in Lhasa are importing machines for the purpose of printing a Tibetan newspaper.” And in the capital by the end of March this “first newspaper in Tibetan,” called in English *The Tibet Times*, had “begun publishing there.” Though implementation of the plan did indeed reach fulfillment, no more was ever heard about it, most likely because of Tibet’s being overtaken by a rapid succession of unsettling political and military events that soon engulfed Central and East Asia.¹⁵



A third earlier attempt took the form of a mixed Chinese-Tibetan newspaper that began publication in the year 1910/11 in China, most likely along the Sino-Tibetan border. This was, of course, during the chaotic period in Chinese-Tibetan relations, already alluded to, when Chinese troops were in Tibet, the Dalai Lama himself was once again in exile—but this time in India, and the Ching Dynasty of the Manchus in China was about to fall to the Nationalist revolutionaries. Like the two previous efforts, however, this journalistic attempt experienced a quick demise after only a short period: in the words of Gergan Tharchin, it lasted only “a few years.”*

But there was a fourth attempt at newspaper publishing; this, too, having taken place in China, at Peking itself. The source for this information is the highly respected Dutch Orientalist scholar and linguist, Johan van Manen (1877-1943), previously mentioned in Volume I, Chapter 5 of the present narrative as having first met Gergan Tharchin at Ghoom in 1916 when at that time the Dutch scholar had inaugurated a serious two-and-a-half-year personal study in the Tibetan language under the tutorship of Tharchin’s Mission School Headmaster, Karma Sumdhon Paul. As the indefatigable General Secretary of the prestigious Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta, van Manen often mounted exhibits of artifacts he had collected related to Tibet and the Tibetan language. And in 1926, at the Society’s Annual Exhibit for that year, the Dutchman placed on view examples of three Tibetan newspapers: an issue of the Moravian journal described earlier; the very first number of Gergan Tharchin’s own news organ only

*The only source the present author could find for this earlier attempt at newspaper publishing for Tibetans was Tharchin himself, who when laying out his so-called memoirs near the end of his life made a point of bringing this little known fact out. See GTUM TsMs, 154n.

recently inaugurated (“Published at Kalimpong,” van Manen announced, “by a Christian Tibetan, Tharchin,” and most likely sent by the latter to the General Secretary as a token of their friendship and mutual interest in things Tibetan); and an example of another one whose title in Tibetan, van Manen noted, was *Bod yig phal skad kyi gsar hgyur* (*The Tibetan Colloquial Language News*; or, *Newspaper*). Produced by the lithographic process, this last mentioned newspaper—like its immediate predecessor—was a mixed Chinese-Tibetan language publication that was described by the Asiatic Society’s Secretary as “a semi-official gazette of the Chinese government.” It so happened that the Government of that day in China was the Nationalists’ Republican-installed regime at Peking headed by the dictatorial President, Yüan Shih-kai, a military leader in the Nationalist movement who hailed from northern China. Launched just a year after the welcomed downfall in 1912 of the Manchu Imperial government, the mixed-language newspaper would be published for only four years—between 1913 and 1916—before meeting its demise. Nevertheless, observed the Dutch Tibetologist, this news journal made a rather frequent appearance: in “about six numbers annually.”¹⁶ The most likely reason for the termination of this publication, incidentally, was the death of the discredited President Yüan in June of 1916; an event that immediately plunged the Chinese government into a decade-long period of dissension and political confusion which only ended in 1927-8 with the triumph of Sun Yat-sen’s handpicked successor Chiang Kai-shek as Nationalist leader of a more or less united Chinese government at Nanking. With the demise of this Peking-published gazette in 1916, Tibetan readers would have to wait nearly another decade before a much more promising prospect could be inaugurated.

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But with the arrival of such a welcome prospect on the scene at last, it could be said without any equivocation that for the first time ever, a Tibetan newspaper had commenced to be published that unlike its predecessors would continue indefinitely beyond a mere few years. In this sense Dorje Tharchin’s journalistic enterprise could claim to be the first truly Tibetan newspaper. And Michael Goodman finds his news journal “unique on three counts” more, which in the year 1925, at least, were genuinely true of Tharchin’s “journalistic prodigy.” These three distinctives, according to Goodman, were: (a) that “it was the only newspaper available in Tibet written in the Tibetan language”; (b) that “it was the only medium of information published in Tibetan that discussed the affairs of the outside world”; and (c) that “it was not printed in Tibet at all but rather in Kalimpong, the Indian border town and hub of the centuries-old caravan route between India and Tibet.”¹⁷

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Within a year, however, all three distinctives would be overturned when in 1926 the “Moravian journalistic tradition,” to borrow John Bray’s phrase, was revived in Lesser Tibet

after an absence of many years. It was in September of that year that the first edition of a revived monthly journal—produced on folded sheets of foolscap—reappeared, but this time more closely resembling the format of a newspaper. In fact, when writing up his various reports on the subject, that was what this publication's new founder and editor, Walter Asboe of the Moravians at Kyelang, himself termed it, using such phrases as "the Kyelang Tibetan newspaper," "the local Tibetan newspaper," "the Tibetan newspaper," and so on. Its masthead read in Tibetan: *Kyelang kyi ag bar* (the *Kyelang News*). For many years to follow he would serve as its chief editor, at the outset producing it, as was done by A. H. Francke some twenty years before, in handwritten form on a lithographic press, but now at Kyelang in Lahul Province and not at Leh in Ladakh.

To ensure its ability to circulate in all parts of Tibet, the paper was published in the classical Tibetan text. Sometimes, even, a cultured Tibetan would contribute an article to it. In its format, observed Bray, the *Kyelang News* was similar to Francke's old monthly; in 1931, for example, a typical issue included an Aesop fable, some local news, a domestic hygiene article, and international news. All the educated classes could naturally understand the newspaper, though there were large numbers of people who, being quite illiterate, would be dependent upon others such as the lamas to read its contents to them—which as a matter of practice did actually occur. At first it was circulated throughout the local neighborhood, with the intention, as Rev. Asboe put it, "to disseminate news of world affairs, and, most important of all, to use the paper as an evangelistic agency by inserting gospel stories, etc." within its pages. During this first year of its issue the paper was made available free of charge, but commencing with the following year, "a small charge of 1s. 4d., and 1s. 8d. post free, was made annually."

Within two years of its resumption missionary Asboe could report in 1928 that the *Kyelang News* was being "read with avidity by the Tibetans of Lahul and adjacent districts" such as Spiti, Zangskar and Ladakh, even though "only a limited number of copies" was available "owing to a lack of funds" and also, he added, owing "to the poor apparatus which I was compelled to use." The growing readership, despite these inadequacies, was due to the fact that the few copies produced were "passed round from hand to hand." Later on, when a greater quantity was available, a copy of the paper would be sent to the *gopa* or headman of each village in the Lahul valley around Kyelang, who, "perhaps to show off his learning," said Rev. Asboe, "calls the villagers together and reads it to them." Also, by 1928, the newspaper editor could report that four *skushog* lamas (monastery abbots) had personally asked him to be given the paper monthly, indicating further that they were "willing to subscribe towards it." Needless to say, they would receive it regularly thereafter.

Copies even found their way across the border into West Tibet, carried there by mendicant lamas and others. Furthermore, there were instances of travelers, in possession of the newspaper, who were bound for distant Lhasa, the "Rome of Buddhism." And it was the hope and expectation of the Moravian publisher that along the way, "many wayfarers will scan its contents" as they encounter on the road these travelers from Little Tibet. By the mid-1930s Asboe could even report that "one copy of the paper always goes to the Dalai Lama at Lhasa." But interestingly enough, the paper went even farther afield than this: all the way to the Berlin State Library and to Professor Giuseppe Tucci in Rome, among other

subscribers. Even the British Museum's Curator of its Oriental Manuscript Department sought a subscription.¹⁸

These, then, were just some of the promising developments which manifested themselves during an entire decade (1926-35) in which Rev. Asboe's Tibetan journal was produced at Kyelang on a regular monthly basis. The only exceptions were for two one-year furlough periods when it ceased publication temporarily due to the editor's absence from the field. (It would be resumed in 1937, however, but at a new location.)

Now thanks to some very timely help from a girls' school in his home country of England (at Tytherton in Wiltshire), Asboe, because the school had donated funds for a new printing apparatus (a gelatine duplicator), was able by 1930 to produce, by means of copying ink and the new duplicator, a better quality impression of the newspaper—including illustrations, thus enhancing the monthly publication's usefulness as an evangelistic tool "in disseminating Christian truth." That this latter purpose for the newspaper was preeminent was made only too plain by Br. Asboe in his two-year report from Kyelang for 1933-4, in which he openly declared the following:

Whilst current news of the world is occasionally inserted in its pages, its primary purpose is to proclaim the gospel, thereby undermining the hold that superstition and ignorance have upon the people in Tibet. . . . The paper now reaches the Pontifical Palace of Buddhism at Lhasa, and other high ecclesiastical Buddhist dignitaries get copies month by month. The gospel thus reaches places and people inaccessible to the missionary or even evangelist.

During this same period the editor had noted that the monthly's increasing circulation was "a good sign." It was so good, in fact, that two or three years later, with "demand for copies" of this patently Christian journal continuing to increase, missionary Asboe, now stationed at Leh in the Ladakhi region of Kashmir, decided to restore to the resumed publication the name which Francke's missionary colleagues had given it back in 1907: the *Ladakh Herald*—a name which would ever afterwards remain on its masthead. This "new" appellation for the monthly would thus reflect more accurately its contents and what its editor had in mind as its primary function: "that God can and will use this means of *heralding* the glorious news of salvation through Christ's atoning sacrifice."

One other change in its masthead appeared: a text from the Bible was placed just beneath it, which thus established the newspaper's Christian character for all to see; nevertheless, the main section of the paper's contents was devoted to world and local news of interest. At first, observed John Bray, Rev. Asboe must have derived his newsworthy information from the Indian press; from 1937 onwards, however, "he was able to monitor international developments by listening to radio broadcasts"—a method for gathering news which Gergan Tharchin would himself come to employ during the many years of his own newspaper publishing experience.

It should be observed here, though, that the situation for the Moravian editor at his new location of Leh did not at first seem promising for a revival of the Tibetan paper. "Owing to certain restrictions in the matter of publishing circulars or pamphlets in the Kashmir State," he later noted, "it seemed as if there was no hope of continuing the Tibetan paper hitherto published in Kyelang. However, contrary to all expectations, a discreet application made to an important official in the State, to publish a monthly pamphlet on the lines of the Kyelang

Newspaper, produced very satisfactory results." For, Asboe added, "the Wazir of Ladakh gave me permission to publish a monthly circular in Tibetan, and suggested that it should be given wide circulation"! With such unexpectedly good news like this, the relocated newspaper editor wasted no time in coming forth with the newly-entitled *Ladakh Herald*. And although it still contained world news when available to it, and included in its pages other, local practical features such as rural uplift, agricultural methods, first-aid information and local bazaar prices, the journal would nonetheless continue to have as its primary object the dissemination of Gospel truth.

The gelatine duplicator heretofore at Kyelang, was brought over to Leh where, said the editor, it continued to function "as well as ever." The editor would also be fortunate in having, as he indicated in 1937, "the expert services of an artist to illustrate the front page": a lady in a Moravian congregation at Bristol back home in England! "She has already sent me," reported Asboe, "a few clever little sketches to attract the attention of my Tibetan readers." These would usually portray scenes from Ladakhi domestic life—a woman spinning, for example. Other illustrations appearing throughout the newspaper's pages might include, wrote Bray, a sketch map of Europe depicting the claim by Germany to portions of Czechoslovakia and Poland, a drawing of a German soldier in uniform, a parachutist jumping from an airplane, or a caricature of a skull looking out from behind a "mask" of Adolf Hitler's face. All such illustrations, of course, would be accompanied by appropriate explanations to facilitate the reader's understanding of what otherwise were foreign topics.

That the revived periodical proved to be an unusual success locally, at least with respect to its circulation, is attested to by what Editor Asboe wrote within a year or so after its resumption: "I have a distributing agent in the [Leh] bazaar, and he tells me that within twenty-four hours all the papers I give him are taken by Tibetans from the outlying villages who come on trading or shopping expeditions to Leh." This technique of using the Leh bazaar as an effective distribution point Asboe had no doubt learned from his clever predecessor, Editor Francke. And as was the case in his predecessor's time, one particular feature of the newspaper which may help to account for its rapid popularity under Rev. Asboe's editorship was his inclusion of texts from Ladakhi history. For instance, according to Bray, in 1938 and 1939 Asboe serialized extracts from a Khalatse villager's reminiscences of the nineteenth-century Dogra Wars which Francke had originally recorded and which had subsequently been published in his monumental two-volume work, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet* (Calcutta, 1914, 1926).

The Tibetan journal at Leh would continue to be published there for many years to come. But it ought to be observed that with the coming of the Second Great War in Europe—which would ultimately engulf Asia, too—the monthly would cease publication yet once more, not to be revived again till well after the end of hostilities and under a new editorship.

It is significant that within a year of each other there would have appeared a Christian-oriented Tibetan-language newspaper at both ends of the Himalayas on the Indian subcontinent adjacent to the Forbidden Land. For even as Dorje Tharchin's print medium, begun in 1925, was destined, as will be seen, to serve a readership that would be found on either side of the northeastern Indo-Tibetan border region and deeper still into eastern and

southeastern Tibet itself, so also, the subsequent journalistic effort of Walter Asboe and the Moravians at Kyelang and Leh was destined for a Tibetan readership in the northwestern sector of India that was similarly scattered along both sides of the border and deeper as well into Tibet proper at the latter's western and southwestern end.

Samuel Hutton, one of several authors who have chronicled the history of the Moravian missionary effort worldwide, has provided a record of Asboe's embryonic revival and interesting format of the *Ladakh Newspaper's* successor publication at Kyelang. In his volume on the Moravians published in 1935, Hutton, without mentioning Asboe by name and with an apparent lack of knowledge concerning Tharchin's decade-long newspaper efforts, wrote in the following vein:

Come farther over the Pass [near Kyelang], a pass that is blocked with snow for three months of the year, so blocked that not even the postman can get through. Here is a young missionary, with his wife and little daughter, the only English people in the village....

A few years ago this young man revived the idea of a newspaper for western Tibet. It is not easy to imagine a country without a newspaper, but here was one: Tibet should have its Christian newspaper. Foolscap paper was procured, paid for by a boys' school in Yorkshire; a gelatine copying press was given by a girls' school in Wiltshire; and by means of a neat hand and a gift for drawing, the newspaper made its appearance. By no means a "daily"—no, a monthly edition is all that is possible, for everything must be laboriously handwritten and drawn in the midst of a multitude of other duties....

On the front page is a topical article with a picture—shoeing a horse, or the latest great ocean liner—the center pages have news of the land and of the world, health talks, advice to farmers, and such like; on the back page is a portion from the Word of God, or a gospel address written by one of the native evangelists. The pilgrim gets his copy: he cannot read, but the picture interests him vastly. He looks about for someone who can read, and presently a group is gathered together, with one better than the rest reading aloud from the Christian Newspaper. The seed is sown by the wayside; but the sowing is surely seen by the eye of God.

That the revived Moravian journalistic tradition at Kyelang and the successively-named *Ladakh Herald* at Leh exerted a considerable influence on its readership in and out of Tibet cannot be denied. Yet it must nonetheless be acknowledged as well that by comparison between the two efforts, Gergan Tharchin's publication, as this biography of his life will make abundantly clear, has had by far the greater impact and exerted the wider influence on the whole of Tibet and the Tibetan-speaking peoples in almost every way.¹⁹ Indeed, in 1985 one prominent Tibetan journalist and scholar, Bhuchung K. Tsering, was moved to describe the late Tharchin Babu as "the father of Tibetan journalism" because of his great contribution in the field of newspaper publishing.²⁰ This contribution must therefore now be looked into more closely.

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When in 1925 the man from Poo was presented with a golden opportunity to experiment in such an enterprise, he could not easily be turned aside; and thus there began a most

interesting saga of a truly authentic Tibetan newspaper. And although, like its founder and editor, the publication's origins sprang from the most humble of circumstances, it would nevertheless increasingly come to exert a considerable impact on its Tibetan readership over a widely-scattered geographical area for many, many years. It would grow in time from a mere hand-operated duplicating machine process by which to produce the newspaper to an actual printing press process that Gergan Tharchin himself would inevitably come to own: plant, press, type matrices and all!

Now from its very inception Tharchin made it quite plain that his purpose in undertaking this venture into newspaper publishing was threefold: cultural, journalistic and evangelistic.

First, he wanted to ameliorate the adverse cultural situation of the Tibetans who in those days in great numbers had settled down in Kalimpong. Although on the one hand they did not care to educate their children according to the standards of modern times, on the other hand the parents had not been taking any precaution to preserve the mother tongue; and with this attitude they quite naturally left the children to the fate of learning any language (excepting their own) that was the *lingua franca* of the locality or neighborhood in which they now lived. No thought was given to the maintenance of their past heritage. They did not even care to preserve their culture, historical traditions, or even their national dress anymore. In this way Tharchin observed a gradual decline in the adherence to Tibetan customs and mores.

To salvage the situation from further deterioration, Tharchin the traditionalist went from home to home in an attempt to enlighten the parents and those responsible leaders in the Tibetan community, but they would not pay attention to his pleadings or suggestions. Some told him that it was useless to study the Tibetan language and literature. They presumed that the study of Tibetan would not help in their future. Some argued that since they were in India, a working knowledge of English or Hindi was required to manage their daily affairs. They thought that if their children learned English, they would have every hope of securing employment in the industrial units or Government services. Reflecting on the cultural situation of that long-ago day, Gergan Tharchin mused: "I am a lover of Tibetan since it is my mother tongue, so I wanted to propagate it among others. With this in mind I commenced publishing the Tibetan newspaper, but some complained that it was only because I was interested in propagating Christianity that I had started it."

Second, Tharchin wanted the people of Tibet in general and the literate Tibetans in particular to know about the events and happenings which were taking place around the world. As he himself explained it many years after the event, "In 1925, I started the ... Tibetan newspaper just to give some idea of the news of the world to the Tibetans who were quite ignorant about the outside world."²¹ In the far-off and in many ways isolated land of Tibet only a newspaper could "go in" and educate the people about modern social, economic and political trends. Said Tharchin the journalist: "Paper has wings. It can fly fast to any place in the world."²² And doubtless, given the low literacy rate among the general Tibetan populace of that day, the would-be Tibetan newspaper publisher must have envisioned and hoped that, as often happened with the *La dvags kyi ag bar's* successors, some of the literate recipients of his forthcoming newspaper would make it a habit of calling together their illiterate friends and neighbors and read aloud to them from the paper's pages.

And *third*, his primary objective in publishing the Tibetan newspaper was indeed evangelistic. “A man of deep conviction and whose first emphasis was the evangelism of Tibet,” Gergan Tharchin, believes B.C. Simick, Jr.,

would—if there indeed existed any evangelist for Tibet—have to be counted as second to none. This is because whereas the human Christian agent of the gospel must obviously have been limited [back in those days], the discerning Tibetan reader was able to discover the message of Christ in this celebrated publisher’s Tibetan journal that was eventually able to find its way into every nook and cranny of the closed land of Tibet as well as reach the hands of many officials within the highest echelons of her Government—even into the Potala itself.²³

Unapologetically, Tharchin the Christian wanted to use his newspaper as a medium to present expository articles or publish passages from the Bible so as to bring the Christian gospel, if he could, within the reach of the entire reading section of the Tibetan-speaking population wherever found. And to that end, as he himself commented years later, “I dedicated one page of the newspaper to Christian matters.”²⁴ That his superiors in the Kalimpong Scots Mission would soon realize the utility of his newspaper in reaching Tibet and Tibetans with the message of Christ is clearly borne out by the observation which one of them would make just two years after joining the Mission staff as the missionary in charge of its Tibetan work and only a short five years following the paper’s inaugural issue. Writing of Tharchin’s printing responsibilities for the Mission in his Annual Report on the Tibetan Work at Kalimpong for the year 1930, Rev. Dr. Robert Knox would observe that the “monthly newspaper which he founded and edits ... continues to find much acceptance even in Tibet. With its definitely Christian outlook, this paper is a valuable adjunct to our [evangelistic] work.”

One must acknowledge today that on the whole he was successful in attaining his cultural, journalistic and evangelistic goals. But the problem long ago had been how “to bell the cat”—that is to say, how to start a Tibetan newspaper. He needed a printing press which he neither had nor could afford to buy. He often pondered how he might make his vision a reality. But a day at last dawned, an opportune moment arrived, and he was ready to take advantage of it.



One day he happened to visit Dr. Graham’s office at the Scots Mission. It was housed in the extant Anderson office building²⁵ located on the right side of the road going from the main bazaar towards the Charteris Hospital and facing the Macfarlane Memorial Church building. Inside the Graham office he saw several clerks engaged in their duties. Some were recording while others were typing or stenotyping. As he was conversing with one of the staff members, he chanced to see a Roneo duplicating machine (in essence a mimeograph machine)²⁶ lying in a corner on the floor. It had for some time been lying there neglected. He made inquiries regarding the apparatus. The clerks informed him, “As we could not handle or operate this machine properly, we have just dumped it in a corner.” The office staff had tried their level best to operate it but they had failed. Moreover, in the attempt to make it workable, some parts of the machine had been spoiled or even broken.

Suddenly the idea, which for years had been lying dormant in the subconscious, of starting a Tibetan newspaper, forced its way to the surface and took hold of Tharchin's thinking. The visionary idea of somehow operating this machine to begin producing a newspaper fired his imagination. He therefore made bold to approach Dr. Graham right then and there. Tharchin said to him, "Sir, if you give me that machine, I will try it out." Graham very sympathetically replied, "Your thought is an excellent one. All my workers have tried and failed. I doubt, however, if you can handle it at all." Nevertheless, Tharchin—who at times can turn out to be very strong-minded—insisted by saying, "Sir, if you give it to me, I will try to make it operate." Dr. Graham thought for a while and then gave a slip of paper to Tharchin to be given to the clerk in charge, who was thereby directed to hand over the Roneo to him as well as all the materials connected with it. This took place in mid-1925.

The employees in the office turned over the machine, ink, a packet of stencils, a pen and a plate to Tharchin. Most of the workers scoffed at the idea, however, commenting: "Why do you waste your precious time? You cannot do it. We tried so hard and we were unsuccessful. You will only waste your time. We are sure you will never make it work. You will never do it." This last sentence pierced through Tharchin's heart like a sharp red-hot iron, cutting him to the quick. In fact, these very words, as he later acknowledged, aroused his determination to accept this challenge that had been hurled at him. He commenced right away in great earnest to overhaul the machine. He readily confessed: "No one had taught me or trained me to handle the Roneo. I had not even seen such a device before. If there was any instruction manual about it in the market, I was ignorant of it. All along I had to struggle on my own."

Tharchin the visionary transported the machine to his residence at Polhill Hall. He kept on working with the thing day and night. He experimented with it from different angles. He bought paper and fed it into the machine. In his endeavor he consumed three or four reams of the expensive stuff. Even his family now quarreled with him, saying, "You are wasting paper, money and time. You are not getting sufficient sleep. You are disturbing yourself and others around you."

Yet in spite of these adverse circumstances Tharchin was determined not to give up his goal. He would not be daunted or turned aside. For as was demonstrated repeatedly in many other facets of his long and varied career, Gergan Tharchin seemed to thrive on challenges. Indeed, when asked in an interview in late 1975 whether as a pioneer in this field he had been faced with many problems in launching his newspaper, the indefatigable Tharchin replied flat out, "Yes, but I liked them!"²⁷ And one day he succeeded in crowning all his labors with victory: he had finally produced a four-page Tibetan newspaper! Admittedly, this maiden copy did not have anything like a neat appearance about it. For one thing, the handwritten lines of text were crooked. Later he was to say, "If you were to see that copy today you would laugh at it. I myself laugh at it whenever I think of its initial format." Tharchin added: "I have kept that copy somewhere."

After much further trial and error, the would-be newspaper publisher succeeded in bringing out a better copy with visibly greater improvement. Still he had to grapple with the machine for five to six weeks more before he could produce a fair enough copy. When Tharchin took

the finally-wrought first issue to Dr. Graham he said, perhaps with some pride: "Sir, at last I have learned to handle the machine. Now it can be operated without any difficulty." The Scottish missionary's first reaction was one of admiration for Tharchin, who recalled the scene quite vividly: "When I first held the Tibetan newspaper before Dr. Graham, he looked at it and then he looked squarely into my face with surprise time and again. He patted me on the back and said, 'I congratulate you for this good work. At last you have succeeded.'"

Immediately thereafter, Graham led Tharchin to his office and showed the newspaper to the staff. First turning to the Tibetan and then to the clerks he recited how Tharchin had produced a newspaper by means of the Roneo duplicator—the very device which they themselves had failed to operate. Upon hearing Dr. Graham's commendation all the members of the staff sat silently without speaking a single word. After the missionary left the office, the man from Poo lingered behind for a few moments and then, facing the clerks directly, he said, "Thank you for your word, 'You will never do it.' That expression pierced my heart and I set myself to work hard to prove that I could handle and operate the machine." In response, one of the clerks, acting in a most pious manner, at that very moment brought out a certain mechanical part belonging to the device and handed it to Tharchin, at the same time apologizing for having failed to give it to him earlier. It was only at this very moment that Tharchin became aware of the existence of that part to the machine, and confessed long afterwards that he never did learn why it had not been given to him before. Could it have been that Graham's staff had deliberately held this part back so that he would not succeed where they themselves had failed?—for that is the implication one would have to consider when reviewing their strange conduct. Yet even more intriguing is the question of how this would-be newspaper publisher was able to achieve a successful operation of the apparatus without this missing part. This, though, Tharchin never revealed when sharing this incident for his so-called memoirs. He was to recall, however, having brought out the very first copy of the Tibetan newspaper sometime in that same year of 1925.

As a matter of fact, this Issue No. 1 was dated 1 October 1925 and had in its front-page masthead or nameplate in Tibetan characters the words *Yulchog Sosoi Sargyur Melong* signifying the title of the newspaper, which in English (and included in the masthead) was translated as simply *The Tibetan Newspaper*; although its *literal* English translation was the *Mirror of News from All Sides of the World*.^{*} In the years that were to follow, the publication usually retained in its masthead the *Yulchog Sosoi Sargyur Melong* transliterated title already mentioned (accompanied by its equivalent in Tibetan characters); but immediately bracketed after the *Yulchog* title would be such English short-title variants as [Tibetan Newspaper], [The Tibet Mirror], [The Monthly Tibet Mirror], [The Weekly Tibet Mirror], etc. These several "Mirror" titles especially came to be applied to the title of "The Tibetan

^{*} This translation represents but one among various translators' renderings of the title in English. Another one, provided by Bhuchung K. Tsering, former editor-in-chief of the *Tibetan Bulletin* and a great admirer of Gergan Tharchin's work, is as follows: *Mirror on the News about Individual Countries*. See B. K. Tsering, "Last Page," *Tibetan Bulletin* (Oct.-Nov. 1985):20. But see the Text a few pages hence in the present chapter for yet another remarkable English-language rendering of the title of Tharchin's newspaper, this one appearing on the front page of the *New York Times*!

Newspaper” after the establishment by Tharchin of the Tibet Mirror Press in 1948 (whose history is recited in a later chapter of the present narrative).



But also as part of the masthead, and centrally visible to the eye of the reader, was an explicitly Tibetan Buddhist emblem, the *Dorje Ge-tram* or “double dorje”; an odd, even confusing, thing for a *Christian* newspaper publisher to have done, in the eyes of some observers at the time—both Christian and Buddhist. Indeed, there were comments expressed by some of Gergan Tharchin’s Tibetan contemporaries and by latter-day commentators on his work who have openly wondered whether he was “really” a Christian. That Gergan Tharchin was a Christian is a fact that, if not yet convincingly obvious to the reader at this point in the present study about the man from Poo, will be made abundantly clear throughout the remaining pages of this narrative on his life and times. Let it be said here, however, that upon further reflection, the use of the Buddhist double-dorje symbol by this Christian newspaper editor need not be viewed as something strange or confusing after all, once an expanded appreciation is gained of this far-from-ordinary ethnic Tibetan who just happened also to be a devout Christian.

The term “maverick,” though not completely applicable to Gergan Tharchin, comes readily to mind here, in that he was not your run-of-the-mill believer in Christ; far from it, he was neither stereotypically narrow nor in the least stodgy when it came to his Christian walk, work and testimony. In the words of Dawa Norbu, “there was no sign of identity crisis nor confusion of values” in Gergan Tharchin the converted Christian. And though much more will be set forth and explained in a concluding chapter of the present narrative concerning “Tharchin the Man,” this much needs to be said right here in regard to the use by him of the double dorje and, for that matter, a few other Buddhist symbols or signs with which he had decorated the front page of his Christian-oriented newspaper. For in speaking at some length with members of the Tharchin family and close Kalimpongian friends of the Indo-Tibetan publisher, the present writer has learned that the Christian editor had continually sought to employ various ways to draw as large a readership as possible to the pages of his journalistic creation. And what better technique, they opined, than to decorate the very first issue of the *Tibet Mirror* with a Buddhist symbol widely recognized by all Tibetans: the double dorje. It was an emblem which, signifying as it does permanence and unity, had for centuries graced the large front panel of the venerated Lion Throne of Tibet’s Priest-Kings, the Dalai Lamas. Through his Tibetan newspaper, as it were, Gergan Tharchin had consciously wished to assist, if he could, in maintaining the permanence, stability and unity of the Tibetan nation and people.

Moreover, the present author’s informants on the matter wholeheartedly agreed, when apprised of it, with the speculative observation recently put forward by John Bray in a letter to the author that because the design of the double dorje used by the Christian editor in his paper’s masthead has the appearance of a cross (in this instance, that of a Maltese Christian

Cross), perhaps this could be viewed as a kind of “visual ‘pun’.” Indeed, noted the elder Tharchin’s son, the choice of the double dorje with which to adorn the *Tibet Mirror* was an example of his father’s attempt to put at ease its potential Buddhist audience so that, free from any fear or anxiety, readers would easily be drawn to its pages, including even to the page devoted to Christian themes. Not unlike Christ’s faithful apostle St. Paul, Gergan Dorje Tharchin, it may be said, had “become everything to everybody, in order by all means to save some of them”; and did so, like Paul, without compromising his Christian values. In a remarkable passage from his First Letter to the Corinthian church (9:19-23), the apostle of old had spelled out in some detail what he meant by this profound statement (as quoted here from the Williams New Testament translation for easier comprehension):

Yes, indeed, though I am free from any human power, I have made myself a slave to everybody, to win as many as possible. To the Jews [or, in Tharchin’s case, To the Buddhists] I have become like a Jew [or, for Tharchin, like a Buddhist] for the winning of Jews (or, for Tharchin, the winning of Buddhists); to men under the law, like one under the law, though I am not under the law myself, to win the men under the law; to men who have no written law, like one without any law, though I am not without God’s law but specially under Christ’s law, to win the men who have no written law. To the overscrupulous, I have become overscrupulous, to win the overscrupulous; yes, I have become everything to everybody, in order by all means to save some of them. And I do it all for the sake of the good news [i.e., the gospel], so as to share with others in its blessings.

Interestingly, as far as can be determined, the Christian publisher only employed the Buddhist double dorje emblem in his Christian newspaper’s masthead on the occasion of very special editions: those, for example, like the initial issue of the *Tibet Mirror* in October 1925 and the very first issue of it produced on a lithographic hand press in September 1928. On the other hand, with respect to his newspaper’s office letterhead stationery, the Dorje Ge-tram, in combination with the *Norbu Me-bar* or flaming jewel with its six gems radiating light—a sign to Tibetan Buddhists of enlightenment and prosperity, became a standard fixture. It had apparently been adopted for the purpose of expressing to all Tibetan recipients of his communications, and by means of symbols they would well understand, his hope and optimism that the Snowy Land of his proud ancestors would experience unending national life, unity, enlightenment and prosperity. Nevertheless, the symbol or sign which usually graced the front page of nearly every other issue of the *Tibet Mirror* was the *Dungkar Yekhil* (or, White Conch Shell), one of the Eight Auspicious Signs of Tibetan Buddhism known collectively as the *Tashi Takgye*. This particular sign of auspiciousness or good fortune appeared as the centerpiece within the decorative display that was splashed left to right completely across the topmost area of the newspaper’s upper fold.

As the newspaper founder well knew, of course, the White Conch was looked upon by Tibetans as a most auspicious sign, it constituting a very precious object that conveyed the idea of “the spreading of the (Buddhist) teachings far and wide.” In the mind of this clever and enterprising Christian publisher, however, the adoption by him for his news journal of the *Dungkar Yekhil* sign was meant to symbolize not the spreading of the Buddhist dharma but of two other things: one of which was secularly-oriented in content, the other, religiously so; yet both of which, in the thinking of Gergan Tharchin, were very much interrelated and

whose spreading abroad was to be accomplished by means of his newspaper. So that first, through his publication there could occur the spread, diffusion and dissemination among Tibetans far and wide the news of the outside world that he anticipated would assist in bringing his long-isolated ethnic countrymen into the modern experience of the twentieth century. But second, and equally significant for this Christian publisher, his news organ, with its one page set aside for the propagation of Christian truth, would also be the means of spreading far and wide the message of Christ among those same ethnic countrymen of his.

Tharchin was very much aware, though, how for centuries the Land of Monks and Monasteries had continually perceived that the widespread exposure of her people to outside ideas and practices and especially to the Christian gospel would be highly inimical to her socio-political and religious well-being. Most likely, therefore, the newspaper editor had purposely chosen the familiar sign of the Conch to be his signature emblem on the front page of nearly every issue of the *Tibet Mirror* as a way, he hoped, of immediately putting potential Tibetan Buddhist readers at ease; resulting, he further hoped, in attracting large numbers of them to the pages of his newspaper so that they would become willing beneficiaries of his attempt to spread widely among them news about the outer world and about Jesus and His sacrificial love.

Without modernization and a more outward-looking perspective, Tibet, Tharchin was convinced, would continue to remain—as she had been for several centuries past—isolated within her tightly closed borders wellnigh untouched by an alternative competing religious option like Christianity. But with appropriate exposure to the news, concepts and ideas of the modern world from which she had long ago consciously separated herself, Tibet and Tibet's people, the Christian news editor hoped and prayed, would no longer remain impervious to the claims and appeals of the Christian faith.^{27a}



Now in the very first issue of his journalistic creation, incidentally, the newspaper founder made it quite clear what he was attempting to do in having created the *Tibet Mirror*. "Presently," Tharchin explained on its front page, "India, China and other foreign countries have been bringing out their own *Khabar Kakasi*"—the term he used here which is a literal Hindi translation of the English word "newspaper." And by this means, he continued, their peoples have been made aware of the various happenings around the world. "This newspaper," the fledgling publisher confidently asserted, "is an attempt to do the same thing for the Tibetan-speaking peoples."²⁸



With a sense of joy and triumph the publisher mailed fifty copies of his first Tibetan newspaper to his friends at Yatung, Gyantse, Lhasa and other places—but "most of them,"

he said, “to my friends in Lhasa”; though first he posted a copy to His Holiness the Thirteenth Dalai Lama.* “His Holiness was very pleased,” recalled Gergan Tharchin in 1975. As well he might be, in view of the fact that the two English journals published in Calcutta, the *Statesman* and the *Englishman*, and to which the Dalai Lama had himself subscribed several years earlier, had proven too much of a challenge for him inasmuch as “he was unable to read a word of them.” Needless to say, the subscriptions were shortly afterwards dropped,† compelling the Grand Lama to continue to depend upon his Tibetan officials stationed at Yatung and Gyantse, who by their favored geographical location were more in touch with the outside world, to “forward to Lhasa foreign comments on Tibetan affairs.”²⁹ As a matter of fact, until the arrival on the scene of Tharchin’s news journal, the people of Lhasa, apart from its highest court and official circles, remained “in complete ignorance of the outside world” and were “completely unconcerned with what the outside world might have thought or said of it.”‡ This, according to an account written by the Western observer, William

* Some idea of who were the fortunate recipients of gratis copies in those early days of the *Tibet Mirror*’s history can be ascertained from perusing a handwritten “Free Copy” list of names dated 17 March 1926, compiled by the publisher less than six months after the paper’s inaugural issue. Found among the Tharchin Papers, the list indicated—besides a number of influential Tibetans at both Lhasa and Gyantse—the following individuals: Rev. F.E. Peter at Leh, Ladakh (six copies); the Political Officer at Gangtok, Major F.M. Bailey; Rai Bahadur Norbu Dhondup, wherever; Tharchin’s four military officer friends, wherever; the British Trade Agents at Yatung/Gyantse and Gartok; the two clerks at the British Trade Agency, Yatung, Y. Isaac and the future Rai Sahib, Pemba Tsering; the University of Calcutta; Karma S.Paul at the same University; several Lamas in the Simla Hill States; the Dzongpon of Gyantse; the Head Lama at both the Gangtok School and the Darjeeling High School; Frank Ludlow, Headmaster at the British School, Gyantse; Tarnyed Nasib Ali at Kotgarh; etc.

† William McGovern, *To Lhasa in Disguise*, 426. His Holiness even had two of the four Tibetan boys whom he had sent to England for education—now that they had returned to Tibet—engaged in translating at Lhasa for him these English newspapers. These two were Mondo and Kyipup. But a third of these four, Ringang (who later would work with Tharchin at the Tibetan capital), wrote back to England to his educational adviser to say that “the Dalai Lama complains of not being able to make much out of the translation, which is small wonder. It is so difficult to convey [Western] ideas and inventions into our language.” Ringang went on to confess: “I shall be in a worse position than they as I cannot read or write properly in our language.” This latter observation was attributable to the fact of his having been away from Tibet the longest of the four—nearly ten years—and only recently had he arrived back in the country and was even then making his way to Lhasa to assume, among other duties, translation work for His Holiness and for the Tibetan Cabinet. Ringang to Dr. T. W. Arnold, Gyantse. 7 July 1920, quoted in K. Dhondup, “The Thirteenth Dalai Lama’s Experiment in Modern Education,” *TJ* (Autumn 1984):55.

‡ It is quite true that the Tibetan leadership at Lhasa was not unaware of developments occurring in other lands both near and far. This is made clear when one reviews the various accounts of those visitors to Tibet who succeeded—either legitimately or by subterfuge—in penetrating the country’s frontiers which during the last two centuries, as was learned in Volume I, Chapter 2 of the present work, had been fairly effectively sealed off either by the Manchu regime in China or by the British in India, and often in tandem with the Tibetan government’s own predilection towards an exclusionary policy with respect to the outside world. For in perusing these accounts, whether Western or non-Western, the reader discovers that, in the words of Beatrice Miller, “the Tibetan government was not at all shy about attempting to glean whatever information these visitors could provide about the state of affairs in the rest of the world.... They were inevitably questioned about their homelands and about the situation that prevailed in the neighboring or more distant States.” Miller, “Lhasa: An International Politico-Economic Center through the Centuries,” in H. Uebach and J. Panglung, eds., *Tibetan Studies* (Munich, 1988), 260. Yet even for those in leadership and in positions of influence at the Tibetan capital, the information collected by this means could not be comparable in scope and depth to what a reliably accurate

McGovern, who as mentioned before had made his way in disguise to the Tibetan capital in early 1923 where he remained for several months interacting with the people and observing their customs and habits.³⁰ Moreover, as another writer, a Tibetan, observed decades later, because “independent Tibet did not have newspapers through which to comment on the current situation” there, the masses had “to resort to folk songs, street plays and other similar devices to show their approval or disapproval of various goings-on in their society.”³¹

A case in point was the example told on himself which Tharchin’s future friend Sir Charles Bell recounts in one of his studies on Tibet and published in 1924. By that time he had retired as the British Political Officer for Tibetan affairs but had been privileged, as the head of a diplomatic mission, to spend nearly a year in the Tibetan capital during 1920-1 at the express invitation of the Tibetan ruler himself. This thus gave Sir Charles an invaluable opportunity to observe at close range the ways of the people. At one point in his volume he commented on how both men and women among the laboring classes of Lhasa were wont to compose topical songs—“usually of an uncomplimentary character”—about “their own officials, high and low” and to sing them on the streets in lusty fashion as they went to and from work. Bell also noticed that no check was ever placed upon the people for doing so; for, he explained, the authorities were quick to recognize that this was one of the means by which “public opinion finds expression.” Even Bell was not immune to their musical wit, as he was later to learn. “Such a song,” he wrote, “was composed about me after I left Lhasa” (in October 1921); “but, fortunately,” Sir Charles added with a bit of wry humor, “I am able to record that it was couched in complimentary terms. It was somewhat on the lines of a nickname which the Tibetans had given me several months earlier.”³² Other officials, though, whether foreign or domestic, would not be so fortunate.*

newspaper of quality, consistently produced and disseminated, could provide. Indeed, it may have been for this reason, among others, which led one influential member of the Tibetan ruling Cabinet to remark to Tharchin: “Tibet may become civilized through your newspaper.” (See a few pages hence in the Text to follow.)

* Though Bell may not have been the butt of an uncomplimentary street song, he did become the target—even while in the Tibetan capital—of some very hostile poster-pasting on Lhasa’s walls: another popular form of communication widely used, as the case might be, by either happy or disgruntled Tibetan citizens. Not surprisingly, during Bell’s critically significant diplomatic mission, certain of his proposals for modernization of various aspects of Tibet’s socio-economic and political life encountered virulent opposition from the conservative, tradition-bound elements in the country, in particular, from the ecclesiastical establishment. The latter was especially opposed to the Tibetan Army that at the suggestion of Bell was being augmented and strengthened by the Lhasa government as a defensive measure in the event of another Chinese invasion. And at one point during Sir Charles’s lengthy stay at Lhasa, when the nature of Bell’s ideas had become known, posters suddenly appeared on the walls of prominent capital buildings which demanded Bell’s death! “Placards,” wrote Bell, “are put up secretly one night at various places in Lhasa, telling the people to kill Kennedy and myself”—Lt. Col. R. S. Kennedy being the doctor of the party of thirty in Bell’s entourage and by that time his “sole white companion on the Mission.” Moreover, several thousand monks could be seen marching through the streets in protest and demanding that negotiations be conducted immediately with the Dalai Lama concerning Bell’s unwanted proposals. Mercifully for Bell, the monks were in the end peacefully dispersed: but only after the British diplomat, in the words of his biographer, C. J. Christie, had “carefully dissociated himself from extreme demands for the expansion of the army.” See Bell, *Portrait of the Dalai Lama*, 276; Alan Winnington, *Tibet: Record of a Journey* (London, 1957), 117; and Christie, “Sir Charles Bell: a Memoir.” *Asian Affairs* (Feb. 1977):57. See also Bell, *Diary* (Typescript, British Museum), vol. ix, pp. 45-9; vol. xi, p. 9.

With the advent of the *Tibet Mirror*, information relevant to Tibet—both internal and especially external in character—began to appear routinely in the pages of the Tibetan newspaper. Gergan Tharchin himself, when asked long afterwards if he thought his publication had made “some impact on Tibetans,” remarked that “it was the only [print] medium in the world through which the Tibetans, at least in Lhasa, learnt something about the fast-changing world outside: revolution in China, World War II, India’s Independence, etc.” And, he added, “the impact was considerable.”³³ Actually, the Kalimpong publisher was too modest in his assessment of his news journal’s impact on Tibetan society. For in reality, Tharchin’s news journal was an instant overnight success, it becoming quite popular with the elites of Lhasa and elsewhere in the Great Closed Land. Indeed, in the opinion of one latter-day observer on Tibetan affairs, Bhuchung K. Tsering, the *Tibet Mirror* “did much to expose the Tibetan rulers in Lhasa to the ways of the modern world.” Moreover, other less highly-placed individuals were also drawn to its pages. In what is one of the most detailed biographies published on the life and times of the current Dalai Lama, Michael H. Goodman has pointed out that the Tibetan-speaking traders and other nomadic peoples who could read had come to be quite dependent upon his newspaper for outside—and even, to some extent, inside—information. Commenting on the traditional trading patterns of the Tibetans, Goodman noted that for over a thousand years traders would gather immediately after harvest time at outdoor markets, creating overnight sprawling tent-cities at predesignated places throughout the barren landscape. These markets were not only trading posts for conducting business by barter; they were likewise social centers where old friends would meet and exchange news of their lands and regions—“an especially important consideration for Tibetans,” wrote Goodman, “because aside from the pages of Tharchin’s Kalimpong-based *Tibet Mirror*, there was little other way for the news of the world to reach them.”^{*34} (Had he been aware, of course, of the *Ladakh Newspaper*’s successor publication at Kyelang and Leh under Rev. Asboe’s editorship, a monthly that had increasingly been finding its way deeper and farther into the Land of Snows—reaching even to Lhasa itself, Goodman could have cited that newspaper as well.) It was nonetheless Bhuchung Tsering’s further considered judgment concerning the impact of Tharchin’s news organ that “if only the majority of the Tibetan public had had access to this newspaper Tibetans would have been more prepared for the cruel world of politics” during the ensuing quarter century following the successful inauguration of Gergan Tharchin’s news journal.^{34a}

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As a demonstration of just how “pleased” the Dalai Lama indeed was with Tharchin’s first efforts at newspaper publishing, the editor in far-off Kalimpong promptly received in

* As late as 1950 Tharchin could claim that inasmuch as the *Tibet Mirror* was the only paper in the Tibetan language, he had “a clear field in a country of four millions.” So the Indo-Tibetan publisher said to the India correspondent of London’s *World’s Press News* and published in an article which appeared in the issue of that periodical for 25 May 1950, p. 13.

response a letter of appreciation from His Holiness, accompanied by a gift of Rs. 20/- (today equivalent to Rs. 100/- and more). This was in early 1926.³⁵ In the letter he expressed his great admiration for the newspaper publisher and proffered his congratulations on the fledgling publisher's achievement. In fact, over a period of years thereafter, the *Tibet Mirror's* editor "received several congratulatory letters from the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, who became a regular subscriber" and was to remain so till his death in 1933.³⁶ One of these subsequent letters is especially worth quoting, since one can easily ascertain from it just how much indebted the Great Thirteenth felt he was to the Babu's news organ for providing him with reliable information about the outside world. In the brief missive, sent on the 16th of the second month of the Fire-Hare year (1927), the Dalai Lama indicated he was sending separately another "symbolic" gift to show his appreciation, while writing thus:

You have diligently been sending me news about various countries for the last few years. In appreciation I have sent a symbolic present of Rs. 20 separately. If you continue sending me your monthly newspaper containing news about countries like China, Britain, etc., it would greatly help in my understanding of the various situations. The subscription charges will be paid without any loss to you and you are to send the bill at the end of the year.³⁷

The subscription, incidentally, "was still in effect" in 1940 upon the accession to Tibet's Lion Throne of his "reincarnate successor," Dalai Lama XIV; and it continued so up through 1959.³⁸

When in 1927 at Lhasa Tharchin was able for the first time to meet personally with the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, His Holiness remarked, "I have always hoped that some day someone might bring out a Tibetan newspaper." The Grand Lama of Tibet once again encouraged the publisher to continue and keep up the good work. Indeed, less than two years later, Tharchin, in a handwritten note sent to his esteemed friend Bell back in England, explained in some detail the success the newly-created news organ had met with during its first few years of existence and the reaction of the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan leaders to it. But as he was wont to do with others, the Tibetan publisher humbly petitioned Sir Charles for some sound advice on improving his journal. Here is what he wrote the former Political Officer in the summer of 1929:

This little newspaper has been published for about five years for the benefit of the people of Tibet. Nevertheless, only 200 copies approximately go to Tibet. The precious protecting omniscient sovereign [the Dalai Lama] has shown great kindness and has sent two or three commands [i.e., letters of commendation, that included some financial help as well]. And the Shapes [the members of the ruling Cabinet] and officers are very pleased with it and have asked me to increase its size and publish bi-monthly. But as this entails additional expense and the income is but small, I have hitherto been unable to do this. By the mercy of God, this newspaper, it is hoped, shows the good customs of British countries. This respectful one of little intellect petitions the great powerful man kindly to advise him, saying, "Do this, do not that." And please give me for my [newspaper] office the two profound books on Tibet [*The People of Tibet, Tibet Past and Present*] which you have written recently. Do not reject me, but show kindness, holding the immensity of religion in a moment of time.*³⁹

* Interestingly, just as he had sounded out both the Great Thirteenth and Sir Charles for advice on his newspaper publishing efforts, Tharchin had also approached the successor Dalai Lama on Tibet's Lion Throne for the very

Now as Tharchin had intimated in his missive to Bell, there were others among Tibet's ruling circles at Lhasa besides His Holiness who expressed deep interest in the *Tibet Mirror*. As a matter of fact, during the same visit to the Tibetan capital in 1927 in which he had first met the Dalai Lama, Tharchin was able to ascertain just how extensive was the salutary impact his fledgling newspaper was indeed having in the Closed Land. For during the publisher's lengthy visit at Lhasa that year, various officials in high places had taken it upon themselves to express personally to him their praise and encouragement.

One such high official who proffered his deep appreciation to Tharchin was none other than Tsarong Shape. Until recently the Tibetan Army Commander-in-Chief and second most powerful figure in Lhasan politics next to the Dalai Lama himself, Tsarong, even at the time of the Kalimpong publisher's visit in 1927, was still a very influential member of the Government's *Kashag* or Cabinet which advised His Holiness on all important matters of state. Now in one of Tharchin's letters sent from the Tibetan capital to Rev. John A. Graham at Kalimpong, the publisher recounted how the former Tibetan Army Commander had on more than one occasion sent his servant to fetch him and bring him to his villa that the two might discuss a number of subjects of mutual interest, not least of which was the *Tibet Mirror* and its possible future effect on the country.

"He is greatly interested in my paper," wrote Tharchin of Tsarong, "and he gave me a lot of hints." Furthermore, added the publisher, and here he quoted the Shape directly, "he says that 'Tibet may be civilized through your paper.'" So impressed was Tsarong with the beneficial possibilities of what the *Tibet Mirror* could provide for his country that this powerful, and certainly the most progressive, member of Tibet's ruling Cabinet went a significant step further in his talks with Tharchin. "He gave me advice," continued the newspaper editor, "that [I should] apply to the Tibetan government for help in getting a proper press, and he promised that he would recommend [approval] very strongly; for if I apply," it was explained to Tharchin by Tsarong, "the application has to go through him and through the other three Shapes." On this point in his letter to Rev. Graham Tharchin concluded by saying, "I am praying about it whether I will apply or not as he advised."

same purpose. As the gathering storm surrounding the crisis in Sino-Tibetan relations was commencing to manifest itself by the late summer of 1949, the *Tibet Mirror* editor was moved to write directly to the fifteen-year-old Fourteenth Dalai Lama. And as an aid to the teen-aged Boy-King of Tibet, Tharchin had included with his letter copies of various communications about the *Tibet Mirror* he had received over the years from the Great Thirteenth. (This had been the suggestion made to the publisher by Yapshi Sey, the present Dalai Lama's brother-in-law.) In part the newspaper editor had written as follows, first indicating to the Dalai Lama how he had been privileged in 1927 to have been granted a private audience by his predecessor:

I had received much "nectar of advice" from His Holiness. Keeping in mind his kindness, I am serving till now by working very hard [on the newspaper].... [However,] I am finding it difficult to meet all the expense. I am able to publish only once a month, but according to the written instructions of His Holiness [the Great Thirteenth], I am working hard to [continue to] serve.... I am enclosing herewith copies of letters sent to me by the previous Dalai Lama and urging Your Holiness to go through them and kindly direct me regarding my future course of [newspaper] work (i.e., what I should do and what I should not do).... Please do not exclude this humble newspaperman from beneath your benevolent umbrella, and grant me the instruction of Your Holiness....

If the Office of His Holiness did ultimately give reply, more than likely the response emanated from advisers who surrounded the young Dalai Lama, which development—under the circumstances—Tharchin must doubtless have expected would occur. Source: Copy of letter in Tibetan written on *Tibet Mirror* Press letterhead stationery (and translated for the present author by Phurbu Tsering), Kalimpong, 18 September 1949, ThPaK.

Interestingly, in this same letter to Graham the Tibetan publisher had thanked the Scottish Mission leader for sending the two most recently printed issues of the *Mirror* which, wrote Tharchin, "I received just this morning." But he continued his letter immediately with this: "The Tibetan officials are very keen to hear the different news [reports, and] they are asking me to publish, if possible, the *Tibetan News* fortnightly, if not weekly." To which request the rising newspaper entrepreneur, ever on the lookout for new and better printing facilities, now took the occasion to follow up on what Tsarong had mentioned to him earlier. "I told them," reported Tharchin to Graham, "that if they help me to get a press, then I will try."⁴⁰ The reader will learn in Chapter 19 below the outcome to all this.

Suffice it to add here, however, that no matter the frequency of Tharchin's publication, as time would go by, officials in the Tibetan government as well as even a number of important monks and lamas in the monasteries grew increasingly eager to learn more regarding the outside world. But they were likewise eager to hear—some of them for the very first time—about the modern ideas in politics, science and law, ideas which heretofore had fallen on the deaf ears of many of those in Tibet who had already been aware of them. By the time of the Tibetan publisher's visit to Lhasa in 1937, for example, Tharchin could report to Sir Charles Bell the unusually favorable reaction he found there among the ruling circles—both lay and cleric—to his newspaper, and of their nearly insatiable hunger to imbibe the latest Western ideas. In the letter of 25 July he sent from the Tibetan capital, Tharchin went into some detail in describing for his friend Bell his remarkable findings:

Some of the officials are very much interested in modern ideas and they are keen to know and learn more and more, but at the same time, still, they are afraid of the monks and lamas. But I met many educated and high class monks and they are also interested. They all asked me to write [in the *Mirror*] something on the present development of the world or on different countries and especially about our Government [in India], about the Sciences and [our] laws. I was able to get about 500 subscribers to my small newspaper [beginning] from next year; of course, I am very doubtful whether I can get all the money from them all. All the Trulkus and Khenpos of SER DRE GA SUM [the abbreviation in Tibetan for the influential Big Three monkish institutions of Lhasa: Sera, Drepung and Ganden monasteries] asked me to send [the paper] and many other monks also asked the same and they said that they have not seen or heard about the newspaper at all. I think if I am able to get some [financial] helps and print 1,000 copies and send to every monastery for a year or two freely, I am sure it will do good for them and also for the paper in future. Also, if I get contributions of articles on different subjects that may do good for Tibet, it will be very good for me.... All the officials are very much interested and some other officers advised me to bring a small litho press to Lhasa and also keep a radio and publish a small daily newspaper in Lhasa. The Regent, Prime Minister and Shapes are all very much interested. If I can only develop this paper it may do a lot of good for the Tibetans as well as to our Government [of India]. Some suggested to me to print weekly which I am unable to do at present.*⁴¹

* The present writer could not agree more with three of Heather Stoddard's more recent observations (1994) about Tharchin's newspaper when she wrote that the *Tibet Mirror* "provided a unique forum in which other Tibetans could express their ideas on politics, science and history"; that it "is a mine of information on events in Central Asia and the Himalayas in the mid-20th century"; and that therefore "a complete set of copies" of it "should be collected together for public use before it is too late." But in the light of the foregoing discussion in the Text above which has highlighted the *Mirror's* considerable influence among Lhasan officialdom during the first decade of its publication, he could not disagree more with an additional recent comment Ms. Stoddard has made

Needless to say, the strong encouragement which Tharchin received from so many at Lhasa during this early period of the *Mirror's* history was truly heartwarming to him. He would continue to be pleased and gladdened by the response of Tibetans to his newspaper as the nations of the earth approached another period of worldwide conflict. He himself would long afterwards comment on the unusual, even somewhat peculiar, impact World War Two would have on Tibetans' perception of the place and importance of the *Tibet Mirror*. Wrote the newspaper publisher in 1963: "Gradually all the Tibetans began to realize the value of the newspaper. Because all the news published in it during the war came true, they would write to say that my paper was a prophecy-teller, and so they liked it very much!"⁴² It must have therefore buoyed his spirits up immensely to believe that he had not striven in vain to produce a news organ that in his view could fill the informational, cultural and even spiritual needs of so many of his ethnic countrymen—especially among those in positions of responsibility and leadership.

Nevertheless, these initial successes and the generous plaudits of men did not puff up the publisher's heart with overweening pride or conceit. To the contrary, with all simplicity Gergan Tharchin long afterwards confided the following to a close acquaintance:

I felt humble before God when I realized how people praised my sincere efforts to produce a Tibetan newspaper. The Dalai Lama and Dr. Graham spoke admirably about it. Both inspired me and advised me not to be discouraged but to press on. Some laughed and mocked at me, saying, "How long will you work on that sort of machine and who will appreciate your efforts?"⁴³ Yet high Tibetan officials sympathetically endorsed me as they realized the power and importance of a newspaper for the future progress of Tibet. Some others criticized me, saying that I had started the paper [solely] to spread Christian propoganda. But that was in the year 1926. After some time I began to produce the paper monthly.



But the enterprising and talented newspaper publisher had numerous other notions on how the *Tibet Mirror* could assist "in the future progress of Tibet" in a practical way. In an extremely wide-ranging letter to Sir Charles Bell from Lhasa during the summer of 1937,

about the Indo-Tibetan's journal; namely, that "... Tharchin's long-term intentions, like Francke's, were those of awakening the flock to the truths of Christianity, thus largely restricting the real impact of his newspaper ..." Stoddard, "Tibetan Publications and National Identity," in Barnett and Akiner, eds., *Resistance and Reform in Tibet*, 126, 155, 126. Nowhere in all the research among a huge number of primary and secondary sources (including the vast collection of the Tharchin Papers itself), as well as in the course of his many interviews, did the present author encounter anything written or said which would suggest that the *Mirror* would have been able to exert a greater influence had it not been for its Christian identity and evangelistic purpose. It would appear, in fact, that the Christian slant to the newspaper had little if any negative effect upon its Buddhist-oriented readers, so hungry were they for news, information, and new ideas and ways of thinking. Just as Tharchin's personal Christian faith seldom if ever presented an insurmountable obstacle in his personal interactions with others of a different religious persuasion, just so, the Christian nature of his newspaper never seemed to be such to its readers, either. Though the one page of his publication devoted to Christian themes may never have *enhanced* the news organ's impact, it would appear that it never *diminished* its impact, either. And as decade followed decade in its rather long history, the *Tibet Mirror* would continue to be an incredibly influential publication, as the remaining chapters of the present biography of Gergan Tharchin will make plain.

Tharchin Babu highlighted a number of ideas about which he had been seriously ruminating. The following passages from the letter make for very interesting reading on at least four counts: first, these passages demonstrate just how necessary, from an outsider's point of view, Tibet was in need of modernizing in a number of key areas; second, they also reflect the breadth of Tharchin's interest in the welfare of his ethnic countrymen; third, they reveal the eagerness which was displayed by the progressive wing of the Tibetan ruling elite in seeking the Babu's help through his newspaper—thus indicating the valuable and important role these Tibetan leaders now believed a newspaper could play in the life of a country; and finally, these excerpts clearly signify the willingness of Babu Tharchin to help in whatever way he could to bring Tibet into the twentieth century.

[Concerning tobacco and cigarettes]. Though there is the prohibition against smoking and bringing [such products] into Tibet, yet I saw in Lhasa and Shigatse that cigarettes are openly being sold in the market and on the street all along the Barkhor and other streets. But along the trade route or at Yatung and other frontier places Tibetan officials are seizing and confiscating [tobacco] goods and punishing the poorer traders heavily [but] the rich traders who can afford to pay bribes they let them do so. Because of this, many traders are very much disappointed and also [one particular] Indian trader at Phari is doing largely [i.e., doing a huge business in this prohibited product]. Many traders and the public have asked me to write on this matter in my Newspaper and tell the Tibetan government either to stop [this illicit trade in a] proper way or else the Government should withdraw the [prohibition] order and let everyone trade openly. Thus in this way the public would benefit [by being able to] buy [tobacco products] more cheaply.

[Concerning the military in Tibet] ... Unfortunately [many of] the officers [in 1924-5] were degraded and Tsarong was also [removed from command of the Army]. Since that time the army of Tibet has become slack. During the time of Tsipon Lung Shar I wrote him and suggested that army books of instruction [from India and elsewhere] be printed in Tibetan and that a [military] school be started. He was just thinking to move these matters to [the attention of] His Holiness when he [the Tsipon] became powerless.

[Concerning hospital and medicine]. The hospital at Dekyi Lingka [British Mission at Lhasa] is ... doing good, but only the common people are attending for extrials [meaning unclear] or external diseases. The better class people and also the Monks are not taking much interest. They say it is only good for sourses (rma) [sic; again, meaning unclear] and they do not understand the benefits of the hospital. I think, however, that such thoughts can be removed from their minds through the distribution of pamphlets or through my Newspaper. If I can get helpful articles on the benefits of [Western] medical aids, then I think the Tibetans will understand very soon and would like to have a permanent hospital in Lhasa.

[Concerning the Tibetan postal service]. The postal work is not so good yet. Many letters are not delivered properly and the postmasters are just taking the money for stamps but the letters are not stamped and are simply sent bare [of any stamps] and sometimes they do not even send the letters at all. Moreover, the sealing or the stapling of the stamps on the letters is not good. All receipts have to be recorded and yet there are no printed forms and much time is thus wasted. The stamps themselves have to be cut with knife or scissors and are without gum. I have suggested a strching [sic; starching?] machine and also ways of putting the glue onto the stamps; and I hope very soon they are going to do so. It would be good if the Tibetan government joins the postal service with [that of] our Government. Some have asked me to print in my Newspaper the post office rules and write showing proper methods. But again, I need assistance from a person who has experience about the post office.⁴⁴



But just exactly what kind of news and cultural coverage did the *Tibet Mirror* come to embrace in its pages during the early decades of its existence: the period of the 1920s, '30s and '40s? One later generation Tibetan scholar, Tashi Tsering, who had access to a nearly complete run of the journal that is today housed in the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives at Dharamsala in northern India, made an in-depth study of the newspaper and gave the following summary of its contents for that period:

Inspired by the British press style, the *Mirror* published articles on world events and especially reported what was taking place in India, Tibet and in the region of Kalimpong. It was a rich source of information on the world of Asia of the time. It reported the movements and diplomatic activities of the functionaries of the governments of Bhutan, China, Britain, Sikkim and so on, as well as the goings-on among the nobles and the endeavors of Tibetan scholars. The paper debated the question of the Status of Tibet and the position of Tibet towards China.... In the 1930s [it] attacked and criticized the Chinese advances into Kham [East Tibet] ... Some reports [in the paper] presented contemporary political personalities such as Stalin, Hitler and Gandhi, as well as some modern Tibetans, who had been educated in China and India. They also described the great military powers, the latest war machines and the latest cars in detail. The dates of important events such as the anniversaries of the Indian Empire as well as the Olympic Games were also announced.

A classified advertisement section was [provided] for the Kalimpong wool market, and to announce gold and silver prices.* A series of cultural articles was regularly published as were examples of classical Tibetan poetry. Sometime in 1936 [the publisher] hired Dge-'dun chos-'phel (1902-1951) and [later] Lcang-can gung bsod-nams rgyal-po [Changlo Chen Gung Kusho] (1897-19) and the quality of writing in the paper improved noticeably.⁴⁵

In the year 1930 a great depression and gross unemployment had begun to spread all over Europe and America. In view of this worldwide situation Tharchin was led to publish a small article in his newspaper on the subject: "Why Unemployment in the World?" He treated the topic from both the religious, economic and political perspectives, which treatment prompted a good deal of reader response from many places (see below). He even later received a newspaper clipping about it taken from the front page of the 27 January 1934

* But there were other kinds of advertising as well, which in their own peculiar way exerted considerable influence upon the not altogether discerning readership of Tharchin's journal, including the Dalai Lama himself. As but one indication of the power and influence of the *Tibet Mirror's* advertising page, there is the amusing story told the present writer by Sonan T. Kazi, who himself would spend many years in Lhasa later. He related the incident of the Great Thirteenth having once read in an issue of the paper an advertisement for a special kind of candle, whose rather hyperbolic main line ran as follows: *Yang-la Zam-ling Mun-sel*. This in translation signified that here was a candle which will shed light over the whole world! Upon reading this extravagant claim made by the candle manufacturer, the credulous Dalai Lama immediately sent a telegram and money to Tharchin ordering him to kindly have sent to Lhasa two entire mule loads of such marvelous light-spreading instruments. The newspaper editor duly carried out the instructions of His Holiness. The Dalai Lama may have been extremely disappointed, however, upon discovering that these were no more extraordinary than the run-of-the-mill candles which were obtainable in the Tibetan capital's own bazaar! Interview with the Kazi, Oct. 1991.

Late City Edition of the *New York Times* that had the interest-provoking headline: "Way to Prosperity Found by Lone Editor in Tibet." It obviously had reference to Tharchin's recent article. Dated Shanghai, January 26th and made available to the *Times* by the Canadian Press, it began the news article as follows: "Interest in the 'forbidden land' of Tibet, revived by the recent death of the Dalai Lama, discloses that there is only one newspaper in all Tibet. It is published monthly and is edited by Tarchin Baboo,* at Kalimpong." The *Times* article also revealed that at this time the Tibetan newspaper was an eight-page publication and that its freely translated title in English (an indulgent poetic license, to be sure) was *The Mirror of the New Vicissitudes of Every Corner of This Universe!*

In his article Tharchin advanced the provocative argument that manual labor be used instead of most machinery. Prior to the introduction of machines hundreds upon hundreds of people received employment, but now as a result of the machine age only two or three persons are required to handle the work that otherwise would have kept a thousand persons employed and supplied with food. As the *Times* article said in summing up what Tharchin had written, "Unemployment brings distress: distress means no money and no money brings bad trade." Tharchin's newspaper, the *Times* article concluded, "thinks the Western world could immediately become prosperous by abolishing" most machines.

Some readers evinced interest in Tharchin's arguments. Others were critical of them. He received dozens of letters pro and con. Some said, "You have really found a solution to the problem of unemployment. Please write more along the same lines." Others retorted, "This is the industrial age. How can you do without machines?"

Tharchin especially remembered with interest those correspondents who had responded to his discussion of one aspect of the subject from a Biblical perspective. In his article he had written that Jesus told his disciple Peter to put the sword back into the sheath. In other words, Peter was ordered by Christ not to fight with weapons. Tharchin fell back on these words of Christ to buttress his case against the use of machines or weapons. In the article he had confronted his readers with the words, "You are manufacturing these machines. Put these machines back into their sheaths. If not, the machines will kill you." In reply to this challenge, some correspondents referred to the motor vehicle and the railway engine. The newspaper editor responded to that observation by saying: "I am not against such goodwill

* Baboo, babu: The British in India often used this term in a disparaging manner, it meaning that a person thus referred to was half-Anglo. It is a Hindi word borrowed from the Hindustani term *babu* conveying a Hindu title corresponding to *Gentleman* or *Mr.* or *Esquire*; and according to Sonam T. Kazi, who hails from Sikkim just north of West Bengal, the word is also a title given by the British to civil officers, especially among Bengalis. But the Kazi also agreed that babu can likewise refer to a native-born clerk or manager (usually one who speaks or writes English). Interview with the Kazi, Oct. 1991. In this case, therefore, the term was also employed, in reference to Tharchin, as signifying a title of honor and denoting his profession—that of an indigenous newspaper editor. Moreover, the Kazi noted to the present writer that babu is usually affixed to a person's name as a suffix: e.g., Tharchin Babu; although, he added, Babu Tharchin is also acceptable. But according to Shanti K. Pradhan, son of the Babu's very good friend K. D. Pradhan, the newspaper publisher would also be addressed among the Tibetans with the affectionate term Babula and with the respectful and honorific term Gyen La; and addressed by many non-Tibetans as Tharchin Guru Babu! Interview with S. K. Pradhan, Nov. 1992. "Tarchin," of course, is a variant spelling of the editor's name.

machines. I am against producing deadly weapons. These lethal instruments will come back upon their manufacturers with striking power. There is a Tibetan proverb which runs, 'With goat's hair you make a sling to hit the goat!' These deadly machine weapons will similarly boomerang against their designers and makers."

In discussing this whole matter many decades later Tharchin Babu was heard to say: "If those people who opposed my arguments were alive today they would repent. They would admit the truth of my statements. Take, for example, the case of the atom bomb. Everyone is afraid of it—even the manufacturer himself!"

The present reader may decide for himself what side he would have taken in this debate had he been a part of the *Tibet Mirror's* readership of that day. One thing, however, is most certain from all this: the newspaper editor had a knack of creating unusual interest in his journalistic organ that would continue to manifest itself with each passing year.



One need not be surprised, incidentally, that the *Times* article dealing with Gergan Tharchin's newspaper had been datelined Shanghai, for apparently his publication had been finding its way into many places much farther afield than merely northern India or even southern and central Tibet. It may have also been, and probably was, the inspiration for the commencement of another Tibetan-language newspaper in the late 1920s that, if the report be true, was interconnected with one of the most remarkable though short-lived developments ever to appear on the scene in Tibetan-Chinese-Mongolian relations. The initiator of this new publication was none other than the self-exiled Panchen Lama himself, to whom it is known that the *Tibet Mirror* publisher had sent copies of the newspaper. Some three or four years after his controversial departure in 1923 from the ecclesiastical seat of Trashilhunpo he had inaugurated in Mongolia a weekly Tibetan newspaper that would later be published by His Serenity at China's then capital of Nanking. The documentary sources for this information are two books published in 1935 and 1942 authored by an American, Gordon B. Enders.

Enders, the son of a Presbyterian missionary in India, had been brought up as a schoolboy on the Indo-Nepali-Tibetan frontier, his father having been a teacher there. After completing his higher education at the College of Wooster near Cleveland, in the American State of Ohio, and seeing service as a pilot in Europe during the Great War, Enders returned to Asia as a representative of the United States Department of Commerce posted to Peking and Shanghai at the American legations there. He then left Government service to go into private business for himself in Shanghai, where he was living in 1923 when he heard that the Panchen Lama was leaving Tibet in voluntary exile to China and Mongolia. Enders was later introduced to His Serenity, an encounter which led to his becoming an adviser to the Panchen on economic, technological and scientific affairs. For it so happened that having left his own country's Government service, the American had been taken on by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek as his technical aviation adviser during the late 1920s. Furthermore, during this

same period (1927-9) Enders had even taught flying to Chiang's armies.* And as will be seen, this kind of knowledge and expertise was precisely what the Panchen was in search of for his own future plans.

Now when the Panchen Lama had unexpectedly fled from Trashilhunpo and his very own country in late 1923, he had been accompanied by a large retinue of some 400 priests and other followers. Initially finding his way to Peking and other areas of North China (where he would stay for some two or three years), His Serenity and his entourage had then relocated to Lamaist Inner Mongolia in 1927, where he took up residence within the safe precincts of a yellow-walled gompa known as the Monastery of a Hundred Miracles located at the town of Peilingmiao. Here he would be supported by Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang and would also receive a contribution from the Nationalist government of China. It is known from other sources (see earlier in the first volume of the present narrative, Chapter 5) that the Panchen Lama exhibited a great interest in modern gadgetry and western inventions and, to use the words of the American, "not only understood but welcomed modern methods" of transportation, communication and dissemination of news and information. And hence, added Enders, for the next six years, from roughly 1927 to 1931 or 1932, "he published a [Tibetan] newspaper ... in Inner Mongolia." In fact, it was within Peilingmiao's famed monastery that this high Tibetan cleric's newspaper was published.

But then, China's Generalissimo invited this forward-looking Lama to establish his residence at Chiang's capital of Nanking, the date for this invitation having been sometime in late 1931 or into 1932. For nearly six years thereafter, wrote Enders, "I spent many hours alone in the presence of the Panchen Lama." Not only at Nanking and Shanghai, but also at Koko Nor and Peilingmiao, the American would engage in many conversations with His Serenity. It would be in 1933, almost immediately after the death of Dalai Lama XIII and the resumption of the Panchen Lama's influence upon the Government of the Generalissimo, that Tibet's second most powerful spiritual leader accepted Chiang's invitation to relocate his residence. And by early 1934 His Serenity would order his editor "to bring his Tibetan newspaper from the Monastery of a Hundred Miracles down to Nanking," where without further interruption it would continue to be published till the Lama's death at the end of 1937.

The newspaper, wrote Enders, was being edited by the American's old friend Liu, a fellow member of the Panchen's Cabinet and the latter's envoy at Nanking. According to Enders, Liu had "a brilliant mind, a nimble pen and an innate knowledge of the etiquette of courts." The weekly publication, in the estimation of Enders, had "gradually built for itself a firm place among the eight million Lamaists in China and Mongolia," but it had apparently not yet had any discernible impact on Tibet. Often visiting Liu in his editorial office, Enders

* To round out this American's interesting career over the next few years, it can be noted here that just before the Panchen Lama's death in late November 1937, Enders would return to the United States to write, lecture, and teach history at Indiana's Purdue University. But with America's eventual entry into the Second World War looming close on the horizon, he accepted a Major's commission in the U.S. Army in October of 1941 and was sent off shortly afterwards to Kabul, Afghanistan, as the American Military Attaché, the first diplomat ever to represent the U.S. in that country. Enders would record his experiences in Asia in two very interesting volumes, in both of which he described in great detail his relationship and interaction with Tibet's Panchen Lama during the latter's lengthy exile in East Asia: *Nowhere Else in the World* (1935) and *Foreign Devil: an American Kim in Modern Asia* (1942).

happened one day to discuss Liu's plans for eventually relocating the paper's office from Nanking to Koko Nor. The latter place, just then beginning to be developed as an important city by the Panchen Lama's followers, was to become—if it can be believed—the capital of an extensive heart-shaped province by the same name whose region was to be the center of a visionary Central Asian Buddhist Empire which, according to Enders, His Serenity had proposed to, and had been approved by, the Nanking Chinese Nationalist government. In fact, reported the American adviser, His Serenity had told the Chinese officials that he wished to build a new capital city for himself “on the banks of Koko Nor, the Azure Lake, at a point where China, Mongolia and Tibet came together. It was to be a holy city whence the Incarnation could extend his spiritual influence over the hundreds of millions of Buddhist-Lamaistic believers of Asia.”

“With polite smiles,” explained Enders, officials of the Nanking government had approved the Koko Nor scheme in an attempt to trap this unworldly guest of theirs when asking him where the funds would come from to finance the operational expenses for this Tibetan Incarnation's capital city. But the Panchen Lama had a ready answer that must have surely surprised his secularist inquirers. “There was gold in Tibet,” he had replied simply. But then, wrote Enders:

When the Chinese asked how he proposed to get this gold out to world markets, His Serenity replied promptly: airplanes. Where men and animals might not safely traverse fourteen hundred miles of robber-infested back country, loaded with Tibetan gold, an airplane could. Furthermore, the cost was less and the time shorter.

It was largely for this reason, His Serenity told me, that he had added [me] to his Cabinet. His plan was to exchange Tibetan gold for power plants, road-making machinery, motorcars and radios [all of which he had witnessed both in India on his visit there in 1905-6 and now in China]. It was his purpose to make his New Heart for Asia accessible to all his people.... [And] if he did not live to carry out his plans, there would be another Incarnation, and another, to carry them out.

While he thought in terms of eternity, the Panchen planned in terms of airplanes which could annihilate time and space ... [and] release Tibet from her age-old shackles by means of the airplane....

Years later, in looking back on his experience with the Panchen Lama, Enders could see why the Nanking government had allowed him to build an aerodrome at Koko Nor but never allowed His Serenity to use it to carry his gold out of Tibet. Though the Chinese officials had continually sought to retain his favor, Enders remarked, “they feared that gold might build a secular power for the Incarnation which would rival theirs.”

Enders recalled how prior to his discussion with Liu, he had personally visited the Panchen Lama at his temporary residence outside Nanking. At one point after being ushered into the Lama's office the Panchen had stepped to a wall map and “in a few neat strokes” had

outlined in heavy black the boundaries of Tibet; then the boundaries of Mongolia. With a lighter line, he indicated the much larger limits of the egg-shaped territories of Lamaism. Finally, with a line twice as broad as any he had previously employed, he drew the province of Koko Nor, between Tibet and Mongolia. Nobody had ever before noticed that Koko Nor is shaped exactly like a human heart, with its apex pointed towards China. Here the great trans-Asiatic caravan routes cross, and at their intersection the Panchen proposed to establish the new capital of a Central Asian Empire. Here today is the new town of Koko Nor, the “City of the Panchen Lama.”

As a matter of fact, in the second volume of his experiences in Asia, published in 1942, the Panchen Lama's American eco-technological adviser could actually report on and describe in some detail the ongoing physical development and further planning of Koko Nor, including the establishment already of a local municipal police force there as well as the gathering of equipment and supplies.

While still discussing with Liu his intention to move the Tibetan newspaper's offices to the newly developing town of Koko Nor, Enders innocently suggested that Lhasa might perhaps be a more suitable location. Liu bristled at the idea, however, and pointed to a map of Asia on the wall behind his desk. On the map could clearly be seen the heavily outlined heart-shaped area of Koko Nor. "Never again," he declared emphatically, "will Lhasa be the center of Lamaism, for the Central Asian [Buddhist] States will henceforth be united at Koko Nor."

This extraordinary plan—if it ever did have a chance of succeeding—died a sudden death, however, with the passing to "the Honorable Field" of the Panchen Lama in late 1937 at the important lamasery town of Jyekundo on the borders of East Tibet. * By the autumn of 1936 His Serenity had already created for himself a new residence there in the nearby Raja Gomba—the Monastery of the King. Dutifully Enders had gone to be with him at the Gomba; and even later, when in Shanghai, the American kept in periodic touch with the Panchen Lama by means of the latter's radio station which, not surprisingly, the forward-looking Tibetan Buddhist prelate had established at this important Chinese metropolis. Enders would return to America just two months prior to the high Lama's death on 30 November 1937 at the very moment when His Serenity had been poised to return to his ecclesiastical seat at Trashilhunpo. But if the Panchen Lama had died, so, too, had died the Tibetan weekly newspaper he had initially founded in Inner Mongolia and which later was based at Nanking; thus bringing to a swift close one of the most mystifying incidents in Tibetan affairs.

It should be added, however, that a year before his death the Panchen Lama had been made aware of Enders' first book through the word of Basil Crump, a longtime acquaintance of the Lama in China. Upon being informed of its contents, the Panchen wrote a letter of refutation to Crump, stating that "Enders' strange statements [dealing with various commercial and political schemes of His Serenity] are entirely without foundation or fact." Whether the

* It is worth noting that one prominent authority on the religio-political history of Central Asia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had a quite optimistic opinion about such a scheme's possible success. British scholar John Snelling, author of a volume on Buddhism in Russia, believes that had Inner Asia not been gobbled up by the vast Chinese and Russian empires under Marxism, and had its local Buddhist traditions not been decimated as a result, the very real possibility of such a Pan-Buddhist entity arising a century ago could have occurred. Wrote Snelling in 1993: "... The Buryat lands in the [Siberian] north, Mongolia, parts of eastern China and the whole of Tibet could well have become the zone of a great Lamaist Buddhist confederation of the kind envisaged by [Agvan] Dorzhiev. Perhaps, despite everything that has happened, dormant vestiges of that potential remain." *Buddhism in Russia*, 79.

It would appear that the Buriat Lama Dorjjeff, the Russian émigré to America Nikolai K. Roerich, and this very same Panchen Lama who was contemporaneous to them both—all had envisaged in varying degrees the creation of a Pan-Buddhist geographical entity in Central and East Asia, and during their careers all three had taken concrete action to try to effect its realization. Indeed, Snelling had gone on to point out the potential significance for the hoped-for implementation of such a grand scheme, of Dorjjeff's encouragement and subsequent involvement

new Koko Nor Province concept was one such scheme which the Panchen had had in mind in his refutation is a matter which will probably never be known; but because His Serenity was at that moment in the midst of sensitive negotiations with the Lhasan government for his return to Trashilhunpo, the Panchen Lama may have felt, if this book published in 1935 by Enders had been known to the Tibetan government as well, that his denial of the scheme would have been the better part of wisdom!⁴⁶ Nevertheless, it ought to be observed that

in successfully bringing about a treaty between Tibet and Mongolia. For the Buriat Lama had been instrumental in convincing both the Great Thirteenth of Tibet and the Jetsun Dampa of Mongolia to enter into a mutual treaty of friendship that was ultimately signed at the Mongolian capital in January of 1913. In the words of the treaty itself, "Whereas Mongolia and Tibet, having freed themselves from the Manchu dynasty and separated themselves from China, have become independent States, and whereas the two States have always professed one and the same religion, and to the end that their ancient mutual friendships may be strengthened:" therefore, the two Governments' signatories to this document pledged, among other things, that "both States shall take measures, after mutual consideration, for the prosperity of the Buddhist faith" and that "both States ... shall henceforth, for all time, afford each other aid against dangers from without and from within." As the Dalai Lama's plenipotentiary, Dorjjeff, together with two Tibetan officials, signed the document on behalf of Tibet's Priest-King. Wrote Snelling of this coup of the Buriat's: "It is of course quite possible to discern here the rudiments of Dorzhiev's ... grand design for a Pan-Buddhist confederation in Central Asia." *Ibid.*, 151. Despite Sir Charles Bell's doubts, incidentally, that a treaty had ever been executed between these two lands (he describing it as the "alleged" Mongol-Tibetan Treaty, 1913), later scholarship, especially by Indian historian Parshotam Mehra, has shown on fairly solid evidence that such a treaty had indeed been consummated. See Mehra, "The Mongol-Tibetan Treaty of January 11, 1913," *Journal of Asian History* (1969):1-22. The treaty's complete text can be found in Bell, *Tibet Past and Present*, 304-5.

It is interesting to note as well that Dorjjeff and later Roerich himself had made personal contact with the Panchen Lama or else with the latter's entourage. In fact, a little known meeting had occurred at the turn of the twentieth century between His Serenity and the Buriat Lama. It so happened that by design and in disguise the latter, while en route in March of 1901 on a third mission as Dalai Lama XIII's emissary to the Russian Tsar, had stopped off at Trashilhunpo for two full days. And from the Panchen Lama personally, Dorjjeff had received not only gifts but also "secret teachings and, most significantly, oral readings of the *Prayer of Shambhala*." The nature of this latter spiritual exercise, Snelling explained, was a popular text which had been composed by the Third Panchen Lama (1737-80) and concerned the millennial Buddhist kingdom of Shambala, "which was of central importance to the visions of Agvan Dorzhiev."

Snelling went on to observe that there was thought to exist a special connection between the entire line of the Tibetan Panchen Lamas and Shambala, since some of them were believed to be incarnations of specific Shambala *kalkis* or kings. Taking the Shambala myths quite seriously, Dorjjeff, Snelling believed, thus "linked them with the potential he saw in the great heartland of Central Asia for a glorious Buddhist regeneration," since the Buriat-Mongolian cleric was also a practitioner of Kalacakra teachings with their portrayal of the destruction and renewal of the Buddha-dharma. It will be recalled from the previous chapter that according to Buddhist mythology these teachings had been heard by King Sucandra of old from the very lips of the Buddha himself and then taken by him to his kingdom of Shambala somewhere in the north of Asia. It will also be recalled that Dorjjeff had occasionally identified this "Northern Shambala" with Russia and therefore looked upon the Tsarist Empire (and later Soviet Union) as "the protector" of all Lamaist-oriented peoples in Inner Asia who might be conjoined together as a theocracy under the Dalai Lama. And if not under the latter, then perhaps under the Panchen Lama, whom Dorjjeff years later would rush to meet again upon hearing, while at Urga, the sensational news of the Tibetan Lama's flight to China and Mongolia in 1923. Though Dorjjeff traveled as far as Peking in search of His Serenity, the Mongolian-Buriat Lama somehow missed him. Before returning to Mongolia, however, he left in the care of someone in Peking a letter from himself for the Panchen Lama.

His deep interest in and knowledge of the Shambala myths and their interconnection with the Kalacakra teachings Dorjjeff would convey personally to Nicholas Roerich. This he would do in 1909 at St. Petersburg. It had happened that the Buriat Lama had selected Roerich, along with an architect and seven other prominent European Orientalists and artists, to serve as a construction committee for the creation of a Lamaist Buddhist temple at the Russian capital. Roerich's meeting with Dorjjeff had greatly excited him, and the Russian later

despite the Panchen Lama's categorical refutation in 1936, Enders repeated and amplified still more on the Koko Nor plan—as well as reported his own witness of its development—in his later volume of 1942; the implication of which was that all that he had described in his earlier book was essentially the truth.*⁴⁷

It is significant to point out, furthermore, that the Panchen did not deny the existence of the weekly newspaper. That Gergan Tharchin had been aware of its publication is made clear by an exchange of letters in 1943 between him and a former student of his at Ghoom, Pemba Tsering, who by then was on the staff of the British Mission at Lhasa. "My dear Gegenla," Pemba endearingly wrote to his former teacher, "when I was at Kalimpong I forgot to ask you ... how many Tibetan newspapers there are in existence ..." In the course of his reply, the Tibetan publisher, after noting the cessation of Rev. Asboe's Ladakhi monthly journal, made reference to the Nanking publication (though incorrectly assuming it was published by the Chinese): "Another paper, a weekly, in the Mongolian, Chinese and Tibetan languages, used to be published in Nanking sometime in 1935, 1936, [and] 1937 by the Chinese; but that's also stopped since the [beginning of the Sino-Japanese?] War."⁴⁸

confided that it was during the construction of this Buddhist temple that "I first heard of Shambhala." As a member of the committee, he added, "I met with a very learned Buriat Lama who was the first to pronounce the name of Chang [North] Shambhala." "It will be known one day," Roerich prophetically declared, "why this name pronounced under such circumstances had a great significance"—at least for him and for what he envisaged as the Unity of Asia. And as recounted in the previous volume of the present narrative (see Chapter 2's End-Notes), during the latter phases of Roerich's five-year Central Asian Expedition (1924-8), its leader had made contact with the Panchen Lama's entourage in Mongolia. It was his hope and expectation that His Serenity would join him in a grand spiritual procession all the way to Lhasa as a prelude to the fulfillment of the Shambhala legend, whose ultimate consequence, he believed, would be the ushering in of a New Age of Universal Brotherhood, Peace and Enlightenment, a notion not unlike the millennial messianic kingdom found in the Christian faith. As stated elsewhere, however, the march on Lhasa was never realized, Roerich never stepped foot inside the Tibetan capital, and the Panchen himself failed to return to his country before his death. Nonetheless, as was learned in the previous chapter's End-Notes, Roerich would apparently not cease his efforts to see the legend of Shambhala fulfilled. For while on a subsequent Asian expedition in 1934-5, he conducted Shambhala-inspired Banner of Peace prayer meetings among the Mongols and had even attempted to secure rifles and ammunition from American infantry stationed in North China for the purpose of creating—by force, if necessary—a new State in Siberia!

See Snelling, *Buddhism in Russia*, 74-9, 136-8, 228-31; and Alexandre Andreyev, "Soviet Russia and Tibet: a Debacle of Secret Diplomacy," *TJ* (Autumn 1996):19, 26-7.

* That all Enders claimed concerning Koko Nor was in fact true is strongly supported by the record of communications which had been transmitted back and forth at this time between the Panchen Lama and the Tibetan government. In his volume on the history of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama published in 1996, Tibetan historian K. Dhondup has reported the following:

In 1934, when the Panchen Lama demanded that several Trashilhunpo officials, 30 monks and 300 people from among his subjects be sent to Koko Nor, the Tibetan government at once consented to it hoping it would speed up the long awaited return [to Tibet] of the Panchen Lama. A year later, the Kuomintang government [of China] announced that the Panchen Lama would establish his headquarters at Sining [very near to Koko Nor] and then enter Tibet with a Chinese representative escorted by 500 Chinese soldiers.... Through the Tibetan representatives in Nanking, the Tibetan government vehemently opposed the idea of sending 500 soldiers to Tibet as an escort of the Panchen Lama.

But Dhondup has provided further evidence, in this instance circumstantial in nature, that the Panchen Lama and his many followers had looked upon the Koko Nor/Sining area as their hoped-for future religious, political and cultural center. After the Lama's death at Jyekundo, writes Dhondup, the numerous Panchen Lama party,



Whether or not the Panchen Lama and his Cabinet had been inspired to commence the short-lived Peilingmiao- and Nanking-published Tibetan newspaper because of Gergan Tharchin's own journalistic production cannot be verified. Nevertheless, it is inconceivable that His Serenity was unaware of the *Tibet Mirror's* existence; for as noted earlier, he was one of those to whom Tharchin had especially sent a copy on a regular basis as a courtesy to be extended to such a distinguished Tibetan. In any case, as was pointed out before, the Kalimpong publication had already begun to find its way beyond northern India's and southern Tibet's borders. Furthermore, by the late 1930s editorial writers elsewhere were starting to take note of Tharchin's paper.⁴⁹ A significant case in point is the lengthy and quite interesting article which had appeared in 1939 in the *North-China Herald*, Shanghai's important independent English-language weekly. This somewhat amusing though at times quite serious and perceptive article, entitled "News for the Lama," was signed simply "Tibetan."⁵⁰ It would do well to pause for a few moments to consider this article, for it provides insight as to how others were beginning to perceive Tharchin's publishing efforts and in addition reveals the extent to which the paper was being circulated far and wide. It also provides a few pertinent housekeeping details of the newspaper that might otherwise go unnoticed by less acute observers.

"Tharchin Baboo," the article began, "may or may not be a great editor, but he certainly makes every attempt to keep the Land of the Lamas informed on world events. Lamaland lies entirely at the Baboo's feet, as he encounters no competition whatever, his *Tibetan News* [the title this author chose to use in referring to the Kalimpong news journal] being the only medium of information between the lama and the outside world."⁵¹ "In the issue before the present one," the writer went on to explain, "world events were so hurried and so varied, that Tharchin had, perforce, to dismiss many of them in a few sentences."

which over the years since the Panchen's flight from Shigatse had further grown and developed organizationally in China and Mongolia, split up into two groups. One group eventually returned to Trashilhunpo with the Panchen Lama's body; the other removed themselves to Koko Nor. Nevertheless, these two groups went on to collaborate together on the search for the late Sixth Panchen Lama's successor reincarnation. Between them, three candidates were discovered by 1944 and put forward that year for the Lhasa government to consider. Whereupon the latter instructed that all three boys should be brought to Shigatse to undergo the traditional spiritual tests for the final discovery among them of the true reincarnation. The Sining search party, however, proceeded to ask the Tibetan government to confirm their particular candidate as the true one, after which, they declared, they would bring him to Tibet. Lhasa had refused this overture, which in time led the Nationalist Chinese government to support the Sining candidate. And when Sining ultimately fell to the Communists, this candidate was arbitrarily proclaimed by Chairman Mao to be the Seventh Panchen Lama and a few years later was formally installed by the Chinese upon the ecclesiastical throne at Trashilhunpo. See Dhondup, *The Water-Bird and Other Years*. 126, 129, 134-5. Thus ended all hope for the creation of a new center of Buddhism in Central Asia which Enders had fully reported the Sixth Dalai Lama had been bent on establishing in the Koko Nor/Sining region.

That others besides Enders, incidentally, have come to believe that this could have been true is reflected in the fact that the respected American scholar and professor of history at the University of North Carolina, Robert Rupen, did not think it a fanciful idea at all to assert that "after the Thirteenth Dalai Lama died in 1933, the Panchen Lama tried to get support for moving the focal point of Buddhism from Lhasa to Pailingmiao and Koko Nor," citing Enders as his source. Rupen, "Mongolia, Tibet and Buddhism . . .," *Canada-Mongolia Review* (Apr. 1979): 9.

In describing the format of the Kalimpong paper, "Tibetan" was hard-pressed to delineate its frequency. "It is somewhat difficult," he wrote, "to describe the Baboo's newspaper: it is not a daily, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or a bi-monthly." Indeed, in a moment of "cheerful candor," the editor-publisher, who constantly relished making a play on words, explained to the India correspondent for London's *World's Press News*: "I sometimes have to make [my paper] a once two-monthly."⁵² Nonetheless, continued Shanghai's "Tibetan," the *Tibetan News* "leaves Tharchin Baboo free both with regard to his time and his energy.... The morning issue can come out any morning;... and ... if one issue is missed, or five, then the next is crammed tight ..." For example, "Tibetan" tells of a recent copy of the *News* in which "Tharchin, like many other editors, seems to have rolled up his sleeves in earnest. Page one offers an editorial dealing with the Dalai Lama. The Baboo is a Christian, but his editorial deals with the view held by the Tibetans all over Lamaland, namely, that the world will only reach a state of tranquillity and stability when the incarnation of Tuden Jamtso [the late Dalai Lama XIII] sits securely on the Lama throne in Lhasa."

This same issue of the newspaper also covered international affairs in different countries, illustrating the discussion of each nation with a picture of its leader. At this point, though, "Tibetan" waxes serio-comically about the depiction of Neville Chamberlain, at that time the embattled British Prime Minister. "A Tibetan artist," he writes amusingly, "may be all right when he is drawing the sun, moon and stars, but he is all wrong when he tries to reproduce the face and figure" of Chamberlain. "True, the proverbial umbrella is not there, but Neville Chamberlain's face from the artist's point of view gives one the impression that it might rain at any moment." In the depiction of the Prime Minister, he "looks tired and weary and the burdens of state sit very heavily upon him"! "Tibetan," however, has no criticism to make of the photos of Japan's and Abyssinia's Emperors, which, he points out, are also published in this particular issue of the *Tibetan News*, accompanied as they are by events relating to both these nations that appeared in the news columns.

It was the opinion of "Tibetan," clearly stated, that "Tharchin Baboo faithfully mirrors world events as he hears them on the radio* and reads them in the daily press." His aim, the Shanghai observer went on to say, was to keep Tibetans everywhere "informed as to the progress of the history of the world.... In Tachienlu [a border city in a Chinese-controlled province of far distant eastern Tibet] we find incarnations, *drabas*⁵³ and others quite keen to read this Tibetan newspaper, and in the interior, Tharchin's *Tibetan News* is the only available means of knowing what is going on in the world." Those fortunate to receive the newspaper will, he adds, "spend hours on one copy of the *Tibetan News*."

"Tibetan" gives high marks to Tharchin for the literary and erudite qualities of the Kalimpong publication. He praises the editor with these words: "Tharchin Baboo makes every attempt to keep up a high literary standard in the *Tibetan News*.... He writes a leader with every issue and highly educated lamas on the border here have been impressed with his erudition."

* Even some 40 years later Tharchin was still relying on the radio for gathering news for the *Tibet Mirror*. A visitor in his home for two weeks in 1964 took note, retrospectively, of this feature of his past daily life: "Because of the reporting that he needed for his newspaper, the radio would run day and night. When Mrs. Tharchin would awaken and notice that her husband slept, she would turn it off." Margaret Urban. *Jesus unter Tibetern*. 33.

“Tibetan” is likewise impressed with the wide dissemination enjoyed by Tharchin’s newspaper, despite obvious obstacles that would normally impede its penetration to distant places. “Circulation,” he observes, “must present great difficulties in the Land of the Lamas where post offices are almost unknown.” How Tharchin, he wonders, “gets the *Tibetan News* into Litang, Kanze, Derge, Dzochon and other lamaseries throughout Sikang [Province] must remain somewhat of a mystery.* There is no doubt, however, about the *News* being widely circulated, as the paper is now fairly well known.” The paper, the Shanghai writer adds, “can be sent by the Tibetan post as far as Lhasa⁵⁴ and it may be that the Baboo has some distributing agency there.” His “agency,” it should be here explained, was initially simply a growing list of faithful friends whom Gergan Tharchin could rely upon to disseminate farther afield the additional copies he would systematically send to the Tibetan capital. As will be learned later in the present narrative, however, the publisher felt compelled to engage a prominent resident of Lhasa now and then to serve as his distributing agent for the *Tibet Mirror*. In fact, there would come a time when the Babu would even have *two* agents to rely on at the Tibetan capital for distribution of his newspaper as well as personnel at the British Indian Mission. And in every major town along the main trail between Kalimpong and Lhasa Tharchin would have either the postmaster or another individual living there handle the task of disseminating his paper. (For each issue of the newspaper, incidentally, the total run produced would remain in the range of 500 copies right on through the war years that lay just ahead.) The newspaper’s most distant subscribers by 1950, incidentally, were situated along the Mongolian trade route at Amdo, and along the East Tibet-Assam border at Sadiya. “Copies sent to these places,” wrote one foreign correspondent in India as explained to him by Tharchin himself, “might take four to six months to arrive as all transport was either by mule-pony caravans or by foot porters over hilly, difficult country.” Moreover, “requests for back copies” of the news journal “from distant monasteries” might require as long as four months to effect their deliveries.^{54a}

The *North-China Herald* writer’s final comments about Tharchin’s publication addressed the matter of subscription costs and how they might be paid. He noted that the Baboo charged only five rupees as the annual subscription. But then he asked: “How is a *draba* living somewhere in the heart of Asia going to pay this?” By which he meant, how was payment to be forwarded to the founder-editor, and in what form? “Yak butter all over Lamaland,” the correspondent observed, “is always a convenient means of barter; but Tharchin lives in Kalimpong and a subscriber may live in Gada, 1000 miles away; and that seems a long distance to send a consignment of evil-smelling rancid yak butter”! It is highly interesting to note what conclusion “Tibetan” himself arrives at: “the only solution we can come to is that the editor, being a Tibetan Christian, may run his paper on purely idealistic lines, very

* “Considering the rustic nature of Tibet’s postal system,” Tharchin’s *Tibet Mirror*, writes Michael Goodman, was likely conveyed to these and other provincial outposts “by traders or religious pilgrims.” *The Last Dalai Lama*, 110. In fact, distribution of the paper, so colorfully explained by the India correspondent of London’s *World’s Press News*, “is by mule trains” which literally “pass by the [Kalimpong] office door” of the *Tibet Mirror* “on their four weeks trek over the Himalayas to Lhasa” and from where “the bulk of the 300 copies [sent there] were redistributed” elsewhere within Tibet. See “Its Distribution Route Is by Mule over the Himalayas,” *WPN*, 25 May 1950, p. 13.

graciously believing that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Or he may be a man of independent means and run the *Tibetan News* largely as a philanthropic adventure.” “Tibetan” was not far from the mark on both counts (Christian idealism and philanthropic motivation); although the correspondent’s surmise that Tharchin might be a man of independent means was totally off the mark! Indeed, writing some three years later, Tharchin would himself give the lie to such a notion as well as describe further the same problems “Tibetan” had remarked upon of funding and distributing his news organ during the early years of its existence:

I first started with 14 subscribers and then it went up to 200, but I did not get the [subscription] payments properly. In consequence, I had to send them almost free. There were no helpers inasmuch as I had to bear all the cost myself, though the Mission under which I serve had been kind enough to permit me to do the newspaper work along with the Mission work. I could not run the paper smoothly due to two main reasons: Firstly, most of the papers I sent did not reach their destination, they having been lost on the way through lack of proper Postal arrangements and also the lack of a Tibetan Postal system of remittance. Secondly, only irregular issues of my paper [were produced] because of a lack of funds. Later on, I issued 400 copies of 8-pages each, most of them free.⁵⁵



Before concluding this discussion on the position and influence which the *Tibet Mirror* increasingly came to have in relation to various facets of Tibetan affairs, mention ought to be made of one other person who expressed appreciation for Gergan Tharchin’s remarkable news publication. This was the Austrian author of the celebrated book *Seven Years in Tibet*, Heinrich Harrer. In an obvious reference to Tharchin’s journal, Harrer tells of an incident that occurred in Lhasa while he and his fellow wayfarer, Peter Aufschnaiter, were waiting in March of 1946 to be granted asylum by the Tibetan government under the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. And in so recording this incident, the Austrian revealed still further the degree to which by that time the *Tibet Mirror* was finding its way even more widely beyond just the territory of the Snowy Land. Wrote Harrer:

One day [our friend and former host] Thangme brought us a newspaper in Tibetan and showed us an article about ourselves, which related in a very friendly spirit how we had burst our way through the mountain barriers and reached Lhasa; and how we were now begging for the protection of this pious, neutral country. We thought that these friendly lines could only have a favorable influence on public opinion and hoped they might lend some support to our petition. It is true that the journal in question would have been of little account in Europe. It appeared once a month and was published at Kalimpong in India. Its circulation did not exceed five hundred copies, but it was read rather extensively in Lhasa in certain circles, and individual numbers were sent to Tibetologists throughout the world.⁵⁶

The reader will be interested to know that Harrer and his companion did ultimately receive official asylum to remain in Lhasa, despite an attempt by British Indian authorities to have them expelled. They had arrived in the Tibetan capital at about the time when Hugh Richardson, the last British representative in Lhasa, had returned there following a six-year

absence from Tibet. Upon receiving instructions from his superiors in India to have the two Austrians sent back to India, Richardson discreetly inquired about them and learned that they were “well-liked,” and so he “let the matter drop.” His excuse to New Delhi was that because there was no “extradition treaty” between the two countries, he could not have them expelled.⁵⁷

As it turned out, the two escapees from the British concentration camp at Dehra Dun would remain in Lhasa until late 1950, when Harrer withdrew to Kalimpong in the face of the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet that even forced His Holiness to retreat to Yatung in southern Tibet. Harrer was of course to meet the newspaper editor who had unknowingly befriended the Austrian at his time of urgent need by means of his friendly article. According to Tharchin’s son, the two of them, in fact, came to know each other well during the many months of Harrer’s stay at Kalimpong; and hence there is little doubt that he made a point of extending his personal thanks to the newspaper publisher for his favorable report in the *Tibet Mirror* on behalf of the two Austrian wayfarers.*

* It is unfortunate that in an otherwise accurate presentation of events, the screenwriter of the 1997 Hollywood film version of Harrer’s classic travel epic, directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud and using the same title as that of the book, felt it necessary to indulge in artistic license of the worst kind when handling the concluding chronology of events surrounding Harrer’s exit from Lhasa. In the present writer’s opinion it is unforgivable what this film production did in so grossly straying from historical fact in an apparent attempt to give the film account of the Austrian’s tale a more dramatic finish. Here are just some of the most glaring misrepresentations of fact and timing.

(a) No makeshift airstrip was ever created at the Tibetan capital by the Tibetans in 1950 to accommodate the arrival of any plane from China, or from any other country for that matter, since religious taboo would have made it unthinkable in still “sovereign” Buddhist Tibet to have done so. This is because such an act would have contributed to the violation of the sanctity and preeminence of the land’s “god-king,” the Dalai Lama, in that it would have placed other human beings (the aircraft’s crew and passengers) at a higher elevation than he. Only after Red China had become fully entrenched in its occupation of Tibet and could therefore dictate its wishes with impunity was there ever an airfield constructed and utilized at the Tibetan capital.

(b) The future Chinese overlord of Tibet, accurately identified in the film by name as General Chang Ching-wu, never made—along with two other fellow generals—a plane trip to Lhasa in 1950 or 1951 to have talks with Tibetan leaders and an audience with the Dalai Lama as a supposed part of Peking’s attempt to intimidate the Tibetan government into submission; in fact, the very first encounter between the Dalai Lama and General Chang did not occur till July 1951 and not at Lhasa but at Yatung in south central Tibet; and the General and his entourage traveled there not by *plane* but by jeep and mule caravan from Kalimpong! (See Volume III, Chapter 24 of the present work for the details.)

(c) Both Harrer and the youthful “god-king” had departed Lhasa in November-December 1950 bound, respectively, for Kalimpong and Yatung; and therefore they could not have been in the Tibetan capital at the time of the first influx of Chinese troops into Lhasa: an event that did not occur till August 1951; yet the film places Red soldiers, Harrer and His Holiness together in the Tibetan capital from the end of 1950 or early 1951 onwards.

(d) It was not, as the film version makes it out to be, that the Secretary of the five-member ruling *Kashag* or Cabinet was Ngabo Ngawang Jigme. That lesser post was occupied by someone else. Ngabo, on the other hand, who many Tibetans feel did indeed conduct himself in a traitorous fashion with the Chinese (though later in East Tibet and at Peking, and not initially in Lhasa as the film would have it), was a very highly-placed aristocratic Tibetan who, far from being the *Kashag Secretary*, was himself a *member* of that elite body of counselors to the Regent. It was Ngabo’s misfortune to have had the rotation lot among the *Kashag* membership fall upon his shoulders in the late 1940s to assume the Governorship of Tibet’s incorrigibly independent-minded eastern province of Kham and to have been dispatched to that province’s strategic center of Chamdo where it had been he who in early October 1950 had surrendered the 8500 Tibetan troops to, and had himself been taken prisoner by, the dreaded People’s Liberation Army of Communist China. He had then been ordered by the Dalai Lama’s government to leave Chamdo—with the PLA’s agreement—for Peking *directly*. There he, as head of the Tibetan



In brief, then, it is quite plain that Gergan Tharchin's humble newspaper had begun to assert itself and to make its own impact on the larger world's opinion around him.⁵⁸ Furthermore, as for his blood brethren's appreciation of the newspaper in general, the publisher—in a moment of justifiable pride—was heard to declare decades later that “the *Mirror* is treasured by all Tibetans.”⁵⁹

delegation which had been dispatched in late 1950 from Lhasa to Chamdo and on then to Peking, would become the co-leader with Yapshi Sey, the Dalai Lama's brother-in-law, of the combined delegations—the one from Lhasa-Chamdo and the one led by Yapshi Sey and sent in early 1951 from Yatung-Kalimpong—to “negotiate” and later—against their will—to forcibly sign the infamous Seventeen-Point Agreement between Red China and Tibet on 23 May 1951.

(e) And thus Ngabo could not possibly have been in Lhasa at the time when, according to the film, Harrer had personally and physically vented his displeasure and hot anger upon the Tibetan traitor, since not only was Ngabo no longer there but also the Austrian had himself already left Lhasa in late 1950 for Kalimpong in nearby India where he would mark time so as to be able to witness, close by, the outcome for Tibet of the Sino-Tibetan “negotiations” before his ultimate return to his European homeland in 1952.

In the light of these misrepresentations, it is no wonder that Beijing, and justifiably so in certain respects, lashed out at the film. Quoting a Tibetan researcher at the China Tibetology Center, Dotar by name, the official Xinhua news agency reported on 17 December 1997 that the researcher termed the movie “cheap stuff” that is based on “invented stories.” Claiming, and rightly so, that the film “distorts historical events,” Dotar added that “the ignorance of the movie makers is shocking. They seem to try to cheat their audience.” The present writer for one felt cheated indeed. See “China Hits Out at Hollywood over ‘Cheap’ Tibet Film,” *Kathmandu Post*, 18 Dec. 1997, p. 3.

In sharp contrast to this film of distortion, Director Martin Scorsese, and his screenwriter Melissa Matthiesen, are to be commended for their extremely accurate portrayal of the life of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama as presented in their Hollywood film *Kundun* that was released to the American public on 25 December 1997. To this present writer's knowledge, there was but one minor departure from historical chronology in *Kundun* and no instance, of which he was aware after viewing the movie twice, of any distortion of essential fact or event throughout the entire film.

On the other hand, *Seven Years in Tibet* screenwriter Becky Johnston is to be faulted greatly for her faithless adherence to the facts of history, which did not need to be perpetrated at all in order for the story to have a dramatic conclusion. For the latter was there already in Harrer's book! Furthermore, the present writer could not agree more with Jamyang Norbu's chief criticism of the movie as a whole. Although happily acknowledging that *Seven Years in Tibet* stands as the first feature film that has represented Tibet “as a real place,” he went on to say that his main objection to the movie was that, unlike the book, it reduces Tibet to mere background for the personal drama of a white man. Musing that he believed it would not be unfair to observe that the Harrer character in the film occupies himself most of his seven years in the land engaged in “ostentatious soul-searching and grief for the son he has abandoned in Austria,” Norbu perceptively noticed that “the sense of wonder and high adventure that the book conveyed is sacrificed to this overwrought and essentially unconvincing emotional drama.” Norbu, “Tibet in Film. Fiction and Fantasy of the West,” *TR* (Jan. 1998):22

The film, incidentally, did not gloss over the fact of a Nazi past in the life of Heinrich Harrer in the days when he was in his early to mid-twenties back in Austria. Having been confronted by European press investigation which indisputably revealed the Austrian's past Nazi connections, Director Annaud at the last moment hastily inserted into the script at three or four places clear indications to this effect in scenes, narration and dialogue. Though acknowledging to the press prior to the film's release that he had joined the Nazi party at the time of Germany's occupation of Austria in 1938, Harrer declared he had done so only because he would have had no chance to fulfill his youthful dream of joining a government-financed Himalaya mountain-climbing expedition and that he had never carried out any activities for the Nazis. Indeed, asserts the *Tibetan Review*, “there is nothing on

record to show that he had taken part in or committed any Nazi atrocities." Moreover, in defense of the Austrian mountain climber-explorer, Annaud, though having suspected when making the film that Harrer had had some sort of Nazi connection prior to World War Two, added nonetheless that following the War, "he [has] devoted his life to nonviolence, human rights and racial equality." Moreover, the well-known Nazi hunter, the German Jew Simon Wiesenthal, has likewise exonerated Harrer, declaring that the Austrian had never been involved in politics and was guilty of no wrongdoing. To the Austria Press Agency Harrer had himself remarked that "from today's view the former [Nazi] party and SS membership is an extremely unpleasant thing"; and had further said, in a subsequent interview given at his Austrian home in Huttenberg, that his involvement with the Party and the SS had been "a stupid mistake," an "ideological error" and "one of the aberrations in my life, maybe the biggest"; but he added that he had a "clear conscience." See *TR* (July 1997):12-13 and (Aug. 1997):10-11.

C H A P T E R 18

Second Visit to Tibet: the Notovitch Hoax Unmasked, Christian Evangelism at Lhasa, and an Audience with Dalai Lama XIII

There are some that ... would pervert the gospel of Christ....

Add thou not unto [God's] words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

Galatians 1:7, Proverbs 30:6

I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Romans 1:16

IN 1927 GERGAN THARCHIN availed himself of another opportunity to visit the city of Lhasa. On this occasion he accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Norman Odling and Mrs. George Sherriff.¹ This entourage, which departed Kalimpong in late August, went as far as Gyantse together. Tharchin and his wife, however, shortly after their arrival at Gyantse, proceeded farther as they were desirous of meeting his mother-in-law and other relatives in Lhasa. "In 1927," he would write years afterwards, "I went to Lhasa to see my dear wife's mother and relatives ...". Moreover, Tharchin entertained great hopes of meeting His Holiness the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and other high-ranking Tibetan officials. According to news he included in a letter which he would subsequently send from the Tibetan capital to his friend and superior in the Scots Mission at Kalimpong, the Rev. John Graham, Tharchin and his wife left Gyantse on the 9th of September and arrived at Lhasa on the 14th, the journey taking but six days. These two would remain at the capital for quite some time, not returning to Kalimpong till March of 1928. In all, the Tharchins would be away from the hill station for nearly seven months.

In the same letter to Rev. Graham, which was the first of a series the Tibetan would forward to his valued missionary colleague, Tharchin briefly recounted the opportunity he had on the journey to share Christ with the Tibetans who served as boatmen on one of the familiar coracles (*kowa* in Tibetan) which habitually plied the waters of Tibet's main waterway, the river Tsangpo (known also elsewhere along its course as the Brahmaputra). These traditional Tibetan boats, incidentally, primitive but extremely practical, were constructed from a number of yak hides that were sewn together and stretched over a willow frame. Although humans were ferried inside the coracles, the horses and ponies had to swim alongside but were held in check by means of their reins from inside the boats. Though this could be a tricky operation, the boatmen were quite skilled in handling the animals. The Tsangpo's strong currents, of course, would invariably pull the coracles downstream, which thus meant that the boatmen, once depositing their passengers on the other side of the river, would have to carry their craft back upstream; nevertheless, due to their lightness, this was not a difficult task.

Now in referencing his ferry experience on the river, Tharchin's brief account was tinged with the excitement of an evangelist: "On our way we came about twenty miles by

boat on the river Brahmaputra. We had very good weather and I had long talks with the boatmen, to whom I told the story of our Lord Jesus on the Sea of Galilee and how He stopped the tempest after being awakened by His disciples. Oh! they were very much interested to hear the story.”



Just here would be an appropriate place to indicate to the reader just how fortunate and, it may justifiably be said, just how unique, in one important respect, it was for Gergan Dorje Tharchin—a stalwart servant of the Christian God—to have gained access repeatedly into the very heart of the Land of Buddhist Monks and Monasteries, where with care and wisdom he could and did spread the message of Christ in an unhindered way as opportunities presented themselves to him (the most interesting of which are recounted later in the present chapter). Indeed, it had clearly become obvious to those around him in Kalimpong that “when so many other people—both foreigners and Indians—could not enter Tibet, Tharchin had somehow obtained a kind of special permission to travel even as far as to the Tibetan capital”; and consequently, added the Christian Babu’s Kalimpong friend D. K. Khaling, “he had much opportunity to spread the gospel of Christ there.”² This quite singular development in Tharchin’s life is all the more remarkable; for it must be understood and appreciated, as Alex McKay has most recently pointed out, that a “ban on [Christian] missionaries entering Tibet [had] remained in force throughout the 1904-47 period, and none of them ever reached central Tibet.” As a matter of fact, following the Younghusband diplomatic and military expedition to Lhasa in 1903-4, there had been frequent requests by Christian missionaries to be granted permission to enter Tibet and carry on gospel evangelism there; a case in point was the petition of missionary Annie Taylor, described and discussed just two chapters earlier; but “the imperial government” of British India, notes McKay, “refused them all.” As was made clear in Chapter 2 of the present narrative’s first volume, the Indian government of that day was especially concerned about Christian missionaries, it having realized early on in its relationship with Tibet that Tibetan authorities were extremely opposed to their entry. “Buddhism was at the heart of the Tibetan socio-political system,” explains McKay, “and the Tibetans regarded the missionaries as a direct threat to their historical culture.” Accordingly, the British took every precaution to preclude even the slightest intrusion of Christianity into that culture; to the point, even, reports McKay, of having disallowed the British and Foreign Bible Society from presenting a copy of the New Testament to the Panchen Lama during the latter’s visit to India in 1905-6!

It was quite evident to the British Indian authorities, of course, that Gergan Tharchin was a strong adherent of the Christian faith (see earlier at the end of Chapter 14 for the details). But because they recognized in him, as stated about others, an “experienced ‘*bona fide*’ traveler of ‘temper and discretion’,” and one who was quite familiar with the Tibetan language and customs, Tharchin was permitted to cross into and travel up to the very heart of Tibet. As will soon be learned, moreover, because of his unusual connections not only with British

authorities but likewise with key government officials at Lhasa, the Indian government came to view Tharchin as one who could and would, in McKay's words about other desirable travelers to Tibet, "advance British interests." Furthermore, it must not be overlooked that because the Indo-Tibetan *babu* constituted a valuable source of intelligence to the British imperial government, it was not about to deny him entry into the land of his forefathers unless his Christian conduct there ever proved to be an embarrassment to the British, if not an affront to the Buddhist Tibetans. It can be stated here, however, that the latter situation would never arise;* and consequently, the same could be said with regard to Tharchin Babu as was said by the British about other acceptable travelers who were permitted to enter Tibet as a way of benefiting British interests; namely, that the "systematic acquisition of intelligence would receive all possible encouragement."³

*

As expected the Tharchins put themselves up at the mother-in-law's home. "By the grace of our Lord Jesus we arrived here safely," began Tharchin's letter to Graham. "We were very glad to be in Lhasa, and my wife's mother and sister were also very glad to meet us." Indeed, everyone was very happy about this family reunion after a separation of four years. There were tears of joy and happiness at the first meeting of the near relatives and loved ones. Many gifts and presents had been carried from India to be offered to the mother-in-law, relatives and friends. Mrs. Tharchin had two younger sisters who were happy to meet their eldest sister "Acha" after such a long time away. Her second sister's son, Ringzin Wangpo,⁴ was also there inasmuch as he preferred to live with his grandmother "Mola" all the time. It was truly a blessed and joyful family reunion, one that was charged with deep emotion. Then, too, there were occasions for the Tharchins to share their Christian faith with these many relatives. For in that same first letter to Graham from Lhasa Tharchin made a point of relating the following: "The mother is very much astonished with my wife as when [before our marriage] she was here she used to drink and smoke, but now she does not. And so, she [my wife's mother] asked her how she could do so: then she told her mother that 'my Lord gave me the power and He changed me,' and so, on she testifies and sings hymns, and they laugh very much when they hear the tunes."

* Apropos of this, one latter-day prominent Christian in Kalimpong, a Nepali, had on one occasion put the following question to his older friend, Babu Tharchin: the latter known far and wide for his fearlessness in preaching the Christian message that "Christ is Lord" to all ethnic peoples everywhere. Why is it, the Nepali had asked his Tibetan friend, that he had not been publicly bolder when speaking this same message in Tibet and especially while at Lhasa? To which the Christian *babu* had responded by asking his inquirer if he knew what would have been the consequence had he attempted to spread the gospel *that way* within the Forbidden Land? The questioner not knowing the dire truth of the matter, Tharchin proceeded to describe for him in quite graphic detail a particular kind of very cruel punishment—one ending in death, to be sure—which might have been meted out upon him had he followed a far bolder *modus operandi* than the one he had chosen to adopt. Instead, explained Tharchin, he had privately shared his faith with wisdom and with care whenever he was at the Tibetan capital. Interview with P.R. Pradhan, Jan. 1995.



Tharchin was particularly happy to be in Lhasa again, as he expected to see several Tibetan officials as well as old friends and acquaintances, all of whom in the past months and years had received and read his Tibetan newspaper. Indeed, shortly after his arrival, reported Tharchin in his initial letter to Graham, "I paid my respects to all the Tibetan high officials and they were very glad to see me again in Lhasa and were very kind to me." He went on to indicate to Rev. Graham how his interaction with these officials created for him an incredibly busy schedule from the very outset of his visit to the Tibetan capital. "I had no time to stay at home," Tharchin explained, "every officer sending servants; sometimes two, but even three, will come at a time to call me [to their masters' homes], and I go with the man who comes first, and then I have to stay the whole day" with that official, adding, significantly, that by this means "I get very good opportunities" to share the Christian message. In fact, he wrote years later, "I got good opportunity to preach [i.e., present or share] the gospel to high officials, as I knew them before and through my paper."⁵ Some of these same individuals would even come themselves personally to the newspaper publisher's Lhasa residence to pay their respects to him because they recognized and appreciated the original and lasting contribution of his newspaper to the people of Tibet. Other individuals, however, of higher rank and influence, requested the Kalimpong publisher to call on them at their homes that they too might tender their thanks to him for his publishing efforts on behalf of Tibet and discuss a wide range of other topics with the Babu.

One such individual was Tsarong Shape, whose significant talks with Tharchin at this time were touched upon in the previous chapter. The humble Tibetan from Poo mentioned in his letter to Graham how this powerful and influential official "called me again, and I was the whole day with him," after which "I came back at 9 p.m.," both of them, added Tharchin, having "had a very good time." It was on this occasion, incidentally, that the Babu had received the startling but heartwarming comment from the lips of Tsarong, told of in the preceding chapter, that "Tibet may become civilized through your newspaper."⁶

There was another important individual whom the Kalimpong publisher saw at Lhasa. "When we arrived here," wrote Tharchin to Graham, "Rai Bahadur Norbhu Dhondup [1884-1944] was here and I met him, and he was very kind to me. Yesterday he left for Gyantse."[†]

* Tharchin never forgot this comment of Tsarong's. That it had made a lasting impression upon the Babu is confirmed by the fact that he paraphrased it in a letter he wrote some 22 years later when describing to a friend what he had wanted to do for Tibet through his newspaper and press. He wrote as follows: "Up to now I am running the press at a loss, but if I can develop it [further] there is a great prospect for the future, as Tibet is a virgin country and it is gradually developing. I am trying to open their eyes, and the time may come very soon that Tibet will develop along the line of civilization." Tharchin to Joseph V. Nunes, Kalimpong, 21 Sept. 1949. ThPaK.

† Not long after Norbhu Dhondup had left, however, Tharchin became fearful and distrustful of him. By this time the Tibetan publisher had commenced serving as voluntary intelligence agent for the British Government of India as the information gathered might relate to Tibet and Tibetans; and when on this very visit to Lhasa he had conveyed through the Rai Bahadur some sensitive photographs to the Political Officer for Tibet, Colonel Bailey, the latter, reported Tharchin in a letter to Sir Charles Bell, had "asked him [Rai Bahadur] to give me some present [i.e., a remuneration for his services], but I never got it." As a consequence, wrote Tharchin in the same letter, "I

This gentleman was by this time well on his way towards achieving a brilliant career both in India and Tibet, as his titles of Rai Bahadur and Dzasa, respectively, would indicate. He was a Tibetan who had been born in Kalimpong, and had commenced his association with the British when he served as a junior transport clerk with Colonel Younghusband on the latter's Mission to Lhasa in 1904. Because he demonstrated "such a flair for political and Tibetan affairs," he was "specially selected to become a clerk in the Indian political service." So gifted was Norbhu with an intuitive perception of things Tibetan that his fellow officers would in time offer the following observation about him: "He has such an intuitive knowledge of Tibetan affairs and people that his conclusions, however fantastic they may appear, are practically always right." He would go on "from strength to strength" and later become the personal assistant to the Political Officer for Tibet, Sir Basil Gould, be appointed British Trade Agent at Yatung, and even serve during the mid-1930s as the In-Charge of the British Mission at the Tibetan capital. By this time Norbhu had become so trusted a frontier officer "insider" by the British that he was treated with appropriate honors reserved for the *British* "politicals." For example, subsequent to his taking up the post of Lhasa Mission Head, this Indo-Tibetan would now be shown all the ceremony deemed necessary "to uphold the prestige of a British officer"; for upon his arrival one time at Gyantse from Lhasa, Trade Agent Captain Saker rode out with 25 troops to escort the Rai Bahadur into the Agency compound! All told, Norbhu would visit the Tibetan capital some fifteen times prior to the creation of the British Mission there in 1936.

Lieutenant General Sir Philip Neame, who served as a military adviser on the team of a special politico-military Mission of the British Indian government to Lhasa in 1936, and whose chief interpreter would be the Rai Bahadur, was moved to describe Norbhu Dhondup in the following laudatory terms:

... he has a deep and thorough knowledge of Tibetan affairs and a wise judgment, practically on instinct, as to the reactions of the Tibetan government to any given matter. He gives the most excellent advice, for he will, unlike some Orientals, tell what he really thinks, instead of what he thinks you would like. He has a keen sense of humor, and gets on well with every class of person he meets, European or Oriental. He has been on every Mission to Lhasa and ... the Indian government has made him a Rai Bahadur.

So impressed was the Tibetan government by his abilities that it would soon reward him with an honorary Dzasa of Tibet. Moreover, he would become a trusted confidant of the Tibetan *Kashag* itself. "Although he was an Indian Tibetan," observed Tsewang Y. Pemba, "he was a complete Lhasa Tibetan." Indeed, noted Pemba, this "small dark gentleman, with a long turquoise earring," wore "a head knot denoting his aristocratic rank." There will be occasion later in the present narrative to make further reference to this extraordinary public servant.⁷

was afraid of Rai Bahadur and did not trust him." This distrust would only be dispelled some ten years later when Tharchin would again be in Lhasa, this time with the American, Theos Bernard. It was after this latest Lhasa stay in 1937 that the Tibetan publisher wrote the letter to Sir Charles just now quoted from. After describing to Bell what had happened in 1927, Tharchin then remarked: "Anyhow, I am quite happy [with the Rai Bahadur, because] this time [in 1937] he was in Lhasa and was very good to me." Tharchin to Bell, Kalimpong, 25 December 1937, Bell Papers. (For more details surrounding the incident with the photographs, see the opening pages of Chapter 24 in the final volume of the present work.)



Prior to his departure from Kalimpong for the Tibetan capital, Tharchin had already written a letter requesting an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In the application he indicated his deep desire to pay his respects to His Holiness personally. He also mentioned that in Lhasa he would be staying with his mother-in-law whose address was likewise included. His several letters to Rev. Graham from the Tibetan capital shed more light on the intricacies of the protocol that was required to be followed for the visitor from Kalimpong to obtain the coveted audience with the Grand Lama of Tibetan Buddhism. For example, in his letter of 25 October, he wrote: "Yesterday I got two letters from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, but they were only replies to my letters from Kalimpong; he is very pleased with my letters and he knows that I am here. I hope now I shall soon get the opportunity to pay my respects," for earlier, on the 4th of October, Tharchin had applied more formally for the audience, and by the 17th he had received a reply from the Office of His Holiness to the effect, he wrote, that "I will get the opportunity, but the date for it is not mentioned." Nevertheless, added Tharchin, "the Officers told me that 'You may be called any day, [and thus] it is better for you not to go far' away from the capital; "so I am waiting for the date."⁸ As it happened, however, Gergan Tharchin would have to wait patiently for the long hoped-for summons two months more from the date of the initial application made by him in Lhasa! Such did the slow wheels of ecclesiastical officialdom turn in those days.



During his stay in the capital Tharchin applied himself diligently in learning about Tibetan literature from the noted scholars there. Especially did he devote his time and energy to the study of the general characteristics and special peculiarities of Tibetan poetry and grammar. He read scientific works available in the fields of prose and poetry, rhetoric and prosody. The textbook on poetry which he thoroughly mastered is still in his personal library. It might now cost over Rs. 1000/-. Moreover, this maturing student of Tibetan literary culture benefited greatly from his growing circle of intellectual friends and acquaintances at Lhasa, for they either gave or loaned him a number of prized works in Tibetan covering a variety of subjects. From his letter to Graham dated 14 October 1927, for instance, it is learned that he had obtained "very interesting Tibetan [works] of ancient history from a Tibetan Officer," and Tharchin added with a tinge of satisfaction, "I am copying them." At the same time, he went on, "Tsarong Shape has lent me an interesting book on the history of Tibet; he has asked me to read it as it will help me, he says, for my newspapers."⁹ It was most likely on this lengthy visit to Lhasa, incidentally, that Tharchin (as discussed earlier in Volume I, Chapter 2) received the title of Gergan (*Gyegyen* in Tibetan), which means Teacher.



Now according to Sadhu Sundar Singh traveling in 1912, some twenty-five years before that, a Russian by the name of Nicholas Notovitch had written that at one of the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist temples he had received into his hands a certain book in Tibetan translation whose pages had stated that Jesus (or Issa) had gone to India and Tibet. (And by Tibet here, both the Russian and Sundar Singh had Little or Ladakhi- or Indo-Tibet in mind rather than Tibet proper itself, even though the subtitle to the Russian's book about his discovery of the so-called Unknown Life of Christ had been deceptively worded: "From an Ancient Manuscript, Recently Discovered in a Buddhist Monastery in Thibet"!)^{*} On a visit in 1912 to one of the monasteries of Indian Tibet in or around the town of Kanum (which is a long day's march down the river Sotlej from Poo), the Sadhu had inquired of the Head Lama if there were any such book there. To which the Lama had sternly replied that "there [was] no such book in any of our libraries," and that ever since the death centuries before of a converted Christian Tibetan king, Christians had been "banished from the country and ... have no permission to come here." Tharchin had of course read the account of this incident, and its mention of Notovitch and his Life of Jesus, in the Sadhu's little Urdu volume on his early travels published in 1915 entitled *A Collection of Incidents*, and had made careful note of the details.[†]¹⁰

What Tharchin's good friend had not been aware of was that a great controversy had been spawned by the publication of a book by Notovitch nearly two decades earlier which told of Jesus' supposed travels to the East. Unknown as well to Sundar Singh (and apparently to Tharchin, too), but definitely known by 1912 to a number of scholars and critics both East and West, the Russian had almost universally been accused of having committed a grievous fraud upon his readers with the sensational book's initial publication in 1894 at Paris entitled, *La vie inconnue de Jésus-Christ*. Indeed, it came to be viewed as a grand hoax perpetrated by this European journalist upon an unsuspecting public whose appetite in those days for accounts about the "mysterious East" was insatiable. Furthermore, it would appear that the observation of a more recent critic of Notovitch's presumed Gospel discovery was as true—

^{*} "The aura that came to surround the idea of travel in Tibet," writes Alex McKay, "meant that Europeans began to make liberal use of the term 'Tibet' to include the entire Tibetan cultural world, in order to claim distinction of having visited the 'forbidden land.' In particular, they frequently referred to Ladakh as Tibet or 'Little Tibet,' and there are numerous travel accounts from the late nineteenth century whose titles suggest that the author visited Tibet, whereas in fact their travels were limited to Ladakh. Others simply claimed to have been to Tibet when they had not, and some went as far as to profess to have visited Lhasa. Such a claim might not have been easily disproved, but those who did so gave themselves away with obvious fantasies." McKay, "Tibet: the Myth of Isolation," in P. v.d. Velde and A. McKay, eds., *New Developments in Asian Studies*, 306-7.

[†] It will be recalled from Volume I, Chapter 11 of the present narrative that earlier in 1927 while at Darjeeling on a business trip Tharchin had been visited at his hotel by a prominent local Catholic Jesuit priest, Fr. Henry Hosten. Upon inquiring of Tharchin about the Sadhu's Urdu book he had asked if he could borrow it. Not having thoroughly read the volume himself, the Tibetan had politely refused to give it up to the Jesuit even temporarily. This incident had no doubt prompted Tharchin to read his friend Sundar's small tome of travels once again; and thus by the time later that same year when he left for Lhasa the reported remarkable find by Notovitch was still quite fresh in his mind as he subsequently attempted while at the Tibetan capital to resolve one way or the other the Russian's claim that in one of the Lhasan gompa archives could be found the Pali original on the Life of Issa and his journey to the East.

and perhaps even more so—in the late nineteenth century as at any other time in history since the days of Christ: that “the idea of the unknown Jesus manuscript seems to lie deep in our unconscious, and many of us seem to hope or fear that such a manuscript might appear.”¹¹ In general, then, what follows in the next few paragraphs are the main elements comprising the Russian’s claims regarding his supposed manuscript discovery in 1887, as culled from the text of the Issa tale itself, from the “Résumé” and travel narrative sections of his book published in English as *The Unknown Life of [Jesus] Christ* (the London edition of 1895), and from his lengthy note of defense against his early critics which appeared under the heading, “To the Publishers,” in this same British edition of the *Unknown Life*.

According to the Russian, the so-called Life of Issa (as Jesus is reputedly known in much of Central and South Asia) had been written down within three to four years after Christ’s crucifixion. This recorded narrative had been based upon accounts brought back to India in the same year of Jesus’ death by a number of Indian Hindu merchants returning from their trading in Palestine where they had witnessed the horrendous event at Jerusalem. Some of those who heard these merchant reports, wrote Notovitch, were “Buddhists belonging to the sect of the Buddha Gautama” who soon thereafter became “the chroniclers” in the Pali language of the Issa story by recalling and recording what they had heard.

But then, some two hundred years after Christ’s death, successor Buddhist scribes began to carry from India to Ladakh, via Magadha (the Indian locale of Buddha’s birth) and adjacent Nepal, these same Pali manuscripts on the Life of Issa and had apparently even continued on with further “compilation” of this tale in Magadha-Nepal. At least this was what the Russian’s Ladakhi Lama-informants with whom he supposedly had conversed had intimated to him while on his journey through Little Tibet in 1887. Indeed, after declaring to Notovitch that Issa’s “name and his acts are recorded in our sacred writings,” one such Lama, who was the Russian’s host at one of the Ladakhi gompas he had presumably visited, is recorded as having said to the visitor that the “compilation” of “the principal scrolls” had been “effected in India and Nepal at different epochs, proportional to the events . . .” Moreover, much of this information was apparently confirmed to Notovitch by the Chief Lama of the prestigious monastery the traveler had visited at Hemis located near the Ladakhi capital of Leh. For in response to the Russian’s question, “In what language are written the chief rolls relative to the life of Issa?”, this Head Lama had replied that “the documents brought from India to Nepal and from Nepal to Tibet concerning his existence are written in the Pali language and are now in Lhasa. But a copy in our language—that is, the Tibetan—exists in this convent.” These and many other things about Issa and the Issa tale were claimed by Notovitch to have been recited to him on his initial visit to Hemis.

But upon his allegedly being laid up with a broken leg during a claimed second visit there a few days later, Notovitch had the opportunity—as he recorded in his travel account—of hearing this same Presiding Lama read to him from this Tibetan-language version the story of Issa/Jesus which told of lengthy travels Eastward by Him to India, Nepal and other Himalayan regions during the years of His life between age 13 and age 29. Moreover, the Issa tale indicated that Jesus had been discipled by both Brahman and Buddhist teachers in their respective doctrines, had himself taught while there, and had then returned to His homeland where he took up His own ministry among the Jews that ended in His crucifixion.

And thus, Notovitch confidently believed, his Buddhist manuscript discovery had at last filled in the so-called “silent (or lost or missing) years” gap which he, and others before him, had with certainty assumed was evident in the four Gospel records of Jesus’ life.

Yet in the process of telling the story of his travels to Ladakh Notovitch painted a most incongruous picture for his readers of how he had acquired his “discovery” at the Hemis gompa: from “two large bound volumes with leaves yellowed by time” the Lama read out the nearly 250 scattered passages which went to make up this “biography of Issa,” while the Russian traveler’s less than minimally capable *shikari* interpreter simultaneously translated it all to his master verbally while at the same time the bedridden Notovitch feverishly set down in his notebook the various parts of this most bizarre tale! Only much later—in fact, only towards the end of a long seven-year lapse of time—did the Russian journalist set about “putting in their order of sequence” these scattered passages “so as to give their consecutive sense” and “deducing from them,” he added, “what forms my translation ...” Only, too, when pressed by his early critics, did the “discoverer” feel compelled to admit that he himself had transformed these Issa passages into the familiar Biblical chapter and verse format.*

Now when this alleged translation of the supposed Issa manuscript discovery was at last issued in French in 1894 and in English translation later that same year,¹² what in reality the Russian had done was to nurture still further the oft-repeated centuries-old legend about Jesus having gone Eastward which has refused to be disbelieved and disavowed in various quarters even to this day.† As recently as 1987, for example, the author of this present work on Tharchin, while in India, came across a newspaper article in the (Calcutta) *Telegraph* for 29 November, datelined Washington DC, entitled “More ‘Evidence’ on Jesus in India.” The Indian newspaper editor was wise enough to place the headline word “Evidence” in quote marks, for he doubtless had been made aware of the heated debate on the subject that had erupted in the public prints back in the mid-1890s (when Tharchin and Sundar Singh, it should be kept in mind, were hardly more than babes in arms). The news item began with the following intriguing lines:

Between his youthful appearance at the temple of Jerusalem and the start of public ministry by the Jordan River—a period of nearly 18 years—where was Jesus?

It is believed that Jesus spent 14 of the lost years in India. He came to India at the age of 14 and left when he was 28.

* Such a format in itself, incidentally, should make any reader of this Issa document who is even a little knowledgeable about ancient texts very suspicious as to the genuineness of it. For though such a format does seem “Biblical,” it cannot be an indication of authenticity for the simple reason that true ancient texts were never divided in such chapter and verse fashion. Moreover, the dividing up of the Christian Scriptures in this manner can itself be dated no earlier than the medieval period of European history—added initially to the Bible’s text by Catholic Cardinal Caro in 1236 and later by Robert Stephens in 1551!

† Indeed, since Notovitch’s day there have been many for whom his fraudulent work is gospel to their belief that such an ancient Buddhist text existed, if not still exists, and that Jesus made one or more voyages Eastward. Too many to cite them all here in the discussion which follows immediately above, the interested reader can consult the present author’s very recently published book on the entire Notovitch fraud, *The Issa Tale That Will Not Die: Nicholas Notovitch and His Fraudulent Gospel* (Lanham MD USA: University Press of America, 2003), for a much more complete recitation.

The article then proceeded to report on the apparent new evidence, in so doing referring back to the popularization by Notovitch himself of the theory of Jesus' travels abroad:

Evidence of a visit by Jesus to India was first published ... in a work by Russian journalist Nicholas Notovitch. And now an American spiritual [read, spiritist, and so throughout this article] teacher, Elizabeth Clare Prophet, backs the theory in a book written by her.

In her book, *The Lost Years of Jesus* (1984), Mrs. Prophet cites evidence and backs Notovitch's theory with new data.*

Tibetan Lamas had told Notovitch while he was visiting their [Indo-Tibetan] country [of Ladakh] in 1887 that the archives at Lhasa held an ancient Buddhist manuscript that discussed the life of Issa, their name for Jesus....

The text said that Jesus was in India when he was between 14 and 28 years of age. He was also said to have studied Hindu and Buddhist teachings and to have become a prominent spiritual leader in India [after which he traveled to Nepal and other Himalayan areas and returned via Persia to Judea where he then began His public ministry and was later crucified but not resurrected].

Notovitch's account was refuted by some Biblical [and secular academic] scholars when first published in Europe. In the early twentieth century, however, another traveler to [Ladakhi] Tibet [allegedly] corroborated that the text Notovitch had cited did exist in the [Hemis] Monastery.† But the [presumed original ancient] texts today [in the Lhasan monastic archives] are assumed to have been destroyed after the Communist revolution of 1950 which made Tibet a part of China.‡

The *Washington Times*, in an interview with Mrs. Prophet, says that "those missing years are a missing path." Mrs. Prophet and other groups believe that revelation of truth about Jesus' lost years would lead to a "new age" of spiritual awakening.

Mrs. Prophet held a five-day spiritual conference here this week. She said that for people seeking spiritual growth it was important to "understand what Jesus was doing during that formative period of his life."

The idea has been debated since 1894 when [it was first reported that] Buddhist scrolls elucidating the fact [had recently been] discovered. This "may be a guide to the linking of religions the world over, and provide the basis for a world religion—the 'new age'," some

* The oft-repeated notion of Jesus' Central Asian travels has continued to be so popular in the East even to the present day that it has prompted Book Faith India publishing house in 1996 to reprint Mrs. Prophet's book that was originally published by Summit University Press at Malibu CA USA in 1984. A free-lance writer, A. Ghosh, has most recently given the book further prominence by having reviewed the Indian reprint of Prophet's volume that appeared on the book review page of *The Kathmandu Post*, 26 Jan. 1997, p. 4. Couched in tentative language because of the writer's limited knowledge on the subject, the review, entitled "A Controversial Topic," wisely took no position on Prophet's claims and conclusions, but nonetheless declared that the book "relies on researches conducted too far away and long ago to inspire that much confidence." Indeed, wrote Ghosh, "since Christ lived so long ago ... it is wellnigh impossible to prove that he was in Jagannath, the Valley of the Kings in Persia, Nepal, India, and Ladakh."

† This is a reference to the visit in 1922 to Hemis of the celebrated Swami Abhedananda (1866-1939) of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, Calcutta. The word "corroborated" is most inaccurate here and not to be accepted as fact when one is apprised of further details regarding the so-called Notovitch discovery at Hemis: see a few pages hence in the Text above. Thus the cautionary word "allegedly" has been inserted.

‡ The results of Gergan Tharchin's investigation on this very point at the Tibetan capital in 1927, well before the 1950 Communist invasion of Tibet by China, would give the lie to this statement. This is because Tharchin and others could demonstrate that no such manuscripts existed there and, for that matter, could never have existed there in the first place. For the details, see a few pages hence in the Text above.

spiritual leaders and philosophers at the conference felt. The *Washington Times* yesterday said Mrs. Prophet's talk on the lost years of Jesus was based on Tibetan texts and the gnostic gospels.¹³

As a result of extensive inquiry into the matter, the present author felt compelled to insert much of the bracketed material above as a corrective to what otherwise could leave misleading, distorted or outright false impressions in the minds of the article's readers since its original appearance in 1987. For it must be stated in the most unequivocal terms that within but a few years after the publication of Notovitch's claims, every major feature of his story, including the alleged manuscript discovery itself as well as numerous minor details associated with his supposed travel adventure to Hemis Monastery, had been refuted by both religious and secular scholars alike—East and West. Moreover, as the decades have passed since the earliest storm of criticism broke upon the initial publication of the *Life of Issa*, there has continued to appear additional critical writing on the issues raised by Notovitch's work: and not only about the alleged manuscript find itself but also about its contents concerning the assumed lengthy visit by Jesus to India and the Himalayan mountainous region of Central Asia. Too lengthy to document here, it is suggested that the reader interested in this fascinating topic should consult the present author's recently published work on the Notovitch "find" that was fully cited a few footnotes earlier, where both these issues are discussed in great detail in the light of both early and later critical research.

Suffice it to say here, however, that the author's book on this subject will show that the more recent scholarly inquiries into the "Notovitch affair" have provided even more evidence than ever to support the assertion that the work of Notovitch was nothing more than the product of the Russian's "fertile imagination" and that it is quite reflective of the particular kind of intellectual, religious and cultural climate in which he had lived. Then, too, with respect to Jesus' so-called "lost years," it is likewise sufficient to say here that the conclusion the author's book comes to on this issue is quite simple and direct: there exists no such missing gap of years evident in the biblical accounts of Christ's life as so often claimed, and that upon reaching accountability to the Mosaic Law at age 13 Jesus neither journeyed east to farther Asia, south to Egypt nor west to Britain, and indeed had no *necessity* to do so in order to fulfill His mission on earth.

Yet despite the fact that the claims of Notovitch, in the words of one of his early and most renowned critics, Oxford University Professor F. Max Müller, were "completely refuted, or, I should rather say, annihilated," those same claims have certainly not been forgotten in either the East or West, and so-called serious students of Buddhism and other Eastern religions certainly continue to be taken in by M. Notovitch. As early as 1894 itself, for example, one Catholic Christian writer and barrister from Calcutta, Julien A. H. Louis, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and member of the Buddhist Text Society of India, had obviously believed the hoax of the Russian's supposed discovery—at least to the extent of believing that a genuine ancient Buddhist text had been found at Hemis. For in a book published that year Louis wrote the following:

In Tibet there are at least a dozen different sects of Buddhism ... In Ceylon and Burma there are differences again, from the Buddhisms of China or of Tibet, and as an instance of the adaptation of Buddhist texts to all possible requirements, I would cite the Pali manuscript recently

discovered in Ladakh, purporting to give a history of Christ, in which the period between the flight into Egypt and the active, preaching portion of Christ's life is ingeniously bridged over by a voyage into Tibet! an attempt, no doubt, to reabsorb into Buddhism some of the earlier converts to Christianity....¹⁴

Needless to say, this passage from Louis's book constitutes a sad revelation of how even learned people such as he could be taken in by a hoax like this simply by accepting without question M. Notovitch's various declarations of discovery of the said manuscript.¹⁵

But take as two other examples two individuals who were indigenous to India: one a Kashmiri *pandit*, the other an educated high-caste young Hindu man from Bengal, both of whose expressed beliefs are reflective of just how influential Notovitch's book has been. A Swami, Rama by name, relates how the *pandit* from Kashmir did not doubt for a minute that Jesus had spent a number of years in the East, and in particular, in his homeland. Writes the Swami:

He started telling me a story about Jesus Christ, claiming that Jesus had lived in Kashmir practicing meditation. The *pandit* referred to a manuscript written in the Tibetan language that is preserved in a monastery situated at the height of 14,000 feet in the Himalayas [an obvious reference to Hemis, but whose elevation is only 11,000 feet]. It was later translated by a Russian writer and then into English and published as *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*. In this part of the Himalayas, many people believe this story, and you dare not disagree with it.... The *pandit* claimed that Jesus Christ left Asia Minor for the unknown period of his life when he was thirteen to thirty years of age, and that he lived in the valleys of Kashmir. I did not know whether to believe him, but ... I did not want to argue with him.

The much earlier testimony of the high-caste Bengali is no less convincing in showing how people in the East have been taken in by the claim, elaborated upon and popularized still further by Notovitch's literary production, of Christ having journeyed to Central and South Asia. In 1914 this fervent young Hindu had declared in utter sincerity to Edwin Schary, the American traveler mentioned in Volume I, Chapter 10 of the present work who had sought to find in Tibet the Great Mahatmas, the following statement of belief: "We in India have ancient records of your great spiritual leader, Jesus of Nazareth, coming to India and disappearing into the great Himalayan mountains for years, to later appear again in the Levant [Palestine] as the spiritual herald of a new day."¹⁶

But take, as still another example, a European, Andreas Faber-Kaiser, who has been called a "scholar of comparative religion and philosopher." He it was who published a book in 1977 with the highly self-assured sounding title, *Jesus Died in Kashmir* (London: Gordon & Cremonesi). In the work, he claims that Jesus did not die on the Cross but lies buried in Kashmir, asserting in addition that there is no evidence that Christ actually died at Calvary. (This bizarre notion from the days of late eighteenth-century Rationalism has often been labeled the Resuscitation or Swoon Theory and is still subscribed to by a considerable number of people even today.)¹⁷ But more to the point of the present discussion is the notion Faber-Kaiser also puts forward that there is indeed a Tibetan Life of Christ at Hemis, making lengthy reference to Notovitch's work as the basis for this belief and citing a certain "Lady Henrietta Merrick" as "confirming," he wrote, that the Hemis gompa "possesses documents written in Tibetan and Pali that speak of the days when Jesus was in Leh, where he was received with gladness and preached."

Upon closer scrutiny of this matter, *Lady Merrick* turns out to be none other than plain Henrietta Merrick (1886-1944), the American traveler and adventurer who just prior to her journey to Ladakh in the summer of 1931 had engaged Gergan Tharchin to be her interpreter and guide into southeastern Tibet earlier that spring. Her adventure with Tharchin is detailed in a subsequent chapter of the present narrative on Tharchin's life. Now in her unusually entitled book, *In the World's Attic* (New York, 1931), to which Faber-Kaiser makes reference, she narrates her visit to Ladakh. Yet she makes no mention of the esoteric Life of Issa in her chapter on Hemis and in another chapter only devotes a single sentence to the legend under discussion: "In Leh," she writes on page 215, "is the Legend of Christ who is called 'Issa,' and it is said that the monastery at Hemis holds precious documents fifteen hundred years old which tell of the days that He passed in Leh where He was joyously received and where He preached."

But several additional points need to be made here in response to Faber-Kaiser. First of all, he is not consistent within the text of his very own book, for on page 13 of his volume he specifically tells his readers that Notovitch had been told by his Ladakhi Lama-informants that, quoting Faber-Kaiser's words here, "the originals" of the Buddhist Life of Issa "were written in the Pali language and rested in Lhasa, but copies in Tibetan existed in Hemis." This is in fact what the Russian claimed had been told him. Yet when discussing Mrs. Merrick some hundred pages later in the same volume (page 106), Faber-Kaiser states most inaccurately that she had confirmed that Hemis possessed documents of Issa in *both* languages, whereas what she actually wrote in her book was nothing of the sort. Secondly, Merrick did not at all say, as Faber-Kaiser claims, that the Hemis monastery definitely possesses documents on Issa/Jesus; she merely intimated that "*it is said* that the monastery" there houses such documents—a *vast* difference! And finally, the supposed Notovitch manuscript discovery on Issa nowhere speaks of his having specifically been to Leh or Ladakh, though that is the impression Faber-Kaiser leaves with his readers by citing the Merrick statement. The closest the Notovitch document came to intimating these places was in its sixth chapter where Issa, after having spent time in India among the Hindus and in what is now Nepal among the Buddhists, "then left Nepal and the Himalayan mountains, descended into the valley of Rajputana, and went towards the west," eventually returning to Palestine. What Mrs. Merrick probably had reference to was another alleged ancient Buddhist document about Issa in the East which the Russian émigré to America and Central Asian explorer Nicholas Roerich in his writings mentioned having come across while traveling through Ladakh in 1925.¹⁸ So much, then, for Faber-Kaiser's reliability in research, which needless to say leaves much to be desired. As one commentator on his work, John Bray, has noted, his citing of Merrick is "not a very convincing authority" to use as confirmation of Notovitch's claims.¹⁹

Bray went on to observe that the legend of Christ's sojourn to distant Asian parts as popularized by Notovitch still persisted on into the 1950s, impelling a Bengali Christian sadhu—who had come all the way to Leh—to visit Hemis in 1953 to conduct an investigation into "the rumors, fashionable in some circles, concerning a journey of Christ to Kashmir and a new Gospel kept in a Ladakhi monastery." (Vittoz) The sadhu, Huldar by name, was

accompanied by three companions: Moravian missionary Pierre Vittoz and Ladakhi E. T. Phuntsok (who would themselves soon become friends and co-workers with Gergan Tharchin on a revision of the Tibetan New Testament); and S. S. Gergan who, like Phuntsok, was also a scholarly Ladakhi Tibetan (and, incidentally, was the son of the late great Tibetan Bible translator, Joseb Gergan). The sadhu and his colleagues undertook a meticulous search of "all the books" in the Hemis library "page by page with full cooperation from the monks." (Vittoz and Bray) As a matter of fact, they spent all of five days searching throughout every inch of the monastery for any such ancient handwritings on Issa. But although according to Bray the four of them found many literary treasures, they uncovered nothing remotely referring to him; and according to Vittoz, they took the precaution of "recording the testimony of the head priest" there, which needless to say was unfavorable to such rumors. Vittoz, who hailed from the French-speaking area of Switzerland, would later describe their careful search in his book, *Un autre Himalaya* (Lausanne: Éditions du soc, 1957); but earlier, in a report of his mission station activities at Leh for the year 1953-4, the Swiss missionary had noted in his English-language summary of this event that, "as could have been foretold, [we] found no evidence whatever of these fancies."²⁰

Bray also went on to tell of how in 1980, while teaching at the Moravian Mission School at Leh, he met several Westerners who confessed to having been inspired by Faber-Kaiser's volume and hoped to find evidence of the Unknown Life of Christ. One of them even wished to make a film about it. But so also have two other individuals, an American couple from California, Richard and Janet Bock. These two not only realized their wish to make the film but in addition one of them, Janet Bock, had a book published under the momentous-sounding title of, *The Jesus Mystery of Lost Years and Unknown Travels* (Los Angeles: Aura Books, 1980). On pages 5 and 24 of the volume she wrote:

... Our need to know ... is shared by so many once the fact and potential significance of the missing years is grasped. As the bits and pieces of information began to fit together, we decided to make a documentary film, and by the time we were ready to begin, we had spent two years exploring the idea.

This was as far as we could go to validate the existence of the legend. We knew it had been seen and written about by Notovitch in 1887 and 35 years later by Swami Abhedananda. We knew also that scholars with time and determination might be allowed to search again the musty chambers and unlit corridors of the sprawling 400-year-old [Hemis] Monastery once the lamas were convinced of their ability and sincerity.

We had good reason to believe the manuscripts had existed, and had been seen [by these two visitors to Hemis] and translated.^{*21} Now it was the path of the legend itself we were to follow.

* As is confirmed in much more detail in the present author's published study on the Notovitch affair (and cited in an earlier footnote), the claimed ancient and genuine Issa Life manuscript discovery by Notovitch has been proven by various scholars and writers—on the basis of both internal and external evidence—to have been fraudulent. Indeed, far from being antique and authentic, the text of the *two*-part so-called Issa/Jesus manuscript which the Russian journalist claimed to have seen and to have had translated at Hemis in 1887 never existed at all except in the mind and imagination of the arch-hoaxer Notovitch. And whatever was the text of a *single*-part manuscript which in 1922 Abhedananda's Lama guide at Hemis had shown to the Swami and who had then helped the Swami translate a portion of it, the latter, one can be most confident in asserting, was likewise not antique and authentic. For putting aside the obvious discrepancy in the number of manuscript segments respectively shown

So convinced were the Bocks that Notovitch's supposedly ancient Life of Issa manuscript had existed that they traveled all the way to the exiled Dalai Lama XIV's headquarters at Dharamsala in Northwest India in their quest for evidence of its existence. Wrote Mrs. Bock on page 96: "Our main purpose in coming all the way to Dharamsala had been to find out if His Holiness the Dalai Lama had any information about the legend by Notovitch at Hemis ... Now, as we sat with Sherpa in the Lama's dining room, ... he told us that His Holiness had been asked this question by visitors about one year ago and had replied that he had no personal knowledge of the legend."

Yet even when confronted by the ignorance about both legend and manuscript on the part of the highest religious authority in all of Tibetan Buddhism and who had by this time become one of the most highly educated and knowledgeable of all Tibetan Lamas,²² the Bocks would still not be deterred from their quest to ferret out the whereabouts of Notovitch's presumed authentic but now "lost" Life of Issa and make a documentary film about it in the process! No one therefore need be surprised that Bray should have felt led to comment about the Notovitch affair in the following terms: "Evidently it is still possible to promote a legend about 'mysterious Tibet' on the authority of a mendacious Russian ... Both Christians and Buddhists have an interest in crushing this absurdly persistent hoax."²³

As a Christian out of a Buddhist background, Tharchin—long before Bray's admonition to the followers of both faiths—was intent on pursuing this very interest expressed by him. With Sundar Singh's written reference to the Notovitch "discovery" fresh in his mind, Tharchin was now highly motivated to try to resolve the intriguing mystery surrounding the supposed Pali text that according to the Russian journalist's Lama-informants in Ladakh was the basis for the Tibetan text of the manuscript he had allegedly found at Hemis. For at Lhasa Tharchin now proceeded to try to get to the bottom of the matter by inquiring everywhere if any such

these foreign visitors to the gumpa, when comparing these two supposedly ancient textual finds in their published English translation, one discovers that the 44 verses comprising the Swami's partially translated and published text are almost exactly parallel in both arrangement and content to the pertinent parts of the much earlier Notovitch published text that has been proven incontrovertibly to be a fraud. And hence, if the earlier Notovitch-"discovered" Issa text is fraudulent, that which parallels it and which was shown to Abhedananda decades later had to have been fraudulent as well. See the particular chapter end-note indicated at this point in the Text above for the bibliographic documentation by which to make a comparison of these two published Issa texts.

* This very interest accounts for why the present author has gone to such great lengths, in a quite recently published study on Notovitch, to attempt to crush this persistent hoax once and for all with as definitive a presentation as is possible. Ghosh, in his review cited earlier of Elizabeth Prophet's volume, whose full title is *The Lost Years of Jesus; on the Discoveries of Notovitch, Abhedananda, Roerich, and Caspari*, made the following concluding observations:

All four researchers on whose work this book is based were honorable people ... "Could all ... have fabricated their stories ...?" asks Prophet towards the end of her book. That is a question for the individual reader to answer.

Due to his obviously limited knowledge of the subject, the reviewer can be excused for inaccurately calling the Russian forger an "honorable" person. However, the present writer, after careful review of each of their work, must assert without fear of contradiction that one of these four—Nicholas Notovitch—was not in the least "honorable," as the present author's published study on Notovitch cited earlier abundantly confirms, and inevitably *did* fabricate a tale that in the end hoaxed, and unfortunately continues to hoax, many in both East and West.

Pali manuscript or similar document existed at the Tibetan capital as claimed by the Russian in which the details on the life of Issa were described. As it turned out, the Tibetan visitor's many inquiries—while on the surface somewhat promising at the very end of his search—proved to be quite fruitless since the meager results ultimately achieved by his inquiries had really nothing whatever to do with what Sundar Singh had sought to find.

That Tharchin's quest ended in failure could of course have been predicted by anyone who had had any knowledge of the explosive refutation which had been administered to Notovitch some thirty years before; or by anyone, too, who had any knowledge of the Pali literary tradition in Buddhist history. It will be recalled that the Russian had asserted he had been informed by Ladakhi Tibetan Lamas that a number of Pali-language originals of the Life of Issa (and from which the alleged Hemis-housed Tibetan translation had supposedly been derived) were kept at Lhasa. Indeed, according to his Ladakhi informants these originals could "be found at Lhasa to the number of several thousands"! Yet in the light of the testimony of William McGovern and other scholars this could not possibly have been true; in fact, not even a single such copy could have existed there or anywhere else in Tibet. McGovern was the well-known American scholar-explorer-Tibetologist who in 1923 had traveled in disguise through much of Central Tibet and who later, after revealing his identity at Lhasa, had been able to stay on for well over a month at the Tibetan capital (an unheard-of stroke of fortune for Western scholars up to that moment in modern Tibetan history). In the book he published a year afterwards which detailed his extraordinary experience in the Forbidden Land, McGovern made the following declaration: "The ancient manuscripts of Tibet consist of writings in both Sanskrit and Tibetan, very occasionally in Chinese. Contrary to popular supposition *there are no Pali manuscripts in the country*, as Buddhism had long rid itself of the Pali literary tradition before Tibet came under its influence."²⁴ This meant that the end of that tradition had occurred well before the seventh to eighth centuries of the present era when Buddhism had achieved its influence over Tibet. As a budding scholar in Tibetan studies, Tharchin may not as yet have been aware of this information and was therefore intent upon ferreting out a Pali text of the Issa story; or, if he was aware of it, he may nonetheless have been in search of *any* manuscript whose content remotely paralleled that of the alleged Hemis discovery.

Imbued with a compelling curiosity about the subject, Tharchin during this current visit to Lhasa in 1927, finally on his last inquiry approached a high-ranking Tibetan official about the matter. In response, the official stated that he did not have in his possession a copy of the manuscript in question but knew of a gentleman who had it. At this the visitor to Lhasa grew rather excited. The official was kind enough to arrange to secure it, and ultimately handed it over to Tharchin. The latter in turn engaged a calligrapher to copy this particular manuscript, which was entitled *Zamling Thagring Thongwe Durbina*, which clumsily translated literally means "a binocular to see the world from a long distance by." In reality, it was a treatise on the geography of the world! Based on the Tibetan official's apparent knowledge of the contents of this work, Tharchin must have assumed that perhaps a life of Issa might be buried somewhere within its text. In another letter he sent from the Tibetan capital to Rev. Graham, Tharchin spoke of this document: "the manuscript is very old; it is written by a great Mongolian traveler. It is as a world geography. In it is mentioned about our Lord's crucifixion

and His resurrection. It is very interesting. At the same time I am getting good opportunities [to testify about Christ and His gospel].”

Although by this event he may have been granted opportunities to witness for his Lord, for which he was doubtless most grateful, unfortunately for the Kalimpong visitor's purse, the copyist took three months to write out the manuscript for Tharchin who had arranged for his board and regular remuneration. And as a consequence, his stay in Lhasa, which was originally to have concluded by about the 20th of October, was delayed considerably beyond that date; for in the same letter to his friend Graham, the visitor to Lhasa wrote: “Now I am trying to start [for Kalimpong] as soon as possible. The ... old manuscript which I am copying is not yet finished; as soon as it is finished ... we will start.”²⁵

Tharchin was to point out later by way of clarification that he subsequently learned that the author of the said treatise on world geography, the Mongolian travel-writer Chang Kya Ho Thog Thu, was one who had been recognized by Tibetans to be an incarnate Lama and who hailed from Northwest China. He had drawn his information about the birth, ministry and demise of Jesus from a certain Roman Catholic priest who had made specific statements to him about Christ's life, crucifixion and resurrection. These statements were then incorporated by the incarnate Lama into his manuscript referred to above. This final inquiry of Tharchin's, like all the others, had proved to be a dead end.

Suffice it to say, therefore, that a life of Issa—as described and boldly published in Western languages by Notovitch and claimed by him as having in ancient manuscript form been housed in monastic archives at or near Lhasa—never existed there in Tharchin's day, nor ever did exist in the Tibetan capital, nor anywhere else, at anytime in the past ... except in the mind of the arch-hoaxer, M. Nicholas Notovitch. As the first two selections from the Christian Scriptures which stand at the head of this present chapter declare, “there are some,” like Notovitch, “that would pervert the gospel of Christ” by “adding to God's words”; nevertheless, in due time, God has “reproved” him, and Notovitch has been “found a liar.” That, so far as Gergan Tharchin was concerned, was the end of the matter. But he could now turn his attention elsewhere during the rest of his stay at the Tibetan capital.



Other events in Lhasa were soon to absorb Tharchin's time and interest. For one thing he visited an old Tibetan man from Lhasa whom he had first met at Kalimpong earlier in the year and whom he had had the joy of leading to Christ. This elderly Tibetan's spiritual odyssey was a most unusual one and is certainly worth telling, since it reveals as well the effectiveness of Tharchin's gospel ministry among his Tibetan people wherever they might be found. Out of hunger for something better and more satisfying to his heart, this old man had been stimulated to learn more about Christ. But how was he to do so? He knew nothing better, Tharchin was later to say, than to visit a 90-year-old cave-dwelling lama. The latter had isolated himself away among the Tibetan hills for the sole purpose to meditate and to

pray, this being regarded as an especially holy exercise to perform, completely dependent as he would henceforth have to be for his food and drink on the contributions of the pious who might visit him.

This quite old lama was now asked by his somewhat younger visitor “what he thought of Christianity, whether it made one crazy.” Unlike some other lamas who, reported Tharchin, were “only too happy to say that Christianity makes a man crazy,” this lama surprisingly responded with just the opposite judgment; for he answered in a loud and confident tone: “Don’t you believe that! This religion is very good, but very difficult to follow. When, however, a person can [follow it], he has the best!” At that, the elderly visitor immediately exclaimed: “Give this to me!” “No, that I cannot,” the honest lama replied. “But should it happen that you meet up with some Christians, then,” he wisely counseled, “you will see for yourself.”

Tharchin continued with his interesting narrative about the old Tibetan and his remarkable conversation:

In the year 1923 I was in Tibet, yet we did not meet. But in 1927 this old man came to a place near Kalimpong. In the lodging-place there we had distributed [Christian literature] tracts at the door. He chanced to find one and read it. He asked the innkeeper where he could find those who had passed out the tracts. He disdainfully answered, “A nuisance, these Christians!” The old man, however, came back with a ready response: “Do not say that. A cave-dwelling lama recommended Christianity to me.” Whereupon the innkeeper sent the man to me. The old gentleman asked many questions. After a week, he said to me: “I am well satisfied; I now believe and am completely happy. I see myself now as God sees me.” I gave him my New Testament which I had had since my youth. He wanted to be baptized but was sick and had to return to Lhasa.

But now that Tharchin was once again in Lhasa, he made it a point of priority to follow up on the old Tibetan by visiting him to see how he was progressing in the Christian faith. The shepherd of the Tibetan flock in Kalimpong would not be disappointed. He later told in a most touching manner what then transpired in the Tibetan capital:

We prayed and cried together. “On earth,” I said, “we will not see each other anymore, but we shall in front of God’s throne!” A baptism in Lhasa, the citadel of Lamaism, was out of the question. After six weeks I received the news that he had died. Short was the time of his new life, but he made good use of it, because always and everywhere this one marked for death had witnessed: “This is the best religion: a very old cave-dwelling lama said that to me!”²⁶



This would not be the only occasion for Tharchin to share the gospel of Christ during his lengthy stay at the Tibetan capital. In fact, in the course of explaining in one of his letters to Rev. Grâham the reasons for his protracted delay in returning to Kalimpong, the would-be evangelist wrote: “We are trying to return as soon as we get the opportunity”; nevertheless, he meaningfully went on to say, “I am not wasting my time but by His [God’s] grace am doing something, and in due time we may see the [spiritual] fruits. Please pray for us.”²⁷ The

“something” Tharchin had reference to here and for which he appealed for prayer was nothing short of an incredible abundance of quiet but effective evangelistic activities, the relating of which filled many paragraphs of his several letters to his missionary friend at Kalimpong.* In one of them he declared: “I am paying visits to all the high officials every day and ... so I am very busy”; “at the same time,” he continued, “I get good opportunity to talk individually with these Officers and with the lamas.”²⁸

Indeed, concerning his Christian witness to “these [military] Officers” and many high officials and Lamas in and out of the Tibetan government, it has come to light what one particular kind of interaction had taken place between the visiting Christian babu and these many friends and scholar-colleagues of his at Lhasa. In an interview the present writer had with Gergan Tharchin’s daughter-in-law, he learned of a singularly interesting and quite enlightening dialogue which had occurred time and again at the Tibetan capital between on the one hand Tharchin and on the other hand various prominent government officials, as well as lama-scholars and other prominent associates of his with whom he had worked together on linguistic research projects during his several lengthy stays at Lhasa. Sharing much later with his family and friends back in Kalimpong about this aspect of his capital visits, Tharchin had humbly indicated what a wide variety of friends, acquaintances and colleagues he had come to have at the Tibetan capital, many of whom were aristocrats, and all, of course, Buddhists.

And so it came about, he had recounted, that after a given government and/or scholar work day had been completed, a group of these Government leaders, officers, scholars and other important friends of his—that is to say, as many as five, ten, twelve, or more of them—would request Gergan Tharchin to come along with them for a night of mahjong gambling, or for an evening of drinking and gossiping, or else for an evening entertainment party at which dancing girls might provide the centerpiece of the entertainment. However, explained the Christian babu, these kinds of private gatherings to which he was constantly being invited he saw no point in attending since he viewed them as either a waste of time or else as providing no opportunity for cultural uplift or spiritual witness. This was because, he ingeniously but accurately observed, the focus of the gathering’s attention was too narrow and therefore too riveting upon what for him would be compromising activities. On the other hand, whenever the nature of these relaxing get-togethers was less focused, more general, or uplifting in content, Tharchin would gladly accept the invitation and attend the function.

* At about this same time he was also relating his Christian outreach efforts in and around Lhasa to his esteemed colleague in the gospel, Sadhu Sundar Singh, who was always eager to hear of any Christian penetration into the Forbidden Land. Although no extant copy of Tharchin’s letter to the Sadhu could be found among his Kalimpong papers, a letter was found from the famed Indian evangelist in reply to that sent him by his Tibetan friend. It indicates that Tharchin had likewise solicited prayer support from the Sadhu for his evangelistic efforts in Tibet. Writing to Tharchin at Lhasa from Subathu in the Simla Hills on 28 November 1927, Sundar replied in part as follows: “I returned here from my [preaching] tour last week. I am glad to hear from you about your trip to Lhasa and the Lord’s work there. May God bless you more and more and use you for His glory is my earnest prayer. I will always be glad to hear from you whenever you can write to me.” Tharchin must have been greatly encouraged by this response from his old friend and doubtless sought even more opportunities to share the Christian message during the remaining months of his stay at the Tibetan capital, since in the end he would not depart for Kalimpong till the early part of the following year.

His well-placed friends and associates, though, would always take careful notice of the Babu's absence if such ever occurred, which in the course of time frequently *did*. And afterwards—perhaps the next day or a few days or a week later—one or more of them would stop by his residence and inquire of him as follows:

You are a very strange man to us. What kind of person are you; because here we were having such a good time after a long, hard day's work and in need of rest, recreation or entertainment, but you were nowhere to be found at our party the other night. Instead, here you were sitting alone in your quarters and missing out on such a grand get-together with us. Why weren't you with us? To us this is all so very strange!

On such occasions of inquiry by his numerous friends at the Tibetan capital Gergan Tharchin had repeatedly replied with the same, though quite exceptional, answer:

I was not there with you because my Lord was not there. If He had been there, most certainly I too would have been there, because He has taken up His dwelling place within me. Let me say that I am a person just like you. We are the same, except for one difference; which is, that I have my Lord Jesus with me and inside me. And He did not permit me to attend your particular function because He would not have liked what was going to take place there, and therefore I had to obey Him.

Remarkably, because this response of Tharchin's was most unusual, the curiosity of his friends was aroused that much more, and so they would question him further: "What is the meaning of this? What is this all about?" To which the Christian evangelist, when telling about this kind of incident long afterwards to his family or else when giving his testimony in company with other fellow Christians, would mention that this additional inquiry by his prominent Lhasa friends and project associates would always provide Tharchin a quite natural opening to witness still more for his Lord Jesus. And in speaking about these particular Lhasa incidents from his life with his family, relatives or Christian friends, Babu Tharchin would invariably explain how it was that on each occasion he would be led by his Lord to know if he had the liberty to accept or decline the invitations to these private party functions of his many Lhasa acquaintances. Nevertheless, in either circumstance—whether his Lord's leading was for him to be present or absent—the Christian visitor to Lhasa was given opportunity to witness concerning his firm belief in, and walk with, Jesus through the inward guidance and instruction of his God's Holy Spirit. In every instance he never hesitated to speak warmly of his Lord and the central place in his life Jesus continually occupied.²⁹

Indeed, far from following the extremely cautionary advice which earlier in 1923 Tharchin had received personally at Lhasa from Laden-La of Darjeeling, the Tibetan from Kalimpong had opted to adopt instead the clear witness of Paul the Apostle of Christ whose words of long ago head up the present chapter: "I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It will be recalled that during this period in Anglo-Tibetan relations Laden-La, by now an important friend to Gergan Tharchin, had been serving the Governments of both British India and Tibet in a variety of ways as diplomat, mediator and counselor. And upon Tharchin's very first visit to the Vatican of Tibetan Buddhism, it had been "recommended" to him by Laden-La "that he give no indication of his Christianity,

since this could cause trouble.”*³⁰ Yet, as has just now been learned, it would become the habit of this Indo-Tibetan Christian that on every visit to Lhasa, beginning in 1923, Gergan Tharchin would serve as a fearless and faithful, though wise and careful, witness to the Good News of his Lord and Master Jesus Christ. One is reminded of the instructive words of Jesus to His disciples, recorded in the New Testament Gospel of Matthew, of how in certain evangelizing situations they were to be “wise, cautious and sensible as serpents” but “harmless, guileless and innocent as doves” (10:16 various versions). And thus, it ought to be observed, it may very well be that the Christian witness which began to be carried on by Gergan Tharchin at the Tibetan capital in 1923 represents only the second such “missionary activity” to have occurred in the Forbidden City since the expulsion of the Catholic Capuchin Mission in 1745, the brief but concentrated witness carried on at Lhasa by David Macdonald in 1904 having been the first, as far as can be determined (see again Chapter 5 of the present narrative’s initial volume for the details of Macdonald’s remarkable gospel witness for Christ there).

One of the most interesting passages from Tharchin’s letters touching upon his Christian witness at the Tibetan capital dealt with his visits among the inmates of two of the three great monasteries in the vicinity of Lhasa. It reveals the extent to which Tharchin went about sharing his faith and unveils as well the great burden he carried in his heart to see the Light of Salvation penetrate the spiritual darkness which he felt enveloped so many of his ethnic brethren. Here is how, in a letter to Graham dated the 14th of October 1927, he outlined his gospel activities among the monks who inhabited both Drepung and Sera.

There are about five monks in the great monastery called Drepung who are from my country [i.e., from Kunawar], and one monk is from my very birthplace; and they all come to see me now and then. One monk is already convicted and he is quite willing to come out [from Buddhism] and wishes to come down to Kalimpong if he gets any work. He was nine years in the monastery and he learned the Tibetan philosophy and is very clever in discussing matters and religion. I am praying for him and at the same time praying for a *press*; if I get a press by His grace, I may be able to give work to the monks of my same country and also to others. (emphasis Tharchin’s)

In this same letter, as well as in an earlier one dated the 29th of September, Tharchin described his visit to the other monastery, which, like Drepung, was only a few miles from Lhasa:

* But the highly talented Laden-La was also serving at this time, if not in every instance the wishes of Delhi and Lhasa, then most certainly those of his most immediate British superior, Political Officer for Tibet, F. M. Bailey, who had begun to act on his own initiative and outside British authority in regard to what was then secretly unfolding at Lhasa. It may be recalled from Chapter 15 of the present narrative that in September 1923 Laden-La, like Tharchin, had arrived at the Tibetan capital, the Darjeeling Police Inspector having been dispatched there by Bailey as the latter’s agent. And in the course of his stay there, Laden-La, either on his own initiative, but far more probably at the personal direction of Bailey, had commenced plotting with the Tibetan military to overthrow the Dalai Lama for the purpose of transferring temporal power in Tibet from him to Tsarong Shape. Most likely, therefore, Laden-La, wishing to avoid any and every possible incident which could unnecessarily complicate the highly sensitive and clandestine activities he was engaged in on behalf—not of London, Delhi or Lhasa, but—of British Officer Bailey, gave this candid advice to his friend Tharchin. Unforeseen adverse events, however, would overtake the plotters, and the coup attempt utterly failed to achieve its objectives. See Alex McKay, *Tibet and the British Raj*, 108-14; and cf. his subsequent monograph article on the plot, “Tibet 1924: a Very British Coup Attempt?,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3d Series (Nov. 1997):411-24.

Today [29 September] I went to the monastery called Sera where there are thousands of lamas. I had a talk with them and took a photo of the monastery.... There are supposed to be 5500 monks here but at present there are over 8000. I met one monk who knew me from the last time I was at Gyantse [1921-23]. I did not recognize him but he himself came [forward] and asked me, "Are you Tharchin?" and I told him yes; and so we began to converse, and he told me ... how I had told him some [Bible] stories—of the Lost Son and of the Rich Man and Lazarus ... [He also told me of] the tracts which I gave him, and of the Ten Commandments which I wrote out and gave him and which are still with him. All this ... he told me, and I was so glad to meet him, and so we had a long talk again. He came twice to my place and asked me for some [Christian] books which I gave to him. I praise the Lord that His light is shining in a small [way in the] hearts of some monks in those great monasteries.

Interestingly, it was a review of these very letters of Tharchin's sent to Rev. Graham which prompted research scholar and writer John Bray to comment thus: Tharchin "is chiefly remarkable for the extent and breadth of his contacts. He was well known as a Christian and openly discussed his religious beliefs in Lhasa; his experiences show that the prohibition of Christianity in Tibet was far from absolute." As a matter of fact, they "show that Christians ... were able to establish close personal relations with prominent Tibetans."³¹ One ought to add here that undoubtedly his ethnic background and recognized mastery of the Lhasan Tibetan dialect greatly contributed to the Indo-Tibetan's success in communicating the Christian gospel to so many in Tibet, and especially at the Tibetan capital.

Yet it cannot be emphasized too much that it was unarguably because of his discreet and sensitive conduct which made it possible for him to carry on without hindrance his style of personal evangelism. In the words of his younger-generation Christian friend at Kalimpong, B. C. Simick, Jr., "Tharchinla was a quiet worker on behalf of the Christian gospel because he who understood the Tibetans and their Buddhist culture so very well had realized early on that if he attempted to press the message of Christ upon the Tibetans they would reject it out of hand. And hence, he chose to spread the gospel by his life and evangelized covertly and wisely for the sake of the gospel." This was why, incidentally, added Simick, that "in his various published works in Tibetan which he periodically composed and published at his Kalimpong Press—many of them school texts—Babu Tharchin would include, as some of his teaching examples, passages and stories from the Christian Bible, particularly Jesus' parables." If any further evidence were needed, Simick concluded, such a *modus operandi* confirms that this Indo-Tibetan "was a Christian of deep conviction and a first-rate evangelist."³²

Then, too, Tharchin and his wife continued their strong but sensitively delivered Christian witness among her relatives and the Tharchins' many friends and acquaintances at the Tibetan capital. His several letters from Lhasa reflect this in a clear way, and demonstrate the great lengths to which the Indo-Tibetan was willing to go—even to go into debt, if need be, if by this means many of them could be brought down to Kalimpong where they could hear the gospel of Christ further and see it lived out before their eyes on a consistent daily basis over a long period of time. Wrote this zealous "missionary" of the gospel at Lhasa:

By the grace of our Lord Jesus we are keeping well and trying our best to do something for Him during our ... stay in this place.... My wife is doing her best to testify to her relations.... My wife's mother and brother ... and one sister about 14 and one boy about 7—altogether four in

one family—are willing to come down with us and remain at Kalimpong, and we have great hope that they will come out into the light and get salvation....

The husband of [my wife's] younger sister is a brother of a Tibetan official, and at present they are also here, as they have land about two days' distance away from here. With the husband I talk every day and we discuss [religious] matters. He is very clever in Tibetan and in their own [Buddhist] religion. He also wishes to come down to stay at Kalimpong and he too is very anxious to work in a press.

My wife's mother, brother, the young boy of 7 and the sister of 14—they have all decided to come down with us, and we hope by His grace they all will get the true salvation. It seems a heavy burden on me as ... they have no money for the road expenses. Only some goods [do they have] which they are trying to sell, but they could not get a good price; and so they think that at Kalimpong they will keep a small shop as the mother has some ornaments which she wishes to sell ... at Kalimpong. But she asks me to give help for the road. So I am praying to the Lord to give me the necessary help....

In my wife's [family's] house [at Lhasa] there are nine persons [intending to come down to Kalimpong], and I am supplying all the expenses for all; they have no money. I am afraid I shall be put under debt again. Still I have to take out a loan from a Tibetan Officer. [Nevertheless] I trust in the Lord if [by this] these souls get salvation.³³

As will be learned at the conclusion of the present chapter, all of these relatives and friends—and a few more besides—did take the journey with the Tharchins to Kalimpong, the Lord providing, wrote the Tibetan publisher, the necessary funds to assure that all would reach their destination in India. Moreover, the light of the gospel did shine in the hearts of most, if not all, of them, as Tharchin himself would testify later.



On yet another day while in Lhasa there at last arrived at Tharchin's door an official from the Dalai Lama's palace who carried a message granting the Tibetan visitor the unusual and much-sought-after audience with His Holiness the very next day! In the opening line of his letter to Rev. Graham dated 6 December 1927, an enthusiastic Tharchin exclaimed: "Praise the Lord! Day before yesterday the call from the Dalai Lama came and yesterday at about 11 a.m. I paid my respects to him ..."³⁴ Now it so happened that when the messenger brought the word, Tharchin was away from the dwelling. So the message was delivered to his mother-in-law to pass on to him. In the evening when he returned to the residence of his relatives he received the message and learned of its momentous contents. Immediately he hurried to the residence of Doring Thaiji³⁵ who now advised him concerning the correct procedures to be observed while interacting with the Grand Lama of Tibet. He kindly offered Tharchin his pony and a servant, and also suggested that early the next morning he consult further on the matter with the former Commander-in-Chief of the Tibetan military forces, Tsarong Shape. Though no longer Army Commander, he had nonetheless continued to serve as a member of the Dalai Lama's *Kashag* or Cabinet and was still one of the most trusted officials of His Holiness.³⁶ One can only wonder if the lowly Tibetan from Poo was able to sleep much that night as he lay down with what inside him must have been intense feelings of excitement at the prospect of what lay in store for him the following morning.

It would be a day Gergan Tharchin would never forget, and for him it was a day which began quite early. In what is perhaps the finest description to be found in all the English literature on Tibet which devotes any space to how a typical day in Lhasa might have commenced, Noel Barber has captured the essence and ambience of what it must have been like for Tharchin to have awakened from the precious-little slumber he had been able to garner through the night just past. In a masterful delineation of those early hours which for century after century had marked the opening of every day at the Tibetan capital, Barber penned the following evocative passage:

On this particular morning ... dawn broke across the city with an almost exaggerated Oriental splendor. As the first daubs of pink lit the skies behind the mountains circling the capital, the throb of drums and the low, mournful boom of ceremonial trumpets seemed to linger and tremble high in the air before swooping down to earth, to the city far below. Everyone knew from where the sounds came—the gilded roof of the white and russet Potala, the greatest building in all Tibet, towering high above the Plain of Milk on which the city stood twelve thousand feet above sea level. The heavy trumpets were between ten and twenty feet long, so the Lamas in their saffron-colored robes rested them on golden supports as they blew notes which carried far beyond the edge of the plain, fifteen miles distant.³⁷

In a way the trumpets were Lhasa's alarm clock. Within a few minutes the first wisps of smoke were trailing upwards as dutiful wives lit their fires of yak dung and brewed the morning butter tea. In air made cold with the tang of the mountains, Lamas and monks shuffled through the streets to their morning devotions, shadowy forms in the uncertain light of dawn. The first carts trundled past. The pathways leading south to the broad River Kyi—where the houses quickly gave way to countryside—were alive with small boys fetching water or with girls milking yaks or goats.

It was perhaps at dawn more than any other moment of the day that Lhasa displayed to perfection its enigmatic and remote mysticism. Certainly ... there was no capital in the world like it. Locked in by the endless contours of mountains carved throughout the ages, aloof and apart from the world, it was a city of yesterday uninterested in tomorrow. Wrapped in an aura of mysticism, of devotions, of tinkling bells and fluttering prayer flags, its religious life spilled out into every street—pilgrims spinning their prayer wheels, the chanting monks, the panoply and color of each new procession with its clashing cymbals and gigantic drums shaking the air ... No wonder the weavers of romantic novels had found it irresistible as a setting for fiction, and had added their own mystique, so that to the Western world Lhasa was not only remote and unattainable, but had somehow achieved a peace and serenity denied to ordinary mortals in the frenetic world outside.

Much of this was true, and there was a dream-like quality about the tales which had reached the West from the few travelers who had penetrated the country—stories of devout mystics who could see to the heart of the human spirit, animals and insects treated with loving care because they might house the souls of humans; Lamas who lived in solitary meditation for years, praying simply for their fellowmen; of a country with no concept of time as the Western world knew it. And as if this were not enough, the very isolation of Tibet doubled its mystery to those who read about it, with perhaps an uneasy feeling that here, in this timeless tranquillity, lay the secret of life as it was meant to be lived.

Yet Lhasa was a city of bewildering contrasts. As the streaks of dawn gave way to the clear, sharp mountain air, the first of the pious pilgrims were making their ritual tour of the Lingkor, the five-mile sacred walk round the city; another caravan was preparing to set off across incredibly hostile country to China. Already the fretting ponies, the stoic yaks, the placid mules were being loaded with yak skins of frozen butter, saddlebags of barley, bricks of tea,

haunches of dried yak meat—[an] ... almost Biblical scene, one enacted without change for thirteen centuries ...³⁸

Such, then, were the sights and sounds of Lhasa to which Gergan Tharchin had awakened on this eventful morning in his life. Soon, after completing his routine ablutions and seeking the face of his Lord for the day, he set forth on his pony with his servant towards the villa of Tsarong Shape as had been suggested to him the previous day. The Lhasa residence of this very important person lay about a mile away from the town proper and some four miles from Norbu Lingka, the summer palace of His Holiness. When Tharchin reached his home, the Shape happened to be absorbed in his own regular morning worship, which was naturally not Christian but Buddhist in character. It was well known by all, incidentally, that Tsarong was a deeply religious man for one who was not of the ecclesiastical profession. In the meanwhile Tharchin waited for him in his host's reception room.

When Tsarong was at last free he graciously received Tharchin and proceeded to instruct his visitor as to the right gestures and protocol to be followed in the presence of the Dalai Lama. Tharchin was asked about the presents to be offered to His Holiness. Whereupon the visitor brought out a beautifully packed tin of tiny biscuits, and a solid gold watch which he was carrying on behalf of missionary Cecil Polhill-Turner that was to be presented to the Dalai Lama. The tin of biscuits was nicely covered and decorated with a lovely fancy wrapper.

Tharchin was asked about the ceremonial scarf or *khata* he had brought with him for this august occasion. According to Tibetan custom a silken ceremonial scarf, instead of flower garlands, is offered as a mark of respect and good wishes. "There are at least three kinds of scarfs," wrote one visitor to Lhasa in 1948, "called respectively *nangdso*, *ashi* and *doshe*. The first is of the finest silk and this was the kind I intended to give the Dalai Lama and the Regent; the second is silk as well, but of a lower quality, and the third of a coarser cloth. They were so much in use that they were sold by the bolt, and all came from China. The price varied according to the quality." When one visits the person meant to receive the *khata*, this traveler further explained, the scarf "is rolled up, to be unfurled swiftly on the very moment of the meeting so that its middle lies on the outstretched palms, from which it glides into the host's palms, likewise outstretched. Host and guest bow gently as the scarf changes hands."

Woven nearly "to the fineness of a spider's web," the *khata* is deemed to be a sign of purity and sincerity. "From time immemorial," writes Chapel Tsetan Phuntso, "Tibetans have considered that white symbolizes both purity and good luck, so most *khatas* are white." Nevertheless, he adds, there are ceremonial scarves which are gaily colored as well—made in blue, yellow, green, and red—"and these are presented to those who have made vows to attain Buddhahood and are wound around the arrows for the bride to give them color." Indeed, Phuntso notes, colored *khatas* "are the grandest gifts of all." This is because the colored scarf, in accordance with Buddhist belief, "is the dress of the Bodhisattva and can therefore be used only on special occasions." It has also been observed that *khatas* which have been consecrated by a Lama are believed to possess magical power.

Khatas are presented in an extraordinary variety of situations: for instance, in addition to weddings, birthdays and funerals, they are presented when an individual calls on his elders,

renders homage to figures of the Buddha, or takes his leave of an honored person to commence a journey. These “scarves of blessing” as they are sometimes called are also proffered as presents when presenting a petition to a person or at the great Tibetan festivals, and the kind of khata presented should, in the words of Heinrich Harrer, “be consistent with the rank of the giver.” To anyone versed in Tibetan etiquette, noted another writer on Tibet, “it is possible either to convey delicately a compliment or a slight in the little slip of silk, and foreigners have been known to make sorry blunders in this point without being the least aware of the fact.”³⁹ Although Tharchin was certainly not a “foreigner” to Tibet in the strictest sense of the term, nevertheless, General Tsarong wanted to be very sure his visitor would not blunder in this important regard. Upon being shown Tharchin’s ceremonial khata, the Shape immediately expressed his disapproval of the kind his visitor was intending to offer to Tibet’s Highest Personage. To him it was of an inferior quality. Accordingly, the Cabinet Minister gave to his guest another khata from his own personal collection. In those days it cost Rs. 50/- but now it might cost as much as Rs. 200/- or even more.

Tharchin then proceeded to explain to his Buddhist host that as a Christian he would be unable to prostrate himself before the Dalai Lama, which Tsarong understood very well and took with good grace. Tharchin was excused from this ordeal in view of his faith and commitment to a way of life which prohibited any act of prostration before man or matter.⁴⁰ Tsarong Shape then dismissed his guest with a most courteous goodbye, sending him on his way with best wishes. Tharchin must have departed with a great deal more confidence about what lay ahead than when he had first arrived at the General’s doorstep.

By the time the Tibetan from Kalimpong and his borrowed servant reached the gates of the Dalai Lama’s summer residence, it was already 8 o’clock in the morning. A two-mile distance separated the Palace of Norbu Lingka (meaning “Jewel Garden” or “Jewel Park”) from the Potala Palace. The Jewel Park Palace was the residence the Dalai Lamas loved best, for “it had none of the prison-like atmosphere, the dark corridors and dimly-lit rooms of the Potala.” Furthermore, added Noel Barber, Norbu Lingka “was not a palace in the accepted sense of the word, but an amorphous collection of buildings, more like a village than a palace, set in glorious parkland, square in shape, surrounded by four ten-foot walls, each a half a mile long.” These walls, he further explained as he quoted Frederick Spencer-Chapman’s description upon seeing them in 1936, were “built of huge blocks of granite laid in lines.” The 160-acre Jewel Park not only had well-tended flowers and trees; it also contained the Dalai Lama’s small zoo, an arsenal for the Kusung Regiment (the Royal Bodyguard), and residences for a few select government officials of high rank. In the middle of the Park was situated the private well-kept garden and summer residence of His Holiness, surrounded itself by an inner wall, known as the Yellow Wall, and its two large gates, secured by members of the Bodyguard and a pair of enormous fierce-looking mastiffs.

The Jewel Park’s grounds themselves have been described in picturesque detail by Margaret Williamson. She, with her husband Frederick Williamson, the British Political Officer for Tibet in the mid-1930s, were taken on a personal tour of the entire complex one summer day in 1933. In her *Memoirs* of that period she recalls their visit to the splendid Norbu Lingka:

We were escorted round the beautifully kept gardens by Kunphela and Ringang [respectively, the then favorite of the Great Thirteenth, and one of the four Tibetans educated in England earlier in the century]. We followed flagged paths that wove through them and admired the profusion of blooms on every side. There were lupins, nasturtiums, sunflowers, hollyhocks, stocks and roses. There were also dogs of various breeds—dachshunds, dalmatians, pekinese and many ferocious Tibetan mastiffs—not to mention three monkeys and a bear.

In a small resthouse the Dalai Lama kept his collection of exquisite jade carvings and *cloisonné* brought back with him from his exile in China. There was also a lake in which a delightful little temple had been built. This was surrounded by stone balustrades and pots of flowers, and on the outside walls were painted panels. Here a scribe was seated cross-legged, so deeply engrossed in his work that his nose nearly touched the paper.

Outside one of the many small temples we found a tiger and a leopard—both stuffed—and a pair of brass lions. In the stables were real animals: about 150 horses and mules. Since the Dalai Lama had acquired his motor cars, however, they were only used once a year for the great ceremonial procession to the Potala.

Down a broad avenue of poplar trees we found Chense Lingka, meaning “favorite garden,” which consisted of another private palace and garden that Kunphela had recently designed and had built for His Holiness. Here more flowers bloomed and we saw the bower where His Holiness liked to sit in the afternoon. Behind the main palace was another small palace with a sun-room at the rear.

In our tour of this miniature wonderland of palaces, temples and gardens, we came at length to a path lined with trees—and from every tree hung a cage with a little bird in it. This delightful aviary-walk brought us past another summer house to the garages where His Holiness’s cars were stored. The first car, acquired about two years before our visit, was a Baby Austin bearing the numberplate TIBET No. 1. Painted yellow and red, its interior was lined with Chinese brocade. Later a six-cylinder Dodge had been added which was brightly painted, had no number and seemed to have its hood permanently raised. Yellow silk trim had been put around the windows and the rear seat covered with yellow brocade. Lastly, there was the blue Baby Austin, TIBET No. 2, which Kunphela was permitted to use. The cars had to be transported in pieces over the mountains and the petrol brought up in cans.

We walked back around the palace and looked into a large audience chamber, the centerpiece of which was a huge throne with a gold-washed table beside it.⁴¹

It would be this Audience or Reception Chamber, of course, that Gergan Tharchin would soon be ushered into to have his “moment in the sun.” Nevertheless, upon their arrival at Norbu Lingka, Tharchin and his servant had to wait for some time inside the gate. Another visitor to the Tibetan capital exactly twenty years later—a Westerner, in fact—had also had the privilege of an audience with the Dalai Lama, although in his case he had it with the Great Thirteenth’s successor on the Lion Throne of Tibet. Like Tharchin’s current visit to the Holy City, it was the summer season in 1947 when Amaury de Riencourt was at Lhasa, and therefore the latter’s audience was held at the Norbu Lingka too. Hence, it may be worth quoting this Westerner’s account of his experience of what happened as he made his way to the Palace and waited his turn to be ushered into the presence of the Dalai Lama; for it can give some idea of what it must have been like for Tharchin on his own memorable day. Riencourt, it should be added, was accompanied to the Norbu Lingka by George Tsarong, Darjeeling-educated and son of the same General Tsarong who had rendered assistance to Tharchin twenty years earlier. Here is how this Western visitor described his early morning

experience of 1947 just before he entered the Reception Room for his audience with the Dalai Lama:

It was a beautiful morning and it certainly looked auspicious. George arrived late at 8 a.m. and we left right away ... We trotted briskly on a large dusty road ... [and] halted shortly afterwards in front of the large golden gate of the Dalai Lama's residence.

A small platoon of khaki-clad Tibetan soldiers presented arms. We dismounted ... and walked straight into Norbu Lingka. Trying my best to look dignified, I followed George along a wide paved alley lined with a large multicolored variety of trees gathered in dense thickets of oaks, poplars, woods; a small silvery lake, covered with lotus flowers and slightly rippled by white swans sailing majestically, shimmered under the bright sun. A small island surrounded by the calm water carried a delicate Chinese pagoda connected with the mainland by a yellow marble bridge.

Ahead of us, throngs of cherry-colored monks of the household ambled slowly along the alley ... There was an air of hushed expectancy about Norbu Lingka; it was as if the Holy Presence of the God-King made it imperative not to raise one's voice.

A small group of yellow and purple-robed lamas, the Peak Secretaries of the Ruler's Court, were apparently waiting for us, twiddling the beads of their rosaries. George salaamed the First Chamberlain of the Court and I imitated him. Without a word, we walked on towards the far end of the alley where the Audience Hall stood in all its majestic splendor, with its golden dome and shingles, dark woolen curtains covered with *Kyilkhors* or magic diagrams and green leering dragons.... I spent the rest of the time waiting in the chamberlain's reception room, talking to our host ...

The sound of a loud gong interrupted us ... Nine o'clock had just been struck and we rose in a hurry. I made sure that my silken khata was at hand and that Chumpa followed with the presents. The sounds of a beating of drums and gongs started, spreading a strange musical rhythm through the gardens of Norbu Lingka.... Cohorts of gigantic monks of the Dalai Lama's Bodyguard took their position near the entrance ... These seven-foot tall Khampa lamas are recruited in eastern Tibet, in the province of Kham where men are larger than anywhere else in Asia.⁴²

Such must have been some of the scenes and activities which Tharchin himself encountered on his momentous morning; for doubtless little was to have changed between 1927 and 1947. And as the visitor from Kalimpong now awaited his turn inside the antechamber to the private Reception Room of His Holiness, Tharchin noticed that there were also other Tibetan officials who were waiting their turn to be interviewed. Every visitor was allowed a five-to-ten minute audience with His Holiness. At last Tharchin's turn came and he was called in.

The Highest Dignitary of Tibet whom the lowly man from Poo was about to meet has been well portrayed by a learned American Oriental and Buddhist scholar, William McGovern, who in 1923 traveled in disguise through much of Central Tibet. Upon revealing his identity at Lhasa, he was permitted to remain on an extended visit there for more than five weeks. During that time he was commanded by the Dalai Lama himself to have a secret nocturnal interview with him in an upper chamber of the Potala. It lasted a full hour, with just the two of them together in a small darkened room. McGovern has left the following vivid and quite full portrait of the Inmost One:

I found him to be a smallish man, lighter in build and with a face longer and more oval than most Tibetans. A childhood attack of smallpox had left slight traces upon his countenance. But these were almost invisible in the gloom. His head was shaven, as becomes a priest, but he had long, pointed mustaches, which he had learned in India to wax. He was a man who obviously

was accustomed to be regarded as a god, and who, moreover, had a firm belief in his own divinity, and yet there was a great quietness, even modesty, about his manner. He has not the delicate, half-mystical appearance which characterizes the Panchen Lama of Shigatse. He is much more a man of the world, a careful observer of human nature, and a shrewd conjecturer of ulterior motives. His personal life is above suspicion. He is rigid in his celibacy and in his abstinence from wine and tobacco. His food is simple, and his dress on ordinary occasions is scarcely to be distinguished from that of an ordinary monk. He prefers to reside as much as possible in his villa at Norbu Lingka, another mile beyond the city, instead of living in state, attended with pomp and ceremony, in the Potala ... Yet he is obviously concerned with this world's affairs. He is ambitious in a cool, calculating way, ever seeking to unify his power and to weaken opposition.

In his youth his violent temper frequently led him to commit some rash or foolish act, but the trials and tribulations of exile and deposition have taught him greater caution—one might almost say craftiness. He is afraid to commit himself, and his intelligence is not gigantic. Fine points of metaphysics and theology he leaves to others, but he is possessed of a great deal of acumen and acuteness. Above all, he is blessed with the faculty of being able to choose wisely his human instruments. His most notable success along this line is Tsarong Shape, and the wisest thing he ever did was to place in Tsarong's hands much of the reorganization of the State.⁴³

When Tharchin entered the Reception Room, he noticed the god-king of Tibet sitting on a throne raised about one and a half feet above the floor. It has been said by some that no one can ever be positioned on a level which is higher than the Dalai Lama. This is not altogether accurate since whenever the latter on occasion makes his way in procession through Lhasa's streets the people may, without fear of rebuke or reprisal, climb onto the flat roofs of the houses located along the way and look down upon His Holiness. It is true in audience, however, that the Lama-King of Tibet will always be seated higher than all others present.⁴⁴ Such was the case in the present instance. Now upon the raised throne His Holiness was sitting in a cross-legged fashion, the familiar lotus position of the Buddha and a posture quite common as well in most parts of India. He was attired in a rich yellow robe.

As the reader of the present narrative may by this time have deciphered, yellow is the color of the Reformed Sect of Lamaist Buddhism, also known as the Gelugpa or Yellow Church of Tibetan Buddhism. And, of course, all modern-day Dalai Lamas are of this Reformed wing of Lamaism. Heinrich Harrer tells of an old legend that is supposed to explain why this color was selected.

Tsong Khapa, the great reformer of Buddhism in Tibet, was standing, on the day of his entry into the monastery of Sakya, at the tail of a line of novices. When it was his turn to be robed the supply of red hats had run out. In order that he should not be hatless, someone grabbed the first hat that came to hand and put it on his head. It chanced to be a yellow one. Tsong Khapa never gave up wearing it and so yellow came to be adopted as the color of the Reformed Church.⁴⁵

Upon seeing His Holiness in his golden-colored robe, Tharchin saluted him in military style. The Dalai Lama nodded his head in acceptance of the greeting. He motioned Tharchin to be seated. The visitor was now positioned almost directly in front of His Holiness at a distance apart of five to six feet. "I dared not look here and there in the Reception Room," reported Tharchin, "except to look straight at the impressive countenance of the Dalai Lama."⁴⁶

Beautifully designed woolen carpets were spread on the floor. The entire room conveyed the idea of contemplation and peacefulness.”

If the décor of the Audience Chamber at Norbu Lingka escaped the notice of Tharchin because he was so greatly preoccupied, as ceremony strictly required him to be, with gazing nowhere else but upon the face of the one whom Lamaists believe to be the Vice-Regent of Buddha, there has nonetheless been left to us, happily, a fairly good description of the Chamber by another, Tokan Tada from Japan, who lived and studied for the priesthood at Lhasa's Sera Monastery during the decade 1913-23.* Because he was one of the Dalai Lama's personal disciples, became an informal foreign adviser to His Holiness, and frequently attended the Grand Lama of Tibet at his Court, Lama Tada grew quite familiar with the Audience Hall at the Summer Palace and could thus delineate in detail its rich interior:

The Throne was placed ... facing south, and on top of the Throne there were five-colored brocade cushions, reaching 1.5 meters high. From the ceiling a yellow brocade canopy was hung. On the surrounding walls there hung many painted scrolls depicting the story of Sakyamuni [Buddha] in gay colors. On the capital of the pillars and on the panels were designed flowers and birds after the Chinese fashion. On the brackets were engraved lion-dogs after the Nepalese fashion, which showed the origin of the Tibetan arts. The pillars of the inner sanctum were covered with gold brocade, and between the pillars were hung the banners and the incense-banner to which small bells were attached to make a tinkling sound in order to give the atmosphere of solemnity in the hall.⁴⁷

Indeed, solemnity and majesty were united in the person of the Great Thirteenth Priest-King of Tibet.

Once he was seated in the presence of His Holiness, Tharchin was asked routine questions regarding his arrival, the duration of residence and the time of his anticipated departure.

* He would later become, incidentally, a correspondent with Gergan Tharchin; and he even paid a visit to Tharchin's Kalimpong home in 1961. Tada would die in 1967. See the final volume of the present biography, Chapter 23, for details. However, more than likely Tokan Tada and Gergan Tharchin had initially met each other long before 1961, and, of all places, at Ghoom! This would have been during the first two years of the Babu's stay at the tiny hill station. From both the Japanese monk's book on the Great Thirteenth and a volume on the Japanese in Tibet by Scott Berry, one is able to piece together a likely scenario for how these two met at Ghoom. For in January 1912 Tokan Tada had come to India, and more specifically, to Darjeeling, where he had an audience with the Dalai Lama during the latter's exile from Lhasa 1910-13. Moreover, while still at Darjeeling, the Tibetan God-King even officiated at the rite that made the Japanese "a true lamaist priest," was given his lamaist name of Thubten Gyantshan that included, the disciple carefully noted, part of the Great Thirteenth's own name of Thubten Gyatsho, and was provided formal permission to enter Tibet and "a guarantee of many conveniences."

The Dalai Lama's disciple, however, did not accompany Tibet's Priest-King on the latter's return to his land in June 1912; instead, and as directed by the Grand Lama, he would remain behind for more than eighteen months and learn Tibetan at Ghoom from an aristocrat who himself had originally hailed from Lhasa. Only in July 1913, some six months following the Dalai Lama's own arrival in the Tibetan capital, would the Japanese monk take leave of Ghoom and enter Bhutan "as a Tibetan pilgrim" on his way on the lengthy trek up to Lhasa.

This thus meant that during nearly all of 1912 and the first half of 1913 both Tokan Tada and Gergan Dorje Tharchin were present in the little hill town of Ghoom, where it is inconceivable that at some point during the monk's study of Tharchin's native language these two budding intellectuals would have failed to encounter each other on some occasion or other. See Tada, *The Thirteenth Dalai Lama*, 88; and Berry, *Monks, Spies and a Soldier of Fortune*, 101 with 121, 136. Furthermore, depending on how long into 1923 the Japanese monk had remained in Tibet, it is quite conceivable that the two might have met again either at Gyantse or at the Tibetan capital itself, where Tharchin would himself arrive in early September of that year.

After this His Holiness asked him several questions on various phases of social and political life. He inquired, "Who is the Viceroy of India?" Happily for him, the visitor knew the name and replied, "Lord Irwin." He had answered correctly and had pronounced the name properly too. Said Tharchin later: "Fortunately, the name was on the tip of my tongue."

The Grand Lama of Tibet then told his visitor, "I am pleased to know about the Tibetan newspaper which you have founded." Reported Tharchin long afterwards: "The Dalai Lama encouraged me to continue to publish the newspaper, to which sentiment I rather apologetically replied that the newspaper was not properly printed." To which His Holiness responded with, "Go on, and do not give up." Thereafter the Dalai Lama inquired about the civil war that was then going on in China between the Nationalists and the Communists. This interest in the Chinese Civil War unquestionably stemmed from the Great Thirteenth's increasing dread of "the Red menace" which had begun to spread in Asia. Ever since 1921 with the fall of Buddhist Outer Mongolia to the brutal Soviet variety of Marxism, His Holiness had grown increasingly concerned for his own Buddhist land were the Chinese Communists successful in defeating the Nationalists. Aware of Tharchin's ability, as a newspaper publisher, to monitor the news and gather information about happenings in other lands, it is not surprising that the Dalai Lama would have inquired of the Babu about the current status of the political and military struggle then taking place in Tibet's vast neighbor to the east. But he also inquired about the Panchen Lama who at that time was away in Chinese Mongolia. His Holiness evinced this interest particularly inasmuch as he was anxious about the safety and return journey of the next highest ranking Lama of Tibet. Another reason for his reference to the High Lama of Trashilhunpo in his conversation with Tharchin was because the newspaper publisher had recently featured a series of articles about the Panchen in the *Tibet Mirror*.

It would do well to pause in the narrative for a few moments to add some further words about this ecclesiastical personality, who proved to be so important, yet quite troublesome, in recent Tibetan history. The Panchen is the Lama next in rank to the Dalai Lama as spiritual head of Tibetan Buddhism. Indeed, the followers of the Panchen Lamas had frequently maintained this Lama's *supremacy*, at least spiritually-speaking, over the Dalai. As a matter of fact, in the East Tibet province of Amdo, where the current Fourteenth Dalai Lama was discovered, the Panchen more often than not ranked in the minds of the people there as the more important figure. Tibetans address him as Panchen Rimpoche ("The Precious Great Pandit or Sage"), which is an abbreviation of Sanskrit *pandita* ("scholar") and the Tibetan *chen-po* ("great") with Rimpoche ("precious," the form of address applied to all supposedly reincarnated Lamas). His official residence at the Tashi Lhunpo or Trashilhunpo Monastery at Shigatse (southwest of Lhasa) provided early Western visitors the opportunity of nicknaming him Tashi Lama in contradistinction to the Dalai Lama, but the appellation lacks any validity, for Tibetans never call him by that name. They do have the designation "Tashi Lama," but reserve it for priests of an inferior position who attend weddings and furnish the material for jokes!

The Panchen Lama is regarded by Tibetans as a supreme incarnation, an emanation or manifestation of the celestial Buddha O-pa-me, "Measureless or Boundless Light"—in Sanskrit, Amitabha—who is believed by Tibetan Buddhists and other Buddhists to preside over the present world era, or *kalpa*, the fourth of the five deemed to constitute the entirety

of cosmic history. Now these presumed successive incarnations of O-pa-me have been recorded in official biographies of the Panchen Lamas. The first Lama to hold the title of Panchen (1569-1662) received it from Dalai Lama V (1617-82). As a sign of immense appreciation to his teacher, the then Abbot of Trashilhunpo, the Great Fifth had given him the title of Panchen Rimpoche. And ever since then, the Trashilhunpo Abbots or Panchen Lamas have succeeded one another in accordance with the very principle of reincarnation that is followed by the Lamaist pontiffs at Lhasa.

Around the year 1910, at the time when the Chinese were occupying much of Tibet and the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had had to flee to India, a rift began between him and the next to the most recent and late Panchen Lama, the one referred to in the interview here with Tharchin by His Holiness. Some of that Panchen Lama's attendants seized the opportunity during Dalai Lama XIII's absence from Lhasa to register a complaint regarding the taxes then being levied by the Government against the monastic seat of the Panchen Lama at Shigatse, and other similar secular issues. The occupying Chinese on their part sought to exploit the rift and thus attempt to divide Tibet along ideologically religious lines,⁴⁸ but failed to do so: they themselves, by early 1913, having been totally driven from the country. What had especially presented the Chinese with an opportunity to attempt to exploit the division between these two important administrative centers in central Tibet was the fact that during the period of Chinese expulsion from the country (1911-13) the followers of the Panchen Lama had not lifted a finger to assist the forces of the Dalai Lama to expel the Han from the Panchen's own administrative area of Shigatse,⁴⁹ which doubtless deepened the suspicion in Lhasa that the Panchen's supporters—if not the Lama himself—were pro-Chinese. This naturally aggravated the rift between the two High Lamas still further; and when the two of them, as will shortly be delineated next in the present chapter, differed over similar tax and other economic issues in 1923 the Panchen Lama, on 15 November of that year, fled immediately to China. There and in Chinese Mongolia he wandered about for the rest of his life, only infrequently setting foot inside Tibet in its northeast section that in any case often fell under Chinese influence if not its outright control. He never again saw Dalai Lama XIII.

Now in the interview between the Great Thirteenth and Tharchin in 1927, there was perhaps a more specific reason for the keen interest His Holiness displayed in conversation with his visitor from Kalimpong with regard to the welfare of his so-called spiritual rival. Indeed, it would appear that the Dalai Lama's attention given towards the Panchen was bordering on an obsession; but perhaps justifiably so, since it greatly revolved around the matter of the Tibetan treasury, or better stated, the growing *lack* of a public treasury. Three years before Tharchin's own audience with His Holiness, Major Bailey, the then British Political Officer at Gangtok, was invited by the Dalai Lama to pay a visit to Lhasa in 1924 for talks with him and his Prime Minister. And according to Bailey's biographer, Arthur Swinson, "the most important topics" for discussion (apart from the then current Everest Expedition)⁵⁰ "were the flight of the Tashi Lama and Bolshevik intrigues"* and a suspicion by the Dalai Lama that some hidden connection existed between the two. Swinson went on

* Besides the Dalai Lama's anxiety over the possible triumph of Communism in China to the east of Tibet, he was also concerned about the machinations of the Russian Bolshevik brand of Marxism to the north. This was

to observe that the big sticking point between the two Grand Lamas of Tibet had for years centered upon the matter of annual taxes or contributions. The “curious financial arrangement” which obtained in respect of the Panchen Lama was that “he paid a quarter of the Tibetan government’s expenses in time of war,” but paid “nothing in time of peace.”

Inasmuch as there had been many years of conflict with the Chinese, the contributions of Tibet’s second-ranking prelate had been falling due continuously for a considerable number of years. Yet each time he had failed to pay. Swinson explains that when eight full years of defaulted payments had gone by, the Dalai Lama, no doubt anxious beyond measure, had demanded immediate payment. Further compounding the Panchen’s problem of contributions in arrears was an issue which revolved around the status of the vast estates belonging to his monastic seat at Trashilhunpo near Shigatse. For the longest time a number of estates, particularly those which had been granted to high religious figures or families of aristocrats for having rendered outstanding service, had been given tax exemptions by allowing the holders of these exemptions to render the required tax not in coin but in kind in the form of agricultural or nomadic products. The Monastery of Trashilhunpo was one such estate-holder which had long enjoyed this special privilege. But when in the early 1920s a reform program—whose aim was to gain increased central control and central revenue to help finance the formation of a stronger Tibetan military force and other secularist changes in the country’s polity—led to the

because two years earlier the Soviet government had apparently already authorized the Buriat Mongol Lama Agvan Dorjief, British India’s nemesis of yesteryear, to organize a secret Soviet Mongolian delegation to Lhasa to open diplomatic relations with Tibet and offer arms and ammunition to the Tibetan government. It would not be the last mission the Soviets would dispatch to Tibet in the 1920s, either. See Volume III, Chapter 24 of the present work for details. Suffice it to add here, however, that by 1924 the British Political Officer was himself equally concerned about the Bolshevik threat from the north. Like many other members of Britain’s frontier cadre identified with the “forward school” mentality in British “Great Game” politics, Bailey harbored a deep-seated fear of Russia’s intentions in Asia, especially following the Bolshevik victory over the Tsarist government. After all, Bailey possessed his own informants among the Russians; for example, the Buriat Buddhist Lama-leader Zamba Haldenov of the Astrakhan Kalmucks in the Soviet Union. As historian Alex McKay has observed, information received from such sources had to have convinced the Political Officer that a real threat existed of Communist influence in Tibet and that, “like Curzon” some twenty years earlier, Bailey “was determined to meet the challenge in Tibet before it became a challenge to India.” And in line with this intent, Bailey had not hesitated to warn the Delhi government a mere few weeks before he himself had launched this current journey of his to Lhasa that a Russian, by name “Zyrianin,” was even then undertaking a mission from Urga to the Tibetan capital “with a view to establish Bolshevism in Tibet.” In fact, as intimated at several places in the present volume, he had become so anxious about already known recent Soviet intrigues in Tibet that he had even then been plotting secretly the overthrow of the Tibetan ruler with whom he was at that very moment holding talks about the Bolshevik menace! McKay, who has thoroughly researched the matter, has explained that by late summer of 1923 Major Bailey had concluded that His Holiness, made extremely ineffective due to the vehement opposition by reactionary factions within both Government and Buddhist Church to his socio-economic reforms and military modernization, was no longer willing or able to create a strong enough Tibet which could successfully withstand the Communist Russian attempts to gain influence in the land. Yet if this be true, as Bailey most firmly believed, then this would unquestionably affect adversely Britain’s primary interests in India. Accordingly, the Political Officer now thought that only General Tsarong, if made head of Tibet’s secular power, could deal effectively with the perceived Soviet menace and thus protect Britain’s imperial interests to the south. Hence, Bailey had set in motion the attempted coup to effect the desired change in Tibetan temporal leadership. It failed, though, due to Bailey’s monumental miscalculation. See again McKay, *Tibet and the British Raj*, 102-15, and his subsequent monograph on these events, “Tibet 1924: a Very British Coup Attempt?,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3d Series (Nov. 1997):411-24.

reorganization of the land's entire tax collection system, the Dalai Lama partially removed Trashilhunpo's special tax status. And together, these two actions by His Holiness very quickly impelled His Serenity the Panchen Lama to flee the country in 1923 and find refuge in China and Inner Mongolia, taking along with him a large retinue and a considerable portion of his own treasury. The Panchen's flight, sudden and unexpected as it was, created a near panic in Lhasa. (Gergan Tharchin, incidentally, was himself present at the Tibetan capital at that very moment.) Moreover, sizable segments of the Tibetan populace viewed the flight of this popular successor incarnation of O-pa-me, in the words of one scholar on Tibet, "as yet another of the undesirable consequences of secular changes and the rise to prominence of the Anglo-oriented military faction."⁵¹ More importantly, the Panchen's hasty departure set off a political conflict of serious proportions between, if not personally the two Lamas themselves, then most certainly the two groups of retainers and other followers each of them had; for it was fairly well believed that the two holy men themselves would have soon settled the dispute had the matter been left to them to resolve.⁵² As one writer on Tibet observed, the conflict did not in the first instance originate over the matter of territorial jurisdiction or power and authority, as some have alleged, but was a controversy which erupted "over the privilege of tax exemption and the question of revenue."⁵³

When the British Political Officer appeared in Lhasa a year later he had been asked by the Dalai Lama to use his considerable influence to try to effect his "rival's" return, since most Tibetans, including the Grand Lama himself, had been made extremely sad over his exile; but even though Major Bailey had over the years become a great personal friend of the Panchen, he was unable, in his biographer's words, "to make any practical suggestion."⁵⁴ Hence, the resultant conflict which emerged between these two power centers of Tibet provided the Chinese with a pretext they had long sought after, since their deportation in 1912, for interfering in Tibetan political affairs, an interference which would last for decades to come.

At some point during his audience with the Dalai Lama Tharchin was able to present not only his own gift (the decoratively wrapped tin of biscuits) but also the gifts from missionary Cecil Polhill-Turner. These gifts—a gold wrist-watch and an expensive writing instrument—were duly conveyed by the Kalimpong visitor to His Holiness, who would several weeks later acknowledge the same to Polhill-Turner by means of a sealed letter in Tibetan. As it turned out, the letter was transmitted by mail to the British missionary in England by the hand of Gergan Tharchin when the latter left Lhasa for India to post it there early the following year. The full text of the letter, so kindly made available to the present writer by Cecil Polhill's grandson, Professor Doctor Victor C. Funnell, makes for interesting reading, for it reveals the contents of a letter sent His Holiness earlier by Polhill that had been forwarded to the Dalai Lama by the latter's old friend in Kalimpong, the retired British Trade Agent, David Macdonald. But it also reveals a quite obvious hesitancy by Lhasa, at this sensitive period in Tibetan affairs, to respond positively to Christian missionary Polhill's request for permission to enter Tibet and travel up to the Tibetan capital for an audience with the Great Thirteenth. In contrast to the earlier-described success of "missionary" Tharchin's less obtrusive approach to Christian evangelism in Tibet, missionary Polhill, though not presented with an outright negative to his more direct approach (perhaps due to his identification with two quite respected friends of Tibet: the Babu and Macdonald), was nonetheless the recipient

of a display of the Tibetan government's by now all too familiar temporizing when it came to appeals by Christian workers to be granted permission to enter the Great Closed Land. How coincidental—but also how ironic—that missionary Polhill's "unsuccessful" letter was dated the same day on which the "successful" Tharchin had had his audience with Tibet's Great One: 5 December 1927! The Dalai Lama's reply to Polhill's missive, a very clear English translation of which was found by Professor Funnell among his grandfather's papers, reads this way:

The reason for writing this letter is as follows:

I have duly received your letter dated the 12th day of the 10th Tibetan month of the Fire-Hare year (5th December 1927) through Mr. D. Macdonald, late British Trade Agent, Yatung and Gyantse, together with a gold wrist-watch and a pencil, and have understood the contents. In it you state that although you are not acquainted with me personally, you have a great desire to meet me. Formerly you had visited Amdo and Kham, and made the acquaintance of the Tibetan people and established friendly relations with them and that you are keenly interested in them. Therefore you propose to send me news from the English town of London, also illustrated newspapers and Chinese news that will be useful to me, as you have friends in China from whom you are receiving letters. Furthermore, you wish to tell me what sort of religion the British people have, and what is going to happen in the world. You are of opinion that wonderful things are going to take place in the near future. I have thoroughly understood all that you say, and I shall keep them in mind.

This letter is sent with a silk scarf of greeting and a Tibetan gold coin on an auspicious date—the 5th day of the 11th Tibetan month of the Fire-Hare year (31st December 1927).

Round Seal of the Dalai Lama.

Reply sent through Tharchin of Khunu [i.e., of Kunawar]

To C. Polhill Esquire
Howbury Hall
Bedford England*

On the whole the Dalai Lama was openly expressive of his goodwill towards his visitor from Kalimpong, who in return was very glad to have met His Holiness, the political monarch as well as the religious ruler of Tibet. The Grand Lama was kind enough to grant Tharchin an interview of thirty minutes whereas various top-ranking officials were getting barely five to ten minutes. Observed the Kalimpong publisher later: "I believe this good gesture towards me was indicative of the Dalai Lama's admiration for, and appreciation of, my services and contribution to the people of Tibet through the Tibetan newspaper." Indeed, such a conclusion would appear to be quite reasonable when one considers the contents of the brief report about the audience which Tharchin sent from Lhasa to Rev. Graham by letter the very next day following the event. For among his few remarks to his friend concerning the unusual interview,

* The present author owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. John Bray of London for having put him in contact with missionary Polhill's grandson. In consequence, Professor Funnell kindly furnished the author a copy of the English translation and graciously granted him permission to quote its contents. Letter, Funnell to the present author, Beijing, 6 November 1995. Professor Funnell, incidentally, is a Council member of the Tibet Society of England, and is currently (2003) editing for publication the unpublished memoirs of his grandfather Cecil, and granduncle Arthur, Polhill-Turner (brothers) that will be entitled *Two Etonians in China*.

Tharchin mentioned in particular the fact that “at the last” few moments of his time with the Dalai Lama the latter once “again asked me to continue with the paper and try to enlarge it by and by.” Furthermore, the Tibetan publisher added significantly, His Holiness also declared at the end of the audience that he “would keep me in mind to help me in the work.”⁵⁵ In the light of these statements, therefore, it would seem that Tharchin was not off the mark at all to conclude that the unusual length of his audience was due in great measure to this progressively-minded Dalai Lama’s keen interest in the Kalimpong publisher’s newspaper as yet another instrument in the furtherance of his country’s modernization which the shrewd Tibetan ruler had been pursuing so diligently during the latter years of his long reign.*

After the conversation was concluded, and in accordance with the requisite etiquette, tea was served by a Tibetan attendant who was the faithful and favorite servant of the Dalai Lama. His name was Kuchar Kunphela (or, Kun-pel La) whom Tharchin was to come to know much more intimately in Kalimpong in the years after the Dalai Lama’s death in 1933. One-third of a cup of tea was poured into a Chinese porcelain. According to custom Tharchin acknowledged the offer but declined it with thanks. Then, in a round basket, Tibetan cakes and “khapses,” along with a bowl of fruits, were brought in but again the visitor declined these politely but with thanks. When Tharchin emerged from his audience with the Tibetan god-king, he found—as he was supposed to find—that all the offerings which he had courteously declined inside had been handed over to his servant who was still awaiting him at the gate. Many people who were standing at the entrance greatly desired to have a share in these preparations because they, like all Tibetans, believed these were now infused with the special blessing of His Holiness.

This was not at all unlike the instance told of by David Macdonald about an occasion in 1919 when he had dined with the same Panchen Lama only just now discussed above. This second most revered of all Tibetan Lamas had been on a return journey from Lhasa back to his monastic seat outside Shigatse, and had purposely arranged that his itinerary would take him via Gyantse to see his old friend Macdonald, the then British Trade Agent there. Upon being conducted by the Panchen to his temporary quarters at the local Palkhor Chhode Monastery, Macdonald found himself seated at table in one of the Great Lama’s rooms where lunch was about to be served. Small bowls of rice, cooked in butter, and dried fruits were shortly afterwards passed around. “Before we ate,” the British guest reported later,

* A discrepancy exists here concerning the actual amount of time the visitor spent with the Dalai Lama. In the account above of what Tharchin reported long after the event, he stated it as having been for thirty minutes. But in his letter to Rev. Graham dated 6 December 1927, just one day after the audience, the Tibetan had stated that his interview with His Holiness had lasted only “about ten minutes.” Yet given the variety of topics said to have been discussed, as indicated in both Tharchin’s brief description to Graham and his much more thorough report of a later date, there is little doubt in this author’s mind that the audience lasted much longer than a mere ten minutes. Perhaps the discrepancy can best be explained by making the observation that the excitement of the moment for Tharchin of at last sitting face-to-face with the near-legendary Great Man of Tibet had probably caused him to lose all sense of time. And when only twenty-four hours afterwards he took to his typewriter to report to Rev. Graham this momentous event in his life, the emotional high of the previous day still lingered with him. But upon further reflection much later, when, as he said in his letter to Graham, “I shall tell all the news [about the audience] on my arrival” back in Kalimpong, calm reason could assess more accurately the length of time he had actually spent in the presence of the Inmost One of Tibet.

“the Panchen Lama solemnly blessed the food. My confidential Tibetan clerk, a devout Lamaist, who was also present, instead of eating his portion surreptitiously emptied his bowl into the pouch formed by his robe and waistband, to take home to his family.” This was because once the Panchen had blessed it, explained Macdonald, “this food was sacred. Such food is considered a very potent talisman as protection against all ills and misfortunes.”⁵⁶

Whether or not before departing the presence of His Holiness the visitor from Kalimpong had had placed round his neck by the Dalai Lama a wisp of red bandage material that had been knotted by Tibet’s spiritual ruler himself and rubbed between the palms of his hands, Tharchin never did say.* More than likely, however, out of respect and appreciation for Tharchin’s unique contribution to Tibetan life and culture, and the fact that His Holiness had granted such an extraordinarily lengthy audience, it is not too much to assume that the Dalai Lama had in very truth graced the neck of his visitor with one of the ceremonial red ribbons. This is another object which Tibetans would regard as most valuable—indeed, as even more precious than the said food preparations. At *public* audiences held by the Grand Lama such red ribbons are distributed by one of his Lama ministers to the crowd of pilgrims who file past before him, and would not have likely been knotted or blessed by His Holiness. “It is when he performs this ceremony himself, as he sometimes does at a private audience, that one is considered to have received, in that tiny scrap of material, a treasure beyond the value of all the gold in Tibet.”⁵⁷

Before concluding this portion of the narrative dealing with Gergan Tharchin’s unusual private audience with the ruling monarch of Tibet, mention should be made of one or two more details. According to the letter which Tharchin had dispatched from Kalimpong, permission was sought by him to study under an erudite and renowned Lama who was then engaged in the task of revising the *Kangyur*, the canonical scriptures of Buddhism. The would-be scholar had hoped during his period of study at Lhasa to reside in the same compound where the learned Lama was living while taking lessons with him. But because His Holiness was not pleased with this Lama, the latter was compelled to move away to some other place. In Tharchin’s audience with the Dalai Lama, the latter inquired of his visitor whether or not he was studying under this learned Lama. Tharchin wisely replied, “As the place of that Lama is far away, I am not going to study under him. Instead, I am taking lessons from another Lama in Lhasa city itself.”

When asked later to convey his final impressions of the Tibetan ruler and the interview he had had with him, the elder Tharchin replied: “His Holiness the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had a very attractive personality. His eyes were forceful and penetrating. In fact, you could never look straight at him even if you were a non-Tibetan. The British Officers used to have the same feeling. Even so, the great virtue of simplicity was written on his face. He was a wise, kindhearted, broadminded and farsighted person. Yet he was also a man who was made of stern stuff. He was tough and dignified—almost born to command. He was shrewd, too.” At

* It is known, though, for Tharchin said so in his letter written the following day to Rev. Graham, that the Dalai Lama presented a particularly valuable remembrance to his visitor. Wrote Tharchin: “He gave me ... a large silk khata [by which he meant a *longer* than usual one] to take with me.” This, too, was a further indication of the great respect His Holiness had towards Gergan Tharchin.

the conclusion of the interview the lowly Tibetan from Poo saluted him again in military style and moved slowly backwards, as was strictly required, without showing his back to the Great Man of Tibet.⁵⁸

That the Thirteenth Dalai Lama always had at heart the best interests of Tibet is borne out especially in his foreign and domestic policies as they pertained to the country's huge neighbor to the east. When asked in 1975 what he thought was this Grand Lama's chief accomplishment, Gergan Tharchin answered that the main achievement of His Holiness was the latter's "realization that Tibet must change or perish. His lifelong attempt was to modernize Tibet and make her independent, [completely] free from China." Tharchin added, meaningfully, that the Great Thirteenth had always "wanted to be friendly with China, but not be *under* China."⁵⁹

After this visit to Lhasa Tharchin was never to see this great personage of Tibet again, for Dalai Lama XIII (1876-1933) would die six years later before his next visit to the Tibetan capital. Since this Buddhist Priest-King's death he has gained the reputation of having been the greatest Dalai Lama second only to the Great Fifth (1617-82). Furthermore, as the author of his definitive biography in English, Sir Charles Bell, has asserted, he was "unique among all the Dalai Lamas, for he was the only one among them to exercise the worldly, as well as the spiritual, power throughout the whole of his adult life, that is to say, for thirty-seven years."⁶⁰



The publisher from Kalimpong claimed that the Dalai Lama read his newspaper carefully. One need not doubt in the least the credibility of this statement. Indeed, "every important Tibetan—whether he have been a Government official or a person dealing in commerce or trade—depended upon Gergan Tharchin's *Tibet Mirror*," reported a latter-day member of India's Lhasa Mission, "since, among other things, the *Mirror* published the latest prices on wool and other news related to the wool trade."⁶¹ The following incident bears out, in fact, the validity of this report and the Babu's claim regarding the Great Thirteenth himself. As already indicated, in his newspaper Tharchin would regularly publish the current prices of items such as wool which was at that time a very good source of income annually for Tibet. In those days a monopoly of wool was entrusted by the Tibetan government to a particular trader. On one occasion His Holiness noticed that a price list of wool submitted by the Government wool trader for a particular month differed from the price list published by Tharchin in his Tibetan monthly newspaper. Immediately the Dalai Lama called for an explanation from the trader concerned.

Now since the Tibetan government had taken over the wool trade, the general wool merchants began to lose their source of income. Hence they began to export sheep by the thousands of thousands to India, which was unprecedented in the history of the wool trade. Although the sheep were being sold very cheap, still there were no buyers and so the traders began to kill the sheep and to sell the meat (which was in those days even cheaper than beef) from house to house. Tharchin published this matter in his newspaper under the headline "Mutton Is Selling

Cheaper Than Beef” and under another headline “Wool-Selling and Sheep-Selling.” He pointed out that if sheep which are the source of wool be killed, then a day will come when there will be no more sheep, which in turn would mean there will be no more wool trade. As soon as the Tibetan monarch read these articles he immediately ordered that not a single sheep along the border between India and Tibet was to cross the boundary. This incident again showed that His Holiness read the Tibetan newspaper very carefully and acted promptly whenever an economic or a political measure was required in the greater interest of the country.



Whether or not His Holiness took any special notice of those pages in the issues of the *Tibet Mirror* devoted to Christian themes is not known. It is known, however, that on at least two occasions, either a copy of the Tibetan Gospels or else a Tibetan New Testament (the revised one published at Ghoom) had been made available to the Dalai Lama. In the first instance the information comes from Annie R. Taylor, celebrated missionary to Tibet from the China side whose life and career have already been discussed elsewhere in the present narrative. In an interview she granted to a London *Daily News* reporter in late 1905, she reported that “the Dalai Lama had sent for copies” of the Gospels that she continually kept available in the store she had operated at Yatung, in Tibet’s Chumbi Valley, dubbed the “Yatung Medical Hall,” in which the chief articles of sale were “simple drugs, books, and copies of the Gospels.”⁶²

In the second instance the British and Foreign Bible Society’s Mongolia Sub-Agent and Colporteur, Mr. F. A. Larson, had made the acquaintance in the summer of 1908 of a wealthy Mongol prince, at whose home town northwest of Urga (today’s Ulan Bator) the Dalai Lama had stayed as a guest for some time earlier that year while on a voluntary exile from Lhasa since 1904. Larson subsequently met the Prince again at Peking, where the latter was in attendance on the Dalai Lama. Through the Prince’s connection with His Holiness, several well-bound Tibetan New Testaments and Gospels had been given to the more prominent members of the Dalai Lama’s entourage. But Larson was foiled by the suspicious and protective Chinese in the Prince’s attempt to effect an interview between the Colporteur and His Holiness “that had been desired on both sides.” Instead, a Testament was left with the Prince’s son, who promised to deliver it personally to the Grand Lama once Larson and the Prince’s party had left Peking on a joint trip to Shanghai.⁶³ And sure enough, during the autumn of 1908 at Peking the Mongolian prince’s son fulfilled his promise by personally presenting to the Dalai Lama, “in the name of the Bible Society,” a copy of the “Tibetan New Testament and Psalter bound in yellow brocade.”⁶⁴

Moreover, the Dalai Lama had also been the recipient of a Tibetan version of John Bunyan’s famous seventeenth-century Christian allegory, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. The Religious Tract Society in London had, by means of “a missionary working on the Indian frontier” [James A. McDonald of Calcutta?], forwarded to His Holiness in early 1931 a copy of the translation that had been completed earlier by none other than Tharchin’s predecessor colleague in the Tibetan work in Kalimpong, Rev. Evan Mackenzie, just a few months before

the latter had departed for Scotland on his final furlough. The Tract Society had, in fact, published Mackenzie's translation of the allegorical masterpiece in 1928 in conjunction with the tercentenary celebration of Bunyan's birth. Translated into more languages than any other book in the world save the Bible itself, *Pilgrim's Progress* in its Tibetan edition was illustrated with pictures drawn by an artist with Indian experience and hence calculated to appeal to the Oriental mind.⁶⁵ The *Times* of London in March 1932 printed the text of the letter of acknowledgment which His Holiness had sent to the Society expressing his appreciation for their sending him a copy of Mackenzie's translation; it makes for highly interesting reading:

Greeting. Received the letter and the Ashi scarf [a better quality *khata*, it will be recalled, befitting the dignity of the Hierarch of Tibet] sent on the 21st of the 6th Tibetan month of the Iron-Sheep Year, in which it was said that [David] Macdonald Sahib who is [temporarily] living in England⁶⁶ had written that the religion of Jesus Christ had been translated into Tibetan and printed under the title of "The Pilgrim's Progress." It is difficult for us, who accept and spread the doctrine of those who wear the yellow hat [the Reformed Sect of Tibetan Buddhism], to accept and live your religion. I have received the copy you forwarded by post from the Religious Tract Society. Please thank them. With Ashi: written on the auspicious date, the 10th of the 10th Tibetan month of the Iron-Sheep Year.⁶⁷

It is worth noting that it was the Moravian missionaries at Leh in Ladakh who were responsible for yet another Tibetan translation and preparation for printing of Bunyan's masterpiece, which was completed in 1929.⁶⁸



At the end of 1932 the Dalai Lama sent another gift of Rs. 20/- to the publisher in Kalimpong earmarked for his newspaper. Failing to receive an immediate acknowledgment, however, His Holiness ultimately dispatched a telegram (dated 7 December 1933) to Tharchin requesting him to acknowledge the receipt of the contribution by return telegram. It so happened that the publisher was unable to write a letter of acknowledgment when the gift was first received because during those days he was lying ill in the local hospital. Now, though, he promptly sent off the requested telegram and thanked His Holiness for the timely gift. About all this, Tharchin commented: "This goodwill gesture of monetary gifts was demonstrative of the Dalai Lama's love and concern for me personally."*

But Tharchin added the following sad observation to the above comment:

* This proved to be the last instance of financial help the Great Thirteenth would be able to extend to the Kalimpong publisher, as the ensuing paragraphs of text above will explain; even so, it would not be the end of contributions emanating from Lhasa and its Government leaders. For in a letter which Tharchin dispatched to Sir Charles Bell from the Tibetan capital when the newspaper publisher was there in 1937 with the American traveler and scholar Theos Bernard, he could write the following: "Here I met the Regent, Prime Minister, and the four Shapas, [inasmuch] as they were so good to me just before I left Kalimpong, the Tibetan government [having] sent me Rs. 100/- as a help to my Tibetan newspaper [and] saying they were very much pleased with the paper and asking me to continue it and send regularly." Moreover, in the same year but prior to his trip with Bernard to

Ten days after the ... telegram, His Holiness passed away. I was one of the few persons who heard of the sad news first. Right about this time Sir Charles Bell, the [retired] Political Officer, was intending to proceed to Tibet. When the news of the Dalai Lama's death was first conveyed to Sir Charles, he did not believe it at all. [Those like him who knew His Holiness well had assumed he would live for at least another fifteen years.] When it was finally confirmed through the post and telegraph department,⁶⁹ the Political Officer's face suddenly changed and became quite grief-stricken inasmuch as he had had a very high regard for His Holiness the Thirteenth Dalai Lama.

Sir Charles has himself described the event, and Tharchin's involvement, in a scholarly biography he authored about the Great Thirteenth, as follows:

In November 1933, the Dalai Lama summoned one of the Nepalese photographers in Lhasa to take his photograph. This alarmed the people of Lhasa, who took it as a sign that he intended to die soon. Towards the end of November I arrived from England, at Kalimpong, hoping to go to Tibet the following May as soon as the passes over the mountain ranges were open. On December 19th my wife and daughter and I were having tea with David Macdonald and his family in the little hotel that his daughter, Mrs. Perry, was running there.

Suddenly the blow fell. A note from Tharchin was handed to Macdonald. It told him that Tharchin had heard a report that the Dalai Lama had gone to the Honorable Field, or in other words, had passed out of his thirteenth Incarnation.

A Chinese newspaper declared the story to be a hoax. The Dalai Lama, it said, was going towards eastern Tibet for the purpose of making war. But the Tibetan report was true; the Chinese statement was entirely devoid of foundation, as Chinese statements about Tibet often are.

I sent a telegram of condolence to the Prime Minister and another to the Cabinet.... Tibet [now] felt as though orphaned. One of the glorious Rebirths had gone to the Field; the other [the Panchen Lama] was absent far away in China. On the worldly side she was sadly weakened by the passing of the Precious Sovereign, for who else could hold the Land of Snow against foreign aggression and internal commotion?⁷⁰

Rinchen Dolma Taring (Mary La), who was in Lhasa at the time of the Great Thirteenth's passing, has described the poignant reaction of the capital to the news the night it became known:

Lights were burned inside every house and on the roofs; the flags and banners of all houses and temples were brought down; officials put on their mourning dresses and took off their earrings; women took off their gaily striped *pangdens* (aprons) and all their ornaments. (The ornamental pangden of a Tibetan woman is considered most important and is only taken off on the death of a Dalai Lama....) ... Next morning people flocked to Norbu Lingka to pay homage to the Holy Body and everyone wept at having lost their great Ruler and Lama.⁷¹

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At Lhasa Gergan Tharchin finally bade goodbye to officials and friends and took the return journey. His entourage had a permit from the Lhasa government instructing the local

Lhasa, the Kalimpong publisher had remarked in another letter to Bell that "when His Holiness the Dalai Lama was in life, he used to take much interest in it [the newspaper] and used to send me help and give encouragement, which kind letters are with me, and I hope to produce them in my paper now and then in the future." Tharchin to Bell, Tsarong House Lhasa, 1 July 1937; Tharchin to Bell, Kalimpong, 16 Feb. 1937—Bell Papers.

gopas or headmen at the different stages along the journey to supply ponies for riding and luggage. It must be understood that it was frequently the custom in those days for the Government to grant to certain parties who might apply for them appropriate permits which would provide the use of animals free of charge or at minimal cost on the various stages along the caravan routes within Tibet. And as a matter of fact, in his Lhasa letter to Rev. Graham of 10 October 1927, Tharchin had expressed the hope, as he said, "that I may be able to get two or three pack animals ... free on the stages, as I am thinking to apply and request this of His Holiness the Dalai Lama."

Modern-day Western travelers may not be able to appreciate the difficulties which had to be overcome by Tibetan travelers of the recent past. The arrangements for travel and communications required in making the journey contemplated by Tharchin was no simple matter back then. Some idea of the intricacies involved can perhaps be gleaned from a description that was given by a young Tibetan nobleman when he, too, was preparing to make the same journey to India from Lhasa which Tharchin was himself about to begin. Though the nobleman in question, Lobsang Lhalungpa, traveled this route twenty years later than the Babu's party, the arrangements he had to follow were exactly the same as now confronted Gergan Tharchin and his large group of fellow travelers; for even in 1947, Lhalungpa noted, "communications and modes of travel in Tibet were still old-fashioned." He continued:

The route from Lhasa to Darjeeling, over three hundred miles across rough caravan trails and high mountain passes, usually took three weeks on horseback, although it could be covered by fast runners in less than ten days. I planned to make the trip in six weeks, because I wanted to visit friends, lamas, and holy places along the way.

For traveling on official assignment, the Council of Cabinet Ministers [the *Kashag*] issued me an official document addressed to the administrators and elders of districts along the route with instructions to provide me and my party with lodgings and replacement horses, for which I was to pay but a minimal fee. Certain farmers and landowners all over the country had to provide these services for the Government in lieu of paying a land tax. The unpaved caravan routes were maintained by volunteers as a religious act, often poor people who accepted donations from travelers.

Before leaving I sent advance notice to the village elders of each district where I intended to stop, giving them the approximate date of my arrival and the number of horses that would have to be cared for. Handwritten on a big sheet of paper and wrapped around an arrow, this notice passed through a system of relay runners, each ten or so miles beyond the last, beginning with a runner provided by an agency in Lhasa. This was a modified version of our ancient communication system in which messages were wrapped around arrows and shot to the next village.⁷²

*

Tharchin's party was fortunate in receiving the Government permit requested, thus reducing considerably the road expenses involved. Nevertheless, it was a case of "touch-and-go" for the Kalimpong visitor during much of his stay at Lhasa whether or not he would be able to collect sufficient funds necessary to cover the expenses for such a large party of travelers.

As it turned out, Tharchin, as he had feared, did have to go into debt after all since, as he repeatedly remarked in his several letters to Rev. Graham, those from his wife's family who were planning to accompany him back to India "have no money." In his final letter to Graham from the Tibetan capital he explained his predicament in some detail:

Now I am trying to start [for home] as soon as possible.... We finished [collecting] all our road expenses, but I took a *hundi* of Rs. 200/- [a check loan in this amount] from Khan Sahib Faizullah and gave him a letter and a receipt addressed to you requesting [you] kindly do this favor for me by paying [him] this amount. Even so, I am afraid this is not sufficient for our road; [because] from this amount only half is left since we had asked for this money from Khan Sahib a long time back.... I [therefore] have to take a loan from a Tibetan Officer. Anyhow, I am trusting in the Lord [that] these souls get salvation. I think we shall miss Xmas there.⁷³



Tharchin Babu's reference here to Khan Bahadur Faizullah should not be surprising at all when one understands that he was one of a number of very important Moslem traders and businessmen whose ancestors had settled in Lhasa a long time before. The background of Haji Faizullah is a most fascinating one. (Haji is a prized title for any Moslem who in his lifetime has accomplished the coveted goal of making the Hajj or pilgrimage to Islam's most holy center of Mecca in Arabia.) For it is instructive as to how most of the Moslem community at the Tibetan capital—which in its heyday had numbered 2000 residents—came to be there.

It needs to be explained that the bulk of the Moslem citizens in Tibet was of Kashmiri and to some extent Ladakhi origins, living primarily in the country's two largest cities—Lhasa and Shigatse. (Other Tibetan Moslems were of Chinese and Nepalese origins, too.) According to local tradition, writes one authority on the subject,

these Kashmiri Moslems migrated to Tibet during the seventeenth century, during the reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama, when the Kashmir Valley was in the grip of a severe famine. The Dalai Lama allowed them to settle in Tibet permanently, and provided all basic amenities. During the Dogra rule of Kashmir, too [which lasted till its defeat by Tibet in 1841-2], many Kashmiris migrated to neighboring countries, including Tibet, on account of the oppressive measures by the Dogra rulers.... Under the influence of Kashmiri Moslems, many Dogra Hindu soldiers embraced Islam and were called "Singhpa Khachey," or Dogra Moslems [*Kha-che*, the Tibetan word for Moslem, also means Kashmiri.]. ("Singh" is a Sanskrit word meaning "lion." All Sikhs and many Hindus add "Singh" to their name as a sign of fearlessness.) ... Like other Moslems settled in Tibet, Kashmiri Moslems adopted Tibetan culture, language, dress, food, etc., after their migration.

The Moslems who came from Ladakh were by and large traders who traveled to Tibet in connection with business. Indeed, these traders established large stores in Tibet's major cities, including the capital, where, in the words of Hugh Richardson, they were "British protected subjects," having continually "good relations with the British Mission" there.⁷⁴ But besides trade, they would also engage in various other businesses; for example, many of them operated tailor shops in the Tibetan bazaars.

Now among the Tibetan Moslem families whose origins were Ladakhi, a very prominent one was the Khowja family. Some of its members, explains this same authority,

regularly visited Tibet in connection with trade. One member of this family, Haji Umar Shah, settled in Lhasa. He was allotted land at Lhasa and Shigatse and his descendants settled in both these cities. In addition to Lhasa and Shigatse, the Khowja family had a house at Rudok, a trading center in western Tibet.

Four members of this family were awarded the title of “Khan Bahadur” by the British Government of India for services rendered to the British. Of these, two—Haji Faizullah and Haji Ghulam Mohmad—lived in Tibet. Haji Faizullah was very close to the Thirteenth Dalai Lama ...

As a matter of fact, the Khowja family was extremely influential, having regular contacts with His Holiness. The other Khan Sahib, Haji Ghulam Mohmad,

headed a five-member committee of Singhpa and Kashmiri Moslems, which had been given the authority to resolve disputes within the Moslem community, as authorized by the Tibetan government in a document of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Austin Waddell referred to this committee in his book, *Lhasa and Its Mysteries*, where he wrote: “An aged, gentle and good-humored Ladakhi Moslem chaired the committee. He has got powers of an honorary magistrate to settle criminal and other cases of his co-religionists.”

But as a further sign of this family’s influence at Lhasa, two of Haji Umar Shah’s grandsons, and their two relatives—all four of whom likewise bore the esteemed title of Khan Bahadur—would in time be provided land in the Tibetan capital by the Great Thirteenth’s successor, Dalai Lama XIV. But after 1959 they, like all Moslems of Kashmiri origin, would flee to India and be rehabilitated at Srinagar in Kashmir and at other places in India.*⁷⁵

* Indeed, in 1959 many members of the Tibetan Moslem community pressured the authorities in Tibet to view them as foreign nationals (that is, Indian citizens), this being seen by these Moslems in Tibet as “primarily a politically expedient move.” So writes scholar José I. Cabezon, who goes on to explain that following the complete Chinese Communist takeover of Tibet in 1959 this action would turn out to be “to their advantage” in that it provided the Indian government grounds for claiming these Tibetan Moslems as citizens of India. Nevertheless, despite Indian intervention in their support, only a few hundred Moslems were able to leave Tibet, they settling as refugees mainly in India and Nepal. “We find today,” notes Cabezon, “concentrations of Tibetan Moslems in Kathmandu, Darjeeling and Kalimpong, though the largest community is to be found in Srinagar.” Cabezon, “Islam in Tibet,” in A. W. Radhu, *Islam in Tibet [and] Tibetan Caravans* (1997), 23.

These Moslem refugees from Tibet, like their indigenous Tibetan counterparts who also fled south, were to miss dearly the Land of Snows. Dawa Norbu recounts the observations of one Tibetan Moslem escapee from Lhasa whom he met in Kalimpong. An old man who wore a long silvery beard, he “was full of nostalgic memories of heavenly Tibet.” Said the elderly Tibetan Moslem to Norbu: “We can’t be more free even in India than we were in Tibet. Our only obligation was that some of our elders used to attend the New Year celebrations and do obeisance to the Dalai Lama. We owe him and his government immense gratitude. Son, you will never have the happiness and freedom that we enjoyed in Tibet.” *Red Star Over Tibet*, 88.

For a beautifully written biographical work of nostalgia, authored by a younger-generation Ladakhi Moslem trader and sometime member of the Lhasa Moslem community who had frequently visited the Tibetan capital and had lived there for several lengthy periods both before and after the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet in 1950, see Abdul Wahid Radhu’s highly personal account, *Tibetan Caravans*, first published in French at Paris in 1981, and that appears in English translation in *Islam in Tibet [and] Tibetan Caravans* (Louisville, 1997). Three of Radhu’s cousins, incidentally, were sons of Haji Faizullah, and two brothers of Radhu’s father-in-law—known prominently in Lhasa as the “Tsakhur brothers”—were descendants of the above-mentioned Haji Umar (Omar) Shah, one of the very early Moslem settlers in the Tibetan capital. Radhu, who off and on through the years had also resided in Kalimpong, most likely came to know Gergan Tharchin at this latter place.

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It was no wonder, then, that in an emergency such as now confronted him, Gergan Tharchin, when faced with a shortage of funds for his delayed stay at the Tibetan capital and for his homeward journey to Kalimpong, would approach the prosperous and influential Khan Bahadur Faizullah for timely assistance. But it will be learned later in the present narrative that he would also approach the good Khan Sahib to petition him to serve as a distributing agent at Lhasa for his *Tibet Mirror* newspaper.

*

Now although pony permits for the journey homeward were indeed available to Tharchin for his party, an unpleasant incident involving one of the riding ponies occurred along the way. At the third stage, from Gyantse to Phari, it so happened that the local *gopa* supplied a bad riding pony which began to kick back very nastily. The servant was thrown off of the pony and its saddle became tilted. During the turmoil half of a sword had come out of its sheath and the pony went on kicking against the edge of the sword until it cut the nerves of its hind leg. With great difficulty they stopped the pony from kicking further against the sword. There ensued an altercation between the parties concerned over the damage done to the pony. At last the price of Rs. 120/- was fixed for the animal, out of which Rs. 60/- was paid by Tharchin with the rest to be paid by the owner. Thus did the owner take away the pony.

On this return journey, which is believed to have begun from Lhasa on 5 February 1928,⁷⁶ ten or twelve other persons, mostly Tharchin's mother-in-law and other near relatives, accompanied him and his wife to Kalimpong. They reached the Tharchin home in March of 1928 just two months prior to the arrival of Dr. Knox, the new missionary from Australia. Here at Kalimpong the party of ten or twelve from Lhasa spent one full year. During this long interval Tharchin's relatives, he noted later, had many opportunities to attend the Sunday church services and thus hear the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. They learned, he added, of the redeeming love of God expressed in the crucifixion of His Son Jesus which was then vindicated—according to Christian belief—by the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

About his loved ones at this time Gergan Tharchin had this to say: "From Lhasa we came back as a great joyful company. I believe my relatives were inwardly convinced of the truth of Christianity. I even believe that they accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Of course they were not initiated into the Christian rite of baptism because they were intending to return to Tibet within a very short while"—thus meaning there was insufficient time to undergo the necessary period of instruction which in the Church of Scotland was required of any potential candidate for baptism.

**The Path of Difficulties Leads to Scholarly Achievement:
Resignation from Scots Mission, Dangerous Trek to Gyantse,
and Translation of Tun-Huang Texts**

I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth....
I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears....
This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles....
O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that taketh refuge in him.... For
there is no want to them that fear him.

Psalm 34:1, 4, 6, 8-9

AFTER HIS SECOND VISIT to Lhasa, Gergan Tharchin—as was indicated before—returned to Kalimpong in March of 1928. During his long absence proper arrangements had been made so that his newspaper, the *Tibet Mirror*, could continue to be published regularly through the kindness of David Macdonald. Nevertheless, the newspaper and its printing schedule had not been far from his mind while he was at the Tibetan capital. “I am very anxious about my Newspaper,” wrote Tharchin early into his stay at Lhasa. “It was due to be published on the 25th of September 1927,” he noted in his letter to Rev. Graham of 14 October, “and they have not yet reached Lhasa, though ... about twenty days post” have already passed. Tharchin continued with his concerns to Graham: “I do not know whether Mr. John* and Atuk† published it in time or not. I hope Mr. Macdonald is helping them and is getting on well with the church work. Please give him my respects ...” Since Macdonald was an elder in the Tibetan church, he also, while Tharchin was away, had conducted the Sunday morning worship services.

It was obvious from his several letters that his mind and heart were not only concerned about his newspaper publishing but likewise about the well-being of the Tibetan church during his long absence. In his 25 October letter, the would-be pastor of the Tibetan flock at Kalimpong had this to say: “We are praying for you all and specially for the Tibetan congregation. I hope Mr. Macdonald is doing well. Please remember us to all. Also, please remember us to Rev. Dr. Knox, if you happen to write him, who will be coming to work

* Most likely this is a reference to John Macdonald, a son of David Macdonald.

† This is a reference to Atuk Tshering, one of the closest and most intimate friends Babu Tharchin ever had. His was a fascinating career, to say the least. Born in the Tibetan capital around 1903. Atuk when only a small boy emigrated from Lhasa to Kalimpong with his family. He began attending the SUM Institute in 1909, during which time he was a paying guest in K. D. Pradhan’s home while attending school. He would even live for some time in the home of Gergan Tharchin, as a result of which, observed Gyan Jyoti to the present writer, “Atuk gained a great deal of knowledge which would prove useful for his future career.” In his Class 10 year at the Institute, young Atuk received in 1919 the highly-coveted Dux Prize in recognition as the best student of his class for that year.

After schooling and further education Atuk would receive additional recognition as the first member of the Tibetan community ever to be admitted into the Indian Police Service. Indeed, this news brought much joy to Tharchin when first hearing about it while at Lhasa in early 1928. Upon receiving the news he wrote immediately to a mutual friend of his and Atuk’s the following brief message: “Am exceedingly pleased to know that cousin Atuk left for Police Officers Training. I am praying to God for the betterment of his future and the development of his career. Please convey our salaams when you write him.” By the end of World War Two in 1945 Atuk would

among the dear Tibetans ...” And in an earlier letter to Rev. Graham he asked that his respects be given “to all the brethren during Panchayat day [most likely a reference to the day-long meeting of the congregational kirk session or committee of the local Tibetan church]. Please tell them to pray for me. I am praying for all the [church] work at Kalimpong.”¹

Immediately upon his return from Lhasa the newspaper publisher went to pay his respects to Dr. Graham, who among other things remarked: “I have good news for you. I have got a double crown lithographic press for your work. Just go and pick up the machine from the godown.” This particular handpress had been donated to the Mission by a friend of Dr. Graham’s. It will be recalled from two chapters earlier that Tharchin had been waiting upon the Lord in prayer as to whether or not he should follow the advice of Tsarong Shape to apply to the Tibetan government for financial assistance in acquiring “a proper press” for printing the *Tibet Mirror* in the future. And as was learned, the newspaper publisher continued to pray about this press, for if such could be obtained, he had written, it could provide employment in Kalimpong for those monks and others at Lhasa who wished to escape from what he perceived to be the deadening spiritual environment of the Tibetan ecclesiastical system. But in his letter to Graham of 25 October 1927, Tharchin altered somewhat the nature of the prayer burden regarding the press when in asking prayer of Graham he wrote the following: “... please pray for a Press, and if not a proper one, then a lithograph.”²

be serving as Kalimpong’s Inspector of Police; but by mid-1949 and probably sometime earlier he had become a Deputy Superintendent of Police with the I.A.R.F. and stationed at Barrackpore near Calcutta. By 1950 he had become Kalimpong’s Circle Inspector of Police. In time Tshering would rise through the ranks of India’s Central Intelligence apparatus, eventually working under the Chief of India’s Intelligence Unit for Tibetan Affairs. But in the early 1950s Atuk would finally end his public service, having retired as the Assistant Director of India’s State Intelligence Bureau (SIB). The capstone to Atuk Tshering’s public and professional life came in 1953 when India’s President bestowed upon him the President’s Gold Medal Award in recognition of his distinguished career and meritorious services rendered to Independent India.

Tshering would die in December 1975, only a few months before the death of Gergan Tharchin, the latter physically able nonetheless to attend the funeral of Atuk, his “very intimate friend.” Still a Buddhist when he died, Tshering had nevertheless left beneath his pillow a note on which had been written by him the instruction that upon his death he would like the Darjeeling District Police Band to kindly play his favorite Christian hymn, “Abide with Me.” This the Band indeed did, which must have cheered the ailing Tharchin Babu much.

Atuk Tshering’s eldest daughter Yudon (meaning “turquoise”) would marry Tashi Pempa Hishey, the first Tibetan to be admitted as a student into Graham’s Homes School, an action personally arranged by Dr. Graham himself in 1939 when Pempa was a boy of 7 or 8. Young Pempa would go on to become a prominent Patron of Graham’s Homes, a longtime Kalimpong Municipality Commissioner and Chairman of its Committee, and up until his death not long ago had for many years been Commandant of Kalimpong’s Home Guards and Chief Civil Defense Warden for the hill station. At the time of the present writer’s interview with Commandant Hishey, one of Atuk Tshering’s sons had already become President of the United Trust Bank of New York in New York City; a second son was serving as India’s Ambassador to Spain; while a third son had achieved the distinction of being the first Tibetan to become a Colonel in the Indian Army.

Besides various interviews with members of the Tharchin family, other sources for the above information and brief quotations were the following: Tharchin letter in Tibetan addressed to “My intelligent bosom friend”—a person at Phari, Tibet, written in ink and sent from Lhasa, dated 1 Feb. 1928 (translated for the present author by Phurbu Tsering), a copy found among the ThPaK; Tshering letter to Tharchin, Barrackpore, 20 July 1949, ThPaK; and interviews with (a) Hishey, Nov. 1992; (b) Dawa Babu (a retired SIB Officer who, while attending SUM Institute Classes 7 and 8 between 1948 and 1950, had stayed with Atuk Tshering in the latter’s home), Nov. 1992; and (c) Gyan Jyoti (son of the prominent Jyoti business family of Kalimpong and younger contemporary of Atuk’s in the hill station who now lives in Nepal), Feb. 1993.

It was no doubt in response to this altered prayer request that Dr. Graham saw in the present donation of the double crown lithograph an opportunity for this prayer to be answered. And thus did the Kalimpong publisher come into the use of a newer and better hand-operated mechanical device by which to produce his Tibetan newspaper. And thus, too, he believed, was his prayer answered by God in a most remarkable way, through the kindly beneficence of the Guild Mission leader who from the *Tibet Mirror's* very inception had been one of the strongest supporters of Babu Tharchin's newspaper efforts as a means of opening up the Great Closed Land and furthering the Christian gospel's presence inside its borders. Indeed, over the years of their association in Kalimpong, it was because of this mutual interest in Tibet and the *Tibet Mirror* which, among other reasons, would forge a close friendship between these two servants of God. "Attending numerous religious, social and public functions together in the hill town," noted one prominent longtime resident of Kalimpong, "Tharchin and Dr. Graham were considered by all and sundry in the town to be very close friends."^{*3} Now upon receiving the lithograph machine at the local godown (warehouse), Tharchin—in his capacity as manager of the Guild Mission's Tibetan Press—was soon afterwards commissioned to travel to Calcutta for three months to acquire some experience in operating this litho press. He was given a letter of introduction (probably signed by Graham) to a European firm there for apprenticeship in litho printing. The name of the firm was the Caledonian Press. On the first day of arrival he was met by a European gentleman who ordered a foreman in the firm to instruct Tharchin in litho press techniques.

The next day the foreman led the would-be apprentice to one of the rooms in the plant and instructed him to polish a litho stone lying there. Day and night thereafter it remained his duty to continue polishing this stone, a tiresome activity which insulted his intelligence beyond measure. He quickly became fed up and even annoyed at the foreman for giving him this kind of monotonous task. He had approached the foreman on several occasions requesting him to give him further training, but in every instance the publisher from Kalimpong was given false assurances by the meaningless words uttered of "Yes, yes." For in practice the foreman made no move to teach his visitor any technique.

One day the foreman told Tharchin point blank: "We took several years to learn the art of printing, and you want to master every detail in a very short time like a quick horse." The

* Indeed, a further mark of their friendship was the gift which the Mission head had bestowed upon the Tibetan newspaper publisher in the very year of the *Tibet Mirror's* inception. For on the flyleaf of a copy of Edmund Candler's *The Unveiling of Lhasa* (London, 1905) found in the Babu's personal library were these words written in obvious gratitude by Tharchin: "Presented me by Rev. Dr. J. A. Graham D.D., C.I.E. 1925." It should be added here that Graham's contribution to the inauguration and ongoing improvement of the *Tibet Mirror* has not been lost, fortunately, on a later generation of Tibetans. In a recent article of appreciation on Dr. Graham in a special issue of the journal *Lungta* devoted to Christian missionaries and Tibet, respected Tibetan scholar and author Jamyang Norbu had this to say about Tharchin Babu's esteemed friend and benefactor in relation to his newspaper publishing efforts: "Dr. Graham played an important role in the establishment of Rev. G. Tharchin's *Tibet Mirror* newspaper. In the Silver Jubilee Number of the paper, Tharchin has a photograph of Dr. Graham on the front cover and recounts that the first issue of the paper 'was first printed with an old Roneo duplicator in October 1925. The duplicator was so kindly presented by the late very Rev. Dr. J.A. Graham, CIE, whose kindness is always remembered.' In September 1928 there was a major improvement in the production of the Tibetan newspaper, which came about through an old lithographic hand press presented to the *Tibet Mirror* Press by Dr. Graham" for its use. Norbu, "Graham of Kalimpong," *Lungta* (Winter 1998):35.

attitude of this man was highly insulting, and in spite of repeated petitions he would not listen to the pleadings of his frustrated apprentice. It was quite evident that the foreman would not condescend to teach either the printing process or the transfer process involved in lithographic press work.

Ultimately Tharchin lost his patience and threatened the foreman with these words: "If you do not teach me anything then I am going to report you to the manager." In the end, however, he did not carry out his threat, thinking later it useless to do so; furthermore, if the foreman would come to know about a complaint registered with the manager against him, he might become angry, which would jeopardize still further Tharchin's chances of learning; moreover, it might even make matters worse. Although many types of chemicals were stocked in the plant, the foreman adamantly refused to show an iota of sympathy towards this deserving and struggling hillman from the District of Darjeeling. Tharchin was still ignorant of mixture and the applications of various chemicals.

In his exasperation the Tibetan happened to mention his difficulty to one of the employees of the Press. He told him how the foreman was harassing him and refusing to teach him anything about the press work. "He only gives the orders," explained the employee; "we are the ones who have the knowledge of the practical side of printing." This statement opened the publisher's eyes and he immediately thereafter entertained some hope. He offered Rs. 2/- to each of the three workers there, and they consented to teach him everything they knew about the chemical transfers and procedures. Tharchin, incidentally, had brought an instruction manual with him. Using it as the basis for his inquiries, he asked a number of questions of the workers, who most gladly answered them and quite satisfactorily. It needs to be said that Tharchin picked up the techniques quickly and intelligently. In fact, he had gone down to Calcutta with the intent of spending three months but returned after only nineteen days. During this short period he completely mastered the art of litho printing. Quite an achievement!

*

Back in Kalimpong Gergan Tharchin installed his first litho press (the one donated to the Mission by Dr. Graham's friend) in a building now occupied by the Central Bank located on the main road in Kalimpong. The first issue of the Tibetan newspaper to be run off on this new device occurred in September 1928 just three years after the inception of the paper. On its front page, and positioned in the center, was displayed a magnificent photograph of the Potala Palace and its Lhasan environs, taken from the vantage point of Chakpori Hill located to the west southwest of the Dalai Lama's winter palace. From time to time Dr. Knox, who sometime in April-May of 1928 had arrived in Kalimpong as a (medical) missionary to the Tibetans, made it a habit of coming in to oversee the general management of the Press that was in the hands of its manager, Gergan Tharchin. It was plainly understood that the litho press belonged to the Scottish Mission which would do its own printing work there, but at the same time it was also made quite clear that the Tibetan newspaper would be owned and operated exclusively by Tharchin himself. In other words, the newspaper was Tharchin's

private property, with the Mission having no claims whatsoever in this regard. The Tibetan publisher maintained that Dr. Graham had granted him this privilege. Because of this, he did not have to pay any cost for the paper stock, labor involved, or for the use of the litho press in printing the newspaper. Later, from what is now the Central Bank building the Mission Press was shifted to the Tin Dhuray quarters just above Polhill Hall.



Just here may be the proper place in the present biography to amplify further upon the relationship between the Tibetan Press manager Tharchin on the one hand and the Tibetan missionary (whomever he might have been) and the Scots Guild Mission on the other. A few words also need to be added describing briefly the kinds of printed materials the press ended up producing during the late 1920s, '30s and early '40s—all printed on the aforementioned donated lithographic press. First of all, it was as a consequence of the Babu's success in printing his newspaper on the Roneo machine and subsequently on the double crown lithographic press which in due course prompted the Guild Mission to authorize the creation of the Tibetan Press with Tharchin as its manager and the eventual hiring of one full-time employee to handle most of the printing operations. However, the overall responsibility for the Press ultimately lay with the Tibetan missionary; who at this time, of course, happened to be Rev. Knox

Both Tharchin's proven abilities and the establishment of the Press now made it possible, by virtue of the above-mentioned understanding between the Guild Mission (read: Dr. Graham) and the Babu, to produce the Tibetan newspaper as an agency for gospel evangelism and dissemination of news that was to be distributed within the local Tibetan community but more so within the neighboring lands of Tibetan Buddhist culture, including Tibet itself. Yet the creation of the Press also made it possible to print for the Scots Mission and its various branches a whole range of in-house materials—and not just in the Tibetan language, either. These materials, for example, were such items as Christian tracts, pamphlets, leaflets and booklets; also, Mission announcements, calendars, forms, stationery; also, posters and pamphlets on health matters; etc. In addition, as a means of generating income to enable the Press to operate in the black or at least break even, special items would periodically be designed and printed for sale; for instance, a series of Christmas cards with local scenes and racial types pictured on indigenous paper, or a booklet entitled "Scenes of Tibetan Life"—both of which proved to be profitable for the Press. A further way to generate income was frequently to take orders from institutions, offices and shops outside the Mission.^{3a}

Finally, particular notice should be taken of the special, close relationship which had developed between Dr. Graham and Gergan Tharchin because of their shared vision and evangelistic burden for Tibet and all Tibetan-speaking peoples everywhere in Asia and, further, because of their mutual recognition of the vital role which the printed page could play in the furtherance of that common vision and burden. And as a consequence, Graham was not only a great supporter of Tharchin's efforts to win his ethnic brethren for Christ by every legitimate

means, including both his Tibetan newspaper and his frequent permitted journeys into the Closed Land, but also a most helpful reconciler between the Babu and his "friendly adversaries" within the Mission. For though the Scottish missionary would soon retire from the Guild Mission, he would nonetheless remain close by in Kalimpong at his beloved Graham's Homes Establishment and was therefore available as a peacemaker when now and then Tharchin found himself at variance with his Mission colleagues over important matters of interest pertaining to Tibet, the Tibetan Press or the Tibetan newspaper. Indeed, a case in point is discussed just a few pages hence.

*

During the month of May 1931 Tharchin had wished to go to Yatung and Gyantse in Tibet as a guide and interpreter for the American author, explorer and traveler, (Mrs.) Henrietta Sands Merrick, who desired to travel at least that far on a brief expedition into the Forbidden Land. On her way from New York to India she had stopped off in London where she was privileged to have tea with the celebrated Sir Francis E. Younghusband. "How you will love the Sikkim jungles!" he had exclaimed to her. "I envy you the experience. But you should take with you someone who knows the flowers and trees and the birds and butterflies, for nowhere are they so wonderful as in Sikkim." Although Mrs. Merrick was not fortunate to secure such an expert as this, she would be able to secure the services of one who knew much about Sikkim and Tibet in general and the trail to be traveled in particular: Gergan Tharchin.

Having arrived in Kalimpong from Darjeeling, Mrs. Merrick's intention was to leave May 1st and arrive in Yatung via the Jelep La no later than the 10th; for she had promised the British Trade Agent, Captain E. W. Fletcher, to follow this schedule as closely as possible and then leave Yatung on a specified date thereafter on the onward journey to Gyantse so as to avoid "running into an inspection party that was coming in over the Natu La." While making final preparations in Kalimpong for her Tibetan journey, the American lady stayed at the Himalayan Hotel⁴ where by this time the David Macdonalds were living as owners and proprietors, he having retired from all Civil Service in 1924.* Merrick was soon introduced to Mrs. Norman Odling, one of the daughters of Dr. Graham, and known affectionately as "Bunty." She was the one who recommended to the American traveler that she take a Tibetan with her to serve as guide and interpreter. Whereupon, when asked by Mrs. Merrick who should be the one to accompany her, "the ever-resourceful Bunty," the American wrote

* For his many long years of distinguished service to the British Crown Macdonald had been offered a knighthood; he turned it down, however, in favor of a grant of land he received in Kalimpong on which he then built the Macdonald family's fine hotel. Kimura, *Japanese Agent in Tibet*, 134. Indeed, "over the years Kalimpong had made such a favorable impression" on Macdonald that "when his time had come to retire from Indian government service," it was at this hill station where "he chose to settle." R. K. Sprigg, "Foreword," in Sandeep Jain, ed. and comp., *Kalimpong: a Guide and Handbook of Information*, 3.

in her narrative volume of the journey, “suggested that I might persuade the pastor of the Tibetan Mission to go along with me as interpreter; and when I offered an inducement ... I secured his services.”⁵



As it turned out, however, it was not going to be an easy matter for “Pastor” Tharchin to obtain from the Mission the necessary leave of absence for this purpose. In fact, it must have come as quite a surprise, if not shock, that when he requested Dr. Knox⁶ to grant him one month’s leave from his accumulated leave, the missionary turned down his request on the ground that the granting of any such privilege was not minuted in the Mission records. It should perhaps be pointed out that earlier in the spring of 1931 Dr. Graham had retired from the Mission and was away in Scotland. He had every intention of returning to Kalimpong, and did so early the following year, though not returning to any official capacity at the Scots Mission, which by this time had a new head, Rev. William Scott (see below). Dr. Knox, however, was the one to oversee not only the Mission’s press affairs, as mentioned earlier, but also all its Tibetan work. It is almost certain that had Rev. Graham been present in the hill station and still in charge of the Scots Mission, Tharchin would have immediately appealed to the Mission leader for a final decision, and would probably have obtained his permission, for the reasons given a page or two earlier above. Lacking this option, the Babu took the most drastic course of action open to him.

Indeed, the negative reaction of Dr. Knox to Tharchin’s request of a month’s leave of absence instantly impelled the Tibetan to tender his resignation from the Mission service, so convinced had he apparently been that this contemplated journey to Tibet, having already been approved by the concerned political authorities, would have happily been viewed and supported by Rev. Knox as a means of furthering the entrance of the Christian gospel into that Closed Land. After all, Tharchin probably reasoned, Knox’s own recently Mission-approved “Policy for Tibetan Work” (see again Chapter 16 above) had called for such visits to be undertaken “as often as [the political] permission can be obtained” and “with a view to starting work in Tibet should it [eventually] be opened to missionaries.” And though he, Tharchin, was not, as Rev. Knox was, the Guild Tibetan Mission missionary, he may have been of the opinion that in the foreseeable future Knox would himself seldom, if ever, be allowed to enter Tibet and that therefore the missionary, far from opposing the proposed visit to the Forbidden Land, would most likely have been supportive of this opportunity for Tharchin the evangelist to make the journey there. Instead, Knox had not only refused to grant the necessary leave for his catechist/evangelist to make the journey but had also refused to accept the resignation which had only been given at a moment’s notice. The missionary further decided to deduct from Tharchin’s wages one month’s salary. The shrewd Tibetan, quite legitimately so, it would appear, objected to this by reasoning that “if the privilege of one month’s leave was not minuted, then the matter of withholding one month’s salary was also not minuted, and as such, the missionary doctor had no right to cut the salary.” These

altercations complicated the relationship between the two, and Tharchin thereafter left for Tibet having "left the service of the Mission from the end of April."^{*6a}



Meanwhile, Merrick, during the final days of preparation in late April, was taking the opportunity of becoming acquainted with her guide. For her, she wrote, "Tharchin was a new experience. Never before had I met such elaborate humility. He rarely raised his eyes above the level of my feet, and talked with bated breath, in whispering voice." Clearly, she added, "he was the prodigy with whom a woman might safely go into the wilds." Added insight into Tharchin's studied humility was provided by the American explorer further on in her narrative of the journey (which she enigmatically entitled *Spoken in Tibet*). Merrick records that one day after her party had reached Gyantse, she and Tharchin called by appointment on the Kenchen Lama, Lobsang Jungne. The latter, a high monk official, was the Dalai Lama's personal representative at this fort town and who also served as the Tibetan Trade Agent. Previously the Kenchen had been an experienced diplomat at Peking as the official representative of His Holiness there. Indeed, the former British Trade Agent at Gyantse, David Macdonald, had remarked in 1932 about this Tibetan gentleman in the following laudatory terms: "He is a cultured man, and has traveled widely in China and Mongolia with the Dalai Lama, with whom he was a great favorite. He has retained his ruler's confidence through all the storms that have swept across the political stage in Lhasa." This would not be the first time, of course, for Tharchin to meet the Kenchen, inasmuch as the latter had been serving as the Trade Agent at Gyantse ever since 1916 and was consequently present at this fortress community during the period 1921-3 when, it will be recalled, Tharchin had been living and teaching at the school he had founded there. For more than one reason, therefore, Tharchin would naturally wish to accompany the visiting American to the interview with this high Tibetan personage.⁷ Merrick describes the scene in colorful detail.

* The reader will learn later on in the present chapter that Dr. Knox and the Tibetan publisher would disagree on other issues, too, exacerbating further the strain already existing in their relationship. In all of this, of course, the reader is only being given Tharchin's side of the story; yet there doubtless was another perspective from the missionary's point of view. Moreover, Tharchin's leaving the Mission made for an extremely troublesome year for the missionary, as he explained in his Annual Report on the Guild Mission's Tibetan Work for 1931: "The year has been a difficult one, ... partly on account of the resignation of the Tibetan catechist. Mr. Tharchin, which threw more detailed work upon shoulders [his own] as yet ill-prepared to receive it." Even so, it needs to be recalled that there were still other issues on which these two were *in agreement*, particularly as they related to the welfare of the Tibetan community in Kalimpong; see earlier in Chapter 16. It also needs to be pointed out that so far as is known neither party to these disagreements ever exhibited any personal vindictiveness or spite of any kind towards the other. Indeed, Tharchin always had high regard for Dr. Knox, and the latter continually showed kindness towards the Tibetan and his family. Additionally, just a year earlier the missionary had provided Mission superiors with a most favorable assessment of Tharchin's performance as his associate in the Tibetan work of the Scots Mission. Wrote Knox in his Annual Report for 1930: "The catechist has been a busy man, as, in addition to the [pastoral] care of the Kalimpong and Pedong Tibetan Christians, he is much sought after, for advice and help, by Tibetans visiting or resident in Kalimpong and he is always ready to speak to them on

... I had presented the ceremonial scarf, my gifts had been delivered, and I was seated behind one of those delectable little folding Tibetan tables, brilliantly painted, while the Kenchen sat, Buddha-wise, to my left, dressed in a dark robe of brocade.

"Tharchin," I said, "you don't have to be afraid of him." The conversation was being so long drawn out that I began to fear that I would reach the Tibetan's daily quota of from 50 to 70 cups of tea if Tharchin could not be induced to talk more rapidly. Every sentence had to pass through the mill of translation, and came out, I am sure, with all of the "chaff" and much of the frankness ground out, for there are established customs in Tibet, and reverence for authority requires a hidebound humility that tries one's patience.

Tharchin obviously enjoyed his role; but with all due respect for a necessary self-deprecation in the presence of a superior he was overdoing it;⁸ his breath came in humble gasps; words followed haltingly with long pauses between, and his eyes were rarely lifted higher than his folded hands. And so I protested.

"It is a manner I assume," he answered me.⁹ "Then please do assume another one or we will be here all day."



Now on the day of the expedition's departure from Kalimpong, Tharchin brought forward what Merrick termed "three Tibetan urchins" whom her Tibetan guide indicated were to be her pony boys: Lhakrey, Phurbutsering and Bainig. "But this is not a kindergarten, Tharchin," I said. "They will have to walk all the way and could never keep up." But Tharchin, as later events proved, knew what he was doing. "They are all good boys and strong," he answered the lady. "They never get tired. They live with me, and Lhakrey wants to go to Gyantse to visit his mother." (This was the same pony boy who would accompany Tharchin six years later with Theos Bernard to Lhasa and who would receive news of his mother's death while all in the party were on their way to Gyantse; see next chapter.) "I started to reason," countered Mrs. Merrick, "that that was a poor excuse for taking the infant along." But Tharchin's humility, she explained in her journal, "was reinforced by determination, and he continued: 'Lhakrey is a good boy ...; his name means "Gift of the Gods".'" "That settled the matter," she wrote. "Far be it from me to refuse a Gift of the Gods at the beginning of such a journey. Then, because every member of his household except his wife was in my bandobast [arrangement], I asked Tharchin if she was to accompany us also. The reason he gave for her not doing so was that she was too busy." As it turned out, it was perhaps just as well that Mrs. Tharchin did *not* travel with the party in view of the rigors and dangers which awaited the group over the Jelep La. As it was, Karma Dechhen would be in a good situation while her husband was away, since fortunately, despite the disagreement between Tharchin

spiritual matters. In addition he manages the Tibetan Press and edits a monthly newspaper which ... is a valuable adjunct to our work." Furthermore, it must not be overlooked that these two were eventually reconciled to each other, with both of them able to rise above their differences for the sake of the work of serving the Tibetans and the Tibetan Church in Kalimpong. These facets of their relationship the present chapter will also make clear.

and Dr. Knox, the latter had kindly agreed prior to the publisher's departure with Merrick to allow the Tibetan's wife to stay on at Polhill Hall until his return from the Land of Snows.



Traveling along the great mule track that wended its way out of Kalimpong into Sikkim, the Merrick party left as scheduled on May 1st bound for an unusual rendezvous with the Jelep La, the experience of which none in the group would forget for a long time to come. Moreover, the expedition would not return to India until late in July via the Natu La and Gangtok, two months longer than Tharchin had originally planned to be away. But fortunately the trek would take them through territory that by now was quite familiar to the Tibetan guide.

At one point on the path towards Pedong in Sikkim Lhakrey suddenly pointed to a boulder on which was the imprint of a human foot. Tharchin translated: "The footstep of the Holy One." "Buddha?" asked Mrs. Merrick. No, he replied; it was that "of Padma Sambhava, the saint, who traveled all over Tibet preaching long, long ago." When Merrick remarked that that was a very long while ago, Lhakrey interjected with an innocent statement of faith, "Yes, and the rocks were then very soft so that his foot sank in. The rock grew hard later."

From Pedong the group made their way towards the village of Ari, beyond which was a four-mile descent over a rock causeway so rough that riding over it was impossible. Suddenly at a bend in the road, wrote Merrick, "the very heavens seemed to open, and the stupendous vision of the whole Kanchenjunga range rising to unbelievable heights into the sky, lay before us, gray in its shadows, rose where the dawn touched its peaks. It was as if all the fine courage of the universe, every noble deed and high aspiration had been caught up and visibly perpetuated." The American continued her narration of the event. "Tharchin," she wrote, "spoke at my elbow:

There is said to be a book held in one of the monasteries in Tibet which contains the story of Kanchenjunga. It tells of five treasures that lie buried under the mountain, and relates that on the appointed day the right person will discover them. He alone may lift the stone under which lies the key that will open the door to the treasure chamber. And therein will be found a map showing the only possible ascents to Kanchenjunga and Everest. The book says also that there will be a famine all over the world and that everything necessary to relieve the sufferings of men will come out of Kanchenjunga.

"Do you believe these things, Tharchin?" I asked. "'It is so related. Who can say?' was the answer."

Beyond Ari (4700') Merrick's party made their way to Lingtam (4000'), a mule caravanserai,¹⁰ from whence there began an incredibly long ascent of 10,000 feet in fifteen miles to the "sleepy mule caravanserai" of Lingtu situated at nearly 14,000 feet. Traversing the Pemberingo Pass they made their descent from there some 2000 feet to Gnatong (at 12,300'), the last major village before the formidable Jelep La and the Tibetan border and the formerly British fortified town where Annie Taylor had made her serious blunder as the

short-lived leader of the Tibetan Pioneer Mission. Here, the Merrick party was overtaken by unusually bad weather for this time of year, which delayed the group considerably. May 10th had come and they were nowhere near Yatung, the place at which they had aimed to reach by that date. Merrick recorded what happened next:

... when that date arrived and I still saw no chance of fair weather, I got out of my sleeping bag at two o'clock in the morning and woke the men and said to Tharchin: "It's impossible to hold over longer. We must cross today." He shook his head dubiously at the prospect of marching eighteen miles in such weather. Waiting had not helped matters. The snow had piled higher, and a steady drizzle of rain promised slippery going over the high-flung pass. This was the pass of which Colonel Waddell had written: "Hannibal crossing the Alps was a mere bagatelle compared to General Macdonald's [Younghusband's Army Commander in 1903-4] crossing the Jelep Pass." And he remarked that then there was no snow.¹¹ I wondered just how much worse it was going to be for my little outfit, with paths obliterated, and the ground many inches deep under snow.

The mules, tethered in front of the bungalow, drooped their heads. We were all in sorry mood and Tharchin remarked: "It will be difficult to get across in weather like this." "Ask Tsigyalbu if it *can* be done," I said. The old muleteer shook his head, but smiled and answered: "I think we can get through if the blizzard gets no worse, but it will be hard going."

"Tell him to load at once," I decided, "and let's get started. It will be worse every day that we delay."

When all eight mules plus the additional transport animals they had taken on at Lingtam were loaded up, the somewhat dejected party pushed off in the direction of the Pass, whose name in Tibetan, it may be recalled, means, ironically, "Lovely Level Pass"!! The party would find it otherwise *that* day. Merrick continued with the narration of the event:

What a dreary spectacle my little caravan made as it mounted ever steeper grades, slipping on stones and into the snowdrifts. I and my men were up to our knees in snow, and a high wind drove sleet into our eyes. Mists soon blotted out all but the short stretch ahead, and a heavy snowstorm soon turned into a howling blizzard. The mules seemed to know the unseen path by instinct, and we followed them. Once I stopped and called the camera coolie to me, and with numb fingers unbuckled the straps of the canvas cover that protected it. While my pony boy held an umbrella to cover it, I tried to catch the impression of my little band in that desolation.

In fact, two photographs appear at page 118 of her book that pictorially record the incredible feat in which Tharchin was a reluctant participant. It was fortunate for him that he had only just turned 41 years of age. Had he been much older he might not have made it.

"Some men passed," the American traveler continued, who looked "like walking haystacks as they bent under loads of fodder brought down across the high pass from the forests of the Chumbi Valley just across the range in Tibet, to the treeless, grassless regions on the Sikkim side of the range." Merrick then described in graphic detail the climb up to the crest of the Jelep La that now lay before them.

For the rest of the way it was just a heart-straining, breathtaking climb at zigzag over slippery loose stones hidden under snow, or pulling one's feet out of deep drifts only to sink into another one at the next step. A weary climb. No chance to rest. One could not sit down in the snow, and there was not even a boulder behind which one might hide from the wind or lean upon; yet one had to halt for breath every few minutes. All that was written about the strain on

heart and lungs, pulling up at such altitudes, was true. I was able to make the grade simply because I was so fit. I was dripping with perspiration from the exertion, but chilled the minute I stopped moving. We were covered with snow as we climbed up and up until we reached the ridge, where a cairn with prayer flags¹² floated above the watershed ...: the top of the Jelep La, 14,390 feet above sea level.

Merrick confessed that the climb to the crest of the Pass had indeed been strenuous, but she was high in her praise of the members of her party. Noting in her narrative that not one of the eleven-member group, including Tharchin, had contracted mountain sickness, the American lady attributed this to the fact that her men were hardened to such conditions and familiar with the trail; and, she observed proudly, they all “came through smiling”—adding as well concerning herself that “I had not suffered more than discomfort.”

They were not yet beyond the danger point, however. For the party still had to get down the Tibetan side of the Pass that was marked by similar climatic and topographical conditions.

On the crest we paused for breath, but not too long in that driving wind. Just long enough to sense the mysteries of the Forbidden Land of Tibet which lay beyond, cloaked in cloud and snow.

There was a drop of four thousand feet in six miles from the top of the Pass. Mindful of the danger of halting, we slid and slipped down, going sideways along the mountain where the grade is one in two, and one in three. The pack mules with somewhat lightened loads, because of extra transport animals taken on at Lingtam, were helped down by the mulemen, and the riding ponies were carefully watched by the other boys. Deep snow hid what might otherwise have been terrifying drops; one could slide when the grade made walking difficult.

Some trouble was experienced when we struck ice-covered rivulets hidden in the drifts of snow, but one came to the help of the other who might be in temporary difficulty; and it was really glorious fun ...



The party was now out of any further danger and soon entered the lovely, relatively level but exceedingly warm Chumbi Valley that was in sharp contrast to what they had just experienced in the Jelep La. After spending a few days at Yatung recuperating from the unforgettable ordeal in the Pass, Merrick and her party resumed the forward journey towards Gyantse, traveling the route which had become so familiar to Tharchin up the long stretch of Tibetan terrain to the town where ten years before he had spent so many wonderful months teaching in the school he had founded there. Memories of that bygone era must have come rushing back into his mind, especially when he encountered two acquaintances of yesteryear: Doring Thaiji, in whose home at both Gyantse and Lhasa he had stayed when on his very first visit to Tibet; and Jigme Taring, who had been his student at Gyantse, and who by this time had Mary Tsarong for his wife. Though Jigme's father, Taring Raja, was absent, his mother, Taring Rani, was there with Jigme and Mary at the family estate some six miles outside Gyantse.

Unfortunately for Doring Thaiji, in 1930 he had lost favor with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who had confiscated his Lhasa estate (called, it may be recalled, Doring, from whence he had gotten his name), had deprived him of the title of Thaiji (although he still continued to be commonly addressed as Doring Thaiji), and had degraded him to the sixth rank because

of suspicion of his having intrigued against the Government. Nevertheless, he still had a spacious home and estates near Gyantse, had been able to retain his achieved rank of Major General in the Tibetan army, and was about to become the *Dzongpon*, or District Commander, of a fort at Nyanam on the borders of Nepal.¹³

In the homes of both these friends Tharchin, in company with Mrs. Merrick, experienced gracious hospitality as only Tibetan noblemen can show towards any honored guests. Indeed, Tharchin's and Mrs. Merrick's delightfully charming experience at Doring Thaiji's country villa has already been described for the reader in Chapter 14.



One final episode in this journey of Tharchin's ought to be recited here. For it serves to indicate the change in the attitude of the Tibetan government towards the education of the young that had apparently occurred since the days when eight years earlier Tharchin had been about to establish a school in Lhasa itself at the invitation of Doring Thaiji and other Tibetan officials. Mrs. Merrick records an interesting dialogue which took place during that same interview partially recounted earlier which she had had with the Kenchen of Gyantse—the Tibetan Trade Agent. It will be recalled that Tharchin was also present as interpreter. At one point she said to him:

"Please tell the Kenchen that I want to open the school in Gyantse again, and install you as teacher, but that I understand that the Dalai Lama does not wish to have the people educated."

"The people themselves do not wish to learn," the Kenchen answered.

"But, Kusho," I replied, this being the correct way to address a Tibetan gentleman, "I have found out that there are 100 children in Gyantse whose parents are willing to pay five rupees a month to have them taught."

At this the subject was adroitly shifted, the Kenchen asking after the author about her journey to Gyantse, her age, and whether she had any children back in America. But the American lady would not be deflected so easily, and she returned to her subject but with a new approach.

"Kusho, I want also to start a newspaper here for the Tibetans. I can send lots of material for it, so that they can learn about the outside world."

"The people do not wish to know about the outside world. They wish no contact with foreigners."

"But I think they do, Kusho. All along the road they seemed interested. They have heard of President Hoover's efforts for world peace, and asked me to tell him please to continue them. For war was a dreadful thing.* Also they told me they had heard that America was the richest country in the world, and that England owed her money. When I told them that other nations owed us also, they seemed surprised that there were other Western nations."¹⁴

* This that Mrs. Merrick related regarding the then U.S. President was quite true. Just a few years prior to her own journey into Tibet, the Russian artist-explorer Nicholas Roerich had spent four years in Central Asia, including a lengthy stay in the Land of Snows. At the conclusion of his travels he could report that the worldwide fame of Hoover because of his work as head of war relief missions in Europe following the Great War had even

But once again the Kenchen cleverly changed the subject and no more could be said thereafter on the matter!* Truly, the conservative-minded clergy of Tibet had effectively influenced even the Thirteenth Dalai Lama from further pursuing the modernizing of his country and the continuance of the policy His Holiness had initiated of turning Tibet in a more outward direction in the aftermath of Sir Charles Bell's visit to Lhasa in 1920-1 at the invitation of the Dalai Lama. And as the reader will learn, one terrible consequence of this return to a conservative stance in educational matters and to the earlier reclusive foreign policy was the ease with which the Chinese in the 1950s were able to intimidate the world—especially Britain and Independent India—into accepting the twin notions that China had the right to meddle in Tibetan affairs and that anyway the Land of Snows was an integral part of the Chinese empire.



During Tharchin's three-month absence from Kalimpong someone had edited his newspaper without proper authorization. An article had been published in it comparing Buddhism with Christianity. The writer of the article made several glaring mistakes which went to prove that Buddhism and Christianity were the same. Tharchin naturally took exception to this sort of mismanagement of his newspaper, for which he was the legal editor. Accordingly, upon his return from Tibet in late July of 1931 the newspaper publisher wrote a letter about this matter to the ruling Mission Council—that body which was responsible for handling all administrative and policy matters of the Mission.

The Mission Council or, as it was also more completely known, the Eastern Himalayan Mission Council, was, in the words of Scottish Churchman J. N. Ogilvie, that ruling body within the Scottish Mission of the Eastern Himalaya which linked together and controlled "all the component parts of the Kalimpong Mission Group." As was further explained by Rev. Ogilvie, who himself visited Kalimpong twice (in 1905 and 1921), the Mission based at Tharchin's hill station constituted not one but a whole group of Mission components that individually were supported either by the Home Church of Scotland, by the latter's Young Men's Guild organization, by its Women's Guild organization, or by the Universities Missionary

penetrated into these distant regions of the earth. "In the remote places of Asia," noted the famous Orientalist. "President Hoover is regarded as a legendary giant who feeds all peoples." And in Tibet, he commented, the name "Hoover" had been distorted into "Yoovera"—the Tibetan name for the God of Happiness! Professor Roerich had even discovered an old photograph of the President enshrined in a Tibetan house. See *New York Times*, 9 May 1929, p. 1 and 7 June 1929, p. 27.

* It should be pointed out that this was the same Kenchen who by his "implacable opposition" to the Ludlow school just five years earlier had himself contributed to its demise after only three years' existence. At that time, it may be recalled, the Kenchen had been ordered by the Tibetan government that all expenses for the school and its operation must be paid for out of *his* pocket, since the Government claimed it lacked funds for such a project! Little wonder, then, that on the personal level, if not on any other, the Kenchen five years later, when presented by Mrs. Merrick with a similar school proposal, had displayed no interest whatever in even discussing the matter. Perhaps he did not wish to be reminded of what the Ludlow school had cost him!

Association (or else were supported by two or more of these Scottish Church entities). And hence the necessity for there to be such a ruling Mission Council. By 1921, reported Ogilvie, it had come to be "composed of the missionaries [both male and female] and four Indian 'consulting' members"—these latter four doubtless being of Nepali, Lepcha, Bhutia or other ethnic extractions indigenous to the geographical area of the Mission's labors.¹⁵ Moreover, two years later these four nationals were given full membership status; and by 1933 they would be granted the right to sit on those Council committees that were responsible for control of the various departments of mission work.¹⁶

In his letter to the Council Tharchin first pointed out the fact that his paper had been edited without his permission; but he then mentioned as well the article containing inaccuracies on the comparison of Buddhism with Christianity. The Mission Council discussed Tharchin's letter sympathetically, and it was also resolved that his one month's salary which had been withheld should be given him. Dr. Knox therefore called him in and offered him the previously deducted back salary as a "gift" which the Tibetan refused to accept, for he correctly argued that "the Council had decided that the pay should be given ... as salary and not as a 'gift'." The matter was soon settled in his favor and Tharchin was indeed given his arrears as salary. The Tibetan had courageously stood his ground on principle and had in the end been vindicated by the Council itself. One must note, however, that although he had some legitimate disagreements with the Mission authorities, Tharchin still did not separate himself from the local Tibetan church fellowship. He continued to attend the church services, sitting in the back pew while Dr. Knox conducted the Sunday morning worship.

At about this same time Dr. Graham returned to Kalimpong after having completed an elected term as the Moderator of the Church of Scotland for the year 1931. This was the Presiding Officer elected within the Scottish Church to preside over its General Assembly, which is the highest ecclesiastical judiciary or governing board of the Church and composed of ministers and ruling elders delegated from each and every district presbytery within the Church of Scotland. Usually the Moderator must be, and almost always is, a minister. As stated earlier, Graham had gone on furlough back to his home country in the spring of 1931, having retired from the Kalimpong Mission earlier that same year. It proved to be quite a whirlwind furlough year for the missionary: he arrived in Scotland sometime in May, was later that same month surprisingly elected the Church's Moderator, and arrived back in Kalimpong on 18 March 1932. Retirement the previous year, after forty-two years of devoted service in the hill station, had not, however, meant his leaving "his beloved Kalimpong" but simply moving up to the Homes Establishment "to continue to work for the project which was so dear to his heart."¹⁷ (It so happened that David Macdonald was also at this time in Britain¹⁸ but he returned a little before Dr. Graham.)

Happily for Tharchin and all others concerned, thanks to Dr. Graham's timely assistance (he still maintained membership on the Guild Mission Council under a special provision of its Constitution), the difficulties over the question of accumulated leave were clarified and the points of difference reconciled. Whereupon Tharchin, as the Tibetan catechist, rejoined the Scottish Mission work, effective 1 September 1932,¹⁹ which by this time had come under the superintendency of one of the Scottish missionaries who had been on the Eastern Himalaya field the longest, the Rev. William M. Scott.²⁰ In fact, in advance of Tharchin's rejoining the

Mission, missionary Knox, in an apparent move to obviate the recurrence of the kind of dispute which had erupted the year before between him and his catechist, had taken the precaution to update and further codify, in a document he had drawn up, a "Church of Scotland Guild Mission [Set of] Rules for the Appointment of the Tibetan Catechist." This typed document, found among the Tharchin Papers, had been either initialed or signed in ink by both parties on all three of its pages. It had further been signed by both men at its end, and had further included the following initialed handwritten inked statement by Dr. Knox at the bottom of the final page: "Tharchin re-entered the service of the Mission on 1st September 1932, and agreed to these conditions at that time. RBK."

Interestingly, exactly two weeks prior to this transaction, on 15 August, Tharchin had apparently requested from Knox clarification of these conditions before he would give his assent to them. For found also among the Indo-Tibetan's personal papers was a letter sent by the missionary to his would-be re-appointed catechist, dated 16 August 1932. Its opening section reads: "Dear Tharchin, With reference to the points raised by you yesterday in connection with the conditions of your re-appointment as Tibetan Catechist, the following may serve to make matters clearer." And upon clarifying the first two matters—"Salary" and "Non-Mission Work"—Knox addressed the subject of "Leave" in the following fashion: "The allowance of 14 days leave every year is considered sufficient [In the aforementioned "Rules" document that was initialed two weeks later the number of days had been changed: from "14" as typed to "21" inked over the originally-typed number of 14.], but the rule allows further special leave to be granted at suitable times.... I can assure [you] that a sympathetic consideration will be given to requests for special leave and [I] feel that the special case which you suggest, viz., a journey to your own country [i.e., to Tibet] might quite easily be met from accumulated ordinary leave [which would be "with full pay"] together with some special leave." Moreover, the "Rules" document itself included a provision whereby the catechist's ordinary leave, "subject to the exigencies of the work," could "be made cumulative within a period of 3 years"; and that "the Missionary may, at his discretion, grant additional short periods of leave." Obviously, Tharchin was making certain, before ever rejoining the Scots Mission work among Tibetans, that he would have the right, if the opportunity presented itself, to visit his ethnic homeland again in the future.

On the other hand, Knox as missionary, was intent on making sure there would henceforth be no misunderstanding over the matter of future catechist resignations. Spelled out specifically in the "Rules" document of 1 September 1932, it called for the following: "The appointment [of Tibetan Catechist] may be terminated by one month's notice being given on either side. If dismissed without [this] due notice, the Catechist shall be entitled to one month's salary, less 1/30th for every day for which notice is given; and if he leaves without [giving] due notice, he shall forfeit one month's pay, less 1/30th for every day for which notice is given."

With these various conditions now clarified, the two men were able to amicably affix their signatures to this newly-created document of understanding. Nevertheless, this transaction did not at all signify the end of disagreements between these two over *other* issues, as the reader will soon learn.



During this same troublesome year for Tharchin (1931) a split occurred in the local Macfarlane Memorial Church and a sizable group of members, led by their “leader-pastor,” separated themselves from this local congregation and joined the Roman Catholic Church. According to Dr. Graham’s biographer, this leader of the breakaway group was the Lepcha Christian, Rev. C. T. (more accurately, G. T., for Gyan Tshering) Sitling, who, writes James Minto, “almost wrecked the [Macfarlane] Church because of his ... opposition to the missionaries.” Taking with him “about one-third of the congregation,” Rev. Sitling became a Roman Catholic, and “he and his group strengthened considerably the small struggling Roman Catholic community in Kalimpong.”²¹ Actually, the Catholic Church at first had shown little interest in the Darjeeling District and the immediate surrounding areas “as mission fields in their own right” but had considered them as “barriers to be overcome” in her quest to establish routes through the Himalayas into Forbidden Tibet. But when frustrated in their various attempts to make entrance into the Great Closed Land, the Catholics, as was learned in Chapter 7 of the present narrative, did establish a mission station at Pedong in 1882 under the leadership of Fr. Desgodins. Meanwhile, in 1846 there was opened the Loreto Convent at Darjeeling Town, which was in time followed by other Catholic institutional works.²² Nevertheless, in Kalimpong the Catholic Church had by and large maintained a low profile, it having had no established work in the hill station prior to the Sitling group’s departure from Macfarlane. And hence, the action taken by Rev. Sitling and his followers, in the words of Dr. Cindy Perry, “sent shock waves throughout” the ruling Council and the entire Eastern Himalaya Mission. Dr. Perry went on to describe what happened and the apparent reasons for it having occurred:

In what was termed “Roman Catholic aggression,” the pastor of Macfarlane Memorial Church in Kalimpong, Rev. G. T. Sitling, and most of his family, including his brother Pasang Sitling, a catechist, his father Rev. Gora Sitling of Chhobo Church, and two teachers, left the Scottish Mission fold to join the Roman Catholic Church.... The exact reasons why the Sitlings joined the Roman Catholic Church are unclear. Neither Rev. G. T. Sitling nor his father ... became priests. According to local informants Rev. G. T. Sitling had a vision which he felt was from God telling him to join the Catholic Church.... This event was a precursor of what was to come, although from within the Protestant fold, as more and more outside Christian influences entered Darjeeling District from [this time forward].²³

As a matter of fact, the Sitling-led split would prove to be only the first of many breakaways from the Macfarlane and other congregations within the Scots Mission over the next several decades.

Now when some of the 1931 separatists heard of Tharchin’s own disagreements with the Mission authorities, they approached him with the purpose of enticing him away from the Scottish Mission work in order that he might pilot their own new printing press which belonged to one of the group’s members.* In order to please him and at the same time capture him,

* According to Tharchin’s “memoirs,” Rev. Sitling had established the Wang Press in a building in Kalimpong owned at the time by the Tibetan’s Christian friend, F. Desraj, the building later having been purchased by the

Tibetan type was specially ordered for the publisher from Hong Kong. But Tharchin refused, despite these and other attractive overtures made to him, to secede from the Mission and join in with them. Indeed, in a letter David Macdonald wrote the following year to the Bible Society in London, Tharchin's esteemed friend commented that "the Roman Catholics did their utmost to get hold of Tharchin, but have failed to do so."²⁴ Far from taking advantage of such a troubled situation for his own self-interest, Tharchin—the always helpful man that he was—recommended to this separatist group some other person to aid them in the use of the Tibetan type, but this recommendation did not meet with the approval of the owner of the new press. The "fish" was thus lost and the "game" foiled, since Tharchin stood firm throughout. He was not at all an opportunist, his loyalties always having been towards his church which he served faithfully throughout his lifetime.



Still another difficulty arose concerning the question of printing. For in the wake of Tharchin's resignation over the Tibet trip issue, Dr. Knox had (rightfully) claimed the litho press as Mission property. In the end the publisher, though no longer on the Guild Mission staff, was still allowed to print his Tibetan newspaper on the press, but in receiving this privilege he was now to pay for the actual cost of the paper used and for the labor involved. Dr. Knox, who still supervised the management of the Mission Press, agreed to this settlement. Yet the next time that Tharchin printed the *Tibet Mirror*, he was given a bill for Rs. 16/-, which proved to be Rs. 3/- over and above the actual cost. The publisher, again on principle, objected to this extra charge. Knox reacted by pointing out that there was wastage attendant upon the printing of the newspaper; and besides, he observed, Tharchin was not being charged anything by way of house rent at Polhill Hall where he and his family still resided. Yet these issues had never entered into the aforementioned settlement that had been agreed upon. Instead of surrendering to what appeared to him to be Knox's extraneous logic, Tharchin went to the Mani Press in Kalimpong and requested them to allow him to print the *Tibet Mirror* on their small litho press which at the time was lying idle. By so doing, of course, Tharchin—to meet Government regulations in such matters—was required to declare himself the printer and publisher of his newspaper; and accordingly, he would have to pay the wages of the workers from his own pocket. Hence, the cost to him in printing and producing a newspaper on the Mani small litho press, including the salary of the workers and materials, would now be Rs. 35/-. But Gergan Tharchin was willing to suffer this additional expense for the sake of upholding what he felt was principle rather than succumbing to expediency.

The litho machine at Mani was so small, however, that he could print only one page at a time whereas on the Mission press he could print four pages at a time. Nevertheless, for a

Central Bank of India. After a short while, however, the Press folded up and was eventually shifted to Kurseong in 1932. See GTUM TwMs, Ch. 22, p. 5n. Interestingly, in this same year of the Church split at Macfarlane, Tharchin had printed at his Tibetan Press for Rev. Sitling a calendar of events for the Christian Lepcha community entitled "The Young Lepcha" and edited by Sitling himself. See a page from the calendar for March 1931, ThPaK.

few months he was financially able to manage the production of his paper by means of this Mani machine. Long afterwards the original owner of the small litho press put it up for sale, and the editor and publisher of the Tibetan newspaper felt led to purchase it as a remembrance. It was still with him at his death, and serves as an important landmark in the history of the development of Gergan Tharchin's modern Tibet Mirror Press.



During the period of Tharchin's resignation from the Mission service, and after his return from the Tibetan city of Gyantse, he changed his place of residence from Polhill Hall to Kasim Manzil located just across the street. This was doubtless a consequence of the disagreement between the Tibetan publisher and Rev. Knox surrounding the Rs. 3/- overcharge. As will be learned a few pages hence, this shift in residence would be temporary only. Now it so happened that shortly after Tharchin had resigned from the Mission service, someone remarked to him, "You fool! You have left the work. What will you do next?" To which the Tibetan's faith responded on this wise: "You will see what I will do. God will open the way for me."

And sure enough, a way *was* opened, opened for Tharchin to assist a learned French scholar, historian, explorer and geographer, the world-renowned Professor Jacques Bacot (1877-1965), who was then engaged in some ongoing research work and translation. A specialist in Asian civilization, Bacot contributed in his works to Western knowledge of Asian peoples, especially the Tibetans. As a consequence, he was also a noted scholar of the Tibetan language who taught many Europeans at Paris.* Bacot, who had many disciples in Europe, had even traveled during the period 1906 to 1908 through Kham Province in the eastern part of Tibet.²⁵ But he undertook several other Asian exploratory travels that led him to northern Indochina (1909-10) and various parts of the Himalayas (1913-14 and 1930-31).

* As a matter of fact, Bacot's linguistic work in Tibetan still maintains a central place in the study of this language and its grammatical literature. It was the year 1928, "the true *annus mirabilis* of Western studies of the Tibetan grammarians," writes Roy Miller, which "saw the publication of the two basic studies that continue to set the tone for this field, Schubert (1928, completed 1929), and Bacot (1928)." Stressing in particular "the presumed role" of Thonmi Sambhota "in inventing not only the grammar but the language behind the grammar," Bacot, notes Miller, viewed the Tibetan of Sambhota's texts "as by and large an artificial creation"; indeed, Miller explains, in the thinking of this French Tibetologist, "one could hardly believe that anyone—much less the Tibetans!—had really ever used and mastered such a language; and what we find in our texts today must be the result of cunning and artifice, both mainly to be laid to the charge of the first grammarian." Thonmi Sambhota.

But Tibetologist Miller points out that more recent scholars are raising serious doubts about Bacot's *a priori* assumptions, which, Miller declares, "continue to interpose themselves between us and our texts." Specifically, he asserts, the question surrounding Bacot's assumption of the artificial nature of the historicity of Thonmi Sambhota: its grammar cannot, in Tibetological terms, "be divorced from the problem of the historicity of Thonmi Sambhota: if he never lived, then he could hardly have invented the Tibetan language. But this same question also has another dimension: this is not so much whether or not Thonmi Sambhota did what Bacot believed him to have done, but rather whether anyone in human history ever did what is attributed to Thonmi Sambhota, i.e., artificially create not only a grammar but the language that lies behind it." Miller, "On the Utility of the Tibetan Grammarians," in Steinkellner, ed., *Tibetan History and Language*, 358-9, 361.

Now it had only been three months after Tharchin's resignation and at about the time of his return from Tibet in 1931 that Professor Bacot had arrived in Kalimpong,* where he stayed—as was not surprising—at the Himalayan Hotel. Tharchin was brought to the attention of Bacot, who, upon recognizing the originality and ability of his intellect in the field of research in the Tibetan language, requisitioned his assistance in the translation project.

Chief among the works which the French Tibetologist assigned to the grateful Tibetan to translate for him were those portions of the famed Tun-Huang Cave Documents which dealt with ancient Tibetan history. These extraordinary Cave artifacts constituted a great body of manuscripts which in 1907 had been obtained by the renowned Tibetologist and scholar-explorer Sir Aurel Stein from a long-sealed cache in the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas at the Gobi oasis town of Tun-Huang in China's Kansu Province and which were then brought to Europe and divided between the India Office Library in London and the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. It will be recalled from Chapter 14 above that the ancient Tibetan Empire had conquered and then held control over Kansu and Szechuan Provinces of the Han Empire for a hundred years; and apparently it was during this period of control that certain Tibetan texts found among other ancient manuscripts at Tun-Huang had been written down, they dating from the eighth and ninth centuries. These Tibetan documents include Annals covering the years 649-747; a list of the ancient Principalities of Tibet and a Genealogy of the Tibetan Kings from the beginning down through the Third Religious King and on to King Langdarma's reign (838-42); and a chronicle down to the end of the Second Religious King who ruled Tibet between 755 and 797.†²⁶

* Per Kvaerne, in reviewing Heather Stoddard's biography of Gedun Chopel (*Le mendiant de l'Amdo*), is incorrect in the date of Bacot's Kalimpong visit when he states it was "during a long stay in Kalimpong around 1940" that Bacot, working "on historical texts from Tun-Huang," had "enlisted the help of Tharchin Babu in reading these difficult texts." Kvaerne, "The Beggar from Amdo," *TJ* (Autumn 1987):73. See Chapter 23 of the present work for more on the collaboration among Bacot, Tharchin and Gedun Chopel, wherein is indicated the fact that Tharchin sought the aid of the famed Tibetan scholar Chopel in assisting Bacot (who was back in Paris) in his work of translating the ancient Tun-Huang Cave Documents.

† Claudine Canetti has provided additional details about this remarkable discovery at Tun-Huang. During the so-called "Buddhist millennium" of roughly the first to the tenth centuries a.d., in which Buddhism gradually spread from North India to the large countries of the Far East, especially to China, there had developed north of Tibet, writes Canetti, a "prodigiously rich" artistic and religious culture that came to be centered "in oases a few days' walk from one another" and located on two diverging ancient silk routes: "one to the north and the other to the south of the impassable desert of Takla Makan, from the Pamir mountains in the west right to the Chinese province of Kansu in the east." It was archaeologist Stein who "gave this region, divided between the influences of India and China, the name of 'Serindia,' referring to the 'land of the Seres' spoken of by the Greek geographer Pausanias (around 180 a.d.) based on the name for silkworms."

Some twenty or so great Buddhist sites had been rediscovered during various dangerous expeditions conducted by Russian, British, German, French, Swedish and Japanese archaeologists that included Kucha, Tamstak and Turfan on the northern silk route and Khotan, Luan and Miram on the southern route. "But the real gateway on the silk roads linking China to the West," explains Canetti, "was Tun-Huang, an oasis located at the fork between two routes in ... Kansu and where Chinese Buddhism developed and spread under the empire of the Tangs in the 7th and 8th centuries." Now it was here that "an extraordinary collection of some 450 sanctuary caves, carved out of the rock, were discovered" and which came to be known as the Ch'ien-Fo-Tung ("the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas"). One particular sanctuary, called "the cave with the manuscripts" and characterized as a hiding-place, which had been walled up during the 11th century, was thoroughly explored by both Stein and a young French expert in Chinese, Paul

It was portions of these works, difficult in the extreme to decipher, which Tharchin Babu was now asked to lend a hand in translating. Bacot had not brought the originals—they were far too priceless to be allowed to be removed from the French National Library—but photographs of the sections of these Tibetan texts which three Tibetan Lamas invited by the French government to perform the translation were unable to decipher. As a subsequent chapter will reveal, in time Tharchin would be able to read and understand three-fourths of the photographic material which the French professor had brought and left with the Babu to work on after his departure back to France. This remarkable achievement gave ample evidence, if any were needed, of Gergan Tharchin's linguistic ability in the classical Tibetan language. That Bacot appreciated and enjoyed immensely his time in Kalimpong with the Indo-Tibetan is evident by what he would say to Tharchin nearly two decades later in his letter of 7 February 1948 (and found among the Tharchin Papers):

... How many events [have occurred] since I [last] saw you and how important [they have been] in Europe and recently in India!... I wonder what Kalimpong is like after 18 years. I seldom had such a nice time in my life than [I had] there. And you were my only visitor when I was ill. Your friendship is among my best souvenirs [i.e., memories]. Had I less duties at home and less than seventy-one years, I would be pleased to see you and Kalimpong again.

Now as a consequence of his association with Bacot, Tharchin became the recipient of Rs. 200/- per month as compensation for the scholastic assistance he rendered the Professor. This incident of what he perceived to have been God's providence once again deepened the Tibetan's faith in the goodness of the Lord who he firmly believed is ever mindful of every need of His children. Surely he could identify with David the psalmist of old, who had declared in the midst of his own difficulties: "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.... I sought the Lord, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears."



It so happened that one day after his return from Tibet Tharchin's wife Karma became very seriously ill from the development of an acute abscess on her neck. The pain grew so

Pelliot. Here was discovered a rich cache of hundreds of religious wall paintings, paintings on silk, and thousands of precious manuscripts on paper or on wood that "had slumbered for a thousand years, miraculously preserved."

The caves at Tun-Huang also contained religious statues made of stone, wood or dried earth, as well as large votive banners, painted on silk, hemp and paper, which were carried in religious processions. Many of these, together with some 300 paintings and more than 6,000 manuscripts (sacred texts and archive documents that throw light on everyday life in medieval China), were acquired by Pelliot and are today housed in either the Guimet Museum or the Bibliothèque Nationale, both at Paris.

In conclusion, Canetti describes a moving 9th-century painting on silk found at Tun-Huang that delineates "a monk weighed down with books, walking accompanied by a tiger," thus symbolizing "the means of propagation of Buddhism from the Indian world towards the Far East across Central Asia, thanks to these scholarly monks who brought the sacred books." Canetti, "Buddhist Art on the Silk Road" (culled from French Features), *Kathmandu Post*, 11 Feb. 1996, p. 4.

unbearable and the condition so bad that it required immediate treatment. Ignoring all the strained relationships of the past, Dr. Knox rushed to see sister Karma and said to her husband: "If you want me to operate on her with chloroform, then I am willing to do it." Tharchin likewise ignored the past difficulties and agreed to the Doctor's proposal with full faith and trust, since he was a Christian doctor. Knox personally went to the Tibetan's home and there performed the operation with his own hands, and dressed the wound—which was deep and putrid—by cleansing out the pus with a long piece of cloth.

At the time, some people chided Tharchin in the following fashion: "You have disagreements with Dr. Knox and yet you still call him to treat your wife. You are being very foolish." To which he replied, "It is true that at times in the past we have had certain differences; nevertheless, he is a Christian missionary doctor, and I am sure he would never think of doing any harm to my wife. I trust him fully in the operation." In the event, Dr. Knox was as good as the proverbial Samaritan doctor even as Tharchin was childlike in reposing his faith and trust in the missionary. Subsequently, Tharchin's wife recovered completely.*

Apropos of all this, Gergan Tharchin would remark later that "Dr. Knox was truly a sincere and well-meaning missionary, especially towards the little flock of the Tibetan church. When there was any sickness, and while others were hissing or passing him by, he would care for the Tibetan patients, not being concerned in the slightest for himself. One day, for example, the missionary saw a very sick Tibetan who was so helpless he could not walk. The Doctor literally carried him on his own back and got him admitted into the Christian hospital. Dr. Knox was indeed a Christ-like missionary. Later he left on furlough [in late July 1939] but could not return because of ill health." Following his furlough, however, Dr. Knox would continue to live out his life for many years back in his homeland of Australia till his death on 19 May 1963.

As noted before, Knox was instrumental in opening the Tibetan dispensary at the Eleventh Mile in Kalimpong. And as was made clear in an earlier chapter, this dispensary was to render a great medical service to the Tibetan-speaking population of the area—both residents and visitors alike—for many, many years.

For more than thirty-five years Miss Dorothy Christianson (from 1950 to 1986) and for nearly twenty-five years Miss Lillian Carlson (1950 to 1973), both of the World Mission Prayer League, had been of great help to the Tibetan church in both the medical and educational fields. Often they had assisted in conducting Bible classes in Polhill Hall. At times they had also helped deserving Tibetan students with free tuition. Moreover, for many years Miss Carlson faithfully taught English to the children who were being educated in the Kalimpong Tibetan refugee school. Besides their regular attendance at the Tibetan church services these two would in addition often visit Tibetan homes as a means of evangelizing or else confirming the Christians in their faith. From time to time these two sisters carried on literature and translation work for the benefit of the Tibetans. Furthermore, these two

* As further evidence of Dr. Knox's kindness towards Tharchin despite the sharp differences between the two, it is reported by Sonam T. Kazi that on one occasion the good doctor had presented the Tibetan with a peach seed brought from his Australian home, which Tharchin planted outside Mackenzie Cottage. There it grew into a beautiful tree that in time bore yellow-skin peaches. Interview with the Kazi, Oct. 1991.

missionary ladies had proved to be very helpful in the preparation of Tibetan tapes for Gospel broadcasts that were then relayed in broadcasts to Tibetan peoples from a Christian radio station—owned and operated by the Christian group known as FEBC, the Far Eastern Broadcasting Company—located in Manila, the Philippines.* Another missionary, Dr. Janet Duncan, ever since her first arrival in Kalimpong, had continually visited the Tibetan Mission dispensary at least once a week that she might aid the sick Tibetans there with her medical advice and treatment. Miss Christianson, too, labored at the dispensary, and for many years. Indeed, one worker at the dispensary, whom the present author interviewed, recalled laboring with missionary Christianson for a number of years. A self-made “doctor” though not doctor-qualified, “Dr.” N. Tshering indicated to the author that he had ministered for over five years at the dispensary (1959-64). He humbly related how he would himself preach to the patients in Tibetan (which he had himself thoroughly learned on his own), and then, “Dr.” Tshering added, “Miss Christianson and I would render medical service to the Tibetans.”²⁷ Unfortunately, Dr. Duncan’s service was cut short with the onset of cancer that took her life in the mid-1970s.²⁸ The Tibetan church is very grateful to these women missionaries for their timely assistance and for their encouragement in spiritual matters.²⁹

It has been appropriately remarked by some observers that the fruit of Dr. Knox’s ministry is still present in the Kalimpong hill station and its environs. During his one month study of the Tibetan language in Algarah Bazaar near Kalimpong, he happened to lodge with the founding family of the village. And in the course of time this missionary doctor witnessed to them about the love of Christ, and as a result the entire family was won for the Lord Jesus. After some years both parents died in the Christian faith. The youngest daughter of this Tibetan family had for the longest time been a teacher in the local Mission school and one of the most prominent members of the local Tibetan church. Moreover, she in time married a close acquaintance of Tharchin’s. Needless to say, in that family the name of Dr. Knox is still greatly revered.



After Dr. Graham’s wise and kindly intervention, everything was amicably settled and Gergan Tharchin with his whole family were able to shift back to their former residence at Polhill Hall (where they would remain until 1936 with the opening of the newly-built Mackenzie

* In his annual summary of “Church News” about his Tibetan congregation in Kalimpong for 1970 Tharchin, who two decades earlier had become its ordained pastor, had singled out these two and one other Christian sister for special mention in this regard: “Under the supervision of Misses D. Christianson, L. Carlson and Miss Rieta of the Free Church of Finland Mission, Ghoom, again we have been able to translate some gospel literature and make a number of tape recordings in Tibetan for radio broadcast from Manila. Please pray that the Holy Spirit may work in the heart of many listeners as the programs go on the air.” See G. Tharchin, “Church News of the Tibetan Congregation, Kalimpong, for the Year 1970,” p. 2 of a three-page typed document found among the ThPaK, and probably submitted by the pastor in early 1971 for eventual publication in the *Eastern Himalayan Church News* that was circulated widely among the UCNI churches in the region.

Cottage that as mentioned in an earlier chapter had now been specifically designated for the use of the catechist-“pastor” of the Tibetan church). Admittedly, during this period of the Tibetan’s life there were many difficulties to overcome; yet in spite of them all there was significant development as well. During these troublous times how truly apt for God’s faithful servant from Poo were the words of David in Psalm 34: “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.... Oh taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that taketh refuge in him.... For there is no want to them that fear him.”

1937: Conducting Research with Theos Bernard in Lhasa and Befriending Kuchar Kunphela and Changlo Chen in Kalimpong

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

1 Thessalonians 5:21

IN THE YEAR 1937 Gergan Tharchin visited Tibet on a third major journey.* He was to spend over six months away, leaving Kalimpong in early May (reaching the Sikkim-Tibet border on the 11th) and arriving back in late November. On this particular occasion he accompanied Theos Casimir Bernard, the soon-to-become well-known American scholar, author, and research student in the field of religion, particularly in the area of Tibetan lore. Indeed, Bernard was currently engaged in an extensive research project in the field of Buddhism and its deep logical philosophy.¹

Born in 1908 in the United States, Bernard would receive his Ph.D. degree in oriental philosophy in 1943 at Columbia University, New York, where, incidentally, he had submitted as his doctoral dissertation that year the text of what one year later the Columbia University Press would publish as a book, under the title of *Hatha Yoga: the Report of a Personal Experience*. Before this Bernard had become a member of the prestigious Explorers Club of New York City, a member of numerous scientific societies, and a consultant for the Bureau of Indian Affairs at Washington DC. He also became an attorney, having received a law degree from the University of Arizona. And by the time he had teamed up with Gergan Tharchin in 1937, the American had already undertaken a field trip to India in connection with yoga studies. Moreover, just prior to his departure with Tharchin for Tibet, he had spent the entire summer and winter of 1936-7 at Kalimpong studying the written language of Tibet and three of that land's spoken dialects. His Tibetan teacher, in fact, was Tharchin himself. As it turned out, Bernard would be one of the few Americans prior to 1950 to ever visit the Tibetan capital. Furthermore, he was said at the time to have become the first white man ever to witness, photograph and participate in the religious rites of the lamaseries and monasteries of the Great Closed Land.

Now at first the American Buddhist scholar had intended to make only a short trip to Kalimpong, but his search for original materials ultimately led him to Gyantse, where he applied for a permit to visit Lhasa for a ten-day period, but which when granted by the *Kashag* or Cabinet in a telegram allowed him "to come to Lhasa by the main road for a three weeks' visit." However, because of his unusual knowledge of the Tibetan language and Buddhism, he was subsequently granted permission for an indefinite stay (which ended

* It should be made clear that Tharchin made several other briefer and less extensive journeys into Tibet at various times throughout his adult life. A case in point was the 1931 journey as guide and interpreter with Mrs. Merrick to Yatung and Gyantse that was discussed at some length in the previous chapter. Another instance was a trek he had made in late 1925 but only as far into the Closed Land as Yatung and its environs, the purpose for which, reported Tharchin later, was "a visit he had paid to the Congregation in the Chumbi Valley." He had reported this to his fellow members on the Kalimpong Tibetan Congregation Kirk Session at its meeting of 13 Jan. 1926, both Dr. Graham and David Macdonald being present as well. Minutes, ThPaK.

up being an almost unheard-of length of time for the ordinary foreign visitor: two and one-half months!). Bernard gave much of the credit to Tharchin for his securing the three-week permit to visit the capital, to where from Gyantse Tharchin had in fact gone in advance with Bernard's application, resulting in the approval by telegram.² "With Tharchin taking things in hand," he had later reported, "and journeying to deliver my messages [of application] in person to the Regent and to the members of the *Kashag*, I felt my chances were good."³ Indeed they were, and meant an unparalleled opportunity for the Tibetan from Kalimpong.* For by this association with the American, Tharchin was not only able to visit Lhasa again, he was also able to make contact with a number of highly educated Tibetan scholars and Lamas, some of whom were already personally acquainted with him. But in addition, by this trip he was able to avail himself of an opportunity to meet his mother-in-law, friends and relatives once again.

* It would appear, in fact, that much of the credit for Bernard's good fortune in receiving the unusual permission which he obtained must indisputably go to Tharchin Babu. This becomes quite clear when one is apprised of the stringent travel regulations controlling access to Lhasa which were then in place as well as of the understandings which had gradually developed between the British Indian government and Tibetan authorities at the capital.

Following upon the Younghusband Mission of 1903-4, the only travelers permitted to enter Tibet from British India were those who in that Government's opinion would or could advance British interests in some manner or other. But later, in consequence of Sir Charles Bell's one-year diplomatic mission to Lhasa in 1920-1, his recommendation that the number of Western visitors into Tibet be gradually increased so that Tibetans could familiarize themselves with Western customs was eventually adopted despite protests from certain suspicious quarters in Tibet.

Permission to visit the Tibetan *capital*, however, was another matter altogether, as Alex McKay additionally makes clear in his article on "Tibet: the Myth of Isolation." Since permission to visit Lhasa—and not just some distance inside the Snowy Land's borders—required the central Tibetan government's approval, writes McKay, the British, wishing to avoid the blame for any exclusion, were able to claim that this access was controlled solely by the Tibetans themselves. Yet, "their control was soon shared with the British." For in certain instances, the Tibetan government would ask the Indian government to prevent undesirable Western individuals and others any access farther north beyond Gyantse. For although the Tibetan authorities would invariably permit British officials to travel up to the Lhasa Mission that had been established by the Indian government in 1936, McKay goes on to point out that "other would-be visitors required strong British support before the Tibetans would admit them." Consequently, those Europeans and other Westerners lacking official connections who might wish to apply to the British Government of India for permission to visit the Tibetan capital "would be told that the Tibetans did not allow entry to private individuals and that there was no point in asking" the British.

Only if the British perceived some political or economic benefits redounding to them by allowing someone to travel to Lhasa would they forward an application to the Tibetan government. After which, British officials at the Lhasa Mission would then seek approval of the application that according to McKay would "invariably be granted," given the fact that the Anglo-Tibetan alliance during this period "meant that the Tibetan attitude was that 'as the Political Officer in Sikkim is asking for the permission, we see no objection to the proposed visit.'"

As a matter of course, in fact, this procedure, states McKay, was employed to secure permission for a number of visitors to the Tibetan capital between 1936 and 1947. It must be added here, however, that Bernard the American was not one of them. Instead, as McKay was careful to point out, several American and Canadian visitors to Lhasa during the 1930s were able to obtain their permits in a different way: they could, and did, "apply directly to the Tibetan government for travel permission." And that is how Bernard, through the good offices of his indefatigable guide and interpreter Tharchin, was able to achieve success in the matter, but far beyond the expectations of either of them.

One must therefore conclude from all this that it was preeminently because of the Tibetan publisher's prior connections with key government officials at Lhasa that the American's application had been granted and granted so liberally. See McKay's article in P. v. d. Velde and A. McKay, eds., *New Developments in Asian Studies*, 309-12.

This success by Bernard in 1937—through the indispensable aid of Tharchin—apparently upset the British



Bernard was quite effusive in his words of appreciation of Tharchin as his “Lopon” (Tibetan for teacher in secular, rather than religious, education) and his “fast friend.” In the first of two syndicated newspaper articles he wrote in America shortly after his return from India and Tibet, the American Buddhist scholar had the following to say about the Tibetan from Poo and the invaluable assistance he rendered in teaching him the Tibetan language (indeed, Bernard would be able ten years later to publish his own *Simplified Grammer of the Literary Tibetan Language* and present a copy to Tharchin, “my first Tibetan teacher,” as he would declare in a flyleaf inscription):

As I sought for literature in Kalimpong, I became acquainted with a Tibetan who was to become my Lopon ... and my fast friend. Through him and with him I did what research I could do in Kalimpong, and through him I met a number of Lamas who came from Tibet on pilgrimage, as well as the Tibetan traders and merchants who came there to do business....

My Lopon was a good teacher and in a few months with him I managed to pick up rudiments of Tibetan and became able to converse haltingly with the Tibetans whom I met in Kalimpong. Later, in Tibet, my command of the language improved, and before I left I was conversing in Tibetan quite as fluently, say, as the average Chinese laundryman converses in English....

... From my Lopon ... I learned the proper forms of address to the various categories of Lamas and secular officials. I learned what sorts of gifts should accompany various requests for favors ...⁴



In the thumbnail sketch of Bernard that is provided the reader in the very first end-note to the present chapter, a number of books which the American authored are mentioned. These had entirely to do with Oriental religion, philosophy and language. But by far his most famous work appeared shortly after his return from his trip to Tibet with Tharchin and made him almost overnight something of a celebrity in his own country and in Britain. This was the book that in the American edition had the intriguing title of *Penthouse of the Gods; a Pilgrimage into the Heart of Tibet and the Sacred City of Lhasa* (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1939) and which in the London edition had an equally fascinating title of *Land of a Thousand Buddhas; a Pilgrimage ...* (Rider & Co., 1940).^{*} It describes in

very much. For according to Eleanore Murray, confidante to Bernard’s father, they did all in their power to thwart his reentry into Tibet ten years later; see later in the present chapter for the details.

^{*} As a mark of his deep gratefulness to Tharchin for making both journey and book possible, Bernard sent a copy of *Penthouse* to him shortly after its publication, on the flyleaf of which the American once more gave the Tibetan primary credit for the success of the enterprise when he inscribed thereon the following brief but effusive note of praise:

Greetings! Well, Tharchin—here it is at last—and you are the one who deserves all the credits—to the [end? last? (illegible)] I will always appreciate your faithfulness—I hope you are well again.

Sincerely
Bernard

very interesting detail his experiences on the very journey from India to Lhasa on which Tharchin had accompanied him partway and which the Tibetan himself had told about in his end-of-life “memoirs.” Some of these experiences and other events of interest are now recounted more briefly in the present chapter.

In his finely-written and extremely personal volume of his Tibetan experience Bernard made numerous positive references to Gergan Tharchin and commended him often for his help, kindness and sympathy, as well as the Tibetan’s loyalty to the American traveler. Several passages in particular from the work would be of special interest to readers of this biography of Tharchin, since they provide (from an observer more likely to be objective) a further glimpse into the life and character of this humble and compassionate Tibetan from the village of Poo. What follows is a sampling of a few such revealing passages (culled from the American edition).

At Kalimpong I secured the services of Tharchin, a Tibetan who had been raised on the border and was well qualified to act as my mentor; he was to remain with me throughout my entire pilgrimage. I was extremely fortunate in my choice.... I could not have been in a more ideal place, as Tharchin ... had a host of friends in Lhasa and a wide acquaintance among the Lamas from the large monasteries. (p. 32)

Henceforth, Tharchin was to be my almost inseparable companion. He was a smallish man, with a figure inclined to plumpness. He had a little fat face with a tiny moustache, and he was dressed in plus-fours and a rather loud English tweed coat. He usually held his cigarette within the palm of a closed fist, and it scarcely touched his lips.⁵ What is more important is that, a Tibetan who had been raised on the border, he had a full knowledge of the literature of his country and he had been in Lhasa many times, and had devoted many years to study. He was exceptionally competent. (p. 36)

Lhare [Lhakrey], one of our boys, hoped to see his mother on the following day at Kangmar. It would be their first meeting in several years and I felt the trip meant as much to him as it did to me. Just as we were leaving Dochen, the [dak bungalow] *chowkidar* called Tharchin back and told him a message just came in saying Lhare’s mother had died. Tharchin delayed telling him until evening rather than to let him ride all the afternoon on a jolting pony trying to nurse his grief. (p. 53)

Being of a literary turn of mind, Tharchin rarely visited anywhere without taking an armful of books along, which served as return gifts. More than once he saved my face by having them in readiness. (pp. 74-5)

... I spotted Tharchin racing through a cloud of dust [just outside Lhasa]. It was a cheering sight in a lost corner of the world to see a friendly, familiar face. I rushed towards him as fervently as he towards me, and as we met there was an infusion of deep emotion. Had it not been for his loyalty, which enabled us to work quickly in the brief time at our disposal, I should never have been able to manage to be here. When he left for Lhasa neither of us was by any means sure that we should meet again there. His animated face with the flowing moustache stretched out from ear to ear revealed how great the joy my arrival afforded him. I almost feel that he was getting a bigger kick out of it than I was. Perhaps I should not be using so blatant an Americanism in writing of a pilgrimage to Tibet; but the fact is, the sort of personal exuberance I experienced at the meeting is always conducive to a reaffirmation of the native idiom. After a few minutes he insisted upon taking a couple of hurried shots with the movie camera which he had brought along. (p. 149)



Not unlike other Western visitors to Lhasa, Bernard's first moving experience upon reaching the outskirts of the fabled city was to feast his eyes upon the imposing structure of the Potala. Tharchin had traveled five miles outside the city to meet the American on the western approach to the Tibetan capital. Bernard would later recall the feelings which rose up within him as he, Tharchin and the others with him made their way through the Western Gate:

We had barely passed through the famous gate, when there loomed to our left, seeming to penetrate the clouds themselves, the palace of the Dalai Lama, majestically dominating the landscape.... Its majestic sweep left me breathless, and I had to pause for a few moments, to take it in, to feel it, to let it sink into my soul.... And, strangely enough, I did not even think of taking a picture of it; for something different possessed me, and I had not the least inclination to bring the mechanical note into the mood of the moment. Indeed, I was aware of nothing but the sense of the life and feeling it had created in me.

And on a subsequent occasion weeks after this initial encounter with the Palace of the Gods, Bernard was given to expressing afresh his feelings of awe and wonder towards this incredible structure: "As I approached it on horseback I was impressed anew with the magnificence of the edifice towering hundreds of feet into the heavens. Its rhythm is that of a rapid rhapsody, with no two lines balancing, but forming a perfect composition by uniting in the glittering roof of the gods."⁶



During his stay in Lhasa Bernard and his party lodged in the large palatial home of Tsarong Shape,⁷ whom the reader will remember as the high official who had advised Tharchin on the formalities of his audience with the late Dalai Lama. As a matter of fact, Bernard, in keeping with the Tibetan custom of hospitality, had been met by Tsarong on the road some seven miles out from the city. "He had brought fresh horses and a Government deputation," wrote Bernard, "to welcome me." The American and his party, joined by Tharchin five miles out, were then led to the Tsarong home. Another traveler to Lhasa whom the Shape was to befriend a decade later was Heinrich Harrer from Austria, who, with his companion Peter Aufschnaiter, were likewise put up as guests in his home. The Austrian portrayed Tsarong as "a superb administrator, even by Western standards, an outstanding diplomat who dared to oppose the Dalai Lama, a man forever trying to achieve reforms in his country, and a man whose wise counsel was sought on all important Government matters." A self-made man in the most modern mold, Tsarong's abilities, he added, "would have made him an outstanding personality in any Western country. I shall never forget the gratitude I owe to Tsarong for having opened his house to Aufschnaiter and me, and for helping us to settle in Lhasa."⁸ This latter sentiment was easily shared by Bernard and Tharchin.

But this sentiment was also shared by many other foreigners who frequently enjoyed the warm hospitality of this highly-placed Tibetan. Two such foreign visitors were Frederick

Williamson and his wife, who spent over two months at Lhasa in the summer of 1933. Williamson was the British Political Officer for Tibet at the time, and his wife Margaret has left a record of their impressions of the man and Tsarong House itself.

We were often entertained at Tsarong House, which put me in mind of an English country house with its drive bordered with hollyhocks.

Tsarong Dzasa ... greeted us at the head of the steps to the house.... Tsarong was a short man, dressed in a strange mixture of Western and Tibetan dress. His eyes, his whole bearing, clearly showed unusual energy, will, courage and intelligence.

Tsarong House had many Western-style appointments. There was a brass bedstead in the master bedroom; and the main staircase was fairly substantial, in contrast to the rickety ladder that served in most Tibetan households. The bathroom, too, did not have the usual hole in the floor but had Western fittings; and there was a large table and real chairs in the dining room. The house was not only large but unusually clean and airy for a Tibetan house, many of which were rather dark. Tsarong House even had glass in the windows. Another surprise was when I was offered "real" tea and biscuits. Then I felt truly at home.

The gardens at Tsarong House were also impressive. The soil and climate of Lhasa are excellent, and not only can up to three crops a year be obtained but the size of everything is quite remarkable. There were marvelous cauliflowers, cabbages, onions, carrots, lettuces, radishes and turnips that would easily have won first prizes at any English country show.*

One of Tsarong's hobbies—and a very unusual one in Lhasa at that time—was photography, and he had a collection of cameras. On one occasion when we were at his house, while the men talked in the vast sitting room, the ladies took me to his office to show me his photograph albums. Later we played an original version of Snakes and Ladders that he had devised himself. There were entertainments, too, usually Tibetan music and dancing.⁹

Such, then, was the kind of comfortable—even affluent—accommodation to which Bernard and Tharchin could now look forward.

By the time of the American's visit in 1937,¹⁰ however, this heretofore most trusted of all advisers to His Holiness had fallen on bad times politically. He had left his homeland on pilgrimage to India in late 1924 as the most powerful and influential man in Tibet next to the Dalai Lama; but upon his return in 1925 he had taken a great fall; for he was deprived of his position as Commander-in-Chief of the Tibetan Army, and four years later, in 1929, was degraded from Shape to the rank, though still high, of Dzasa (he nonetheless continuing to be known as Tsarong Shape despite this demotion).

These developments had been the consequence of his having fallen out of favor with certain elements of the Tibetan ruling classes—both cleric and lay, particularly with certain conservative religious leaders who continued to wield considerable influence with the Dalai Lama. Shortly before his demotion, it had become fairly well known that he was taking an increasingly dim view of the entire monastic system that had become so pervasive in his native land. For example, Sir Charles Bell remembered once speaking about this matter with Tsarong, probably during the British diplomat's year-long visit to Lhasa in 1920-1. "He agreed with me," recalled Bell, that Tibet's population was decreasing, "and gave as one of the reasons the large number of celibate monks." "That," said Bell in response, "is a matter of

* Sonam T. Kazi has reported that the ever-resourceful Tsarong had even introduced the tomato plant into Lhasa and had successfully propagated it in his gardens. Interview with the Kazi, Oct. 1991.

religion on which I can make no comment.” “I also can make no comment about matters of religion,” the Army Chief replied, with a wry smile. Yet he did comment upon it, and quite candidly, less than three years later to the American, William McGovern. The latter reported in 1924 just after his visit in disguise to Lhasa the year before, how he had had long conversations with Tsarong about religion and other matters. He could write that the General “has no illusions as to the nature and value of the average Tibetan monk. He asserts, and quite rightly, that there are far too many inhabitants of the monasteries. This surplus number weakens, he says, the economic structure of the country; and even from the religious point of view it is impossible for so many people to be really fitted for the monastic life.” Consequently, added McGovern, this highly placed Tibetan was doing what he could “to limit the number of entrants to the priesthood, and to place it on a more competitive basis.”

Moreover, Tsarong—whom one British frontier official at Gyantse in 1924 had described as “the one man who is really wide-awake in Lhasa”—was the prime mover among the Dalai Lama’s inner circle of advisers and government officials in pushing for reforms in both government and society in order to effect a more modern Tibet that could successfully adjust to a world outside her borders which had changed so radically. These reforms, he felt, were absolutely essential if Tibet was to maintain its independence, especially *vis-à-vis* China. Indeed, he readily endorsed the maxim of the Italian revolutionary Garibaldi, which Heinrich Harrer reported the Tibetan General had once quoted to him: “If we want to remain as we are, certain things must change.” But if his goal of Tibetan modernization was ever to be brought about, Tsarong recognized with greater clarity than most that the country’s long-established aristocracy and monastic hierarchy must change. Yet because these twin pillars of conservative power and influence in Tibet were so deeply bound by centuries-long custom, tradition and bureaucratic privilege, the forces they represented greatly opposed a policy of change for any reason and from any quarter—even from the Dalai Lama himself, who for a long while had been very much in favor of the modernization and secularization of his country along the lines of what Tsarong espoused: until, that is, His Holiness was confronted by the overwhelming opposition and inordinate fear exhibited by those leaders among these reactionary forces who still very much had the ear of the Dalai Lama. As one recent writer on Tibet, Heather Spence, has remarked: “The keynote of Tibetan life was its ready acceptance of the traditional order of things. Change was frightening, a path that led to the unknown.”

Thus, those in power were not about to give up their familiar and comfortable existence for one that promised to be most unfamiliar, far more disciplined, and much less privileged. And hence, because of the ideas and actions of Tsarong relating to their privileged religious and lay preserves, and because, further, they viewed him as being far too progressive in his outlook on Western culture and technology, and as being far too friendly with the British in particular, a number of powerful religious leaders—in concert with certain nobles among the lay government officials—were able to prevail upon His Holiness to remove Tsarong from his two high posts. Another and highly significant factor in inducing the Dalai Lama to take these actions against his former chief favorite was his own growing suspicions—created in his mind in part by Tsarong’s rival Lungshar who sought power for himself—of Tsarong’s enormous power and wealth, which His Holiness now viewed as constituting the most

formidable threat to his own rule in Tibet.* Hence, the dismissals from both the military and the *Kashag*.

Later, ironically, the former Shape was once again offered the post in the *Kashag*, but he refused to accept it, though he did accept the opportunity to become one of the Directors of the Drapchi (hydroelectric) factory located just outside Lhasa. Apparently his deep interest in Western technology had also fueled his interest to improve the means of transportation and communication within his country, because Tsarong had also by this time (in 1937) just completed the construction of the first steel bridge in Tibet, it spanning the Kyi Chu's tributary (the Tolung Chu) at Trisum, eight miles from the capital. This feat of Tsarong's skill was

* Indeed, as intimated in earlier chapters of the present narrative, most likely, though not as yet absolutely confirmed, in 1923/4 Tsarong's supporters in the Tibetan military, if not the General himself, "began," in the words of Alex McKay, "what was apparently a somewhat disorganized effort to take secular power from the Dalai Lama and transfer it to Tsarong Shape." Moreover, it is the firm belief of this British frontier cadre historian as well that the then highly regarded and trusted Darjeeling Police Inspector Laden-La, whom the Tibetan government had requested be sent to Lhasa by the British Government of India for the purpose of setting up and training a police force at the Tibetan capital, was without any doubt also involved in the plot against the Dalai Lama. Certainly the Indian government had come to accept that he had been involved, since the file on this matter at its National Archives, though still classified, is entitled: "Indiscretion of Laden-La in associating with Tibetan officers attempting to overthrow the Dalai Lama." And though the British governments in both London and Delhi were most certainly not involved, it is McKay's considered judgment, after thoroughly researching all available sources, that "the weight of circumstantial evidence definitely points to a coup having been planned under [British Political Officer] Bailey's direction" and that its unfolding and partial implementation prior to its eventual failure had been carried out by means of "his own key agent" Laden-La whom he had himself dispatched to Lhasa in late summer of 1923.

For by that time it had become clear to Major Bailey that the Dalai Lama was either unwilling or unable to continue his efforts at social reform and military modernization sufficiently enough to counter what the Political Officer deemed to be a most serious threat from Communist Russia to British interests in Tibet and therefore in India. Eventually coming to see that, in this important respect, the Dalai Lama was unable or unwilling to follow British "advice," Bailey, it would appear, attempted "to establish an alternative leader" at Lhasa who would follow that advice. And hence, most anxious about the apparent Soviet threat in Central and South Asia, this British Political Officer, McKay believes, gradually concocted a plan whereby through contacts to be established at Lhasa by his agent Laden-La with Tsarong and the Tibetan military, he anticipated, if all went well, an overthrow of the Dalai Lama government and the installation of central rule at the Tibetan capital headed up by the progressive Army Commander-in-Chief.

Bailey, whose plan was chiefly motivated by the Soviet threat, had become convinced, writes McKay, that "the only way to modernize Tibet to the extent where it would provide a secure northern border for India and exclude Russian influence, was under Tsarong's leadership." McKay further believes that Bailey thought that if his plan succeeded and British (that is, Bailey's) involvement were concealed (something which this Political Officer was in a very strong position to effect), then Delhi and London would have accepted the situation because the British would have had to depend largely on the advice which Bailey and other British frontier officers possibly involved in the plot would give; namely, "that a Tsarong-led Tibet was in Britain's best interests." Two of these other frontier officials, with both of whom it is known Bailey had been in close touch at this time, were the then British Resident at Kathmandu in nearby Nepal and former Trade Agent at Gyantse, Lieutenant Colonel William F. T. O'Connor, and the then Political Officer in Assam, Captain G. A. Nevill. In previous years Bailey had worked closely with both of these frontier officers, he having been mentored by O'Connor as the latter's longtime "loyal protégé" and having served under Nevill as the latter's Intelligence Officer in 1912-13 during a sensitive mission among the hostile Abor tribespeople in Assam.

Unfortunate to Bailey's plans, however, was a series of unforeseen and highly adverse events which one after another unfolded at the Tibetan capital in the spring of 1924, and which led to a clear-cut victory for the conservative and reactionary factions within the Tibetan government and Buddhist Church. McKay cites two primary reasons for the plot's failure: (1) because Bailey, continually hamstrung by London, was unable to

remarkable in two ways, in that (a) he built the bridge without the assistance of foreign engineers, and (b) all steel pieces had to be brought from India over the Himalayas by coolies because the girders were far too heavy for pack animals to carry.

Highly cosmopolitan for a Tibetan—with an ability to speak a little English, Russian, Mongolian and Hindustani—Tsarong, despite his demotions, had continued to exert a considerable influence on Tibetan affairs, he even having been considered the leading figure in the *Tsongdu* and its main driving force. Furthermore, the Great Thirteenth, in an apparent change of heart towards his former favorite, appointed him a Finance Minister—a post he would hold till the coming of the Chinese Communists in 1950. In addition to these distinctions, on the other hand, Tsarong's wealth, business acumen, and sound practical wisdom were bound to maintain for him a substantial share of influence in the economics and politics of the country far into the 1940s. And on into the 1950s Tsarong served as Economic Adviser to the Government of Tibet, that would now conduct its affairs under the watchful and sovereign eye of the People's Republic of China. He even had the complete support of the Regent (Reting Rimpoche), the one who upon the death of the Great Thirteenth in 1933 had offered Tsarong—who refused to accept—the opportunity to rejoin the Kashag. Moreover, in spite of his turn of fortune earlier, Tsarong was nonetheless able to maintain a high degree of visibility among the upper circles of Lhasan society. Indeed, observed one later-day resident of Lhasa, “for a man of such a simple background, his everlasting success sparked the imagination, and the expression ‘clever as Tsarong’ became proverbial.’ Not surprisingly, therefore, many people in and out of government still greatly admired and respected him, and sought him out for advice and counsel.*¹¹

provide much, if any, “practical support” to the progressive forces at Lhasa, especially the decisive element of military assistance; and (2) Tsarong's uncharacteristic indecisiveness. With respect to Tsarong himself. McKay's judgment on him, even as is this historian's assessment of the plot just now described for the reader, appears to be quite plausible. The Tibetan Army Chief and Kashag Shape. writes McKay, was

apparently unwilling to take the decisive step of declaring his claim for power. He owed his position to the Dalai Lama's patronage and knew that if his patron died or was overthrown he lacked sufficient support to take over Tibet without British assistance [which under the circumstances then current in Anglo-Tibetan relations would most assuredly not have been forthcoming]. Tsarong was also a Tibetan patriot. His dealings with foreigners were designed to benefit Tibet, not the British, and his personal and patriotic loyalty to the Dalai Lama was too strong for him to turn against his benefactor.

It is the particular conclusion of McKay to this entire episode, incidentally, which in this historian's view most adequately explains why there was a rapid deterioration in Anglo-Tibetan relations from 1925 onward till the resumption of better relations once again in the early 1930s. Other historians (e.g., Peter Hansen, Alastair Lamb, Walt Unsworth and A.K. Singh) have blamed this decline on various other causes; it is McKay's conclusion, however, that once the Dalai Lama was made aware, as indeed he was—and rather quickly, of the details surrounding the events during the first half of 1924, His Holiness “must have gradually come to suspect that Bailey had been involved.” And that would explain, reasons McKay, why the Tibetan ruler “began to distance himself from the British, and turned away from British-sponsored reforms.”

For McKay's detailed analysis of this episode in Anglo-Tibetan relations. see again his volume, *Tibet and the British Raj*, 102-15; and his subsequent monograph article, “Tibet 1924: a Very British Coup Attempt?,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3d Series (Nov. 1997):411-24; and cf. also Melvyn Goldstein's account, *A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951*, 121-37.

* Recent Tibetan history is replete with various “might have beens if only ...” One of the most intriguing revolves around the premature ending of this illustrious Tibetan leader's career at the height of his powers and ingenuity. In her well-developed article on General Tsarong and the modernization struggle which occurred in



But they also counted it a privilege to be invited to one of many parties the former military and political leader of Tibet still often gave. One such gathering occurred while Bernard and Tharchin were his guests. A passage from the American's book on his experiences in Lhasa can provide some insight into the careful but nonetheless exciting preparations Tsarong made for such a party, as well as provide a further portrait of this famous Tibetan. Writes Bernard:

Everything was confusion about the house, adding unaccountably to my inner excitement. Tsarong's large house was nothing but one stack after another of things which would be used for his party. There was scarcely room left to walk. I now began to understand what he meant when he said that it took a lot of trouble to give a large party to which all the high officials of Tibet were to be invited. In all he was going to have over 300 guests, 200 of whom would be the servants of the other 100. The ground of the entrance would be lined with carpet so that no one need put his feet on the ground on arrival. There would be the most lavish decorations. His private temple surpassed any other private temple I had seen, and I had seen a good many. His images were superb, entirely covered with gold and radiating with the finest jewels. The silks in evidence here were also of the best. There are few persons who know their silks better than Tsarong, and, indeed, what little I know about silks I learned from him. As for Tsarong's sitting rooms, they make as perfect a museum of Chinese antiquities as any I have ever seen. He has objects of art which even the Museum of the Forbidden City of Peking might regard with envy. And in this respect the entire house is of a piece. Yet, quite apart from this, and in spite of his wealth and power, Tsarong dresses very simply and there is no ostentation of any kind in the matter of daily living. It is only when he gives a party of this kind that you begin to realize the high place he holds in Tibet. I have heard it said that he set the pace for Lhasa. Everything he did was regarded with respect, and his ways regulated the ways of others.¹²

Tibet between 1912 and 1933, Heather Spence has speculated on what might have been different about Tibet's future destiny had Tsarong been given a freer hand to develop and implement his ideas of modernity within the Tibetan polity. Ms. Spence took note of the fact that Tsarong had only been in his mid-20s when in 1910 he had led his tiny force of soldiers into the rearguard battle against the much stronger Chinese force, thus saving the Dalai Lama's life as the latter fled into Indian exile. But then, too, Tsarong was only in his mid-40s at the moment when he fell from the pinnacle of power in 1929. Many more years of significant and superlative service to his country could still have been his fate and that of his nation had only his fellow leaders in Government and Buddhist Church treated him favorably. "Had conservative forces, both within the monastic orders and the Government," writes Spence, "not obstructed the Thirteenth Dalai Lama's attempts to modernize the Army during the 1920s, under the command of Tsarong II, then Tibet might have been an independent country today." But "Tsarong's conviction, that modernization of both the Government and the Army were necessary for Tibet to preserve its status, brought the military into direct confrontation with conservative forces.... In the complex of historical circumstances it could be argued that if Tsarong had been able to accomplish his program to strengthen and modernize the Army and undermine monastic conservatism, Tibet might have been able to resist the Chinese invasion [of 1950] and gain valuable time, thus allowing the Government to harness international support and gain recognition and validation of its autonomy. The fighting in Kham had clearly indicated that, with effective leadership and modern weapons, Tibet was able to more than hold its own against China." But the adverse effects resulting from conservatism's unending negative reaction to the various attempts by Tsarong and the Dalai Lama at social and political engineering during the critical period of 1912-1933 "left Tibet militarily weak and in a state of political instability." Spence, "Tsarong II" *TJ* (Spring 1991):33, 55.



Hence, by Bernard being lodged in the home of such an important and influential figure in Tibetan politics and culture, it made it possible for the American visitor to investigate all aspects of Tibetan life, thought and customs. Tsarong was also the one who, on Bernard's behalf, now collected and/or made preparations out of various materials such as butter, flour, incense and tea that were essential for his guest to engage in worship and to make offerings at the several centers of religious activity the American was to visit, including especially a visit to the shrine of the late Dalai Lama at the Potala Palace. Two such offerings which were quite common for pilgrims to offer at Tibetan places of worship as gifts for these institutions and/or their inmates would be butter for the prayer lamps "to lighten the darkness of ignorance" and contributions of needles "to sharpen one's wisdom." So declares Buddhist teaching.¹³ A type of yak-butter lamp, called *choeme gyatsho* and meaning "yak-butter lamp ocean," was widely used in Buddhist places of worship in Tibet. "The wicks float in the yak butter," explains one writer on Tibet, "which was constantly being replenished by the offerings of the pilgrims. These lamps were never supposed to go out. Lamp holders were generally made of copper, but sometimes gold was used." Flasks or other vessels carried by pilgrims into Tibetan temples were often filled with yak butter or even yak-butter tea. "Yak butter was added to the lamps in front of the various shrines as an offering or act of devotion. Yak-butter tea was given as a form of alms to the monks who lived and worked in the monastery. Both offerings were pious acts, and built up the individual's store of good deeds, thus helping towards a good rebirth in the next life."¹⁴ From this brief explanation, therefore, it can well be understood why the preparations made by Tsarong were so essential for the ritual performances Bernard was about to embark upon at various places of worship in and around Lhasa. Besides the butter for the lamps, the American was in need of butter, flour and tea as vital ingredients for making the kind of butter-tea for which Tibetans were famous.

Thus, with Tsarong's valued assistance, Bernard, accompanied by his competent guide Tharchin, was now prepared to make his entrée into a world that, if not totally esoteric, was little known or understood, at least to the outsider. What, though, would most likely have been the ambience with which the American would typically have been confronted as he and his small party went from one sacred place to another within and around the precincts of the Vatican of Tibetan Buddhism? A most engrossing passage from one recent study on Tibet can help to set the scene for the uninitiated, a scene with which Gergan Tharchin was by now quite familiar but one which Theos Bernard must doubtless have initially been somewhat unsettled by and which was perhaps even intimidating to him, despite some exposure to this mystifying world earlier at the Gyantse Monastery. Highly vivid and dramatic in his delineation, David Bonavia paints the following picture:

To visit any Tibetan temple or monastery is an eerie and to some people disturbing experience. In the yellow half-light of dozens of strong-smelling yak-butter lamps, and the pale wreaths of incense, one gazes up at the inhumanly calm or fierce expressions of bodhisattvas, gods and

demons, sculpted in huge effigy. On shelves behind them lie stacks of dusty scriptures—it would take a century to read them all, even if one mastered the difficult Tibetan classical writing. Immense robes of brocade and gold thread clothe some of the images. And in case one were getting the impression that all Buddhism is an enemy of carnal pleasures, one deity is shown, with a woman entwining her naked legs around his lap, while in one hand he holds a small bell, and in the other a bronze thunderbolt, symbol of spiritual power. Coins lie scattered around—offerings from pilgrims ... Many of the walls are covered from top to bottom in magnificent, detailed mural paintings, depicting temples and gardens, demons and gods, heavens and hells, monks, lamas and ordinary people, going about their daily affairs. One can only dimly make them out in the lamplight, and in places they have worn or flaked away.... Along winding corridors, up steep stone stairs, and down seemingly endless galleries with recessed shrines and murals, one strolls with a feeling of mounting astonishment—even awe—at this proliferation of overwrought decor. It is a relief to emerge into the light ...¹⁵

Relief, indeed!



Now the first sanctuary the research group of Bernard visited was the Jo-khang Cathedral, where the American offered a thousand butter lamps in the temple. This ceremony, called *doncit*, was usually performed by individuals. Next, they visited Ramoche Monastery where in its holy temple Bernard also offered a thousand butter lamps. After this they visited Drepung Monastery about five or six miles west of the capital and again Bernard offered a thousand butter lamps. The original enrollment of monks in this Monastery had been 7700, but later the number rose to 10,000, having thus grown into the largest lamasery in the world! Divided into six colleges, it had monks not only from all over Tibet but also from Mongolia, India, Ladakh, Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal. These monks at one time controlled 25,000 peasants and herdsmen who worked 185 nearby estates and tended 200 pastures!¹⁶ A city in itself, Drepung possessed a multitude of stony houses and hundreds of gilded pinnacles pointing upward above its shrines. Next they went to see Sera Monastery three miles north of the capital where again a thousand butter lamps were offered by Bernard.¹⁷ The original enrollment of this Monastery had been 5500, which subsequently increased to more than 7000.

Now it may seem unusual to some readers that Bernard would not only offer but offer up so *many* butter lamps wherever he went in his monastic visits. There is a very good reason for this, however, as is explained by another American, who was perhaps an even more learned scholar in Tibetology and Tibetan Buddhism than Bernard: "Nearly every one of the older religions reveals a fondness for having some light burning before its sacred images, and in Tibetan Buddhism this practice has been carried to extraordinary lengths." Himself a traveler to Lhasa (in 1923), William McGovern went on to comment about this extraordinary practice in the following way:

At all times the principal idols have two or three sacred lamps burning in front of them, and at festival periods the number of such lamps set alight in a temple will be increased by hundreds and even thousands. It is a common form of piety to bestow a sum of money on a temple to

have a special display of such lights. In all such cases the only fuel used is butter. . . . The flame is a rich and creamy yellow and is rather pretty but gives out little light, for which reason, and also because of the expense of the fuel, these butter lamps are chiefly used in religious buildings and are but sparsely employed by laymen. The Tibetan believes in going to bed with the sun, and in an ordinary household artificial light is seldom required. During the last few years wax candles of European design have been imported into the larger centers, such as Shigatse and Lhasa, and the townsmen are taking to the use of them; but they remain entirely secular, and it would be considered blasphemous to burn a candle before a sacred image.¹⁸

In the light of these comments, therefore, Bernard, who would later come to be known as “the White Lama” because of his eventual reception into the Buddhist priesthood while in Tibet, and who in some ways had already adopted a number of the traditions of a Lamaist, was merely carrying out the practice of offering butter lamps at holy places in Tibet as would most Tibetans—but particularly as would the well-to-do, who, like him, could afford to offer butter lamps in the hundreds and thousands on special occasions.

The Bernard party next visited the famous Ganden Monastery¹⁹ some twenty-five miles east of Lhasa and situated on a mountain some 14,000 feet in elevation. It is one of the oldest monasteries and was founded in 1409 by the great Tibetan Buddhist Reformer Jay Tsong Khapa (1356-1418).²⁰ It takes its name from the same Tibetan word (*dGa' ldan*) for the Tushita Heaven where the Maitreya (Jampa) Buddha is believed to reside. For the longest time the simple quarters in which Tsong Khapa, as first Abbot, had lived were preserved here: dark rooms with low ceilings, and walls covered with paintings. The original enrollment of this religious house had been 3300 monks but it had increased to more than 5000.

One former citizen of Tibet who later lived in London for a while has noted that Tibetans have in the past compared these three great monasteries to the painting of a Tibetan book: “Ganden represents the leaves of the book, as it is famous as a seat of learning. Sera is the two blocks of solid wood that guard the leaves: it produces warriors and fighters that defend the faith of Tibet. Drepung, as it holds the monasteries of Tibet together, is the cloth that is bound round the text.”²¹

On the way back to Lhasa the party stopped at the sacred place of Drag Yarpa (*Tra Yer-pa*, “the Rock of Purity”), an ancient site where many devotees retire for meditation to attain sainthood. This place is located one day’s journey between the capital and Ganden. Hugh Richardson has described this sacred site as “a lovely quiet valley containing a group of cave hermitages and small temples associated with the names of Songtsan Gampo, Padma Sambhava, Pandit Atisha and other holy men.” Each year a small festival, known as Yarpa Tsecher, would take place here. During the festival a prayer service was held which was then followed by religious dances commemorating the founding of a temple here that had occurred long ago at the very same time as the establishment of the most sacred Tibetan temple of all, the Jo-khang.²² Many people from Lhasa would attend the festival, though this would not have been the motivation for Bernard’s own visit to Drag Yarpa Monastery (see below). Now it just so happened, incidentally, that Tharchin’s longtime acquaintance, mentioned in the previous chapter, the former Tibetan Trade Agent at Gyantse, Kenchen Lobsang Jungne, had in this very year of Bernard’s visit been sent to supervise the repairs of this historic monastic site near Lhasa.²³



Here at Drag Yarpa Bernard was very desirous of meeting a well-known hermit who was said to have spent twelve years in meditation in purely a sitting position inside a nearby cave. Since Bernard wanted to learn yoga techniques from this Lama, a request was made to that effect by Bernard, which was granted. When narrating his “memoirs” decades later, Tharchin well recalled the incident that followed at Drag Yarpa and described in detail what happened. The Lama said to the American, “You are so curious to know about yoga. You may be around here only for a week or so, but beyond that perhaps you may not obtain permission to stay longer. You should be here for at least six months if not for one year, which is the reasonable period in which to truly pick up yoga techniques. You will have to learn several formulas.” To all this Bernard replied: “I have learnt these formulas in India.” When he heard that Bernard was already rightly acquainted with the correct formulas, the hermit suggested that since his own technique of yoga practices did not differ from the Indian types, Bernard need not spend further time in the specialization of yoga in the Monastery.

Tharchin continued with his clear recollection of this unusual incident involving the American. When the Lama had become convinced of Bernard’s comprehension of yoga knowledge and exercises, he decided to confer “Wang”—that is, “Authority”—on the American. The procedure was simple yet meaningful. At first Bernard was directed to bow down to the picture of Milarepa²¹ three times, which thing the American did very gracefully. Then the Lama said, “Bow down to me three times.” Bernard carried out this instruction also. Tharchin remembered that a lamp was burning nearby, which enabled the hermit Lama to read thereafter all the pages from a booklet of yogic scripture. He handed the book to Bernard as a present. After a time of prayer, “Wang” or “Authority” was conferred on the visitor by the invocation of the words, “I hereby give you ‘Authority’ to practice and propagate yoga among others who are desirous to learn it.” And with that, noted Tharchin, the ceremony was concluded. Bernard appeared quite happy and content.

Sometime later, critics of Bernard doubted the truthfulness of what he himself had reported of this experience at Drag Yarpa Gompa, they not believing his interaction with the cave hermit had ever taken place. Referring to the Drag Yarpa initiation of Theos Bernard, Eleanore Murray, companion-confidante to the American scholar’s father, has written that “certain well-known persons” from the West had “hunted down” Tharchin, Bernard’s “guide there who had taken him to the cave of the hermit, in an attempt to discredit his claim of having spent hours there, and receiving certain initiations from him.” These enemies of Bernard must have been greatly disappointed to learn from his Indo-Tibetan guide to the hermit’s cave that all the American had claimed was factual, since he could bear witness to the truth about this event in Bernard’s experience in Tibet.* Much more will be revealed shortly about Bernard’s well-placed enemies and their further attempts to discredit him in the eyes of his and Tharchin’s Tibetan hosts.

* Letter, Murray to Wesley E. Needham, Calimesa CA, 18 June 1963. This lengthy research letter (written and typed by Ms. Murray) is addressed to Yale University Library’s well-known Adviser on Tibetan Literature in response to his inquiries about Bernard’s experience in India and Tibet. By an extremely circuitous route the



Now besides the opportunities granted him to visit the monasteries, temples and shrines which abounded in and about the Tibetan capital area, Bernard, as a guest of the Tibetan government, was given the unique privilege of taking still and motion pictures everywhere he visited and of recording ceremonies on film which even many nationals of the country had never seen. He photographed, for example, the celebrated Black Hat Dance and the unveiling of the Kiku Banner. In addition, the American was able to purchase thousands of valuable books and manuscripts on various aspects of Buddhism, which he later took with him to the United States. One can get an idea of the extent of this cache of rare materials when it is understood that it required twenty mule-loads capacity to bring it all down to India! These materials, including banners and historical relics that had been presented to Bernard as gifts, were carried from Lhasa in yak-skin bags for hundreds of miles by a pack caravan of mules and yaks over 18,000-foot mountain passes and streams down to Kalimpong, where Tharchin was responsible for seeing that they were shipped off to America.

Before leaving Lhasa Bernard was taken by Tharchin on a visit to the infamous Tibetan prison housed in the dungeons of the Potala, in order that, as the American was wont to phrase it, he might "touch on all sides of life." It was an experience Bernard, and for that matter, his Tibetan guide, would not soon forget. Here is how the American visitor described it:

... the Tibetan prison ... reminded one of a trap to catch a man-eating lion; it was filled with wretched, withered souls, trotting about with shackled limbs. We entered into a conversation with one poor fellow. He told us that he had stolen a couple of charm boxes about five years ago, and he had no idea when he would be released. What actually happens is that the Government forgets whom they had put in and for how long, which means that once in, always in, unless one day the Government decides to win a little grace by releasing some of its prisoners; and on so auspicious a day any man may be the lucky one. Just as we were about to leave, we heard faint echoes which emanated from a still lower dungeon; a crying soul was going through the ritual that he might gain happiness in the next life. It turned out to be a friend of Tharchin's, who had once been very powerful, and had the reputation of being a fine scholar to boot.²⁵

present author had secured a photocopy of the letter along with photocopies of other related documents about Bernard prepared by Murray. The original source from whence copies of these materials were obtained was Yale's Beinicke Library, secured in the first instance by Paul Draghi at Yale. He sent a copy of the materials to John Kenneth Knaus, author of *Orphan of the Cold War* (1999), a volume by this former CIA Agent on the American CIA role in Tibet's unsuccessful struggle for freedom against the People's Republic of China. Knaus in turn had then provided a copy to William S. Martin, currently a US State Department Foreign Service Officer in charge of the Austria Desk and friend of the present author, who kindly gave the latter a copy. These documents by Ms. Murray figure prominently in the Text discussion a few pages hence dealing with judgments made by others about Bernard personally and with his ultimate demise. These materials are hereafter cited as the Murray Documents.



Not all the time while in Lhasa was Tharchin required to be at the American's side. On the contrary, the visitor from Kalimpong was able to meet with the highest officials of the land. In a letter he wrote from the Tibetan capital on 1 July to Sir Charles Bell, Tharchin remarked: "Here I met the Regent [Reting Rimpoche], the Prime Minister, and the four Shapes." It was probably on this occasion with the Regent that Tharchin, asked to draft in Tibetan a memorial and petition to him by Bernard, submitted the document in its final form to Reting. Found among the Tibetan publisher's papers, its English translation reads in part as follows:

To the lotus feet of the Golden Throne of the Snowland's main pillar of well-being for the Religion [i.e., Buddhism] and people, Savior Reting Hututhu—

With full respect, I would like to pray you herewith. As I have prayed for, I am thanking you wholeheartedly for having extended my period of stay by allowing me to remain for the period of two months in this Nation, I studying religion.

During my stay here, I am eager to copy the text of a golden-lettered [bound book entitled] *Dorjee Choipa*,* and [certain] prayer-books, etc., [written] in gold letters....

On the other hand, the Babu from Kalimpong had numerous opportunities to see and converse with his many friends he had come to know over the years since his first experience at Lhasa in the early 1920s. But these visits with friends were not exclusively social in nature. Tharchin the evangelist never missed an opportunity to share his faith with both high and low. A most intriguing passage that appeared in another of Tharchin's letters sent at this time to Bell reveals how he occupied himself during those periods of his stay at the Tibetan capital when free from any responsibility involving his American friend. But it also bares what was the attitude which many Tibetan leaders harbored towards the British concerning their apparent lack of religion. Written in the form of a report to Sir Charles, Tharchin entitled this section of his letter as "About Religion," and ended it with "My Own Opinion":

All the Tibetan officers know that I am a Christian and now and then they themselves asked me questions and we had long talks and they are not against our [Western] religion; they say that all the religions are the same—that just as there are differences in nature, customs and food, [so is it] the same with religions. But they said they blame some of our officers who are in Tibet or who visit Lhasa who have no religion of any kind. They said that they saw only Sir Charles Bell and Mr. [David] Macdonald and Mr. Guthrie [Major James Guthrie, the Lhasa British Mission Doctor] doing and observing their religion. But other [officers from India] they have not seen [displaying any religious faith], and they [thus] think that they have no religion.

My Own Opinion

If all the officers who visit Tibet and stay here try to observe and show the Tibetans according to our own ways of worshiping on every Sunday at their own place and read the Bible every morning and evening, I think all the Tibetans will appreciate more than without any [i.e., more than the absence of any religious expression by the British officers whatsoever]. Of course, I told them that we have nothing to show outwardly but we worship God in spirit and mind. [even as] our officers are doing.

* According to Tibetan Buddhism, by reading this volume one's sins can be diminished or even forgiven.

Yet this latter explanation of Tharchin's—charitable as it was towards the British—did not satisfy his various Lhasan hosts, whose religion was so steeped in external rituals and observations. For “they said,” added Tharchin, that “there must be some outward signs.”²⁶

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From the Tibetan capital Bernard and Tharchin went to Shigatse. Prior to their departure from Lhasa on the 15th of September²⁷ the latter bade goodbye to his mother-in-law, relatives and loved ones. At Shigatse, which at an elevation of about 13,000 feet was then the second largest town in Tibet, they visited the famous nearby Monastery of Trashilhunpo (meaning, in Tibetan, “The Mount of Blessing or Good Fortune”; the word *trash* signifying “good luck”), the magnificent residence and ecclesiastical seat of the Panchen Lama. It might do well to quote Sir Charles Bell here on the relation between this Tibetan Buddhist Prelate and the highest-ranking Priest of the Tibetans, the Dalai Lama. In their turn, Bell has explained, each of the Dalai Lamas has been recognized by all the people of Lama Land

as the Vice-Regent of the Lord Buddha in Tibet ... and regarded by Tibetans as the head of Tibet, both in the spiritual and on the secular side. The Panchen Lama, who originated a little later, is practically of equal spiritual rank with the Dalai Lama. In strict theory, indeed, he is even somewhat higher, because the Panchen is the incarnation of the Buddha of Boundless Light, whereas the Dalai is the incarnation of the Buddha of Mercy, and the former is the spiritual father of the latter. But as regards secular authority, the Panchen is a much smaller figure. His power extends to only three or four districts in Tsang, and even Shigatse, the chief town of the Province, adjoining his own Monastery of Trashilhunpo, is not under his authority.²⁸

At the time Bernard and Tharchin were in the Shigatse area the Panchen Lama was not there, and in fact died later that very year in China where he had been living for nearly fifteen years following a breach between him and Dalai Lama XIII (see again Chapter 18 earlier).

Located but a mile or so from Shigatse, Trashilhunpo was generally viewed to be the best conducted of all monasteries in Tibet. Famed for its learning, it had attracted monastic students from all parts of the land, who sought to secure the highly prized religious degree which it bestowed. At the time of Bernard's visit the Monastery housed some four to five thousand monks. The Panchen's residence and Monastery, separately situated, were beautiful structures containing fine decorations, *thangkas** and other paintings and unusual architectural forms. Rare Chinese articles could be found inside the complex of buildings which made up the Monastery site. The Monastery was also well known for its rich icons, among which was an immense image of the Maitreya or Jampa Buddha that measured some nine stories high, reaching up 110 feet. The enormous golden butter lamp which sat before this image had a capacity of twelve *khels* of butter (approximately 324 pounds)! Moreover, as the ecclesiastical

* A *thangka* (literally meaning “banner”) is a Tibetan painted scroll, and is thus a Tibetan religious painting on cloth.

seat of the Panchen Lama, Trashilhunpo Monastery housed the golden chortens of the past five or six Panchen Lamas and their *sunbums* (complete works) that numbered a total of some forty volumes.²⁹

Prior to the Chinese occupation of Tibet that occurred after 1950, Shigatse, like her sister community of Gyantse to the southeast, could boast one of the finest architecturally impressive fortresses or dzongs in the whole land, towering majestically as it did high above the city on its hill. But today it lies in ruins, with merely the foundation walls remaining to bear silent witness to the carnage heaped upon the town by the fanatical young Red Guards of China's so-called Cultural Revolution that in 1966 erupted throughout China's domains that would only cease a decade later.

The Panchen Lama's Monastery, which required some seven years for its construction, had been founded in 1447 by Gedun Drubpa. This monk was the son of a herdsman as well as the nephew and disciple of the great reformer of Tibetan Buddhism, Tsong Khapa. Eventually Lama Drubpa became the Great Reformer's successor. (Gedun had earlier founded, in 1416, the largest monastery in the world's history, Drepung near Lhasa, as a means of housing the quickly increasing number of Yellow Sect monks of his Reformist uncle.) Tsong Khapa's successor had subsequently founded Trashilhunpo in honor of his teacher Kadrub; this was because although Gedun Drubpa had indeed been one of Tsong Khapa's disciples, he was fairly young when the Great Reformer died, and had therefore come under the primary influence of Kadrub, an older disciple of Tsong Khapa.³⁰ Because of a wide reputation he had for saintliness and because of the people's great reverence towards him, Trashilhunpo's founder would later be posthumously regarded as the very first Dalai Lama. As it turned out, it would not be till the seventeenth century that Trashilhunpo would become the seat of the Panchen Lamas of Tibet.

One additional important facet of Tibetan culture was to be found at the famous Narthang Monastery only five to ten miles from Shigatse. This Monastery, as was noted earlier in Chapter 17, owed its fame to the printing shop which was there; for here were printed, by the ancient method of wooden blocks, most of the books to be found in most any respectable monastery throughout the Land of the Lamas. Although Lhasa had its printing capability by the same xylographic technique, and though some Tibetan books were at this time still being printed at the Lama Monastery in Peking, neither of these places could begin to rival Narthang for fame in this regard: only the printing press and library at Derge in East Tibet could come close to doing so. Tibet's large canon of literature, a great part of which consists of translations of works originally composed in India in Sanskrit, is almost all of a religious nature. And because these Sanskrit originals have in most instances been lost, students of ancient Indian literature, history, customs and thought have invariably had to turn to the Tibetan literary canon for research purposes.³¹



Both the American visitor and the Tibetan guide were greatly impressed by an extensive tract of land, vast and flat, which stretched along the hills that serve as guardians of the town

of Shigatse. Bernard, commenting on this large piece of land, remarked: "The time will come when Shigatse will become larger than Lhasa."³² Several reasons went to support this assertion. First, the wide geographical plain affords spacious room for the expansion of the city. Here larger and broader buildings can be constructed on the flat land. The surface is suitable for roads and highways which would cost less to construct. Furthermore, the area could easily provide the necessary and proper space for an aerodrome for smaller and even larger planes to land and take off. Second, in the vicinity of Shigatse the Brahmaputra River (called the Tsangpo in Tibet) flows wide and deep, carrying within its basin plenty of water throughout the year. The river receives most of its water supply from the seasonal rains and the snow which melts during the summer. The river can be easily harnessed to produce hydroelectricity which can illumine an entire town as well as supply sufficient power to operate large-scale industries. In the course of time, noted Tharchin, Bernard's prophecy had in fact become true. For ever since the aggressive intentions, invasion and occupation of Tibet from 1950 onwards, the Chinese had developed the city of Shigatse and its environs into an important industrial and political complex that was designed to serve the purposes of the new Communist masters. Indeed, by 1989 it could be reported that the Chinese would expend throughout the country as a whole some 300 million dollars annually to maintain Peking's control over Tibet and improve the standard of living not for the Tibetans but for the primary benefit of Tibet's allegedly predominantly ethnic Chinese citizenry.³³

Navigation has also been made possible in and around Shigatse with the coming of the modern facilities created by the Chinese, and naturally, observed Tharchin, this has enhanced trade and commerce which in turn have increased the material prosperity of the town. This has all been at the expense, however, of the monasteries in the area, most of which, Tharchin later reported, have over the years of the Chinese occupation been ransacked and the most valuable curios dispatched to China, whence they have either been transported or smuggled into Hong Kong where the foreigners have bought them for huge sums of money for the purpose of taking them to the libraries or museums of Europe and America. Much of the precious loot has also been taken by the route to Kathmandu, a principal point of transshipment, and from there to the great antique markets of the world. The large amounts realized from these sales have been utilized to further expand the construction of the city of Shigatse. With money from these sources huge buildings have been erected. Such a drain on the objects of art, noted Tharchin, is a most telling commentary upon the state and condition of the cultural heritage of Tibet which has been gradually yet alarmingly undermined. Indeed, one recent estimate of the value of the priceless cultural objects removed from Tibet by the Chinese runs into billions of American dollars.³⁴

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While at Shigatse Bernard, accompanied by Tharchin, was presented with an opportunity to observe how Tibetans dispose of their dead. In his "memoirs" created near the end of his life, the Tibetan from Poo evinced a fascination for the subject, if the somewhat lengthy

discussion he presented of what he witnessed at Shigatse can serve as an indication. As a rule, he noted, Tibetans do not bury or burn their dead. To the contrary, David Macdonald, a longtime observer of the Tibetan scene, has explained the matter this way: "The fact of the ground being so hard in the winter, coupled with extreme scarcity of firewood, probably accounts largely for the Tibetan custom of air burial." He went on to point out that Tibetan Buddhism recognizes four means of the disposal of the dead: by air, fire, water and earth. These were four of the Lamaist elements, to one of which "the body must return after the soul has left it."³⁵ Perhaps an even more significant reason for Lamaist Tibetans to refrain from "earth burial" is their animistic "fear of disturbing and annoying the earth spirits."³⁶ Nevertheless, there were two classes of people in Tibet whose bodies *were* consigned to the earth, as explained by one authority on Tibetan customs and rituals, Chapel Tsetan Phuntso:

Burial in the ground is reserved for people who died of contagious diseases such as leprosy and smallpox, as well as for robbers, murderers, and other criminals. The law denies them celestial burial and even water burial, for if their souls are trapped underground, they will not be reincarnated and their kind will become extinct. This type of burial ... brings dishonor on the family of the deceased ...

Under normal circumstances, however, the choice of burial method, as noted by Tsetan Phuntso, was usually made "according to the financial and social status of the deceased and the family."³⁷

In Shigatse Bernard and Tharchin had a unique chance to witness the most common method used by far to dispose of the dead: "air" or "celestial" or "sky burial"; that is to say, how Tibetans feed a dead body to the vultures and ravens, which, in turn, Tibetans believe, upon taking flight "carry the spirit of the deceased heavenward."³⁸ Moreover, the ritual of having one's body fed to the birds of the air actually serves as the dead person's final act of devotion to the needs of these other sentient beings, and for which, incidentally, he believes he will acquire merit. Yet it must be added that the entire procedure in air burial is as apprehensive as it is fascinating.

First of all, it must be understood that the body of a person who has died is looked upon by Tibetan Buddhists as now a useless husk to be discarded, because it is the soul of the person that is important; without it, the body has no meaning; and hence, the treatment which the human carcass receives is of no concern to the survivors. Usually the dead person, after being washed and dressed in the best clothes of the deceased (normally white), is placed in a sitting position in a corner of a room in the home for three to five days.* A priest will be

* In some instances—for example, as happened when Professor Dawa Norbu's father had died in Tibet—not only is the corpse placed in the death chamber but a life-sized effigy of the deceased, and dressed in a complete set of the dead person's clothes, is also set up there, before which may be burned many votive butter lamps and much incense. But when the corpse is finally disposed of, this effigy is carried to the abode of the lama who acts as the custodian of the dead person's spirit. In the case of Norbu's father, an inscription (*chang-ku*) had been inserted in the front of the effigy's head, which read:

I, the world-leaver, Thubkye Choephel, adore and take refuge in thee my most venerated Lama, and all the deities peaceful and wrathful. May the Lord of Compassion, Phakpa Chenrezig, forgive my accumulated sins and impurities of former countless lives and show me the white path to the world of eternal bliss.

The effigy's clothes became the possession of the lama and the *chang-ku* was burned. By the color of the flame emitted the lama was able to decipher "whether the deceased was on or off the 'white path'" to the Western

called who will remain in constant attendance in the dead person's room, reciting prayers and chanting scriptures as a means of releasing the soul from the body and to ward off any evil spirits which might attempt to occupy the corpse.*³⁹ Dawa Norbu has noted that what the priest and his attendant do is to read and re-read in relays day and night for the requisite number of days the *Bardo Thodol* (the Tibetan Buddhist guidebook for dead souls). The priest-lama, who acts as the custodian of the dead person's spirit, sits near the head of the shrouded corpse chanting melancholy dirges and keeping out all family members and other relatives of the deceased from the death chamber. For silence, explained Norbu, was necessary for the lama to communicate the *Bardo Thodol* message to the spirit which would aid the latter to seek the path which leads to "the world of eternal bliss."⁴⁰

According to C. T. Phuntso, it is during this brief four days' period that friends and relatives of the deceased make their presence known at the house of mourning. He writes:

Friends and relatives bring a bottle of barley beer, a silk *khata*, some butter, a bundle of incense sticks, and sometimes a paper package containing money and labeled "condolences." The *khata* is for the deceased, but the money and other presents are for the family, who are not supposed to comb their hair or wash their faces or laugh or speak aloud, so that the soul of the deceased will ascend quietly. The family must also put away all the ornaments in the house. Neighbors are also expected to express grief and avoid any form of levity such as singing or

Paradise of Peace. Unfortunately, wrote Norbu, "the flame threw doubts about Father's solitary journey towards reality, as I learned much later." *Red Star over Tibet*, 48-9.

* According to Dawa Norbu, one part of these ceremonies was the particular ritual known as the *pho-wa* service, "which was always performed by the favorite and most venerated lama of the deceased." In the case of his own father's death at the Tibetan monastic town of Sakya, this lama happened to be in life-long retreat and so he conducted the service in his cell on behalf of Norbu's dead father. The lama, said Norbu, "mentally concentrated upon the deceased, visualizing his body and calling my father's spirit to his presence." For it must be explained that *pho-wa* is defined as "the extraction of consciousness," and consists of a magic chant that commands the spirit "not to haunt its family and not to cling to the world of spirits, but to seek the 'white path' to the Western Paradise of Peace." In other words, observed Norbu, the *pho-wa* ritual was meant to provide the deceased one with the correct beginning to his new life, thus enabling the dead person "to face reality": since Tibetans believe there are many impediments to be overcome. Yet "reality" here, Norbu made clear, has a different connotation to it from the normal understanding of the word. For within the present context it means that "the deceased must not delude himself by haunting his family or his relatives but must go where the lama leads."

Nearly everyone, Norbu went on to explain, expires with wishes unrealized, food left unconsumed, wealth not utilized and relatives separated from him. All these situations come to a person's mind in an instant moment of time as the person is about to die, thus inclining his consciousness towards one or several of these desires or aspirations, even though all be immaterial to the dying one now. And thus it is because such impulses of consciousness could be detrimental to the well-being of surviving relatives and friends, through the spirit's haunting, that particular Tibetan Buddhist rites like *pho-wa* were advised as a means to direct the spirit of the deceased towards the "white path."

Yet just as the rite of *pho-wa* was believed by Tibetans to serve as a guide to the departed in the worlds beyond, so the death horoscope could serve as a directive to the survivors of the deceased in this world. Accordingly, when Norbu's father died, an astrologer was instantly called to the home. Once given certain biographical data about the deceased and his family and the time of death, the astrologer was able to arrive at specific calculations after consulting his book. The astrological results announced had to do in part with various aspects of the deceased one's previous life but also in part with what could be expected regarding his next rebirth, the astrologer adding that if the survivors would consecrate an image of Chenrezi, he would be reborn a male in a land where the Buddha's teachings were heard. Otherwise, he would be reborn an animal—signifying that it would require eons for the opportunity to enter a human womb. Finally, the astrologer also determines the most auspicious day for removing the corpse of the deceased from the home. *Ibid.*, 47-8.

dancing. A common Tibetan saying runs: "If your neighbor's domestic animal dies, it is proper to grieve for three days. How much more so when it is a human being!"⁴¹

The family of the deceased will then choose a propitious day for the funeral. Early one morning, usually before dawn, the body is taken away from the house. But in the rites preparatory to this, the cadaver is stripped, the limbs bound, the body wrapped in a woolen blanket (called a *phula*), and then carried by the heir to the door of the house, where the one who will serve as "undertaker" of the sky burial is waiting to carry the body away on his back.⁴² Sometimes in Tibet the road or path outside the house of the deceased will be adorned with the eight precious symbols of Buddhism: done in lime whitewash, thus denoting the route of the funeral procession.⁴³ But sometimes, too, as in the instance of the death of Dawa Norbu's father, neighbors—particularly friends—would bar their doors with a line of sand. This was done in the belief that each grain would appear as a hill of impediment to the spirit of the deceased; and hence, said Norbu, it was believed that there would be no chance for the spirit to visit and subsequently haunt its friends and relatives. Though in theory the cadaver of Norbu's father was by then nothing more than the four elements of earth, air, fire and water—inasmuch as the spirit had been transferred to a life-sized effigy of the deceased that in turn had been taken to the lama who had served as the spirit's custodian, nevertheless, its neighbors were not taking any risks!⁴⁴

Now a special class of people (called the *ragyapas* and denominated by one Tibetan as "outcast undertakers") is qualified to dispose of the corpse, for which task they are given "the clothes off the corpse and good pay" and for which they also "inherit certain silver decorations from the dead."⁴⁵ Household members and relatives may or may not choose to follow the dead body to the place of its disposal; but according to Tsetan Phuntso, "only one or two close friends, representing the family, actually witness the celestial burial itself."⁴⁶ If a family can afford the expense, a lama or two will accompany the body to keep the vultures at bay while the *ragyapas* occupy themselves with the necessary sky burial rituals, to pray, and to comfort the dead person's spirit. Indeed, according to Charles Bell, if the deceased is of the upper classes or of anyone else who can afford it, a lama is engaged by the dead person's relatives to go to the disposal area a day before the corpse for the purpose of praying to the spirit (*lha*) of the deceased one, when next day it will witness its body being cut up and torn from it.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, for a period of forty-nine days the house of mourning will continually be purified to drive away any lingering evil. At the same time, constant prayers will also be offered up by the priests in a death ritual known as the "Forty-Nine Offerings"—and performed

* But there were other corpse-bearers in Tibetan society besides the *ragyapas*; and in one of his books on Tibetan life and culture, Sir Charles Bell has taken note of these others and drawn a distinction between this more well-known class of Tibetan "undertakers" and the others in this profession. On pages 290-1 of his *People of Tibet* volume (1928), Bell wrote the following: "If the deceased is of the gentry, the corpse is carried to [the disposal ground] by the *tom-den* ..., a class by themselves, carrying on their prescribed occupations from father to son. They are not much higher in social position than the Ra-gyap-pas, the beggar-scavengers of Lhasa, but they do not live in a quarter by themselves as the Ra-gyap-pas do. Should the deceased be of the lower or middle class, the corpse is carried by Ra-gyap-pas or other beggars even farther down the scale, for the Ra-gyap-pas rank above some. There are other corpse-carriers, beggars, whose status—and fee—are the lowest of all."

by them every Saturday of this very long mourning period—as a means of ensuring a good reincarnation, since during this period the departed soul of the dead person is believed by Tibetans to remain in a state of limbo before ultimately being reborn in another creature.⁴⁸ According to the Buddhist doctrine of reincarnation, this other creature may not necessarily be in the form of another human. As a way, therefore, of helping the soul of the departed to pass through successfully the various “psychic experiences” it would encounter during this weeks-long period—all of them crucial in determining the kind of rebirth it would have, family members of Dawa Norbu’s deceased father would daily repeat Tibetan Buddhism’s most sacred mantra as often as possible, make certain not to kill any insects, and refrain from eating any meat. In addition, beggars who might come to the doorstep of the deceased would be encouraged daily to utter repeatedly the same sacred mantra on behalf of the dead person. Moreover, family members would be sent to nearby monasteries to replenish the butter lamps there. In short, observed Norbu,

it was a seven-week-long period of accumulating merit, believed to be the only influential power capable of helping the deceased.... In addition, we were required to keep up our spirits—a difficult if not impossible task. Our aunts (Mother had five sisters) repeatedly warned us that we should not weep during the forty-nine days, especially on the weekly ritual days. While undergoing after-death experiences and trials, the spirit would still visit its home occasionally. If the spirit saw its relatives weeping it would not be able to face reality, which was the only way to be born again.... Our hair we left uncombed and unoiled, looking like a yak’s tail. Our grimy faces were covered in layers of dirt by streams of tears, and our dark, sober clothes were thrown on anyhow.⁴⁹

Now the cadaver that has been removed from the home of the deceased is taken to a special spot where there is a huge flay rock. The corpse is lowered onto this piece of rock—“on which places for the limbs have been roughly hollowed out”—with “their faces to the sky and their limbs stretched out.” A fire made of pine and cypress wood is then lit, after which *tsampa* is sprinkled on the fire. The dense smoke thus created rises skyward as a signal that is answered immediately by the appearance of two vultures acting on conditioned response as they have done over many years’ time. “If these vultures in their flight wheel to the right,” reported one foreigner at Lhasa who in 1883 had witnessed such proceedings, “then the soul is [believed to be] happy ‘in heaven’; otherwise the vultures either turn to the left or go away.”⁵⁰ By the time the ragyapas finish their tea, hundreds and perhaps thousands of sharp-eyed and sharp-billed vultures—the sacred bird of Tibet*—come flying from long distances, alight upon the ground, and then wait around the rock.

(It should be noted here that not in every case, apparently, do the vultures always automatically appear at the appointed place and hour for their grisly duty. In some instances, even today, they must be called. A case in point is the experience of a Tibetan lama along the Chinese Communist side of the Sino-Tibetan border who has for years taken it upon himself to perform what he calls “a charitable work” of disposing of the dead bodies brought to him

* “To Tibetans vultures are sacred birds because of the important part they play in the celestial burial and also because they are believed not to harm any small creatures. They have thus become a protected species, and hunters are not allowed to shoot them.” C. T. Phuntso, “Customs and Rituals of the Tibetans,” in N. N. Jigmei et al., *Tibet*, 91.

by relatives of the deceased for that purpose. When asked if the Government or anyone else interfered with his "burial" work, the lama replied: "I have problems, but not with the Government." He went on to explain that "for a while the vultures would not cooperate—they were simply nowhere in sight." Shaking his head, he continued: "Some lamas know how to call the vultures, but unhappily I do not. So I hired an assistant who knows the trick. His calls are always answered, and now we have successful burials once more."⁵¹

After prayer and the usual formalities, the head of the body is cut off and kept separately and away from the eyes of the vultures, the reason for which will shortly be explained. After this the decapitated corpse is cut up by means of a sharp instrument into portions of flesh small enough to be devoured by the vultures but with the portions remaining separated. By now the hungry birds have been alerted. Interestingly enough, the vultures do not touch the body without there first being a small formal ceremony of their own. These carrion creatures have a leader. When one of the ragyapa men gives the signal to the vultures, their leader, usually the oldest one of the flock, waddles forward first and bites only a mouthful of flesh and immediately returns to its flock. This formal inauguration is a signal for the rest of the birds to rush in and finish off the entire corpse. "One wonders," Tharchin mused within himself, "what form of government these creatures have among themselves!"

After a while the bones of the cadaver are crushed and cut up into small enough pieces and then mixed with tsampa and finally rolled into a ball; whereupon they are given to these carrion birds to be consumed, or else they are pounded to a paste and thrown to the dogs. Should any of the bone be left by the vultures, it must be burned to ashes and scattered far and wide. In view of the fact that these creatures like the brains best, the latter are fed to them at the very end when all the flesh and crushed bones have been completely devoured: otherwise, the birds would ignore the rest of the carcass. And thus, with but few exceptions (see below), the entire dead person's body—bones and all—is by this bizarre ritual disposed of so that the soul is free to leave it. As Thomas Manning, the first Englishman ever to visit Lhasa, quaintly put it when protesting in 1811 against the closed game laws of the Tibetans:

* Harrison Forman, an American explorer traveling through Northeast Tibet in 1932, tells of witnessing the air burial that was conducted by two Buddhist lamas shortly after the death of one of his Tibetan guides. At the appointed place, and after an altar fire had been lit, the elder lama moved off a short distance away from where the corpse lay. Writes Forman: "For a moment he stood there as if in a trance, head back, arms wide and a fixity of expression in his eyes. Then suddenly he called aloud in a mournful, yet imperious voice:

Ai-Yah! Ai-Yah! O you Monarchs of the Unknown! Come! Come!
I command you, come! Feast! Feast! Feast!

A tense silence followed. I was a little cynical. How could finite man call upon the Infinite, with any hope of being heard? I scanned the heavens.... The sky overhead was void of all but a few scattering clouds. But no! What was that? Black dots coming over the horizon. Many of them. Growing and growing in size. And quickly their grim identity became manifest. Flying high and majestically, suggesting for all the world some vast armada of fighting planes on parade, they came straight toward us; as though from the very beginning they had known exactly where to come.... Overhead they circled once or twice, and then spiraled sharply earthwards.... Utter silence held sway with the folding of their wings." *Through Forbidden Tibet: an Adventure into the Unknown* (New York, 1935), 269-70. Forman's description of the entire burial procedure for his Tibetan friend, related on pages 268-72, makes clear that there is no uniformity in all aspects of the air burial ritual in Tibet, but may vary from place to place.

“They eat no birds, but, on the contrary, let the birds eat them.”⁵² Now once this extraordinary ceremony has been completed, the family representatives will “produce food and barley beer, prepared in advance, for the undertakers’ fee.”⁵³

An unsavory sidelight to these rituals has been revealed by the Japanese Buddhist monk Ekai Kawaguchi, whose fourteen months at Lhasa right after the turn of the twentieth century had afforded him an opportunity to observe the practice of sky or air burial close up, particularly when a friend of his had died. He noted that in the course of their rather messy work of cutting up the body, separating the flesh from the bones, and reducing the bones to powder, the “undertakers” and attending lamas got hungry and thirsty. In response to this circumstance, the Japanese visitor wrote afterwards, they would

prepare tea, or help themselves to baked flour, with their hands splashed with a mash of human flesh and bones, for they never wash their hands before they prepare tea or take food, the most they do being to clap their hands so as to get rid of the coarser fragments. And thus they take a good deal of minced human flesh, bones or brain, mixed with their tea or flour. They do so with perfect nonchalance.... When I suggested that they might wash their hands before taking refreshment, they looked at me with an air of surprise. They scoffed at my suggestion, and even observed that eating with unwashed hands really added relish to food; besides, the spirit of the dead man would be satisfied when he saw them take fragments of his mortal remains with their food without aversion.⁵⁴

Another interesting sidelight to this entire grisly affair has been related by Rinchen Dolma Taring (Mary La). While these large birds are consuming this human meal the ragyapas are busily occupied pulling out their big white tailfeathers from which will be made shuttlecocks for Tibetan children to play with.⁵⁵ Mention should be made, too, of one rather unusual belief among Tibetans which has it that if a person’s air-burial funeral is attended by a large number of vultures he is said to have been most virtuous in his life, whereas if a person’s corpse attracts only a small number, with even the dogs refusing to go near his remains, that individual is deemed to have led a sinful life.⁵⁶

Now as intimated above, there were exceptions to having a deceased person’s entire body fed to Tibet’s sacred bird. There were times, for example, when some parts of the skeletal remains would be ground up as fertilizer to renourish the soil, while other parts might even be kept back for use in religious art. The reason for such transformation into religious art and ceremonial objects goes to the very heart of the Buddhist faith itself. One author on Tibet, Rosemary Tung, has explained that since the goal of Buddhism is to achieve a state of perfect enlightenment or Nirvana, “these objects seen in daily use in religious ceremonies had the effect of reminding the faithful of their own mortality. Buddhist doctrine says that one of the greatest obstacles to enlightenment is *attachment*, particularly to one’s own body.” It is not to be surprised at, then, that frequently the bones of the dead would be formed into musical instruments and other Buddhist ceremonial objects and sold to the monasteries and temples. For instance, skulls, writes Tung, will be made into drums by sawing off the top and stretching skin over its opening. Then, too, leg and arm bones might be transformed into ceremonial horns. “The better the specimen, the higher the price,” with “the thigh bones of tall men,” for example, being preferred “because they make a better tone.”⁵⁷ Furthermore, these human bones might also be carved into varying shapes and sizes

and, by attaching them together, be made into ceremonial aprons for monks to wear during religious festivals and other observances. But the skulls themselves had still other ceremonial uses: they might be made into attractive offering cups for use at Buddhist altars. Such skulls would then be finished off, explains Tung, “with silver or gold liners, set with semiprecious stones, and topped by intricately decorated lids of precious metals.” Cups or chalices of this kind, she adds, were highly prized by Western art collectors.⁵⁸

Before leaving this intriguing subject, one should note the gradation in respect to the various ways in Tibet for the disposal of dead bodies.* If the deceased person is a highly renowned Lama like the Dalai and Panchen Lamas or some other such celebrated Buddhist saint, his body is embalmed by being preserved in salt. Once this has been done, it is dried; the mummified corpse is then “rubbed with precious ointments and spices,”⁵⁹ encased in a bronze casket and inurned in a stupa or large-sized chorten. The responsibility for implementing this customary method of embalment for renowned Lamas has always been entrusted to members of the monastic community. It should be observed, incidentally, that the Dalai and Panchen Lamas have their chortens plated with gold or silver. But there are also bronze, wooden, and clay chortens—used according to the status of the Lama—that are then stored in the halls of the pertinent monasteries.⁶⁰ For the practical and religious reasons already given earlier, there is rarely a cemetery to be found in Tibet for “earth burial” except for the Moslems, who have had in Lhasa two such burial grounds for the disposal of their dead.⁶¹ The bodies of the lesser incarnate Lamas are burnt, this being the one exception to the general rule among Tibetans cited earlier that no dead bodies are disposed of by the method of cremation or “fire burial.” The ashes of these great teachers are then often placed into smaller chortens because of the belief that such relics could serve as a reminder of their teachings to future generations; or else, in the case of the learned scholar-monks called Geshe, their burnt bones and ash are “either scattered to the winds or cast into a river.”⁶² The corpses of the third type are fed to the vultures as narrated above. A final and fourth method, “water burial,” is for the dead body—usually of the very poor class, including the beggars, widows and widowers—to be dismembered and thrown into the nearest lake or swiftly flowing river (or else wrapped in white cloth and thrown in whole)⁶³ where it is devoured by the fish: the belief being, as stated previously, that in death as in life one’s body can provide service to its fellow creatures.† When infants die, however, “their bodies are put in porcelain jars covered with lids and thrown into the river, though sometimes these jars are kept for a long time in the families’ storerooms.”⁶⁴ It should be added here that at Lhasa

* “The origins of the burial rites in Tibet lie deep in the religious history and legends of the country. It is said that some 2,000 years ago a king called Drigum Tsenpo adopted burial in the tomb: before him there was no such thing, and kings simply rose to the sky. Records of early rites are preserved in *The King’s Admonitions* and other Tibetan histories. From the times of King Thothori Nyantsen, who lived around the year 200 of the Christian calendar, it was stipulated that tombs be set up for kings, queens, royal concubines, and princes. The remains of tombs still to be seen in Chunggye in the Yarlung valley are evidence of the early burial of royalty in tombs. When Buddhism became the dominant religion in Tibet, other rites came into use, such as cremation for some great Lamas to release their souls in accordance with the Buddhist scriptures.” C. T. Phuntso again, in Jigmei et al., *Tibet*, 91.

† Or as the authority on Tibetan customs quoted above, C. T. Phuntso, has put it: “In the water burial, the feeding of a corpse to the fish has the spiritual significance of a gift to the Buddha, and so fulfills the wish to perform good works”—and thus, too, the deceased can thereby gain further merit for a good reincarnation. *Ibid.*

there is one particular mountain one day's ride away on top of which only members of the aristocracy and high Lamas of a lower rank than those whose corpses are mummified have their bodies dismembered and offered to the vultures.⁶⁵

Tharchin had anticipated an opportunity at the Tibetan capital to observe the ceremony of feeding a dead body to the carrion birds, but the chance did not present itself for him to do so. However, he was successful in witnessing the same disposal ceremony, and more minutely so, in Shigatse when, as indicated earlier, he accompanied Bernard to the burial site used here for such purpose. Nevertheless, Tharchin was to admit later that he found it very disturbing to have watched the air burial at Tibet's second city. Bernard, on the other hand, did not seem to be emotionally unsettled by these unique rituals; to the contrary, he exhibited such detachment from it all that with apparently great composure he was able to photograph the entire affair with his movie camera! Perhaps his composure at Shigatse can best be accounted for by the fact that he had already experienced the observance of an air burial outside Lhasa only a few days before his and Tharchin's departure from the capital. It had taken place at the edge of Sera hill, and on this particular occasion "three persons had just died" and would be jointly treated to the "graveyard" proceedings (Bernard's term). For some reason Tharchin had apparently not been able to accompany the American on this short but unusually motivated trek to Sera.⁶⁶

About his visit to Tibet's second city Tharchin was wont to remark that his "short trip to Shigatse was truly an interesting, informative and quite memorable one." Memorable, indeed! One person who came away from having witnessed an air burial with a far different impression was Mary La, wife of Jigme Taring, Tharchin's former pupil at Gyantse. "Dreadful"—and *not* "memorable"—was her characterization of the scene, although she did assign to the experience a positive benefit of sorts. In her autobiography she wrote:

... when I was grown up I once witnessed this ceremony. Early one morning I went with some friends to a place in Lhasa near Sera Monastery, where the bodies of three ordinary people, which had been carried from their homes ..., were placed on a huge slab of rock.... The six men who were to cut up the bodies sat by the rock and drank *chang* before uncovering one of the bodies and laying it flat on the slab, face downwards. About twelve yards away hundreds of vultures were waiting ... [She then described the unseemly ceremony in some detail.] ...

Witnessing this rite was a dreadful experience for me. Yet I had been anxious to see it, as watching such a thing is considered very beneficial to our spiritual development. No matter how happy and successful we are we become corpses eventually and some Tibetans keep a skeleton in their home as a reminder that we all must die. When we think of dying we feel less ambitious. For days afterwards I could not eat and I did not touch meat for nearly a month, as the recollection of what I had seen was so awful. For a few days I had pains in all my joints and could not comb my hair because my scalp was so sensitive. [She had seen the ragyapas pull the hair of the corpse away to be burnt later; it had come off quite easily, and had left the skull all white.]⁶⁷

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From Shigatse Bernard went to Sakya and then returned to Kalimpong in India. Very soon afterwards he left for the United States, where he mounted a number of lecture tours

that were accompanied by his photographs and motion pictures, and where he also offered lessons in yoga. In the meanwhile, Tharchin went off to Gyantse to pick up the American's considerable luggage full of rare manuscript materials and other memorabilia, which had been deposited there for the Tibetan eventually to carry away to India, from where it was finally shipped to America. So extensive was the American's cache of Tibetan treasures that it required Tharchin close to a month's stay at Gyantse to make proper arrangements for their transshipment by caravan down the rest of the way to the Sikkimese border and on then to Kalimpong. From among the considerable amount of material Tharchin helped to ship, it should be noted that in 1963 Yale University in America purchased from the estate of the late Theos Bernard what the *New York Times* reported as a "rare 63-volume unbound 'encyclopedia' of Buddhism, written in Tibetan ..." and "printed from wooden blocks and containing 50,000 pages, each about 3½ inches wide and 17 inches long." The *Times* article went on to say that this set of volumes contains the collected writings of the first Tibetan monastic order, founded in the eighth century, and is "a copy of one written during the lifetime of Padma Sambhava, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism. The particular printing blocks were carved in 1910 although the set was not printed until 1937 in Lhasa by Buddhist monks for Bernard.... The books, written in highly technical theological language, were hidden in caves and under rocks to be preserved for future reincarnated monks, but they were discovered by lamas in the thirteenth century."⁶⁸

Eleanore Murray had indicated to Yale University Library's Adviser on Tibetan Literature, Wesley Needham, that Tharchin "would be able," if Needham cared to write him (which he did), "to give you inside information on the history of the manuscripts" Bernard had collected and which Yale had later purchased. "According to Theos' diary," she went on, Bernard "was at a loss to know what to buy, as he was not prepared for the great surprise of being invited to Lhasa. He carried and studied Laurence Waddell's book en route and this helped him a great deal, but being a scholar he wanted only scholarly works and not just the ordinary popular scriptures." "I do know," explained Murray, "that his name and presence spread [throughout Lhasa during his lengthy stay] and he was visited by sundry Tibetans, go-betweens of course, bringing many of the books to him for sale. His diary," however, "says that much he turned away, and in this manner the rare things became available." She had further indicated that "Tharchin would be the best source" for determining precisely what Bernard had purchased, both art works and books, since the American failed to indicate much of this in his diary.^{*69}

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While at Gyantse Tharchin met a Tibetan Christian convert. He had met the convert a few years before in Kalimpong. This relatively new Christian did not originally belong to

* Letter, Murray to Needham, Calimesa CA, 18 June 1963, Murray Documents. From the Tharchin Papers it is known that Needham had been in correspondence with Babu Tharchin since at least 1953, long before Yale University's purchase in late 1963 of much of the Bernard materials collected from Lhasa.

Gyantse but hailed from some other place. Though alone here this convert had remained faithful to his Lord all through the years despite the fact that he had had no spiritual fellowship with any other believers and was therefore lonely and limited in his expression. Yet the Christian publisher noticed that he led a deeply prayerful and spiritual life. Needless to say, this brother was overjoyed to meet the visitor from Kalimpong who had a like precious faith to his own. Tharchin was later to remark that such lonely Christians were still living in Tibet but were scattered everywhere. From Gyantse on 8 November Tharchin traveled to Yatung where he visited a small Christian congregation.⁷⁰ Spending the 20th and 21st of November there, he had a time of prayer and fellowship with the believers.⁷¹ The visit definitely inspired the Christians in their faith and spiritual life. Prayers are still requested to this day on behalf of these scattered ones, noted Tharchin in his end-of-life “memoirs,” who, he added, were in need of God’s grace and mercy to stand true to the Lord Jesus Christ at all costs.



Before concluding the account of Tharchin’s association with Theos Bernard completely, it should be pointed out that the Tibetan’s American friend visited India once more ten years later. This visit in late 1946 and into 1947 proved to be Bernard’s last. On this final occasion he would be accompanied by his wife, Helen. Bernard had wanted to journey to Lhasa again but could not obtain from the authorities there the permission needed to enter Tibet. Bernard had applied to the Kashag for permission to visit the Tibetan capital during the famed *Monlam* (Great Prayer) Festival; but in February 1947 the Cabinet notified him of its refusal on the grounds that because many others were also applying it could not permit one without feeling obligated to do so for all.⁷² This, however, appears to have been an excuse triggered by pressure from the British, and not a valid reason for refusing the American’s entry application (see a few pages hence for a probable explanation why this time he was prohibited).

For some little while—in fact, for well over six months—Bernard, with his wife, stayed on in Kalimpong. He occupied his time pursuing further his research in the field of Buddhist studies (on occasion borrowing a Tibetan book or two from Tharchin’s well-stocked personal library) and polishing up his handling of the Tibetan language (inviting the Babu to his residence for a lengthy lunch period now and then).⁷³ It was also at this time that Bernard had presented to “my first Tibetan teacher Tharchin” a gift copy of his *Simplified Grammar of the Literary Tibetan Language* (Santa Barbara CA USA, 1946). According to Eleanore Murray, who derived her information from Bernard’s personal diary, the American scholar had “spent most of his days while in Kalimpong (1946-7) with his [Lhasan] Geshe, translating and interpreting.” Moreover, reported Murray, “he says he read everything Tibetan he could lay his hands on and retained Tibetan servants in order to exercise his speaking knowledge of Tibetan.” In fact, added Murray, during this period in Kalimpong “he spoke it solely.”* One or more of these Tibetan servants, incidentally, had been provided him by Tharchin.

* Quoted from page 1 of Murray, “Concerning Dr. Theos Bernard’s Work in the Tibetan Field,” a 3-page research paper found among the Murray Documents.

Now it was not Bernard's intention subsequently, as was alleged by both Lowell Thomas, Jr. and Hisao Kimura, that because he failed to receive the sought-after second invitation to visit the Land of Snows, "he must have planned to enter secretly" (Thomas, Jr.) by "trying to sneak across the border" (Kimura).⁷⁴ On the contrary, the American couple thereafter went to Himachal Pradesh, traveling to the Spiti region via the Kulu Valley⁷⁵ in order to do research on Buddhism and to secure rare manuscripts from the ancient Tibetan monasteries in Lesser Tibet beyond there. As Murray had reported, "His Geshe in Kalimpong was unable to obtain them from Lhasa, and advised Theos to seek them in Kyi Monastery."^{*} And hence, the first goal of his journey was to be this very gompa located north of the Spiti River. Tharchin, as always, had tried to be helpful, this time loaning to Bernard his own faithful Tibetan Khampa servant, Senge.

Actually, Bernard had at first approached Hisao Kimura to be his guide and interpreter on the trip. For while waiting to hear from Lhasa, the American would often call at the Tibet Mirror Press office to chat with this young Japanese, whom he had met through Tharchin who had given Kimura needful and timely employment at the Press. "My English was now up to it," explained the former Japanese spy long afterwards, "and I felt I would probably benefit more from a trip like this than from further English lessons" at the Graham's Homes school to which he had been sent by his Kalimpong benefactor. Tharchin, however, would not hear of Bernard's offer to Kimura since, wrote the Japanese much later, the Tibetan publisher "had other things in mind for me" and instead "dispatched one of his servants as a guide" for Bernard.[†]⁷⁶ As events would subsequently demonstrate, it was extremely fortunate for Kimura that he was *not* allowed to accompany the foreign scholar into Lesser Tibet.

Beginning his travel to Kyi Monastery on August 20th, which was just five days after Indian independence from Britain had been declared, the American met with foul play only a few days into his journey. For according to a *New York Times* article of 31 October 1947, six days after Bernard had left the Punjab and gone into the Kulu Valley, "he was last reported seen by a group of shepherds who said the scholar's party was attacked by tribal raiders who killed his Moslem servants." The article added, ominously, that the shepherds "did not know whether Mr. Bernard had escaped, however." Also, Bernard's wife, who had originally been with the party, and who had fled on foot 126 miles to Simla from the northern valley where the attack had occurred, feared "that her husband . . . was missing and probably killed."

Hopes in America, though, were subsequently raised when in a follow-up article on November 17th, the *Times* printed the story that Bernard's New York publisher had received a letter from New Delhi in which Mrs. Bernard was quoted as having written that "information had reached her from the Punjab that . . . her husband had escaped and was safe . . . [and]

* Letter, Murray to Needham, 26 September 1967, *ibid*.

† What Gergan Tharchin had in mind for the former Japanese intelligence agent was what proved to be a nearly one-year intelligence-gathering assignment into distant East Tibet—a journey which in due course the publisher personally commissioned Kimura to undertake on behalf of, and in the pay of, the British Government of India. See later in the present work for further details.

was reported now in the [Indo-]Tibetan Mountains,” the very area towards which Bernard had initially set out August 20th on his trip to Kyi Gompa.

Meanwhile, on the very day on which the first *Times* article had appeared, Helen Bernard was writing a lengthy letter from Calcutta to Tharchin about the chain of events—as best she knew them at that moment—which had happened weeks earlier in Kulu. She was intent on leaving for Hong Kong on November 10th, she explained, and wished to know how best to get back safely to Tharchin a Tibetan-Hindi dictionary Bernard had borrowed for the Kyi journey, she not even trusting registered mail at that chaotic period in Independent Indian affairs. She then went on to write about her husband Theos and Senge whom she still hoped and believed were still alive:

Theos is not with me. He is somewhere in Spiti or Ladakh and not able to get back or communicate with me. He and Senge left Kulu on August 20th to visit Kyi Monastery and planned to return to [where I had remained in] Kulu [Valley] and then we would all go through Lahul to Leh. It seems that he got back to the Haupta Pass about the 12th of September or thereabouts and there ran into transport trouble as his muleteers were Mohammedans and all the Mohammedans in the Valley had been polished off [killed] by then and they [Hindus?] were out after the stray ones. There were all sorts of rumors back in the Valley that he had been attacked and looted and his servants all killed, etc.—but that Sahib was unharmed. Whether that means Senge, too, I do not know. I haven't heard from him [Theos] since. Other rumors say that he has returned to Spiti and is attempting to go to Leh—I guess he can't get out through Kashmir at this stage anyway.

I had to walk to Simla as it was the only way out of the Valley now that the roads are all washed out and there are no trains out of Pathancote on account of torn up tracks and bombs, etc. I managed to get on the last armed refugee train out of Simla as there are no regular trains there either. The Punjab is a complete mess generally.

Then turning to the matter of Senge's belongings, Mrs. Bernard now wrote in forlorn fashion one moment and in more sanguine manner the next, as follows:

I also have Senge's best clothes here and his silver charm box [the *dablam*], etc. and newest fur hat, etc. Can you suggest any place where I could leave them or send them so that they would eventually catch up with him if he is still alive and kicking? I somehow can't believe that anything could have happened to him. I'm sure that he will turn up in Kalimpong one of these days. I could leave them at the [Calcutta] apartment where we lived after we left Kalimpong as I think Senge could find that and he knows the servants there ... Perhaps I could leave the dictionary there for safekeeping, too, until the situation and the postal service improves. If I don't hear from you, this is what I shall do....

Do let me hear from you as soon as possible. I hope you are well and that Mrs. Tharchin is wholly well from her illness. Best wishes,

Helen Bernard

P.S. Did you ever receive the registered letter with the clippings sent from Kulu in August?

The sketchy information supplied by Mrs. Bernard as to her husband's and Senge's safety, however, proved later to be faulty, and hopes were forever dashed, since, after a reasonable period had elapsed, no word from Bernard himself was ever received. Indeed, even an attempt by Mrs. Bernard to wire Lhasa concerning the whereabouts of Theos proved negative. She had written Tharchin again from Calcutta a few days after her first

letter, “wondering,” she wrote, “whether it wouldn’t be a good idea for me to have the American Government wire to Lhasa to ask if they have received any reports of the whereabouts of Dr. Bernard or, if he should have to return via Tibet, if they would extend the courtesy, etc.” She inquired of Tharchin the best person in the Tibetan capital to whom American officials in India should address the telegram since the United States had no representative there. Unfortunately, at that time Tibetan officials had no inkling of what had happened to Bernard beyond their country’s far-western border.⁷⁷

Alas, the American scholar was never to be heard from again. Piecing together all the information that in time became available to him, the father of Theos, G. A. Bernard, finally gave this account of his son’s death:

In 1947, Theos Bernard was on a mission to the KYI Monastery in western Tibet in search of some special manuscripts. While on his way, rioting broke out among the Hindus and the Moslems in that section of the hills; all Moslems including women and children in the little village from which Theos departed were killed.

The Hindus then proceeded into the mountains in pursuit of the Moslems who had accompanied Theos as guides and muleteers. These Moslems, it is reported, learned of the killings, escaped, leaving Theos and his Tibetan boy alone on the trail. It is further reported that both were shot and their bodies thrown into the river.

To date we have not been able to get any authentic information on the entire circumstances of his death, nor have we any line on the [personal] effects Theos had with him. That region of Tibet is so very remote that it is unlikely we shall ever learn the full details.*⁷⁸

* This account, published in 1970 (see End-Notes of this chapter for details), doubtless represents an attempt made on the spot either by the elder Bernard or his representative to try to ferret out the facts. For interestingly, the present writer came across copies of two pieces of correspondence in the ThPaK bearing on an official investigation into the matter by the Indian government. They reveal the following information.

In 1966, Tharchin received two letters from someone at Kyelang in Lahul inquiring into the death of Dr. Bernard. Immediately upon their receipt, the Tibetan had notified the American Ambassador in New Delhi, Tharchin intending to answer the letter-writer after hearing from the Ambassador. But not receiving any response from the Embassy after a long lapse of time, and in the meantime having unfortunately misplaced the letters because of his office having been shifted several times, Tharchin had to let the matter go.

But, then, two years after receiving the Lahul letters, the Babu received by registered mail an official memorandum, marked SECRET, from the Superintendent of Police for the Kulu District in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh dated 15 May 1968. Its subject read: “Whereabouts of Dr. Theos Bernard, an American National.” The Police Superintendent indicated that a copy of Tharchin’s 25 August 1966 letter to the American Embassy had been forwarded to the Superintendent of Police, CID, for the entire state of Himachal Pradesh; who in turn passed on a copy to the Kulu District Police Superintendent “for conducting a detailed inquiry into the matter.” The Kulu Superintendent wrote further: “I understand some source has given you information regarding the alleged murder of Dr. Bernard”—this source most likely being either the elder Bernard or his on-the-spot investigator who had sent the two letters. But, continued the District Superintendent in his secret memorandum to Tharchin, “before I depute someone to contact you personally at Kalimpong, ... could you please ... send us the relevant information so that we may have some solid matter to begin with in the inquiry.”

After searching unsuccessfully for a month in an attempt to find the misplaced letters from Lahul, Tharchin finally wrote to the Kulu District Police Superintendent on 22 June 1968 explaining his embarrassment in not finding the letters and unable to remember the name of their sender and only recalling that the letters had come from Kyelang. Whatever the Indian Police uncovered in their investigation of Bernard’s death was probably never conveyed to the elder Bernard or his investigator-representative. And whether or not anyone from the Superintendent’s office was ever deputed to interview Tharchin is not known. Moreover, no other documents bearing on the case could be found among the voluminous Tharchin Papers at Kalimpong. If the letters to Tharchin Babu in 1966 were indeed authorized by Dr. Bernard’s father, the latter, after waiting four years for a reply which never came, could delay no longer in publishing the above summary of events surrounding his son’s untimely death.

Unfortunately, the "Tibetan boy" referred to by Bernard's father was none other than Tharchin's Khampa servant already mentioned. It was alleged that since Bernard wore a beard, somebody had mistook him to be a Moslem during the awful after-partition Hindu-Moslem riots and other disturbances which were then rampant, and had killed him. This about the beard would seem to be the truth of the matter, as is confirmed in what would appear to be the definitive explanation for Bernard's death that was reported by Tharchin's good friend Prince Peter of Greece and Denmark to the Explorers Club of New York to which both Bernard and the Prince belonged as members. His Royal Highness had arrived in Kalimpong in February 1950 to learn the Tibetan language in preparation for leading out Group 2 of the Third Danish Expedition to Central Asia that would continue his anthropological researches in Tibetan polyandry (one of his more important language teachers being Tharchin himself). In his report on Bernard from Kalimpong that year which appeared in the Club's *Journal*, Prince Peter wrote the following:

I have since obtained quite reliable information as to how he died. It was during the communal trouble which followed partition between India and Pakistan. Bernard was on his way to Lahul, a valley lying north of the Punjab to which access is obtained over the Rohtang Pass (14,000 feet), at the head of the Kulu Valley. He spent the night at Koksar, a bungalow to the north of the pass, and the next day, hearing a commotion outside, came out to see what it was. It turned out to be a party of Lahulis (Buddhists) marching down to Kulu to avenge Hindus who had been massacred by Moslems. They were excited and drunk. Bernard had a beard, and they mistook him for a Mustilman. Before he could explain, their leader (whom I know personally [the Prince having made a lengthy visit to the region in 1938]) shot him. Finding out afterwards that he was an American, they buried him stealthily and tried to hush the matter up.⁷⁹

Doubtless these same Lahuli Buddhists were also responsible for the death of Tharchin's Tibetan servant, Senge, whom they killed as well either because he had tried to defend his American master or that he would have been too reliable a witness against the murderers were he allowed to escape the scene of the crime. Eleanore Murray would later report that shortly after the disappearance of Bernard's party, the Indian government had sent in Gurkha troops to investigate the situation but that before they could reach the specific trail used by Bernard, heavy rain storms set in, destroying bridges, causing landslides and washing out the trail; and thus, they had to turn back. For many months afterwards, she added, both the U.S. and Indian governments attempted, unsuccessfully, to discover the bodies and to ferret out "the facts of the tragedy, but nothing more was ever learned."* As was noted a page or two earlier, the Tharchin Papers reveal that the Indian government had conducted another inquiry into the matter in the late 1960s, but again, no new information was apparently gleaned from this much later investigation.

Lowell Thomas, Jr., writing in 1951 about his and his famous newscaster-father's journey through Tibet to Lhasa in the late summer of 1949, tells of their having inquired about Bernard from some of their Tibetan friends at the Tibetan capital. "All of them agreed," Thomas reported, "that Bernard had been killed, that the bodies of his [Moslem] servants were

* Letter to Needham, Calimesa CA, 26 September 1967. Murray Documents.

found, and that although his body was never found, they said he had unquestionably been murdered, too.”

Thomas, Jr. had gone on to add that his and his father’s friends at Lhasa had told them that when the American scholar had been in the Tibetan capital in 1937 they had been “amazed and puzzled at the way Bernard had kept changing his costume ... One day he would wear a Tibetan nobleman’s outfit and the next day he would appear in the robes worn by the abbot of a monastery. But what had puzzled them most was that when he returned to America he called himself ‘a white lama.’” Whereas the Tibetans had been puzzled and amazed at the American, the British were amused. Wrote Hugh Richardson to Tharchin from Lhasa in 1947: “I was amused to hear and to read in your paper that Bernard has turned up again.” Others, like Hisao Kimura, came to view the American visitor to Tibet as having a “questionable reputation” because Bernard had allegedly claimed to have been none other than the reincarnated Padma Sambhava. So, also, two other modern-day writers, James Cooper and Alex McKay, have likewise asserted that the American had made this claim; although McKay has at least commented that Bernard’s “exotic” garments and behavior while at Lhasa “were not unacceptable to the Tibetans.”⁸⁰

Kimura’s allegation needs to be looked at with some skepticism. He asserted that Bernard, in his book on his Tibetan experience, had “claimed to have passed through his complex monastic initiations quickly and effortlessly because he was none other than the incarnation of Padma Sambhava, the Indian mystic who converted Tibet to Buddhism in the 7th century.” The Japanese spy, however, is incorrect here in stating that Bernard had himself made this claim. On the contrary, it was those among the Ganden monastic community, including none other than the Ganden Tri Rimpoche himself, who had done so. On page 2 of the American’s book the reader is told that it was his Lama guides and escorts at Ganden gumpa who first had asserted these things to Bernard, but without identifying by name the “celebrated Saint” of whom they said the American was a reincarnation; and on page 22 the reader is informed that the Tri Rimpoche, the highest-ranking Lama in Tibet at that time, and who had personally been the one to install Bernard as a Tibetan Buddhist monk, had said the same things to the American. Only later in his book, on page 100, while discussing the *Tantras*, does Bernard reveal—and merely by way of parenthesis—whose precise reincarnation he was supposed *by the Tibetans* to be: “With the coming ... to Tibet of Padma Sambhava (whose reincarnation I am believed to be), there developed ...” (emphasis added). Nowhere else in the book does the American make reference to his supposed preexistent identity. Yet Cooper has hyperbolically asserted that Bernard “persistently” referred to himself in his book as being the said reincarnation, further labeling his claim “to be ... the reincarnation of the *founder* of Buddhism in Tibet” as “outrageous.”⁸¹

Eleanore Murray was far from “amused” or “puzzled” by all this. Writing in 1967 to Wesley Needham at Yale, who had been contemplating the publication of a volume on the life and career of Theos Bernard, Ms. Murray had few if any kind words to say of either the Thomases or the British and other critics of Bernard. In a lengthy letter to Needham, written on behalf of the elder Bernard, she presented a far different slant on why Theos had been barred from entering Tibet again in 1947 and how the title of “White Lama” had been

assigned the American Buddhist scholar. She would also take the celebrated news broadcaster to task for airing misinformation about Bernard.

"As to the White Lama business," Ms. Murray began, "that was unfortunate." Explaining that the author of a series of articles on Bernard's Tibet journey appearing in *Family Circle* magazine had "taken it upon himself to give Theos that title," Murray asserted that both she and the elder Bernard were "certain that Theos did not know about it until the publication of the first article." Without a doubt, noted Murray, he thought that the matter would end there and so he "let it go, but such was not the case." She went on to declare:

It certainly is the only thing insincere that his henchmen [enemies?] could tag him with, and they made the most of it. So, it seems that this White Lama business was the only thing they [the British] could balloon into great proportions, particularly since it was in black and white [i.e. it was in print]. It was unfortunate, but certainly not of his choosing. The author probably thought the title fitted him, and in truth it could [have], for he had his initiations. But I do not want to justify it, for I am not qualified.*

"As to Lowell Thomas," Murray continued, "when he returned to America and even before, he was referring in his broadcasts to Theos over the air in derogatory terms, and [these terms] were unfounded, as his diary would prove." She decided to contact Thomas, Sr., and in successfully doing so, she had dinner in New York with the famed newscaster and viewed his films that very night. "We had a very long talk, and he never since then mentioned Theos' name, to my knowledge." It had been "a clear case of jealousy," added Murray, yet "not for himself but for the son. This I could see as we talked."

Finally, as to the prohibition against entering Tibet again ten years after Bernard's initial visit, Ms. Murray had much to say, most if not all of it appearing to have the ring of truth surrounding it. "Theos had many enemies," she began,

because of his good fortune [in 1937]. It was because of lies that he did not get back into Lhasa but settled for his death journey. The Tibetan officials who held Theos in high esteem would no doubt have let him reenter whenever he wished. In fact, [in 1937] he was invited to stay as long as he wished, even to live there, but he was very anxious to get back to America as any of us would so yearn. The doors were left open to him. But the British really fixed him with their stories. I cannot mention names but the diary does. It was not the wish of the British and some other Westerners for this to happen, so the [Tibetan] officials were told that he was selling and making money on his experiences in Tibet and had intended only to use the teaching to make money. It doubtless took much clever talking to convince his hosts that he was insincere, and a money-mad American who used them, but this [convincing] seemed to have been accomplished. No wonder the Tibetans were "puzzled" at the reports they received. Theos dearly loved the Tibetan people and their life.... This information came back to Theos thru the grapevine. †

* In fact, however, Bernard, shortly after his return to India and before his departure back to America, had written two articles about his Tibetan experience for the London *Daily Mail* (and appearing in the 12th and 17th November 1937 issues) in which he had stated, "I am the first white Lama." This is according to James Cooper. "Theos Bernard: Fact and Fiction." *TR* (Apr. 1986): 12, 15 note 7. Nevertheless, if indeed Bernard received his initiations while at Lhasa and Ganden, as seems to have occurred, then in the absence of any information to the contrary, it may very well have been the case that he was in truth the first Caucasian Lama of Tibetan Buddhism and that therefore the title did fit him.

† Excerpted from two of Murray's letters to Needham, Calimesa CA. 18 June 1963 and 26 September 1967.

It must readily be acknowledged that Theos Bernard was certainly a most unusual and oftentimes enigmatic personality. His matrimonial episodes (he was married three times in twelve years) with wealthy New York socialites had earned for him, by virtue of two controversial divorce settlements, sufficient funds with which to carve out for himself a comfortable if not luxurious lifestyle and to assist in funding his two lengthy Asian journeys. Yet, despite the sometimes flamboyant behavior of this unorthodox American, which often resulted in lurid headlines in American newspapers, it can nonetheless be said that the tragic circumstances in far-off Kulu had unquestionably cost the Buddhist world a great friend, admirer and scholar. In the words of Eleanore Murray, "Whatever else Theos Bernard was, he was the most sincere and most likely the most astute scholar of Buddhist philosophy and Tibetan studies in his era. It was the only thing he lived,—and died for."*

Murray Documents. Tharchin has himself corroborated the assertions of Ms. Murray above favorable to Bernard in his interaction with the Tibetan officials at Lhasa. For in a letter he wrote to Sir Charles Bell while still at the Tibetan capital with the Buddhist scholar, Tharchin declared the following: "The American gentleman, Mr. Bernard, is still here. He is a Buddhist and doing lots of ceremonies in all the monasteries. All the Tibetan officials like him very much and also he has become a very good friend to our [British] officials who are in Tibet. I am with him and found that he is only seeking after Tibetan literature and researching Buddhism in Tibet, and he is thinking to write a book on Buddhism. Also, he is taking lots of photos with the permission of the Tibetan officials." Tharchin to Bell, Tsarong House Lhasa, 25 July 1937, Bell Papers.

These statements by Tharchin, along with the foregoing discussion in the Text above, certainly fly in the face of not only the assertions of Kimura but also those rendered up by both historian Alex McKay and writer James Cooper. The historian declared that when Bernard "claimed to be the incarnation of an important religious figure and to have participated in 'secret ceremonies,' British (and Tibetan) support for him vanished." McKay, *Tibet and the British Raj*, 173. Support may have indeed vanished, particularly in the case of the Tibetans, but only—if Ms. Murray is to be believed—after an intensive rumor-mongering campaign against Bernard had been mounted by certain Britishers and other Westerners *vis-à-vis* Tibetan officialdom at Lhasa. And if McKay's end-note observation "Bernard's ... [book] account (1939) is unreliable" is chiefly based on Thomas, Jr.'s reporting (he cites this American's book in his Bibliography) and on Cooper's assessment (whom he cites in the same End-Note 27 on page 261), then it is this present writer's belief that the basis for McKay's observation is faulty. For apart from Thomas, whose reporting has been answered by Murray, Cooper's five-page article of criticism is so full of inconsistencies, *non-sequiturs*, echoes from Thomas (whom he cites), and an unjustified reading into the Bernard account at numerous points, that one is compelled to question the motive for Cooper's abusive attack on Bernard. See Cooper, "Theos Bernard: Fact and Fiction," *TR* (Apr. 1986).

* The Murray quote is from her letter to Needham, 18 June 1963, Murray Documents. Two examples of newspaper article headlines in 1946 that were far from flattering to either Bernard or his spouse, clippings of which are among the Murray Documents, were: "Mme. Walska Divorces Sixth Mate, Who Must Quit 'Penthouse of the Gods'"; and, "The Handsome Young Yogi Is Off to Tibet: Ganna Walska's Divorce Settlement Finances Trip for Ex-Husband."

A further indication of Bernard's deeper scholarship in Tibetan studies than has heretofore been noted in the discussion on his work can be had by consulting a three-page typewritten precis by Eleanore Murray entitled, "Concerning Dr. Theos Bernard's Work in the Tibetan Field" (1967), a part of the Murray Documents. Ms. Murray's paper on Bernard's Tibetan scholarship has revealed that before his untimely death in 1947 he had already labored several years on a biography of Padma Sambhava. This involved the translation by him of a number of Sambhava's manuscripts, which had led him to seek out therein—as a way of completing his philosophical training—"the U-me doctrine (a work on emptiness, more detailed and further explained than that given in the Prajna Paramita) ..." Bernard had also "amassed a tremendous Tibetan vocabulary, cross-indexed in detail, and which included the rare medical nomenclature." Furthermore, "a diligent project of his was the indexing of the Kangyur and Tengyur," on which he had labored during the last ten years of his life. With respect to the American scholar's translation of important Buddhist works, "the *Tendrel* was his best endeavor," with Bernard and his Lhasan Geshe having translated numerous manuscripts on this subject. He had even translated



This chapter would not be complete without relating one other aspect in the life of Gergan Tharchin which occurred during this most eventful year of 1937. For upon returning to Kalimpong in late November from his lengthy journey to Tibet with Bernard,⁸² Tharchin was subsequently visited by two previously very influential men from Tibet who now sought temporary asylum with the Tibetan newspaper publisher. Both of them were important enough for their names to have been listed in *Who's Who in Tibet* that was published in Calcutta by the (British) Government of India Press in 1938, and marked *Confidential* on both the casebound cover and title page. The eighty-page volume, as was made clear on both the cover and title pages, had been “corrected to the Autumn of 1937, with a few subsequent additions up to February 1938,” and had been prepared by the Political Officer for Sikkim (Basil J. Gould) and submitted to His Majesty’s Government of India Political Committee for publication on 14 June 1938 with only 100 copies to be printed.

One such copy fell into the hands of Gergan Tharchin, to whom—as will shortly be learned—the Political Officer was now in debt for the very latest information about the two men in question which he had been able to add at the last minute for inclusion in his confidential publication. (As a matter of fact, research has revealed that Tharchin had been the source as well for some of the personal data in this *Who's Who* relating to a number of other Tibetan personalities included in its pages; and thus this serves as a further illustration of Tharchin’s ongoing contribution to the British Raj in gathering and reporting intelligence data dealing with Tibet and Tibetans.)

Now over the years the meticulous-minded newspaper editor had made additional handwritten inked entries and notations onto the pages of his copy of the confidential volume. Indeed, it is because of certain of these notations, together with one or two of Tharchin’s letters to Sir Charles Bell, that it is known that the two Tibetan VIPs under discussion had visited and even stayed for some little while with the Kalimpong publisher and his family. These individuals had been so prominent and influential, in fact, that in the *Who's Who* they had not one but two stars printed next to their names to indicate, as the introduction to the volume stipulated, “the relative importance of the more prominent persons” listed in the book—with “three stars indicating the most important.” Before falling from political power, one of these two visitors would have had three stars affixed.

Now one of these two Tibetans who knocked at Tharchin’s door was none other than Changlo Chen Gung (or Kung) Kusho (personal name: Sonam Gyalpo) who at the time was nearly forty years old. It will be recalled that he had been one of the four higher Tibetan officials sent from Lhasa to Gyantse for military training with the British at the time when

a small medical work on the treatment of horses, information from which “could be transferred to interpret” the human animal’s “make-up physically.” Bernard also labored “intensively on Nyaya translations,” considered a very significant part of any Lama’s curriculum. Finally, writes Murray, the American had collected sufficient material for a grammar “that would have probably been the best yet written in the English language”; this material, however, had been lost at the time when Bernard was killed in Indo-Tibet while searching for additional Buddhist manuscripts.

Tharchin had been Headmaster of a school established by him there. It will also be recalled that a close friendship had developed between these four and the Headmaster: especially after they approached Tharchin to instruct them in Hindi, which he faithfully did during the nearly two years they were together at Gyantse. In exchange, Tharchin was able to increase his knowledge of Tibetan language and literature at the feet of Changlo Chen, who would go on to become a highly respected scholar in that field. As was learned earlier, this highly "refined literary man" had previously held the rank of Gung or Duke. But in 1925 he had been stripped of this rank when he and other officials (among whom were Tharchin's very close friends Tsarong Shape and Doring Thaiji) had been degraded by reason of an alleged conspiracy by the Army to gain political power, an allegation that at the time was never definitely proven (but which since then, as discussed earlier in the present and previous chapters, has fairly well been documented as having occurred); as a consequence, this spelled the end of the hereditary dukedom of the family of Changlo Chen. Some years later (1931-2) Changlo Chen was reinstated in Government service, appointed a Depon or Commander, and dispatched to Kham on military assignment in eastern Tibet, but brought back a year later to Lhasa where he was appointed an Assistant in the important Drapchi Lekhung Department at the Tibetan capital.*⁸³

Shortly following the death of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in December 1933, Gung Kusho was banished because of his having been a member of the inner circle of dedicated supporters of the reform party of Lungshar, he having in fact become this party's Secretary and the one who, having literary skills superior to the others, had drafted the document containing the party's reform proposal, or, as one of his later acquaintances at Kalimpong, the Ladakhi Moslem trader Abdul Wahid Radhu, has described it, "had edited most of the texts defining their ideas and political objectives."^{83a} (Lungshar, having been influential with the Dalai Lama, had in 1934 been arrested on the well-grounded charge of having conspired to overthrow the then existing Government at Lhasa in order to establish a more progressive government and seize power for himself.)⁸⁴ As is well known, Lungshar, as the primary guilty person, was condemned to have his eyes torn out from their sockets and to be imprisoned for life. But Radhu, who was to meet him at Lhasa in his blinded state, has reported that several years later Lungshar was allowed to leave prison and dwell for the rest of his days in a cabin situated within a Lhasa park that served as a sanctuary for old animals which the Buddhists had not wished to kill. And as for Changlo Chen, writes Radhu, who learned of these events from Gung Kusho himself later in Kalimpong, the Kashag's sentence upon this participant in the Lungshar affair had called for both hands to be cut off. Mercifully, reports Radhu, "he had the good fortune of escaping this terrible punishment" by having this sentence

* At about this same time he was even serving as the Lhasan guide to the British Political Officer, Frederick Williamson, and his wife Margaret, who were on a diplomatic mission to the Tibetan capital for two months during the summer and early fall of 1933. Mrs. Williamson writes further about Changlo Chen Kusho in her delightful memoirs of the period as a Political Officer's wife. She records the fact that while at Lhasa they had learned that "lately" Gung Kusho had been "appointed one of the Dalai Lama's *garpons* or viceroys in western Tibet, though apparently he had no intention of exchanging the sophistication of life in the capital for bleak exile in the wastes of Ngari Khorsum and had dispatched a proxy to discharge his duties there." *Memoirs of a Political Officer's Wife in Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan*, 91.

“commuted to exile.”^{84a} The place of Gung Kusho’s banishment was to Chaknak Monastery in far-off Kongpo Province, located about a week’s journey east southeast of Lhasa.

The second of these two men was none other than the monk official, Kuchar* Thupten Kunphela, the latter-day favorite of the Dalai Lama whom Tharchin had first met at Lhasa in the audience chamber with His Holiness back in 1927. Born in the area of Nyemo southwest of Lhasa in about 1905, this young monk of humble origin, “who possessed one of the finest brains in Tibet ... [and] who by sheer ability and personality made himself indispensable,” turned out to be one of the most fascinating and powerful yet tragic figures ever to arise on the political landscape of Tibet during and after the Dalai Lama XIII’s reign, and one whom Tharchin not only came to know most intimately but to respect very highly. Described by one early American visitor to Lhasa as “a handsome, bright young man of peasant origin,” Kunphela “had pushed himself up to a position of trust and honor, but not without stirring up a bit of resentment and animosity, which his personal arrogance helped along.” In the opinion of the Sikkim Political Officer who had prepared the *Who’s Who in Tibet* volume, Kunphela was not only a favorite, but the “supreme favorite,” of the late Grand Lama of Tibet, and who had been “consulted” by His Holiness “in all matters private and official.”

Indeed, Kunphela had grown much closer to the Dalai Lama than was the case with most attendants to His Holiness. The British Political Officer F. W. Williamson has described this close relationship in an account he sent to the Indian government of an official reception he attended in 1933: “The Dalai Lama was attended with tea on the dais by Kusho Kunphela, a tall rather good-looking young man of 28. He is, next to the Dalai Lama, undoubtedly the most powerful person in Tibet. He holds no official rank, but is always in personal attendance on the Dalai Lama who is very fond of him and treats him like a son. He has immense influence over the Dalai Lama. ... He is extremely clever and intelligent and his talents would bring him to the fore anywhere.” And in the same dispatch to India describing his 1933 Mission to Lhasa, Williamson added that on the occasion of showing a motion picture to the Dalai Lama, the Britisher again observed that the Dalai Lama’s “fondness for Kunphela was obvious.” Rumors had it that the relationship between these two men was more than one of father to son. “Because of his good looks and his youth,” writes Hisao Kimura, “it was rumored that there was something unseemly in Kunphela’s relations with the Dalai Lama, and that political power had been willed to him as a result. To anyone who knew of the wisdom of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama such a tale was ludicrous, but power-mongers in Lhasa found it useful.”^{†85}

Williamson’s wife Margaret, in her highly informative and delightfully composed memoirs, gave an extensive record of the impressions which both she and her husband (“Derrick”) came to possess about Kunphela as a result of their frequent interaction with him during the summer of 1933 at the Tibetan capital. They found him to be at once arrogant, handsome, charming, well-mannered and brilliant:

Of the other Tibetans whom we got to know, Derrick and I were most impressed by Kunphela.

* Kuchar: from Tibetan, *sku*—Dalai Lama, and *bcar*—one who goes and stays with; that is to say, someone who is always in the presence of the Dalai Lama; thus signifying: a most intimate Private Secretary to His Holiness. See Surkhang Wangchen Gelek, “The Thirteenth Dalai Lama,” *TJ* (Winter 1982): 16.

† Kimura, *Japanese Agent in Tibet*, 151. Rumors concerning the homosexual proclivities and the licentious and lavish lifestyle of another of the Dalai Lama’s younger favorites had far more basis in truth and reality. The

His Holiness was very fond of him and showered him with wealth and favors. As a consequence Kunphela had been able to acquire for himself a fine house in Lhasa and to fill it with many rare and beautiful objects. He also had the use of His Holiness's second Baby Austin car, TIBET No. 2, which was painted blue.

Aware of the high favor in which he stood, Kunphela could be arrogant. His manners were faultless, however, and whenever we visited him he was invariably an impeccable and delightful host. He was also very handsome, and I said to Derrick that it was a very good thing that he was a monk or else the ladies of Lhasa would be breaking their hearts over him. Despite his religious vocation, Kunphela had a good grasp of worldly matters and had accomplished quite remarkable things out at Drapchi, where he was chief director of the new installations.... There, about three miles outside the holy city, Kunphela's forward-looking vision, energy and organizing genius were on full display [for us to see after] paying two visits to this factory in 1933.... He spent much time with Derrick discussing business matters, including the supply of munitions.

As we both got to know and like Kunphela more and more, the fact that he had many powerful enemies saddened us. Being a progressive force in the country—and a very effective one—he had unavoidably attracted the enmity of many of the conservatives, notably the malevolent Lungshar Tsipon.

But it is Tharchin's distinguished friend, Sir Charles Bell, who has provided the fullest and most vivid sketch of this young Tibetan attendant of His Holiness. In his extensive biography of the Great Thirteenth published in 1946, Sir Charles writes as follows (but interspersed with related quotes from other sources):

A young favorite of the Dalai Lama, a lad of singular personal charm, was coming into influence and power as the years passed. When he was initiated as a monk, the Dalai Lama himself gave him his religious name, Tup-ten Kun-pel, which means "Doctrines of Buddha, All, Increase." That is to say, "He who spreads the doctrines of Buddha in all directions." For general use his name was Kun-pel La ... By 1930 he had become, after the Dalai Lama, the most powerful man in Tibet. [In her autobiography, R. D. Taring (Mary La) has written that Kun-pel La had become so influential by 1930 that "even if he said 'East is West,' everybody had to say 'Yes' because the Dalai Lama trusted him so much."] He had the charge over the Precious Sovereign's property, and had himself accumulated considerable wealth. His power was on both the civil and the military side. All orders of the Dalai Lama were carried out through him; he knew every action that the Inmost One took....

After the Dalai Lama's departure ..., Kun-pel La exercised power for a brief period, but was then arrested and imprisoned. He was tried by the now powerful Parliament. The main charge against him was that he had failed to report the illness of the Precious Protector to the Cabinet, and would not let the Members of the Cabinet see His Holiness. His defense was that the Precious Protector had told him to act as he did. [Another version, reported by the American, C. S. Cutting, has it that upon being arrested Kun-pel La was charged with poisoning his late master. "To this he had a ready and convincing reply: 'Poison His Holiness? I had everything to lose by his death.'"]

But he had many enemies; his position as the Dalai Lama's chief favorite rendered that

subject of these more credible tales was none other than the abbot of Reting Gompa, the incarnate Lama, Reting Rimpoché, who at a remarkably young age would soon be thrust into the highest position of power and influence in Tibet upon the untimely death of the Great Thirteenth. For a discussion about this aspect of Regent Reting's life, as well as a frank discussion about the prevalence of homosexuality in pre-1950 Tibet among the monastic community in general, see the note indicated at this point in the End-Notes for the present chapter.

inevitable. He was found guilty; the wealth which he had amassed during his years of power was confiscated; and he himself was banished to a monastery [the Chaknak] in the province of Kongpo [in January 1934] ...

Then a surprising change occurred. Being endowed with a disposition of singular charm and other attractive qualities, he was so greatly liked by the monks that in the course of time they made him, their prisoner, the head of the monastery. This enabled him to escape through Bhutan to British India and ... [on to] Kalimpong.

But there was another Tibetan who joined Kunphela in his escape from the Kongpo monastery of Chaknak. This was, of course, Changlo Chen Gung Kusho. These two had well known each other back in Lhasa before their mutual banishment to Kongpo, inasmuch as Gung Kusho had worked directly under Kunphela as one of the latter's Assistants in the Drapchi Lekhung. According to the entry for Changlo Chen in *Who's Who in Tibet*, "he fled in the autumn of 1937 to India via Tawang and Bhutan in company with Kun-pel La" to Kalimpong. The entry for Kunphela reads similarly: "In autumn 1937 he ran away ..., entered Bhutan via Tawang, and proceeded to Kalimpong ..."

Now upon their arrival at the hill station on Sunday the 19th of December at about 10 a.m., these two escapees went *immediately* to Tharchin. This is intimated in the latter's inked notation added as a continuation of Kunphela's entry in the *Who's Who* volume. It is written in the third person in the Kalimpong editor's handwriting, and as though he were merely updating the Kunphela entry more completely for the sake of any future reader of the volume. The notation, though erring with respect to the month, reads: "Nov. 1937 he arrived with Chang Chand Kung Kusho [i.e., Changlo Chen] and [they] put up with [i.e., lodged with] G. Tharchin the Editor Tibetan Newspaper." And in a letter marked "Private and Confidential" which Tharchin soon after their arrival wrote to Sir Charles Bell, the Kalimpongian described in more detail their coming, thus:

Kuchar Kunphela, the very favorite of the late Dalai Lama, and Changlo Chen Kung Kusho came in a car from Siliguri direct to my place and asked me to let them stay with me and I did so.* They ran away from Kongpo via Bhutan; they first went to Calcutta and then came to Kalimpong. They said that they were four months on their way to here but that they had stayed one month and a week at Tashigang in eastern Bhutan, the Dzungpon [Governor] of that place [being] known to Kuchar Kunphela and was very good to them.

One can speculate, with a great deal of confidence of being correct, as to why these two Tibetans found their way to *Tharchin's* doorstep. Doubtless they were aware of his famous newspaper, regularly subscribed to by His Holiness and by other high officials at Lhasa (including perhaps even these two), and which over the years had in its pages continually shown great favor and respect towards the Dalai Lama and an editorial stance supportive of

* Interestingly, the biographical account of Kunphela by his later Lhasa wife, Lhazom Tseten Dolkhar (he would give up his monkhood vows in 1954 and marry her), an account which she writes was "based on what my husband told me and what I've heard from others," is incorrect on two counts in stating that her husband and Changlo Chen, "in 1936, ... reached India through Bhutan [where] at first they stayed at the Radreng [Reting] guest house in Kalimpong." The Text of the present narrative above belies her account with respect to both the year of their arrival in Kalimpong and where they first stayed. See Dolkhar, "Kuchar Thupten Kunphela," in Appendices of K.Dhondup, *The Water-Bird and Other Years*, 214.

the latter's progressive measures then being implemented for the development of Tibet. Moreover, Kunphela must have recalled the Kalimpong publisher's unusually lengthy audience with His Holiness a decade earlier when the Dalai Lama's favorite had first met the founder of the *Tibet Mirror*. Furthermore, as Private Secretary to His Holiness, he must have personally handled the Grand Lama's telegrams, letters and contributions in support of the *Mirror* which His Holiness not infrequently sent to the newspaper publisher during the last years of his life. Then, too, Gung Kusho himself could not have forgotten his very close association and friendship with Tharchin at both Gyantse and Lhasa and in India. Indeed, Tharchin made a point of informing Sir Charles of his prior association with these two men: "Chansen Kunphela was known to me in 1927 when I paid my respects to the Dalai Lama, and Changlo Chen Kung was first known to me in 1922 when he came down to get army training at Gyantse where I taught him Hindustani, and a little English too; he can speak the first very well, and speak a little English also. I came to know all about his nature."

All these factors, therefore, must have suggested themselves to Kunphela and Changlo Chen as compelling reasons, once they had decided to escape, for fleeing to the particular town of Kalimpong above all others in India. And possibly not knowing a single Tibetan soul there whom they could trust except Gergan Tharchin himself, Kunphela and his friend would have quite naturally sought him out for temporary asylum until they could get a better handle on their lives which had been so dramatically altered so quickly for the worse.

The first issue confronting these two exiles was the matter of a more permanent arrangement for lodging. Temporarily, though, they were glad to stay with Tharchin. "I have very small rooms to put them up in," wrote their concerned Kalimpong host to Bell in his letter he had typed up so late in the evening of Christmas Day, "but they were very happy with me" and stayed in the Tharchin home from the 19th through the 23rd of December; but on Christmas Eve, Tharchin added, "I had to arrange some other place for them, as many poor-class Tibetan Christians will be coming to me [for the holidays] and we will have meetings that may [include] Communion for them." So the two exiles, Tharchin continued, indicated "that they want to come back to my place as soon as our Xmas and New Year is over." Or, he concluded, "I will try to get a small nice house for them on hire." In the end, this is what happened, the two finding lodgings elsewhere in the hill town, after a further stay with the Tharchins was concluded. This other lodging place, where they would remain about a year till a more permanent place was arranged for, was the "Radreng [Reting] Guest House" that was most likely connected with the Tibetan Regent Reting's Trading Company in Kalimpong and where Kunphela would acquire gainful employment "helping the Radreng traders and side by side did some petty business to maintain his living."^{85a}

But the issue which was uppermost in their minds was to somehow obtain permission to return to their homeland as quickly as possible and resume a normal life. This, however, was easier said than done. According to a recent study by one Western historian, Melvyn Goldstein, both the Kuchar and Gung Kusho had become embittered during their exile years at Kongpo as they witnessed how many other exiled and debarred political figures were being permitted to rejoin the Tibetan government, while they themselves were prevented from even returning to Lhasa simply to live. At the time of their flight to India, Changlo Chen, poet that he was, penned a letter to a Lhasan friend which, asserts Goldstein, "became a classic in Tibetan

literature.” It was even circulated among certain lay officials and memorized by them, one of whom, in an interview with Goldstein long afterwards, could still recall part of it for him from memory, as follows:

The false explanation in which Sherkarlingba Depon is [said] to be the father of young Lhalu who is Lungshar’s child has been accepted, but our request, which was only to be allowed to return to our homeland, [has not], because a few of the principal lamas and lords cannot judge fairly [literally, not treat equally happiness and sadness, higher and lower]. [Thus] we have no choice but to secretly go for a while to sightsee and seek refuge in the capital of England though we are faultless. Because of this please do not have any regrets.

Their place of settlement turned out not to be London, but Kalimpong—and for a *very* long time at that. Here is what happened, as described further to Sir Charles in thorough detail by Tharchin Babu who had waited upon Kunphela and Changlo Chen hand and foot during those initial hectic days of theirs in Kalimpong. Much of the letter is worth quoting not only because of its informative value with respect to these former high officials in the Tibetan government, but perhaps even more so because of what it reveals of that aspect of Gergan Tharchin’s career—as a most willing and loyal intelligence agent for the British Raj in relation to his ethnic homeland of Tibet—which during the Babu’s entire life had for the most part remained a closely guarded secret from even the closest and most intimate of his associates, relatives and friends. Here, then, is what he conveyed to Bell in an exhaustive report on his two visitors:

They say that they did not do anything against the Tibetan government. You know, of course, that Kunphela was exiled just a few weeks or a month after the death of the Dalai Lama. Changlo Chen Kung was among the Lungshar party and wrote the plot [Tharchin really meant to say “plan” here, though it is true that this party’s opponents had viewed it as indeed a plot; see below] or the petition letter to the Kashag about their reform schemes.... Changlo Chen Kung says that there were 108 persons in this party and they asked the Kashag Five “Dontshen” about reforming Tibet, and that [this] application [petition] was offered to the Kashag. There was nothing against the Government, [said Changlo Chen,] they only wanted to change some of the governing methods. But the Kashag blamed [accused] them that they had [in mind] some private plot [in submitting] the application which they offered. But he says there was none. And so he also was exiled.

Now they are thinking to move to [i.e., petition] the Tibetan government and request them to reconsider their case and allow them to return to Tibet. Kuchar says that the Tibetan government has confiscated about Rs. 250,000/- worth of his properties and gold and silver. He is thinking to [petition], and thinks the Tibetan government might consider to give him back his property. He says that the judgment of the Tsongdu [National Assembly] was not just, only [that] some of his enemies had done [this] and the chief among them was Lungshar. He [Kuchar] was blamed that he had not informed [the Kashag] that His Holiness was seriously ill. But Kuchar says that he was ordered by the Dalai Lama not to inform [anyone] and also that He was not so seriously ill. Kuchar had many things to prove and say [before the Tsongdu] but he could not do so as he was not given the chance.

These two officers are thinking that they might get help from our Government about this matter. I advised them to see the Political Officer in Sikkim, and they agreed. On the day before yesterday they went to see Mr. [later Sir] Basil Gould and I also accompanied them, and at 3:30 p.m. we saw Mr. Gould [at the British Residency, Gangtok], and they paid their respects to him.

They did not openly request Mr. Gould, they only said that at Kongpo their health was not so good; so they came away secretly to India, and would like to go back to Tibet if they can do so. Mr. Gould asked them whether they had made any application [to the Tibetan government] about their going back to Tibet, but they said they have not done so. Mr. Gould said that it is a matter of internal affairs and he may not be able to do anything. Anyhow, he is going to inform the Kashag through Rai Bahadur [Rai Bahadur Norbu Dhondup] that they were here and came to see him. They had a nice time with Mr. Gould and came back to Kalimpong yesterday [24th December].

While still at Gangtok, Tharchin himself had a private conversation with the Political Officer. In the same letter to Bell, this quasi-intelligence agent for the British confided as follows:

I told Mr. Gould all about their thought which I had gathered, since they were quite frank with me, and they trust me. They are thinking that the Political Officer might help and advise the Tibetan government to reconsider their case so that they might go back to Tibet in safety, but also that they want safety once they have returned to Tibet. If our Government does not take any action to help them, then they are thinking to go to China.

At this point in his narration to the former Political Officer, Tharchin was moved to mention the Chinese official, Mr. Chang. He it was who had been sent as envoy to Lhasa from Peking in early 1934 to convey that Government's condolence to the Tibetan government over the death of the Great Thirteenth but who then, together with his official party, had stayed on indefinitely at the Tibetan capital—though unwanted by most of the Tibetan officialdom there. Chang and his party had gradually insinuated themselves into Tibetan affairs and ultimately created, as it were, a quasi-Chinese Mission in Lhasa that in time, incidentally, paved the way for the British to do the same. Tharchin now continued his account of his private talk with Basil Gould:

... the Chinese officer, Mr. Chang, who was in Lhasa for nearly four years, is also here at Kalimpong, [having] arrived two days before these two, that is, on the 17th of December. He is on his way back to China and is trying his best to take these two to China and has said that now that the Chinese government is removed to Szechuan [as a consequence of the Japanese invasion of Nationalist China which began in July], they are going to take much more interest in Tibet. He is also promising to give [to the two Tibetan exiles] all their expenses needed for going to China; and he will also arrange with the Chinese government to give them regular pay. But [, continued Tharchin to Gould,] I understand their thoughts and came to know that if they get help from our Government, they are not keen to go to China. But at the same time they are not going to request [our Government] to do so, but it seemed [to the two exiles] that our Government might advise and say something to help them to return to Tibet and get safety.

What had led the Kuchar and Changlo Chen to intimate to Tharchin why they believed the British Government of India might be inclined to do and say something to the Tibetan government on their behalf was the precedent they were well aware of and which they now cited of the British having performed a similar service during the recent reign of Dalai Lama the Thirteenth:

They said that though [their situation] is indeed an internal matter, yet once while the Dalai Lama still was [alive], through the Political Officer the Tibetan government was requested to release or let go the Gung and Yabshi of Trashilhunpo, and that was granted. So, they are thinking that they may also [receive] the same [treatment].

But, then, speaking directly to Sir Charles, Tharchin wrote of his concern for Tibet were these two former high officials of Tibet to go to China, especially in the case of the Kuchar. The loyal Indo-Tibetan informant explained his fears in a roundabout fashion as follows:

I think if he goes to another country such as to China it may be harmful for Tibet. Yesterday when we returned from Gangtok I advised Kuchar to write to you all about his troubles. He said that this is [the] best advice [and] that he will write, but he asks me to send a cable to you and state that he with Kung Kusho arrived here safely from Kongpo and to ask for a reply cable from you about your health. But yesterday was late and today is Xmas Day and tomorrow is Sunday; so I advised to cable on Monday, which we will do. I think if you advise, he may come to you, inasmuch as I believe I have read his thought carefully. Meanwhile Mr. Chang is trying his best to take them to China but I am advising them not to do so. At the same time I have been asked by Mr. Gould to let him know all about their movements, and I will do so.

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Finally, turning once again to the present situation of the two debarred officials, Tharchin wrote:

If he [Kunphela] is not able to return to Tibet soon, then until such time as he can, he or both of them may perhaps be maintained in India and given a house and support for their living. This is of course only my own humble opinion.... These two officers have one man with them who is the husband of Kuchar Kunphela's sister; and they have three more servants at Tashigang in Bhutan. If they [the two officers] settle something about their movements, they want to call them here.... It seems that they have some money but not much.

Indeed, as Sir Charles later was wont to describe this new situation in India for Kunphela in particular: "he who had gained and lost [a small fortune], and had exercised extensive powers over Tibet, was reduced to working in Kalimpong as the manager of a warehouse where

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But besides the gaining of inside information from these exiles, the Chinese government at this time sought, through Chang, to make use of them for another more nefarious purpose. Hugh Richardson has pointed out what China's grand policy towards Tibet was at this time. Speaking of Nationalist China's aim of establishing control over Tibet, Richardson enumerated a number of propaganda methods by which "to effect a radical change in the Tibetan attitude" in the direction of assenting to the false notion that Tibet was a part of China. Such "practical activities" towards this end, he wrote, were the following: "the education of border Tibetans and their employment as Chinese officials; teaching Chinese Buddhists Tibetan with the view to using them as missionaries in Tibet: *the use of discontented and exiled Tibetans as propaganda agents*; presents to Tibetan monasteries and officials, and, possibly, attempts to buy over some officials; the establishment of a school and a wireless transmitter at Lhasa." Richardson, *Tibetan Precis*, 83 (emphasis added). What Chang, the returning Chinese Nationalist "condolence envoy," was attempting to achieve in Kalimpong with Tharchin's two exiled and discontented Tibetan friends constituted a prime example of what Richardson had in mind in citing here what is in italics.

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Tibetan wool was stored on its way to India.” Even a petition finally submitted by the two ex-officials, who were assisted in its English drafting by the ever-helpful Tharchin, bore no positive result. This had been done some eight months into their stay at Kalimpong, a good rough translation of which was found among the Tharchin Papers.* Having been drafted first in Tibetan, and most likely by Changlo Chen, it was then translated by Tharchin into English, for submission—once it was polished up—to Political Officer Gould, and read as follows:

Rough Translation

I Thubten Kunphel and son of Chang Chen jointly beg to request the following for your consideration:

Our Savior, the incomparable kindly His Holiness the Dalai Lama left us in the year of the Water-Bird (1933).

For some reason, as soon as His death took place, some of His favorite servants who have served Him faithfully until His end were exiled; also, some of the monk and lay officials were also exiled.

The climate of the place to where we were sent was not suitable for our health; we tried our best to bear up under it for many years, but at last we were unable to bear it any longer, and because there was no means by which we would be able to appeal to our Government to reconsider our case and find out the truth, we two came out risking our lives in a far and troublesome journey to your land India, about which our Savior the Dalai Lama had left words of advice in His small booklet to all the [Tibetan] officials advising them to keep friendship with the British government. And accordingly we hope our Government has been keeping friendship with the British government as brothers in one family.

Therefore we dare to pray to your kind Government to help make the crooked balance straight by advising our Government to allow all the exiled persons to return to their own place and to return all their properties which the Government had confiscated, in just the same manner as the Government has been returning the same to others. Also, please help us that we all may go back to Lhasa without any trouble and with safety for the future. If your Government think that you can so advise our Tibetan government on our behalf, please kindly do so as soon as possible, inasmuch as we have been here in India since eight months ago and now we are unable to keep up with our expenses involving servants for any longer period. If your Government think that you are unable to talk with our Government, then please let us know as soon as possible. For which kind acts we shall never forget.

This document had been prepared in the late summer of 1938. Either the Government of India ultimately refused to appeal to the Tibetan government to reconsider their case, grounding its refusal on the fundamental assumption that this was an internal matter beyond the scope of its authority to involve itself in, or else, having carried through with the appeal, the Tibetan government declined to respond in the affirmative. Most likely what happened was that the British government did probably send some kind of report (if not the petition itself) to Lhasa indicating the presence of these two Tibetans at Kalimpong and their desire to return home, and *in safety*, as well as wishing an assurance of a resumption of rights to their properties. For in the biographical account of Kunphela's life already referenced and which was set down by the wife of his latter years, it is reported that “after about a year”

* Actually, there were at least two such rough English drafts of the petition extant among the ThPaK, the text of one, that given above, constituting what was probably the second of these two drafts, since its English is better and text more complete.

following the arrival in Kalimpong of these two men the Tibetan government had ordered the Drochi or Governor of Dromo (the Chumbi area of south central Tibet immediately adjacent to India) to request the British Indian government “to arrest and repatriate Kunphela to Tibet as he was a political culprit”; meaning, of course, that he would become a political prisoner of Tibet’s central government. At this time the Drochi was Pomda Yarphel (Yangpel Pangdatsang), possibly the wealthiest man in all of Tibet and quite an influential figure. A most difficult moment, however, had now confronted the Drochi. Here is how this episode in Kunphela’s life was finally resolved, as recorded by his wife:

He [Pomda Yarphel] knew that if he did not inform the British government, the Tibetan government will turn against him. But as Kunphela was a popular man, his repatriation to Tibet may turn many well-placed supporters of Kunphela against him. Moreover, he had maintained good relationship with Kunphela when he was the Kuchar and he did not now dare to cause such trouble against him. Therefore, Pomda Yarphel, before informing the British, informed Kunphela of the instruction from Lhasa. Together they discussed a way to escape this instruction so that both of them will remain unharmed by it. It was then decided that Pomda Yarphel will notify the British officials and as soon as the talk of repatriation began, Kunphela will take the help of the international law that any refugee who does not go against the penal code of the host country cannot be repatriated arbitrarily and if necessary Kunphela will find an advocate to fight the case in British court and Pomda Yarphel will meet the expenses of the legal battle. They did accordingly and Kunphela won the case and was able to stay in India for the time being.^{85b}

And thus Kunphela and for that matter Changlo Chen would remain in India for some years to come, until, in the case of the Kuchar, he was deported to China in 1946 by the British Government of India for clandestine political activities that were considered inimical to political stability in both Tibet and India. And apparently not long afterwards Changlo Chen would likewise end up in China. There at the Nationalist Chinese capital of Nanking he would be reconnected with Kunphela for a time, though it appears that Gung Kusho would later return once again to Kalimpong before being allowed to make his way back to his homeland (see the present narrative’s final volume, Chapter 24, where an attempt is made to sort out more definitively the subsequent events in Changlo Chen’s life).

Meanwhile, Kunphela was experiencing a rough time health-wise in Tharchin’s hill station, as might be expected for someone who had been accustomed most of his life to the rarefied climate and unique diet that was part and parcel of a Tibetan’s existence living on the high Lhasan plateau. In a subsequent letter to Sir Charles some three months following his exhaustive report of the Kuchar’s arrival, Tharchin was compelled to write that the reason Kunphela had not answered Bell’s letter to the Kuchar was because the latter had lately come down with a serious case of dysentery that had left him very sick. Now, though, he was getting better and would be writing Bell sometime very soon.

That Tharchin, by the end of 1937, had come to know much more intimately about the late Dalai Lama’s Private Secretary is confirmed by what the Kalimpong publisher further communicated in the lengthy letter of Christmas Day sent to his friend Bell and quoted from extensively earlier. This former Political Officer for Tibet and Sikkim tells in his biography of the Great Thirteenth of having received the letter from Tharchin and quoting a passage from it. Wrote Bell:

Four years after the Dalai's death, the Rev. Tharchin, of the Church of Scotland, ... wrote to me from Kalimpong, where he had made friends with Kun-pel La.... He wrote, "I came to know all about the Kuchar Kun-pel La and he is really a wonderful man I think he had the most experience of the late Dalai Lama, and [is] a clever man. His age is thirty-three. He says that the Dalai Lama was a very very [good] friend of yours and always talked about you. He knows all about the private affairs of the Dalai Lama, and all the confidences.... During Dalai Lama's time he was called, 'The Keys of the Dalai Lama,' and it was true."

There shall be occasion in a subsequent chapter of the present narrative to learn more about the activities of Kunphela in Kalimpong and of his further relationship with Changle Chen Gung Kusho and also with the famed Pangdatsang brothers from Kham. Suffice it to note here, however, that he finally was permitted to return to Lhasa from China in late 1948 where there was bestowed upon him immediately two very tangible signs of his social, if not political, rehabilitation: he was provided with a house and an annual salary by the Government! The reason for this permission and highly favorable turnaround in treatment is explained in some detail by Goldstein in his historical study of modern Tibet. In a nutshell, it was because Kunphela had been waiting for an opportunity, and found it, to take revenge against Reting Rimpoche, whose Reting Monastery Labrang Trading Company in Kalimpong, for whom Kunphela had worked while there managing the wool godown mentioned by Bell, had refused to reimburse him when a venture which Kunphela had invested in at Bombay on behalf of the Company failed and lost money. The opportunity to wreak vengeance for this refusal presented itself to him in China during the spring of 1947 when he became privy to some very confidential information about the clandestine attempt by the ex-Regent Reting to retake power at Lhasa with the help of the Chinese. Kunphela, now living in Nanking, upon gaining the secret information, went immediately to the Tibetan government's representative at the Chinese capital, from where it was communicated in code to the Lhasan Kashag. As a consequence, the Reting conspiracy to overthrow the Taktra Regency was exposed, Reting Rimpoche was arrested and imprisoned, and shortly afterwards he died under mysterious circumstances.⁸⁶

Apparently, to show its appreciation to Kunphela for his most timely intelligence, he was allowed to return to the Tibetan capital, but not before he had opportunity once again to visit with his Kalimpong host of yesteryear, Tharchin Babu. For the Kuchar would return to his homeland from China not by way of the long, arduous and dangerous overland caravan trail but by way of the now familiar route via Calcutta, Siliguri and Kalimpong. Alerted to Kunphela's itinerary, Tharchin had tried to contact him by letter at Calcutta, but by the time his intermediary, Hisao Kimura, had received the letter for delivery personally to the Kuchar (whom the Japanese had come to know several years earlier in Kalimpong), Kunphela had already left for the hill station on the 27th of August 1948.

Arriving in Kalimpong a few days later, the former favorite of the late Dalai Lama would now celebrate his anticipated return to Tibet with his older friend and confidant, the Babu, who would soon see him off after word had come from Tharchin's very dear friend, the Inspector of Police for Kalimpong, Atuk Tsering: "Dear Guruji," warmly began the Inspector's brief handwritten note of 4 September. "Please do not mind. I have sent word to Kuchar to see me with you at about noon today. I must get orders from the Superintendent of Police

about his departure.” Shortly thereafter, the Kuchar would depart on the long-delayed but now auspicious journey, bound at last for the Tibetan capital. Making numerous stops along the way, he would finally arrive in Lhasa on 1 November 1948.* Thus ended Thupten Kunphela’s extraordinary odyssey that had begun nearly fifteen years earlier when he had been toppled from the pinnacle of power.⁸⁷

As for Changlo Chen, three years later (1940) and while yet in Kalimpong, he, the scholar that he was, would aid Sir Basil Gould, still at that time the British Political Officer for Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet, by assisting in the translation into Tibetan of Gould’s book about the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. Because Changlo Chen’s reputation as a respected linguist and literary scholar had begun to spread far and wide, it was only natural that Gould, based in nearby Gangtok, would take advantage of the Tibetan scholar’s presence in Kalimpong. In his political autobiography, Sir Basil gave credit to both Gung Kusho and Rani Choni Dorjee, the wife of Bhutan’s Prime Minister, Raja S. T. Dorjee (and who happened also to be the aunt of Jigme Taring the husband of “Mary La,” and the sister of Sikkim’s Maharaja, Tashi Namgyal). Both of them, he wrote, “had undertaken a labor of pious love and had translated into Tibetan my account of the Discovery and Installation of the Dalai Lama.” Gould’s original English version of the book, entitled *Report on the Discovery, Recognition and Installation of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama*, was published in 1941 at Delhi. The Tibetan version, on the other hand, would have to wait till 1944 for publication when the British Government of India found it necessary to have Sir Basil make a third and final diplomatic visit to Lhasa, where, after careful perusal of the manuscript by the Kashag, permission was granted for the Tibetan edition of the *Report* to be printed at the Potala Press.⁸⁸

But at Kalimpong Changlo Chen would subsequently serve the British Political Officer in yet another scholarly capacity. And for this labor Gould likewise gave credit in his political memoirs: “... during my last visit to Lhasa in 1944, expert† went carefully through not only

* His return to Tibet would not mean he would never again set foot in India, and more particularly in Kalimpong. On the contrary, he would make a number of journeys into the Subcontinent, at least prior to 1952. A news item that appeared in *The Himalayan Times* of Kalimpong noted the following in its issue of 24 June 1951, p. 3: “A most important visitor from Tibet is at present here in Kalimpong on his way to Calcutta. He is Kunpel La. ... [who] was banished to Kongpo ... but escaped later ... to India. He was deported to China, but returned to Tibet on the invitation of the Tibetan government. His mission in India has not been disclosed.” Without question, the Kuchar saw Tharchin during this visit to India at a time in Tibetan and Indian history that was fraught with momentous events which were about to occur, with Kalimpong at the center of much of them.

† One of whom, had he been free to go to Lhasa with Sir Basil, would have been Gergan Tharchin. In the ThPaK is still preserved a letter of invitation sent to the Babu from Gould, dated the Gangtok Residency, 4 July [1944]: “I am writing to Mr. [David] McHutchison [the then head of the Scots Mission] to ask whether, if you are willing, you could be spared to go with me again to Lhasa. There is plenty of language work I want done. If so, perhaps you could meet me at Relli, probably on Friday.” Given his penchant for Tibetan scholarship, as well as his eagerness always to visit with so many friends and relatives in Lhasa, there is no doubt of his willingness to go, even at such a moment’s notice as this. Apparently, however, either the press of duties or else Rev. McHutchison’s denial of the request prevented the Babu from making one final journey to the Tibetan capital: a journey which he would unquestionably have thoroughly enjoyed making. As it was, the lengthy visit he would make to the Tibetan capital with Sir Basil in 1940 would turn out to be his very last ever to Lhasa. Had he gone in 1944, though, part of Gould’s much “language work” which Tharchin would have engaged in would have been to sit down with his Lhasan fellow scholars and review the very supplement of thousands of new words here mentioned in the same Text sentence above which Changlo Chen and the Rani had prepared back in Kalimpong.

the *Tibetan Word Book* [another work he had been preparing], but also a supplement [to it] in manuscript of several thousand words which had been prepared by Rani Choni Dorjee and by Changlo Chen Gung, a fine scholar who had been in the close confidence of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama.”⁸⁹

Meanwhile, Gung Kusho and Gergan Tharchin would themselves collaborate on some translation work that was now requested by Major George Sherriff, soon to be the new British Mission Head at Lhasa.* Major Sherriff was a resident of Kalimpong during the 1940s who lived with his wife in the hill station residence called “Crookety.” On Christmas Day 1942 Sherriff, before leaving Crookety for the holidays, had penned a note to the newspaper editor which explained what he wanted done: “Will you please try to help Gung Kusho to translate Mr. Churchill’s speech [into Tibetan]? He has got the printed speech, but wants help with the English. I will be back on 1st January.” And a little over a month later, now poised to depart very soon for Lhasa to take up his new post, Sherriff made another request of his friend Tharchin that would involve both his newspaper and Changlo Chen. “I want to publish in the next two months’ issues” of the *Tibet Mirror*, he wrote, “a paper on the wool industry in Tibet. I will give you the English paper on this before I leave, or arrange with Mr. Odling† to hand it over to you. Will you please ask Gung Kusho to translate it. I have written to him to ask for his help....”⁹⁰

Changlo Chen would remain in Tharchin’s hill station till most likely 1947, during which period, according to Goldstein, he would often consort with Kunphela; with the “somewhat idealistic Khampa nationalist and intellectual” from East Tibet, Rapga Pangdatsang (see the present narrative’s final volume, Chapter 24); and with the “brilliant but dissolute monk, scholar and rebel,” Gedun Chopel (see Chapter 23)—all four of whom were the guiding members of a political reform organization, the Tibet Improvement Party, founded and led by Rapga (again, see Chapter 24). But Changlo Chen would also continue, as frequently requested, to lend his literary talents to Tharchin and others. Moreover, he must have enjoyed

* Interestingly, beginning in April of 1943, Major Sherriff, accompanied by his wife, would replace an old acquaintance of Tharchin’s, Frank Ludlow, who was leaving Lhasa after only a one-year posting at the Mission that had begun in April of the previous year. Ludlow, it will be recalled, was the one who had successfully competed with others for selection to the headmastership of the English school created at Gyantse by the British in 1923. It was this school’s establishment which had contributed in part to Tharchin’s decision to close down his own school there and return to Kalimpong to begin his long-term association with the Church of Scotland Mission.

† Norman Odling was his brother-in-law, they both having married the two youngest daughters of Rev. John Graham: Sherriff to the youngest, Betty; Odling to the next youngest, “Bunty.” All were friends of the Tharchins. Major Sherriff, O.B.E., was born in 1898 at Kirriemuir, Angus, Scotland, and would die very near there in 1967. Just shortly before he went to Lhasa, Sherriff married Betty Graham. After their return to Kalimpong in the spring of 1945, they resumed their residence at Crookety. In 1946-7 these two, with Frank Ludlow and Colonel Henry Elliott (as medical officer), undertook a major expedition into Tibet. In 1949 once again, the Sherriffs and Ludlow, this time with Dr. J. Hicks as the medical officer, made another expedition—but on this occasion to Bhutan. Upon his retirement from India in 1949, Sherriff purchased an estate at Ascreavie, very near his birthplace, and here created a beautiful garden in which, noted his obituary, “he grew with astonishing success numerous Himalayan plants.” *Times* (London), 20 Sept. 1967. Upon word of his death, Tharchin sent a letter of sympathy to Betty Sherriff, who wrote a lengthy reply of appreciation dated 9 Nov. 1967. In fact, these two carried on an extensive correspondence after 1949, especially during the 1950s and ’60s, the letters of which are a part of the ThPaK.

immensely the frequent company of Tharchin at the latter's home. For the Babu, so it was later reported by one who witnessed it, would often put questions of Tibetan grammar to this very fine scholar; that would then be followed up by a discussion on the finer points of the Tibetan language.⁹¹ These various literary discussions and labors no doubt helped to divert Gung Kusho's mind from constantly being occupied with his plight as an exile and at the same time enabled him to garner some much needed income for his living expenses.

One major project which his friend Tharchin had taken upon himself to launch at the beginning of 1950 was to publish in his newspaper in translated form for his Tibetan readers the entire text (some 400 pages) of Sir Charles Bell's remarkable biography of the Great Thirteenth, *Portrait of the Dalai Lama* (London, 1946). And for this project he had initially called upon his great literary associate Changlo Chen Gung Kusho to provide him with a translation of the preponderance of the book's first seven chapters, which he gladly did for the Babu. This task Gung Kusho either had done just before departing for China (in 1947?) or, if indeed he did return to Kalimpong before returning to Tibet, had done sometime during 1949. These translated chapters eventually appeared serially during the entire year of 1950 and on into 1951 as well. It was a major undertaking for the editor of the *Tibet Mirror*, one which involved many other translators as well, including David Macdonald, the Kusho Geshe C. L. Sangpo, and Tharchin Babu's old associate from his Ghoom days, Karma Sumdhon Paul, the former Headmaster of the Mission school where Tharchin had had his very first experience as a teacher.⁹²

Had Changlo Chen remained longer in Kalimpong, he would doubtless have had a greater hand in this important enterprise. But as with his former Kongpo exile companion, there would come a day when news for which Gung Kusho had been waiting patiently all these years finally arrived: he was now to be allowed—by a more enlightened and less insulated Tibetan government—to return to Lhasa and take up residence there once again. This good turn of fortune most likely occurred in 1951, his originating place of departure for there having been either somewhere in China or Tharchin's hill station. And upon his return to Lhasa at last, Changlo Chen was given the nobleman's title of Thaiji, doubtless meant as a mark of his rehabilitation, by a Tibetan government that would need all the talented friends and supporters it could muster, for the time of the menace of the Red Chinese was even now overshadowing the country. In the critical year of 1959 it was made known to the outside world that Gung Kusho was still alive in Tibet.⁹³

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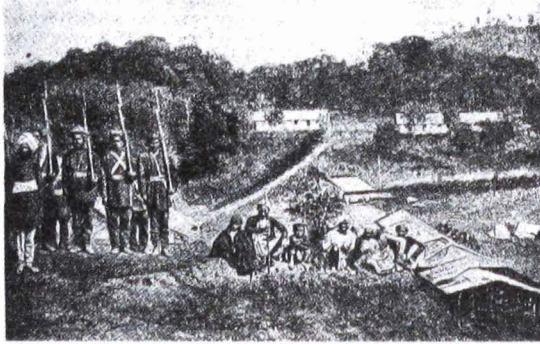
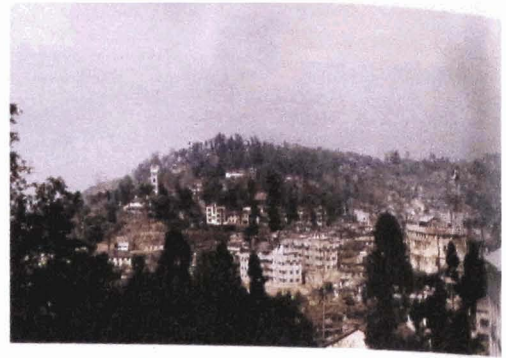
Before concluding this chapter it should be mentioned that when Tharchin had originally contemplated his journey to Tibet with Theos Bernard in 1937 he had applied for a leave of only three months, but as it turned out he actually resumed his duties back in Kalimpong after six months had gone by! During these many months of absence his Tibetan newspaper had not been published at all. However, the Tibetan church services had been conducted very faithfully by his close Christian brother and elder in the congregation, David Macdonald.⁹⁴



Pl. 1 The author once again with the son of Gergan Tharchin, Sherab Gyamtsho, and his wife Nini, outside S.G.'s office on the premises of the spacious Tharchin compound, Kalimpong.



Pl. 2 a-e Founder Macfarlane and Other Early leaders of the Church of Scotland Eastern Himalaya Mission (aka: Church of Scotland Guild Mission).



- Pl. 3a Kalimpong in the early days.
 3b Kalimpong today.
 3c In the background are the first Scots Mission buildings in Kalimpong; in the foreground are shown the bazaar area's few grass huts.
 3d The Church of Scotland Mission's Preaching House in the Kalimpong bazaar area.



- Pl. 4a The façade of the famed SUM Institution, Kalimpong, established 1886.
 4b Ganga Prasad Pradhan.



Pl. 5a Rev. Dr. W.S. Sutherland.

5b Kristo Das Pradhan.

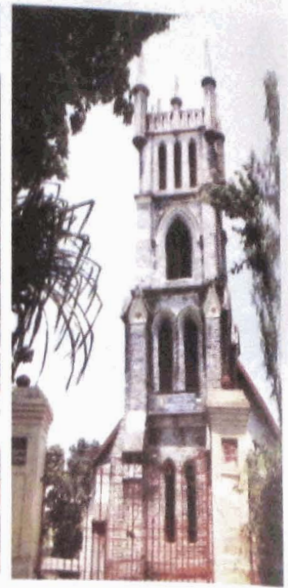
5c Grave of K.D. Pradhan, God's Acre, Scots Mission, Kalimpong.

5d Tharchin surrounded by his Tibetan-language class students, c.1920. According to Mrs. S.G. Tharchin, most were from Bhutan.

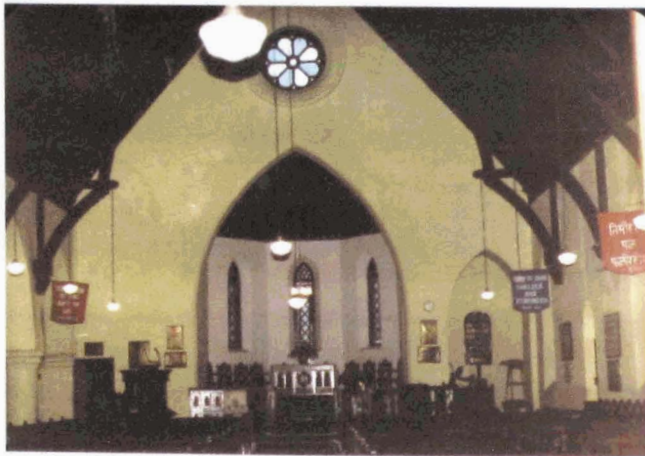
5e Rev. C.T. Pazo, pioneer and leader of the Sikkim church. He succeeded Tharchin as Teacher of Tibetan at SUMI when Tharchin left for Tibet in 1921.



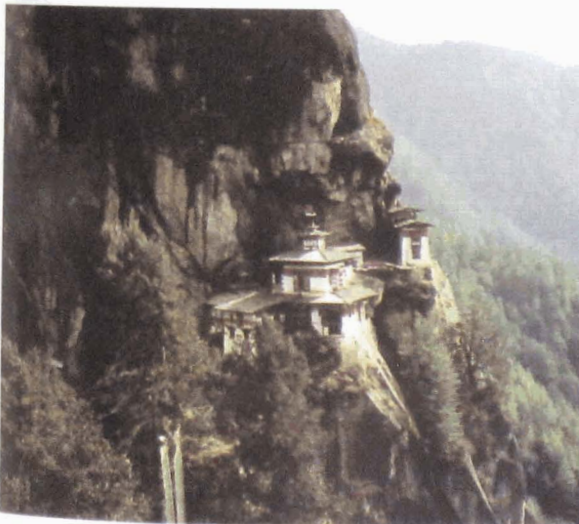
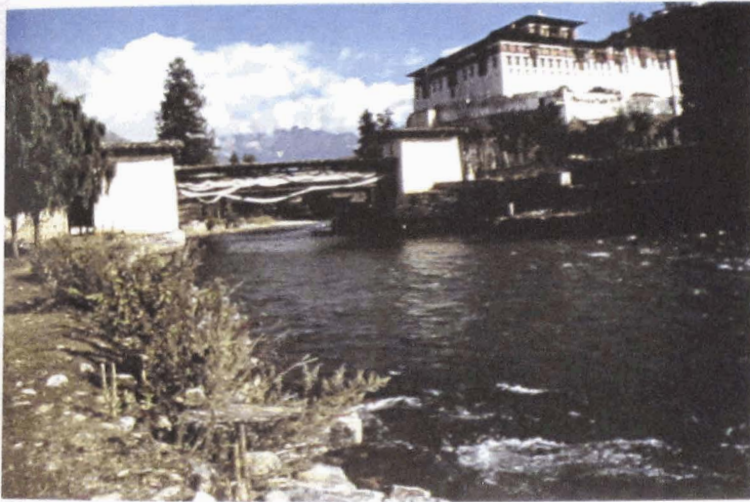
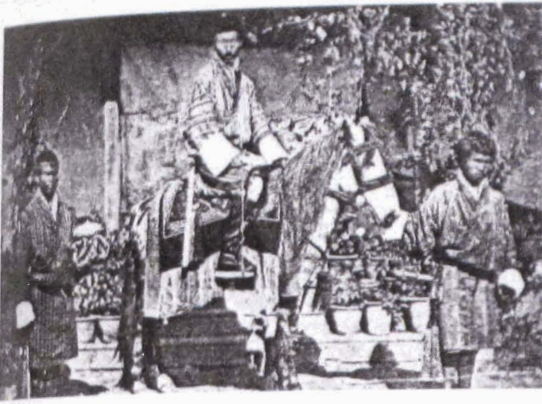
Pl. 6a-c Views of campus and cottages of Graham's Homes Establishment and of Kalimpong Panorama looking towards Tibet.



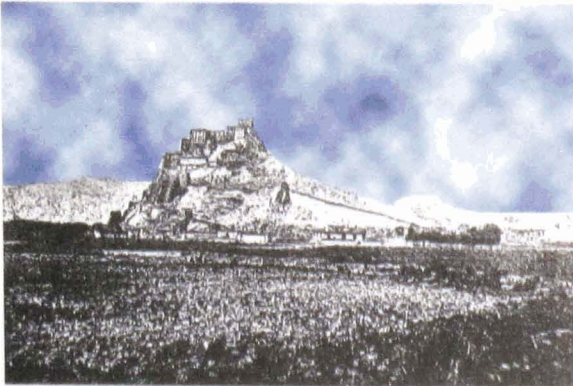
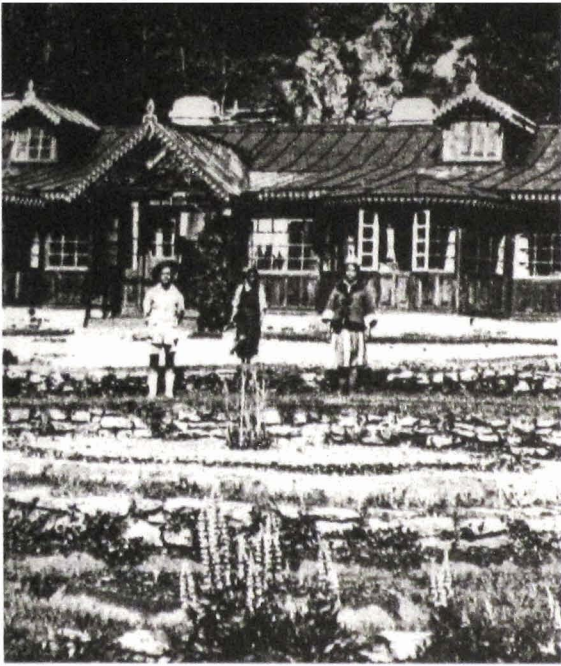
Pl. 7a The so-called Three Holy Roofs of Kalimpong: Christian church on hill, upper right; Moslem mosque in foreground, center left; and Hindu temple in foreground, center right.
 7b Belfry tower and façade of Macfarlane Memorial Church, Kalimpong.



Pl. 8a-d Main sanctuary of Macfarlane Church and display of three memorial wall plates in honor of those who labored in the gospel among Tibetans: Revs. Evan Mackenzie, John Graham and Gergan Tharchin. The latter plate is displayed on wall above where the author is shown standing at the side chapel pulpit where these three servants of God faithfully ministered God's word to the Christian congregation of Tibetans for many years.



- Pl. 9a The Bhutanese Kazi of Kalimpong, Raja Ugyen Dorjee; photo taken outside Rev. Graham's manse residence, Kalimpong.
- 9b Ugyen Dorjee's son and successor in Kalimpong, Raja Sonam Tobgye Dorjee.
- 9c The Tongsa Penlop, Ugyen Wangchuk, the first Maharaja of Bhutan.
- 9d Paro Dzong, one of Bhutan's great fortresses.
- 9e Paro-Taktasang, or Tiger's Nest, Monastery has stood for centuries thousands of feet above the Paro Valley.
- 9f Oath of Allegiance signed at Poonakha at the installation of Sir Ugyen Wangchuk as first Maharaja of Bhutan, 1907.



Pl. 10a The British Trade Agency at Yatung in the Chumbi Valley, Tibet.

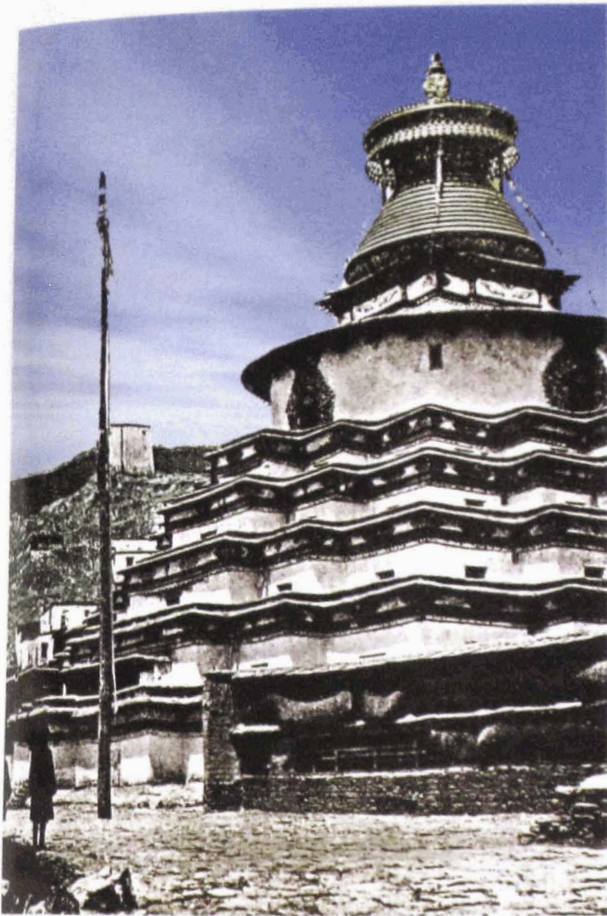
10b In foreground, caravan road leading from Chumbi Valley up to Phari, with Mt. Chomolhari (24,000') looming in background.

10c The road to Gyantse in Tibet.

10d The Gyantse Dzong, impervious to capture for centuries till 1904.



Pl. 11 From atop Gyantse Dzong's citadel a sweeping view of the town where Gergan Tharchin would live and teach for more than two years, 1921-3. The main thoroughfare is divided by a long "mendong," and the large Palkhor Chhode Monastery sits enclosed within its walls that fills up the upper end of the photo. Note also the location of the renowned golden-roofed Chorten in the upper left section of the monastery wall (see next Plate).



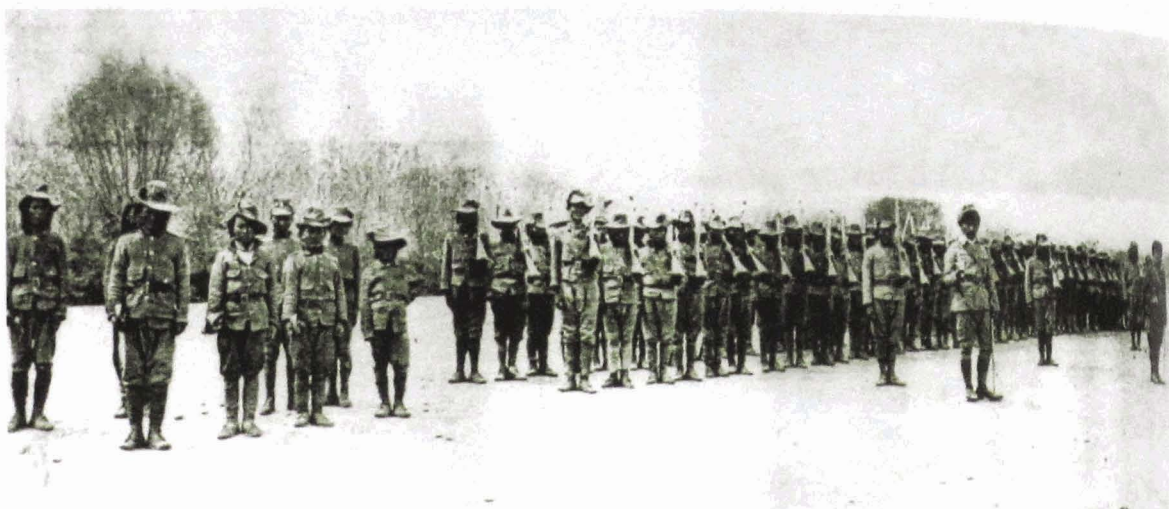
Pl. 12a The golden-roofed pagoda-like chorten or temple within the Palkhor Chhode Monastery, Gyantse. Octagonal in shape, it has five stories, 108 doors, and total height of 107 feet. Each floor is a separate hall for worship containing some of the estimated 100,000 images of Buddhas. Thus this greatest shrine in Tibet has sometimes been called "the Pagoda of the Hundred Thousand."

12b Some of the countless Buddhas to be found within the great chorten of Palkhor Chhode Monastery.



Pl. 13a On right, Changlo Chen Gung Kusho, one of the young officers in the new Tibetan army, with his A.D.C., at Gyantse.

13b Group of Tibet Army officers, with Tsarong II seated center, 1920s. Standing third from right is Depon Dingja Dorje Gyaltzen, one among Tharchin's several officer friends whom he had taught languages while at Gyantse.



Pl. 14 As at Gyantse, so here at Lhasa, soldiers of the new Tibet Army were often seen on parade.



Pl. 15a Umbrella-shaded market stalls at Gyantse situated inside the Monastery walls.

15b Sadhu Sundar Singh, Europe, 1922; an eager supporter—in terms of funds, prayers and gift parcels—of Tharchin's educational and Christian ministry in Tibet, especially at Gyantse.

15c The original head of the extremely aristocratic Tsarong family who in 1912, along with his son, was assassinated by Lhasa Lamas for having allegedly been very pro-Chinese. Here shown (in center) in *Kalon* robes as a member of the Dalai Lama's *Kashag* (or Cabinet) at the time of the signing at the Potala Palace in 1904 of the Lhasa Convention with Colonel Younghusband and the British Mission.

15d Tsarong II, made so by Dalai Lama XIII.

15e "Mary La," daughter of Tsarong I, wife of Tsarong II and later, of Jigme Taring.

15f Jigme, son of Taring Raja, and student of Tharchin's at Gyantse.

15g Taring Raja of Sikkim who became a resident Tibetan aristocrat.



Pl. 16a Sir Charles Bell (seated center with arms folded) and party, Lhasa 1921. Seated second from left is Rai Bahadur Sonam Wangfel Laden-La, and standing behind the right shoulder of Bell is Rai Bahadur Norbu Dhondup; two of Gergan Tharchin's close acquaintances intimately involved in Anglo-Tibetan political relations. The seven individuals shown with hat feathers are Sikkimese employees.

16b General Charles G. Bruce, leader in 1922 of the first ever Mount Everest Climbing Expedition (seated), listening to Tharchin's close friend Karma Sumdhon Paul—the Expedition's interpreter—

verbally translate a message he has brought to the General from Lama Zatul Rimpoche, Abbot of Tibet's nearby Rongbuk Gompa. Several Everest Climbing Expeditions had now been permitted to be launched from Tibetan territory as the result of Sir Charles Bell's one-year diplomatic mission to Lhasa at the invitation of Dalai Lama XIII.

Some 30 years later Karma Paul would greatly contribute to the translation from English to Tibetan of Bell's *magnum opus*, *Portrait of the Dalai Lama* (1946), a biography of the Great Thirteenth, that would be serialized in Gergan Tharchin's *Tibet Mirror* newspaper during the early 1950s.

16c Tsipon Lungshar (center) and the four Tibetan boys he is about to accompany to England for gaining a European secondary and university education, Lhasa 1913. One of the four was Wangdi Norbhu, older brother of Sonam Tobgye, one of Tharchin's four officer friends at Gyantse. Both brothers were also known as Kyipup; the older, however, having become the more famous.

16d Frank Ludlow, who in 1923 became the Headmaster of the Tibetan government school established at Gyantse that, like Tharchin's own school there, was modeled on British lines. It was forced to close in 1926, however, due largely to pressure from the Lhasan religious authorities.



Pl. 17a Scene along caravan road between Gyantse and Lhasa at Gobshi.

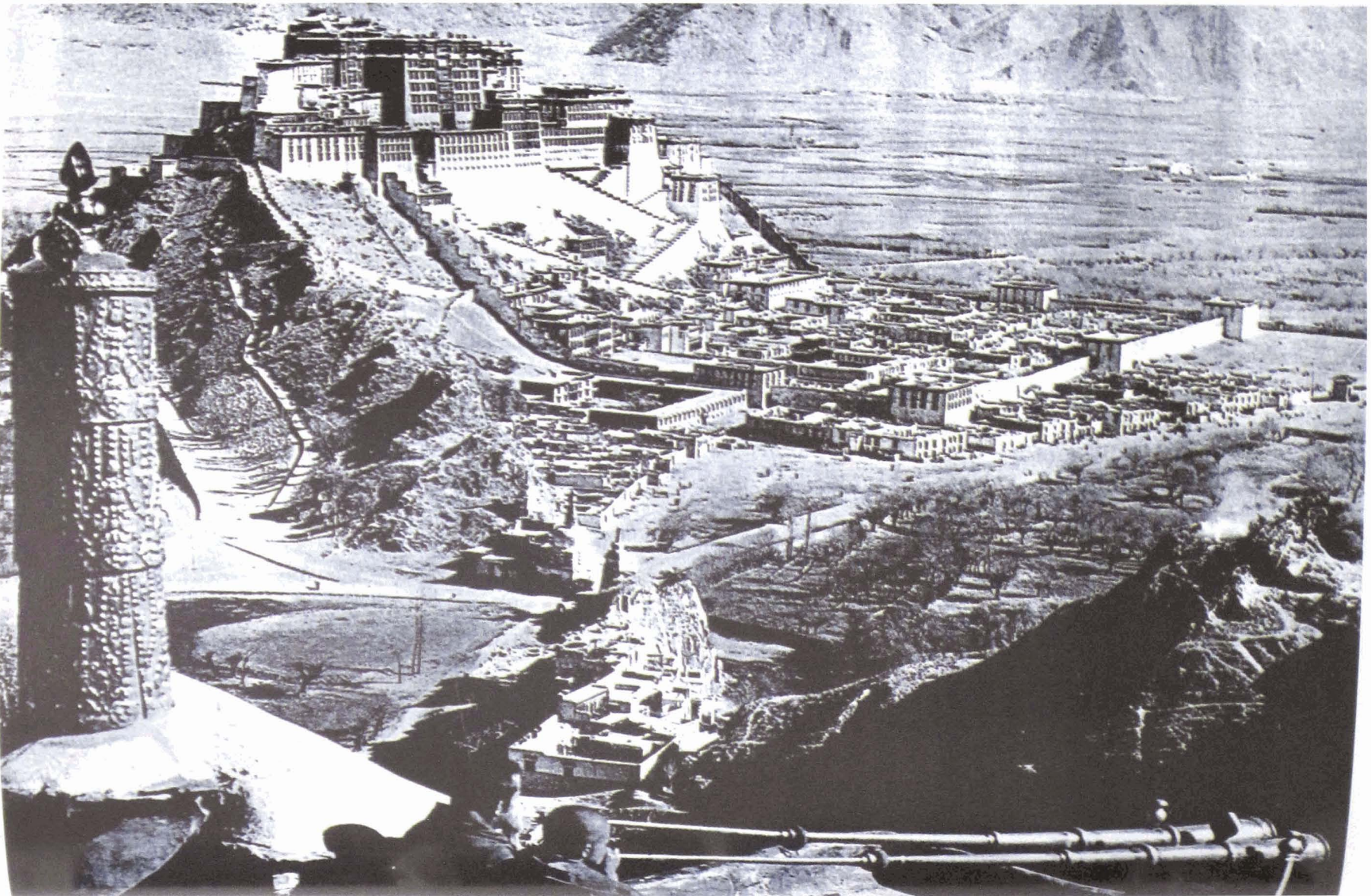
17b Famed Swedish explorer in Central Asia, Sven Hedin. All his life he had failed to fulfill his dream of setting foot in the Sacred City of the Gods.

17c Chenrezi, Bodhisattva of Compassion and patron-protecting deity of Tibet whom Tibetans believe manifests himself in reincarnated earthly form in the person of Tibet's line of successive Priest-Kings, the Dalai Lamas.



Pl. 18a The Pargo
Kaling Chorten or Western
Gate of Lhasa.

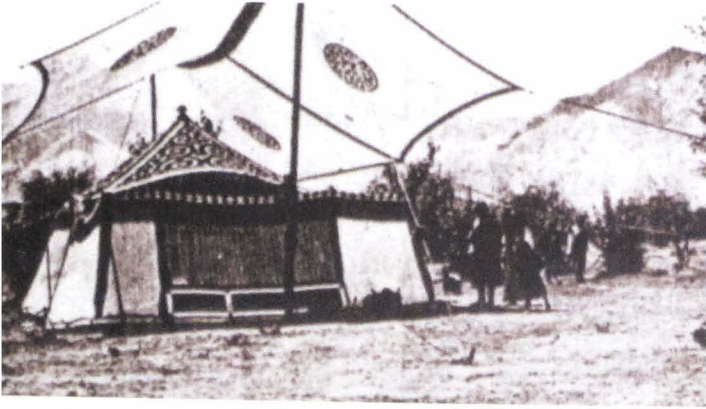
18b The view
just inside the Western
Gate.



Pl. 19 The awesome Potala Palace, village of Sho, and main road leading to Lhasa proper a mile away, as seen from atop Chakpori (Iron) Hill just opposite the Potala's more famous Marpori (Red) Hill.



Pl. 20a, b Two street scenes in the Tibetan capital. At the top, one of the main streets in Lhasa from which can be seen in the background: on right, the Potala; in center, the Jo-khang Temple; and on left, Chakpori Hill's Medical College. The bottom photo shows another street lined on both sides with shops and in the distance is a large *chorten*.

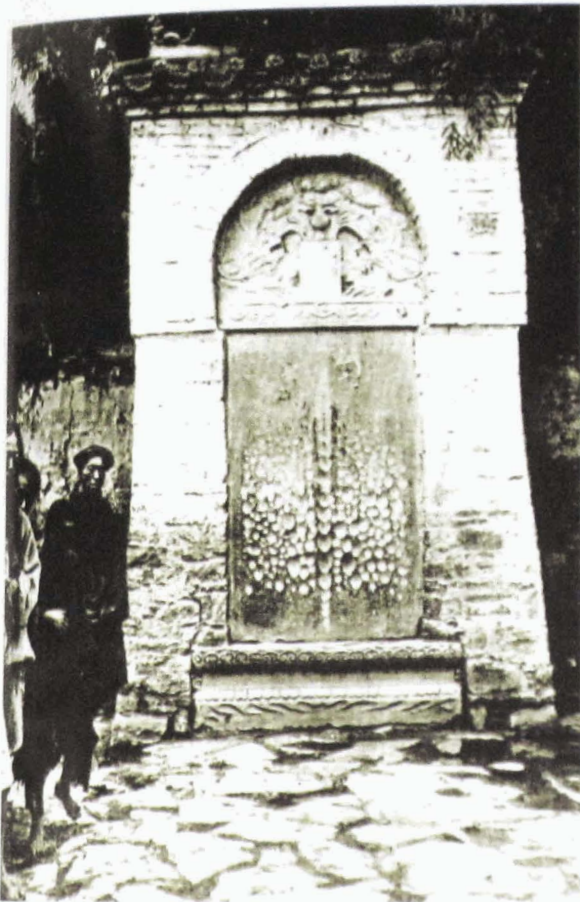


Pl. 21a A view across the river Kyi from the steps of the Potala, showing a few *lingkas* (parks) along the valley floor.

21b A wealthy merchant's picnic tent in a park near Lhasa.

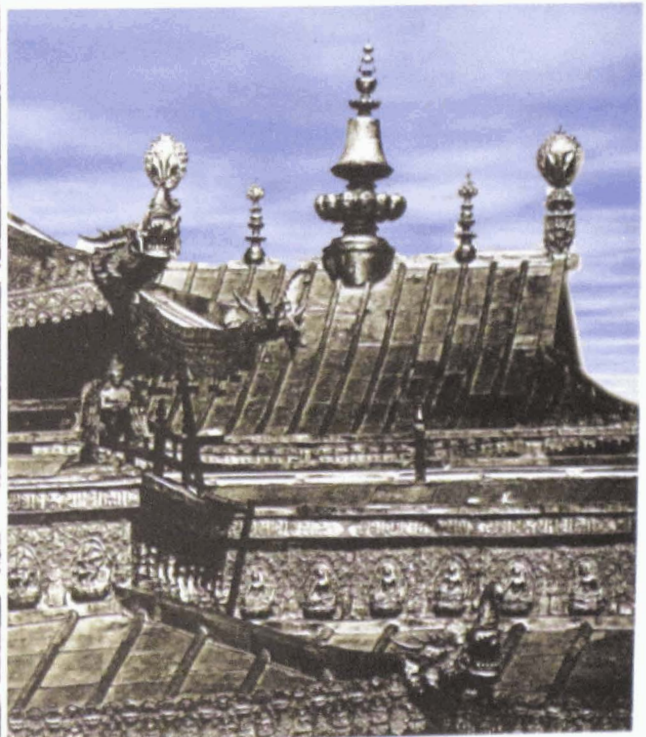
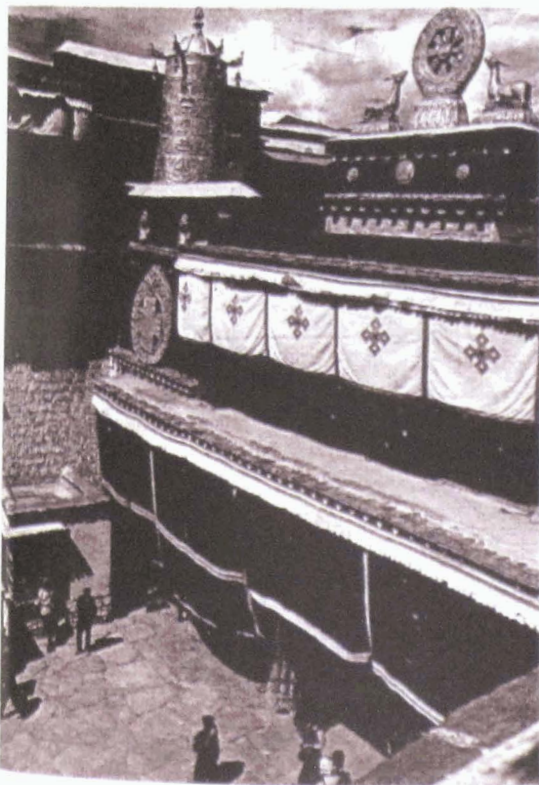
21c Playing the dice game of *sho* beneath a large picnic awning in a Lhasan *lingka*.

21d Numerous tents of picnicking parties inside a park near Lhasa where willow and poplar trees abound.



Pl. 22a In the center of Lhasa near the Jo-khang Temple is still found today the Treaty Pillar known as the *Do-ring* (meaning ancient stone), on whose columns had been inscribed in both Tibetan and Chinese the text of the peace pact of 821 a.d. between these two Central Asian empires.

22b Overhanging the *Do-ring* or Pillar of Unity could be found in Tharchin's day the so-called sacred willow tree, said to be over a thousand years old, and believed by Tibetans to have sprung from a hair of Lord Buddha that had been brought and planted here by a Chinese princess as a symbol of friendship between the two peoples.



Pl. 23a, b Two exterior views of the Jo-khang Temple, Lhasa. Left photo shows the Temple's great entrance; the huge bell-shaped object (*Gyamschen*) at the corner of the roof is symbolic of the flourishing of Buddhism. The right photo: the Jo-khang's golden roof, with its main ridge decorated with urns, pearls, golden bells, and animals of cast metal.



Pl. 24 The priceless bejeweled Sakyamuni Buddha statue, or Jowo Rinpoche (the Precious, Supreme One) stands in Lhasa's central cathedral, the Jo-khang. It is traditionally believed to have been brought to Lhasa in the mid-7th century by the Chinese Princess Wen-ch'eng from Changan. It still stands in the Jo-khang today, venerated and worshiped by all Tibetans of the Lamaist faith.



Pl. 25a In the Jo-khang of Tharchin's day could be seen the richly carved statues of Tibet's first so-called Religious King, Emperor Songtsan Gampo, his Chinese wife Princess Wen-ch'eng, and the King-Emperor's Nepalese wife, Princess Brikhuti Devi. Wen-ch'eng is in foreground, Brikhuti in background.

25b Madame Alexandra David-Neel and her lama-companion Yongden. A follower of Hinayana Buddhism, she had the distinction of being the first white woman in history to have walked the streets of Lhasa, having arrived in the city at about the time of Gergan Tharchin's departure from Lhasa back to India (February 1924).



Pl. 26a-d A photo montage of Gergan Tharchin and his Lhasa wife Karma Dechhen. As best as can be determined, these four photos were taken during the 1920s. See Photo Credits for more details.



Pl. 27a Captain Younghusband and his "Great Game" rival Colonel Grombtchevski (in full-length black cape) meeting high in the Pamirs of Central Asia, 1889.

27b The Younghusband Expedition staff in Tibet, 1904, including Col. Younghusband (seated left), Brig. Gen. J.R.L. Macdonald (to Younghusband's left), Lt. F.M. (Eric) Bailey (standing left) and Capt. W.F.T. O'Connor (to Bailey's left).

27c Lt. Colonel Bailey (left) and O'Connor, shown together with Bailey's wife. Photo taken either before or shortly after the plot against Dalai Lama XIII, concocted by Political Officer Bailey and carried out at his direction by Bailey's personal agent at Lhasa Laden-La and the latter's assistant Major Padma Chandra (inset), had failed by mid-summer 1924. O'Connor at this time was British Envoy to the Court of Nepal, was in close touch with Bailey, and may even have been involved in the plot himself.

27d John Claude White (1853-1918), appointed first British Government of India Political Officer Sikkim in 1889 and served in that post till succeeded by Sir Charles Bell in 1908.



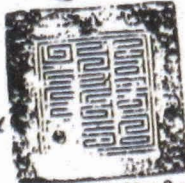
27e "Sardar Bahadur Sonam Wangfel Laden-La, CBE, FRGS, ADC, Civilior of the Order of Leopold II (Belgium), Retired Superintendent of Police, Darjeeling, etc. etc."








Pl. 28a-d “Great Gamers” and alleged “spies” in Central Asian geopolitics during the first quarter of the 20th century. Counter-clockwise: Lord George Nathaniel Curzon, Viceroy of India (1899-1905); Colonel Francis E. Younghusband, leader of the Expedition to Lhasa, 1903-4; Ekai Kawaguchi, the Japanese Zen Buddhist monk who traveled to Tibet and Lhasa 1901-3 and was a controversial source of information on Tibetan politics; and the Buriat-Mongolian Buddhist Lama, Ngawang Lobsang Dorjief (1854-1938), Lhasa’s shadowy emissary to Russia’s Tsar Nicholas II.



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 seal of the Dalai Lama affixed by the Ganden Ti Rimpoche

 seal of Council seal of the Dalai Lama's Monastery seal of Lhasa Monastery seal of Gaden Monastery seal of National Assembly



Pl. 29a Various official seals that were affixed to the Lhasa Convention signed at the Potala on 7 September 1904.

29b The Ganden Ti Rimpoche, into whose hands the fleeing Dalai Lama XIII had placed Tibetan affairs, and who affixed the Dalai Lama's seal to the Lhasa Treaty in the Priest-King's absence.



Pl. 30 Chinese soldiers departing Gyantse on deportation to India, 1912. Some of them, together with their Tibetan wives, children and assorted camp followers, settled down in Kalimpong and elsewhere in India rather than return to the uncertainties of life in their Chinese homeland. The above-pictured scene, therefore, as well as other historical events then occurring on the Roof of the World, account in great part for the influx of Tibetans and "disaffected Chinese" in large numbers into Kalimpong during the early 1900s, confronting Christian workers like Rev. Evan Mackenzie and catechist Gergan Tharchin with a multitude of challenges in the establishment, growth and nurture of the Tibetan church at Kalimpong.

Farewell Meetings.

Edinburgh, Cambridge, Oxford, London.

THE MEMBERS of the Missionary Band, of whose farewell words the following pages contain some record, were:—

REV. W. W. CASSELS, B.A.,
St. John's College, Cambridge.

MR. D. E. HOSTE
(Late of the Royal Artillery).

MR. STANLEY P. SMITH, B.A.,
Trinity College, Cambridge.

MR. MONTAGU BEAUCHAMP, B.A.,
Trinity College, Cambridge.

MR. C. T. STUDD, B.A.,
Trinity College, Cambridge.

MR. CECIL H. POLHILL-TURNER
(of the 2nd Dragoon Guards).

MR. ARTHUR T. POLHILL-TURNER, B.A.,
Trinity Hall and Ridley Hall, Cambridge.

All these left London on 5th February, 1885, for Brindisi, en route for China. During the few weeks immediately preceding their departure, Mr. STANLEY SMITH and Mr. STUDD, in company with Mr. REGINALD RADCLIFFE, took an evangelistic tour, and visited, besides other towns, the following:—Liverpool, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock, Newcastle, Leeds, Rochdale, Manchester, and Bristol. These meetings were of remarkable interest. At one we learn that sixty persons professed conversion. At Edinburgh the interest manifested was extraordinary. Dr. Moxey, writing of a wonderful work of grace going on in the University of Edinburgh, in *The Christian* of February 19th, says:—

"The event that has precipitated the shower of blessing that has fallen in our midst is the recent visit of the two young Christian athletes from Cambridge, who are now on their way to preach Christ to the Chinese. Students, like other young men, are apt to regard professedly religious men of their own age as wanting in manliness, unfit for the river or cricket-field, and only good for psalm-singing and pulling a long face. But the big, muscular hands and long arms of the ex-captain of the Cambridge eight, stretched out in entreaty, while he eloquently told out the old story of redeeming love, cap-

sized their theory; and when Mr. C. T. Studd, whose name is to them familiar as a household word as perhaps the greatest gentleman bowler in England, supplemented his brother athlete's words by quiet but intense and burning utterances of personal testimony to the love and power of a personal Saviour, opposition and criticism were alike disarmed, and Professors and students together were seen in tears, to be followed in the after-meeting by the glorious sight of Professors dealing with students, and students with one another."

In other places also the distinctions which our friends had achieved in the athletic world induced young men to assemble in large numbers to see and hear them, and to not a few of these, according to abundant testimony, the word came with convincing and saving power. These meetings, it should be remarked, were evangelistic in character, and nearly all were kindly arranged for, and all printing and other expenses met, independently of the CHINA INLAND MISSION; the same may also be said of a former series of meetings held in Scotland, in some of which Mr. Radcliffe, Mr. James E. Mathieson, Major-General Haig, and Mr. Landale took part.

Pl. 31 A published account of some of the "farewell meetings" of the now famous Missionary Band that came to be known as "The Cambridge Seven" prior to the group's departure for China as missionaries with the China Inland Mission.

C.T. Studd

M. Beauchamp

S.P. Smith



A.T. Pollhill-Turner D.E. Hoste C.H. Pollhill-Turner Rev. W.W.Cassels

Pl. 32a A photo taken at Shanghai of the celebrated "Cambridge Seven." One of their number, Cecil Polhill-Turner, would become a close personal acquaintance of Gergan Tharchin and would visit the latter's hill station at least three times under unusual circumstances.



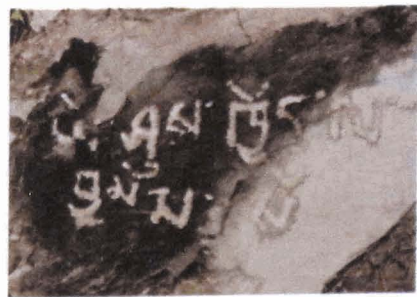
32b Annie Taylor and her servants at afternoon tea in London. On her left is Pontso, the little Lhasan Tibetan servant who had accompanied Miss Taylor on her noteworthy journey from China attempting unsuccessfully to reach Lhasa with the Christian gospel in 1892-3. A year later she would again attempt to penetrate Tibet with the gospel of Christ, this time from India and Sikkim.



Pl. 33a The "Tibetan Pioneer Mission" which Annie Taylor organized and brought out to the Darjeeling District in early 1894 from Great Britain in an attempt to preach Christ in Tibet once again. It ended in disaster, but Cecil Polhill-Turner helped to rescue the situation, thus releasing these young missionaries to minister the gospel to Tibetans in other places and in other ways. In the photo, taken at Darjeeling, Annie is in the center, below here is Pontso, to her left is Mrs. Evan Mackenzie holding her infant daughter, and above Mrs. Mackenzie with his hand on her shoulder is her husband Evan. The Mackenzies would eventually join the Scots Mission at Kalimpong and work among the Tibetans there.



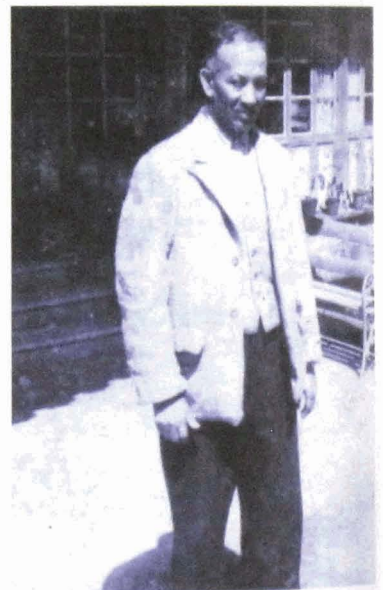
33b Gnatong, the Sikkimese frontier outpost of the British nine miles from Tibet and the scene of Annie Taylor's disastrous attempt in 1894 to penetrate the Closed Land with the Christian message in company with her Tibetan Pioneer Band of young missionaries. In the photo's upper right can be seen the zigzag path leading from India to the fort. After the disaster, Annie lived for a year or more in the rough shanty structure shown just below the fort. She then removed to Yatung in Tibet's Chumbi Valley where she finally was able to share the gospel and distribute Christian literature to the Tibetans and others for a number of years.



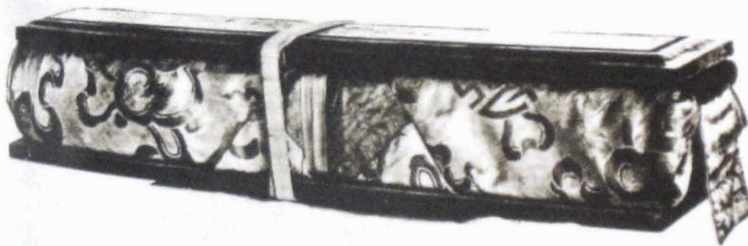
Pl. 34a-d Christian works and workers among the Tibetans in and around Kalimpong: upper left, the Tibetan Mission House of the Scots Mission that was the center of much of the work for and among Tibetans and where local and Western Anilas and other missionaries would frequently stay; upper right, a short Christian message carved in Tibetan that was personally inscribed by Australian missionary Dr. Robert Knox on a rock formation along the road to Pedong and which reads, "Jesus loves you"; immediately above and left, Rev. Evan Mackenzie and Christian catechist workers photographed together outside Macfarlane Church, before 1915; and at right, Polhill Hall, formerly called the Tibetan Preaching House in the late 19th century but subsequently and rightly renamed after Cecil Polhill-Turner of the China Inland Mission who had donated funds necessary for its construction and where even today the Tibetan Church Fellowship, shown gathered outside, still meets.



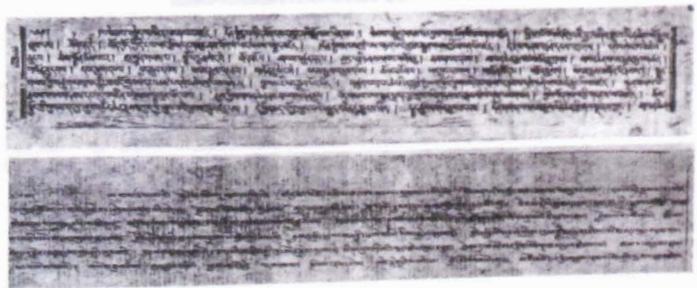
Pl. 35a-c Other servants of Christ who had long labored among Tibetans in the Kalimpong area. In the group photo outside Jarvis Hall at Graham's Homes, taken sometime in the 1920s or early '30s, can be seen seated front and center left to right: Dr. Graham, his right hand assistant Mr. Purdie, and David Macdonald; just above the latter stands Gergan Tharchin, probably a Tibetan catechist by this time; and above Purdie is the longtime minister of Macfarlane Church P.S. Targain. And the ladies shown at right are two American missionaries who for many years labored in the gospel faithfully among Tibetans and others in the area: Dorothy Christianson (upper right) and Lillian Carlson.



Pl. 36a-c The Himalayan Hotel, established and operated by the David Macdonald family ever since his retirement in 1924 from Government service in Tibet, became a popular meeting place for Gergan Tharchin and others involved in Christian ministry among Tibetans. Standing together in the group photo, taken during the late 1920s, are Tharchin and Macdonald (two very close brethren in Christ) and possibly another member of the Macdonald household. The lower left photo is a view of the Hotel façade as it appeared in 1987; and the small photograph of Tharchin emerging from the Hotel was most likely taken during the late 1930s.

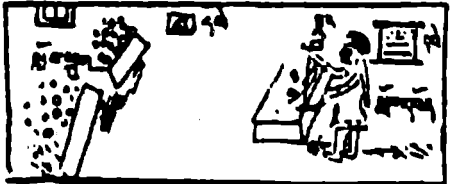


Pl. 37a-d From ancient times to the mid-20th century in Tibet little had changed with respect to printing and book publishing activity, methods of filing literary materials in libraries, and the sale and distribution of literature among the people. Photos in clockwise order above show: (a) a pile of books and a bookseller on the streets of Lhasa; (b) another stack of Tibetan literature; (c) the appearance of a typical Tibetan library shelving situation, with white silk labels employed to indicate the book titles lying on the shelves; and (d) a Tibetan book that is wrapped in silk cover, its title shown at one end, the book encased top and bottom within oblong boards, and the use of Tibetan alphabet letters in multi-volume works to denote the particular volume—in this case, the 6th letter indicates Vol. VI. Furthermore, newspaper printing and publishing had been non-existent inside Tibet right up to the time of Gergan Tharchin.



Pl. 38a, b Prior to the late 13th century Tibet had scarcely progressed beyond handwritten manuscripts that from the very beginning of her literary history had been the form of all Tibetan books. With the introduction of the wooden block-printing method of producing books, block-printing centers began to be established throughout the land—those like the one much later created at the Potala, shown at left. Also shown is an example of a page of block print from a centuries-old Tibetan book, the Blue Treasury, wherein words are not spaced and vertical lines denote, more or less, the ends of sentences.

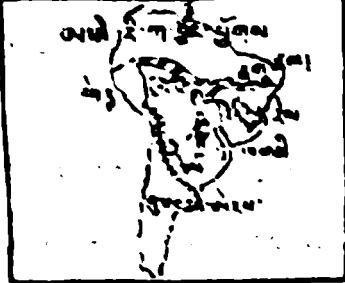
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Pl. 39
 An example of the "Moravian journalist tradition" in Indo-Tibet: the front page of the twelfth number of "The Tibetan Newspaper" edited and published at Kyelang, Lahul Province, by Moravian missionary Rev. Walter Asboe. Though issues of the newspaper found their way deep into Tibet over the several decades of its publication (began a year following the inauguration of Gergan Tharchin's Tibet Mirror newspaper in 1925), the Moravian journal would not have nearly the impact on the Tibetan nation as would Tharchin's news organ.

THE TIBETAN NEWS PAPER

Main body of the document containing dense, mostly illegible text in Tibetan script.

News That's
Print."

The New York Times.

LATE CITY
WEATHER—
Forecast for
Wednesday Jan.

Copyright, 1934, by The New York Times Company.

7,762.

Entered as Second-Class Matter,
Postoffice, New York, N. Y.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 1934.

TWO CENTS
In New York
City
THREE
CENTS
Elsewhere

Way to Prosperity Found By Lone Editor of Tibet

By The Canadian Press.

SHANGHAI, Jan. 26.—Interest in the "forbidden land" of Tibet, revived by the recent death of the Dalai Lama, discloses that there is only one newspaper in all Tibet. It is published monthly and is edited by Tarchin Baboo, at Kalimpong.

The eight-page publication is called The Mirror of the New Vicissitudes of Every Corner of This Universe.

Unemployment, says the publication, has been caused by the introduction of wheels. Two men now do the work that formerly kept 1,000 men employed and supplied with food. Unemployment brings distress; distress means no money and no money brings bad trade. The paper thinks the Western world could immediately become prosperous by abolishing all wheels.

FATE OF CITY BILL HANGS ON LEHMAN

Governor Is Expected to Exert
Pressure on Legislators to

BLANSHARD RAIDS KELLY CLUB IN HUNT FOR MARKET GRAFT

Subpoenas Seneca Records,
Seeking Political Link to
Wallabout Rackets.

FLAT DENIAL BY LEADER

But Party Circles Consider His
Candidacy for McCooley Post
Adversely Affected.

Paul Blanshard, Commissioner of Accounts; Will Maslow, one of his assistants, and Patrolman Thomas Mulligan conducted a "raid" on the Seneca Club, 93 Division Avenue, Brooklyn, yesterday noon. They were interested in any connection that the club might have with the racketeering that has gone on in the Wallabout Market.

As a raid, the trip was not a complete success, in view of the fact that the club records sought were refused to the investigators, at least

47 of Byrd's Men Are Marooned As Breaking Ice Drives Ship Away

Vessel, Battered by Swell, Cruises Perilously in Bay and Will
Head for Ross Sea if Wind Grows Worse—Unloading
Before Feb. 10 Deadline Will Be Desperate Job.

Market Radio to THE NEW YORK TIMES

ABOARD THE JACOB RUPPERT, BAY OF WHALES, Antarctica, Jan. 26.—High winds, a strong swell and the complete disintegration of its berth alongside the inconstant ice front of the Bay of Whales have again driven the flagship of the second Byrd Antarctic Expedition from her moorings.

At 1:30 this afternoon the flagship has been fruitlessly cruising and drifting within the bay for thirty-two hours. Forty-three men are marooned at Pressure Camp, the temporary supply base four and one-half miles south of the edge of the ice. Four more are at Little America to keep warm and fed. They have had to break into the stores cached for the winter party. As long as the wind and swell hold, there is no immediate prospect of relieving them.

Fat rolls of dark storm clouds are piling up in the northern sky beyond the open mouth of the bay. The wind is east-southeast and

where the ice is disintegrating. The whole front of the bay flooring, eight miles across, is crumbling, and Admiral Byrd has estimated that more than 1,000,000 square yards of it have broken off since yesterday morning. The west side of the bay is filled with drift ice. There is no anchorage either. The bottom is upward of 400 fathoms deep.

If the wind should increase, Admiral Byrd has ordered Commodore Ojertsen to put out for the open waters of the Ross Sea. The blinding snow usually characteristic of this area, and the danger of collision with wind-impelled ice make navigation within the bay dangerous.

The problem of establishing the winter camp of the expedition has reached a critical point. Admiral Byrd has said the deadline for the departure of this ship is Feb. 10. She must be unloaded and cleared by then, otherwise she will run the danger of being beset by new ice

'REPRISAL' LEVIES AIMED AT FRANCE PUT INTO TAX BILL

50% Impost on Branches of
Foreign Corporations Here
Hits at Discrimination.

'WRITING OFF' IS CURBED

Corporation Reorganization
Clause Is Changed as House
Group Nears End.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26.—Moving to revise the tax laws further, the Ways and Means Committee adopted today provisions intended to obtain more revenue from American commercial operations in foreign countries, and at the same time put additional safeguards around domestic concerns with branches abroad.

The committee voted first to cut to half the 100 per cent credit which American concerns have been allowed to take against income tax

Tokyo Club Is Inviting Roosevelt to Visit Japan

Wires to THE NEW YORK TIMES
TOKYO Saturday Jan. 27.—The Pan-Pacific Club of Tokyo is inviting President Roosevelt to visit Japan in the course of his tour to Hawaii next summer.

The club has adopted a resolution to this effect and cabled it to the Pan-Pacific Union in Honolulu for action. If President Roosevelt is unable to come, the Premiers or Presidents of the nations bordering the Pacific, all of whom are honorary members of the union, will be invited to go to Honolulu in June, when Mr. Roosevelt is due there for informal discussions.

Prince Iyeyasu Tokugawa, who is now in Canada, has been requested to present the message to President Roosevelt.

PRESIDENT PUSHES AIR-MAIL INQUIRY

Wishes It to Go Limit, and Also
Indicates He May Cancel
Some Contracts.

Pl. 43 A short article about Tharchin Babu's Tibet Mirror news journal that appeared prominently in the upper fold section of the front page of an issue in 1934 of the world-renowned newspaper, The New York Times!



Pl. 45a-d For Gergan Tharchin there were three methods by which he could get his Tibetan newspapers into Tibet and up to Lhasa; (a) trusted friends traveling there would kindly transport some of them; (b) the Tibetan Postal runner system; and (c) British Indian frontier personnel.

Counter-clockwise above, the first three photos relate to (b), using its mail runners to carry the newspapers in large bags on their backs, though the Babu confided that even with Tibet's supposed secure Postal system, many papers were nonetheless lost. Each mail carrier carries a short spear as his badge of office, with bells on it as a further mark of identification. Running five miles, each will then transfer his load to another who will in turn resume the chase. The last photo above depicts Indian government frontier employees based in Tibet bringing down over the Jelep La to India large quantities of mail; they will then return to Tibet with mail from the Subcontinent, including large bundles of Tharchin's *Tibet Mirror*.



Pl. 46a Boats called coracles plied the waters of Tibet's main waterway, the river Tsangpo. Constructed of yak hides sewn together and stretched over a willow frame, a coracle was extremely light in weight but quite sturdy. Tharchin tells of preaching Christ to his coracle's two boatmen, with whom he shared the instance of Jesus and His disciples caught in a violent storm over the Sea of Galilee in Israel.

46b The infamous 19th-century Russian journalist and spy Nicholas Notovitch. He claimed to have discovered in 1887 at the Tibetan Buddhist monastery of Hemis near Leh, Ladakh, an ancient Gospel of Issa/Jesus manuscript but which Gergan Tharchin, and others before and after him, have helped to prove was nothing more than a literary fraud created by the Russian hoaxer himself.

46c Dzasa Rai Bahadur Norbhu Dhondup, a Tibetan born in Kalimpong who rose to become a very prominent adviser and confidant to both British and Tibetan political leaders. He would also become a close acquaintance of Gergan Tharchin, who nonetheless did not repose complete trust in him.

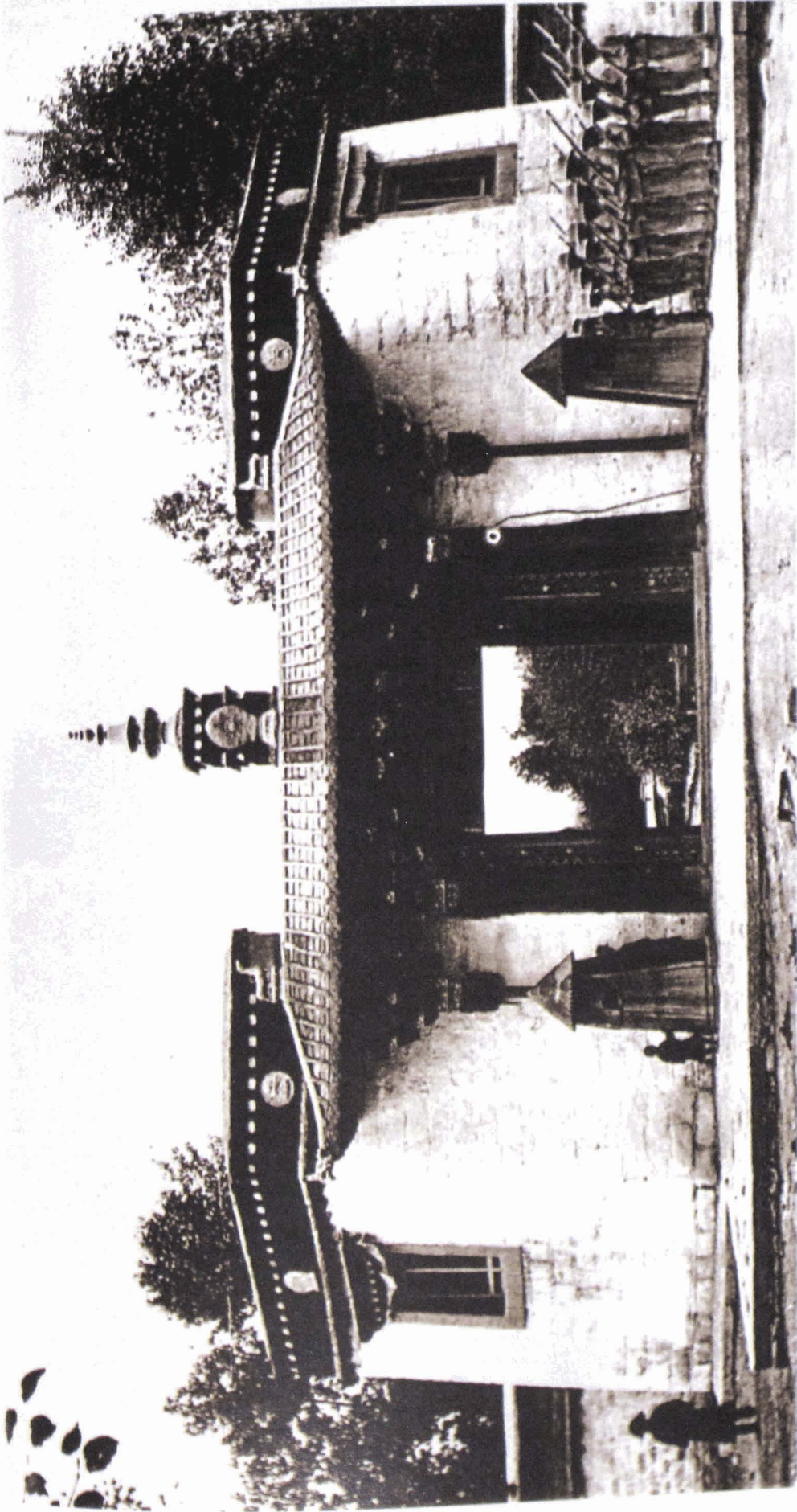


Pl. 47 Dalai Lama XIII on his throne. From a photograph taken by Sir Charles Bell, signed and sealed by the Dalai Lama himself, and colored by a Tibetan artist.

It was in surroundings similar to this that Gergan Tharchin experienced a private audience at Lhasa's Norbu Lingka Palace in 1927. Normally a five-to-ten-minute event for most individuals, nonetheless, because of the Babu's unique contributions to Tibetan culture through his newspaper, the forward-looking monarch granted a lengthy thirty-minute audience to Tharchin and showered upon him other special favors, including several financial gifts in support for the continuance of the *Tibet Mirror*. His Holiness counted Tharchin Babu as a friend of his and of his Tibetan nation.



PL, 48a-d A photo montage of Tibet's God-King, the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama, at various periods of his rule after 1910.



Pl. 49 The Gate of the Norbu Lingka Palace. It was here in the lovely, tranquil surroundings of the Tibetan Priest-King's favorite Palace—his Summer Residence—that on 5 December 1927 at about 11:00 a.m., Gergan Dorje Tharchin was ushered into the presence of the Inmost One of Tibet. This private audience with His Holiness lasted thirty minutes, but, carried away by the emotional high of the moment, he penned a letter the following day stating it had lasted only "about ten minutes"! To say the least, it was an unforgettable experience for the humble man from Poo.

These Tibet:
26. 10. 27.

My dear Sir, Rev. John A. Graham

By His Grace we are keeping well here. On the 4.10.27

I applied that I may be permitted to pay my respects to H. H. the Dalai Lamas and on the 17.10.27 I got reply that I will get the opportunity, but the date is not mentioned, but the Officers told me that "you may call any day, it is better for you not to go far". So I am waiting for the date. Yesterday I got two letters from H. P. D. I. but they were only replies to my letters from Kalimpong; he is very pleased with my letters and he knows that I am here. I hope now I will get soon the opportunity.

It is getting very cold now in the morning and evening, we feel very cold; since day before yesterday it is raining and the mountains are clad with snow. We are trying to return as soon as we get the opportunity, but I am afraid that we may not be able to reach by 20th of November; if we are a little late, then please grant me leave. I am not wasting my time but by His Grace doing something and in due time we may see the fruits.

Please pray for us. We are praying for you all and specially for the Tibetan congregation. I hope Mr. MacDonald is doing well. Please remember us to Rev. Dr. Knock who will come to work among the dear Tibetans if you happen to write him and at the same time please pray for a Press if not a proper one, a lithograph. Please remember me to Mr. Purdie. I have taken lots of photos and if they turn out nice will send some to Mrs. Coffey as she was so kind to me and sent me 6 spools.

My wife asks me to write her best respects to you; her mother and sister are also getting ready to come down with us.

Only these few lines with my best respects.

Knox

Pt. 50 An example of one of many letters Tharchin typed and sent off to his valued friend

and missionary colleague, Rev. John Graham, during his nearly seven-month stay at the Tibetan capital, 1927-8, the highlight of which was indeed his private audience with the Great Man of Tibet. The Babu had carried with him to Lhasa, incidentally, his tiny portable typewriter (see inset) which thus made it easier to dash off numerous letters to friends and Christian associates vitally interested in the spread of the Christian gospel in the Great Closed Land—but especially at the capital itself.

Yours obedient

Tharchin.



Police Office.
Darjeeling.
April 4, 1928.

Dear Tharchin,

Thank you very much for your letter and for the parcel which you brought from Lhasa from my friend Dorjé Thel. I read the contents with great pleasure. I wish to see you very much and to hear all about Lhasa.

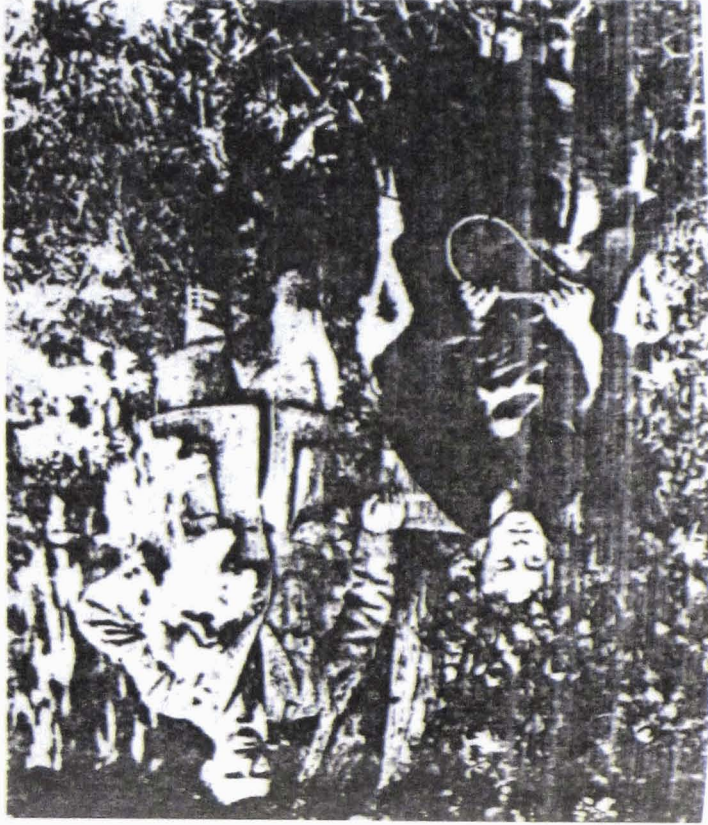
Will you please let me know when you would be coming to Darjeeling? If you have no place to reside, I can arrange to put you up in a friend's house. But you must let me know a week before.

I hope you are keeping fit with your wife.

Yours very truly,

Mr. Tharchin,
FOL HILL,
KALIMPONG.

Pl. 51a, b Shown in this and the following Plate are various personalities and a letter, all having figured in the life and times of Gergan Tharchin during the exciting decade of the 1920s. At the immediate right: Lama Tokan Tada, one of several Japanese friends of the Babu's, pictured with an unidentified British visitor in Lhasa. He and Tharchin would first meet each other at Ghoom sometime during 1912-13, after which the Japanese monk would study Tibetan Buddhism at Lhasa between late



1913 and 1923 where he received Lamaist commandments directly from his spiritual master, Dalai Lama XIII. He would visit Tharchin at his Kalimpong home much later. At far right: A letter to Tharchin from his powerful, influential and, to some extent, controversial acquaintance, Darjeeling's famed Police Inspector and Superintendent of Police, Sonam Wangfel Laden-La. The latter figured prominently, though clandestinely, in carrying out the failed plot of Political Officer "Eric" Bailey to wrest secular authority at Lhasa from the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama and place that power in the hands of Tibet's Army Chief, Tsarong II. Laden-La and Tharchin were simultaneously at the Tibetan capital during the unsuccessful plot's unfolding in 1923-4, but the Indo-Tibetan was unaware of the plot till much later.



Pl. 52a, b Several more personalities who figured in the life and times of Gergan Tharchin during the 1920s. At top above can be seen seated center the then absolute monarch of Sikkim, the Maharaja or *Chogyal* (god-king) of this tiny Himalayan kingdom that was predominantly Mahayana Buddhist in religion like Tibet. Among the assembled dignitaries surrounding the Chogyal, who was on a visit to Kalimpong, can also be seen two Christians who were nonetheless on close friendly terms with the Sikkimese Buddhist monarch: Gergan Tharchin (seated 3rd from right on ground) and his good friend and longtime Minister of Macfarlane Church, Rev. P.S. Targain (standing, 2d from right).

In the bottom picture above, and seated center, is shown the very first hereditary monarch of the Thunder Dragon Kingdom of Bhutan, Maharaja Ugyen Wangchuk (1907-26), who paid a visit to Kalimpong where he stayed at the Bhutan Durbar House, the setting for this photograph. His kingdom, too, was predominantly Mahayana Buddhist in religious faith. Ch. 13 of the present narrative relates how in 1917 and 1919-20 Gergan Tharchin had accompanied SUMI Principal Rev. Dr. Sutherland on two Education Missions to Bhutan at the behest of the Maharaja, where they met the ruler at Bumthang. Not surprisingly, therefore, among the dignitaries gathered around the Bhutanese monarch can be seen the Indo-Tibetan Christian seated on the ground (2d from left), as well as Rev. Targain (whose face is immediately behind and to the right of the gentleman holding a pith helmet)



Pl. 53a, b The Jelep La, scene for Tharchin and the Merrick trekking party in 1931 of one of the most dangerous and strenuous efforts the Indo-Tibetan had ever experienced in crossing this famous pass into Tibet (and told of in detail in Ch. 19 of the present narrative).

Shown immediately above is a photograph of Tibet's longtime Trade Agent at Gyantse and very close confidant of the Great Thirteenth, the Kenchen (or Khenchung) Lama Lobsang Jungne, who also became a personal friend of Tharchin's during the Babu's residence at Gyantse in the 1920s. Tharchin would serve as interpreter for the American author-explorer Henrietta Merrick in her lengthy interview with the Kenchen in 1931.



Pl. 54a-c Forms of Tibetan greeting showing respect. The photo on upper left depicts the beggar's salute: tongue out and thumbs up. The upper right photo pictures a single person revealing the most polite Tibetan salutation, wherein three forms of respectful greeting are executed simultaneously: tongue protruding, right hand outstretched with palm up, and left ear pushed forward.

Nearly all these forms of Tibetan greeting have their origins back in the remote religio-political past of the country, and were still quite evident during the days of Gergan Tharchin's many visits to the Snowy Land.



Pl. 55a,b American scholar on Indian yoga and Tibetan Buddhism Theos Bernard had been greatly assisted by Gergan Tharchin in getting to Lhasa, summer 1937. There, through the Babu's many connections with high Government officials, including the Regent Reting Rimpoche, the American was able to stay for two months and a half, an almost unheard-of length of time for the ordinary foreign visitor in those days of stringent Tibetan frontier policies. Here is shown Bernard with the King Regent and the latter's personal assistant.

The Bottom photo shows the new Tsarong House in Lhasa, built in the early 1920s, as it appeared in 1944, and where Bernard and Tharchin lodged during the summer of 1937.

U. S. Tibetan Scholar Is Missing In Punjab After a Tribal Attack

**Theos Bernard, Author, Feared
Dead by Wife Who Escaped
and Trekked 126 Miles**

NEW DELHI, Oct. 30 (AP)—Mrs. Theos Bernard of New York and Santa Barbara, Calif., who fled on foot 126 miles from tribal raiders in isolated Kulu Valley in the northern Punjab, said today that her husband—a scholar of Tibetan lore—was missing and probably killed.

Mrs. Bernard said there was still hope that her 40-year-old husband, son of G. A. Bernard of Northridge, Calif., had escaped raiders who, shepherds said, had attacked his party.

No trace of his body has been found by searchers, and his wife said it was possible that Mr. Bernard, who speaks Tibetan fluently and is well acquainted with the terrain, might be trying to make his way out through Kashmir or Tibet.

Mr. Bernard—author of a number of books on Tibet and possessor of a large library of manuscripts about the little-known land—began a trip to Ki monastery on Aug. 20. He was last reported seen by a group of shepherds who said the scholar's party was attacked by tribal raiders who killed his Moslem servants. They said they did not know whether Mr. Bernard had escaped, however.

Mrs. Bernard, who arrived here yesterday from Simla, left today for Calcutta, where she plans to wait for news of her husband.

Six days after her husband left the Punjab, she said, Hindu-Moslem rioting spread into the valley.

A Gurkha company commanded by a Captain Wilson arrived in the Kulu Valley on Sept. 16 with trucks to evacuate any Europeans and Americans who wished to go. Shortly afterward cloudbursts washed out the roads and bridges, isolating the trucks.

Mrs. Bernard said that Captain Wilson offered to investigate her husband's disappearance, but satisfied himself that the people in the area where the attack was reported knew nothing about it. She said she learned that her husband was short of food at the time of the reported attack and was at



Theos Bernard

Associated Press

tempting to get back to the Kulu Valley.

Mr. Bernard is the author of "Penthouse of the Gods," published in 1939, which describes his experiences on a journey from India to Lhasa in Tibet where he lived with priests at the Buddhist shrine. Eventually he was received into the Buddhist priesthood there.

He received his Ph.D. degree in Oriental Philosophy from Columbia University and later received a Law Degree at the University of Arizona. He spent a number of years studying in India.

His former wife, opera singer Ganna Walska, described him as a white lama, Yogi and a lawyer. In a suit for divorce last year she said that as a practicing Yogi, Bernard was able to stand on his head for three hours at a time.

His first wife was Miss Viola Wertheim, a niece of Henry Morgenthau Sr. His present wife cannot be identified from available records.

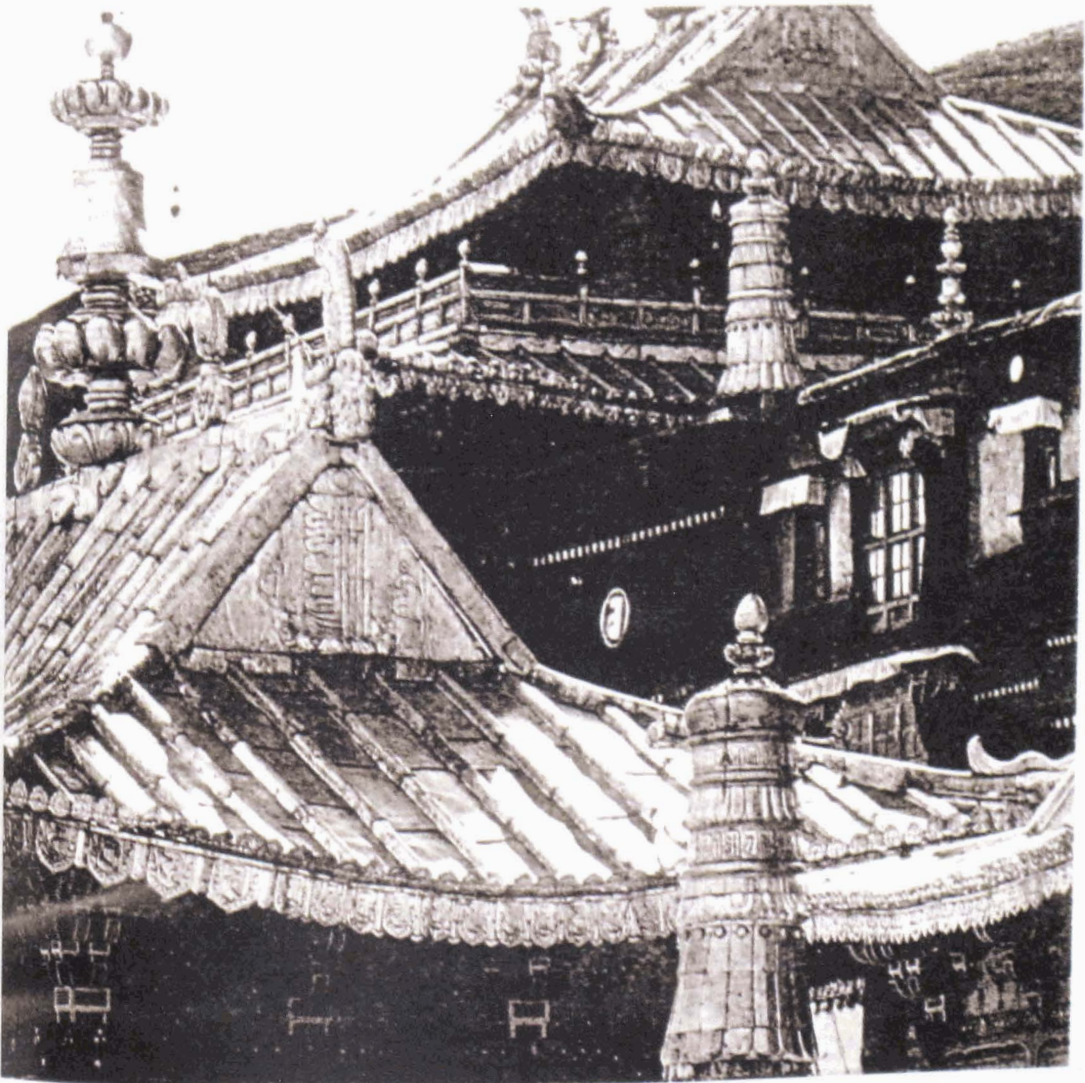
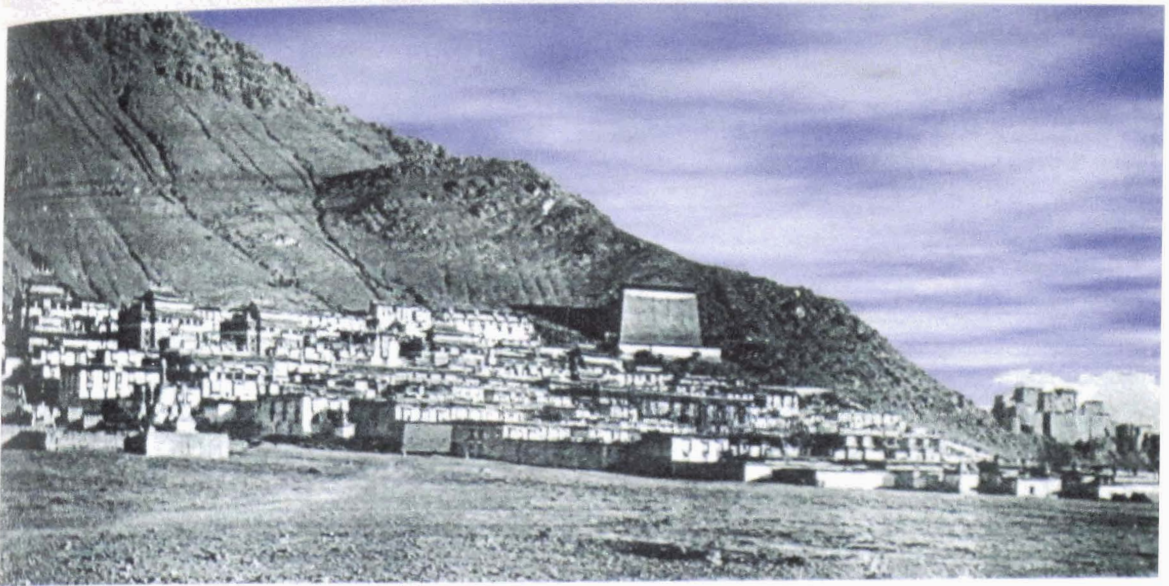
Pl. 56 Exactly ten years after his trip to India and Tibet in 1937, Bernard returned once more to Kalimpong and sought to gain entrance again into the Forbidden Land. But when that country's Government politely but firmly refused his application he went off to conduct research in Spiti Province and adjacent areas of Little Tibet in NW India. The ever helpful Tharchin loaned Bernard one of his servants, a Khampa from East Tibet. But he and the servant became victims of communal strife which had erupted following the partition between India and Pakistan that same year of 1947. One of several articles on Bernard's whereabouts and final end appeared in the New York Times. He was never heard from again.

Pl. 57 The great Tibetan Buddhist Reformer Jay Tsong Khapa (1356-1418) from East Tibet. He had founded in 1409 the famous Ganden Monastery outside Lhasa, one of the oldest in Tibet (see next Plate). In fact, upon his death his grand mausoleum was erected at Ganden, where he had lived out the rest of his years. The Reformer is revered as one of the greatest saints in the Tibetan Buddhist Church. Tharchin would accompany Bernard and his party to Ganden and many other celebrated monasteries in and around the Sacred City where the American would offer up thousands of butter lamps, prepared, so far as collecting the ingredients were concerned, with the generous help of this party's Lhasa host, General Tsarong.





Pl. 58a-c Pictured above are the three great State Monasteries or Ecclesiastical Seats of Tibetan Buddhism at Lhasa. Prior to 1950 these three religious institutions had for centuries wielded enormous religio-political and even economic power over the country. Each of them, as it were, was a city in itself, so vast were they in houses, alleyways, shrines, cells and monkish populations (one of them, for example, having possessed in its heyday as many as 10,000 inmates!). Top to bottom above: Drepung, and to the right, the Nechung State Oracle Temple; Sera; and Ganden, showing the Reformer Tsong Khapa's mausoleum at left center (the large red structure).



Pl. 59a, b A view of Trashilhunpo Monastery, ecclesiastical seat of the Panchen Lamas of Tibet, with the Shigatse Dzong visible in the distance a mile away on the right guarding the land's second largest city. Shown in the second photograph is a part of the golden roofs of the Monastery.

It is known that Gergan Tharchin had visited Shigatse and the Monastery twice, in 1924 with Doring Thaiji and in 1937 with Theos Bernard, the latter being the longer stay of the two. It was while here with Bernard that the Babu for the first time witnessed in all its gruesome detail the ritual of "sky burial" (next two Plates).



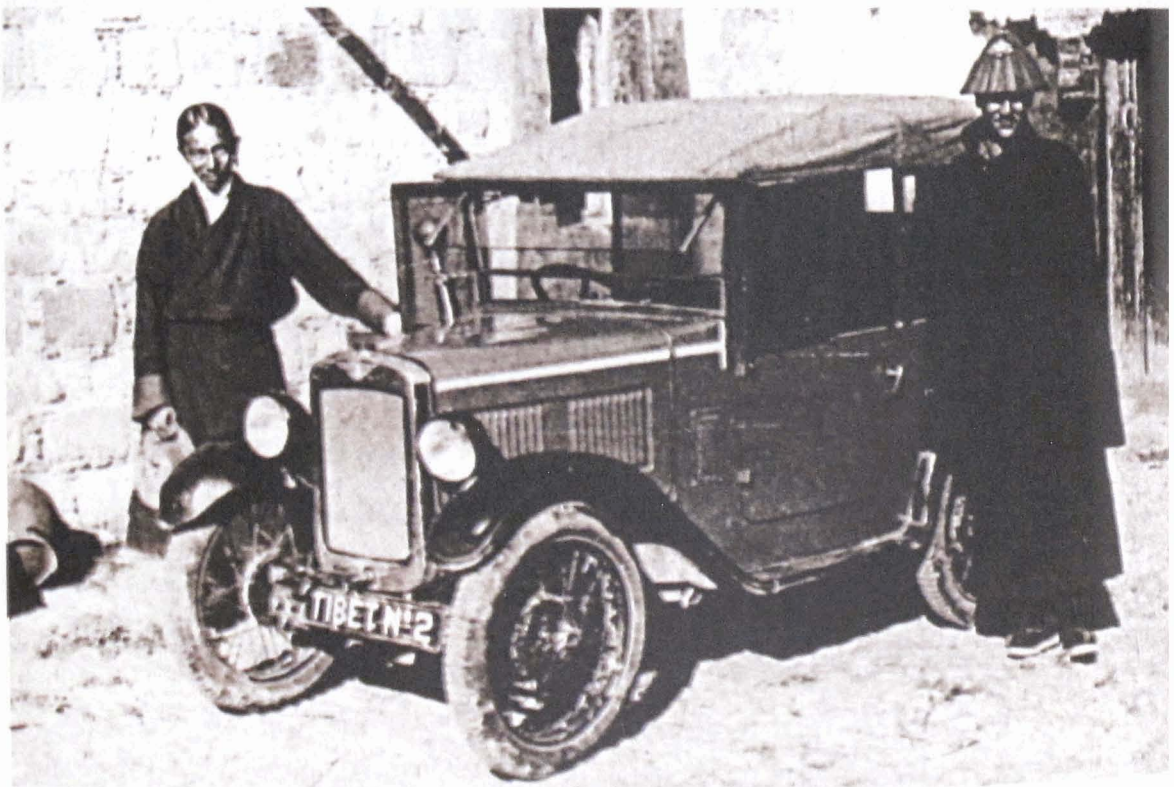
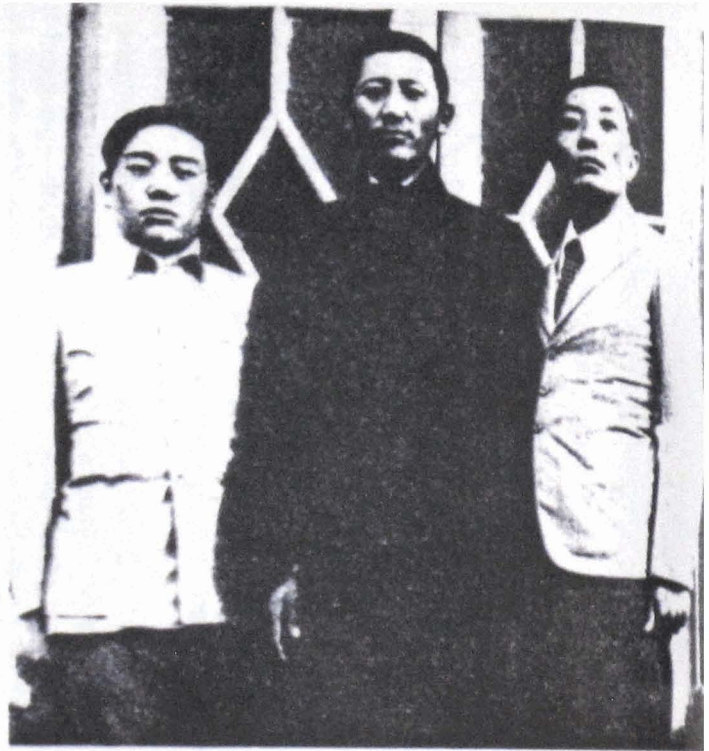
Pl. 60a-c This and the next Plate's photos present various aspects of the ritual known as "air," "celestial" or "sky burial": the most common method of disposing of the dead in Tibet; which is to say, how Tibetans feed a human corpse to the vultures and ravens. Beginning with the topmost photo above, some "outcast undertakers" called *ragyapas* are shown, whose Lhasa homes—isolated from the rest of the city's inhabitants—have walls built with animal horns; next, a corpse is shown being carried away by two Lhasan *ragyapas* to a special spot, usually on a hill top; where, in this Plate's final photo, there is shown a large flat flay rock area, upon which the corpse is laid, usually face up, and where the dismemberment or mutilation ceremony commences.





Pl. 61a, b Because the sky burial ritual had been occurring for centuries in Tibet, the vultures, upon seeing dense smoke rising skyward from a wood fire that has been lit, will commence to appear out of nowhere and gather at the dismemberment site, as seen in the top photo above. Here they await the signal given by one of the ragyapas, at which point they rush in to consume the flesh, crushed bones, and brains of the corpse.

However, not all bones are crushed for the birds or pounded into a paste for the dogs. Some parts of the skeletal remains might be kept back for the creation of various kinds of religious art objects. For example, human bones may be carved up into varying shapes and sizes and, by attaching them together, be made into ceremonial aprons for lamas to wear during religious festivals and other observances, such as is shown in the second photo of a lama magician from northern Tibet who is wearing an apron made of carved human bones; thus "reminding the Buddhist faithful of their own mortality."



Pl. 62a-c Depicted counter-clockwise are three Tibetan friends of Gergan Tharchin who in the late 1930s and early '40s ended up residing for a considerable length of time in the Babu's Indian hill station: the former favorite of the Great Thirteenth, Kuchar Thupten Kunphela, here shown seated on a chair in full dress; another also standing with hat in hand at the side of the TIBET No. 2 motor car which the Dalai Lama had allowed him to drive in Lhasa; and in the final photo can be seen standing together in Kalimpong (left to right), Rapel Pangdatsang, Kunphela, and Changlo Chen Gung Kusho. In one way or another Gergan Tharchin would befriend each of these men who were all "on the outs" with the central Tibetan government of that day.



Pl. 63a-c Some other events of the early and mid-1930s which impinged themselves on the life of Gergan Tharchin are reflected in the above illustrations: the arrival at Babu's home in late 1937 of Changlo Chen and Kunphela seeking redress of their forced exile outside Lhasa meant for the Babu taking these men to see the Political Officer for Tibet at the by now familiar Residency at Gangtok, a British government landmark he would frequently have occasion to visit during the rest of his career; in 1931

Tharchin would find a new missionary in charge of the Scots Mission at Kalimpong, the Rev. William M. Scott, who would also on occasion temporarily be in charge of the Christian work among Tibetans there; and the receipt in 1937 of a postcard from the Tibetan Buddhist scholar and translator of the famed "Tibetan Book of the Dead," W.Y. Evans-Wentz, requesting, if possible, a room at the Tharchin home during his visit to Kalimpong, meant that, given Tharchin's well-known generous nature, he would be hosting at his residence another of a growing number of scholars, researchers and writers who would find their way to his doorstep.

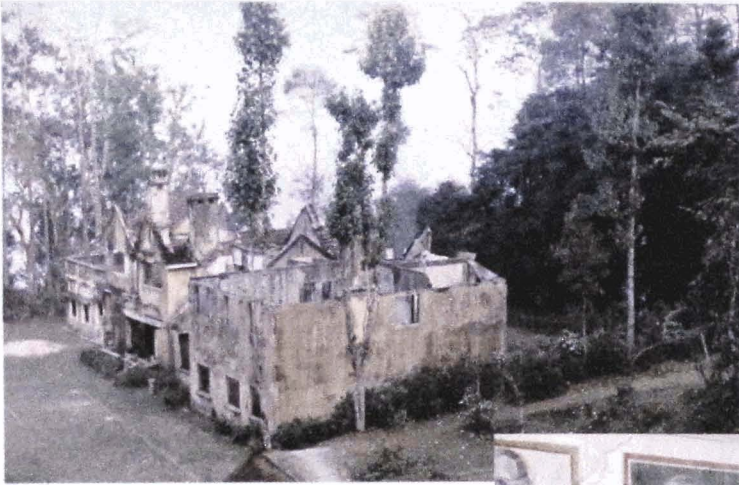
Dooqeeling Nov. 25, 1935. 2x1 exp.
 Dear Son, - I met you in the Nepali Curio Shop when you had the big Buddhas. Mr. Kelly tells me that you can advise me if I could find an inexpensive room to put up in for awhile if I come to Kalimpong at end of this month during the Mala. Could you put me up in your place or find some other simple quarters? I do not care to go to any hotel. I live on vegetable

W.Y. EVANS-WENTZ
 110 West 11th St.
 New York City

INDIA
 POST
 ADDRESS ONLY

Mr. Tharchin,
 Paul Hill,
 Hall,
 Kalimpong
 (Bengal)

Writing space:
 can find and look
 for myself.
 Thanking you
 for information,
 I am, sincerely yours,
 W.Y. Evans-Wentz



Pl. 64a-d Shown here are the ruins of the famous Gauripur House and garden, Kalimpong, originally built by the Maharaja of Gauripur in Bengal, but which later became the home of Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore whenever he was vacationing in the hill station. While visiting in Kalimpong through the years he had struck up a very warm friendship with Rev. Dr. John Graham, a friendship which only ceased with their deaths a year apart in the early

1940s. Later, the Independent Government of India came into possession of the property and converted it into a Teachers Training Institute that existed till the structure was torched in anger in 1988 by supporters of the Darjeeling District Gorkhaland political agitation movement of the 1980s and early '90s. Though heavily damaged by the fire, one can still discern clearly the



portraits of those thinkers, poets and religious leaders who were obviously an inspiration to Tagore. First can be seen a trio of great Nepali poets (left to right above the open doorway): Lekhnath Paudel, Bal Krishna Sam, and Laxmi Prasad Devkota; then, to the extreme right of the latter, Gautama Buddha; to the left of Jesus, Ram Krishna

Parma Hansh, a great guru within the Bengali community of Hinduism; Tagore's very intimate friend and Father of Independent India, Mahatma Gandhi, seated at his proverbial spinning wheel; and to the right of Gandhi, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Moslem thinker-philosopher and a former President of India.



PHOTO/ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

- Plate
- 1 David Tharchin, 1992.
- 2a-c a-d John A. Graham, *On the Threshold of Three Closed Lands* (Edinburgh/London, 1897), 48, 60, 138, 142.
e David Tharchin, 1992.
- 3a-d a,c,d Graham, *On the Threshold of Three Closed Lands* (Edinburgh/London, 1897), 33, 56, 53.
b David Tharchin, 1992.
- 4a,b a SUM Institution (B.K. Subba, ed.), *SUMITE Centenary Souvenir* (Kalimpong, 1986), unnumbered page.
b Cindy L. Perry, *Nepali around the World* (Kathmandu, 1997), 50.
- 5a-c a D.G. Manuel, *A Gladdening River* (London, 1914), 18.
b SUM Institution (B.K. Subba, ed.), *SUMITE Centenary Souvenir* (Kalimpong, 1986), unnumbered page.
c David Tharchin, 1992.
d G. Tharchin's photo collection, ThPaK.
e Billy Bray, in Billy Bray, "Sikkim," in Donald E. Hoke, ed., *The Church in Asia* (Chicago, 1975), 555.
- 6 James R. Minto, *Graham of Kalimpong* (Edinburgh, 1974).
- 7a,b Picture Post Cards printed at Rakmo Press Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.
- 8a-d David Tharchin, 1992.
- 9a-f a Florence Donaldson, *Lepcha Land* (London, 1891), 44.
b David Macdonald, *Twenty Years in Tibet* (Philadelphia, 1932), 258.
c J.C. White, *Sikkim and Bhutan* (London, 1909), opposite p. 234.
d Angelo Nodi, "Little Buddha," appearing in Bhutan brochure published by The America-Bhutan Council, Ojai CA USA.
e Joseph McColskey, The Springer Group, appearing in *ibid.*
f J.C. White, *Sikkim and Bhutan* (London, 1909), opposite p. 222.
- 10a-d a Margaret D. Williamson, *Memoirs of a Political Officer's Wife in Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan* (London, 1987), 64.
b Charles A. Bell, *Tibet Past and Present* (Oxford, 1924), 1.
c William M. McGovern, *To Lhasa in Disguise* (London, 1924), 120.
d Francis E. Younghusband, *India and Tibet* (London, 1910), 216.
- 11 Perceval Landon, *Lhasa the Mysterious*, 2 vols (London, 1905), 1:207.
- 12a,b a *Ibid.*, 211.
b Edmund Candler, *The Unveiling of Lhasa* (London, 1905), 182.
- 13a-b a William M. McGovern, *To Lhasa in Disguise* (New York, 1924), 16.
b Rinchen Dolma (Mary La) Taring, *Daughter of Tibet* (London, 1970), 113. For name ID in photo, see same photograph's caption at Plate 12 of D.N. Tsarong, *In the Service of His Country* (Ithaca NY USA, 2000).
- 4 Charles A. Bell, *Tibet Past and Present* (Oxford, 1924), 193.
- 5a-g a Charles A. Bell, *The People of Tibet* (Oxford, 1928), 128.
b *Missionary Review of the World* (Apr. 1922):291.

Plate

- c Francis E. Younghusband, *India and Tibet* (London, 1910), 268.
d-g Theos Bernard, *Penthouse of the Gods* (New York/London, 1939), 81.
- 16a-d a Bell Collection: Copyright, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford and appearing as Plate 7 in Alex McKay, *Tibet and the British Raj* (London, 1997).
b Still from Captain John Noel's motion picture, *Climbing Mount Everest* (1922), as published in Peter H. Hansen, "The Dancing Lamas of Everest: Cinema, Orientalism, and Anglo-Tibetan Relations in the 1920s," *American Historical Review* (June 1996):723. Copyright, BFI Stills, Posters and Designs.
c Charles A. Bell, *Tibet Past and Present* (Oxford, 1924), 164.
d Harold R. Fletcher, *A Quest of Flowers; the Plant Explorations of Frank Ludlow and George Sherriff* (Edinburgh, 1975).
- 17a-c a Perceval Landon, *Lhasa the Mysterious*, 2 vols (London, 1905), I:250.
b *Tibet, the Sacred Realm: Photographs 1880-1950* (Millerton NY USA, 1983), 149.
c Marco Pallis, *The Way and the Mountain* (London, 1960), 162.
- 18a,b a Francis E. Younghusband, *India and Tibet* (London, 1910), 250.
b Perceval Landon, *Lhasa the Mysterious*, 2 vols (London, 1905), II:286.
- 19 Hugh E. Richardson, *Ceremonies of the Lhasa Year* (London, 1993), cover photo.
- 20a,b a William M. McGovern, *To Lhasa in Disguise* (London, 1924), 268.
b Charles A. Bell, *The People of Tibet* (Oxford, 1928), 131.
- 21a-d a,c,d *Ibid.*, 264, 265, 265.
b Charles A. Bell, *The Religion of Tibet* (Oxford, 1931), 186.
- 22a,b Perceval Landon, *Lhasa the Mysterious*, 2 vols (London, 1905), II:292, 293.
- 23a,b N. N. Jigmei et al., *Tibet* (London, 1981), 226, 228.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 172.
- 25a,b a *Ibid.*, 229.
b Luree Miller, *On Top of the World: Five Women Explorers in Tibet* (New York, 1976), 153.
- 26a-d Tharchin family photograph collection, noting the following information:
a In his own handwriting, this picture is dated by Tharchin as 20/2/20—i.e., 20 Feb. 1920, well before he met his future bride in Lhasa. Taken in Kalimpong.
b Karma Dechhen in Lhasa prior to her marriage to Tharchin. Conceivably, he may even have taken this photo during his first visit to Lhasa, 1923-4.
c Taken of the married couple at Pyne Studio, Kalimpong, sometime during the latter 1920s.
d Taken in Kalimpong at about the same time as c.
- 27a-e a Eileen Younghusband Collection, and appearing in Patrick French, *Younghusband, the Last Great Imperial Adventurer* (London: Flamingo, 1995), between pp. 136-7.
b Royal Geographical Society, and appearing in *ibid.*, opposite p. 137.
c Bailey Collection: Copyright, Oriental and India Office Library and Records, and appearing in Alex McKay, *Tibet and the British Raj* (London, 1997), 134. Inset of Major Chandra: taken from Photo Plate 13 in D.N. Tsarong, *In the Service of His Country* (Ithaca NY USA, 2000).
d *Tibet, the Sacred Realm: Photographs 1880-1950* (Millerton NY USA, 1983), 155.
e Appearing in a 58-page booklet on the life of Sardar Bahadur S.W. Laden-La published in both English and Nepali and "Printed at the Mani Press, Kalimpong." Found among the ThPaK.

- | Plate | |
|-------|--|
| 28a-d | a Copyright, British Library, and appearing in Nikolai S. Kuleshov, <i>Russia's Tibet File</i> , ed. by Alexander Berzin and John Bray (Dharamsala, 1996), xiii.
b George Seaver, <i>Francis Younghusband, Explorer and Mystic</i> (London, 1952), 201.
c Charles A. Bell, <i>Tibet Past and Present</i> (Oxford, 1924), 63.
d Ekai Kawaguchi, <i>Three Years in Tibet</i> (Madras, 1909), 1. |
| 29a,b | Francis E. Younghusband, <i>India and Tibet</i> (London, 1910), 306, 273. |
| 30 | Charles A. Bell, <i>Tibet Past and Present</i> (Oxford, 1924), 122. |
| 31 | B. Broomhall, Secretary of CIM, <i>The Evangelization of the World; a Missionary Band: a Record of Consecration, and an Appeal</i> (1885, under title: <i>A Missionary Band</i> ; 2d enl. ed., London, 1888), 1. |
| 32a,b | a <i>Ibid.</i> , 23.
b Susette M. Taylor (Annie's sister), "The Only Englishwoman in Tibet." <i>Wide World Magazine</i> (London) (Sept. 1904):534. |
| 33a,b | a Isabel S. Robson. <i>Two Lady Missionaries in Tibet</i> (London, 1909), 82.
b Susette M. Taylor (Annie's sister), "The Only Englishwoman in Tibet," <i>Wide World Magazine</i> (London) (Aug. 1904):442. |
| 34a-d | a,b David Tharchin, 1992.
c D. G. Manuel, <i>A Gladdening River</i> (London, 1914), 56.
d Author, 1987. |
| 35a-c | a Tharchin family photograph collection.
b,c Lillian Carlson et al., <i>If the Vision Tarry</i> (Minneapolis, 1988), back cover photos. |
| 36a-c | a,c Tharchin family photograph collection.
b David Tharchin, 1987. |
| 37a-d | a-c Charles A. Bell, <i>Tibet Past and Present</i> (Oxford, 1924), 92, 92, 152.
d _____, <i>The Religion of Tibet</i> (Oxford, 1931), 204. |
| 38a,b | a <i>Ibid.</i> , 208.
b Theos Bernard, <i>Penthouse of the Gods</i> (New York/London, 1939), 174. |
| 39 | <i>Moravian Missions</i> (Dec. 1927):90; the same photographic reproduction of Asboe's Tibetan Newspaper appears again in <i>ibid.</i> (June 1930):47. |
| 40a-c | a Impression derived from a photographic reproduction of this first issue which appeared in <i>Lungta</i> (Winter 1998 Special Issue, "Christian Missionaries and Tibet"):12.
b Author, 1987.
c Impression taken from the front page of the Silver Jubilee Number of the <i>Yulchog Sosoi Sargyur Melong (The Tibet Mirror)</i> , Vol. XIX, Nos. 1 & 2 (1 Dec. 1950-1 Jan. 1951), ThPaK. |
| 41a,b | ThPaK. |
| 42a,b | a ThPaK.
b Author, 1987. |
| 43 | Front page of <i>New York Times</i> , Late City Edition, 27 Jan. 1934. |
| 44a,b | a Charles A. Bell, <i>The Religion of Tibet</i> (Oxford, 1931), frontispiece in color.
b Margaret D. Williamson, <i>Memoirs of a Political Officer's Wife in Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan</i> (London, 1987), 161. |

Plate

- 45a-d a,b Archibald T. Steele, *In the Kingdom of the Dalai Lama* (Sedona AZ USA, 1993), 65.
 c Lowell Thomas, Jr., *Out of This World* (London, 1951), 80.
 d Charles A. Bell, *Tibet Past and Present* (Oxford, 1924), 202.
- 46a-c a _____, *The People of Tibet* (Oxford, 1928), 4.
 b Nicholas Notovitch, *The Unknown Life of Christ*, trans. Violet Crispe (London, 1895), frontispiece.
 c India Office Library and Records, British Library, and published in Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet* (Berkeley, 1989), 126.
- 47 Charles A. Bell, *Tibet Past and Present* (Oxford, 1924), frontispiece in color.
- 48a-d a William M. McGovern, *To Lhasa in Disguise* (London, 1924), 306.
 b Alexandra David-Neel, *With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet* (London, 1931), 4.
 c Radio Times Hulton Picture Library and published in Peter Fleming, *Bayonets to Lhasa* (London, 1961), 33.
 d Margaret D. Williamson, *Memoirs of a Political Officer's Wife in Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan* (London, 1987), 96.
- 49 Hugh E. Richardson, *Ceremonies of the Lhasa Year* (London, 1993), 103.
- 50 Letter, Graham Papers; inset photo of typewriter, S.G. Tharchin, 2004.
- 51a,b a Tokan Tada, *The Thirteenth Dalai Lama* (Tokyo, 1965), Plate XXVI.
 b Letter, Laden-La to Tharchin, Darjeeling, 4 Apr. 1928, ThPaK.
- 52a,b Tharchin family photograph collection.
- 53a,b a Perceval Landon, *Lhasa the Mysterious*, 2 vols (London, 1905), I:49.
 b William M. McGovern, *To Lhasa in Disguise* (New York, 1924), 97.
- 54a-c a Charles A. Bell, *The People of Tibet* (Oxford, 1928), 134.
 b Laurence A. Waddell, *Among the Himalayas*, 2d ed. (Westminster, 1900), 172.
 c Sven Hedin, *Trans-Himalaya* (London, 1909), as published in Peter Hopkirk, *Trespassers on the Roof of the World: the Race for Lhasa* (London, 1982), 166.
- 55a,b a Theos Bernard, *Penthouse of the Gods* (New York/London, 1939), 194.
 b D.N. Tsarong, *In the Service of His Country* (Ithaca NY USA, 2000), Plate 20.
- 56 *New York Times*, 31 Oct. 1947.
- 57 Ekai Kawaguchi, *Three Years in Tibet* (Madras, 1909), 414.
- 58a-c a Charles A. Bell, *Tibet Past and Present* (Oxford, 1924), 52.
 b Alexandra David-Neel, *With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet* (London, 1931), 114.
 c Charles A. Bell, *The Religion of Tibet* (Oxford, 1931), 100.
- 59a,b a _____, *Tibet Past and Present* (Oxford, 1924), 85.
 b N. N. Jigmei et al., *Tibet* (London, 1981), 277.
- 60a-c a,c Charles A. Bell, *The People of Tibet* (Oxford, 1928), 137, 290.
 b _____, *Tibet Past and Present* (Oxford, 1924), 183.
- 61a,b a *Ibid.*
 b Alexandra David-Neel, *With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet* (London, 1931), 296.
- 62a-c a Charles A. Bell, *Portrait of the Dalai Lama* (London, 1946), Plate 49.
 b Margaret D. Williamson, *Memoirs of a Political Officer's Wife in Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan* (London, 1987), 64.

Plate

- c Melvyn C. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet* (Berkeley, 1989), 451.
- 63a-c a J.C. White, *Sikkim and Bhutan* (London, 1909), opposite p. 22.
b SUM Institution (B.K. Subba, ed.), *SUMITE Centenary Souvenir* (Kalimpong, 1986),
unnumbered page.
c Post card, Evans-Wentz to Tharchin, Darjeeling, 25 Nov. 1935, ThPaK.
- 64a-d David Tharchin, 1992.

END-NOTES

The reader is referred back to the “Abbreviations” page at the front of the volume for an important statement and explanation about the abbreviations employed in these End-Notes for documenting the use of the Gergan Tharchin Unpublished “Memoirs” (GTUM). A further word, however, needs to be appended here about this same documentation.

The reader will notice from a perusal of these End-Notes that the documentation on the use of the GTUM material appears in the following places within the listing of each of the Text chapter’s End-Notes:

- (1) at the very beginning of the section of End-Notes for each chapter there appears a *general* citation which includes:
 - (a) the total pagination of the relevant part of the GTUM material used in composing the Text of that chapter of the present narrative, and
 - (b) a summary enumeration of the specific pages of the GTUM material from which were taken particular quotations appearing in the Text of that chapter of the present narrative (see at the head of Ch. 12, e.g., which reads: GTUM TsMs, 90-6; quotes: 91, 93n., 94-5, 96);
- (2) in those important instances where unambiguity about the specific GTUM pagination was felt necessary to provide the reader with beyond what (1) (b) above already provides, there is indicated in some of the individual end-notes for each chapter of the present narrative a GTUM source citation which gives the particular page(s) that was used or quoted from (see, e.g., end-note 46 of Ch. 13); and finally,
- (3) in those individual end-notes themselves in which quotes and/or information have been included that were derived from the GTUM material, appropriate documentation, with an indication of the specific page(s) of the GTUM, has been provided (see, e.g., end-note 60 of Ch. 14).

Chapter 12

GTUM TsMs, 90-6; quotes: 91, 93n., 94-5, 95-6, 96.

1. Billy Bray 1975a, p. 561.

2. Manuel 1914, p. 10 (emphasis Manuel's).

3. Weir 1900, p. 73.

4. All quotations in the discussion of Christian Missions and education are from Lindell 1979, p. 72.

5. In one of his early letters from Gaya Macfarlane wrote: "The hearers are generally a band which one of our brethren in the Punjab truly described as generally consisting of 'lewd fellows of the baser sort.' They laugh and oppose and revile until one is sick of their company. Not a soul is himself seeking after truth. Not a Hindu or Mohammedan ever comes to our house to inquire after Christ. Who can be satisfied with such a state of things?" And in another letter, written in 1868, he makes it even plainer his discouragement with gospel preaching there: "The more I become acquainted with the Hindus, the more do I despair of bazaar preaching producing any effect upon them. They are the most unspiritual, earthly, low-minded, deceitful, subtle, cunning, characterless, unearnest race of men that I either saw or read or heard of...." Quoted in Manuel 1914, p. 9.

6. Hewat 1960, p. 158. See also Manuel 1914, pp. 9-10 for additional details on this momentous move from Gaya to the Darjeeling area.

7. Lindell 1979, pp. 69-74. See also pp. 55 and 75-83 for more on his life.

8. Kilgour 1931, pp. 182-3.

9. Hewat 1960, p. 161. In fact, Rev. Kilgour, longtime member of the Scottish Mission at Darjeeling and Kalimpong who worked with Prasad on the Nepali Bible at one period and who in 1909 became the Editorial Superintendent in London of the British and Foreign Bible Society, made it quite clear that to Rev. Pradhan was "due the greatest credit of putting the whole Bible into his mother tongue." Kilgour 1931, p. 183. The entire translation was finished and printed in 1915, and subsequently, in recognition of his remarkable achievements in Bible translation, Pradhan was made an Honorary Life Governor of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Lindell 1979, pp. 55, 80.

10. At Kalimpong, a catechist of the Scottish Mission in Macfarlane's day and later in the days of his successor, Rev. Graham, was more than what is usually implied by the term. Beyond being a teacher of catechumens and beyond being an indigenous teacher of the Christian Scriptures, the catechist of a local body of believers was in essence "the pastor, doing all the work of a Minister, except the administration of the sacraments" (i.e., communion, baptism, marriage), this latter responsibility, until such catechists were eventually ordained, being administered by the missionaries. Graham 1897, pp. 138-9.

11. Regarding Sukhman, see *ibid.*, 55, 58-9, 149. See also Lindell 1979, pp. 74-5. For both Sukhman and Ganga Prasad Pradhan, see Manuel 1914, pp. 12-14.

12. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Macfarlane's immediate successor, Rev. Sutherland, must have felt differently; since by the early 1890s he had established a Preaching-House at a strategic point at the corner of the Bazaar in Kalimpong (to where elements of the Scots Mission, as will be seen, were transferred), it having been built on that site for the purpose of providing a place from whose steps the gospel could be proclaimed to a vast concourse of people who each week descended upon the hill station in droves to buy and sell on market day. Every Saturday (formerly held on Sundays till the Christian community, for various reasons, successfully petitioned the Government to change the day), as many as four to five thousand people would be in Kalimpong on this exciting day. Whereupon Sutherland and his Training School teachers and students would draw the crowds by their singing and take turns at various intervals delivering gospel addresses in different languages to the milling people that gathered around the steps of the Preaching-House. Rev. Graham, in his 1897 volume on the Mission's work, noted that by this means many "from near and far" heard the gospel for the first time, while others attended the preaching from week to week. He acknowledged, however, that "the direct conversions from such bazaar preaching" were "not numerous," but believed it to be, nonetheless, an important agency, among others,

by which the gospel could be brought to bear upon the people. Graham 1897, pp. 26, 51-4. In his own day, Tharchin was also to use this technique of evangelism, especially among the Tibetans in Kalimpong; see Ch. 16.

13. This little volume and its Q and A's are described and quoted from in Lindell 1979, p. 73.

14. Quoted in Manuel 1914, p. 11.

15. O'Malley 1989, p. 171.

16. Quoted in *ibid.*, 175.

17. *Ibid.*, 171.

18. Quoted in Manuel 1914, p. 16.

19. Weir 1900, p. 103.

20. Much of the information on what happened during Macfarlane's furlough in Scotland is taken from Manuel 1914, pp. 18, 125-6 and Weir 1900, p. 100.

21. *Ibid.*, 101.

22. Hewat 1960, p. 159; see also Weir 1900, p. 101.

23. *Ibid.*, 101-2.

24. *Ibid.*, 102.

25. *Ibid.*

26. Bray 1975a, p. 561.

27. The quote is found in Weir 1900, p. 102; the sources for the rest of the information found in this paragraph are: *ibid.*; Simick 1986, p. 7; and Manuel 1914, pp. 126-7.

28. Quoted in Perry 1997, p. 43.

29. Weir 1900, p. 102.

30. Manuel 1914, p. 127.

31. Weir 1900, p. 104.

32. The source for most of the information in this paragraph is *ibid.* For on Kilgour, Rhenock and his magic lantern, see the April 1893 issue of the *Darjeeling, Kalimpong & Sikkim News*, a small newsletter published by the Church of Scotland's Eastern Himalaya Mission. For on Macara and Chidam, see Louis 1894, p. 26.

33. The quote and all data are from Weir 1900, p. 104.

34. Quoted from R. Sada and S. Mukhia, eds., *Kalimpong Girls High School Centenary Memoirs 1890-1990* (Kalimpong: GHS Magazine Committee, 1991), 4.

35. The creation of the Young Men's Guild within the Church of Scotland in 1881 had occurred but a few years before the Guild itself appointed Graham as its first missionary to be sent abroad, he ending up going, by the will of God, to the Eastern Himalaya Scots Mission based in Kalimpong. The Guild's motto was, "We seek the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness," and its aim, to unite "societies which have for their object to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, by promoting the spiritual and intellectual life of young men, and by encouraging them to undertake works of Christian usefulness." This the Guild was able to fulfill by uniting the young men of the Church of Scotland in a remarkably successful fellowship of prayer, study and service. The Guild's founder was the young Graham's mentor, counselor and Divinity School instructor at Edinburgh University, the Very Reverend Professor W. Charteris. The latter so appreciated Graham's six years of labor as Clerk of the Committee that managed the Church's magazine, *The Christian Life and Work*, that when a paid secretary was being sought for the Guild, he was immediately appointed. And thus began Graham's association with the Young Men's Guild, which by 1897 had grown to 681 branches scattered everywhere in the world where the Church of Scotland was to be found, and with a membership of 25,871: all of whom were now greatly interested in the Scots Mission in

Kalimpong, supporting it as “their” Mission, and Graham in particular, throughout the latter’s lifetime of service in India. Sources: Graham 1897, p. 162; and Minto 1974, pp. 7-9.

36. The Report of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Church of Scotland for the year 1889 reads in part as follows: “Mr. Sutherland has handed over the charge of the Kalimpong Mission to Mr. Graham, the first missionary of the Young Men’s Guild. In recording the severance of the connection between Mr. Sutherland and this Mission, your Committee would desire to express their deep sense of the noble service which Mr. Sutherland has rendered to the cause of Missions...” Quoted in Manuel 1914, p. 20. The transference of administration of the Kalimpong Mission from the missionary hands of the Foreign Missions Committee to the missionary hands of the Guild Mission came about as follows. At the time that Guild member (and Secretary) John Graham volunteered to be a Guild missionary, the Guild formed a Subcommittee and submitted to the Foreign Missions Committee of the Church of Scotland its proposals with respect to the selection of a suitable overseas field for mission work. The Missions Committee of the Church, as described by Graham’s biographer, James Minto, was “concerned about the state of their funds” and “suggested that instead of starting a new station the Guild should relieve them of the financial burden of running an existing station.” Furthermore, the Missions Committee declared “that they would more than welcome the assistance and cooperation of the Guild in the Kalimpong division of the very successful Darjeeling Mission [i.e., the Darjeeling and Kalimpong Missions].” In response the Guild’s Subcommittee gave its assent to this proposal provided, in the words of Minto, “that there was such an individuality in the Mission as would let it [the Kalimpong Mission] be known as the Guild Mission” and that “the field should be such that the Guild could send a man [of their own] and not merely contribute to the support of one [Sutherland, or whoever] already there.” It was only at this stage in the negotiations that the Guild’s Subcommittee revealed that ‘their efficient and industrious Secretary,’ Mr. John A. Graham, M.A., had volunteered his services.” The rest is history. Minto 1974, pp. 13-14.

37. All the foregoing information and quotations concerning the relationship between these two missionaries, as well as the commendation with regard to Sutherland, are from *ibid.*, 19, 24-5, 38-41. The latter statement quoted, about what Sutherland foresaw coming, is doubtless based on what he himself once said prior to 1914: “If India is to be evangelized, it must be by native evangelists. The missionary from Scotland is a necessary element in the Himalayan Church now; but gradually he must be eliminated. He is a foreigner cast in a different mold from the people, and to a large extent he must always remain an outsider. One great object of the Training School is to train the best of the Christian youth to be the future leaders of the native Church and more and more put on them responsibility and service.” Quoted in Manuel 1914, pp. 133-4.

37a. Quoted from minutes of (a) Council meeting (at Siliguri), 27 Jan. 1921, p. 7 and (b) Council meeting (at Kalimpong), 5-6 June 1924, p. 1, EHMC Minutes 1921-1935.

38. Quoted in Manuel 1914, p. 20.

39. Because the Mission, with the arrival of Graham, began receiving support from the Young Men’s Guild back in Scotland and elsewhere, it was only natural that Guild branches began to spring up in the various church districts belonging to the Church of Scotland’s Eastern Himalaya Mission. The branch at Kalimpong that met in this House for Bible study and general knowledge, reported Graham in 1897, “has proved itself to be one of the best factors in the Mission work.” “Some of the natives are good talkers and keen debaters,” added Graham, “and from their consideration of various subjects valuable suggestions have arisen and many advances made.” Graham 1897, pp. 143-4.

40. Minto 1974, p. 25.

41. Per Simick 1986, p. 7.

42. Graham 1897, p. 145.

43. Minto 1974, pp. 24-5.

44. Lindell 1979, p. 77.

45. Graham 1897, pp. 149, 154.

46. As it turned out, this honor would fall to Gergan Tharchin in 1917 and 1919-20. See next chapter.

47. Hewat 1960, p. 162 (emphasis added).

48. The ten are: Lepcha, Nepali (or Parbuti), Tibetan, Santali, Chinese, English, Bengali, Hindi, Hindustani (or Urdu), and Kol (or Uraon, and spoken by the Kols of Chota Nagpur). Graham, 1897, p. 70. The text of John 3:16 in the New Testament is, of course, as follows: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

49. Hewat 1960, p. 162. And to round out the picture still further, by the end of the next thirty years (which period would include Tharchin's early involvement in the Mission) these already encouraging statistics were augmented by even more impressive achievements. For by 1930 there was a Christian community of nearly 10,000 in the area worked by the Scottish Mission, supported by a total staff of only 27 missionaries. The work on the western side of the Mission's area of labor in the "wedge-district" (the latter including the foothills and jungles known as the Terai on the west and the Duars on the east), and directed, of course, from Darjeeling and Kurseong, had a missionary contingent of but two married men and four ladies assisted by three ordained Indian workers, and 60 Indian helpers. But the section of the Mission area worked from Kalimpong had 15 of the 27 missionaries residing there; there being ample justification, however, for having a majority of the 27 situated at this strategic point, since the hill station still stood poised "on the threshold of three closed lands" at that time. With a Christian community within its district that was composed of 3000 of the total 10,000 believers throughout the entire "wedge" region of upper Bengal, the Scots (Guild) Mission at Kalimpong by 1930 possessed "a varied school work for boys and girls, many of whom" came from "among the Tibetans, Nepalese and Bhutanese." Education was by that time conducted up to the High School standard with also a large industrial school created. Also, the Teacher Training Institute at Kalimpong continued to provide Christian teachers for the many schools of the Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts. With its total of 152 schools and 4568 scholars, the Church of Scotland Eastern Himalaya Mission was by 1930 "clearly the most successful Christian work yet attempted on the frontiers of India." McLeish 1931, p. 134; data culled from pp. 134-6.

Encomiums continue to be heaped upon this Mission even today. As recently as 1986, on the occasion of the Centenary celebration of the SUM Institution, the Secretary of Education in the Sikkim State government of India had this to say of this remarkable Mission in a letter he sent to the Institution: "The dedicated and selfless work of Scottish missionaries in the Eastern Himalayas is worth writing in gold; perhaps no other single organization has done so much over such a long period so consistently and so painstakingly." Letter of T.P. Sharma, 28 Feb. 1986, quoted in SUM Institution 1986, on unnumbered page.

50. O'Malley 1989, pp. 170, 171-2.

51. Quoted in *ibid.*, 51-2.

52. Weir 1900, p. 102.

53. The text of this tombstone inscription was noted at the cemetery and recorded by the present author when on a visit to Kalimpong in late 1987. Interestingly, one Scottish Church foreign missions historian has noted that "the chief work of founding the [1870 Darjeeling] Mission was done by Mr. Macfarlane and his sister." *Ibid.*, p. 74. And O'Malley, writing in his gazetteer, has remarked that it was "chiefly owing to the energy and perseverance of Miss Macfarlane" that there was established the only girls' school which then existed in District Darjeeling back in the early years of the Mission; this, despite the strong opposition of the hill peoples who considered the idea of educating girls "quite absurd." O'Malley 1989, p. 174. Margaret Ann had served her brother from nearly the very inception of the Mission, having arrived at Darjeeling in 1871.

54. Quoted in Weir 1900, pp. 104-5.

55. Where not already documented the sources for the general discussion of Macfarlane and the development of the Scottish Mission in the Eastern Himalayan region are as follows: Graham 1897, pp. 29-30, 60-1, 85-9, 146-54; Hewat 1960, pp. 157-64; McLeish 1931, pp. 134-6; Kilgour 1931, pp. 182-3; Manuel 1914, *passim*; Minto 1974, pp. 23-5; Weir 1900, pp. 72-5, 95-105; and E.T. Lucksom, "Centenary Activity Report," B.C. Simick, "Centenary of SUM Institution....," and R.K. Rongong, "Speech..."—all three in SUM Institution 1986, pp. 1, 5-8 and 24-5, respectively.

56. Sutherland served as Principal between 1887 and 1899 (with a furlough interruption in 1892), then returned to Scotland for a while on another furlough (during which the Aberdeen University conferred on him the D.D. degree), and served again as Principal from 1908 to January 1921 (when he returned for good to Scotland). Before these two periods, the founder, Rev. Macfarlane, was Principal for only a short time from 1886 until his death in Feb. 1887. Subsequent Principalships have been as follows:

Rev. John Macara	1900-02	Rev. Gavin Fairservice	1945-47
Rev. T. Edw. Taylor	1902-05	Rev. Wm. M. Scott	1947-52
Rev. W.G. Mackean	1905-07	Shri K.D. Pradhan	1952-57
Rev. George Ogg	1921-26	Rev. Wm. M. Scott	1957-63
Rev. George S. Mill	1927-41	Shri P.P. Mukhia	1963-65
Rev. G. McLaren	1941-43	Shri P.R. Pradhan	1965-88
Rev. Wm. M. Scott	1943-45	Shri N.R. Pradhan	1989-present

Source: "Our Past Principals," in SUM Institution 1986, on unnumbered pages.

57. The Scottish Church still continued to support this Higher Secondary School but by the 1970s missionaries were no longer there, it thereafter being run by Nepali and Lepcha Christians from Sikkim. Bray 1975, p. 93.

58. Simick 1986, p. 8.

59. "Enrollments in the Institution," in SUM Institution 1986, on unnumbered page.

60. Manuel 1914, p. 160.

61. Quoted in *ibid.*, 133.

62. Quoted in *ibid.*, 129-31.

63. *Ibid.*, 131-3.

64. For more on this member of SUMI's Staff, see the next section of the present narrative.

65. The sources for all information and quoted material in this paragraph are two: GTUM TsMs, 93-4; and (b) BB TwMs, p. 2. Since his stay at Delhi years before, Tharchin had apparently improved his knowledge and skill in English, as is confirmed later by the testimony of Mr. Hornell, the Bengal Director of Public Instruction, in his Note of Commendation quoted shortly in the present chapter.

66. Simick 1986, p. 11.

67. The sources for this information in this and the previous paragraph as to the area of the town to be visited, the name and composition of the Commission party, and the date of the tour are three: (a) GTUM TsMs, 95; (b) BB TwMs, p. 2; and (c) Note of Commendation to Tharchin from W.W. Hornell, Calcutta, 30 Dec. 1917 (and quoted in the Text of the present narrative).

68. As was learned earlier, the celebrated Indian teacher Padma Sambhava (in Tibetan, Guru Rimpoche, "the Precious Master") had flourished in the 8th century and brought a decadent Buddhism to Tibet. He also had founded (in 749) the Nyingmapa Sect ("Those of the Ancient Teachings") of Tibetan Buddhism that was Tantric in character (Tantrism was that school of Mahayana Buddhism which the famed teacher had carried into Tibet and which became formative in Lamaist Buddhism as described earlier in Ch. 2 of the present narrative). Padma Sambhava was also the one who established the very first monastery in Tibet (at Samye near Lhasa) in 779. Eventually his Nyingmapa Sect came to be the dominant Lamaist branch of Tibetan Buddhism for a considerable length of time.

Meanwhile, three other sects had developed by the end of the 12th century: (a) the *Sakyapa*, the school of the Translator Sakya Pandita (known as the "gracious teacher" of Tibet), which received its name not from the North Indian kingdom in which Gautama Buddha had been born but from the fact that its first monastery (established in 1071) had been constructed southwest of Shigatse about halfway between it and the Tibet-Nepal frontier on a patch of gray-colored earth (Tibetan: *sa-kya*, "tawny soil"); (b) the *Kadampa* (from *kadam*, meaning "Buddha's teachings"), which—laying stress on scriptural instruction and the practice of lovingkindness—had been inspired by the teachings of the famed North Indian friar Atisa Dipankara, who came to Tibet in the fourth decade of the 11th century, and by his disciple Drom Tonpa; and (c) the *Kagyupas* (from *kagy*, meaning "oral transmission of the doctrine from master to disciple"), who were organized in about the same period as the Sakyapas and whose lineage and teachings can be traced back to Marpa, the Great Translator and the teacher of famed poet Milarepa, and whose Order's present form was given to it by Gampopa—a direct disciple of Milarepa.

But a fifth and reforming sect founded by the Great Reformer of Lamaist Buddhism, Lobsang Trappa, surnamed Tsong Khapa (1356-1419), whose members were called the *Gelukpas* ("Those Who Follow the Path of Perfect Virtue" or, "the Virtuous Ones"), arose to oppose the dominance of the Nyingmapas whose conduct

over the centuries had grown lax in morals and discipline. In 1407, in fact, the reformers gained the principal power of the State under the leadership of Tsong Khapa ("He from the Onion Country," i.e., born on the northern borders of Tibet in the eastern Tibetan province of Amdo, though he was educated in the central part of the country) and other Gelukpas. It must be noted that this reformist sect had actually had its roots in the early Kadampas, with the Great Reformer himself having been schooled among them. In the Gelukpa Sect great stress is laid on the study of scripture and on learning generally. The Kadampas would ultimately be absorbed into the ranks of the Gelukpas, and by the 20th century the Reformers would become the most numerous of all the monks in Tibet.

Now the priestly adherents of the older traditional Nyingmapa school always wore *red* hats and garments and thus came to be known as the Red (Hat) Sect of Tibetan Buddhism sometime after the Reformists—who themselves began to wear *yellow* hats—had come on the scene. The religious strife of those days finally ended, however, with the ascendancy of the Yellow (Hat) Sect to spiritual (and even temporal) power in Tibet; and it is the Gelukpa school of Lamaism to which the Dalai and Panchen Lamas themselves have belonged. Even so, the Nyingmapa Sect still continues to exist, not only in Tibet but in Sikkim, the rest of India, and elsewhere as well. All monasteries of this sect are still characterized by a prominent image of Padma Sambhava together with two female consorts, and the followers of this sect continue to wear, of course, their red-colored headdress. The other two older sects—likewise identified by Western writers on Tibetan Buddhism as Red—can also still be found today, and among these four main elements of Lamaism which remain in existence there is really little or no religious rivalry, although "there is a sharp difference of opinion regarding esoteric practices and monastic discipline between the so-called Red Sects on the one hand and the Yellow on the other." (Sinha).

Sources for this note: Goodman 1986, pp. 73-4, 86n.; Taring 1970, p. 5; Tung 1980, pp. 201-2; Trungpa 1966, pp. 257-8; Sinha 1978, p. 15; and Chinlei 1981, pp. 165-71 (whose pages provide one of the best brief historical sketches of Lamaism's various sects to be found anywhere in the literature).

69. The source for the discussion of Padma Yangtse and Tashiding are: (a) Macdonald 1943, p. 12; (b) Roerich, writing in 1930 after two visits to Sikkim in 1924 and 1928, in Roerich 1930, p. 14; see also his other work, Roerich 1929, p. 56; (c) Pares 1940, pp. 230-1; (d) Tharchin, GTUM TsMs, 95; and (e) Agarwala (ed.) 1991, pp. 62-3. The four most ancient monasteries of Sikkim, as identified by Roerich, are Dubdi, Sanga Chöling, Daling and Robling. And, he adds, "the meanings of their names are noble ones: 'Palace of Meditation,' 'Island of Secret Teaching,' 'Island of Lightning' and 'Island of Happy Striving'." Roerich 1929, p. 57.

70. All information and quoted material in this and all preceding paragraphs concerning Tharchin's visit to Gangtok and his tour into northern Sikkim in Jan. 1919 have been derived from two sources: (a) BB TwMs, p. 2; and (b) the so-called Expense Travel Diary cited in the Text and found among the ThPaK. In no other source can mention of this journey be found. The reader is referred back to Vol. I of the present narrative, Ch. 5 and especially its end-note no. 46 for more information on both Lachung and Lachen and the development of Christian mission stations there.

71. All information and quoted material in this section having to do with Tharchin's reinstatement at Ghoom and his return to Kalimpong permanently have been derived from either or both of two sources: (a) GTUM TsMs, 94-5; and (b) BB TwMs, p. 3.

72. See "SUM Institution Staff Record—Locally appointed Staffs," in SUM Institution 1986, on unnumbered page; his name there is given as C.T. Pazo.

73. In his chapter on Sikkim in Hoke, ed., *Church in Asia*, Billy Bray gives a great deal of space to this important leader of the Christian Church in Sikkim. In fact, there is a picture of C.T. Pazo shown at the beginning of the chapter. Writing in the early 1970s Bray states (in Bray 1975a, pp. 555, 556, 562):

A Lepcha boy from a good family went to Darjeeling [and to the SUM Institution in Kalimpong] on the Indian border to study early in this century; there he came to Christ under the guidance of pioneer Scottish missionaries. He later returned to Sikkim as a catechist to teach in a girls' school [which a Scottish missionary Mary Scott had been permitted by the royal family to establish in Gangtok in 1924, and who was later in charge of Scottish Mission work in the country]. Because he was a Lepcha, he was able to move in royal circles; his fine education and brilliance made him a trusted adviser and later a magistrate and member of the king's council. But all the while he was witnessing for Christ, ... gradually assum[ing] pastoral responsibilities for the believers in Gangtok... and in reality [becoming] the first pastor of the Sikkim church, though he was not recognized as such for some years.... [Pazo] went on to

lead the merging national church (then Presbyterian, now...affiliated with the Church of North India) until today.

Concerning Mary Scott, the British Political Officer for Sikkim during the decade of 1935-45, Sir Basil Gould, had this to say: "At Gangtok for many years 'Aunt Mary'—less well known by the name of The Honorable Mary Scott, D.D.—had given herself and her means to establishing a school for girls. She had worked in what some of us had considered to be 'insubordinate cooperation' with the Church of Scotland Mission at Kalimpong. In a house overlooking the Gangtok marketplace, from small beginnings she had created a school of some 200 girls, many of whom were boarders. She had had the strength of mind, at a time when the school was developing year by year, to hand over her work to a successor in the young prime of life. This was Ruth Fairservice, whose husband Gavin was the head of the Sikkim branch of the [Church of Scotland] Mission." Gould 1957, p. 180. It should be added that Gavin Fairservice would later serve as Principal of SUMI during the years 1945-47.

It was estimated that by 1930 there were 407 villages in Sikkim, in only 13 of which the 695 Christians were living. By this year also, there was a total of 11 missionaries and 46 indigenous workers laboring in Sikkim. By that time, too, it was noted that 28 percent of the Christians were literate as compared with the overall estimate of literacy in the nation of only 12.7 percent. See both Cable et al. 1929, pp. 97-8; and McLeish 1931, pp. 132-3. It will be recalled that on an evangelistic trip into Sikkim in late 1912, Gergan Tharchin himself had met with a Christian congregation at the town of Lachen in the north. See again Vol. I, Ch. 6 of the present narrative.

GTUM TsMs, 97-103; quotes: 99, 101, 102-3.

1. The reader should be aware that much of this discussion of Bhutan in its various aspects is an adaptation from Bray 1975, pp. 85, 88-9, 90-1, 92; with additional information and quoted material gleaned from the following other sources: Bailey 1930, pp. 208, 211, 219; Coelho 1970, pp. 66-8; Das 1969, p. 25; Gould 1957, pp. 183, 185; the British envoy's statement quoted in Graham 1897, p. 157; the 1931 observer was Alexander McLeish, in McLeish 1931, p. 140; Minto 1974, p. 165; Bomwetsch 1899, p. 25 (for his quote on the Bhutanese character), p. 26 (for the extract from the Dharma Raja's letter); Christie 1977, p. 50; and Temple 1887, II:162-3.

2. Perry 1997, p. 145.

3. Tharchin's "dictated memoirs," taken down and composed shortly before his death in 1976, are incorrect to state that the year for this first Bhutan journey had occurred in 1918 (see GTUM TsMs, 97). On the other hand, his earlier "Brief Biography," composed sometime between 1946 and 1955, is correct to assert that it was in 1917 (see below), and to declare further that the month of departure was August (see BB TwMs, p. 2). The present author has shown in his Text that the traveling party departed Kalimpong in late August, an assertion that is corroborated by the fact that Tharchin had to have still been at Ghoom on 7 August since in his *Tibetan Second Book* published by the Ghoom Mission in 1917 (see Ch. 12 above for details), Tharchin had signed the Preface to it as "Ghoom, 7 August 1917." It was only after this that the Tibetan had gone to Kalimpong to help launch the trip to Bhutan. Traveling to the hill station, then getting ready for such a long trip, and having Hornell come up from Calcutta would have demanded that the trip could not be inaugurated till the middle of August at the earliest. That the journey lasted as long as stated in the Text is confirmed by Hornell's Note of Commendation he had written to Tharchin from Calcutta after he himself had returned there from the trip. Dated Calcutta, 19 Nov. 1917, in it he refers to the journey thus: "Throughout a long and arduous tour..." Hornell, along with three other Calcutta University Commission members, would return once again to Kalimpong the very next month (Dec. 1917) to make a cultural tour with Tharchin (as interpreter) into western Sikkim visiting various Buddhist monasteries; see Ch. 12 above for details.

4. Minto 1974, p. 165.

5. Macdonald 1932, pp. 105-6.

6. Graham, quoted in McLeish 1931, p. 143. The story behind the conferral of the Raja title upon Ugyen Dorjee and that of Maharaja upon Ugyen Wangchuk is most interesting. There had developed in the 1890s a serious problem between Tibet and the British Government of India over the former's repeated violations of the frontiers of Britain's protectorate and neighbor to Bhutan, the land of Sikkim. Eventually the British sought out the aid of Ugyen Wangchuk's personal Agent at Kalimpong, Ugyen Dorjee, by asking the latter in 1899 to write to the Dalai Lama of Tibet a letter suggesting it would be a good thing for the Tibetans to commence negotiations with the British over frontier and trade matters. This feeler produced nothing, however. Ugyen Dorjee was then asked by India's Viceroy, Lord Curzon, to take to Lhasa a personal letter from him and deliver it personally to the Dalai Lama. But again, failure was the result, Ugyen Dorjee having to return from Lhasa without accomplishing his mission. He nonetheless served with distinction on other missions for the British, he later taking an active role in the 1910 treaty between Great Britain and Bhutan which significantly revised the earlier Treaty of Sinchula of 1865. In recognition of these distinguished services, the British bestowed upon him the title of Raja in 1908.

A year earlier saw Ugyen Wangchuk receiving the title and office of Maharaja of Bhutan. Because of the already failed attempts to get the Tibetan government to commence negotiations with them, the British decided to launch a military expedition to Tibet; but needing the urgent cooperation of Bhutan for surveying the possibility of a direct route to the Land of Snows through the latter's Chumbi Valley but via Bhutanese territory, the British approached and obtained from Ugyen Wangchuk—the then strongest man in Bhutan—a commitment to cooperate. He even decided to join the Younghusband Expedition to Lhasa, and by his timely assistance rendered to Colonel Younghusband at the Tibetan capital used his personal influence there to effect negotiations between the two hostile powers, eventuating in a signed agreement: the Anglo-Tibetan Convention of Sept. 1904. In gratitude for his services, the British, through the then Political Officer in Sikkim (John Claude White), successfully put forward the suggestion to the Bhutanese power centers (the Lamas, the Chiefs, and their supporters) that

Ugyen Wangchuk should be installed as the Maharaja of Bhutan. Whereupon, in 1907, the British conferred that title upon Ugyen Dorjee's kinsman as well. See Coelho 1970, pp. 67-8, 70.

7. A practice which had continued on into the late 1950s, a further indication of the continuing isolation of Bhutan. Wrote a (London) *Times* correspondent based at Kalimpong in 1959: "In Kalimpong... live for half the year the Prime Minister of Bhutan and his family, while behind the frowning hills to the east of his country lives out its long evening of latter-day medieval pageantry—surely the sole example of a country so shut off from the outside world that even its Government is obliged to reside abroad for the purpose of conducting foreign relations." *Times* (London), 7 Apr. 1959, p. 11.

8. Donaldson 1900, pp. 43, 46.

9. As one evidence of how close a member of the Graham family Kumar S.T. (Tobgye) became, when Graham's youngest daughter Betty was married in Nov. 1942 at Kalimpong to George Sherriff (shortly afterwards the Head of the British Mission at Lhasa, 1943-5), the best man at the wedding was none other than Tobgye, by that time the subsequent Raja Dorjee. Per Betty Sherriff, "Lhasa, the War Years," in Fletcher 1975, p. 228.

10. Quoted in Minto 1974, p. 168.

11. *Ibid.*, 183.

12. Besides those already cited, the sources for the discussion of Graham's relations with Bhutan and its leaders are: *ibid.*, 165-83; Macdonald 1943, p. 76; and Ronaldshay 1923, p. 245.

13. The quotations up to this point in this paragraph are from Simick 1986, p. 9.

14. Ogilvie 1922, p. 125.

15. The information about, and description of, the Ha-Dzong is from Ronaldshay 1923, p. 244.

16. Simick 1986, pp. 9, 46.

17. Manuel 1914, pp. 242-3.

18. This according to SUMI alumnus (1937-47), Dr. Tashi Tobgyel, Bhutan's ambassador to India (1986) in his letter photostatically reproduced in Simick 1986, on an unnumbered page.

19. Ronaldshay 1923, p. 245. That Lord Ronaldshay's assessment proved to be correct is confirmed by testimony given much later by Lt. Col. F.M. Bailey. The latter was one of British India's Political Officers for the region and a later acquaintance of Gergan Tharchin. In a lecture given by Bailey on Bhutan before the Royal Central Asian Society, London, on 12 Mar. 1930 (with Ronaldshay, one of the Society's Vice-Presidents, himself present, along with Sir Charles Bell), Col. Bailey said in part: "The policy of Bhutan is to develop the country with their own people and not to utilize outsiders of any kind. To this end about forty boys were sent to Kalimpong to be educated some years ago. These boys are now being employed in their own country as doctors, veterinary surgeons, teachers, forest officers, engineers, etc. The moving spirit in this matter is Raja S.T. Dorjee, the son of a distinguished father, Raja Ugyen Dorjee... The movement has been encouraged and assisted by Dr. Graham and others of the Scottish Mission at Kalimpong. Schools have been opened at Ha and Bumthang, and at Ha. Raja Dorjee showed us a very creditable exhibition of boxing by the schoolboys there." Bailey 1930, p. 210.

20. Reprinted from the *Sunday-School Times* (Philadelphia), appearing in Anon. 1915, p. 466.

21. Manuel 1914, p. 242. Erected in 1907, Robertson Hostel had been named in honor of the Convener of the Church of Scotland's Christian Life and Work Committee back in Scotland. *Ibid.*, 53.

22. Anon. 1915, p. 466.

23. Simick 1986, p. 9. According to a handwritten inked note in the margin on pp. 168 and 169 of a copy of Minto's *Graham* which had belonged to the late B.C. Simick Sr. but is now in the possession of his son, B.C. Jr. and shown to the present author, B.C. Sr. had made the notation that these five teachers had joined the work in Bhutan in 1916 and had remained till 1922 (or 1927?—the handwriting is not clear, but is most likely 1922).

24. Ogilvie 1922, p. 125.

24a. Collister 1987, pp. 174-5.

25. Bailey's Reports 1922-24, cited in Perry 1997, pp. 144, 164 note 54, and see also 164 note 59; Collister 1987, p. 174; and Bell, quoted in *ibid*.

26. Sources for this description of Chumbi Valley are: K. Majumdar, "The Chumbi Dagger," *Geographical Observer* (India), 2 (1966): 62-7; Thomas Jr. 1959, p. 13; Bernard 1939, p. 44; and Robson 1909, p. 107.

27. Bell 1924, p. 39.

28. In fact, it was in this residence, situated two miles up from the bazaar and past the wool godowns on the way to Tibet, that rooms (since then preserved in their original state) were occupied for several months by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet during his India exile from Lhasa that lasted from early 1910 to June 1912. Traveling via the Jelep Pass, the Dalai Lama had arrived in early 1910 at Kalimpong, where he became the guest of Raja Ugyen for one week before going on to Darjeeling to live in a house there called Padabuk or sometimes called by the English, "Hillside." In Feb. of 1912 His Holiness would return once again to Bhutan House where he would stay till June making preparations for his long-cherished return to Tibet. As an expression of his deep appreciation for Raja Ugyen's hospitality, His Holiness conferred on the Raja and all his descendants the Tibetan rank of Rimshi (fourth Rank). Known today as Bhutan House, to the Tibetans the edifice is still referred to as Migyur Ngonga Phodrang (Palace of Unchanging Delight) because of its association with Dalai Lama XIII. Shakabpa 1967, pp. 230, 239, 242. It has been customary in the past among Tibetans to convert any and every room a Dalai Lama has ever occupied into a Buddhist temple. Rooms in the Bhutan House were no exception to this custom. "Privileged persons," wrote David Macdonald in 1943, "are sometimes invited to inspect these apartments, but they are not open to the general public." Macdonald 1943, p. 76. Another visitor to Bhutan House has written that the rooms preserved in their original state have been set apart as a shrine in honor of the sojourn there of His Holiness and have been "lavishly furnished with religious fittings and attributes associated with him and with the creed that he embodies—in fact a veritable museum of Buddhism on a small scale." Percy Brown, *Tours in Sikkim and the Darjeeling District*, 3d rev. ed. (Calcutta, 1934), 102. These apartments have been described by E.C. Dozey: "In one room there is a library containing a complete copy of the Tibetan scriptures; in another there is the throne on which the Dalai Lama sat, with the vestments he wore and the various ecclesiastical furniture he used; two beautiful prayer wheels, incense burners, chalices, vessels of holy water, etc. In a corner is the bed on which he slept, while opposite the window is a cabinet containing costly images and emblems; in another corner is an image of the great Lama presented by himself after his return to Lhasa, while the walls are hung with beautiful banners with emblems of the Buddha worked upon them in rainbow-colored silks." Dozey 1922, p. 175. One interesting sidelight to the Dalai Lama's stay at Bhutan House in 1910 is reported in a *Time* magazine article in 1950: "In 1910 frenzied devotees kept ripping the exalted exile's bed linen to bits to preserve as sacred objects, along with the dust from his room and his holy bath water." "Haven't We Met?" *Time* (4 Dec. 1950):31.

29. The information given here on S.T. Dorjee and his son since 1916 is from Coelho 1970, p. 70 and Fletcher 1975, pp. 1-2. It should be pointed out that Raja S.T. had many years previously married a sister of the Maharaja of Sikkim (Tashi Namgyal), thus complementing his already high-ranked position. Coelho 1970, p. 70.

S.T. Dorjee's son Jigme Palden briefly relinquished the Kalimpong Bhutan Agency post in 1951 on account of medical treatment he received in Europe. During his absence, his sister, Tashi Dorjee, was appointed the Agent. On his return to Kalimpong from Europe he resumed the post and continued as such till 1962, when Lawrence Sitling succeeded him. However, even from 1957 onward, Jigme Palden had assumed the most significant role as principal adviser to the ruler of Bhutan (who by this time was Jigme Dorjee Wangchuk and who since 1963 would no longer be referred to as the Maharaja but as the Druk Gyalpo—King of Bhutan). Jigme Palden Dorjee became such a popular figure that the Indian press repeatedly referred to him as the Prime Minister of Bhutan. So greatly dedicated was he to the welfare of the Bhutanese people that it was a most unfortunate tragedy when he came to an untimely end at the hand of assassins at Phuntsholing in southern Bhutan in Apr. 1964. *Ibid*.

30. Tharchin was obviously incorrect to state in his 1970s "memoirs" that these two "were the first two teachers of this school" at Ha (see GTUM TsMs, 98). For in the light of the earlier documentation supplied by Simick 1986 and Manuel 1914, the original two schoolmasters had been Ugyen Tshering and Dawa Namgya. The two whom Tharchin met at Ha in 1917 were replacements of the original duo of 1914.

30a. Collister 1987, p. 174.

31. Tharchin was still officially a member of Ghoom Mission, despite his temporary (but which a few years later would become permanent) transfer to Kalimpong. And hence, this explains Hornell's reference here to Ghoom.

32. Unlike in the case of Tharchin's first Bhutanese trip, concerning which his "dictated memoirs" had been incorrect on the year the journey occurred, in the present case his "memoirs" proved to be *correct* on the date of this second trek to Bhutan: namely, 1919; whereas his earlier composed biographical sketch, which with regard to the first Bhutanese trip had been correct, is proven to be *incorrect* in the case of this second journey there! See p. 2 of his BB TwMs where Tharchin mistakenly states that it was 1918, and compare that assertion with p. 99 of the GTUM TsMs where he correctly declares that it was 1919, as will now be explained. It should be noted that records show, and the present author's Text reflects the fact, that the trip—a long one—had to have extended into the beginning of the year following the start of the journey in the latter part of the preceding year; and therefore the BB TwMs account (which would mean the journey began in late 1918 and ended early 1919) cannot possibly be accurate since irrefutable evidence reveals that Tharchin was traveling during late Dec. of 1918 and into most of Jan. 1919 with a Christian brother by the name of James in *Sikkim* (see the Text of Ch. 12 for details). Similarly, it could not have been 1917 into 1918, since again Tharchin was on a cultural tour in *Sikkim* as interpreter with Dr. Hornell during most of Dec. of 1917, and just prior to that had accompanied Dr. Sutherland and Hornell into Bhutan the first time during the months of Aug. to Nov. 1917. Likewise, solid evidence would also rule out the possibility of this second Bhutan journey having occurred during late 1920 into early 1921 for the simple reason that Sutherland ceased forever being Principal of the SUM Institution the month of Jan. 1921 and indeed left for Scotland late that same month never to return to Kalimpong; thus meaning that *logistically* Sutherland could not have been occupied for most of Jan. 1921 in traveling through Bhutan and Tibet's Chumbi Valley and have had sufficient time left over upon his return from Bhutan to recuperate from such an exhausting journey, to wind up his affairs as Principal (with no doubt fêtes being held in his honor by all and sundry at Kalimpong), and to make arrangements for his final departure back to Scotland. And hence, in the light of all the above, the only possible period for this second journey to Bhutan with Dr. Sutherland had to have been between late 1919 and into 1920 (and most likely from late Nov./early Dec. 1919 to late Jan. 1920) when by this time (i.e., by the end of 1919), Tharchin—who had earlier that year returned to Ghoom to teach—had been permanently transferred back to Kalimpong (see details of this in the Text near the end of Ch. 12).

33. Quoted in McLeish 1931, p. 143. As for Bailey, who was a guest of Raja S.T. at Ha in 1922, he had this to say in 1930 at London: "Raja Dorjee, our host, is a very remarkable man. Brought up in Kalimpong, he has received a first-class education and is entirely patriotic, placing his country's welfare before all else. Largely at his own expense he has educated a number of boys with a view to their carrying on the development of their country without the necessity of employing Europeans or Indians. . . . He was entirely in the confidence of his late Highness Sir Ugyen Wangchuk, and his advice and assistance are even more appreciated by the present Maharaja [Jigme Wangchuk, or Jimi Ongchhuk]." Bailey, speaking before the Royal Central Asian Society and whose lecture appeared in that Society's *Journal*; see Bailey 1930, p. 213.

34. The various descriptive quotations are from Macdonald 1943, p. 83; Robson 1909, p. 107; and Merrick 1933, p. 123.

35. Easton 1928, p. 104. Easton was there in 1923.

36. Graham's description of Paro's dzong was part of an account he had written of his journey into Bhutan and which had appeared in both *The Statesman* (Calcutta) of 3 Apr. 1927 and the *Kalimpong Homes Magazine*. The particular words of description which appear here were quoted in McLeish 1931, p. 145; see also Minto 1974, pp. 180-1.

37. All information and quoted material in this paragraph are from Agarwala (ed.) 1991, pp. 176-7.

38. The quotations of Gould and Bailey are taken from: Gould 1957, pp. 187-8; and Bailey 1930, pp. 213-4.

39. The sources of information regarding Wangdu Phodrang, Tongsa and its dzong, and the relationship between the positions of Maharaja and Tongsa Penlop are: Coelho 1970, pp. 127-8; Bailey 1930, p. 215; and Williamson 1987, pp. 74-5.

40. Bailey 1930, p. 215.

41. Bailey 1924, pp. 291ff.; see also Agarwala (ed.) 1991, p. 77 for the quotation about the monks' footprints at the Kuje Temple.

42. Quoted in Perry 1997, p. 163 note 52.

43. Who was Jigme Wangchuk (or Jimi Ongchhuk). He did indeed succeed to the throne when his father, the first hereditary Maharaja, Ugyen Wangchuk, who had ruled his country for 20 years, died in 1926. It was at this time that Jimi, now the new Maharaja, dispatched to Dr. Graham in Kalimpong an urgent invitation for him to be present at his Installation Durbar. In his letter Jimi wrote in almost desperate terms the following appeal:

You were my friend in the time of my father; now also my full hope is in you. The Viceroy has sent a letter in which he has ordered me that I should at once take the position of Maharaja and accordingly on the 5th day of the 9th month of our Bhutanese year I assumed the office of Maharaja. In the second month of the Bhutanese year my Durbar will be held at Punakha. On that occasion, my dear friend, at all costs you must be present, what ever happens.

Dr. Graham did indeed attend the gala Durbar ceremony, held in Mar. of 1927 at Punakha, traveling there in the company of his good friend, Raja S.T. Dorjee, who was to remain the new Maharaja's First Minister of State and Bhutan's Agent stationed in Kalimpong. Minto 1974, p. 177.

It is to be further noted here that almost all the suggestions Dr. Graham had made to Jimi's father for the betterment of Bhutan had by the mid-1970s taken place, although some aspects of the work were still to be completed. And it was primarily through the efforts of the son of Raja S.T. Dorjee, Jigme Dorjee by name, that all this became a reality. For it was primarily Jigme who sought to bring his country into the 20th century. "It was almost as if he" had been "following the plans suggested by Dr. Graham thirty years previously, to his father Tobgay, and the then Maharaja"—Jimi Ongchhuk. "Unquestionably, Dr. Graham exerted a tremendous influence on Bhutanese policy and was treated as a true and reliable friend." And this was no better demonstrated than when in 1935 the Maharaja (Jimi Ongchhuk) and his wife the Maharani of Bhutan visited Kalimpong, it was Dr. Graham who played a key role in the official welcome given the royal couple. *Ibid.*, 181.

44. McLeish 1931, p. 141.

45. Except for Tharchin's "memoirs," all the information up to this point in the paragraph is from Simick 1986, p. 9; and "SUM Institution Staff Record—Locally Appointed Staffs," in SUM Institution 1986, under entry for Dawa Namgya on unnumbered page.

46. For this information on the Agent and Tharchin's strong words of admonishment, see GTUM TsMs, 101. For background information on the community of Buxa Duar and the development of Christian missionary activity there, see earlier in Vol. I, Ch. 5 and its End-Notes. It should be said here, however, that by 1930 Buxa had become a town of 60 houses, "where Bhutanese cultivators and traders to the number of about three hundred" lived. McLeish 1931, p. 141.

47. Simick 1986, p. 9.

48. GTUM TsMs, 101.

49. Quoted in McLeish 1931, p. 142. It can also be found in the original published article that appeared in *The Statesman* (Calcutta) of 3 Apr. 1927 as well as in the *Kalimpong Homes Magazine*.

50. French 1995, pp. 216, 260.

51. As already indicated elsewhere in the Text, Dr. Graham and Colonel Bailey (the then Political Officer for Sikkim, Tibet and Bhutan) were themselves present at the Coronation of Ugyen's successor, his son Jigme Wangchuk, 20 years later at the same town of Punakha. Accompanied by his younger friend Raja S.T. Dorjee, Graham and Bailey journeyed together in 1927, the latter representing the Viceroy of India at the festivities. Graham had personally been invited by the new Maharaja, and has provided an extensive account of the ceremony and celebrations that accompanied it, which can be found in Minto 1974, pp. 177-80. Moreover, his account of the journey he made to attend the Installation can be found in the 3rd Apr. 1927 issue of *The Statesman* (Calcutta).

52. The sources for the description of Punakha and its dzong are: Bailey 1930, p. 214; Williamson 1987, pp. 73-4; and Agarwala (ed.) 1991, p. 72.

53. This new capital of Bhutan, situated along the banks of the Wong Chu, commands a tremendous view on account of its higher than average elevation. The river flows through the entire extent of the nation southwards to the town of Phuntsholing that borders northern Bengal in the Buxa Duar. The palace of Bhutan's ruler is at Dechencholling, just three miles from the dzong. Today, the main secretariat and Bhutan's Army headquarters are now housed in the dzong, along with some 300 or 400 lamas! A large hospital is in Thimphu, also a public school, as well as a new micro-hydroelectric station. The main crops in the surrounding valley are rice, millet, maize, potatoes and chillies. Coelho 1970, p. 128.

54. Paraphrasing the description of Jesus' action in cleansing God's temple in Jerusalem that was given by His disciples (John 2:17), they remembering, and quoting directly from, Psalm 69:9a which reads: "...the zeal of thy house hath eaten me up."

55. These various excerpts were taken from SUM Institution 1986, *passim*.

56. Tucci 1956, p. 17. "When we were there the only trace of China left were a few red-paper bills with good luck inscriptions at the inn doors." *Ibid*. Yatung had the distinction of being the temporary refuge for the Fourteenth Dalai Lama during 1950-51 when he had to flee from Lhasa before the invading Chinese (see more on this in the present work's final volume at Ch. 24).

57. The first quotation in this paragraph, describing the Agency House, is from Taring 1970, p. 55. She stayed with the Macdonald family for several months in 1921 just prior to commencing her schooling at Darjeeling. The second and subsequent brief quotation phrases regarding the bridge are from Easton 1928, p. 55. Easton was a visitor there in the spring of 1923.

58. See Taring 1970, p. 50. A few pages later in her book the authoress wrote of how—upon arriving for the first time in the Macdonald home in 1921 at the age of 12—"I was thrilled to meet Mrs. Macdonald in a Nepalese dress made of Chinese gold-spotted brown satin, with a bright pink silk shawl about her shoulders and gold ornaments on her neck and ears—and the funniest thing to me was that she wore a ring on her nose!" *Ibid*, 55.

59. The sources for the quoted material by and about Macdonald and the information about him and his family's involvement in Christian service are: Macdonald 1932, pp. 11, 13; Tharchin and Woodward 1975, p. 652; and the information regarding the Lepcha NT revision work is from Hooper 1963, p. 151.

60. McLeish 1931, pp. 141, 142.

GTUM TsMs, 104-17; quotes: 104-5, 106, 107, 108, 110, 112-3, 114, 115, 116, 117.

1. It may be recalled that the catalyst which further sparked this great interest in the language and literature of Tibet goes many years back to a curious incident that had occurred while Tharchin was on a preaching tour and passing out Christian tracts around the Siliguri area. See earlier at the end of Ch. 6. Yet this “noble aspiration,” as he once called it, to go to Tibet and engage in higher studies of his ethnic language and literature had always been within him ever since his teen-age years, urging him forward to fulfill this desire, as was repeatedly pointed out earlier in Ch. 4.

2. See GTUM TsMs, 131 for the information regarding the Agra meeting.

3. Peter to Tharchin, Poo, 25 Mar. 1924, MCHA.

4. Tharchin 1921, p. 1.

5. McGovern 1924, p. 133. Far from themselves finding their skin layer of dirt and grease objectionable, Tibetans are actually proud of it, believing that such a film of protection “not only keeps the cold out but also keeps the luck in, and in many parts of the country a young man will want to be sure that his bride-elect has not washed this luck-covering away.” Moreover, “not infrequently the natural layer will be supplemented by smearing the body with butter or sheep’s fat....As though, however, conscious that some criticism might be leveled against them, the Tibetans have a common proverb, ‘The Tibetan is black outside but white inside, and the foreigner is white outside but black inside.’” *Ibid.*, 202. (A variation of this proverb and its application within a different context is discussed later in the present chapter.) It is said that the Tibetan lamas have given an altogether different reason for the habit Tibetan women have of maintaining the so-called “luck-covering” cutch on their faces: “they affirm that Demo Rimpoche, who lived in the latter part of the 18th century, and is one of the greatest of their saints, ordered all Tibetan women to disfigure themselves in this way so that the priests might not be tempted from their vows of celibacy. The women obeyed the mandate, and cutch became as universal a custom as the veil in Mohammedan countries.” Robson 1909, p. 47. There is the somewhat amusing story recounted by Col. Sir Thomas H. Holdich about George Bogle, one of the British East India Company’s emissaries to the Panchen Lama at Shigatse in the 18th century. Bogle was the one, Sir Thomas thought, who had told the incident of an infant Tibetan having been washed for Bogle’s benefit so that he might determine, wrote Holdich, “the general complexion of the Tibetan skin, which otherwise there was no possibility of observing. The child screamed and struggled to such a degree as nearly to bring on convulsions, and the experiment was a failure.” Holdich 1906, p. 122.

6. “So enormous, indeed, is this great projecting mass of the Himalayas,” wrote Laurence A. Waddell in 1899, “that physicists have shown not only that it draws the plumb-line considerably towards it, but that it so attracts the sea as to pull the latter several hundred feet up its sides. Yet this fact is so little generally known that most sea-captains would stare were you to tell them that in coming from Ceylon to Calcutta they had been actually sailing uphill! Nothing perhaps gives a better idea of the enormous size of the Himalayas than this, that they pull the very sea so far up their sides.” *Among the Himalayas*, 2d ed. (Westminster, 1900; 1st ed. 1899), 34-5. “Since I unearthed this interesting subject in 1899 I am glad to see that my remarks have induced the Survey of India to take up the question and institute observations to determine the exact amount of this disturbance.” Waddell 1972, p. 75.

7. This discussion of the possible geological origins of Tibet, including the quoted material used, is based on an article by Robert Walgate which originally appeared in *Nature* magazine dated 5 Jan. 1984 that then appeared in Dutch in a Netherlands publication (“NRC Handelsblad” dated 12 Jan. 1984) and which was finally translated from the Dutch into English and formed the entire content of “Tibet Was a Tropical Continent,” *TR* (Mar. 1984):21. It should be noted that the joint French-Chinese expedition was under the guidance of M. Claude Allegre of the Institut de Physique de Globe in Paris.

Interestingly, most recently there came to the attention of the present author the fact that in the September 2003 issue of the respected *Journal of the Geological Society of America* there appeared an article that provides what might be termed a second supplemental theory concerning the formation of the Himalayas. A team of five scientists—three of whom are associated with the University of Arizona in the USA and the other two being Nepali scientists—had conducted field expeditions during the past several years in the rugged areas of Nepal, principally in the Annapurna Range. Using state-of-the-art radioisotope techniques to determine the exact dates

of the minerals in the present-day rocks of the Himalayas, these scientists have discovered rock formations which show that the Himalayas are predated by “ancestral mountains” which had existed within the same area some 500 million years ago, long before the Indian subcontinent had much later collided with Asia.

Says one member of the team, Nepali Professor Bishal Upreti of the Geology Department of Tri-Chandra College: From this research he and his teammates have concluded that “the modern Himalayan Mountains are built on the foundations of an ancient mountain range that may have been of similar dimensions.” Further, Upreti states that the scientific observations demonstrate that “between 450 and 500 million years ago rocks in the Himalaya were pushed down to a great depth and metamorphosed.” The consequence of which, explains Upreti further, that under this kind of tremendous pressure these rocks became so hot that they melted, producing large granite bodies. These deep-level rocks were then brought back to the surface and formed mountains. But about 450 million years ago, he adds, as the mountain-building forces waned, erosion leveled the earth and the ancient mountains disappeared, with the region eventually becoming submerged beneath the level of the sea. For the longest period thereafter the region remained buried beneath marine sediments until the time when some 55 million years ago the Indian subcontinent collided with southern Asia, resulting in the formation of the modern Himalayas.

Although the above-described concept is not anything new, concludes Upreti, this is the first time specific studies have been performed which support the theory of geoscientists that was first propounded back in the 1980s. It was acknowledged, however, that more research will be required to completely understand these two phases of mountain-building. See Suvecha Pant’s article, “Ancient Himals Existed Long before the Himalayas,” *Kathmandu Post*, 18 Oct. 2003, viewed on the *Post*’s website.

8. It may be of interest to the reader to learn that it has been demonstrated that Tibet’s various climatic conditions affect the climatic phenomena of other countries both near—like India, and far—like those on the North American continent. This so-called “Tibet connection” has been tracked sufficiently in recent decades for weather-watchers to conclude that what happens on the vast Tibetan plateau can affect with far-reaching implications the monsoons of India, cause North American heat waves, and may even be linked to unusually cold North American winters of recent years. See Elmer R. Reiter’s fascinating article, “How Tibet’s Climate Affects Other Countries,” reprinted from the Sept. 1981 issue of *Natural History* (New York) in *TR* (Apr. 1982):11-15.

9. See both Anon. 1983, p. 146, and Chinlei 1981, p. 160. See, however, Ch. 17’s Text for the discussion of a contrary view as to (1) Thonmi Sambhota’s historicity; and (2) that even if he were a historical figure, the question is raised whether or not one single person could have accomplished the creation of both the language and the grammar for it, as has been attributed to him.

10. The account of Herodotus can be found in his *History*, III, Chs. 102-5. These “great ants” were described by the Greek historian as being “in size somewhat less than dogs, but bigger than foxes,” while the marauders on horseback who attempted to steal the gold were described as a tribe of men which “dwells northward of all the rest of the Indians” and were “more warlike than any of the other tribes”—and who “fill their bags...and ride away at their best speed,” with the ants “rush[ing] forth in pursuit.” Herodotus ended his interesting account with the observation that “if it were not...that the Indians get a start while the ants are mustering, not a single gold-gatherer [i.e., gold-stealer] would escape.” These quotes are from the edition of Manuel Komroff, ed., *The History of Herodotus* (New York, 1956), 184-5.

John MacGregor, in his chronicle of Tibetan exploration published in 1970, provides one plausible explanation for this curious story found in Herodotus. He first notes that during the latter half of the 19th century, gold found in Ladakh was generally referred to locally as “ant gold” and that some of the indigenous population there commonly accepted the notion “that the surface gold which they found was the product of ants’ labor,” a notion not dissimilar to the story found in Herodotus. MacGregor then indulges in some speculation on “this obviously ancient myth” whose origin has been “obscured by time.” The author thinks it quite possible that the marauding Indians described by the Greek historian may have actually seen “Tibetan gold diggers crouching on the ground shrouded in their great black yak-skin capes to keep out the chilling winds.” From a distance, MacGregor speculates, “this could have looked like ants burrowing in the ground,” and that antelope horns with which the Tibetan miners used to scratch for gold may have added to that effect. Finally, fierce black mastiffs that traditionally have guarded Tibetan encampments, may—again from a distance—have been “mistaken for pursuing ants by the panic-stricken raiders of Herodotus’s time.” MacGregor 1970, p. 259.

But the most recent explanation given for what the “great ants” in the writings of Herodotus were has been offered by Michel Peissel, the French explorer and writer who has specialized in Himalayan exploration since

the late 1950s. Indeed, by late 1996 Peissel had concluded his 25th expedition into the region. During this latest journey he spent an entire month with British researcher Sebastian Guinness in the Dansar plain that runs along the present-day cease-fire line between India and Pakistan and overlooks the gorges of the Indus River's upper reaches. Upon his return to France the explorer told the press that the giant furry ants of Herodotus which reputedly mined for gold "seem to have a basis in fact after all," the evidence for which, he asserts, he found in the Himalayan area just mentioned. According to the report Peissel gave the AFP, he and Guinness had followed up a hunch that had previously been entertained by a few explorers during the 19th century, and these two men have now determined "to their satisfaction" that the fabled ants are actually the furry marmots which can be found in certain areas of the Himalayas like the Dansar plain and which are a genus of the burrowing squirrel.

Peissel went on to say how he had observed the local species of the marmot, called *Arctomys himalayanus*, dig and burrow themselves into the plateau's black earth that throughout is laced with strata of gold. Confusion about the animal arose, notes Peissel, due to the fact that the Persian word for marmot literally translates as "ant of the mountain"! When the explorer had first visited the Dansar plateau region 14 years earlier on the Indian side he encountered the indigenous Tibetan-speaking Minaros people who had told him about the marmots. But this time he saw them on the Pakistan side of the plateau and there the local Minaros, whose community numbers about 2000, related how their elders in past generations used to collect the gold dust "offered" up by the marmots. Fifty years ago, however, this tradition had died out, though some "gold washers" still go out today to prospect in the upland streams which course through what the Minaros and others have dubbed "the Golden Valley." See "Explorer Locates Gold-Digging Ants of Legend," datelined Paris, Dec. 5 (AFP), in *Kathmandu Post*, 6 Dec. 1996, p. 5.

11. As told of in Allen 1983, pp. 141-2. Allen went on to relate that as Nain Singh approached the first digging sites, "he could hear, but not see, the diggers singing in chorus as they worked." Although it was high summer, the Chief Pundit "thought it the coldest place he had ever visited." These goldminers, in order to avoid the chilling wind of the plateau, remained below ground, "pitching tents inside their digs and sleeping in a most extraordinary position." As Nain Singh himself described it, "they invariably draw their knees close up to their heads and rest on their knees and elbows, huddling every scrap of clothing they can muster onto their backs." In spite of their hardships, the Pundit, observed Allen, "found the miners and their families to be remarkably cheerful and always ready to break into song"! *Ibid.*, 142. It will be of interest to note that in some parts of the Tibetan Changthang (of which the Thok Jalung is a part) a superstitious belief has prevailed for the longest time to the effect that lumps of gold which occasionally can be found in the mountains there belong to the Genii or spirits of the spot discovered and that "any human appropriation of their treasures" would most surely be "severely punished." This, according to William Moorcroft and George Trebeck, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab; in Ladakh and Kashmir; in Peshawar, Kabul, Kunduz, and Bokhara... from 1819 to 1825*, 2 vols. (1841; reprint ed., New Delhi: Sagar Publications, 1971), I:314. Said one Western writer on Tibet in 1970, "Many Tibetans are to this day convinced that to extract gold from beneath the ground is to make the ground infertile." MacGregor 1970, p. 259. That would indeed constitute a severe punishment in the minds of Tibetans, and hence the reticence on their part to engage in goldmining activities. Reticence, perhaps, by the superstitious Tibetans, but certainly not outright prohibition by the authorities against various forms of mining activity by those Tibetans who wished to extract numerous minerals from the land. "It is clear from the accounts [by Western observers and Tibetan writers] that while holding their beliefs about nature spirits, Tibetans from both the upper and lower strata of society were openly involved in mining for livelihood and profit." So asserts Tibetan scholar from New Zealand, Toni Huber, in his excellent article, "Traditional Environmental Protectionism in Tibet Reconsidered," *TJ* (Autumn 1991):65, who debunks, on quite credible grounds of scholarship, the notion that the Tibetan socio-cultural polity forbade the extracting of minerals from the earth.

12. Beckwith, a noted Professor at Indiana University (USA) in Uralic and Altaic Studies and Director of the Tibetan Studies Program there, has provided the particulars, with pertinent documentation, for his discussion of the native ethnonym of Tibet. He writes (in Beckwith 1987, p. 7):

Klaudios Ptolemaios, the Hellenistic father of the science of mathematically precise geography, mentioned a people called Baitai, or (more correctly) Bautai—i.e., the "Bauts." The same people are described by the later Greco-Roman writer Ammianus Marcellinus as having lived "on the slopes of high mountains to the south" of another people in the area of Serica (East Asia). At the same time, Chinese sources recorded that certain Ch'iang tribesmen, after their defeat by the Chinese, escaped deep into the Tibetan interior, where they took refuge with a Ch'iang group whose name is today pronounced Fa, but was in classical times pronounced something like Puat. The latter was undoubtedly intended to represent Baut, the name that became pronounced by seventh-century Tibetans as Bod (and now in the modern Lhasa dialect, rather like

the French *peu*). Unfortunately, several centuries were to pass before anyone was to record the name again.

13. Bonavia and Bartlett 1981, pp. 12, 19.

14. Quoted in Finegan 1986, p. 9. It is this unarguable distinctiveness of race and culture, incidentally, that gives the lie to the endless claims of the Chinese government—whether that has been Imperial, Republican, Nationalist or Communist—that Tibet has always been an integral part of its vast territory. As one Western scholar on Tibet has commented: “Those of us who are seriously interested in Tibet know that Tibet’s real claim to independence is not to be based so much on historical arguments, as on the very distinctiveness of its whole cultural life. Tibet has a separate language and a vast literature which is separate from Chinese literature. It has a separate history of its own, quite distinct from Chinese history, although of course as neighbors they have many points of contact. Most of all it has, rather has had, a separate religion of its own, imported mainly from India, not to mention distinct customs, distinctive forms of music and art, and all that makes up the life and culture of a people. It is sadly ironic that the Tibetans were up to the very last well disposed to the Chinese and deeply suspicious of any Western innovation as likely to threaten their established way of life..., and that it is now the Chinese who have utterly uprooted their traditional culture, and we few Westerners who continue to take a sympathetic interest in their now threatened plight.” David L. Snellgrove, “An Appreciation of Hugh Richardson,” in Aris and Kyi (eds.) 1980, p. xi.

There has been an interesting recent development in the ongoing effort by the Chinese to prove that Tibet belongs to China. Writes Lee Feigon: “Lately,...the Chinese... have even begun to use DNA samplings to prove that they and the Tibetan people are biologically related and therefore that Tibet is part of China. It is a ridiculous leap in logic. If all groups with similar DNA samplings were part of the same nation, China could claim to control much of East Asia and the Europeans would still have a share of the Americas.” Feigon 1996, p. 219 note 9.

15. Sources for this paragraph on Nazi Germany’s interest in Tibet and approaches made to her are four: French 1995, p. 422 note 6; Feigon 1996, pp. 15, 218 note 18; Norbu 1998, p. 19; and John Bray, “Hugh Richardson—In Memoriam,” *Ladakh Studies* (Autumn 2000):25. See also Louis Paumels and Jacques Bergres. *The Morning of the Magicians* (New York, 1964), 197-8, for several bizarre references made to Nazi interest and association with Tibet.

16. It may come as a surprise to some to learn that the Sherpas are by origin not Nepalese, though they now live in Nepal, but are Tibetans. They are actually called *sharpas*, which means “the people who came from the east”—that is to say, they are migrants from Kham province in East Tibet. Ten or so generations ago they migrated from there via Lhasa down to Nepal and in time became citizens of Nepal. But by their blood, language, appearance, customs and traditions they are purely Tibetan. They are also Lamaistic Buddhists, who for the most part belong to the old unreformed Red Hat Sect, although by 1920 a reformed Yellow Hat temple had been erected among the Sherpa valley areas of northeastern Nepal just south of the Tibetan Himalayas which separate the two countries. The Sherpas more or less live quite apart from most Nepalese in small isolated valleys chiefly in and about Sagarmatha, the Nepali name for Mt. Everest. The present author met many of them himself during a two-week trek he made in early 1991 between the STOL airfield at Lukla and Mt. Kala Pattar very near Everest Base Camp. These Sherpas have been left very much to themselves, “and on local matters they are practically autonomous” (at least they were in the 1920s). As of that time they were still divided into nine groups, with each ruled over by a chief, an office that appears to have been largely hereditary though not necessarily so. The most famous Sherpa of all today, of course, is Tenzing Norgay, the mountaineer who with Sir Edmund Hillary was the first to surmount the summit of Everest (in May 1953). Though he became an Indian citizen after setting up residence in Darjeeling, Sherpa Tenzing, according to his very close friend Heinrich Harrer, “remained a Tibetan at heart” and was “a practicing Buddhist.” He established a world-famous mountaineering institute at Darjeeling and served as its Director for many years. Sherpa Tenzing died at Darjeeling in 1989, but the Sherpas still continue to live up to their renowned reputation as the most gifted and reliable of mountain-climbing guides and *sirdars* (leaders of porters) the world has ever seen. See McGovern 1924, pp. 447-8; and Harrer 1985, pp. 39-40.

17. The basic monkey god legend and the Sherpa version of it are related in Matthiessen 1979, p. 318 with some other details added here having been garnered from five other sources: (a) Tenzin P. Atisha, “Origin of the Tibetan Race,” *TR* (June-July 1984):28; (b) Knight 1930, p. 51; (c) Bell 1946, pp. 187-8; (d) Shakabpa 1967, p. 4; and (e) Gelek, “The Tibetan Plateau – One of the Homes of Early Man,” in Ramble and Brauen (eds.) 1993, pp. 75-6; see also Shen and Liu 1953, pp. 18-19. The quote from the chronicles is taken from Pawo Tsuk-lar-re

Cho-chung III cited in Bell 1924a and quoted in Matthiessen 1979, p. 318. In his article, cited above, Atisha describes five other theories for the origin of the Tibetan race—all of them more down to earth and far and away more plausible than the Monkey-Ogress legend: the Rupati Theory, the Tufan Theory, the Chi-lang Theory, the Central Asia Theory and the Mongol Theory.

18. The full text of the treaty translated from the Tibetan by Hugh Richardson, and from which the foregoing quotes have been taken, can be found in the Appendix of Richardson 1962, pp. 244-5. The treaty is carved in both languages on one side of the stone pillar at Lhasa. On a second side is an historical introduction in Tibetan only; on the other two sides can be found bilingual lists of the names of the ministers who witnessed it. The King of Tibet named in the treaty is better known as Ral-pa-chen (815-41); the Chinese Emperor is Mu Tsung of the T'ang Dynasty (821-25). The frontier appears to have been not far to the west of the Kansu-Shensi border. Translations from the Chinese text are likewise available in print. *Ibid.*, 245. The information about the other treaty pillars and where located is from Smith 1984, p. 12. The Lhasa pillar still stands today where it has always stood, per *ibid.* and per Finegan 1986, p. 148.

19. This distinction was made by Professor Sondhi (see next note for documentation). Just here it should be pointed out that this very difference between an offensive and defensive people belies the observations made not long ago by University of Michigan Tibetan and Buddhist Studies Professor Donald Lopez, Jr. in his otherwise quite perceptive and needful critical article on the New Age "Orientalism." In it he has pointed out the errant myths which an increasing number of Western devotees of Tibetan Buddhism have adopted that are highly romanticized portrayals of a traditional Tibetan culture in Tibet which in their view constitutes the ideal place, people and religion towards which Western cultures—all of them deficient in one way or another—must urgently aspire to emulate before this "Oriental" cure of Western ills is forever lost because of recent cruel history inflicted upon the Roof of the World by the Communist Chinese. And among the various errant late 20th-century fantasies about Tibet which have been espoused by these new romantics, asserts Lopez, is the notion of Tibet as "an armed society"—a descriptive phrase coined by Georges Bataille. Lopez declares, though incorrectly, in the present writer's opinion, that:

Tibet did not renounce armed conflict when it converted to Buddhism in the eighth century, or in the eleventh century, or under the fifth Dalai Lama. The fifth Dalai Lama assumed temporal power over Tibet through the intervention of his Qosot Mongol patron, the Gushri Khan, whose troops defeated the king of Tsang, patron of the Karma Kagyu. Tibetan armies fought against Ladakh in 1681, against the Dzungar Mongols in 1720, in numerous interventions into Bhutan in the eighteenth century, against invading Nepali forces in 1788-92 and 1854, against Dogra forces invading Ladakh from Kashmir in 1842, and against the British in 1904.

Lopez Jr. 1994, p. 19; cf. his later larger work, Lopez Jr. 1998, pp. 1-13. Failing to make any distinction between aggressor and defender, however, Lopez overlooks the fact that in nearly all of these military clashes he has mentioned, Tibetans were the defenders of their lands and not the aggressor seeking to expand in territory; which is a significant difference to be considered, even as Sondhi himself was careful to take into account.

20. Prof. M.L. Sondhi of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, has said the following on this very matter: "More than one writer today is pointing out that what the [Tibetan] Buddhists, who were ahead of their time, did was to arrive at the truth. They had the perception of knowledge which is extremely contemporary, if not interesting, and here comes the question of the effect of Buddhism on the mentality of the Tibetans—the fact that a very warlike people gave up being warlike and adopted procedure, technique and social organization which eschewed violence. They may have been violent within the Tibetan system, but there is little evidence of the Tibetans going out and toppling other people." Sondhi was one of the participants in a Symposium, the proceedings of which were printed as "Political Reality of the Tibetan Situation," in *TR* (Feb. 1979):11-19; see p. 15. For an excellent historical perspective on this subject, see Norbu 1997, pp. 362-78. In conclusion on the matter, Norbu writes that "the change from people 'who delighted in killing' others, to people who avoided killing even the fleas on their bodies is remarkable by any standard."

The only other comparable instance in history which comes to mind, and which again involved the influence of Buddhism, is the King-Emperor Asoka of the Mauryan Empire of India some nine centuries earlier to Songtsan Gampo. Described as "the first great royal patron of Buddhism," Asoka, "after youthful indulgence in war and conquest," piously adopted the Buddhist faith, and devoted the rest of his life to conquests of religion, sending missionaries of the new faith everywhere, both at home and abroad. Having successfully invaded Kalinga on the southeastern coast of India in the middle of the third century b.c. as his very first military conquest, it surprisingly became his last because of the resultant disgust that arose in him over the cruelty and barbarity of war which he had inflicted. So horrified was he by the awfulness of the campaign against Kalinga that Asoka almost immediately

afterwards “resolved never again to permit such acts of butchery.” The conversion to Buddhism and its gentle teachings intensified his aversion to warfare, and as the years followed, this unusual king grew even more pious, erecting numerous stone pillars everywhere which had inscribed upon them his imperial edicts that stressed compassion, kindness to all living things, truth, purity and liberality. Said H.G. Wells of this noble king: “His reign...was one of the brightest interludes in the troubled history of mankind.” For the quoted material on Asoka, see Wells 1951, p. 115; Wallbank et al., 1967, p. 99; and McNeill 1967, p. 161.

21. As Dawa Norbu has concluded, after a careful inquiry into the major dynamics of Tibetan-Chinese relations: “Generally speaking, pre-Buddhist Sino-Tibetan relations were characterized by frequent conflicts between the two countries: Btsan Tibet (ca. 600-842 C.E.) was one of the major ‘barbarian’ powers menacing China, which attempted to resolve this security problem by forming matrimonial alliances with Tibetan kings. But neither matrimonial alliances nor friendly treaties secured a durable peace; *only the Buddhist revolution in Inner Asia* solved China’s pre-modern security problem. It not only *tamed the Tibetan martial spirit* but also *created a non-coercive regime* necessitating military dependency. Post-1245, and even post-842, Sino-Tibetan relations were therefore characterized by Tibet’s progressive military dependency on external powers.” Norbu, “An Analysis of Sino-Tibetan Relationships, 1245-1911: Imperial Power, Non-Coercive Regime and Military Dependency.” in Barbara N. Aziz and Matthew Kapstein, eds., *Soundings in Tibetan Civilization* [Proceedings, International Association for Tibetan Studies, Seminar, 1982, Columbia University, New York] (New Delhi, 1985), 193 (emphasis added).

22. Bell 1946, p. 31.

23. Bell 1937, p. 429. In the same passage quoted from in the previous note, Bell had in effect proceeded to admonish Christian Europe for failing to do what Buddhist Tibet had done. Wrote Bell: “Buddhism came to a country essentially warlike,...[that] was one of the chief military powers of Asia....They experienced a real change of heart, which in Britain and Europe has been so often on the lips of men and women, but has not penetrated within. Buddhism has done for Tibet what Christianity, in spite of its high moral code, has failed to do for the nations of Europe. It may be said that the European nations have always been too aggressive and warlike. But so were the Tibetans until they were converted to Buddhism.” Bell 1946, p. 31.

24. In an address which the present Dalai Lama gave on Capitol Hill in Washington DC on 21 Sept. 1987 that detailed a Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet’s long-range future, he warned *inter alia* that if the Tibetans are “to survive as a people, it is imperative that the population transfer be stopped and Chinese settlers return to China. Otherwise, Tibetans will soon be no more than a tourist attraction and relic of a noble past.” Dalai Lama XIV, “Text of Address: Dalai Lama Explains Peace Plan for Tibet,” *TR* (Dec. 1987):15.

In his book on Tibet published in 1986, Jack Finegan gave a population profile which, though probably not completely accurate at that time, was, nonetheless, more than likely close to the truth. Making a useful distinction between “cultural Tibet” (which would doubtless even include western China, where many Tibetans still live) and “political Tibet,” Finegan wrote: “In the entire Tibetan cultural area and in the world there are said to be six million Tibetans. In ‘political’ Tibet the population is presently reported by the Chinese as approximately 1,650,000, 96 percent ‘ethnic’ Tibetans, the rest members of more than ten so-called ‘minority’ groups, Menpas, Denpas, Lopas, Sherpas, and others, the Menpas and the Sherpas both being Tibetan Buddhist in religion. In exile in India and elsewhere are an estimated 100,000 Tibetans. In ‘political’ Tibet under present circumstances there are also many Han Chinese, with their military camps not only in border areas but also practically wherever there is a Tibetan population. and in Lhasa alone the Han military and civilian population is reportedly more than the Tibetan population.” Finegan 1986, pp. 8-9. Indeed, by 1992 it could be reported that 75 percent of the people in Lhasa were Chinese! Per *Compassion in Exile: the Dalai Lama and Tibet*, a guide booklet to a video of the same name and published 1992 by Central Television, Birmingham, England, p. 11. This flies in the face of China’s official Hsinhua news agency report of Mar. 1993 which claimed there were only 118,000 Han in the Tibet Autonomous Region. This, in the view of most Western experts, writes the Director of the Washington DC-based International Center for Tibet, is “a gross underestimate,” they having observed that “at least half of urban dwellers in Tibet are Chinese” and that “Chinese are now a majority in all urban areas of Tibet, including in the TAR.” John Ackerly, “Population Transfer and the Future of Tibet,” *TR* (July 1993):11.

Despite this gloomy assessment by Western-based Tibetan watchers of their land’s developing population profile, as recently as September 2002 the Chairman of the Chinese-occupied Tibet Autonomous Regional government, Legqog by name, had denied, in the words of a report in the *Tibetan Review*, that “Tibetans would soon become a minority in their capital Lhasa.” Moreover, quoting China’s 5th national census that was issued on 1 November 2000, Legqog presented as “proof” that ethnic Tibetans accounted for 92.2 percent of the total

population of the TAR that he asserted then stood at 2.6163 million. He declared further that in this most recent national census of China there were 2.411 million ethnic Tibetans within TAR, whereas only 155,300 were ethnic Han, and peoples of other minority nationalities numbered less than 50,000. See "China Denies Tibet Population Transfer Policy," *TR* (Oct.2002):7.

It should be added, finally, however, that what happened in recent history to both Manchuria and Inner Mongolia at the hands of the various Han governments in Peking greatly troubles exiled-Tibetan leaders and presents a bleak forecast of what is in store for Tibet if the population transfers of Chinese into the Land of Snows are not radically checked if not ended entirely. In a report of its 1985 visit to northeastern Tibet, the Fifth Tibetan Delegation allowed into the country was moved to pose this ominous question: Will the Tibetan race face the same fate which the Manchus and Mongols long since have met? For startling statistics paint a horrific picture of what can be expected for Tibet if the Chinese have their way there as they have had among those two peoples. "Early this century," wrote Professor Dawa Norbu in 1987, "the Manchus were a distinct race with their language and culture; today only two or three million Manchurians are left in Manchuria, where 75 million Chinese have settled. In Inner Mongolia, Chinese outnumber the Mongols by 8.5 million to 2.5 million"! Norbu 1987, p. 276.

Nothing which has occurred in Tibet since the mid-1980s and early 1990s at the hands of the Communist Chinese has provided any hope that the Sinocization of Tibet will end. Indeed, in the opinion of many Tibet watchers, by the year 2003 at Lhasa, the Dalai Lama's dismal forecast of 1987 has nearly become a total reality.

25. Except where already documented, much of the physical, historical, social and religious descriptions of Tibet and the Tibetans found in the foregoing paragraphs, as well as the quoted statements therein, is based on material found in: Ekvall 1907, p. 122n.; Norbu 1987, pp. 25-6, 29; Robson 1909, pp. 44-5; "Introduction," in Hyde-Chambers 1985, pp. 19-20; Hicks 1988, p. 14; Ingram 1990, p. 2; Pallis 1949, p. 195; Peissel 1972, pp. 5-7; Petch, *A Study on the Chronicles of Ladakh (Indian Tibet)* (Calcutta: Oriental Press, 1939), 74; Finegan 1986, pp. 9, 13, 40; McGovern 1924, pp. 133, 246-7, 259; Goodman 1986, p. 29; Merrick 1933, p. 164; *Times* (London), 26 Dec. 1906, p. 6; Woodcock 1965, p. 89; and Pemba 1957, p. 79. See also Feigon 1996, especially the first two chapters, for an excellent, balanced treatment on the climate, topography and geography of Tibet, and on the origins of the Tibetans as a people.

26. See Macdonald 1932, pp. 236, 260.

27. See McGovern 1924, pp. 35-7; Gould 1957, p. 17; and Lt. L.T. Grove, "Two Sapper Subalterns in Tibet," *Royal Engineers Journal* (Dec. 1931):692.

28. Tharchin 1921, p. 1.

29. Both men had previously met for the first time in early 1920 at Yatung in the Chumbi Valley of Tibet when Tharchin and Dr. Sutherland (SUMI's Principal at Kalimpong) were on their return journey from Bhutan (see the end of the previous chapter where more is said by Tharchin about the Trade Agent as a Christian).

Another person who appreciated the abilities and services of Macdonald (1870-1962) was his older colleague in the British civil service, the well-known Sir Charles Bell (profiled elsewhere earlier in the present biography at Ch. 8), a friend of Tharchin's and the one who had been the Political Officer in Gangtok, Sikkim when back in 1914 Sundar Singh and Tharchin had unsuccessfully sought permission there to proceed to Tibet. In his book on the life of Dalai Lama XIII, Bell wrote that Macdonald "had helped the Dalai Lama greatly on the latter's flight to India" in 1910, "and there was consequently friendship between them....Himself endowed with a patient and kindly temperament," Macdonald "never failed to get on well with Tibetans....Macdonald did wonderful work at Yatung and Gyantse as an agent subordinate to the British Representative. In June 1929, several years after his retirement, the Tibetan Prime Minister wrote to him, 'During the time that you were in Tibet relations between the British and the Tibetans were very friendly.' And when I returned to Tibet on a private visit in 1934," Bell went on to say, "I could see how beloved he still was, though it was some ten years since I had retired. As long as the Dalai Lama lived, he exchanged letters with Macdonald." Bell 1946, pp. 84, 370. Bell also had this to say about Macdonald: "Writing and speaking Tibetan as one of themselves, thinking along Tibetan lines,....he never failed to gain the good will of Tibetans of all classes." Bell 1924a, p. 94. In fact, wrote one well-known Tibetan lady, Macdonald "was very popular in Tibet." Taring 1970, p. 49.

Still another admirer of Macdonald was the American author and Tibetan scholar Theos Bernard, whom Tharchin much later was to accompany part-way on a lengthy journey to Lhasa in 1937. In his book describing his pilgrimage to the Tibetan capital, Bernard spoke highly of the Britisher: "At this time I was making many valuable contacts" in Kalimpong. "David Macdonald, who is so very well known and loved by all the Tibetans

because of his intimate friendship with the late Dalai and Tashi [Panchen] Lamas, was always most gracious in introducing me to his many friends, who visited him on their pilgrimages to the birthplace of Lord Buddha in India." Bernard 1939, p. 32.

One final Macdonald admirer who ought to be mentioned and who was one whom Tharchin also accompanied on a journey to Lhasa was Sir Basil John Gould. He, together with Tharchin and others, spent six months in the Tibetan capital during 1940 working on a Tibetan wordbook. In the Preface to the resultant published work by Gould, he favorably comments on Macdonald's assistance in this regard and on his other accomplishments: "Mr. David Macdonald, who has helped throughout, was already a Tibetan scholar of distinction when in 1905 he helped Sir Charles Bell in the preparation of his Manual of Colloquial Tibetan... As a translator of the Bible into Tibetan, Mr. Macdonald is reputed to be the leader of those who hold that even what is most sacred may, without irreverence, be expressed in words which every man can understand. For many years he has conducted on behalf of the Central Board of Examiners in India the official examinations in colloquial Tibetan." Gould and Hugh Richardson, *Tibetan Word Book* (London, 1943), xii.

As a fitting conclusion, the comments of Scott Berry concerning Macdonald ought also to be included here. Describing him as "this near legendary figure," Berry went on to declare that Macdonald "must have been a very remarkable man indeed to have overcome the contemporary stigma against Eurasians... It was probably only his mixed parentage and his own marriage to a woman of mixed Nepali and Scottish blood that kept him from rising as high in the service as Bell, and for twenty years or more he was the most important figure representing the British in Tibetan affairs." Berry 1995, pp. 152-3. Much more can be learned on the life and career of Macdonald by consulting the text pages referenced under the Index entry for him in McKay 1997.

30. The information about what Tharchin found at Yatung is per his own observations recorded in his "memoirs," per his younger Tibetan friend Tsewang Y. Pemba in the latter's article, Pemba 1977, p. 22, as well as other published sources.

31. This per Tharchin in his BB TwMs, p. 3.

32. It was about 10 years earlier that she had established the school. Her husband David, whom she married in 1893 at Ghoom and where they first established their home, has left a brief record of its founding and subsequent history; see Macdonald 1932, pp. 224-5, 42.

33. All information and quotations in this paragraph concerning Tharchin, the school, and his relationship to it have been derived from three sources: (a) Tharchin 1921, p. 1; (b) GTUM TsMs, 105-6; and (c) BB TwMs, p. 3. The (b) source has it that Tharchin assisted at the school for three months, the (c) source, that he remained at Yatung for four months before traveling onward to Gyantse. A four-month maximum period is confirmed by the (a) source. Hence, the Text reads: "three to four months."

34. Pradyumna P. Karan, *The Changing Face of Tibet: the Impact of Communist Ideology on the Landscape* (Lexington, 1976), 71.

35. Tseten 1971, pp. 81-2, 83, 87.

36. Pemba 1957, p. 127.

37. Reported in French 1995, p. 185.

38. Steele, "On the Roof of the World," sixth in his series of seven articles describing his expedition into Tibet, published in typewritten mimeograph form by Bureau of Public Information, Government of India, 7 June 1945, pp. 1-2.

39. Peissel, *Das Verbotene Königreich im Himalaya* (Berlin: Safari-Verlag, 1968), 116. The descriptive and quoted material taken from this book has been freely translated from the German by a German acquaintance of the present author. A map that delineates the misconceived Tibetan view of the earth has been provided on p. 121 of Peissel's book. It is to be noted as well that this volume has been published also under the English title of *Mustang, the Forbidden Kingdom*.

40. The information regarding these four teachers is per Rinchen Dolma Taring (aka: Mary la; see later in the present chapter), who as a twelve-year-old arrived in Yatung from Lhasa just after Tharchin went on to Gyantse. She stayed for about six months (Oct. 1921-Mar. 1922) in the Macdonald home before going on to Darjeeling for three years of schooling there. See her volume, Taring 1970, p. 56.

41. Tharchin 1921, p. 1.

41a. *Ibid.*

42. Bernard 1939, p. 44.

43. All quoted passages in this and the preceding paragraph are taken from Tharchin 1921, p. 1, with some very minor editing provided by the present author for easier comprehension.

44. See Minto 1974, p. 173. See also GTUM TsMs, 107. The fact of the service being conducted in the school is per Tharchin Post-1962, p. 2. It will be remembered that Rev. Graham's senior missionary colleague at the Kalimpong Mission, Dr. Sutherland, had conducted a similar service here a year earlier, Tharchin again being present. See the previous chapter.

45. Tharchin 1921, pp. 1-2.

46. Besides the sources already cited in the previous two notes as well as p. 107 of the general GTUM TsMs source frequently cited in these pages of End-Notes, another document was found by the present writer among the ThPaK which sheds further light on the details of the Tharchin-Graham encounter just now discussed; see Tharchin, "Church News of the Tibetan Congregation, Kalimpong, for the Year 1970," p. 1 of a three-page typed document submitted (early 1971?) for eventual publication in the *Eastern Himalayan Church News* (UCNI), in which this latter-day ordained pastor of the Tibetan congregation, in honor of the Centenary Year of the founding of the Church of Scotland Mission in the Eastern Himalayan region, had recalled certain events and works associated with the early pioneers of the Mission, including the Revs. Macfarlane and Graham.

47. Per Tharchin 1921, p. 2.

48. Almost all the bungalows along the route between Yatung and Gyantse were designed according to the same pattern: "two rooms and bathrooms, with offices, enclosed in a walled compound, for shelter from the wind. That they were also built with an eye to defense is obvious. They are as comfortable as it is possible to make them, but fires are necessary all the time they are in occupation." Dak bungalows in both Tibet and Sikkim "are fully furnished, those above 7000 feet elevation being provided with mattresses also." Macdonald 1943, pp. 87, 25.

49. *Ibid.*, 5-6. For a most detailed description of the entire length of the route to what was then Tibet's third largest city that boasted a population of some 7000 people (when including the lamas and monks of the great Palkhor Chhode Monastery), see *ibid.*, 84-90.

50. Sinclair 1965, p. 266.

51. *Ibid.*, 267.

52. Manning is quoted in Cutting 1940, p. 244. For the Kimura quotations see his book, Kimura 1990, pp. 143, 159. For the Thomas, Jr. quotations see his book of travels, Thomas Jr. 1951, p. 82. See also Tseten 1971, pp. 66, 121. Thomas, Jr. was wont to conclude his description of the Tibetan community by pointing out that "if Phari has the reputation of being the dirtiest town in the world, it may also boast of having the world's loftiest post office at an altitude of 14,700 feet."

53. Millington 1905, pp. 73-4.

54. Since the days of Tharchin's visits deep into Tibet, which for all practical purposes ended in 1940, much of the monastic community at Gyantse no longer exists, as a consequence of the Chinese Communist takeover of the country that began in 1950 and culminated in the notorious and violent rampage of the Cultural Revolution's Red Guards during the decade 1966-76. Although the Golden Pagoda still stands intact, the same cannot be said for the lamasery center in which it once stood. Of the 18 temples which existed in the days when Tharchin lived at Gyantse, only two now survive, the others having been razed to the ground by the wanton zeal of the young Chinese Red Guards. It is said, moreover, "that Tibetans were made to participate in the devastation." Harrer 1985, pp. 136-7. Harrer made a return journey to Tibet in 1982 and visited Gyantse at that time. According to Jack Finegan, besides the Pagoda, the monastery compound's walls and central temple still stand today. Finegan 1986, p. 156.

55. These two bazaar descriptions are from Thomas Jr. 1951, p. 99; and Tung 1980, pp. 90-1. Except for the Millington source, much of the rest of the description with regard to Gyantse is derived from William John Ottley (Brevet-Major, 34th Sikh Pioneers), *With Mounted Infantry in Tibet* (London, 1906), 74, 76, 191; McGovern 1924, pp. 50, 56ff.; Gould 1957, p. 20; Special Correspondent 1904, p. 4 (note: article datelined Gyantse, 16 Apr.; the town did not fall to the British till 6 July 1904); photo caption of Plate II (opposite p. 1117) of "Tibetan Art," *Encyclopaedia Britannica* 21 (Chicago, 1973); Finegan 1986, pp. 156-7; Riencourt 1950, pp. 46-7, 56; see also Tung 1980 again, pp. 21-2 and Merrick 1933, p. 154.

56. Tharchin 1921, p. 3.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

59. Much of the information and all of the quoted matter in this paragraph have been derived from GTUM TsMs. 108 and BB TwMs, p. 3. But the information about for whom he had initially established his school is derived from Carlson 1988a, p. 13.

60. "When I finally returned to India from this trip to Tibet, I brought back that register with me, but evidently it is lost somewhere."—Tharchin, GTUM TsMs, 108.

61. All information and quoted material in this and the preceding paragraph have been derived from either *ibid.*, 109-10 or BB TwMs, p. 4 or the "Daily Attendance Register for the K.O. [Kun-Nang Od-Sel] School, Gyantse for the month of Oct. 1923," ThPaK.

62. See Preman Addy, "British and Indian Strategic Perceptions of Tibet," in Barnett and Akiner (eds.) 1994, pp. 31, 32. See also Spence 1997 in Krasser et al. (eds.) 1997, II:920, where the author states that British India "was willing to train four officers" (doubtless the very four now under discussion in the Text of the present narrative) and to train "some 350 non-commissioned officers. All the military supplies and training were paid for by the Tibetan government."

63. For much of the information found in this and the preceding two paragraphs, see Macdonald 1932, p. 155; Shakabpa 1967, p. 259; Berry 1995, p. 135; K. Dhondup, "The Thirteenth Dalai Lama's Experiment in Modern Education," *TJ* (Autumn 1984):43-4; Rahul 1962, pp. 183-91; Tsarong 2000, pp. 50-51; and McGovern 1924, pp. 458-9.

63a. Per *ibid.*, 16 (photo caption).

64. See P.O.S. 1938, pp. 3, 10, 22; and Petech 1973, pp. 63, 214. For further details about the seven ranks of Tibetan officials, their titles and the origins and meanings of these titles, see McGovern 1924, pp. 443-4; Macdonald 1929 (Mar.), p. 215; Gould 1937, pp. 256-7; Taring 1970, pp. 18, 29; and Goodman 1986, p. 176n. Doring was one of the two young officers who in 1915 had received such military training at Gyantse for a few months. The other was the nephew of His Holiness, Bhrumpa (or Dumpa) by name, who, largely through the favor of the Dalai Lama, would soon rise to become the Commander of the latter's bodyguard regiment and would even assume the highest military position in the Tibetan army—eventually receiving the title of Dzasa and replacing Tsarong Shape in 1925 as Commander-in-Chief. But Doring and Bhrumpa had soon grown jealous of Gongkar, one of the four boys who had been sent off to England for education and had returned in 1916 to train Tibetan soldiers under the direct supervision of Tsarong. These two young officers—sons of nobility—did not favor Gongkar's special knowledge he had brought back with him from England nor his rising position, and "compared him unfavorably with the British military officers at Gyantse. Above all, in a land where birth decided a person's career. Gongkar was the son of a middle-class family and noble sons of high-ranking families regarded it beneath their dignity to serve under him." K. Dhondup (see the citation two notes previously), 45. See also Wangchen Gelek Surkhang, "The Thirteenth Dalai Lama," *TJ* (Winter 1982):15, where, however, Bhrumpa—though not identified by name—is incorrectly called the Dalai Lama's brother. Surkhang described Bhrumpa as "an incapable indiscriminating person." See also Michael 1982, p. 163, where Bhrumpa is identified as the Dalai Lama's nephew and the Dalai Lama's bodyguard regiment commander.

65. P.O.S. 1938, p. 37; see also Rahul 1962, p. 191. Interestingly, his father—the late Kusho Kyipup Sonam Tobgye—had been employed at Yatung at the time of the Younghusband Expedition to Tibet in 1903-4 and

afterwards was appointed the Tibetan Trade Agent at Yatung. The Kyipup family had estates at Gyantse and at three other places. P.O.S. 1938, p. 36.

66. For additional details with regard to the sending of these boys abroad, see the Text and End-Notes of Ch. 21 of the present narrative's final volume. Now after graduating from Rugby, Wangdi Norbhu went on to receive some training in mapmaking and irrigation engineering but "without mastering either subject." Failing to make much progress in these fields after his return to Tibet in 1917, "Kyipup Wangdi" was dispatched to Kalimpong in the spring of 1919 in order to learn telegraphy, where he stayed till Nov. of that year. He eventually went on to become, in 1935, a *Mipon* (City Magistrate) of Lhasa; and by 1946, he had assumed the post as "a high official at the Foreign Ministry" in the Tibetan capital. (Harrer) The family name had actually been Kyipuk but was changed by Wangdi upon his initially leaving Tibet for England and using the more familiar spelling in his writing of English. *Ibid.*; and Harter 1956, p. 155.

67. P.O.S. 1938, p. 20; see also Rahul 1962, p. 188; Tharchin 1937a, wherein Dingja is mentioned by Tharchin as being one of the four who went down with him on his return to India in early 1924 after military training was completed at Gyantse; and Taring 1970, pp. 112-3, 123. The latter author relates the sad end of Dingja's life as follows: "Our very dear friend, General Dingja, represented the Tibetan government in Peking from 1957-59. During his absence his wife, Tsarong's sister, died, and when he returned to Lhasa after the Uprising [of Mar. 1959] to find his wife dead, many of his friends and relatives gone into exile, many killed by torture, many in prison and his beloved country so changed, he got such a dreadful shock that he also died of heart failure." *Ibid.*, 269-70.

68. The two Tharchin quotations are derived from, respectively: (a) Tharchin 1942, p. 1; and (b) BB TwMs, p. 4.

69. Macdonald 1932, p. 223.

70. Tharchin 1937a.

71. P.O.S. 1938, pp. 37, 20.

72. Macdonald 1932, p. 223. Tharchin himself, in his unpublished "Brief Biography," confirms the fact that he taught these officers English as well as Hindi: "They also took great interest to learn English and Hindustani [from me]..." BB TwMs, p. 4.

73. Except for the name and ethnicity of the new assistant teacher, which Tharchin revealed in his BB TwMs, p. 2, the rest of the information in this paragraph was derived from GTUM TsMs, 110 and from Oskar Pfister's summary of what Tharchin had shared with Catholic Jesuit Fr. Henry Hosten at Darjeeling in June 1925 and found in Pfister 1926, p. 215.

74. Both Tharchin sources: GTUM TsMs, 111 and BB TwMs, p. 3.

75. As reported by Hosten to Oskar Pfister and published in Pfister 1926, p. 215.

76. "All [Tibetan] officials and certain of the wealthier non-officials are entitled to be styled *kusho*, literally 'your honor's feet,' which may be rendered into English as 'esquire'." Macdonald 1929 (Mar.), p. 215.

77. This son has had a most interesting career. Born in 1886 to the late Lhase Kusho and Maharani Yishe Dolma of Sikkim before her marriage to Thutob Namgyal (see next note), he was declared an incarnation of Mondoling Monastery (in Sikkim). He possessed a considerable reputation for learning and for medicinal skills. Previously he had lived at Gangtok with his half-brother the Maharaja, serving as family priest and religious instructor. He even acted as head of Religion in Sikkim and introduced many monastic reforms. With the Durbar's consent, he also issued orders prohibiting exorcists from killing animals as propitiation of evil spirits. But he created trouble for himself and friction among Sikkim's Raj families when he laid claim to certain Dobtra estates in Tibet (see next note). For this and other reasons, he was expelled from his homeland in 1934 and came to live at Lingbu Monastery which he himself had reconstructed from a state of disrepair. He came to be known as Taring Rimpoche, as Lingbu Lama, and as Lhatsun Rimpoche. P.O.S. 1938, p. 66. He died in the early 1950s just before the Fourteenth Dalai Lama rested at Lingbu in July 1951 on his way back to Lhasa from Yatung to where His Holiness had fled with the invasion of the Chinese Communists, Oct. 1950. See Taring 1970, p. 174.

78. The more formal and complete name is Raja Tsotra Namgyal of Taring, the latter appellation (meaning in Tibetan, "long life")—variously spelled also as Tharing, Tering, Tsering, Tsaring, Traring, etc.—being derived from the Tibetan village or town by that name located near Gyantse about 155 miles southwest of Lhasa. It was there that the uncle, Lhase Kusho, and his family were to be domiciled on landed estates he acquired in 1893 after fleeing to Tibet. The family had also acquired estates at Dobtra near Khamba Dzong, some 100 trekking miles still farther to the southwest. Long before this, of course, Sikkim's ruling family's ties with Tibet had already been established. As David Macdonald was later to explain in his autobiography published in 1932: "Formerly, the royal family of Sikkim used to spend the rainy season in the Chumbi Valley, to escape the very trying rains of Sikkim. None of the pests that make life unbearable in the latter country are found in Tibet. As late as 1912 the Sikkim ruler held estates in the Chumbi Valley, but... these lands have since been granted as a fief or leased, by the Tibetan government, "to the Raja... Tering... The Terings are the descendants of the late Maharaja of Sikkim. Sir Thutob Namgyal," the predecessor to the Maharaja (i.e., Tashi Namgyal, the youngest half-brother of Taring Raja) who was reigning at the time Tharchin was at Gyantse, "and are, as a matter of fact, the senior branch of the family. All their interests, however, now lie in Tibet, from whence, as landed proprietors, they will never return to settle permanently in Sikkim." Macdonald 1932, p. 59. The Taring Estate near Gyantse used to be a place of enjoyment for Depons "in place of a salary" and was small when compared with some of the old Tibetan noble family estates and those belonging to the monasteries. See Taring 1970, p. 95.

79. Beil 1924a, p. 207.

80. The foregoing information on the Rakasha and other Tibetan peerage families is from: (a) Bernard 1939, p. 318; (b) Petech 1973, pp. 19, 50ff.; (c) Rahul 1962, p. 189 note 28; and P.O.S. 1938, pp. 21, 66.

81. This head of the Tsarong family, who was "one of the then chief ministers of Tibet" and "the only one to remain behind and carry on his duties when the Dalai Lama and the rest of the ministers fled to India, was... suspected of Chinese activities. The lamas of the Sera Monastery dragged him from the council chamber at the Potala and killed him without any form of trial. Several other high Tibetan officers, including one of the sons of the murdered Tsarong, were also suspected of aiding the Chinese. They were killed by the Sera priests at the same time." Macdonald 1932, p. 111. Tsarong and his son were literally dragged down long flights of the Potala's steps to their deaths in unmerciful fashion.

The jury is still out among the many historians and others who have attempted to get at the entire truth as to who precisely was responsible for the decision to eliminate the Tsarongs, father and son. Some claim that Chensa Nang-kang (aka: Dazang Dadul), who would soon be elevated to be the Tibetan army's Commander-in-Chief and become the new Tsarong head of that household (see later in the narrative text), was himself directly implicated. But not enough solid evidence has yet been produced by researchers and historians for anyone outside Chensa's family (he and they denied it) to be able to declare unequivocally that he was responsible. The entire event is still shrouded in the murky mists of the Tibetan politics of that day, and perhaps the whole truth will never be known.

What in general outline is known, however, is as follows: Towards the end of Dalai Lama XIII's self-imposed exile in India (1910-12), His Holiness had dispatched his loyal favorite Chensa to Tibet and Lhasa to make preparations for his safe return, particularly in view of the Chinese military and political presence still evident everywhere in Tibet despite the impending overthrow of the Manchu Imperial dynasty in China. It was in the latter part of 1911 that Chensa had been sent to Tibet for the express purpose of engineering a revolt against the Chinese occupation forces; and to this end His Holiness had even issued a proclamation to his people. Now according to one writer on Tibet (Riencourt), one of the first methods this secret agent of the Dalai Lama's employed to effect this revolt was to go about the land in disguise, stirring up farmers and townspeople to rise up against the Chinese presence by organizing and keeping alive an effective resistance movement. Chensa's clandestine work had proved so promising that at the end of the same year he could send to his master a glowing report of his activities. Riencourt 1950, p. 167; see also Petech 1973, p. 137. Then, upon Chensa's arrival at the Sacred City itself, he and two other Tibetan officials, it is said, convened a secret meeting of the National Assembly. According to one prominent Tibetan historian (Shakabpa), at this meeting "it was decided to arrest all pro-Chinese Tibetan officials, before there were any more defections like that of the Tengyelung monastery" located at Chakpori just opposite the Tibetan pontiff's Palace in Lhasa. (The monks here had perhaps allied themselves with the Chinese as a means of avenging themselves for the punishment which the lay members of the Tibetan government had meted out upon them several years before Dalai Lama XIII had assumed civil powers in 1895. For many generations this monastery had been one of six leading ones in Tibet with the privilege of supplying a Regent during a given Dalai Lama's minority; indeed, its Abbot had become the Regent during

the Thirteenth's minority and had been responsible, along with others, for an unsuccessful attempt to murder the young Dalai Lama, leading to the punishment of that monastery's inmates already mentioned; and, then, because of its siding with the Chinese in 1911-12, Tengyeling's substantial estates were confiscated by the Tibetan government, its monastery "sacked and burned," leaving an "empty shell" that "now stands as a warning to traitors"—Hayden and Cosson.) "As a result of this decision," continues Shakabpa's account, "the members of the *Kashag* were all arrested. Kalon Tsarong [himself one of these members of the Cabinet], his son, and... the Secretary of the *Kashag*, were [killed] for having had close relations with the Chinese." The other three Kalons, who had been appointed by the "suzerain" Chinese authorities, "were imprisoned." Shakabpa 1967, p. 241. See also Goodman 1986, p. 141; see also Rahul 1961, p. 421 and Hayden and Cosson 1927, p. 87 for data on Tengyeling. Kalon Tsarong, then, had been the only one of the four *Kashag* members to have been appointed by the Dalai Lama. Now with the conclusion of the Republican revolution in China and the collapse of the old Imperial order, the Tibetan revolt under Chensa's lead proved successful, making it possible for him to welcome finally His Holiness back to Tibet as far as Sam-ding Monastery. At that time he had already achieved the rank of Commander of all Tibetan forces in the two central and most important provinces of the country (U and Tsang) that included the cities of Lhasa, Shigatse and Gyantse. By the third month of 1913 Chensa would be appointed by His Holiness the first ever Tibetan army Commander-in-Chief of all forces throughout Tibet and in addition he would have the title of *Dzasa* bestowed upon him. A year later the Dalai Lama would make him a member of the powerful *Kashag* or ruling Cabinet. Petech 1973, p. 138. At only age 27 he had arrived at the pinnacle of all lay power in Tibet! The Dalai Lama would eventually return to his capital by early 1913, after all Chinese troops and officials had been removed from Tibetan territory and after Chensa had notified His Holiness that all was now safe for him to re-assume his rightful place among his subjects. Shortly thereafter Chensa became the new head of the Tsarong household, which immediately ennobled this son of a humble maker of arrowheads and "assured his standing in the narrow circle of the ruling class." Moreover, "his talent for finance and for international trade made him the richest man in Tibet." *Ibid.*

82. The reader is reminded to return to Ch. 1 of the present narrative for additional details regarding this unusual polyandrous marriage, as well as an extensive discussion there concerning other such marriage customs to be found among Tibetans.

83. See Macdonald 1932, pp. 73-4 for an exciting account of the dramatic way in which this brave young man held off the pursuers of His Holiness at the Tsangpo River crossing south of Lhasa just long enough for the latter to make good his flight to safety. According to Tibetan historian Shakabpa, because of the help of Chensa, the Dalai Lama had actually escaped being beheaded and his head brought back to the Chinese Imperial Amban at Lhasa. For the latter, upon learning of the Grand Lama's flight from the capital, had instantly asked for two volunteers from among his troops to bring the head of His Holiness back to him. These two, together with 300 cavalymen, were then dispatched in hot pursuit of the Dalai Lama's party, but fortunately for His Holiness, without success! Shakabpa 1967, p. 228. Chensa himself escaped capture and certain death when, after arrival at the Chinese-occupied Tibetan town of Phari (28 miles from Yatung), he was able, with the help of the Phari District governors, to make his way secretly to Yatung where he feigned to be one of the British postal runners who carry letters and parcels between Phari and Sikkim. Chensa was thus able to escape recognition and to climb up through the snow to the frontier mountain pass and cross over to safety. From here he ultimately caught up with the Dalai Lama at Kalimpong and remained with His Holiness during much of his stay at Darjeeling. Bell 1946, p. 88.

84. Robert Byron, *First Russia Then Tibet* (London, 1933), 212.

85. Actually, it was the "devout Christian" Macdonald family's oldest daughter, Annie, who approached Rinchen Dolma and "asked me," wrote Mary later, "if I would like to be renamed 'Mary' before I went to Darjeeling, Mary being the Lord Jesus' mother's name. To me it sounded like Dolma [my Tibetan name for the Indian goddess Tara, and which means 'Protectress'], as Christ's mother is also a protectress [at least to Catholics], so I accepted it and have since been known as Mary to all my friends." At the Mount Hermon School, she went on, "I went to church regularly with the other girls, took scripture lessons and respected Christ. Yet I kept my faith in the Lord Buddha and in Dolma as my karma deity—the goddess who had been my protectress in all previous incarnations.... At church, and during prayers at school, I used to repeat, 'I pray to the Virtuous Protectress [Dolma], Protect all living beings from frightening destruction and death.'" Taring 1970, pp. 56-8. Mary made a point of stating that though a few conversions had been made in the day school which the Macdonalds had operated at Yatung when she was living with them, "they never tried to convert me." *Ibid.*, 56.

86. An event told of in greater detail at Ch. 27 of the present work's final volume. Jigme Taring had the distinction of having filmed the only extant film documentation of the tragic March 1959 Uprising in Lhasa. *TJ* (Summer 1981):84.

87. See Ch. 27 for details.

88. Sources for the foregoing information and quotations therein on the interconnectedness of these five families are as follows: Tharchin himself, *GTUM TsMs*, 110-11; Bell 1946, p. 41; Bernard 1939, pp. 71-3, 75, 98, 111, 120, 153-5, 316-8, 254; Macdonald 1932, pp. 59, 73-4, 124, 133-4, 205-7, 285-7; Harrer 1956, pp. 168, 118-9, 134-5 *passim*; Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1955?, pp. 99ff.; *TJ* (Summer 1981):84; P.O.S. 1938, pp. 21, 22, 65-7, 73-4; (Mrs.) Welthy (Honsinger) Fisher, *The Top of the World* (New York, 1926), 41; Coelho 1970, pp. 18-24; Hayden and Cosson 1927, p. 80; and Taring 1970, pp. 50-66, 68, 73-5, 81-5; see also Spence 1991, pp. 35-6.

89. The data on young Chokte Kusho was gleaned from two entries in P.O.S. 1938, pp. 15 ("Chog-te-pa") and 18 ("Dele Rabden").

90. It is not clear from the available records whether Changlo Chen had his temporary living quarters within Gyantse itself or somewhere outside the town. In any case, most likely these quarters were limited in the amount of space available for guests; which may therefore account for why, during Tharchin's periods of freedom from school responsibilities, the Headmaster ended up spending more time with Doring Thaiji on his ancestral estate than with Changlo Chen.

91. Bell 1928, pp. 93, 283, 98.

92. Merrick 1933, pp. 170-2.

93. Macdonald 1932, p. 155.

94. Kimura 1990, p. 151.

95. See Macdonald 1932, pp. 275-6. See also McKay 1997, p. 99.

96. The source for both Tharchin quotations marked for this end-note no. is Tharchin Post-1962, pp. 2-3. Both can also be found in Carlson 1988a, p. 13.

97. Tharchin Post-1962, p. 2.

98. Special Correspondent 1904, p. 4. See also Finegan 1986, p. 156, where he identifies some of the Buddhist sects numbered among the monkhood who occupied the 16 colleges that were present at Palkhor Chhode.

99. Quoted in Bell 1924b, p. 92

100. A reference, no doubt, to one of the largest prayer wheels in all of Tibet, located at the Palkhor Chhode Monastery where these lamas lived. David Macdonald has provided a description of this particular "external object" of the Tibetan religion: "Near the main temple is a huge prayer wheel, ten feet high and eight feet in diameter, containing millions of repetitions of the sacred 'Om! Mani Padme Hum!' formula written on very thin paper. This is revolved by every pilgrim who visits the shrine, each revolution being marked by the striking of a bell, which thus records that the prayers have been wasted to the gods." Macdonald 1932, p. 131.

101. The eldest brother of Dalai Lama XIV, and himself a learned incarnate lama and former Abbot of one of the more important temples within the famed Kumbum Monastery of eastern Tibet, has shed further light on the "Nangpa-Chipa" nomenclature and their use. He writes: "A Tibetan who does not... belong to one of the religious minorities will, if you ask him what his religion is, tell you that he is a 'Nangpa,' which means 'one who belongs.' Actually anyone, provided that he belongs to some confession or other, can call himself a Nangpa, since Buddhism knows no religious fanaticism. Outside Tibet the word 'Chipa,' which we use to describe someone who is not a Buddhist—actually the word means someone who does not belong—is wrongly translated 'foreigner' or 'stranger.' The correct word for foreigner or stranger is 'Chilangpa'." Norbu 1961, p. 88. This understanding, if applied to Tharchin, would have therefore still entitled him to call himself a "Nangpa" in Gyantse in his discussions with the local lamas there, in view of the fact that Tharchin was a Tibetan, he was in Tibet at the time, and belonged to the minority Christian confession!!

102. Sometimes this ritual involved a different beverage than *chang*, was done with a different finger, and had a different object in view. Tsewang Y. Pemba, already quoted from, who was born at Gyantse in 1931 and spent his childhood at Yatung and Lhasa, recalls how at Yatung his grandmother would engage in this ritual of the finger-dip offering at breakfast. She, however, upon saying a short Buddhist grace at the meal, would, "after dipping the forefinger of her right hand into her tea, ... raise it and flick it three times to the *three most precious things of Buddhism* (Buddha, the scriptures, and the body of monks)." Pemba 1957, p. 26 (emphasis added).

103. Ford 1957, pp. 78-9; see also Agarwala (ed.) 1991, p. 64 for the "sprinkling ritual" quotes; and see also Gould 1937, p. 447. Interestingly, Charles Cutting, one of the few Americans to visit Lhasa during the first half of the twentieth century, has indicated that these so-called *chang* girls served another, quite different, but highly useful social purpose, especially among the families of wealth and position in Tibetan society. One day while guests in the home of Tsarong Shape, he and his wife reported later that as they walked in their host's garden "we were constantly importuned to drink by the famous 'chang girls' of Lhasa, who strutted around heavily laden with jewels and finery provided by the hostess. The superlatively elegant clothes the hostess could not be bothered with were worn by the *chang* girls, constituting a sort of formal parade of the house's riches, displayed as Western houses display their paintings and tapestries. ... The *chang* girls smiled coquettishly at the men, administering pricks with a bodkin to those who seemed to be dallying too long with their beverage. The girls were on a plane somewhat higher than a geisha girl's, and were hired by the great houses for gala occasions. Ordinarily, it appeared, they were occupied with more prosaic professional duties." Cutting 1940, pp. 239-40.

104. See the Old Testament book of Daniel, Ch. 1.

105. *Times* (London), 1 Dec. 1884, p. 5 and 24 Dec. 1898, p. 5; Harrer 1956, p. 66. See also Goodman 1986, p. 18n. A more recent traveler in Tibet (1982) has noted the following: "Tea is indispensable to Tibetans. They are so addicted to it that both the Chinese and British once thought that by controlling the tea trade in Tibet they could subdue the Tibetans. They were wrong, but tea is nonetheless an integral part of Tibetan life." Wong 1984, p. 293. Yet John Snelling has noted that "superior quality Indian tea could certainly be had at more modest cost but the Tibetans were firmly set against it. Wily Chinese tea merchants had put about the rumor that it induced unpleasant headaches." Snelling 1983, p. 87. The tea, which is normally of a coarse quality, is grown in China, where it is pressed into shapes of brick that on their long journey through Tibet are encased in coverings of hide. Carried as they are on the backs of ponies, mules, or donkeys, or of yaks or other cattle, these tea bricks travel "from the extreme east to the extreme west of Tibet, a distance of some 3000 miles across the great mountains and valleys of this difficult country." Because the journey takes such a long while (the yak, for example, covering only 1½ to 2 miles per hour, perhaps 10 to 15 miles per day), the tea must be well packed. Bell 1924b, p. 94. Largely used and much prized in Central Asia and all over the Russias, this Chinese brick-tea was generally called "Caravan tea" for obvious reasons. Louis 1894, p. 9. Yet one contemporary explorer of Tibet, Captain C.G. Rawling, had aptly called the brick tea of that day sent to Tibet as "the leavings and sweepings of the Chinese crop." Quoted in Snelling 1983, p. 87.

Its preparation, as one noted traveler in Indo-Tibet has observed, is somewhat complicated. Filippo de Filippi explains that "the tea stalks, with their leaves, are boiled some time in water, and the infusion poured off into long [i.e., tall] wooden cylinders [affixed with a plunger] where it is churned with the addition of salt, butter, a little *satu* (flour made of roasted barley) and a salt of soda [found on riverbanks or lake margins] which precipitates the tannin and coloring matter. It is then poured into large teapots and kept hot over a brazier. It is of a light-chocolate color, and not displeasing to the taste. It is poured out into the little cup which every Tibetan... always has with him; about half the quantity is drunk: into the rest they put a pinch of *satu* flour and work it into boluses [*sic*] which they eat." Filippi 1931, p. 190n. Very often, said another writer, "the flavor is enhanced with the addition of yak-dung"!! Riencourt 1950, p. 58.

106. The time-frame is not precisely known. What *is* known are the following: (a) as indicated in the text, Knight tells in his book of being stalled for a month at Gyantse; (b) another visitor to Gyantse, General Pereira, tells in his book of travels of arriving in the city from Lhasa on 5 Nov. 1922 and finding "Dr. McGovern and Captain Ellam of a so-called Buddhist Mission" there (see point (c) below), he then departing two days later for the Nathu La (Younghusband (comp.) 1925, p. 188); and (c) Prof. William McGovern, in his own volume on the Gyantse journey of the Buddhist Mission (combined with the account of his solo journey to Lhasa in disguise the following year), states that when three members of the Mission returned to India, he and Captain Ellam stayed on at Gyantse "for nearly another month" in hopes that the Tibetan government might feel less intimidated by only two Westerners requesting permission to journey to Lhasa, but that they, too, were turned down, they

then returning to Darjeeling and arriving there on 9 Dec. 1922 (McGovern 1924, p. 59ff.). Since generally it takes about 15 days to trek from Gyantse to Darjeeling (via Gangtok), one can calculate backwards from 9 Dec. and fairly closely estimate that the probable date for the departure back to India of Knight and his other two Mission members was during the very last days of Oct. And hence, the choice of late Sept. to late Oct. (as is shown in the Text) seems, given the data just now outlined, the most likely time-frame, give or take a few days.

107. The sources for all the quoted material and information with respect to the British Expedition of 1922 to be found in this and the preceding three paragraphs are: Knight 1930, pp. 6-7, 60; McKay 1997, p. 106 for the India Office warning to Bailey; and Macdonald 1932, pp. 277-82.

108. *Ibid.*, 223.

109. Obituary, "Lt. Col. Frederick M. Bailey," *JRCAS* (June 1967):225. Indeed, the Royal Geographical Society bestowed upon him the Gill Memorial Award in 1912 and its Gold Medal in 1916. Bailey would also be the recipient in 1920 of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society's premier award: the Livingstone Gold Medal. See Taylor 1981, p. 62. In yet another obituary of Bailey, the writer had this to say of his kaleidoscopic career: "In its diversity of adventure his career as soldier, explorer, linguist, secret agent and diplomatist can be compared with that of Sir Richard Burton and it included not a few incidents reminiscent of Kipling's Kim; Sarat Chandra Das, who examined young Bailey for his proficiency in Tibetan, was in fact the Bengali secret explorer who appears in Kim under the name of Hurry Chunder Mookerjee." "Colonel F.M. Bailey, Explorer and Secret Agent," *Times* (London), 19 Apr. 1967, p. 10. Much more can be learned about the life and career of Bailey by consulting the text pages referenced in the Index entry for him in McKay 1997.

110. The *Times* (London) obituary again, 19 Apr. 1967, p. 10.

111. Cf. Swinson 1971, p. 225. But according to Charles Allen's thorough historical investigation of the various explorations of the Tsangpo-Brahmaputra River system, there still remained unexplored one short gap: "a forty-mile stretch of river into which [Bailey] had [not] been able to penetrate—the mighty Tsangpo gorge itself" located in the ESE area of Tibet. Nevertheless, Allen did positively acknowledge the great contribution which Bailey's team made in having settled the last doubts about the precise course of the Tsangpo. Allen 1983, p. 171.

112. Even so, wrote Allen in 1982, "the Tsangpo gorge still guards its secrets" today. *Ibid.*

113. John Connell, pseud. (John H. Robertson), *Auchinleck: a Biography of Field-Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck* (London, 1959), 28. Actually, as his friend Sir George Taylor put it in his biographical sketch of Bailey, "since he understood and could speak limited Russian, he was able repeatedly to change his identity." Moreover, upon succeeding in securing his own recruitment into the Russian counter-espionage service—and this, "despite a price on his head"—Bailey was given the task, among other responsibilities, "of tracking a foreign agent named Bailey!" And thus was he able to reach safely at Meshed. Taylor 1981, p. 62. But while in disguise serving the Russian secret police who had hired him, Bailey had lost contact with the British government. Whereupon the latter was compelled at one point to tell his mother that "we can only hope" he "is making his way across the passes to India." But because Bailey had become so important a figure to his British superiors, they held hostage a group of Bolshevik officials in Persia till the talented intelligence agent had returned safely. See McKay 1997, p. 104. That this daring and venturesome Englishman was able to survive through so much danger in Central Asia for so many years has been explained this way in one of his obituaries: "Participants in the 'great game' of obtaining information for the Government of India which would enable frontiers to be defined continually risked death from assassination, disease, starvation and the accidents of avalanches and sudden floods, and it was by unusual resourcefulness, toughness, diplomatic tact, linguistic ability and luck, all in good measure, that Bailey survived so many hazards to reach the age of 85." "Colonel F.M. Bailey...." *Times* (London), 19 Apr. 1967, p. 10.

114. Macdonald 1932, p. 285; and Taylor 1981, p. 62.

115. His departure date is per "Farewell Entertainment," *The Himalayan* (Darjeeling), 29 Aug. 1923, p. 1.

116. See McKay 1997, pp. 109, 113 for the two quoted passages; and for other details in this and the preceding two paragraphs, see his entire treatment of this episode on pp. 108-14 of this same work; and cf. with McKay 1997a, which is this scholar's subsequently published monograph on these same events.

117. How different in personality and temperament was this current British Political Officer from his predecessor in that office, Charles Bell, who was a much closer friend to Tharchin than Major Bailey ever became. The American Buddhist scholar and disguised traveler to Lhasa already discussed, William McGovern, has provided a revealing portrait of these two men with respect to the way each of them handled this highly sensitive *post vis-à-vis* Tibet; he also briefly described how a third friend of Tharchin's, David Macdonald the Trade Agent, fared with both Bailey and Bell. In the volume published in 1924 of his 1922-3 adventures in Sikkim and Tibet, McGovern wrote:

Major Bailey had only recently secured the post of political officer, and I was much interested to learn from him something of his policy towards Tibet, as in his hands lie, to a large extent, the future relations between India and Tibet. From a personal point of view this presents a very great contrast to that of his predecessor, Sir Charles Bell, and well illustrates two different ways of handling Orientals. Sir Charles Bell aimed, not at overawing the Tibetans, but at securing their close sympathy and friendship. In order to do this he thought it necessary to conform to certain aspects of prejudice and superstition. Thus, for example, he neither fished nor shot. He abstained from tobacco as the Tibetans regard the use of tobacco with horror. When in contact with Tibetans he abstained from eating fish and chicken, as the Tibetans regard these foods as unclean. This extraordinary regard for native susceptibilities is not always successful, but in the case of Sir Charles it seems to have worked wonders, and I was later to find that many Tibetan officials have an unusual affection for him.

Major Bailey has followed the more ordinary lines of British administrators, who believe it inconsistent with the maintenance of dignity to pander too much to native ideas, but certainly his policy has not decreased British prestige in this part of the world. [Indeed, though opposite in his approach to Tibet from that of Bell's, Bailey nonetheless had a genuine concern for the country and came to her defense when he felt it necessary. For example, he once protested to London's prestigious Royal Geographical Society over one of its members, the photographer on the 1922 Everest Expedition, Captain Noel, having made disparaging references about Tibet.] But I believe that there is no great love lost between the past and present political officers, and as Mr. Macdonald, the Trade Agent and nominally Major Bailey's subordinate, is a protégé of Sir Charles Bell, the relationship between the political officer and the Trade Agent has sometimes an interesting side.

McGovern 1924, pp. 39-40. (The bracketed material about Noel is per Adrian Moon, "Journeys into the Past," *TR* (Dec. 1991):18.) There is little doubt that Macdonald fared better under Sir Charles than he did under Major Bailey. With respect to Bell, the Trade Agent, after retirement, wrote the following in 1932: "I had served under him for the greater part of my time in Tibet, and no one could have wished for a more kindly, conscientious and honorable Chief with whom to work.... I owe much to his kindness during my service in that country." Macdonald 1932, pp. 272, 40.

118. Swinson 1971, p. 49. Upon completing the service of Political Officer at Gangtok that lasted seven years, Bailey would go on to serve for some months as a political officer in Central India before being posted to Srinagar as Resident and ultimately appointed as British Minister to Nepal. Though he retired in 1938, a year or so later would find him joining the Home Guard in England following the outbreak of war against Germany in 1939, he being placed in charge of the North Norfolk auxiliary units. During the long period of war Bailey even served for nearly two years as a King's messenger based in the U.S. at Miami and also at Washington DC. Married in 1921, he would die at his home in Stiffkey, Norfolk on 17 Apr. 1967. Taylor 1981, p. 62.

119. BB TwMs, p. 4.

120. *Times* (London), 13 July 1922, p. 10; see also Samphel, "Tibet and the Modern World: Tibet's Failure at Modernization (1904-1949)," *TR* (Jan. 1980):15.

121. See Addy, "British and Indian Strategic Perceptions of Tibet," in Barnett and Akiner (eds.) 1994, pp. 31-2.

122. All background information presented here involving the late British Political Officer is taken from Bell 1924a, pp. 3, 194-7, 207; and Bell 1946, p. 342.

123. BB TwMs, p. 4.

124. Sir George Taylor, in a historical sketch on the life of the eventual Headmaster of the school, Frank Ludlow, reveals how the selection of him came about. Ludlow had gone into the Indian Education Service after the Great War and became Inspector of European Schools in an extensive jurisdictional area of West and Northwest India. "In 1922 a request came from Delhi to submit the names of any candidates for the post of Headmaster of a school to be opened in Gyantse, in Tibet, where Tibetans of good family could be taught the rudiments of

Western education. The work and prospect of living for three years in a medieval surrounding appealed to him, and he submitted his own name and was eventually selected." Taylor, "Historical Introduction," in Fletcher 1975, pp. xiii, xxii, xxvii, 233. As will be learned a few paragraphs later in the Text above, Ludlow would be at Gyantse only till the end of 1926 when the school was forcibly closed down by the Tibetan government.

According to another biographical sketch of Ludlow, this one by W.T. Stearn, the Gyantse headmaster had been born in Chelsea, London in 1885 and educated at Wellington School in Somerset and at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, where in 1908 he received his degree in the Natural Sciences. Having immediately joined the Sind College staff at Karachi, he next served with the 97th Indian Infantry in Mesopotamia during the Great War, after which he filled the above-mentioned post of European Schools Inspector, with headquarters at Poona. Stearn notes that in 1927, the year following his Headmastership at Gyantse, Ludlow relocated to Srinagar in Kashmir. It was while on an expedition to Chinese Turkestan in 1929 that he would meet for the first time George Sherriff at Kashgar that was the beginning, explains Stearn, of "the close friendship and the fruitful partnership in [botanical] activities which lasted till Sherriff's death in 1967."

During the 1930s Ludlow would again be back in Tibet—in the southeastern area of the country—conducting botanical expeditions there in 1934 and 1938. The year 1933, however, had seen the very first joint plant-collecting expedition between these two, which had taken them into neighboring Bhutan, accompanied by Frederick Williamson, the then Political Officer for Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet. Sherriff, incidentally, would become a good friend of Gergan Tharchin in the years which lay ahead.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, these scientific activities of Ludlow's were interrupted. In 1940 he was appointed Joint Commissioner in Ladakh, from whence in April 1942, though, he was appointed as Assistant Political Officer for Tibet to take charge of the British Mission at Lhasa. There he remained for exactly one year, after which he was replaced in April 1943 by none other than George Sherriff, Ludlow's frequent companion on his botanical excursions into Bhutan and Tibet. Sherriff, who remained for two years at Lhasa, happened to be the husband of Betty Graham, youngest daughter of Tharchin's new and eventual close friend and fellow colleague in the gospel, Rev. John Graham. Meanwhile Ludlow would return to Ladakh to take up his duties as Joint Commissioner again.

After several more botanical expeditions with Major Sherriff to Tibet and Bhutan between 1945 and 1950, Ludlow would make his final return to England in the latter year. Thereafter he would spend most of his remaining years at the Department of Botany in the Natural History Division of the British Museum, where, writes Stearn, he "diligently, quietly and happily [studied] not only the Ludlow and Sherriff [plant] collections but also those of other collectors in the Himalayan region." But he would also publish several papers and articles of botanical interest relative to the rich flora of the Himalayan region he would come to know and love so well. He would die at Harefield, Middlesex, England in early 1972 after many years of battling a painful condition of sciatica. Ludlow, Stearn concluded, "was an extremely likable colleague whose modesty tended to obscure his great ability and competence, but who always readily made available his extensive knowledge of Himalayan geography, ornithology and botany to any inquirer." See William T. Stearn, *Frank Ludlow...and the Ludlow-Sherriff Expeditions to Bhutan and Southeastern Tibet of 1933-1950*, Bulletin of the British Museum (Natural History): Botany, vol. 5, no. 5 (London, 1976), 243-6.

125. Besides those cited already, the sources for the foregoing discussion on the Ludlow school at Gyantse and its demise are: for the statement of Dalai Lama XIV, see (a) the Snow Lion Newsletter, Spring 1987, quoted in David Woodward, "Examining a Significant Minority: Tibetan Christians," *TJ* (Winter 1991):61 and (b) a quotation from him in Vyvyan Cayley, *Children of Tibet* (Balmain, 1994), 7; Macdonald 1932, pp. 221-3; McKay 1997, pp. 115-8; for the identity of Khenrub Wangchuk, see Macdonald 1932, p. 222 in conjunction with P.O.S. 1938, p. 32; for Doring Thajji's attendance at the Ludlow school, see Petech 1973, p. 64; Shakabpa 1967, p. 264; Burman, *Religion and Politics in Tibet* (New Delhi, 1979), 62; Pemba 1957, pp. 102-3; McGovern 1924, pp. 400, 407-8; Dawa Norbu, "The 1959 Tibetan Rebellion: an Interpretation," *TR* (Feb.-Mar. 1982):16n.; Norbu 1987, p. 73; and Snellgrove and Richardson 1968, p. 264.

Interestingly enough, a similar incident of an English school being closed was to occur in 1945 at Lhasa and for precisely the same reason. Because of a higher frequency of foreign relations than usual having had to be carried on between Tibet and English-speaking nations during the years of World War Two, the Tibetan government finally realized that Tibetans who could speak English were becoming quite necessary for the conduct of its diplomatic, trade and other governmental affairs. But with only a few Tibetans on hand who did have such language knowledge, the Government in 1944 approached Sir Basil Gould of the British Mission at Lhasa on the matter and ultimately secured Richard Parker from England to help establish a school and teach English in the school, which was opened at the capital in the spring of 1945. But after only a few months, "a strong protest"

was registered by the monasteries to the effect that “the school would affect the religious beliefs of the country.” [Lobsang P. Lhalungpa, writing retrospectively of this event, has provided what in hindsight would now appear to have merely been an excuse ready to hand for these powerful monastic institutions to use for issuing their protest. Wrote Lhalungpa in the early 1980s: “By the early 1940s [his memory was faulty, the actual date being 1945] a modern school had opened in Lhasa, but it created new problems. In keeping with Western methods of teaching, instructors did not discipline students as much as Tibetan teachers or interfere with their studies. The children so treated—finding this freedom so different from their upbringing and the traditional Tibetan way of life—began to behave badly at home. Parents objected and organized support among the monks; eventually the school was closed.” Suffice it to say here that the school would have been closed anyway whether the parents had objected or not.] Once again, wrote Hugh Richardson, “the progressives had moved too fast for conservative monastic opinion...” Almost immediately thereafter the newly-opened English school, “after a short but successful existence” (Richardson), was shut down by “the abbots of Drepung” who were the ones specifically among the monastic community at Lhasa who “engineered its speedy closure” (Snellgrove and Richardson). The abbots were not finished, however, with this unwelcome intrusion by foreigners into their holy city. For in their unabated hostility towards what they perceived as English interference in their domain of education, they bequeathed to the people of Lhasa a monkish ditty fit for street-singing that according to one Tibetan historian (Samphel) went like this: “In the holy city of Lhasa there is that unholy English school. / Till our boots split we must go there as their unwilling tool!”

Progressives in the Government were not to be undone by this disappointing development, however; for the Government would subsequently send a few students off to India for study along Western educational lines under Tibetan government scholarships. These students were to be enrolled in a special school for Tibetans which, in the words of Riencourt, “the shrewd British” established in Darjeeling “so as to increase their influence over the Roof of the World.” This special school was a part of St. Joseph’s College at Darjeeling. Now the Tibetan whom the Lhasa government placed in charge of this project was the young nobleman already mentioned above, Lobsang Lhalungpa, who at the time was himself only about 21 years of age! Writing long afterwards, Lhalungpa described this new education project and his role in it: “In 1947 I was summoned by the office of the 14th Dalai Lama’s Regent, where the secretary read an order that placed me in charge of a new project. About ten students, ranging in age from eight to twelve years, would be sent to the Jesuit College of Saint Joseph’s in Darjeeling, ... where they would receive both a modern and a traditional education, eventually returning to Tibet to become technicians, administrators, teachers and diplomats. In addition to supervising the traditional education of these government-sponsored students, my task was to oversee about fifty others already independently enrolled in several modern schools in the Darjeeling area. I was also given general responsibility for cultural matters of Tibet in northern India. After my appointment the number of Tibetan students in India increased to more than one hundred and would probably have gone up to well over one thousand during the next decade. But political events in our homeland changed all this.”

Yet there was another facet to this entire matter which ought to be noted here. Critical of both the Tibetan government and the British here, Marco Pallis, a prominent Western friend of Tibet and one sympathetic of Tibetan Buddhism, would most likely have viewed the appointment of Lhalungpa as being woefully inadequate to protect what he saw as the interests of the country, culture and religion of Tibet. Pallis readily agreed that what eventually had led to the closings of the British schools at Lhasa and Gyantse were the strong objections of influential members of the monastic establishment who had argued that “the existence in Tibet of schools of novel type under foreign management might become a cause of psychic infection to the detriment of the Buddhist tradition.” But he then went on to say the following:

The fact that the [Lhasa] Government bowed to the [ecclesiastical] pressure is far less surprising than its failure to see that sending numbers of children of leading families out of Tibet for years on end and placing them in the unsupervised charge of foreign teachers who, to say the least, cared nothing about Buddhism, was ten times more dangerous than having these same children educated in the home country, admittedly on somewhat alien lines, but at least under the watchful eyes both of their parents as well as the authorities of the State.

It should be added here that there were at least two or three lay schools founded at Lhasa which had apparently posed no threat to the ecclesiastical authorities. One of these had been established much earlier by Imperial China through her Amban representative at the Tibetan court in 1907. A Reuters dispatch from Peking dated 11 July and printed in the *London Times* on 24 August of that year stated that Chan Ying-tang, the Chinese Resident at Lhasa, “reports the establishment of a Chinese-Tibetan school at the Tibetan capital, where young Chinese and Tibetans will learn the languages and literature of China and Tibet.” The Amban added in his report that the students at the school would be “destined for future Government employment in Tibet.” That was in

1907. By 1912 it had come to an obvious end when all Chinese military and civilian personnel, including the Ambans and all military officers, had been forced to exit the country as a consequence of the Republican revolution of 1911/12 which overthrew the Manchu Imperial overlords of China forever.

A second of these three lay institutions of education was another Chinese-established school for primary-aged children that had already been well-founded by the time in Oct. 1942 that an American military officer on his way to China stopped off at the Tibetan capital and noted in his diary that such a school was in operation. It had been founded in 1937 by the Chinese Nationalist government for educating the children of mixed Chinese and Tibetan parentage. It had been set up by the Chinese Liaison Officer at Lhasa, Chiang Chi-yu. It was later taken over by the Nationalist government's Commission for Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs. This and one other lay school, the American officer had been told, were the only ones of their kind in all of Tibet, and it too, according to the American, was also at the Tibetan capital. Conducted, surprisingly, by a monk who happened also to be a radio operator, this second of only two lay schools then in operation had been specifically established for the children of Tibetan nobility and lay officials in Lhasa. The Chinese school was eventually terminated when its teachers were required to return to China in July 1949 in the face of the impending downfall of the Nationalist regime at the hands of the Communists in China. The Tibetan government did not wish to see the Chinese personnel in Tibet either transfer their allegiance to the Communist People's Republic which appeared imminent and would thus gain for the Communists what the Tibetans would view as an unwelcome foothold in Tibet, or else be replaced by Communists consequent upon the change of government in China; so they deported all the Chinese officials in their land as a way of avoiding such a problem. See the present work's final volume, Chs. 23 and 24a, for much more details on the expulsion order of the Tibetan government in 1949. Except for the Riencourt quote, the sources for the rest of the material and quotations in this lengthy end-note are: Shakabpa 1967, pp. 289-90; Lhalungpa 1983, p. 35; Li 1960, pp. 198, 287; Tolstoy 1946, p. 213; Richardson 1962, p. 163 with photo caption opposite p. 103; Snellgrove and Richardson 1968, pp. 263-4; Samphel, "Tibet and the Modern World," *TR* (Jan. 1980):15-16; Lhalungpa 1983, p. 34; Pallis, "Preface," in Radhu 1997, pp. 52-3; and Patterson 1960, p. 60. For the Riencourt source, see Riencourt 1950, p. 112.

126. Tharchin to Bell, Lhasa, 1 July 1937, Bell Papers.

127. For additional details, the reader is referred again to two end-notes earlier, where in addition he should consult once more two of the sources cited already therein; namely, the book by Li, and the article by Tolstoy—same paging for both.

128. Tharchin to Bell, Lhasa, 25 July 1937, Bell Papers.

129. How unlike the previous two schools at Gyantse! In his autobiography, Tharchin's successor—"headmaster" went on to explain that "the teachers... were both Tibetan and Chinese, but the curriculum was strictly supervised by the Chinese. The Tibetans not only had no say in what was taught, but also were very closely watched by these supervisors... The entire program was designed to prepare" the students' "uninformed minds to accept Communist ideals, attractively presented." The "headmaster" learned upon arrival at Gyantse in Sept. 1956 that he "had been listed in the curriculum as a teacher of Tibetan grammar and poetics in a course designed for the teaching staff and advanced students. No Chinese would attend. My pupils would all be Tibetans and most of them," the teacher soon discovered, "had a real interest in the subject." At the first session nearly 200 attended, including all members of the school staff, both Tibetans and Chinese. "But from then on the attendance greatly varied. Usually all the Tibetans were present, which meant about twenty regular students... But not a single Chinese ever returned—evidently they felt no need to learn Tibetan." After only six months at the school, the "headmaster" returned to Lhasa in Mar. 1957 on a two-month leave. He never returned to Gyantse afterwards. Rato 1977, pp. 171, 184-5.

130. The story of how these two "headmasters" met is recounted near the end of Ch. 26 of the present biography's final volume.

131. Tharchin Post-1962, p. 3

GTUM TsMs, 118-32; quotes: 118, 120, 120-1, 121, 122, 123, 123-4, 124, 124-5, 126-7, 128, 129, 130.

1. Thubten J. Norbu in Norbu and Turnbull 1968, p. 105.

2. Hedin to Heinrich Harrer, Stockholm, late 1940s; Hedin to Harrer, Stockholm, 1946 or 1947; both quoted in Harrer 1985, pp. 38, 173. The renowned explorer was greatly disappointed and saddened for the rest of his life over his inability to achieve the goal of his dreams, though he made many expeditions into Tibet for that purpose, among others. As a Swedish youth, Hedin had been obsessed with the whole notion of exploration, he then having studied geography, geology and languages—for equipping himself to do just that—at Stockholm University, Uppsala University, the Berlin Institute of F. von Richthofen, and the University of Halle (of Moravian fame). With the support of Sweden's King Oscar II and Russia's Tsar Nicholas II, Hedin would explore and map extensive areas of Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang), Tibet and China between 1893 and 1908.

With respect to his Tibetan ventures, in 1896 the Swedish explorer crossed from west to east the entire elevated northern Tibetan plateau. But then in 1900-01 he launched forth a journey south with the sole aim of entering the Forbidden City itself. Not since 1846 had any European entered Lhasa, though many had attempted unsuccessfully since the Catholic Lazarist Fathers Huc and Gabet had succeeded in doing so. Hedin now disguised himself as a Tibetan lama, deserted his caravan and trekked to within a two-days' march of his goal, only to be halted by a district official. "Although Hedin was a fearless and even ruthlessly persistent traveler who many times evaded assigned escorts, he was unable to overcome the Dalai Lama's strictly enforced prohibitions against Westerners in Lhasa. For aiding the disguised Hedin a Tibetan lama was forever exiled from the holy city. Not until 1904, when the British invaded Tibet by force, did Europeans again set foot in Lhasa." Chahroudi 1983, p. 149. Though in 1906-07 he was permitted to visit Trashilhunpo Monastery at Tibet's second city, and was even granted an audience with Tibet's second highest ecclesiastic, the Panchen Lama, and though he explored other vast areas of Tibet without prohibition, Hedin would never achieve his boyhood dream of one day feasting his eyes on the golden roofs of the Abode of the Gods.

3. Lhasa: meaning in Tibetan, "the Habitation of the Gods," "the Place of God" or "God's Ground." The capital's original name had been Ra sa, meaning "walled city."

4. Robson 1909, p. 33.

5. Bell 1924b, p. 91.

6. So wrote the Chief Medical Officer of the Younghusband Expedition of 1903-4, and a Buddhist scholar in his own right, after his visit there as a participant in the Mission, in Waddell 1972, p. 330.

7. Landon, special correspondent of the *London Times*, is quoted in Hopkirk 1982, p. 185.

8. Quoted in Bishop 1994, p. 5.

9. Candler, the highly respected reporter of the *Daily Mail*, is quoted in Hopkirk 1982, p. 184.

10. From Landon's own account of the Expedition, *Lhasa the Mysterious* (1905), and quoted in Bishop 1994, p. 11.

11. Quoted in Thomas Jr. 1951, pp. 178-9. Spencer-Chapman had served as Private Secretary to the Head of the British Mission to Lhasa in 1936 and recounted his experience there in his book, *Lhasa: the Holy City* (London, 1938).

12. This according to the current Dalai Lama (Fourteenth), as told to Fred Ward; see Ward 1980, p. 238.

13. Cutting, "In Lhasa—the Forbidden," *Natural History* (Feb. 1936):109-10.

14. Waddell 1972, p. 330; and Thomas Jr. 1959, p. 15. And, Thomas added, "it is the last of Lhasa you see behind you as you leave." *Ibid*.

15. Both journalists are quoted in Hopkirk 1982, pp. 184, 185, respectively.

16. Neame 1947, p. 189. The "colossal monastic style" quote is from Dowman 1991, p. 71.

17. Before giving the sources for this and the preceding paragraph on the Potala, it should be pointed out that the word Potala itself is the Sanskrit name of the mountain abode of Avalokita, the Bodhisattva (see the present narrative's first volume, Ch. 2, for explanation) who manifests himself in human form as the Dalai Lama; consequently, the winter palace of the spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet is also called the Potala. Tibetans, however, generally refer to the Palace simply as *Rtse* ("the Peak"). Actually the name was originally derived from the name of a hill on Cape Comorin at the southern tip of India, where the Indian Buddhist Bodhisattva Avalokita (or Chenrezi, the patron Bodhisattva of Tibet) is said to have had his sacred residence and where Hinduism's Shiva as "Lord of the World" (*Lokesvara*) had his sacred dwelling place too. There is even another Potala hill in eastern China. The word *potala* signified a harbor where *pota*, ships, find shelter.

The above information on the word Potala, together with the data on this Palace's construction and other interesting details contained in the two paragraphs of regular text just now set down in the narrative, have all been derived from the following sources: Snellgrove and Richardson 1968, p. 200; Hyde-Chambers 1985, p. 17 of Glossary of Terms; Ward 1980, p. 238; "Views of Lhasa," *NG* (Jan. 1905):29; Ira Rifkin, "Spiritual Leader, Political Figure," *Los Angeles Daily News*, 23 Oct. 1984, appearing in *TR* (Nov. 1984):23; Das 1969, p. 65; see also Goodman 1986, pp. 89-90; Harrer 1956, p. 193; the statement of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama is quoted in Barber 1970, p. 28; and the story of Phala is found in *ibid.*, 43.

18. Riencourt 1950, p. 110. Riencourt, in fact, was the last white foreign traveler to be allowed into Lhasa before the Tibetan government's decision was made, in Riencourt's words, "to close the country and seal it hermetically against all foreigners until the [Fourteenth] Dalai Lama's [proposed majority] enthronement in 1951." Riencourt's visit in the summer of 1947 was concluded in late July, just two months prior to that historical decision. The only exception to the decision was the well-known American radio news commentator and journalist, Lowell Thomas, who visited the capital briefly during the summer of 1949. By that time the Government, according to Riencourt, was "searching frantically for help" against the Chinese Communists. *Ibid.*, 301.

19. Sinclair 1965, p. 110.

20. This whitewashing took place every September. "A bag of lime at the end of a yakskin rope was dipped into a well [near the Potala], turning the water into whitewash..." Barber 1970, p. 30. The whitewash was then "carried in buckets on the backs of women and dashed up against the wall from dippers. The section of wall that cannot be reached from below is splashed with whitewash thrown out of the upper windows." Thomas Jr. 1951, p. 180. According to Sarat Chandra Das, the famed Pundit who spied out Lhasa in 1882, this work lasts for three days, after which, but only afterwards, the people are at liberty to have their own house walls whitened. He added: "There is no one so poor that he does not at this season renovate the exterior of his dwelling." Das 1902, p. 262. The massive white wings of the Potala (and called the White Palace in contradistinction to the Red Palace) was the living quarters of the Potala monks, and acted as the administrative center of the Potala.

21. Of all the sources consulted, Sir Charles Bell is the only one, to this present author's knowledge, to have noted the fact that besides the whitewash- and crimson-colored sections of the Potala's exterior, there was "another small portion which is yellow" in color. Bell 1924, p. 41. This was doubtless created in deference to the fact that ever since the reforms of Tsong Khapa centuries ago, the Dalai Lamas no longer belonged to the Red Church of Tibetan Buddhism but to that branch of it known as the Yellow Church (or the Gelugpa Sect) that was founded by the 14th-century Great Reformer himself.

22. Barber 1970, p. 30.

23. Tung 1980, p. 24.

24. Quoted in Thomas Jr. 1959, p. 15. It was this special passion in Tibetan architecture, wrote Rosemary Tung, that influenced the great architect of the 20th century, Frank Lloyd Wright the American, to make it a part of his own credo. A photograph of the Potala, she went on to say, "was the only picture of a building other than his own in Wright's famous studio in Oak Park, Illinois." Recalled one of his students, John H. Howe, in a letter to Tung, "I well remember the large, aged photograph of the Potala in Lhasa which hung in Mr. Wright's study... I feel certain that the photograph of this remarkable building had a profound influence on Mr. Wright's work...." Quoted in Tung 1980, p. 24.

25. Thomas Jr. 1959, pp. 15-16.

26. Quoted in Bishop 1994, p. 12.

27. *Ibid.*, 12, 10.

28. Norbu 1998, p. 19.

29. The various sources for the quoted comments concerning the dark side of the Tibetan capital are as follows: the first Candler quote here about the awful conditions in Lhasa (taken from his book, *The Unveiling of Lhasa*, London, 1905), and the quotes of Fleming and the Manning "verdict" of 1811, are all found in Fleming 1961, pp. 232-3; the second Candler quote can be found in Hopkirk 1982, p. 184; and the chapter title quoted from Kawaguchi is taken from his book, *Three Years in Tibet* (Adyar, 1909). One of the Pereira comments is from Younghusband (comp.) 1925, pp. 182-7. One of the increasing number of Western visitors to Lhasa who came after Pereira and whose sentiments the General had earlier voiced was the American correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News* in Asia during World War Two, Arch T. Steele. Writing of his summer 1944 visit to the Tibetan capital, Steele's impressions of Lhasa were not unlike those of his predecessors from the West: "From the distance, sparkling in its mountainous setting, Lhasa had seemed much like the Hollywood conception of Shangri-la. Now on closer inspection, it was still a place of medieval charm and fascination, but its flaws, too, were evident. Except for the mansions of the wealthy, the houses of the Tibetan capital were more congested and less sanitary than New York tenements. Plumbing was unknown. All waste went into the streets, where it was cleaned up, ultimately, by innumerable dogs and the ubiquitous Tibetan ravens." Steele 1946, p. 14.

30. Knight 1930, pp. 44-5.

31. All quoted material in this and the preceding three paragraphs—and whether from French, Cotton or Buchan—can be found in French 1995, pp. 202-3.

32. For a brief history and description of the Norbu Lingka, see the Text and Notes of Ch. 18 below.

33. The derivation of the Tibetan Chenrezi god-form from its roots in Indian religion has been explained by David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson in their volume on the cultural history of Tibet (Snellgrove and Richardson 1968, pp. 117, 200):

With the general equating of Buddhist and Hindu forms of ritual, Hindu devotion to the Great God Shiva, commonly referred to as Lokeshvara, "Lord of the World," finds its parallel in Buddhist devotion to *Avalokitesvara* [the Sanskrit word for the same god in Tibetan, Chenrezi], the "Lord who surveys (all living beings with compassion)." *Avalokitesvara*, like his opposite number also entitled Lokeshvara, "Lord of the World," seems to have become the great god of late Indian (especially in Bihar) and Nepalese Buddhism [which was then carried into Tibet by Padma Sambhava and the other Indian Buddhist missionaries]. He becomes the supreme ideal of the divine *bodhisatva* (would-be buddha) who continually defers his entry into the tranquillity of final enlightenment, so that he may exert himself on behalf of living beings in all their various spheres of existence... [And in Tibet] the Dalai Lamas now come to be consciously identified as manifestations of this most popular of Tibetan Buddhist divinities.

34. Some of the information and observations, and much of the quoted material found in this historical sketch and religious description of the Dalai Lama as an institution in Tibetan society have been derived from Tucci 1973, pp. 201-2. But additional sources consulted and/or used were: Wesley Needham, "Dalai Lama," *Encyclopedia Americana* (International Edition, 1985), 8:433-4; Turrell V. Wylie, "Dalai Lama," *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago, 1973), 7:3-4; Thomas Jr. 1959, p. 43; Woodcock 1965, p. 93; Lang-Sims 1963, p. 46; Bell 1924, p. 41; Tucci 1956, p. 21; Harrer 1956, p. 125; Steele 1946, p. 78; *Compassion in Exile: the Dalai Lama and Tibet*, a guide booklet to a video of the same name and published 1992 by Central Television, Birmingham, England, p. 5 being the source for the lengthy quote tracing back the line of the Dalai Lamas; and P.O.S. 1938.

35. The name Tsangpo is applied by the Tibetans to any large river, but above all to this particular waterway as the country's main river. The Tibetans have given different names for this river on different portions of its lengthy course, which in Tibet runs some 700 miles, of which 400 are navigable, with its average elevation at 12,000 feet above sea level. From its Tibetan source near the celebrated Sacred Lake of Manasarowar all the way to the Bay of Bengal in India and Bangladesh (where this mighty stream is known as the Brahmaputra), the complete course of the river is about 1800 miles. Besides the Kyi, there are two other major tributaries of the Tsangpo: (a) the Shigatse, and (b) the Yarlung which comes into it from the south at Tsethang (the important town and monastery some 60 miles SE of Lhasa). From the junction point of this last-named tributary eastward, Tibet's main river is known as the Yarlung Tsangpo. See Goodman 1986, p. 30n.; and Finegan 1986, p. 6.

36. Sinclair 1965, p. 110.

37. Much of the observations with regard to the Tibetan capital's general features and its population, as well as all quoted material, are adapted or quoted from the following sources: Bell 1924, p. 41; Cutting 1940, p. 239; Hyde-Chambers 1985, p. 654; McGovern 1924, pp. 336-7, 338, 339-40, 351, 374; Riencourt 1950, p. 120; Norbu and Turnbull 1968, p. 107; Tung 1980, p. 21; "Views of Lhasa," *NG* (Jan. 1905):34; Bell 1924b, p. 96; and Sinclair 1965, pp. 107-8, 110.

38. Bell 1928, p. 91.

39. Dowman 1991, p. 70. The other sources for the details regarding the two Pillars and the Tree are the following: Petech 1973, p. 50; Smith 1984, p. 12; McGovern 1924, p. 369; Finegan 1986, p. 148; Bell 1924a, p. 271n.; Macdonald 1932, p. 241; and Bernard 1939, p. 179.

40. Riencourt 1950, pp. 126-8.

41. It had been enlarged in the early 14th century, and once again in the 17th by Dalai Lama V. Finegan 1986, p. 147. Presumably, the very central portion of the original cathedral is still extant: "When we search for the original parts of the structure, they can apparently be found in the innermost sanctuary, the so-called Tsuglagkhang (Tsug lag khang)," Rhie 1984, p. 48. Enlargements were thereafter made to this innermost sanctuary as time went on. Rhie had been a Lecturer in the Department of Religion and Biblical Studies at Smith College, MA USA.

42. "Jo" is a Tibetan word for "Lord," and hence the name of this Temple means "House (or Abode) of the Lord," referring as the word "Jo" does to Lord Buddha. Its original name of Tsuglag Khang meant "House of Wisdom" or "House of the Mysteries" which, according to the current Dalai Lama's eldest brother, was "perhaps a concession to the fact that the Bonpaba [those still extant but here misidentified, misnamed followers of the ancient pre-Buddhist animistic religion of Tibetans] were already becoming a little restive at these foreign influences"—i.e., the influences brought into the country by the foreign Buddhist wives of the converted Buddhist king who then built this temple. Norbu and Turnbull 1968, p. 141. See also Dowman 1991, p. 70, who states: "The temple was originally called the Rasa Trulnang Tsuklakhang, The House of the Mysteries, the Magical Emanation at Rasa. Rasa, The Place of the Goat, became Lhasa, the Seat of God, soon after the temple's completion and the consecration of the Jowo image within."

43. And as Siegbert Hummel has opined, it is not at all surprising, given the survival "in Lamaist cosmology" of "the archaic, pre-Buddhist three-storied cosmography" (described in the Text's earlier footnote on the willow tree) and which informed the site selection for the construction of the Tsuglag Khang, that compared to this sacred edifice, "the Potala—more imposing but far less endowed with tradition as the residence of the god-king of the Lamaist world—can only be of secondary importance." Built over a lake which constituted "the demonic water of the underworld," this most important structure of Tibetan Buddhism "is actually the center of a once widespread cosmography." This is "demonstrated" by several traditions: the "crystal sea" beneath the floor of the sanctuary, "the exorcised chaotic water," and the temple itself as "a holy fortress" ensuring "a sacred historical order in the cosmos." Indeed, in Lhasa these traditions have survived, according to which water has still been detected beneath the sanctuary, access to which is stopped by a stone slab located in a side chapel. "Every year," notes Hummel, "the slab is lifted and offerings are thrown into the shaft so as to appease the water deities. Otherwise it was believed that the holy city would be devastated by floods." The German scholar also noted that a small mountain lake located about a day's journey from Lhasa is believed to be connected to the water beneath the central cathedral, and because of this, offerings are made to the spirits of this body of water, too. But besides these traditions that support this cosmological view, another one has likewise survived into modern times. Described several pages earlier in the present chapter's Text and citing in a footnote there a few comments made by Hummel about the willow tree, the German scholar went on to say that this willow or World Tree located not far from the cathedral entrance also lends support to this view.

It is not coincidental that the proper name in full for Lhasa's and therefore Tibetan Buddhism's holiest structure is *Ra sa 'phrul snang gtsug lag khang*—i.e., the Abode (or Temple) of the Marvelous or Magical (*'phrul snang*), and sometimes referred to as the Magical Emanation at Ra sa (*Ra sa*: the Place of the Goat). "The fact that the central temple of the new Buddhist faith," writes Hummel, "had to be erected on a site where there was a lake, on a particular refuge of the earth and water spirits—the hostile lords of the underworld—can only be explained when the reasons for doing so were quite plausible in the light of the then current [cosmological]

conceptions." For does not this temple's construction upon water and the demonic kingdom of the underworld fit into this world concept, thus taking upon itself a soteriological significance? "This temple of yours," said the Tibetan king who built it for his wife, "is like a magical spell"—a statement that, according to this story, gave this holiest of holies its name. That this undertaking by this king and his spouse was plainly intended to follow this magical marvelous course of exorcism is made clear, asserts Hummel, by the fact that the king had ordered that a ring be tossed into the air—which like an oracle would thus indicate the most auspicious site for the foundation stone—but tossed over a body of water rather than over any other place. "If," reasons Hummel, "the subsequent complex task of draining the area could be justified by the fact that this construction site was a special refuge of... the hostile lords of the underworld, we could then, on the basis of contemporary pre-Buddhist ideas, interpret the project as a large-scale process of exorcism." Otherwise, two seemingly unanswerable arguments can legitimately be raised here, even as Hummel himself has raised them; arguments which greatly support this interpretation: for how very strange that this temple's erection had been undertaken in a lake when far more suitable sites in the Lhasa area must surely have been available; and how equally very strange that those responsible in selecting the site were so very insistent upon adhering to the choice of a place that was "clearly defended in a particularly tenacious way by hostile underworld demons."

Accordingly, this "fortress temple" of marvels and mysteries "in essence" became, in Hummel's view, "... a magical representation of the forces which maintain the cosmos. Exorcising the subterranean powers, and moreover providing auspicious connections between heaven and earth, it was the *axis mundi* rising from the Underworld, the Sky-column... similar to the stone columns (Tib. *rdoring*) or royal pillars in the old Tibetan temples, with the [soteriological] function of guaranteeing the divine order personified by the king." Though this cosmological tradition has now long been dead in most of Eurasia, notes Hummel, it has nonetheless survived up to the present in Tibetan Buddhism. Yet, he concludes significantly, what "we are... dealing with" here is not only "a still valid symbology; we have a whole cosmography, the elements of which are still regarded" by the Lamaist Church "as actual facts down to the very eschatology." If any doubt remains in anyone's mind that the religion of Tibet is, as Hummel himself declared, "rooted" in the shamanism/animism of "Indian Tantric Mahayana Buddhism," then "the story of the construction of the... gTsug lag khang in the center of Lhasa, [and] surviving to this day," should dispel that doubt once and for all. See Hummel's two articles in *TJ* (Winter 1997):71-8 and 79-87, respectively, trans. G. Vogliotti from the German originals which, respectively, were published in 1960 and 1962: "The Construction Site of the Lhasa gTsug lag khang and Its Cosmological Significance" and "The Crystal Sea in the Lhasa gTsug lag khang."

Hummel's credentials as a scholar in Tibetan studies, incidentally, are, to say the least, quite impressive; one could readily say, impeccable. According to a bio-squib of him appearing in the *Tibet Journal* in the latter's Autumn 2000 number, Hummel is described there as follows: Born in 1908 at Vogtland, Germany, Siegbert Hummel "is a scholar who for more than 40 years has contributed much towards an interdisciplinary approach in Tibetan studies. Having obtained his Abitur from König-Albert-Gymnasium in Leipzig in 1932, he studied theology, philosophy, psychology and the history of art at the universities of Tübingen, Rostock, Leipzig and Munich in the years 1932 to 1938. From 1938 to 1947 he worked in Leipzig and Dresden as minister in the Evangelical Church while at the same time studying Chinese, Japanese, Tibetan and Mongolian with various teachers in Leipzig, as well as ethnology and Egyptology. In 1948 he obtained his doctorate (in Sinology) at the University of Leipzig. In 1947 he was appointed in the Ethnographic Museum of Leipzig, first as curator of the Asian department, and from 1949 as director of the museum. In 1955 he became minister to the country parish of Plohn in Vogtland, a position which he held until his retirement. His scholarly output is to be found in over 201 articles, 175 reviews and eight books."

And with respect to Hummel's able translator into English, Guido Vogliotti, the latter is described in the same issue of *Tibet Journal* as having "graduated in English at the University of Turin (1977)," after which "he subsequently studied Tibetan with Dr. E. Lo Bue and moved to Munich in 1986, where he started to collect the works of Siegbert Hummel and then to translate them into English. In addition to the collection of translations previously published in this journal in its special issue on Hummel's works (Vol. 22, No. 4), he has completed the translation of Hummel's books, *Mythologisches aus Eurasien im Ge-sar-Heldenepos der Tibeter* (LTWA, 1998) and *Zhang-zhung* (LTWA, 2000).

44. Das 1902, p. 151.

45. The Jo-khang was truly a "cathedral" rather than a monastery in the strict sense of that term; for the Jo-khang differed from a Tibetan monastery in two respects: "Firstly, apart from the handful of monks who look after the building and tend the shrines, it does not have a large monastic community attached to it. Secondly, it

is used by people from all different sects of Buddhism in Tibet, while most monasteries are dominated by a single sect." Bonavia and Bartlett 1981, p. 114. Even today there is only a handful of monks, and Lamas or religious teachers, here. *Ibid.*, 10. Incidentally, the Palkhor Chhode Monastery at Gyantse, extensively described in the previous chapter of the present narrative, comes to mind as an outstanding exception to this general rule regarding single-sect monasteries.

46. This was the name he had received upon his accession to the Tibetan throne, and meant: "He Who Is Powerful, Just and Profound" (or, as others have translated it: "Strong—Straight—Deep"). Norbu and Turnbull 1968, p. 140. There is "no doubt," writes Hugh Richardson, that the Jo-khang was founded by Songtsan Gampo. And on another page of his article Richardson asserts that "the Jokhang...is unquestionably attributable" to Songtsan Gampo. Richardson 1990, pp. 273, 274.

47. Norbu and Turnbull, p. 141. Actually, it was the Tibetan king's first wife, the Nepali Princess Brikhuti, who founded the Jo-khang, requesting her husband to build this temple to house, not this particular image but an image of the Buddha which she herself had brought from Nepal. Later, her image was removed to another temple, the one at the Monastery of Ramoche, which was founded by the Tibetan king's Chinese wife, Princess Wen-ch'eng, and where the latter princess is said to be buried (according to Wm. W. Rockhill in Das 1902, p. 155n.). See later in these End-Notes and in the Text of the narrative.

48. "To be quite correct, this cathedral is itself Lhasa, and the city is only the buildings which have sprung up around it." McGovern 1924, p. 390.

49. See Rato 1977, p. 43; and Wm. W. Rockhill in Das 1902, p. 151n.

50. This story is recounted in Kimura 1990, p. 67.

51. Li 1960, p. 10.

52. Sakyamuni: one of the hallowed names, it will be recalled, of Gautama after he became the Buddha and meaning "the sage of the Sakyas," the latter being the name of the northern Indian tribe to which his family belonged.

53. This description of the image is based on details found in: (a) Finegan 1986, pp. 44, 147; (b) Das 1902, p. 152; (c) Rato 1977, p. 43; and (d) McGovern 1924, p. 392. The last three of these authors had actually seen the statue in the Jo-khang, in 1882, 1936 and the spring of 1923, respectively, the latter, McGovern, having been there just a few months before Tharchin himself went to Lhasa and saw it; the two of them, of course, had met in Gyantse in the fall of 1922 when McGovern had been there as a member of the British Buddhist Mission under the leadership of George Knight. See again Ch. 14.

54. Das 1902, p. 151.

55. Finegan 1986, p. 44.

56. Hyde-Chambers 1985, pp. 642-3.

57. Rato 1977, p. 43; the insert quotes are from Das 1902, p. 151 and Rinchen Dolma Taring (Mary La, the daughter of the original Tsarong Shape of Lhasa) in Taring 1970, p. 62. For a beautiful color photograph of the Jowo Rimpoche, taken of it since the end of the decade-long Red guard rampage of the Chinese Communist Cultural Revolution (1966-76), see page 246 of Fred Ward's article about his visit to Lhasa that appears in Ward 1980.

58. McGovern 1924, p. 392; the two insert quotes are from Taring 1970, p. 62.

59. Das 1902, p. 151 and Rato 1977, p. 43. See also Finegan 1986, p. 44.

60. See Tung 1980, p. 26. A variation on this story, and probably a far less accurate rendering of it, can be found in Roerich 1929, p. 62.

61. Das 1902, p. 152.

62. The description and quotes up to this point in this paragraph of the narrative are from Strong 1960, p. 124. A Chinese Communist sympathizer, this Western writer had visited Lhasa at the invitation of the Chinese almost immediately after the Uprising had been put down.

63. See Finegan 1986, p. 147; Harrer 1985, p. 157; and Bonavia and Bartlett 1981, p. 10. It should be mentioned that as a result of the uncontrolled and destructive rampage of the Red Guards during the so-called Cultural Revolution (1966-76) which swept through Communist China, including the Tibet Autonomous Region of the People's Republic, both the Temple and the Jowo image suffered some damage when at one point (sometime between 1966 and 1970) the zealous young Red Guards ran through the Jo-khang seeking objects to destroy, damage or carry away (see Taring 1970, p. 272). Eventually the Sakyamuni Buddha, which was one of the prime targets of the Red Guard foray, was restored to its shrine in a repaired state; likewise, the Temple itself was repaired; and when Heinrich Harrer made a return journey to Tibet in the spring of 1982 after a 30-year absence, he visited the Jo-khang and saw the restored image in the "Holy of Holies" shrine of Tibetan Buddhism. "Despite the serious damage done to the figure of Jo Rimpoche, he was once more magnificent with his glittering turquoises, corals and pearls; the gold again had a warm and precious glow. I felt sure that very few people would be able to find any change here." Harrer, 1985, p. 158; see also Tsering Wangyal, "Inside the Lhasa Cathedral," *TR* (June 1980):20.

64. Finegan 1986, p. 44.

65. These details according to Rato 1977, p. 43; Taring 1970, pp. 60-1; and Rhie 1984, p. 48. She has been described by one chronicler of the period as having been 16 years old at the time of being summoned to Lhasa, of being of white complexion, fair and beautiful to look at, and of "not [being] entangled with doctrines of the world, but finding her strength in the Treasury of Jewels [i.e., the Doctrines of Buddha]." Finegan 1986, p. 42. According to Dalai Lama XIV, Songtsan Gampo, Tibet's thirty-third king, possessed three Tibetan wives besides the two foreign princesses. Dalai Lama XIV, 1962, p. 70. Finegan, in his volume, states the same thing, but indicates that he only married these three Tibetan wives (and successively so) when the two foreign wives could not bear him sons. Even the first two Tibetan queens had no sons, but the King was finally successful in siring by the third Tibetan queen a son, whom he installed as king when aged thirteen, the customary age for heirs to the throne in Tibet to assume the throne. Finegan 1986, p. 45. These three Tibetan wives, like King Songtsan Gampo, also became Buddhists. Rato 1977, p. 43.

There has been some question raised, however, as to whether there actually did take place a marriage between the Tibetan king and the Nepali princess. A. Tom Grunfeld, after a careful study into the question, made the following observations: "Only one historian [Giuseppe Tucci] has had the honesty to even bother to mention that it is quite possible that the marriage to the Nepali princess was only legendary, for his search of the historical sources could not turn up a single confirmation of its existence. See G. Tucci, "The Wives of Sron Bstan Sgam po," *Orients Extremes* 9 (1962):121-30. An extensive search of the secondary material turned up no other historian who even mentioned this possibility." Grunfeld, "Tibetan History: a Somewhat Different Approach," *TR* (June 1981):10. But another historian, Turrell V. Wylie, has even questioned the historicity of the Nepalese princess, as Tucci had himself also implied; for the latter had indicated that he had found no *early* evidence for her existence—see Richardson 1990, p. 273. Wylie, on the other hand, chiefly bases his argument on the fact that she was never mentioned in the Chinese Tun-Huang Annals of the period (dealing with the Chinese role in Tibet), nor that the Tibetan name for Nepal, *Balpo*, appears there either, a name which Wylie has regarded as the summer residence of the kings. But Franz Michael asserts that these annals were not concerned with the Nepalese aspect of Tibetan policy and would therefore hardly be expected to mention it or the Princess. Moreover, Michael points out that the father (or uncle) of the Princess (the Nepalese king, Amsuvarman) was an historical figure in Nepali history, thus making it obvious that any daughter or niece of the King would also be an historical figure. See Michael 1982, p. 191. Cf. Richardson 1990, p. 273, who states that "it is not improbable that in his vigorous expansionist activities," Songtsan Gampo "was in touch with Nepal and could have made some sort of matrimonial alliance." He adds that the fact of Nepalese craftsmen having been engaged in the construction of the Jo-khang lends credence to the notion of a link between Nepal and Tibet during the reign of the Tibetan King-Emperor.

66. Taring 1970, pp. 60-1; see also Beckwith 1987, p. 23n.

67. Wanting to build a temple in Lhasa to house the Buddha image she had brought, Balsa "asked Gyasa—the King's Chinese wife—about a site and was advised to build on a small lake in the city; but as Balsa had a doubt about this she consulted her husband, who confirmed, after prayer and meditation, that the lake was the correct site. To fill it up many goats carried loads of earth and stones on their backs, so in their honor we always

had an image of a goat in the Jo-khang." Taring 1970, p. 61. For this reason the Temple's official name became Rasa Trulnang Tsuglag Khang, literally meaning "goat-earth miraculous appearance temple of Ra sa" (Ra sa, it will be recalled, had been the earlier name of the city, later renamed Lha sa). "True, the Buddha image brought from China by Wen-ch'eng is now housed in the Jo-khang; but the Jo-khang—which faces towards Nepal—was founded by the Nepalese princess... The temple founded by Wen-ch'eng is the Ramoche—which faces towards China. And though the site of the Jo-khang may have been suggested to Brikhuti by Wen-ch'eng, the temple was built by the Nepalese artisans who accompanied Brikhuti, and originally housed the Buddha image brought from Nepal... Significantly, it is Brikhuti's temple which became the center of Lhasa city. Wen-ch'eng's temple is secondary in importance, in a peripheral part of the city. It was damaged by the Han [the Chinese] in their ignorance of its history, both in the fighting of March 1959, and during the Cultural Revolution." Warren Smith (a student of Tibetan literature and history for many years), Smith 1984, pp. 11-12, a review article of Israel Epstein's *Tibet Transformed* (Peking, 1983). See also Finegan 1986, pp. 44, 147-9. "From the plans and some glimpses of carved wooden pillars published in a few books and journals, we can see [for the still extant original part of the Jo-khang] a relation to the architectural form that was evolved in Gupta Indian Buddhist art of the 5th century a.d. and as translated into some 6th and 7th century Nepalese art." Rhie 1984, p. 48. This confirms the notion that Balsa and not Wen-ch'eng founded the Jo-khang, which in its *original* structure had little or no Chinese influence in its architecture.

It should be added that Melinda Liu, a *Newsweek* correspondent and one of 40 journalists invited by the Chinese government to pay a six-day visit to Lhasa in Aug. 1983, could report after her visit that "in the ramshackle remains of Lhasa's Ramoche Temple, which had been looted and destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and is now normally closed to visitors, a huge portrait of the late Chairman Mao Tse-tung is now enthroned where a 7th century Buddha of Sakyamuni once stood." Quoted from *Newsweek* in *TR* (Sept. 1983):16. It should further be added that the Ramoche Buddha image referred to by correspondent Liu, the Little Jowo, which had for the longest time been thought by Tibetans to have been destroyed during the Cultural Revolution by the Red guards, was reported by Radio Lhasa on 28 Apr. 1983 to have been "found" and brought back to the Tibetan capital where it was installed—not in the empty shell of Ramoche—but within the Jo-khang. Indeed, an image reputed to be the "missing" presumed destroyed Ramoche Buddha was returned to Lhasa and installed in the Central Cathedral; nevertheless, it has been reported by the *Tibetan Review* that Tibetans both inside and outside Tibet believe that the present image now in the Jo-khang is a facsimile. Several weeks after the Radio Lhasa announcement, the New China News Agency (NCNA) in Peking claimed on 18 May that the image had been broken in two during the Cultural Revolution, with "its upper half" having been "taken to Peking to be melted down, but was saved in 1980 under a law protecting historic relics." "The lower half," the NCNA report continued, "was discovered in a factory scrap heap," presumably at Lhasa. The NCNA then stated the top half of the statue had subsequently been returned to Lhasa and joined to the bottom half in Apr. and installed within the Jo-khang. Almost immediately, the Information Office of the Central Tibetan Secretariat of the Dalai Lama, Dharamsala, made it clear in a statement it issued that the decision to return the damaged statue and other Tibetan artifacts of great value to Tibet had not been a unilateral initiative taken by the Chinese government, as was claimed by the NCNA, but rather had been impelled forward by the fact that a Tibetan Tulku, on a visit to China in 1981, had, after meeting with the Panchen Lama, joined together with the Panchen in appealing to the Chinese leadership to return the images and artifacts which the Tulku had noticed lying about in many parts of China during his roving visit there. It was their joint appeal, declared the Secretariat, which had in reality activated the entire process that had finally culminated in the return in 1983 of the revered Buddha image. See "Sacred Image Reinstalled in Lhasa Temple," *TR* (May 1983):5 and "Peking Claims to Have Returned Damaged Statue to Tibet," *ibid.* (June-July 1983):4, 8. Incidentally, Finegan reported in 1986 that the Ramoche Temple had at least been partially restored. Finegan 1986, p. 149.

68. *Ibid.*, 44.

69. For the supposed dual blessing, see Rato 1977, p. 43.

70. Finegan 1986, p. 44.

71. "Buddhism suffered during the reign of King Langdarma (a.d. 836). King Ralpachen, one of our three most religious kings, was doing much for the country's new religion when he was greatly opposed by his brother, Darma. A man named Be Gyator killed Ralpachen—while the king was relaxing and drinking *chang*—by twisting his head around until his neck was broken. Then Langdarma took the throne, Be Gyator was appointed Chief Minister, and many other" followers of Tibet's ancient pre-Buddhist religion "became government ministers.

They made new laws to destroy Buddhism, sealed up the principal temples and broke all the images." Taring 1970, p. 152. Langdarma himself was later slain by a Buddhist monk in 842, the latter disguised as a sorcerer belonging to Tibet's ancient religion. This was three years after Langdarma's accession. The disguised monk, Lhalun Paljor Dorje, who had taken refuge in a cave near Lhasa, had a vision that instructed him to eliminate the usurper king and revealed to him how to perform this task. "Smearing his white pony with charcoal and donning a black robe with white lining, the monk rode into Lhasa and sought out the apostate king, for whom he performed a fantastic dance invented for the occasion. While making the threefold prostration that protocol demanded, he drew from his broad-sleeved robe a bow and arrow and shot Langdarma through the heart. Then he quickly turned his cloak inside out and rode his horse through the nearby River Kyi, thus washing off the charcoal so that it, too, became white; and in this way he made good his escape. The monk's dance came to be known as the Black Hat dance, and upon the resurgence of Buddhism in Tibet it was celebrated annually in commemoration of the avenger's exploit." Goodman 1986, p. 48.

Legend has it, incidentally, that the custom of Tibetan government officials putting up the hair in knots and braided with red ribbons was begun by Langdarma himself to conceal his horns—the sign, so says the legend, of his being a wizard. The royal hairdressers were warned that should they ever tell about the King's horns they would be put to death. This ancient legend furthermore declared that Langdarma had possessed a black tongue; so that, ever since the days of this wicked King, whenever Tibetans meet high-ranking persons they scratch their heads and thrust out their tongues to make clear they have neither horns nor black tongues! *Ibid.*, 45. Other explanations for the origin of the tongue greeting and the color black are told about in end-note no. 9 for Ch. 19 below.

72. Snellgrove, *Buddhist Himalaya; Travels and Studies in Quest of the Origins... of Tibetan Buddhism* (Oxford, 1957), 145. "It was said that during the eclipse of the doctrine, it [the Sakyamuni Buddha] had been buried and later retrieved, but the supposed burial of precious objects and texts is all too common a story, when the genuine nature of the items is in need of vindication. The Tibetans are usually quite understanding in matters of religious devotion. They will believe anything which redounds to the greater sanctity of a place or object, such deliberate faith being considered of great spiritual value." *Ibid.*

73. Circumambulation is an essential facet of Tibetan religious life whether the object of veneration be a hill, mountain, lake, temple or an image. Yet it has to be traveled round a certain number of times before any benefit can come to the worshiper, and the more this required number is exceeded the more will be the merit reckoned to that one's account. "Whole villages turn out in a body to circumambulate a mountain, spending perhaps a week in the undertaking, camping out during the nights." Annie W. Marston, *The Great Closed Land*, 2d ed. (London, 1895?), 59. Circumambulation must also be performed according to a prescribed direction, that is, clockwise, and keeping the sacred object on one's right, "the side of good omen." The origin of this inviolable rule can be found in India, where the practice from time immemorial has been to circumambulate both sacred objects and one's own spiritual teacher (or *guru*) in such a clockwise fashion, thus imitating the (apparent) movement of the heavenly bodies around the earth or the movement of the planets about the sun. "To Buddhists," explains famed Buddhist Lama Anagarika Govinda, "the Buddha is the Guru of Gurus, the spiritual sun of their universe, and the monuments...erected in his memory were not only receptacles of his relics—which soon enough were exhausted—but symbols of enlightenment in its most universal aspect." And thus it was only proper and appropriate, his followers reasoned, to imitate the celestial bodies in their movements about the physical sun when circumambulating the sacred shrines and monuments having to do with their *spiritual* sun. Govinda, "The Gyantse Palkhor Chorten," *TR* (Oct.-Dec. 1969):11. The Italian explorer Filippo de Filippi, though acknowledging the possibility that this rule finds its origin in the imitation of the physical universe, posits perhaps an even simpler explanation for the rule: "it may be a case of considering the right side as the position of honor and respect. Various passages in the *Nikaya*, or Dialogues of Buddha, which with the *Pitaka* are the oldest existing documents of Buddhist doctrine, seem to show both the remote antiquity of the practice and its derivation and preservation in the Buddhist ritual. In many of the dialogues, when the interlocutor, the disciple or neophyte takes leave of the Blessed One, there is express mention of the ceremonial practice of keeping him on one's own right in passing him." Filippi 1931, p. 118 and 118n. In contrast to the Buddhists, the religious predecessors to the Buddhists in Tibet always circumambulated in a counter-clockwise direction. When asked the reason for this custom, some priests in Tibet who were at that time still following the pre-Buddhist faith had told Sarat Chandra Das (when clandestinely there in 1882) that "salutation, circumambulation, and the chanting of mantra being intended by the sages as processes to sanctify the body, speech and mind, they did not at all benefit the divinity. It is, therefore, immaterial how and which way one salutes and circumambulates

the sacred things, but it is the established usage of the [religious] community to circulate from right to left." To which the famed Pundit had noted to himself when writing his report: "Not a very intelligible or satisfactory explanation"! Das 1902, p. 206.

74. "The Barkhor is most thronged at the New Year..., and most of the life of the city is concentrated in it. Many of the big business houses are here, and here all religious and military processions begin and end. Towards evening, especially on public holidays, pious citizens swarm over the Barkhor mumbling their prayers" and performing the circumambulation. "but not only piety is represented in the Barkhor. You find also pretty women showing off their newest frocks and flirting a little with the young bloods of the nobility. Ladies of easy virtue are also there professionally. In a word, the Barkhor is a center of business, sociability and frivolity." So wrote Heinrich Harrer of his first visit there in 1946, in Harrer 1956, p. 141.

75. This is a reference to the so-called Blue Buddha, the "Buddha of Long Life." It is the outstanding carving among many others that form a mosaic of engraved Buddhas and Bodhisattvas which long ago had been carved by sculptors on every square foot of rock surface of a sheer rock wall that is part of a spinal ridge where the Chakpori or Iron Hill terminates at its southwest side. "Previously these figures were painted immaculately with a considerable amount of gold; today the painting is crude but still effective." Dowman 1991, p. 75.

76. "In the old days on the Barkhor," recalled Harrer in 1982 when on a return visit to Lhasa, "they used to protect themselves against the hard stony ground by gloves made of wood and leather; now they were using pieces of discarded tires tied around their forearms." See Harrer, 1985, p. 97.

77. The sources for the information and quotes dealing with the three Holy Circles and especially the discussion of the Lingkhor are: Rato 1977, pp. 42-3; Goodman 1986, pp. 30-1; Bonavia and Bartlett 1981, p. 114; Pemba 1957, pp. 84-5; Gould 1937, p. 449; Macdonald 1929 (Apr.), p. 311; Tung 1980, p. 194; and Landon, quoted in Hopkirk 1982, p. 185.

78. See Harrer 1985, p. 156.

79. Dowman 1991, p. 70.

80. The sources for this discussion of the "Lhasa pulpit" were McGovern 1924, pp. 367-8 and Bell 1946, pp. 278-9—both men having witnessed the event. Though this unique pulpit was used but once a year for "preaching" to the Tibetan *populace in general* by the Dalai Lama, it was additionally used for "preaching" to only assemblies of Tibetan *monks* throughout the first month of every Tibetan year by the *Ser Ti Rimpoche* ("the precious golden throne"). *Ser Ti Rimpoche* was the more familiar name which the Lhasan people had given this high ecclesiastical figure, but his real title is actually *Ganden Tipa*, "he who occupies the throne of Ganden"—which is to say, the throne of Tsong Khapa, the Great religious Reformer of the fourteenth century who founded both Ganden Monastery near Lhasa and the ruling Gelugpa or Yellow Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism. Almost exactly a year after McGovern's clandestine visit to Lhasa, Madame Alexandra David-Neel from France made her own way there, disguised as a poor Tibetan peasant, where she spent a period of two months that included part of the month-long celebrations of the Tibetan New Year. In her travel volume of the journey to Lhasa, she relates her own experience of having witnessed the *Ti Rimpoche* "preaching" to the monks from this same lone Tibetan pulpit:

On several occasions I saw the man who is recognized as the most learned in all the country, and who occupies the throne of Tsong Khapa. Throughout the first month of the year he preaches in the open air, under a canopy erected for this purpose, close to the Jo-khang. His audience is not recruited from the crowd, as one might think from the fact that he speaks outside the Temple. The monks alone have the right to sit crosslegged on the pavement at his feet, and those who hear the preaching have been chosen by their superiors. They are there by command. Woe to anyone who spoke to his neighbor, and who did not maintain an absolutely motionless attitude. Woe also to the unfortunate layman whose religious zeal led him hither to listen to the discourses of the Supreme Master. The Clerics acting as police officers for the assembly would soon lash him roughly with the long bundle of ropes they flourish continually in a martial fashion.

The great philosopher of Tibet is a spare old man with a thin, angular countenance and the appearance of an aristocratic and haughty ascetic. He walks with short, quick steps beneath the yellow-brocaded umbrella of honor which a friar holds over him, as if he were anxious to have done quickly with an annoying duty. The expression stamped on his intelligent face is that of the suppressed boredom of one to whom crowds and public ceremonies are distasteful.

Seated upon his throne, he does not preach in the way we understand the word in the West. He speaks without gestures, without raising his voice, with an air of detachment, such as the theories he is explaining demand. The striking contrast afforded by the doctrines expounded by the doctor, together with his refined appearance, and the ignorant, listless crowd, watched by the brutal clerical policemen surrounding him, are well calculated to surprise a stranger. As to *Ser Ti Rimpoche*, being born, brought up and having grown old in such an environment, he probably does not notice it.

For a further discussion about the *Ti Rimpoche* or *Ganden Tipa*, see David-Neel 1927, pp. 282-3.

81. See McGovern 1924, p. 354.

82. "In a certain formal sense the Tibetans are undoubtedly a praying people, and the most preeminently praying people on the face of the earth. They have praying stones, praying pyramids, praying flags flying over every house, praying wheels, praying mills, and the universal prayer, Om! mani padme Hum!, is never out of their mouths." Wilson 1875, p. 255 (a book recounting his journey through, in part, Indian Tibet during the summer and fall, 1874). Yet this six-syllable mystic phrase or prayer, if indeed it can be called prayer, presents a most curious phenomenon, in that Tibetan Buddhists themselves—and Western scholars, too, for that matter—have never agreed as to its true meaning. One Western writer, Julien Louis, commenting on this matter back in 1894, argued that at its inception this most famous of Tibetan Buddhist mantras had probably been meant "as a sort of profession of faith, a protestation against, a recantation of, the idolatrous beliefs of Hinduism, and an adherence to the philosophical tenets inculcated by Gautama Buddha." Louis 1894, p. 108. There are about as many interpretations of its actual meaning as there are learned Buddhist Lamas with whom one might speak. Its literal translation from the original Sanskrit into English is generally understood to be as follows:

Om!—O! (or Hail!) *mani*—the jewel *pad me*—lotus in *Hum!*—Amen!

—that is to say: "Hail! Thou Jewel (or Treasure) in the Lotus-Flower. Amen!" which one missionary writer on Tibet had characterized as an expression of adoration directed originally to Gautama Buddha but was later directed to the reincarnated Buddha embodied in the Grand or Dalai Lamas, "the idea being taken from the fable that Gautama was born from a lotus" for the good of mankind. Frank D. Learner. *Rusty Hinges; a Story of Closed Doors Beginning to Open in Northeast Tibet* (London, 1933), 57. (The lotus flower, incidentally, is a symbol for Buddhism itself, its adherents believing that like this beautiful flower which grows from the mud, Buddhism is pure and rises from the "mud" of worldly existence. Jack Finegan has noted that the lotus is "a virtually universal symbol in the ancient world and is of manifold significance. Growing out of the swamp, it suggests the unfolding of the spiritual life, and it is the emblem of many Bodhisattvas, especially of Padmapani [the Hindu name for Chenrezi], the holder of the lotus." Finegan 1986, p. 126.)

But another interesting interpretation of the mantra was once explained by an "incarnate" Lama to an Indian visitor to Tibet as follows, as quoted by Francis R. Moraes: "'The Jewel is none else but the Buddha, and the Lotus is the heart. So its real rendering is: Hail to the Buddha in our hearts!' God, according to the Tibetans, resides in every one of their hearts." Moraes 1960, pp. 62-3. An even more mystical interpretation was told to Cecil Earle Tyndale-Biscoe, the well-known longtime Principal of the famed CMS Mission School at Srinagar, in Kashmir: "May my soul, O God, be like the jewel of water which lies on the lips of the lotus leaf just as it is going to fall into the lake and be lost in the ocean of water [presumably, be lost in Nirvana]." Quoted in Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade* (London, 1922), 211-12. One of the more succinct philosophical statements about the mantra's meaning has been provided by an English historical novelist on Tibet, Fredrick R. Hyde-Chambers, in Hyde-Chambers 1985, p. 16 of its glossary of terms: "OM refers to the inexpressible Absolute, MANI to the Buddha Dharma or Teaching, PADME to the world in which that Teaching is expressed, and HUM that it is victorious in defeating ignorance and its effects." A less flattering understanding of this prayer formula with respect to its origin, meaning and usage comes from Heinrich Jaeschke, the great Moravian missionary-linguist and Tibetan scholar of the 19th century who was stationed for some years at Kyelang in Indian Tibet. About this sacred phrase he wrote the following:

The person addressed in these words is not Buddha, but Spyan-ras-zyigs [pronounced Chenrésik—i.e., Chenrezi, "the patron Bodhisattva of Tibet and incarnate in King Songtsan Gampo as later in the Dalai Lamas"; Finegan 1986, p. 41]; by some he is thought to be the author of them. The Tibetans themselves are ignorant of the proper sense of these six syllables, if sense at all there be in them, and it is not unlikely that some shrewd priest invented this form of prayer, in order to furnish the common people with a formula, or symbol, easily to be retained by the memory, and the frequent recital of which might satisfy their religious wants. And though there may be no obvious meaning in such exclamations or prayers, yet their efficacy is surely to be firmly believed in by the people, whose

practical religion chiefly consists in the performance of certain rites and ceremonies, in a devout veneration of their lamas, combined with frequent oblations to them, and in abstaining from gross sins.

The numerous attempts that have been made to explain the "Om mani padme Hum" satisfactorily, and to discover a deeper sense or even a hidden meaning in it have proved more or less unsuccessful. The most simple and popular, but also the flattest, of these explanations is derived from the purely extrinsic circumstance, that the Sanskrit words of the prayer consist of six syllables, and when pronounced by a pious Buddhist conveys a blessing upon one of the "six classes of beings."

Quoted in Hermann G. Schneider, *Working and Waiting for Tibet; a Sketch of the Moravian Mission to the Western Himalayas* (London, 1891?), 41-2 note. Regardless the actual true interpretation of this mystic formula of the Tibetan Buddhist religion, it is sufficient to note, writes Wilson, "that the repeating of this prayer—whether vocally or by various mechanical means—has become a sacred and protecting symbol, such as making the sign of the cross is among Roman Catholic Christians. However it may be with the more intelligent of the lamas, to the ordinary Tibetan mind, 'Om mani padme Hum' is only known in that sense, and as a prayer for the well-being of the six classes of creatures—to wit, human beings, animals, evil spirits, souls in heaven, souls in purgatory, and souls in hell.... And so it comes to be an aspiration of universal benevolence, which is supposed to have a protecting influence on those who give utterance to it, or reproduce it in any way. The original meaning of a charm of this kind does not much matter when once it obtains general acceptance; and it is quite in accordance with the peculiar value attached to it, that the reproduction of it on stones, flags, and rolls of paper, should be regarded as religious worship, as well as the oral repetition of it." Wilson 1875, p. 257.

Still another writer has explained the phrase's multiple meanings this way, that it "is as different as the individual minds of Tibet's millions, for an old Tibetan proverb says, 'Every village has its own dialect, every lama his own doctrine.' Some mechanically repeat it because they believe it secures for them a rebirth of bliss, or better, no rebirth at all. Others interpret it with symbolism or mysticism. No one can realize the infinite conceptions in it until he understands that these are the first stammering syllables millions of children learn, that they form the last sighs of millions of dying men and women." Sinclair 1965, p. 224n.

It should finally be noted that the nature- and devil-worship shamanistic religion which antedated the Buddhist faith among Tibetans had had its own mantra, but instead of the Six Holy Sounds of Tibetan Buddhism, the followers of pre-Buddhism in Tibet had a special invocation of eight syllables: Oum-ma-tri-mou-ye-sa-leh-don (alternate spelling: Aom matre muye sale du), whose meaning, however, "has yet to be unraveled." So said Julien Lóuis in 1894, in his book quoted from earlier, Louis 1894, p. 102.

83. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama did not make specific reference to this Buddha image when in his autobiography he wrote the following: "It was before one of these images, in the Jo-khang, that I bowed when I first reached Lhasa at the age of four" on 8 Oct. 1939 as the new "god-king" of Tibet. Dalai Lama XIV 1962, p. 70. However, the *Times* of London, in an article datelined Lhasa 8 Oct. 1939 and appearing in the newspaper edition of 4 Nov. 1939, p. 7, records the following: "The Dalai Lama reached...Lhasa this morning...As the middle of the procession reached the south entrance of the Cathedral it was met by the Oracle of Nechung in a state of possession.... When the Oracle had withdrawn, the procession went on to the west door of the Cathedral, by which the Dalai Lama entered to visit the shrine [thirteen] centuries old, in which is kept the Jowo Rimpoche, an image of Buddha said to have been brought from China by a wife of King Songtsan Gampo, who first established Buddhism in Tibet." He even offered a *khata* to the Jowo Rimpoche. Goodman 1986, p. 62. Actually, the Boy-King of Tibet was simply fulfilling the religious tradition which every Tibetan is expected to observe; namely, "...it is said that on arriving in Lhasa, one should go directly to the Jo-khang and touch one's forehead to the knees of the Lord Buddha before the perspiration of the journey has dried on one's face." Rato 1977, p. 43. R.D. Taring (Mary La), in her autobiography, has noted that on this day in Oct. 1939, "His Holiness entered the Jo-khang, with his family and all his officials. A high seat had been raised for him in front of the chief precious image of the Lord Buddha and the Lamas and monks prayed...Next His Holiness was taken to the shrines in Ramoche Tsuglag Khang and then to Norbu Lingka..." Taring 1970, p. 141. She was in Lhasa at the time.

84. "Thou shalt have none other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor the likeness of any form that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I Jehovah God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments." Exodus 20:3-6 of the Old Testament Scriptures.

85. David-Neel 1927, p. 281. Some have expressed skepticism that she ever made such a journey to Lhasa, claiming that she would have been too easily recognized as a foreign white woman despite her disguise, and claiming further that the photograph showing her and her lama companion Yongden (who became her adopted son) seated on the ground in front of the Potala had been “doctored up” and presented as proof of her visit to the Forbidden City. One such latter-day detractor was Jeanne Denys, who denied David-Neel’s achievement in her volume published at Paris in 1972, *Alexandra David-Neel au Tibet*. But Madame Neel’s adventure has been confirmed by David Macdonald, who has reported in his book *Twenty Years in Tibet*, cited many times in these End-Notes, of having received her at Gyantse “one afternoon in August” at the conclusion of her journey dressed in her elaborate disguise that fooled even Frank Ludlow, the Tibetan Boys’ School Headmaster there, to whom she “had disclosed herself” first upon her arrival (see pp. 288-9, wherein, however, Macdonald incorrectly stated the year as having been 1923 when in actuality, of course, it was August of 1924). In traveling to Lhasa, Madame Neel was clad as a poor Tibetan peasant woman, with face smeared “with black lac” according to the custom of Tibetan women, her hair dyed with Chinese ink, her hair also covered “with braids of jet-black yak hair,” and head topped with a fur-lined bonnet that additionally served to screen her face! In traveling from Lhasa towards the southern frontier, all was the same, except that she had changed her station in life somewhat. In her book (p. 298) she explained, as follows:

I left Lhasa as quietly as I had entered, and no one suspected that a foreign woman had lived there for two months. I looked somewhat different from the beggar I was when I first entered the Forbidden City. I had promoted myself to a more respectable station in the social hierarchy. I was now a lower-middle-class woman, the owner of two horses and accompanied by a man servant whom Yongden [her adopted Tibetan son and lama companion throughout the journey] had engaged at Lhasa. Official inquiries about travelers going from the capital to the frontiers are not very strict, so I could afford to make myself a little more comfortable.

She exited Tibet via Samye, Gyantse, Pedong and Kalimpong, where at the latter place she had met the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama years earlier at Bhutan House in June of 1912, just prior to his departure back to Tibet from his long exile in India, and with whom she felt a great accord and who advised her to learn the Tibetan language. This she almost immediately afterwards began to do, beginning her many years of continued study at Lachen in Sikkim and elsewhere on not only the language but also the history and culture of Tibetan civilization. *Ibid.*, 298 with p. x; and also Brahm Norwick’s review of Jean Chalon’s *Le Lumineux destin d’Alexandra David-Neel* (Paris, 1985) in *TJ* (Spring 1986):48-9.

For more details on her life, see the Chalon volume just cited, a book which constitutes, says Norwick, “the first serious, full length biography of this most popular of writers who specialized on Tibet.” See also William D. Carlsen, *Tibet: In Search of a Miracle* (Nyack NY USA: Nyack College, 1985), 23-8. Born near Paris in 1868, she would go on to live to within seven weeks of her 101st birthday, passing away in her homeland of France in 1969.

86. Thomas Jr. 1951, p. 142.

87. Richardson 1962, p. 62. See also Bell 1928, p. 16. Major Waddell, in his eyewitness account of the 1904 Younghusband Expedition, tells of one other possible evidence of the presence of the Capuchins when he writes: “The prevalence of Florentine window-sunshades in Lhasa is, I believe, probably a survival of those introduced by these old Italian fathers...” Waddell 1972, p. 425.

88. The bell, wrote Heinrich Harrer, “was probably the last surviving relic of the chapel which the Catholic missionaries had built in Lhasa many centuries ago.... It may be that the preservation of this bell in their Cathedral is due to the deep respect which Tibetans feel for all religions”—Harrer 1956, p. 218; though, of course, their lamas in general have always vehemently opposed proselytizing efforts on the part of some other faiths, in particular, that of the Christians. This no longer extant chapel is the same one alluded to by Tharchin in the next paragraph of the present narrative. Another probable artifact dating from the time of the Catholic missionaries in Tibet could be found in the Dalai Lama’s private chapel in the Potala. There, an eight-foot-high silver image of Tibet’s patron deity (Chenrezi) was flanked by four Chinese porcelain vases. On the outermost pair of these vases could be seen depicted certain events in the life of Christ and were most likely gifts of Jesuit missionaries to the then ruling Dalai Lama. See caption beneath Plate 29 in Tung 1980.

89. Harrer 1985, pp. 158-9.

90. The Catholic Capuchin Fathers had been permitted to construct the small monastery and church building in 1724 or 1725, nearly twenty years after the founding of its mission station at Lhasa. This constituted the first

and only church structure of Christendom ever erected in the sacred capital of Tibetan Buddhism. Shortly after the demise of the Mission some twenty years later, Tibet's King-Regent at the time (Pholhanas by name) "had the Capuchin church razed"—he being "probably motivated by political expediency" (MacGregor) because of the influential monastic leadership at Lhasa who had felt threatened by the foreign religion and had continually been opposed to the Mission almost from its inception, even though the government through most of the period of the station's existence had been quite sympathetic towards these Western missionaries. But as David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson have so well observed in their cultural history of Tibet, some of the responsibility for the ultimate failure of the Catholic Mission at Lhasa lies with the Western religious authorities; for as these scholars pointed out, the "Tibetan religious authorities seem to have been far more receptive then to strange philosophical and religious ideas than they are now (after almost two centuries of self-enclosure), while the Christian religious authorities, in ignorance of the nature of Tibetan civilization, sent missionaries who with one notable exception, the great Jesuit Father Ippolito Desideri, were incapable of understanding the depths of Tibetan feelings and convictions." Snellgrove and Richardson 1968, p. 220. The quotes of John MacGregor are from his book, MacGregor 1970, p. 110.

91. The Mission at Lhasa itself was intermittently maintained for nearly 40 years (1707-45). Historically, it had been preceded by earlier Catholic attempts to penetrate Tibet from the Indian side. It all began with the Franciscans in the 14th century, followed by the Jesuit and Capuchin orders of missionaries in the early 17th century. In the years following the Lhasa Mission the Catholics established extensive work on those frontiers where it was possible to reach Tibetans. But an evangelical Christian journal in America has observed that Catholic mission efforts among Tibetans have been rewarded by few (if any) converts, either then or now. *Moody Monthly* (Mar. 1949):473, as paraphrased by Tharchin and Woodward 1975, p. 650.

92. Quoted from Tharchin 1942, p. 1.

93. Genesis 2:18 of the Old Testament.

94. See the Hebrew Old Testament story found at Genesis Ch. 24.

95. See BB TwMs, pp. 4-5. Until the moment of the Christian ceremony that was performed in India in late March of 1924, the record of Tharchin's so-called dictated memoirs continually referred to Karma Dechhen only as "his fiancée," "the would-be bride," or some other such term that was non-indicative of any earlier marriage ceremony having been conducted at Lhasa. See GTUM TsMs, 122-30.

96. "Changlo Chen...has visited Gangtok..." P.O.S. 1938, p. 10. "At the end of 1923 he [Sonam Gyalpo, i.e., Changlo Chen] was sent to Gangtok for a course in gunnery." Petech 1973, p. 214. "Two years later [i.e., 1923] he [Doring Thajji] was sent to Shillong for gunnery training." *Ibid.*, 63. "sDing bya mDa dpon [i.e., Dingja Depon 1923-]...received gunnery training in India along with rDo ring mDa dpon [i.e., Doring Depon 1919-] and sKyid sbug mDa dpon [i.e., Kyipup Depon 1932-]...in 1923-24." Rahul 1962, p. 188. See also page 191 in *ibid.*, where the information on Kyipup is repeated: "sKyid sbug mDa dpon 1932-...received military training in India in 1923-24." See also Taring 1970, p. 112 where she writes: "...our closest friend was General Dingja, one of the three Army officers who had been sent to...Shillong [in early 1920s] for military training." The year date after each name in brackets above indicates the year appointed to the rank of Depon or Commander in the Tibetan army. The information found in these four or five quotations, as well as in the Tharchin letter cited in the next note below, when placed together, support the statement made in the Text of the narrative which declares the travel destinations of these four officers during the period 1923-24. Though at some point during their Indian sojourn the group may have temporarily split up three and one, all four officers re-assembled together in the Darjeeling District at the appointed time for the return journey to Tibet, as the pages to follow in the present narrative will make clear.

97. Tharchin to Bell, Tsarong House Lhasa, 2 July 1937, Bell Papers. See also Tharchin Post-1962, p. 3: "So the military officials requested Mr. Tharchin to accompany them as an interpreter to India."

98. For more about this faithful and stalwart missionary of the Christian faith, see the next chapter.

99. This second quote from Tharchin in this paragraph is from BB TwMs, p. 4. The fact of the Graham letter of invitation and its receipt in Lhasa is also found in Tharchin Post-1962, p. 3. And finally, the probable time-frame (late Jan. to early Feb. 1924) for Graham's invitation letter is based on the following excerpt gleaned from the minutes of the Mission Council meeting (at Siliguri), 24-25 Jan. 1924, p. 9, EPMC Minutes 1921-1935: "In

view of the early [i.e., soon] departure of the Rev. Evan Mackenzie..., the Council...wished Mr. & Mrs. Mackenzie a hearty God-Speed when they leave..."

100. Tucci 1956, p. 115.

101. Deduced from internal evidence in BB TwMs, p. 4 and when compared with GTUM TwMs, Ch. 18, p. 2 where mention is made of Tharchin's visit to Shigatse in Jan. 1924, which could only have occurred on the return trek to India from Lhasa, he reaching Kalimpong in Feb. 1924.

102. Patterson 1990, p. 53.

103. Thomas Jr. 1951, p. 217. See also McGovern 1924, pp. 18-19. Tibetans carry such superstitious beliefs even further. Sarat Chandra Das, the Pundit who visited Lhasa and other parts of Tibet in 1879 and 1881-2, reports that especially at New Year's time Tibetans are particularly on the lookout for omens for the ensuing year. The best of them—if one is to start soon on a journey—is to behold a young woman carrying a babe in her arms. He adds: "To see flags, banners, milking of cows, persons carrying vessels filled with water or any other liquid, or timber for house-building or firewood, is lucky, as is also the sight of a corpse on a bier. To meet well-dressed persons, to be greeted by friends, to hear a lucky name, are also held to be signs of good luck; but to see beggars, ragged persons, empty vessels, a person descending a hill, or carrying shoes in his hand, a saddled horse without a rider, to hear impolite or rough language, are portents of bad fortune." Das 1902, p. 265. The editor of the *Das Journey* for publication, Wm. W. Rockhill, appended an editorial footnote to this passage quoted indicating that "all these omens of good and bad luck are of equal importance at any time of the year." *Ibid.*, 265n. Furthermore, superstition with regard to the welfare of children greatly abounded in Tibet. So observed one Tibetan who has been quoted before, Tsewang Y. Pemba, who, it will be recalled, had been born in 1931 at Gyantse, grew up in Yatung, Lhasa and Kurseong (in Dt. Darjeeling), and later attended medical school in London. Commenting on this aspect of Tibetan superstition in the published volume of his early years in his homeland, Pemba wrote: "Whenever a child goes out a dash of soot is painted on the tip of its nose, in order to keep away evil spirits. When guests arrive they are not supposed to go and admire the child immediately on arrival. The year thirteen and every multiple of thirteen are Ka years, unlucky years in which there may be many mishaps. In order to ward off this evil, prayers are said at the monastery, and the person wears saffron-colored clothes with the moon and the sun embroidered at the back. If a child continually falls ill, sometimes its name is changed." Pemba 1957, p. 52.

104. I Peter 4:19: found in the Christian New Testament Scriptures.

105. Quoted in Bishop 1994, p. 11.

106. The sources for all information in this paragraph are GTUM TwMs, Ch. 18, p. 2 and BB TwMs, p. 4.

107. For this and the other quotes regarding Chandra, see McKay 1997, pp. 113-4, McKay 1997a, p. 423; see also Tsarong 2000, p. 69; also, cf. Goldstein 1989, pp. 128-30, 135; and for the outline of the plot itself, see McKay 1997, pp. 108-14 and McKay 1997a, *passim*.

108. All new information and all quoted material in this paragraph have been derived from GTUM TwMs, 126 and BB TwMs, p. 4.

109. See the early notes of Ch. 6 above. The date of Feb. 1924 for Tharchin's arrival back in Kalimpong is specifically cited in BB TwMs, p. 4.

110. Patterson 1959, p. 24.

111. As intimated in the present narrative's first volume, Ch. 5, Ani Anna Kempe (1877-1967) was known far and wide for her selfless and sacrificial Christian service. One foreign missions writer, who had known both the Tharchins and Miss Kempe, having labored in the gospel at Kalimpong for many years herself, has written of Ani Kempe thus: "As in all mission and Christian history there are many individuals who are worthy of special note for their untiring zeal and unflagging faith in the Lord. Suffice it to mention...Miss Kempe who for many years served in the Darjeeling District and of whom many interesting stories are told." Lillian Carlson in Carlson 1988a, pp. 15-16. According to the Tharchin "memoirs" there were indeed many interesting stories to tell. Ani Kempe was a very devout and godly missionary. Originally she had worked among the Tibetans and others at Ghoom with the Scandinavian Alliance Mission (which later became TEAM—The Evangelical Alliance

Mission). After certain administrative changes occurred in the mission she began to work independently in the Kurseong, Kalimpong and Pedong areas. The older generations around these places fondly remember her with great appreciation, and they have often commented on her selfless and sacrificial service to the people. Ultimately she purchased a piece of land above Pedong Bazaar and constructed a single-story building for residential purposes as well as for the weaving industry. A water tank used to collect rain was built near the house since water scarcity was a big problem. In addition, it was also used for baptism.

Even to this day people remark that she never sent a visitor away empty-handed without offering something to the person as a gift. Sometimes she used to give her vegetables away to others while she herself would go hungry. According to a very reliable source, one day she even took her shoes off and gave them away to a needy person.

Ani Kempe used to walk on foot for long distances. Her spirit of sacrifice was astounding. Very faithfully through many sufferings she preached the gospel of Christ to Tibetans and others in that area. Her memory is gratefully revered and remembered by the local indigenous Christians. Indeed, her life and conduct was an example of practical Christianity at its best. Since her departure there has not arisen a second like her. GTUM TsMs, 127n.

112. BB TwMs, pp. 4-5.

113. According to Lillian Carlson, Mrs. Tharchin “received Christian teaching for three months from Miss Kempe, a Finnish missionary.” See the chapter, Carlson 1988a, p. 13. See also Tharchin Post-1962, p. 3, which document served as the basis for Carlson’s published account. Miss Carlson, an American missionary who spent many years at Kalimpong working closely with Tharchin and others among the Tibetans there, acknowledges her indebtedness to Tharchin for some of the information in her chapter.

114. The sources for the quoted material in this paragraph and the date of the baptism and marriage ceremony at Kurseong are per BB TwMs, p. 5. The rest of the information in the paragraph is per GTUM TsMs, 128.

115. The source for the historical and descriptive sketch of Kurseong, as well as for the composition of races there, is O’Malley 1989, pp. 196, 197-8, 200.

116. Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1955?, p. 18. The author became a close friend of Tharchin’s in the 1950s at Kalimpong.

117. Apart from the description of Shillong and Assam, as well as the author’s conjectural statements, the sources for the rest of the information contained in this lengthy paragraph are GTUM TsMs, 130 and BB TwMs, p. 5.

118. The date of the Sadhu’s departure is per Parker 1968, p. 112.

119. In this paragraph the information dealing with the Sadhu’s speaking engagements at Shillong and Mairang in March 1924 is per Rowlands & Ghose (comps.) 1924, “Preface,” p. i. The information and quote about the Santals in Feb., and the quote of Sundar’s letter to Rev. Popley, are all from Appasamy 1966, pp. 201-2.

With respect to the weakness of his lungs, the Sadhu, in one of his addresses at Mairang on 15 Mar., made reference to this very problem—not only in physical but also in spiritual terms—when he said: “I need your prayers. My ‘thorn in the flesh’ is a weakness in my lungs and throat which keeps me humble—otherwise there would be great dangers for me. I am unable to do what I ought to do because of spiritual weakness, so remember me in your prayers.” Rowlands & Ghose (comps.) 1924, p. 11. The Sadhu may have struck upon a helpful though not altogether effective antidote to the weakness in his throat if not his lungs. This was to drink liquids as hot as could be served. This is borne out by an incident that took place when he was a guest in 1918 for two months at the holiday retreat of the father and brother of Sundar’s biographer, Bishop A.J. Appasamy. The evangelist had just concluded a grueling seven-month gospel tour in western and southern India, and it was obvious that throat and lungs had been taxed to the ultimate. In a letter to the biographer, the latter’s brother recollected the following: “...the Sadhu said...that whatever drink was given to him, milk or coffee or tea, he wanted as hot as possible. So we gave it to him as hot as possible. The silver tumbler in which the drink was served used to be so hot that even the Sadhu could not hold it. He wrapped it with the end of his turban, and what was too hot for the hand he drank straight off in a gulp!” Appasamy 1966, p. 106.

120. The Sadhu had spoken at Shillong and its immediate environs between March 6th and 18th, 1924. Per Rowlands & Ghose (comps.) 1924, pp. 1, 35, 36. For the sources of the chronology of Tharchin's movements during all these months, see again three notes earlier above.

121. This date is known from a conversation which Tharchin would have a year later with Fr. Henry Hosten, the arch critic of Sundar Singh, at the Darjeeling home of Rev. Kelly. This conversation, held on 4 June 1925, is summarized on pages 212-16 of Oscar Pfister's unfavorable study of the Sadhu's life, Pfister 1926. The particular item of information regarding the Shillong encounter between Tharchin and Sundar Singh is found on page 216, where Pfister, informed by Hosten, states: "On March 6, 1924 (the date not quite certain) he [Tharchin] heard to his surprise Sundar preach in Shillong and talked with him."

122. R.D. Taring (Mary La) is the source for much of the information and, except for the Goldstein passage, all the quoted material in the Text's discussion of the plot at Lhasa in 1923/4 and its consequences for Tharchin's three military friends, as well as what also follows below in this end-note, all taken from Taring 1970 pp. 66-7, 71, 105-6, 115. See also Richardson 1945, p. 34 for a brief summary of these events from the perspective of one British official; Goldstein 1989, pp. 121-37; cf. also McKay's treatment of these same events, in McKay 1997, pp. 102-15, and cf. with McKay 1997a; for Changlo Chen's deprivation of rank, see P.O.S. 1938, p. 10; and see also Goodman 1986, p. 144.

Tsarong, incidentally, received the word of his dismissal when upon their return to Lhasa in 1925 he and Mary La had reached Chusul some 30 miles out from the Tibetan capital. A special letter from the *Kashag* had arrived to inform him of his deposition. Mary La went on, however, to say in defense of His Holiness: "We heard a rumor upon our return to Lhasa that Tsarong's opponents had tried to persuade the Dalai Lama to remove him also from the Kashag and to confiscate all his possessions; but His Holiness was reported to have said that he could never be so mean to the man who had saved the lives of himself and his Ministers [back in 1910]." Yet, in one of those peculiar ironies of history, Tsarong received this official word of dismissal from Army command at the very spot (Chusul) where in 1910 he had successfully beaten back a Chinese force that was in hot pursuit of the Dalai Lama and his Ministers, thus delaying the enemy long enough to enable the Tibetan ruler and his party to flee unmolested to the safety of Indian territory. As a consequence, His Holiness would soon elevate his brave protector to the top Army post.

123. McKay 1997, p. 109.

124. But it would also take the lives of former British Trade Agent Rai Bahadur Pemba Tsering (1905-54) and his wife who were drowned in the flood. (Pemba, it may be recalled, had been one of Tharchin's primary class students at Ghoom.) Furthermore, the graves of the late Political Officer Sikkim, Frederick Williamson (1891-1935) and other Europeans who had died in Tibet were washed away. McKay 1997, p. 219. "...we heard the terrible news of the flood that washed away the whole town of Gyantse on 17 July 1954, drowning more than two thousand people, including many of our friends." Taring 1970, p. 190. Sonam Tobgay's sister Yangzom, incidentally, was for the longest time one of the prominent members of Tharchin's Tibetan congregation in Kalimpong; see GTUM TsMs, 132. The August date cited for the officers' departure to Tibet is per BB TwMs, p. 5. And the declination by Tharchin to return to Lhasa with the four officers is reported in Tharchin Post-1962, p. 3.

125. Letters of Rev. Peter, MCHA.

126. The source for the quoted material is BB TwMs, p. 5; and for the date of 15 Aug. 1924, both of Tharchin's biographical documents record it: *ibid.* and GTUM TsMs, 132. About this change in denominational affiliation, Tharchin some 40 years later made the following interesting comments: "I became affiliated with the Scottish Presbyterian Church, yet not because I wanted to change. Definitely not! But the border region here was for more than one hundred years their mission field. I am all for it, that at the same time [that one joins the Mission] one goes together with [or joins] the Mission Church..." He declared these sentiments to missionary Margaret Urban, who was a visitor in his Kalimpong home for two weeks in 1964, and she later included these statements in her book, Urban 1967, p. 10. Previously, of course, Tharchin had been affiliated with the Moravian Church.

GTUM TsMs, 137-52; quotes: 145, 147-8, 148, 151, 151-2.

1. Appasamy 1966, p. 41.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Sadhu Sundar Singh; a Personal Memoir* (New York, 1934), 8.

4. *The Missionary Expansion of the Reformed Churches* (Edinburgh/London, 1898), 156.

5. Hamilton Bower (Capt., 17th Bengal Cavalry), *Diary of a Journey [1891-2] across Tibet* (New York, 1894), 238.

6. Bronze Plate I reads: "In affectionate memory of the Rev. Evan Mackenzie, missionary to the Tibetans 1894-1924." Bronze Plate II reads: "In loving memory of Mrs. Evan Mackenzie, devoted missionary to the Tibetans 1894-1917." GTUM TsMs, 139n.

7. Though Sunday was "the weekly day of rest" for the Christian community, each Lord's Day was a full one in the Kalimpong area Church. By the time the Graham's Homes Establishment had begun in 1900, the pattern of worship from Sunday to Sunday—wherein peoples of many races worshiped the one God and were led in worship either by Graham himself or by various colleagues in the Scots Mission—would often be something like the following:

Graham usually took the 10 o'clock service at the Homes, which in the early years was conducted in the school hall there prior to the construction after her death in 1919 of the Katherine Graham Memorial Chapel. The main hour of the day's worship was the Nepali service at noon, later moved to 11 o'clock, when the Macfarlane Church was always packed to the doors. (Since the Nepali language was the one most commonly understood and used by all the ethnic groups, it was accordingly the best medium for preaching before mixed audiences in Kalimpong.) No doubt the missionary who conducted this noon service would have already had an early morning service, including communion and baptisms, at one of the five district churches down in the valley (see further in this note), all within easy riding distance of Kalimpong. Moreover, some Training Institution students would have gone, two by two, and before breakfast, down to their little village Sunday schools to teach, returning in time for the noon service. Also prior to the latter, two other church functions at Kalimpong would have occurred: the local Tibetan church—once it had been created—would have met earlier in the morning at 8:30 or more usually at 9:00; and, the Sunday school, with a large attendance of both teachers and children, would have just been held before the noon worship service.

"With the bell of the Macfarlane Church tolling, there could also be heard the gongs of the little village churches in the valleys taking up the call." Years before, Rev. Graham had been personally responsible for establishing five new district churches, predominantly Lepcha in composition, at Nimbong, Pemling, Mangzing, Dolopchen and Pedong. Even by the mid-1970s, notes Graham's biographer, all of them, with the exception of the Mangzing local church, were "still functioning and flourishing," and even the lone exception still possessed a church but with a dwindling congregation. (The biographer noted as well that many of Kalimpong's community leaders including local political party leaders were members of these Christian congregations.) These local valley district churches were ministered to in those days by the catechists and teachers who had been trained at the Kalimpong Training Institute.

The English service at Macfarlane was held at 3:30 p.m., at which there may have been only the few Europeans among the missionaries' and traders' households and one or two nationals who understood English; but often there may have also been a considerable number of Europeans in the hill station: Government officers on tour, soldiers passing to the front, planters on a visit, etc.

The worship of the entire day would finally end with a devotional time at 6:30 p.m., "when all races took part in half an hour's silent devotion, and, at the end, joined in the Lord's prayer repeated by each in his own language." A full day indeed! Sources: Minto 1974, pp. 43, 63, 163; Graham 1897, pp. 71-3; and information gleaned from the S.G. Tharchins regarding the Tibetan service.

8. A merger formed in late 1970 by "a union of the United Church of North India (formed in 1924 through the union of the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists in the north), the northern dioceses of the Anglican Church of India, Pakistan, and Ceylon, the Baptists, the Australian Methodists, the Disciples of Christ, and the Church of the Brethren in India. Besides these major groups there are different branches of Lutherans, Mennonites,

and smaller conservative evangelical denominations and independent churches.” Theodore Williams, “India, a Seething Subcontinent,” in Hoke (ed.) 1975, p. 220.

9. See later in this present chapter for more on these two famed heralds of the gospel. On a journey made between Sept. 1892 and Apr. 1893, Miss Taylor herself, accompanied only by five Asiatics—one or two of whom attempted to take her life—had penetrated Tibet from the Chinese side and nearly reached Lhasa itself, only to be turned back by the Lhasan authorities at Nagchuka a few days’ journey out from the Forbidden City. The complete story can be found in Carey 1983.

10. The reader is reminded that at the end of Ch. 7 of Vol. I of the present work can be found additional information on this village and the missionary activity there, both Protestant and Catholic: especially the activity of Catholic Fr. Auguste Desgodins.

11. Manuel 1914, p. 144.

12. Caravanserai: for an excellent descriptive definition of this term see end-note no. 10 for Ch. 19 below.

13. Graham 1897, p. 43. Amaury de Riencourt has called the Marwaris “the greatest trading caste in India.” Riencourt 1950, p. 11. An interesting lot, these Marwaris were, and no doubt still are. Three accounts, one written in 1897, the other two in 1948 and the early 1950s, will demonstrate the fact that the dominance these cunning Indian businessmen exerted over the business affairs of the bazaar and over the Kalimpong area’s far less prosperous citizenry continued unabated during those 50 years.

That black-bearded man—squatting on the mat, which serves also as his bed, and adding up the beloved account book with his back against the iron safe—is the regular Marwari merchant from the Bombay Presidency... The bulk of the trade of Kalimpong is in the hands of those men. They buy wool from the Tibetans and cardamoms and other produce from the cultivators, and in return sell Manchester and Birmingham goods and many “made in Germany.” Their hope, however, is not in merchandise so much as money-lending, and the cultivator who once gets into their clutches does not easily get free. Seventy-five percent compound interest is no uncommon rate!... The Mission has done what it could to help the Government to checkmate such exorbitant demands... [of] those extortioners—not, however, that they are all equally bad, nor that the debtors are all simple dupes, only it is hard that the respectable have to pay so severely for defaulters. (Graham 1897, pp. 34-5)

The whole economic life is in the hands of the Marwaris, who are everywhere, possess the most profitable industries and trades, get hold of the most thriving firms, lend money to the societies and to private people and control the imports from and the exports to India. They hail from an area not too distant from Bombay, but there is no village in India where they have not set foot. Even the Himalaya is no barrier to them. When it still was possible, some of them went to Tibet and some to Turkestan in search of their luck. Wrapped in lengths of snow-white muslin, a small turban perched precariously on their head, they squat from dawn to dusk in their shops where only the safe and a few chattels can be seen as their staple goods lie stored in their godowns. (Tucci 1956, p. 11)

The houses of Kalimpong’s wealthiest merchants are grouped on both sides of the road that comes up from the Teesta Valley, at the point where it crosses the narrow bridge of rock linking Deolo with Rinkingpong. These merchants are practically all Marwaris... [They] are born traders, unbelievably hard-working, but hated by their fellow Indians for the craft and cunning with which they advance their business interests. It has been claimed that eighty percent of India’s national property is in the hands of the Marwaris. People say that the Marwaris of Kalimpong charge interest at fifty percent or more on loans, and that many of them present their bills twice....

The Marwaris are extremely frugal; the only luxuries many of them permit themselves are a little car, a radio, or a camera....

The Marwaris keep no special shop hours. They open at sunrise and do not close until late at night. Their shops are without windows, but open to the street along their whole width. A large proportion of the space is occupied by a low dais covered with white linen, which serves as a counter and desk by day and as a bed at night.

Another indispensable article of furniture in a Marwari shop is a safe. Beside the neatly piled bundles of banknotes stands a little statue of the elephant-headed Indian god Ganesha, the divine multiplier of worldly goods. The shopkeepers burn joss-sticks of sandalwood before the safe every evening in his honor. It was this practice, no doubt, which gave rise to the rumor that Marwaris pray every evening to filthy lucre. (Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1955?, pp. 66-8)

For a somewhat bitter critique of the Marwaris, who as outsiders—hailing from the region of Marwari (now Jodpur) in Rajputana, Northwest India—had made tremendous economic and financial inroads over the decades in monopolizing the trade activities in Kalimpong and throughout much of Bengal, see Dr. Panchanan Neogi.

"Kalimpong—Bengal's Gateway to Sikkim and Tibet," *Modern Review* (Calcutta) (July 1939): 39-42. Writing his article from Kalimpong itself, Neogi noted with alarm how the Marwaris, having not only gained a virtual monopoly in the trade situation of Kalimpong, had also "spread over the whole of Darjeeling district and had penetrated even to the trade marts of Tibet." He ended his article with a lament and a dire warning to the young people of Bengal: "Though Kalimpong is a Bengal town, all its internal and external trade with Sikkim, Tibet and the rest of India is in the hands of people other than Bengalis. That story is true for every part of Bengal, and so long as our young people do not develop the necessary spirit of enterprise and powers of physical endurance, people of other [Indian] provinces will continue to deprive Bengal of all wealth born out of trade and commerce."

14. Manuel 1914, p. 144.

15. *Ibid.* The information on the Mackenzies and the Polhills at Ghoom is per Annie W. Marston (the sister of Eleanor Agnes (Marston) Polhill-Turner, the wife of Cecil Polhill-Turner), in Marston 1905, pp. 171-5. It should not be overlooked that during the near-total year together at Ghoom, Rev. Polhill and Rev. Mackenzie spent much time as a team in public ministry. In one of Mrs. Polhill's letters posted to England from Ghoom and dated 5 Apr. 1896, she wrote: "My husband and Mr. Mackenzie have daily street preaching in Ghoom and two small places nearby. Sundays they have two or three open-air in Darjeeling, all in Tibetan. Then on Friday evenings they go up to the soldiers' barracks, about twenty minutes' walk from here. At present there does not seem to be a single Christian among the soldiers here. We are praying much for blessing on the Europeans in Darjeeling and neighborhood. It seems to be very hard soil." *Ibid.*, 172-3.

16. "Graham's influence in Kalimpong in its formative years" (he served there from 1889 to 1942) "was profound and touched on the lives of all classes of the community. It is significant that it is not only in missionary circles that he is called Graham of Kalimpong—the two names cannot be separated. Kalimpong, without fifty-two years of Graham's presence, would still have grown, but it would not perhaps have grown in such an orderly way. It would still, without Graham, have had its beautiful setting, but the spirit of the place would have been vastly different. There is today a tolerance in Kalimpong, a width of vision among the responsible citizens that transcends community prejudice, religious differences and caste superiorities. On Independence Day, 15th August, Kalimpong celebrates with more gusto and exuberance than does Delhi or Calcutta. The people of Kalimpong like doing things together as a group because to most of them it is more than just a place in which to live, to do business, to bring up a family. This feeling for the town is obviously not all because of Graham, but unquestionably he helped to mold its character." Minto 1974, pp. 33-4.

Rev. Graham (later Dr. Graham, when in 1904 the University of Edinburgh, and in 1931 Aberdeen University, conferred a D.D. degree upon him), one of the Church of Scotland missionaries to Kalimpong and sent out as the first representative missionary abroad by that Church's Young Men's Guild (of which he had been its national secretary), was a man of many talents and many accomplishments. In his lifetime he served, among other things, as Moderator of the Church of Scotland (1931), longtime head of the Scottish Mission at Kalimpong, the first moderator of the local Kirk session there, missionary to Lepchas, Tibetans, Bhutanese and others, educator, minister of the gospel, and Bible translator for portions of the Lepcha New Testament. But the most celebrated achievement and one for which he is probably most remembered in Northeast India was his founding in the late 19th century of the unique educational and philanthropic institution in Kalimpong known as the Graham's Homes Establishment and School (originally called by "the pretentious title" of St. Andrews Colonial and Industrial Settlement!). *Ibid.*, 56. Created originally for poor and destitute children of European descent (especially of Anglo-Indians), the Homes—almost entirely supported at that time by public charity from many sources—began with six orphans in 1900 but grew through the years and decades to where by 1975 it had a strength of well over 700 boys and girls with a staff of well over 70 being employed by 1943. Macdonald 1943, p. 71. In the years since Graham's death in 1942 the Homes Establishment had widened its scope to include Tibetan refugees and a large number of students from Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal, although "their main purpose is still to provide sanctuary and hope to Anglo-Indian children, now mainly second or third generation, from the slums of Calcutta and other cities. Graham would have been pleased about the influx of 'hill' children, for he admired the sturdy independence of those people." Minto 1974, p. 163; for a thorough history of the Homes and an enlightening discussion of the entire Anglo-Indian problem, see pp. 48-92, 142-4, 155-64.

Situated in a lovely 100-acre estate on the eastern slopes of Kalimpong's highest hill (Deolo), this Homes Establishment provides accommodation for the children in small cottages that dot this picturesque landscape. Indeed, Graham's cottage planning was greatly influenced by the work of William Quarrier and the Homes the latter had created in West Scotland. There, each of Quarrier's cottages, erected on a large estate, had houseparents (as substitute parents) who looked after the needs and wants of the children from the Glasgow slums. And like

the Quarrier Homes the Graham Homes were established in a setting of "sunshine, flowers, fresh hill air" and above all else in "a place where the children could find themselves" by preparing them "to face life with confidence, a confidence which had to be carefully built up by love and concern." *Ibid.*, 60-1, 65. Accordingly, with 30 or so children in each, each cottage back in those early days was placed under the loving supervision of a "House Mother" and "House Auntie." One could see children of all ages, "ranging from babies in arms to young men and women of 18 or 19 years of age." Macdonald 1943, p. 71. Today the Homes Establishment even has its own dairy, poultry and bakery. Sir Charles Bell, a friend of both Tharchin and Dr. Graham, has commented that the Homes Establishment trained the children "somewhat after the fashion of Barnardo's Homes in England, but with a splendid personality of its own." Bell 1946, p. 17. In fact, Dr. Barnardo himself had had no objection to Graham's Homes being compared to the Barnardo Homes in the interdenominational appeals leaflet that was disseminated widely to garner support from any branch of the Christian Church and elsewhere in the face of the refusal (though a blessing in disguise) of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Church of Scotland and the Young Men's Guild to assist financially (even though they both did approve the Homes scheme itself). Moreover, Graham himself came to be known all over India and beyond as the Dr. Barnardo of the Anglo-Indian community! Minto 1974, pp. 58, 96.

Another friend of Tharchin's had some highly commendable things to say of Rev. and Mrs. Graham, too. Writing in the early 1930s, David Macdonald could assert: "Dr. Graham, the well-known missionary and philanthropist, had, I consider, the finest character I have ever met, and his broad-mindedness, tolerance, sympathy and Christ-like life have gained for him a unique and lasting place in the hearts of all with whom he has come into contact. . . . Dr. and the late Mrs. Graham were always kindness personified to me, and later to my family. I used to stay with them at the Mission House in Kalimpong whenever I visited that place, and was thus privileged to know the whole Graham family." Macdonald 1932, pp. 256-7.

Although Rev. Graham had a special love towards the Lepchas in the community (see next note below), both Grahams also had a heartfelt concern for the Tibetans. This could be clearly seen, of course, in his having called upon Evan Mackenzie to begin a work among them in the hill town and soliciting Tharchin by letter to return from Lhasa to carry on the work among the Tibetan community. But as another example, Dr. Graham also expressed a continuing interest in the spiritual and physical welfare of the flock of believers who comprised the Tibetan local church in Kalimpong, which interest and concern will become abundantly evident to the reader as the present narrative on the life of Gergan Tharchin further unfolds. And as for Katherine Graham, she was inspired to establish a small "industrial" complex that came to be known popularly as Kalimpong Arts and Crafts. In part it was founded and later greatly extended as one way to ease the employment problem which faced many Tibetans settling in Kalimpong who had left their homeland in the wake of the social upheaval caused by the military and political events of 1910-14 that engulfed Tibet, China and India (and which are discussed in more detail later in the present chapter).

In summary, then, the reader shall readily have cause to discern in the pages to follow the fact that Rev. Graham was one of the best friends Tharchin could ever have had, and one who aided and supported him continually in moments both of triumph and of trial.

17. As was intimated in the note above, Dr. Graham harbored a special love towards the Lepchas (concerning the origins of whom, and additionally something more with regard to their character, see again end-note 23 for Ch. 8, Vol. I of the present narrative). Here, however, some background needs to be presented. Most of the Scottish Mission's early conversions were from this particular ethnic community. Kalimpong's missionaries, including Graham and Rev. Sutherland, soon came to recognize that contact with these more gentle folk was easier to come by. When, for example, the founder of the Mission, William Macfarlane, discovered the caste system and orthodoxy of the Hindu Nepalese to be a hindrance to his labors in Darjeeling, he set about working to convert the Lepchas upon his going to Kalimpong. A classless society without a caste system of any kind, this tribal people even had certain social customs which were not unlike those of the Christian. For instance, there was respect and obedience towards the words and thoughts of the elders, since in their society they "were infallible" and required "unchallenged obedience." Thus the Lepcha elders, if converted, soon assumed leadership and patriarchal roles in Macfarlane's and Graham's Presbyterian form of Church government that was introduced in Kalimpong. By 1890, writes Graham's biographer James Minto, "the Lepchas were a diminishing tribe and even then were in danger of losing their identity and language. Already there was much intermarriage with the Nepalese and Nepali was becoming their language." But by becoming Christians they maintained their identity in a different way: they became leaders in the organized Church. And being the favorites of the missionaries, "they won for themselves a kind of protection" in the Kalimpong district, and, because of their simple ways, "were easy to manage." Moreover, they had no taboos concerning food, and many of their legends were quite

similar to the Old Testament: Adam and Eve, banishment from home, the Tower of Babel and the Deluge were just some of the parallels to be found in both. Thus, unlike the Buddhist and the Hindu, who if converted often was deemed an outcast, the Lepcha "had nothing to lose" by becoming a Christian.

The early Scottish missionaries, and especially Rev. Graham, understood the Lepchas and their problems very well, and he vigorously attempted to help them out of their poor economic condition throughout his life. "In his writings," notes Minto, "Graham rarely differentiated between Nepalese and Lepchas. Yet in his early days the word Christian was synonymous with the word Lepcha, and doing anything good for a Christian meant doing good for a Lepcha." Out of his love for and close rapport with this particular hill folk, he almost became "protective" towards them. Graham did his best, for instance, to keep the Lepchas from entering the military service, the Government from conferring awards and honors on them, and the Lepchas themselves from joining Government service. "This was peculiar behavior towards a favorite tribe," observes his biographer. Yet perhaps Graham, he explains, desired the people he loved so much "to remain simple, plain and artless." Minto 1974, pp. 28-30, 44.

As a still further indication of success by the Christian missionaries with the Lepchas, one scholar on the subject, Gorer by name, writing in 1938, declared that "despite the small numbers, the Lepchas represent one of the most fruitful fields of missionary endeavor in northern India, and the conversion of individuals to Christianity seems to have modified the converts' character far more profoundly than the earlier group conversion to Buddhism." Quoted in Amal Kumar Das, *The Lepchas of West Bengal* (Calcutta, 1978), 190. Das himself observed in 1978 that because of the vigorous missionary activity begun almost immediately after the advent of British rule in Darjeeling District and its Kalimpong subdivision, the educational standard of the Christian section of the Lepcha population, being much better than that of the non-Christian section, enabled the Christians to "raise their living standard better than the others." *Ibid.*, 258.

In another earlier work on the Lepchas, co-authored with S.K. Banerjee, Das quotes the testimony regarding the Lepchas of the Kalimpong area given to the authors in 1962 by a Lepcha Buddhist priest, Tshering Ongchhuk, in which he discussed, among other things, the impact of the Christian missionaries. At the time, he was the Head Lama of Mani Gompa (established 1820), the oldest existing monastery of the Lepchas of Kalimpong. Born in 1899, this later Abbot was therefore in a position to know of and to witness the work of Revs. Graham, Sutherland and their successors among the Kalimpong Lepcha community. In part, Lama Tshering Ongchhuk commented as follows: "The Lepchas are very poor and during my lifetime [he was by then 63 years old] I found many Buddhists [among the Kalimpong Lepchas] being converted to Christianity. Those people were economically depressed with a heavy burden of debt, etc. [due to their heavy drinking of "chi" or grain liquor, leading them to a loss of their money and eventually their land], and the missionaries helped them and converted them to their religious creed. They are well looked after and are now educated and well-to-do, but we the Buddhist Lepchas do not know beyond primary education, and have not seen anything beyond this little area. Who will show us light and when? Should we have to change our creed?" Quoted in *The Lepchas of Darjeeling District* (Calcutta, 1962), 160, 42.

18. Minto 1974, p. 45.

19. Manuel 1914, p. 144.

20. See end-note no. 16 for Ch. 1 of the present narrative's first volume for further insight on this term (with its variant Bhod) and its use in reference to Tibet and Tibetans.

21. See the lengthy end-note (no. 82) for the previous chapter in which this prayer formula is thoroughly discussed.

22. Graham 1897, pp. 42-3.

23. Minto 1974, pp. 27-8.

24. Tharchin and Woodward 1975, p. 651, state that it was 1894, but these authors are basing this date on how the Bronze Plates in their honor placed in Macfarlane Memorial Church read. It must be noted, however, that according to Manuel 1914, p. 144, to Weir 1900, p. 100, to Marston 1905, p. 175, and corroborated by other sources, the Mackenzies did not join the Kalimpong Mission and initiate the work among Tibetans there until sometime after Oct. 1896; indeed, according to the Marston source, it had to be in early 1897, since the Mackenzies were still living at Ghoom with the Polhills (for language training and ministry to the Tibetan community) until at least mid.-Jan; after which, wrote Mrs. Polhill, she and her husband would be taking leave of Ghoom to return

to China, she stating in a letter of hers dated Ghoom, 11 Jan. 1897: "This week our final packing has to be done; we leave for Calcutta tomorrow week. Our sorrow at parting with the Mackenzies is mutual; we have been very happy together." The year 1894 cited on the Memorial Plates has reference to the time when they began their work among Tibetans at Pedong where, as stated elsewhere, they were settled for eighteen months (beginning in the late part of that year) immediately following the disastrous experience they encountered at the Sikkimese-Tibetan border as members of Annie Taylor's Pioneer Mission Band, the story of which is told later in the present chapter.

25. Regarding the Christian mela, see Perry 1997, pp. 52, 76 note 81.

26. Hewat 1960, p. 161.

27. This is known from a brief account about the class written by an accomplished Tibetan monk-scribe from Central Asia, Phuntsog Lungtok by name, who had himself been one of the Tibetan teachers in Mackenzie's school during the early days of its history. See the particular page in this monk-scribe's autobiographical narrative that is found in Pete: Richardus, ed., *Tibetan Lives: Three Himalayan Autobiographies* (London, 1998), 27.

28. Manuel 1914, pp. 145-6.

29. Again this is per Phuntsog Lungtok's autobiographical narrative that appears in Richardus, ed., *Tibetan Lives*, 27.

30. Manuel 1914, p. 146, for both these quoted passages.

31. Except where already documented, the sources for all information in this and the preceding two paragraphs regarding Rev. Mackenzie's evangelistic activities into Sikkim and Bhutan, as well as regarding the Panchen Lama's visit to India and Mackenzie's and Bailey's involvement in it, are: (i) Polhill 1907, pp. 332-3; (ii) Special Correspondent, "With Tashi Lama in India," *Calcutta Review* (Apr. 1907):212-9, 228; and (iii) Swinson 1971, pp. 48-9. Bailey's biographer relates an amusing incident in the friendly relationship which in the months thereafter developed between the British officer and the Tibetan Lama: "... Bailey was to become great friends with the Lama who was his own age. Many mornings would find him heading for the monastery with his gramophone and collection of music-hall records. The Tashi Lama had a great fondness for the Harry Lauder songs, and could not hear them too often. Once the music was interrupted by the sound of trumpets and Bailey asked whether he should take off the record, thinking that perhaps some religious ceremony was in progress. At this the Tashi Lama laughed, and replied: 'No, don't stop—they're only worshipping me.'" *Ibid.*, 49. It should finally be noted that the young commander of the escort assigned to the Trade Agency at Gyantse during Bailey's days there was none other than the future Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck of World War Two fame. *Ibid.*

32. Van der Oye 1994, p. 18.

33. For a detailed account of this fascinating attempt by British India to effect contact with the indifferent Dalai Lama via Gartok, see John Bray, "The Lapchak Mission from Ladakh to Lhasa in British Indian Foreign Policy," *TJ* (Winter 1990):90-1. The Viceroy's letter, drawn up by Sarat Chandra Das in both English and Tibetan, was addressed to the "Illustrious Dalai Lama Ngawang Losang Tenzin Gyatsho, Supreme Pontiff of the Great Buddhist Church," and whose text read in part as follows: "It is an undesirable and unfortunate thing that two Governments and two peoples, who are so near to each other, and who possess so many common interests, should not be drawn together by close and friendly bonds, but should be kept asunder, as though they were complete strangers." The bearer of the letter from Leh to Gartok was Capt. R.H. Kennion, at the time the British Joint Commissioner in Ladakh, who in Sept. 1900 secretly crossed the frontier, outpacing the Tibetan border guards who had attempted to prevent his reaching Gartok. Then securing an interview with one of the Garpons there, Kennion convinced him to agree, though reluctantly, to pass on the Viceroy's letter to Lhasa. But the Indian government waited in vain for a reply. For in March 1901, writes Bray, Curzon's letter, its seals broken, was returned to Kennion by the Garpons, who at first reported they had indeed forwarded the letter on to Lhasa but that the Tibetan government had sent it back unread. But then the Garpons changed their story, admitting later that the letter had remained in Gartok, they "not daring to send it to Lhasa in case they were accused of treachery for dealing with a British official."

34. Cf. King 1926, p. 43. Raja Dorjee had been scheduled to visit Lhasa early in 1901 with two elephants, two peacocks and a leopard for the Dalai Lama. Lord Curzon had also given the Raja a revised version of the

earlier letter sent via West Tibet the year before. He set out for Lhasa in June. In the revision Curzon had written that if the Tibetans failed to commence negotiating soon with the British, then "my Government must reserve the right to take such steps as may seem to them necessary and proper to enforce the terms of the Treaty, and to ensure that the Trade Regulations are observed." Raja Ugyen would return to India in Oct. of 1901 claiming that His Holiness had refused to accept the new letter. But Glenn H. Mullin has noted that Sarat Chandra Das, who for decades had been serving as an adviser on Tibetan affairs to the British in India, had subsequently commented that the Raja, wrote Mullin, had most probably not had "the courage to present the letter directly to the Dalai Lama as instructed, but instead had followed the traditional protocol of first discussing the matter with the Lhasa ministers." Mullin added that Das had felt these ministers would doubtless have been opposed to the idea and that once Raja Dorjee had petitioned their advice "he would be unable to go over their heads by approaching the Dalai Lama directly." Mullin 1988, pp. 60-1.

Incidentally, this last personal letter of Lord Curzon's—said by Mullin to have been a revision of the earlier one—had been drafted by Rev. Graham Sandberg. F.W.T., "Sandberg" article, *Dictionary of National Biography* 23 (1901-11):261. Besides serving at the time as Chaplain of Darjeeling (1901-2), Sandberg had earlier mastered the Tibetan language, had written extensively on the exploration of Tibet and that country's history, and served as an adviser and consultant to the Tibetan New Testament Revision Committee—chaired by Moravian missionary Heyde—that was even then sitting in deliberation at nearby Ghoom. See the present narrative's final volume, Ch. 28 for details. Like John A. Graham of later years, Sandberg was especially concerned about the condition of the Anglo-Indians, whose cause he espoused in an article which appeared in the *Contemporary Review* of 1892 entitled, "Our Outcast Cousins in India." "His modesty and reticence," wrote one biographer, "concealed the extent of his attainments, which included a thorough knowledge of the Italian language and literature." *Ibid.* He died back in England in 1905.

35. The Buriats were a nomadic Mongol tribe whose homeland had at one time lain at the SW end of Lake Baikal in Siberia. They were in time subdued and absorbed into Tsarist Russia in the 18th century, the Tsar having in the process bought their loyalty by permitting them to keep their Buddhist religion. By the first decade of the 20th century there were approximately a quarter of a million Buriats dwelling round about Lake Baikal, the dialect of whom was closely allied to the Khalka or Eastern Mongolian dialect, the principal vernacular of Mongolia at that time and used by about four million people. Per "The Bible in China," in Broomhall (ed.) 1907, pp. 411, 414. See also Terentyev 1996, pp. 60-63ff. After Russia's Communist Revolution of 1917, Buriat Mongolia became, in 1923, an autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic following a violent and bloody purge of much of the Lamaist Buddhist culture of the people in 1921. See Ch. 24 of the present work's final volume for more details.

36. "Dorjjeff's figure remains shadowy, as ghost-like he flits across the Tibetan stage." So has he been described by Parshotam Mehra, in Mehra 1968, p. 361. A Buriat Mongol from Baikal, he was born in 1854 (Western reckoning) and came in his young manhood to Tibet from Mongolia to study at the famed Drepung Monastery outside Lhasa. After nearly ten years of study there he received in 1888 the *Iharampa* degree, the highest degree of Geshe ("Master of Metaphysics" or what in the West would be termed Doctor of Divinity degree). It was during the latter stages of his study that Dorjjeff, interestingly enough, became, because of his brilliant scholarship and debating skills, one of the tutors to the youthful thirteenth Dalai Lama (b.1876); and apparently it was this relationship (between 1888 and 1898) which enabled the Russian Lama to gain considerable influence with the new "incarnation." Indeed, by his own autobiographical account, the Buriat Lama during this period would serve as the teen-aged Dalai Lama's "inseparable attendant," Tibet's priest-king coming to look upon the Mongolian Geshe as his "true guardian and protector." It was in 1898 that Dorjjeff made his first visit to St. Petersburg, followed by another in 1900. On each occasion he met with the Tsar as well as other high government figures in the Russian capital. Returning to Lhasa after each visit, he reported directly to the Dalai Lama who was most eager to hear of his impressions of the Tsar, the Government, the Russian people, and especially the situation among the Buddhist minorities there. The pro-Russian faction which Dorjjeff formed at the Tibetan capital exerted a strong influence on the Government's foreign policy for a long time thereafter. At the same time the Russian Buriat Lama aroused great suspicion among some members of the Tibetan ruler's court; but among others within the ruling circles he found support and respect for his knowledge and understanding of international affairs. It was then that early in 1901 Lama Dorjjeff, accompanied by three Tibetan officials, was sent by the Dalai Lama to St. Petersburg once more, where he arrived in June.

37. Ekai Kawaguchi, "Russia's Policy in Tibet," *Open Court*, vol. 30:371-2, quoted in Lee 1931, p. 127n.

38. King 1926, p. 44.

39. Van der Oye 1994, p. 18.

40. Quoted in Andreyev 1993, p. 13.

41. The term "great game" to describe Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia was first coined by Captain Arthur Conolly in a series of letters he penned back in 1840 while on military assignment in Afghanistan, one of the key geographical areas in the rivalry. The 19th-century British historian of empire, John William Kaye, was able to document the term's origin in two works which he authored: (a) *The History of the War in Afghanistan*, 2 vols. (London, 1851), I:537-8, 540n.; and (b) *Lives of Indian Officers*, 2 vols. (London: J.J. Keliher & Co., 1904, a reprint of an earlier 3-vol. ed.), II:133-5, 141-2, 145-6. In his letters (May to Aug. 1840) Captain Conolly was inspired to give expression to the vision he had of the safeguarding of the status quo between Great Britain and Russia but also of the far grander and nobler joint enterprise of Christianizing this portion of the world (and particularly Afghanistan) that under Mohammedanism was from his perspective backward, barbaric and enslaving. And hence it was to the accomplishment of these two ideals that Conolly in his letters applied the term "great game," "noble game," "grand game," etc., although others, like Lord Auckland—who were in higher positions of British responsibility, both military and diplomatic—had only seized upon the geopolitical implications of the term, ignoring the grander aspect of Conolly's vision. The English Captain, himself one of the Great Game's "most enthusiastic players" and a sometime British secret agent, would fall a tragic victim to the intrigues that enveloped the vast geopolitical playing field in Central Asia; for in June 1842, less than two years following his first use of the term, Conolly, along with Colonel Stoddart, was found beheaded by the sword of the Bokhara Amir's executioner. See Prof. Henry W.C. Davis, *The Great Game in Asia (1800-1844)*, Raleigh Lecture on History, Read 10 Nov. 1926 before the British Academy (London, 1927), 31; see also John H. Waller, *Beyond the Khyber Pass: the Road to British Disaster in the First Afghan War* (New York, 1990), *passim*. In his book on the Anglo-Russian rivalry, English historian Michael Edwardes, in a poignant passage from the Preface, has captured for his readers the essence of the romanticism and profound personal tragedy which unfortunately informed this unique episode in world history. In his volume, appropriately entitled *Playing the Great Game* (London, 1975, vii-viii), Edwardes writes:

The Great Game subsumes more than a century of public drama and private tragedy, of high policies in ruins, needless wars, lonely deaths in wild places. It was a scenario which, ruthlessly edited, fitted very well with the Victorian concept of "the romance of empire." But the romantic element should not be discounted. It was part of the attraction for the men who willingly and joyfully played the Great Game on the playing fields, not of Eton, but of Central Asia... [It] was a contest for political ascendancy [there] between Britain and Tsarist Russia. The secret agents, British and Russian, were the advance guards of armies that never met, for there was never to be open conflict between the forces of the two empires in Central Asia. But their clandestine activities often fed the dreams and terrors of the decision-makers thousands of miles away in their comfortable offices.... In high politics, however, illusions acquire a special armor against reality, and so the Great Game—in the graphic words of the Tsarist foreign minister, Count Nesselrode—was but "a tournament of shadows," a secret war of illusions.

See also Peter Hopkirk's more recent volume on the subject, *The Great Game: On Secret Service in High Asia* (London, 1990).

42. All details and quoted material concerning this encounter between the Russian and Englishman are per French 1995, pp. 75-6.

43. MacGregor 1970, p. 256.

44. In Oct. 1901 an announcement had been made in the St. Petersburg official *Gazette* to the effect that the Tsar had received a certain Dorjjeff. The public prints in Russia thereafter elaborated on the story by indicating that this Dorjjeff was a Russian subject, a Buddhist Siberian, who had nonetheless been settled for 20 years in Tibet, and who was now charged by the Dalai Lama with the task of establishing good relations with Russia. The Russian press also described the Buriat Mongol as the head of "an extraordinary mission of eight prominent Tibetan statesmen," carrying unspecified "instructions of diplomatic importance," and who together were granted audiences by both Emperor and Dowager Empress and to whom they presented gifts and a letter. Immediately after this spate of reports had appeared, the Tsar's Foreign Minister rushed to assure the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg that though Dorjjeff was indeed described as an envoy extraordinary of His Holiness, his mission had nevertheless no diplomatic or political character to it whatsoever, he stating that it was of a religious nature

only, likening it to those missions sent abroad at times by the Pope. But as Charles Bell has observed, "in the East religion and politics are closely interwoven with each other," and added that the London government was confronted with the fact that while refusing to receive a British Viceroy's letter the Dalai Lama had not only sent a personal letter but dispatched a Mission to the Russian Tsar! Bell 1924a, pp. 63-4. See also King 1926, p. 44; Mullin 1988, p. 58; and van der Oye 1994, p. 18.

45. These last three quotations can be found in, respectively: (a) Preman Addy, *Tibet on the Imperial Chessboard* (Calcutta, 1984), 69; (b) Alastair Lamb, *Britain and Chinese Central Asia* (London, 1960), 49; and (c) Fleming 1961, p. 40.

46. This according to MacGregor 1970, p. 286.

47. For an absorbing, beautifully-written, and near exhaustive treatment of the subject, see the lengthy volume by Edwin Bernbaum already cited, *The Way to Shambala* (Garden City, NY USA: Anchor Press/Doubleday paperback original, 1980; reprinted 1989, again in paperback). Asian traditions often cite the Gobi as one possible location of Shambala. This was the opinion of the followers of Madame Blavatsky, the Russian who in the second half of the 19th century had founded the Theosophical Society, a mystical movement which soon spread itself widely throughout the world, providing the West with its first meaningful exposure to Buddhism and other Eastern religions. She claimed at one point to have been receiving secret teachings via telepathic and written messages from spiritual masters who were living somewhere beyond the Himalayas. Some of her followers believed that the highest of these masters, known as "The Lord of the World," dwelt in Shambala, whose location was said to be an invisible oasis hidden away in the desert of the Gobi. In these followers' minds, Shambala constituted the world's spiritual center and the original source of Theosophy's secret doctrines. See Bernbaum's vol., p. 20.

Theosophical ideas have influenced a number of important individuals, among them, Nicholas K. Roerich, the Russian émigré to the U.S. whose son George N. Roerich would become a close friend of Gergan Tharchin's. A rather full biographical sketch of both father and son is included in the early End-Notes for Ch. 23 of the present work's final volume, but a few words ought to be appended here concerning the part which the Shambala legend played in a bizarre episode in the life of the elder Roerich that would contribute substantially to ending the political career of a prominent Vice President of the U.S. in his pursuit of even higher office, and would even help to tarnish the reputation and influence of Roerich himself in the U.S.

Now Nicholas Roerich's extensive inquiry into Tibetan mythology had developed in him a profound interest in this particular myth of Shambala which ultimately inspired him to lead a five-year scientific expedition (accompanied by his son George and wife Helena) deep into Central Asia in search of clues to the whereabouts of the hidden kingdom (the expedition would, of course, have other objectives too). Indeed, in the words of Bernbaum, "Shambala became for him the ultimate symbol that bound together the quests and prophecies of all religious traditions." (In fact, Roerich's numerous poetic writings on the subject that included a volume which was itself entitled *Shambala* (New York, 1930), may have been the inspiration behind James Hilton's idea for Shangri-La in his celebrated novel, *Lost Horizon*.)

Furthermore, it would seem as well that Roerich's interest in the Shambala myth inspired him to create and advance the cause of the so-called Roerich Peace Pact with its Banner of Peace concept (but known officially as The Treaty on the Protection of Artistic and Scientific Institutions and Historic Monuments). This was a treaty signed on 15 April 1935 by representatives of the 21 Pan American Republics at the White House in Washington DC in the presence of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It bound its signatory nations to respect and preserve all cultural and scientific treasures by affixing a special symbol—the Banner of Peace designed by Roerich himself—to numerous temples, cathedrals, shrines and other monuments and institutions of culture as a means of protection from bombardment or other means of destruction in wartime. It had been endorsed by such prominent world leaders as Albert Einstein, Pope Pius XI, Belgium's King Albert, and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt.

The connection between the Shambala legend and the Roerich Pact can easily be discerned by examining a passage from one of the speeches given at the Third International Roerich Peace Banner Convention held in Washington during Nov. 1933. In her speech, Frances R. Grant, Vice President of New York's Roerich Cultural Museum and close friend of Nicholas Roerich, offered up these remarks: "The East has said that when the Banner of Shambala would encircle the world, verily the New Dawn would follow. Borrowing this Legend of Asia, let us determine that the Banner of Peace shall encircle the world, carrying its word of Light, and presaging a New Morning of human brotherhood." But the very next speaker was Henry Agard Wallace, who happened not only to be the official Protector of the Convention but also a key member in President Roosevelt's executive Cabinet, serving as the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. The President had endorsed the Convention himself, and

Wallace had even been asked by the U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull to represent the latter at the Convention by presenting to its delegates "a message from the Secretary of State," which was in fact the speech given by Wallace.

The Agriculture Secretary, who became the Pact's most important advocate within the American government, had apparently shown interest in the Banner of Peace movement as early as 1929 but did not have any introduction to the Roerich group until the late summer of 1933 when "by chance" he received a letter from Miss Grant that submitted a proposal on the Roerichs' behalf for a new expedition to Central Asia to be sponsored by the Agriculture Department for the purpose of obtaining samples of those "rare plants" that have been "in constant use in Indian, Tibetan and Central Asian medical practices." Eventually meeting Roerich himself as well as having visited the Roerich Museum at least once in 1933, Agriculture Secretary Wallace was immediately fascinated with the Russian's Theosophical ideas that soon led him into a study of Roerich's teachings.

Wallace, whose spiritual hunger up to this point had remained unsatisfied with his Christian affinities (Presbyterian, Catholic, and finally Episcopalian), had been studying Buddhism, Judaism, Confucianism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, and Christian Science by the time he had his first personal encounter with Roerich. He had also sought out various esoteric Eastern cults, with the result that his religious identity took on an amalgam of all these beliefs that was in addition replete with mystic symbols and amulets. In fact, one thing about the Roerich Pact which particularly attracted Wallace was the symbol on the Banner or Flag of Peace: a red circle which enclosed three red dots or spheres on a field of white—symbolic, in Roerich's mind, wrote one of his biographers, "of the unity of the spiritual, artistic, and educational forces of humanity" which he felt "would protect the values of human genius and thus preserve the spiritual health of the nations." To Wallace, symbols like the Roerich Banner had "a power unknown to science." So taken was Wallace with Roerich's Shambala-inspired symbol that well before the Pact had even been signed he wrote in his book *New Frontiers* (New York, 1934) that for men to see the future they must return to a symbol of the past; perhaps to "the design used by Nicholas Roerich for the Banner of Peace." Diverse peoples, he added, might "unite their economic, social and cultural endeavors under this imagined circle of unifying freedom."

Yet the mystic-minded Wallace was as attracted to Roerich himself as to his Shambala-oriented symbol. As two of Roerich's biographers have observed about him, "This aesthetic appearing man—whose shaved head and long, pointed beard caused him to fit the popular stereotype of a monkish, Eastern mystic—displayed an uncanny ability to influence people." And Wallace would prove to be no exception to this ability of Roerich's. For there was indeed an aura of mystery about this unique individual which few men, if any, could fully fathom but which no one could ignore for very long. Further described by one prominent American newsmagazine as "a little man who looked like a Buddhist monk, with deep-set small blue eyes, egg-shaped head, white face, long white goatee, and a soft voice," Roerich, "a painter of some 3,000 spectral canvases, had traveled all over the Far East...learning about Eternal Krishna the Regenerator, the 363 local gods of the Kulu Valley, and the pharmacopoeia of the Himalayas." It was not surprising, then, that his intimate friends were wont to refer to him as "the artist-yogi" whose paintings possessed "divine healing qualities." It was not surprising, either, that some of his followers thought him "a genius and/or a god who could unify humanity through culture."

Moreover, the energy and charisma which exuded from this many-sided man of accomplishment—artist, archaeologist, author, Asiatic explorer, orator, poet, and mystic philosopher—earned for him, noted Roerich's same two biographers quoted above, "the admiration and support of numerous, frequently distinguished, men and women throughout the world. Thus, Roerich developed a large international following, in a pyramiding fashion, by bringing together influential, often wealthy, people with deep feelings about the state of the arts and culture..." Among many such of his followers and/or admirers were the Nobel prizewinning Hindu poet Rabindranath Tagore, and the celebrated Russian composers Rimsky-Korsakoff and Igor Stravinsky.

But there was also Henry A. Wallace. In his ensuing correspondence with Roerich, who had now become his spiritual mentor from whom he sought advice, this rising political figure in Roosevelt's Cabinet evinced a deep interest in mysticism and revealed his knowledge about Shambala. His correspondence with the mystic philosopher also revealed the fact that Wallace had become convinced that somewhere out on the mysterious deserts of Outer Mongolia could be discovered signs of Christ's Second Coming.

With President Roosevelt's approval, the Agriculture Secretary in 1934 sent the Roerichs, father and son, on a U.S. government-sponsored expedition to Central Asia, ostensibly to obtain drought-resistant pasture grasses and shrubs which could be useful in reclaiming western U.S. plains areas hardhit by several years of extreme drought and wind and water erosion. According to a report in the same newsmagazine referred to earlier, however, "around the Department of Agriculture the Secretary's assistants freely admitted that he also wanted Roerich to

look for the signs of the Second Coming." In Edwin Bernbaum's opinion, "Wallace could only have been thinking of the prophecy of Shambala and associating that kingdom's future King with the coming Messiah."

The Roerichs, father and son, went on their mission to Central Asia. In the meantime, Wallace began singing the praises of the elder Roerich in public. On the day he announced in Washington his own appointment by President Roosevelt to be the Representative for the U.S. to sign the Peace Pact the following year, Wallace glowingly declared: "This Pact owes its conception to the versatile genius of Nicholas Roerich, one of the greatest figures and true leaders of contemporary culture." Furthermore, at the actual signing ceremonies in the White House in Apr. 1935 (with Roerich still in Central Asia), the Agriculture Secretary and Plenipotentiary, with the President looking on, proudly asserted: "Today it is appropriate that we should give recognition to the genius of Nicholas Roerich in whose mind this pact and banner first originated." Moreover, within just two weeks following the treaty-signing, Wallace was again voicing effusive adulation over the Russian émigré to the U.S., for he now felt led to submit Roerich's name to members of the prestigious Nobel Prize Committee, writing to them that in his opinion "Professor Roerich would be a most worthy candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize Award" for 1935.

That was in late Apr.; but by late Oct. 1935 the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture had dramatically changed in his attitude; for he now acknowledged to the Prize Committee, in speaking of Roerich, that "I no longer" had "faith in him or those who" were "trying to aggrandize his name." In fact, Wallace wished the Committee to know that he and other former friends of the Russian "have dissociated themselves from the megalomania" which now appeared to be afflicting Nicholas Roerich.

There may have been many sources for this disillusionment with Roerich, but apparently the one "climactic event," say two of the Russian's biographers, "which caused Wallace's disavowal of their relationship was the disastrous expedition" of 1934-5 into Mongolia and Manchuria by the Roerichs for the U.S. Agriculture Department. The details surrounding "this cloudy episode" are too complex to narrate here; the reader can sort it out by consulting all the sources cited at the end of this note. But it needs to be stated that these sources reveal that both the Japanese government (then the new overlords of Manchukuo or Manchuria), and the Russian government, had complained about the Roerichs' activities in Central and East Asia ("certain officials of Manchukuo" having "regarded" Roerich "as a spy," newspaper reporters were told off the record by Agriculture Department officials), that the Roerichs had become embroiled in a bitter dispute with the two American botanists assigned to the venture by the Department, that according to Wallace Roerich "had apparently mingled in political affairs in a manner totally unwarranted" (with the then American Ambassador to Tokyo having agreed with the assessment), and that, finally, Roerich had earned for himself bitter opponents within the Agriculture Department who in his absence from America had been spreading embarrassing rumors about the Russian. Moreover, disturbing reports of all sorts emanating from Asia came to Wallace's attention: these claimed, for example, that Roerich had been conducting "Banner of Peace prayer meetings among the Mongols"; that he had taken advantage of his friendship with the Agriculture Secretary by attempting to impress the Japanese "with an 'official' importance to which he was not entitled"; and most bizarre of all, that he attempted to secure rifles and ammunition from the 15th U.S. Infantry stationed at Tientsin for the purpose of establishing "a new state in Siberia"! This all spelled disaster for the Roerichs, despite the submission by George Roerich of a progress report on their sample grass seeds in Aug. 1935. It was not sufficient to stem the tide of adversity for them.

As a consequence, Wallace felt compelled to withdraw American support of the Expedition effective 21 Sept. 1935. In a letter to a well-known influential New York banker, the Agriculture Secretary wrote that "Roerich has other objectives in mind than the welfare of the U.S." Moreover, in a letter to the important political leader of Roosevelt's Democratic Party, Governor Lehman of New York, the concerned member of the President's Cabinet confided the following: "Without having anything in the way of absolute proof that I can offer, I am convinced that Professor Roerich's interests are not in the United States but are in the troubled affairs of Asia. [He seems] determined to stop at nothing [to satisfy] some extraordinary fantasy of Asiatic power." And in a curt reply dated 24 Sept. 1935 to Helena Roerich's plea for a reconciliation, Wallace evinced great bitterness at having been "duped" by her husband and added: "I desire that there be no communication, direct or indirect, by letter or otherwise between the Roerichs (father, mother, and son) on the one side and myself on the other."

Roerich's reputation and influence in the U.S. came quickly to an end. Returning to New York in late 1935, the Russian émigré (who though years before had filed for U.S. citizenship still remained a Russian citizen) was faced with sizable tax delinquency suits instituted against him by the American government for 1926 and 1927, and a far less hefty tax suit for 1934. In addition, the State Department gave instructions quietly that the "so-called Roerich Pact" was to be depersonalized because "Roerich owes this government... taxes, and in one or two other ways has caused questions to arise as to the wisdom of giving him any public recognition." Faced also with a substantial erosion of his former faithful following in both the cultural and religious fields, Nicholas

Roerich departed the U.S. "a virtual exile" and went to live at his Urusvati Institute in the Kulu Valley, India, where he died in 1947, never to return again to America.

As for Wallace, he would end his days "stigmatized—in the minds of many Americans—as a mystic, a dreamer, and a spiritualist." Indeed, in 1948, it was reported in the press that astrologists claimed that he now consulted them. Wallace did go on, of course, to become Roosevelt's Vice President in 1940. But during the political campaign that year, his earlier embarrassing mystical correspondence with Roerich almost came to light and would plague him for the rest of his life. Even before 1940, in fact, leaders of the opposition Republican Party, as well as newspaper publishers, commenced to hear rumors concerning Wallace's connection with Roerich, his wife, and a woman at the Roerich Museum known only as "Zenda." In addition, photostats of letters to the Roerich group which he was alleged to have authored began to be passed from hand to hand. Moreover, when Wallace, now a left-leaning independent politician, sought the Presidency itself in 1948, a well-known conservative syndicated newspaper columnist by the name of Westbrook Pegler published this politically devastating correspondence in a series of four columns. And in a display of vitriolic dislike of the former Vice President, Pegler dubbed the correspondence the "Guru Letters." These published letters, which the columnist alleged (falsely) had begun with the salutation "Dear Guru," in the end discredited Wallace and helped to bring down his political career in ignominy.

Indeed, in the minds of some, like historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., the letters to Roerich and his supporters had proven that Wallace, in the words of one writer on the affair, "was a spiritualist, muddle-minded man, and, by inference, unfit for high public office." Wallace's own refusal, when given numerous opportunities, to categorically deny that the letters were his has helped to create the mythology which has persisted over the years surrounding the entire Wallace-Roerich affair. In publishing the correspondence for the first time, Pegler had explained that the American voters in the 1948 presidential election were "entitled to know whether or not those letters were written to a Russian whose followers regarded him as Almighty God and to members of this Russian's Oriental political and pseudo-religious cult by a man running for the office of President of the United States..." But it was to no avail, since Wallace remained silent about the matter even to his grave.

It is the opinion of the present writer, after sifting through all the evidence and documentation available, that most if not all of the letters published by Pegler had indeed been authored by the former Vice President and Secretary of Agriculture. Furthermore, if, as Edwin Bernbaum has observed, President Roosevelt had died *before* the 1944 national election (when Harry S. Truman replaced Wallace as Roosevelt's Vice President), instead of *after* that election, then "a man [who had been] deeply influenced by the Tibetan myth of Shambala would have become President of the U.S."

Sources consulted and/or quoted from are: Bernbaum, 20-2; Rupen 1979, *passim*; Richard D. Burns and Charyl L. Smith, "Nicholas Roerich, Henry A. Wallace and the 'Peace Banner': a study in Idealism, Egocentrism, and Anguish," *Peace and Change: a Journal of Peace Research* (Spring 1973):40-9; Harold Lavine, "The 'Guru Letters,'" *Newsweek* (22 Mar. 1948):27-9; "The Roerich Pact," *Pan American Union Bulletin* (May 1935):359-69; Anne L. Day, "Roerich, Nicholas K.," in Warren F. Kuehl, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Internationalists* (Westport CT USA, 1983), 621-2; and *New York Times*, 12 Aug. 1934, II:14 and 21 Oct. 1934, p. 20. See especially University of North Carolina History Professor Robert A. Rupen's incredibly fascinating scholarly monograph on the Roerichs, Rupen 1979, that brings together so many different threads surrounding both father and son, only some of which are reflected in the content of this lengthy end-note.

48. For example, there is an old Tibetan prophecy which holds that the Moslem power would overspread the entire world until some 300 years later a Buddhist King would arise in a land to the north of Kashmir. Kashmir itself, once Buddhist, had later turned predominantly Moslem in faith. The northern land would be called North (or Chang) Shambala and its King, in breaking the Moslem grip on the Kashmiris, would restore Buddhism to the people. See Mehra 1968, p. 137 and Bell 1924a, p. 132. Even Dorjjeff himself, just a few years hence, would refer to Russia as "The Northern Shambala" in a report he submitted in 1907 to the Vice-Chairman of the Russian Geographic Society and member of the Russian State Council, Semyonov Tan-Shansky, that was entitled "On a Rapprochement between Russia, Mongolia and Tibet," and in which the Buriat Lama had proposed the establishment of a three-state Buddhist Confederacy, with the key role going to Russia. "The Northern Shambala," inasmuch as only that country "could be the protector of the Mongols and Tibetans against [outside] oppressors." This grandiose project, however, received no state support. See Andreyev 1993, pp. 12-13.

49. Indeed, Mehra (see preceding note) believes Dorjjeff might have even hinted to the Dalai Lama that the Russian Tsar was already quite near to embracing his religious faith. In fact, similar to what Alexander Andreyev has presented (see preceding note again), Robert Rupen has written that Dorjjeff had himself envisioned a

Tibetan-Mongolian theocratic empire that would be headed up by the Grand Lama of Tibet but, "under the protection of Tsarist Russia." See Rupen, "The Buriat Intelligentsia," *Far Eastern Quarterly* (1955-6):383-98. Mehra goes on to point out that it would appear that Dorjief had told the young Thirteenth that because of the geographical nearness of Russians to Mongolia, they were increasingly showing interest in, and even embracing, Tibetan Buddhism. "What is plain is," adds Mehra, "that Dorjief had convinced himself, and succeeded in convincing his youthful Tibetan master, that the Great White Tsar of the legendary kingdom of north Shambala, and hosts of his innumerable subjects, were only too anxious to lend all the aid they could to the Lama's faith." "How vivid," therefore, "must the contrast have appeared between a ruler who was moving nearer to his faith and another [the Indian Viceroy] that seemed intent on destroying it. Need one wonder then that while Lord Curzon's letters were returned unopened, the Lama sent missions of goodwill, reportedly of a diplomatic character, to St. Petersburg and Odessa and that he looked to Russia to save him from the intense attention which his southern neighbor was bestowing on him.... Though the British protested time and again that their principal interest was commercial intercourse, the Dalai Lama must have viewed this as a clever ruse behind which lay hidden their nefarious design of entering his land in order to destroy his (Buddhist) religion...." See Mehra 1968, pp. 137, 360, 138.

50. However, it is the opinion of Sajag Rana in his review of Abhi Subedi's recent biography of the Japanese monk, *Ekai Kawaguchi: the Trespassing Insider* (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1999), that Subedi has "quite convincingly reject[ed] the charge that the monk was a spy for imperial Japan." See Rana's review of Subedi's work in the *Kathmandu Post*, 21 Nov. 1999, p. 4.

51. *Three Years in Tibet* (Madras, 1909), 499-500, 505.

52. The information regarding the throne is per Norbu 1990, p. 37. See also MacGregor 1970, p. 297, who reported the following: "So close was the Dalai Lama to making an unprecedented journey to Russia that he had already sent to St. Petersburg the sacred cushion on which he would sit in audience with the Czar, and an exquisite *codex aureus* as a present for His Majesty. The Tsongdu... had intervened, however, and made it clear that the Dalai Lama had exceeded his authority in even entertaining such an idea."

53. Quoted in Mullin 1988, p. 61; see also Mehra 1968, pp. 147-9.

54. Sir Francis E. Younghusband, "Introduction," in Hayden and Cosson 1927, p. vi; and the Viceroy's words are from Mehra 1968, p. 152.

55. Although Colonel Younghusband was inferior in military rank to Macdonald, he was nonetheless superior to the General in status, and therefore he occupied the senior position within the Expedition's leadership. Yet not all was sweetness and light in the relationship between Younghusband on the one hand and Macdonald or White on the other, as Patrick French has clearly documented in his remarkable biography of the Colonel, French 1995: for his relationship with Macdonald, see pps. 206-8, 215-7, 219, 230-2, 244-6; and with White, see pp. 163-4, 183, 188, 195. Each of these two was jealous of Younghusband, with the General also manifesting timidity and indecisiveness in military matters; and the Political Officer demonstrating, from Younghusband's perspective, nothing but being a nuisance and complainer. For his part, the Colonel was not a saint in his conduct, either; but among the three of them, Younghusband easily played the better part in what was unarguably a most difficult and challenging mission all round.

56. Macdonald 1932, p. 29; and this paragraph's earlier quotation is from Ekvall 1907, p. 123.

57. See Mullin 1988, pp. 66-7, where the author introduces to his readers a translation from the Tibetan text of this highly hagiographical work.

58. French 1995, p. 240. The late British historian on Buddhism in Russia, John Snelling, has posited an interesting variant view on these political considerations. He believed that these political considerations had also to do with Imperial Russia. It was his view that the Dalai Lama had fled to Urga where he could be poised "on the very doorstep of the Russian empire" and thus be conveniently placed to communicate with the Russian government or "even make a dash for Russian territory," adding that there is evidence that initially he had "had this in mind." Furthermore, Snelling pointed out that the Russians had given His Holiness a very warm welcome upon his arrival at the Mongolian capital, fifty Cossacks having fired a salute in his honor and the Russian consul there having provided protection to him during his stay. Indeed, Dorjief, noted Snelling, had visited the consul "almost at once on His Holiness's orders," and thus through the consul the Russian Tsar Nicholas II had

been informed of recent events in Tibet and “that ‘the direct aim of his arrival in Urga was the wish to receive help from Russia against the British.’” Even the new Russian Minister to Peking, Dmitri Pokotilov, wrote Snelling, made a point to visit the Tibetan Buddhist Pontiff in June 1905 while en route to his new posting, “bearing gifts from the Emperor and promises of support” despite the war then being waged by Russia against Japan. Snelling 1993, p. 119.

59. French 1995, p. 241.

60. *Ibid.*, pp. 187-8. Glenn Mullin is the author of one of the “modern accounts of the Younghusband Expedition” which French had in mind here. Mullin believes that the Viceroy and his Mission leader Younghusband had launched the Expedition imbued preeminently with a deep-seated desire for imperial glory. In his book on the life and teachings of Dalai Lama XIII, quoted from already, Mullin levels some very harsh criticism against both men, claiming that because of the “impetuosity,” “peevishness,” “immaturity,” ignorance, and the pursuit of “fame and glory” on the part of either Curzon or Younghusband or both, “these two rather headstrong statesmen took the occasion”—provided by London’s initial authorization to go the few miles into Tibet as far as Khamba Dzong—“as an opportunity to launch a full-scale invasion to Lhasa, with the hope of winning fame and glory for themselves.” Mullin 1988, p. 66.

In response, the present writer is compelled to say that the most recent and exhaustive scholarship conducted, and based on all the available archival and other source documents, belies this assertion. Though the one or the other of these two men could indeed be charged with having been impetuous, peevish, immature and ignorant, their aim was not primarily fame or glory of empire. One need but turn to Patrick French’s thorough, balanced and brilliantly written biography of Younghusband to gain a proper perspective on this issue.

61. Van der Oye 1994, p. 19.

62. Quoted in Kuleshov 1996, p. xx.

63. French 1995, pp. 241-2.

64. *Ibid.*, 239.

65. For an excellent in-depth study of the terms *suzerainty* and *autonomy* as applied to Sino-Tibetan relations in modern times (and including British India’s approach to both), see Norbu 1990, pp. 28-74, especially 60ff.

66. O’Connor, “Tibet in the Modern World,” *Geographical Magazine* (Dec. 1937):109. O’Connor had been a member of the Younghusband Expedition, the very first British Trade Agent at Gyantse, and later one of British India’s Political Officers for Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet.

67. Except where already documented, much of the foregoing account of the historical developments in Central Asia involving Britain, China, Russia and Tibet is based on Julie G. Marshall’s masterful annotated bibliographical work, Marshall 1977, pp. 137, 216, 245, 258-60, 262, 265, 271-2, 275; and with some additional material gleaned from Goodman 1986, pp. 124-5 and from Howard 1934, pp. 341-2.

68. In his Last Testament, written just a short time before his death in Dec. 1933, Dalai Lama XIII had outlined briefly what happened between 1904 and 1909: “So I left [in 1904] for Peking via Tibet’s northern plateau and Mongolia. The Emperor [Kwang Hsu] and the Queen Mother [i.e., the Empress Dowager Tzu Hsi] received me graciously, showing me great honor and hospitality while I apprised them of our situation [back in Tibet]. Not long after that [this would be in late 1908], the Emperor and the Queen Mother passed away one after the other. Hsuan Tung was installed as new Emperor [known also as Pu Yi, the Boy-Emperor]. After having talks with him and his father [i.e., Prince Ch’un, the brother of the deceased Emperor Kwang Hsu], I returned to Tibet [late 1909].” Quoted in Michael 1982, p. 172. Text of Testament trans. by Lobsang Lhalungpa. It should be added that while in Mongolia the Dalai Lama had maintained contact with Russia. But once the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 had been signed, His Holiness attempted to come to terms with the Chinese, who by this time were consolidating their power in his homeland. Now, while in Peking, he made attempts to obtain aid against the Chinese from various foreign representatives there; but when unsuccessful, the Dalai Lama agreed to Peking’s terms regarding his return to Lhasa. Per Marshall 1977, p. 258. His movements during this period were as follows: On 7 Mar. 1908 he left Kumbum Monastery on the Sino-Tibetan border, bound for Peking; on 21 Dec. 1908 he left Peking for Kumbum, where he arrived on 19 Feb. 1909 in time to celebrate the Tibetan New Year; on 6 Mar. 1909 he departed Kumbum for Lhasa; and by end of Dec 1909 the Dalai Lama returned to his Potala Palace residence. All dates are per Tada 1965, pp. 47, 55-6.

69. Rahul 1961, p. 420.

70. Quoted in French 1995, p. 257.

71. With respect to this 1910 flight, the Dalai lama's life was spared only through the timely assistance of Tharchin's future friend and fellow Christian, David Macdonald, who just the year before had left working with The Evangelical Alliance Mission in Darjeeling to accept the post of British Trade Agent at Gyantse. Tharchin and Woodward 1975, p. 652. He would subsequently be stationed at Yatung. In his race to reach the safety of Sikkim ahead of the pursuing Chinese, His Holiness made his way towards Yatung, not far from the Jelep Pass and safety. His biographer, Sir Charles Bell, picks up the story (in Bell 1946, p. 84):

The next step was [to get] to Yatung, 28 miles away, where there was a British Agent, Mr. Macdonald, with a tiny detachment of Indian soldiers. Sikkim, safe from the pursuing Chinese soldiery, lay only 12 miles beyond. The Tibetan Agent at Yatung, with the rank of colonel but a timid mind, went to meet the fugitive with such men as he could collect. The Tibetan retinue was now large enough to frighten off the local Chinese troops, who were of inferior quality.

Arrived in Yatung, the Dalai Lama stopped in the British Agency house there with Mr. Macdonald. The two slept in the same bedroom. But the Lama did not feel safe, for the Chinese were hot on his trail, and so, after halting one day [and two nights] in Yatung, he rode on down the valley, then up and over the Jelep La ("Lovely Level Pass") into Sikkim and safety.

An even more detailed account of the Dalai Lama's flight is given by David Macdonald himself in Macdonald 1932, pp. 60-74, where he explains how it was that he and His Holiness slept in the same room: "I shared a bedroom with His Holiness, for he would not hear of my giving up my room entirely to himself." One reason for Macdonald having given protection to the Dalai Lama and his ministers (the latter sleeping in the Agency house living room) was because he had heard that the Chinese were intent on slaying the ministers and arresting His Holiness. Macdonald was also told that few questions would be asked by the Chinese government were the Grand Lama himself killed as well. "This," Macdonald observed, "was tantamount to his death-warrant should he fall into Chinese hands." (p. 67)

Interestingly, the Dalai Lama was to stay once more with Macdonald at the same place, only this time His Holiness remained for nearly a week. It was in June of 1912, and the occasion was the beginning of the Dalai Lama's return trip to Lhasa. In this instance, the Grand Lama and the chief members of his party (12 in all) had the British Trade Agency house in Yatung all to themselves, Macdonald having moved his family to the nearby "comfortably furnished" dak bungalow that was "delightfully situated" on the opposite bank of the river Chumbi from the Trade Agency house and barracks, and reached by a long wooden bridge. But His Holiness always saw fit to take breakfast each morning with Macdonald alone. *Ibid.*, 93ff.; also Macdonald 1943, p. 84.

72. Having reached Yatung and the relative safety of the British Trade Agency, the Thirteenth Vice-Regent of Buddha now wrote a letter to Lord Minto, India's Viceroy. In it he explained how he had had to flee to India, in the face of Chinese oppression, in order to consult with the British authorities. But it was also in this letter that the harried Dalai Lama penned one of his more famous lines that has been oft-quoted ever since: "I now look to you for protection, and I trust that the relationship between the British government and Tibet will be that of a father and his children." To this humble request the Viceroy could only reply in part, granting him, however, safe haven on Indian soil and ordering local Indian officials to provide protection for him and to show the Dalai Lama utmost consideration since His Holiness was regarded with veneration and awe in India. Lee 1931, p. 69, 69n.

73. This reassessment of Morley's conservative policy towards Tibet was due to a number of factors. Heretofore, Lord Morley in London had little concern over the continuing Chinese military encroachments upon Tibet until Chinese intrigues in Nepal and Bhutan finally prompted protests from London to the Peking government and provoked the British into making a forward move in Tibet's neighbor Bhutan—to the disadvantage of China. Ever since the Younghusband Mission there had developed closer ties between the British and Bhutan, aided by visits there in 1905 and 1907 by John Claude White, the then Political Officer for Sikkim. But it was the news in 1908 of the Chinese Amban's open declaration in Lhasa of Chinese suzerainty over Bhutan and of the visit to this Himalayan kingdom by a Chinese mission that truly impelled the British government to act with alacrity in commissioning its new Political Officer in Sikkim, Charles Bell, to negotiate a new Anglo-Bhutanese treaty. Jointly signed in 1910, this agreement placed Bhutan's external affairs under the direct control of the British Government of India. Furthermore, the Government in India, much more aware of the true and serious nature of the situation in Tibet than Morley in far-off London, began stationing troops along the Tibetan border

at Gnatong just inside Sikkim as a means of quickly being able, if necessary, to reinforce the Trade Agencies at Gyantse and Yatung.

Meanwhile, Yüan Shi-kai, the President of the new Chinese Republic that had toppled the centuries-long Manchu dynastic rule, issued a decree in Apr. of 1912 which declared that Tibet should be considered a province and an integral part of China. Almost simultaneously with this pronouncement, the Republicans dispatched a military expedition to its western border with Tibet. The British government, realizing that the internal autonomy of the Land of Snows was vital to the peace of India's northern frontiers, now felt compelled by these actions taken by the new Peking authorities to reconsider its Tibetan policy even more seriously and to take further measures to establish closer ties with Tibet. Marshall 1977, pp. 271-2, 275.

74. Thubten Jigme Norbu (Dalai Lama XIV's eldest brother) and Colin M. Turnbull, in Norbu and Turnbull 1968, p. 314.

75. As a matter of fact, Tsarong—the Dalai Lama's future Tibetan Army Commander—was himself trained at British Army headquarters at Lebong (just below Darjeeling Town) during this exile period. See D.N. Tsarong (Tsarong's son), "What Tibet was" (an unpublished brief account of his father), p. 37 and cited in Spence 1991, pp. 41-2, with p. 56 note 6 and p. 57 note 29.

76. Shakabpa 1967, p. 237; and P.O.S. 1938, p. 2. Able to speak Mongolian, to understand a little Russian, and read and write Sanskrit, the Dalai Lama also in time became "reconciled to the foreign ways" of Europeans, even occasionally taking food with them. *Ibid.*

77. During the first decade of the 20th century a strong liberal and nationalistic movement began to emerge intent on ending the Manchu rule, establishing a parliamentary form of government and modernizing Chinese society. Sun Yat-sen became this movement's most important leader, who had organized the Kuomintang as the vehicle by which to implement these goals. In the latter part of 1911 (specifically on 10 Oct., and called ever afterwards by patriotic Chinese as "the Double Tenth") a revolt broke out and spread widely throughout the provinces of the country. Yüan Shih-kai (1859-1916), North China's outstanding military leader and former confidant to the late Empress Dowager, now convinced of the doomed fate of the Manchu Dynasty. With the abdication of the Boy-Emperor Pu Yi (known under his reign title as Hsuan-tung) in early 1912, Yüan was asked to form a republic for the nation. Yet a few months earlier, in anticipation of the ouster of the Dynasty, Sun Yat-sen had been elected by an assembly of revolutionaries at Nanking to be president of their new republic. To prevent internal strife, Sun stepped aside and encouraged the republican group at Nanking to elect Yüan, which it did. His Presidency, however, would prove to be short-lived.

Trouble soon broke out in the Republic when in 1913 President Yüan negotiated a large loan with bankers from a number of Western powers, thus giving these powers considerable influence in the new Chinese government. A new rebellion, endorsed by Sun, was the outcome. But Yüan moved quickly to suppress the revolt; he also dismissed the Parliament and proclaimed the imminent restoration of the monarchy with himself as Emperor. Once again revolt broke out, and in June of 1916 dictator Yüan, now discredited, died of natural causes.

Even with the death of Yüan, however, dissension in the Republican government would continue for the next decade. Basically, the period was marked by a division between two would-be governments, one at Peking in the north, a second at Canton to the south. The latter, consisting primarily of those radicals who had effected the revolution of 1911-12, ultimately won out, electing Sun as President in 1921. But during the years of his administration till his death in 1925 Sun was never able to unite the Peking regime with his own Kuomintang government. Nevertheless, he was able to groom his appointed successor Chiang Kai-shek (1886-1975), who would by military force eventually unite the entire country by the end of 1928 under his government which he created at Nanking.

It proved to be a shaky unification, nonetheless, and spelled trouble for the future of China. This was because Chiang, now declared a Generalissimo, would continue to be harassed from both the left and right elements whom he had systematically purged from the Kuomintang in order to achieve the unity of the country under his regime. And once the Sino-Japanese War (1937-45) and the Second Great War were over in 1945, it was only a matter of time before the Communists in China, always having been more attune to the needs and aspirations of the people for social and political reform, decisively defeated the Generalissimo's Nationalist forces in 1949. That same year the People's Republic of China was proclaimed under the leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung (1893-1976). This sketch based on Wallbank, et al. 1967, pp. 703-5, 721, 765.

78. According to the London *Times*, in the surrender of the Chinese to the Tibetans at Shigatse, one of the Indian officials there who helped settle terms of the surrender agreement in May of 1912 was none other than David Macdonald. In the newspaper's account he is referred to as "a Nepalese half-caste." *Times* (London), 11 May 1912, p. 5. Some ten years later William McGovern reported seeing adjacent to Shigatse's Nyang River several hundred soldier graves within a Chinese graveyard, "an apparent symbol of the extinct suzerainty of China over Tibet." McGovern 1924, p. 230. A similar instance of Macdonald's helpful mediation between these same two contending parties took place at Gyantse a month or so earlier, in which once again the Chinese troops were compelled to lay down their arms and leave Tibet. Assisting Macdonald, and, like him, signing as a witness the "Agreement between the Chinese and Tibetans" dated 3 Apr. 1912, was the Nepalese representative to Tibet, Lt. Lal Bahadur, which anticipated by four months what this respected Nepalese diplomat would likewise do at Lhasa later that summer (see the next paragraph of text in the present narrative). See Macdonald 1932, pp. 83-9.

79. The Italian film director, Bernardo Bertolucci, made a full-length motion picture in English on the life of Pu Yi (born 1906), accurately drawn and aptly entitled, "The Last Emperor," and which among many awards it received from the (Hollywood, USA) Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, earned Best Picture for the year 1988 of all films made in the world. Toppled from his throne when but a boy of six by the Nationalists, manipulated into a puppet-emperor's role in Manchuria (1934-45) by the aggrandizing Japanese Emperor and his warlords, captured by the Russians in Aug. 1945, and returned to China for trial as a war criminal in 1950, and finally placed involuntarily in a slave-labor camp by the Chinese Communists, Pu Yi, though pardoned in 1959, died a free but poor, lonely, broken and hopeless man in Peking on 17 Oct. 1967. His autobiography was published in 1964 (with an English translation by W.J.F. Jenner, *From Emperor to Citizen*, 2 vols. published in Peking in 1964-5). For more details see E.W. Wu, "Hsuan-tung," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1973 ed., 11:801.

80. Charles Bell (in company with his wife), representing the British Government of India, saw the Dalai Lama and his entourage off for Tibet from Kalimpong's Bhutan Residency early in the morning before dawn on 24 June 1912. His Holiness had been ensconced at Bhutan House, in fact, ever since Feb. 15th waiting for the propitious moment when conditions in Tibet would warrant his beginning to return to his capital. (The source for these two dates is the *Times* (London), 16 Feb. 1912, p. 5 and 26 June 1912, p. 5.) Making his journey part-way into his homeland, the Grand Lama felt it wise to stay south of the capital a certain distance, at Sam-ding ("Soaring Meditation") Monastery, some 70 miles from Lhasa and overlooking Yam-drok Tso ("Lake of the Upper Pastures"), to await news from his favorite attendant, Chensa Nang-kang (the future new Tsarong), whom he had sent ahead to Lhasa to make certain it would be safe for the Tibetan Theocrat to return. (During the previous autumn, in fact, Chensa, commissioned by His Holiness to go from his presence at Darjeeling to Shigatse to defeat the Chinese there, secretly entered Tibet, raised a peasant revolt at Shigatse, and was successful in compelling the garrison of Imperial troops to surrender their arms, thus paving the way for what was now to follow in 1912.) In the event, it required well over a year for Chensa to complete the arrangements for the safe return of His Holiness; so that it would not be until early in 1913 that the signal was finally communicated to the Dalai Lama that he could now make his way back to Lhasa and the Potala Palace after an exile absence of over eight years (except for a fleeting period of time in 1909/10). It may be recalled from an earlier chapter that it was during this waiting period and while Chensa was at the capital that the original head of the Tsarong family and his son met their cruel demise at the hands of the lamas of Sera Monastery in the wake of the unsubstantiated rumors of their having aided the Chinese and conspiring against His Holiness. Chensa himself was never clearly or directly implicated in the murders, although certain pieces of evidence seemed to point in his direction.

81. For an English translation of the document, see Rahul 1961, pp. 422-3. Prof. Rahul, who by the 1960s had become the head of the Dept. of Central Asian Studies in the Indian School of International Studies at New Delhi and who, incidentally, became a very good friend of Gergan Tharchin, has seen and compared both a copy of the Tibetan version (a copy of which he obtained at Kalimpong in 1954) and the Nepali original (viewed at Kathmandu in 1956). The latter, he declared, "is absolutely identical with the Tibetan version except for minor differences of idiom and usage which became archaic long ago." The Chinese version, however, has not been available. Rahul added that two authorities on Central Asia, Hugh E. Richardson, and Prof. Luciano Petech of the Italian Institute for the Middle and Far East, both "doubt if this document ever found its way to China." *Ibid.*, 421-2.

82. Back in those days, and even afterwards, these two "nationalities" were well represented as communities in Lhasa. William McGovern, the American scholar-explorer who in disguise reached Lhasa in early 1923, tells

of meeting several of the Nepalese and even the leader of the Ladakhi (Kashmiri) Moslem community while he was there. He wrote: "there is still a considerable Nepalese community in Lhasa, and Nepal keeps a minister or consul-general there. Most of the skilled artisans, metal-workers, and craftsmen are Nepalese. They enjoy certain extra-territorial privileges, and in most cases are tried by their consul and not by the ordinary Tibetan courts.... The Kashmiri Mohammedans constitute the only other group of foreigners in Lhasa. What is so strange is that though these Kashmiris by long-established custom are permitted to come to the Sacred City, other Indians, whether Hindu or Mohammedan, are not.... The Kashmiris are British subjects, and my visitor, the leading man of the community, had been given the title of *khan bahadur* by the Indian government; and as no European is permitted to reside in Lhasa, he is more or less the unofficial representative of the Indian government there. Diplomatic negotiations, however, do not pass through his hands..." McGovern 1924, pp. 446-7.

83. "...in the end, while leaving their rifles and ammunition, they [the Chinese] retained the bolts to their arms, thus making the weapons quite useless. This caused the Tibetans considerable annoyance; and there can be no doubt that some of the more extreme monastic factions in the capital had hoped to be able to wipe out the Chinese invaders with their own surrendered weapons." Lamb 1966, II:380-1.

84. Sam-ding, whose monkhood belonged to one of the Red-Hat or unreformed Orders of Tibetan Buddhism, is celebrated for being the monastery to have the only female incarnation in all of Tibet: the Abbess Dorje Phagmo (which means "Thunderbolt Sow"), who is deemed the most holy woman in Tibet. Her name derived from the famous centuries-old story of how, during the first Mongol invasions of Tibet, the Monastery's Abbess, noticing the approaching enemy soldiers and fearing pillage and the killing of her monks, abruptly transformed herself into a huge sow and her monks into piglets. Upon entering the Monastery complex and finding only pigs, the Mongol troops were startled. But then the Abbess changed herself and the monks back into human form, resulting in the Mongols becoming so overwhelmed by the miracle that then and there they embraced the Buddhist faith! Since then she has been venerated by all Tibetans. Believed by the Tibetans to be reincarnated as a young girl ever afterwards, Dorje Phagmo would also carry the beloved appellation of the Thunderbolt Sow. Moreover, she is granted privileges accorded only to the Dalai and Panchen Lamas. It is believed that on her back beneath her robes are bristles as upon a sow! Per Tseten 1971, p. 175; see also Macdonald 1932, p. 255 for a variation of this legend. According to Heinrich Harrer, who was living at Lhasa in the 1940s when the then present so-called reincarnation was initially preparing herself for the life of a nun and abbess of Sam-ding, Dorje Phagmo had later gone to India with the first wave of refugees. Very soon afterwards, however, she returned to Tibet and "allied herself to the Chinese." It is said, he further wrote, "that by means of her spiritual powers she prevented the drying up of Yamdrok Yumtso" (the lake along which Sam-ding Monastery is situated). No longer living at Sam-ding but at Lhasa, she married in total disregard of her religious vows, then divorced, had a child, and "permitted herself a rather indulgent life." In the 1980s she was drawing a salary from the State. Harrer, 1985, pp. 141-2.

85. Rahul 1961, p. 421. Rahul added, significantly, about the hidden role of the British: "The spirit of the Anglo-Russian convention of 18 Aug. 1907 did not sanction a policy of intervention by the British. There is, however, ample evidence of the advice the British government gave to Nepal to expedite settlement between the Chinese and the Tibetans through their agents in Tibet, as well as of the British concern for the safety of lives and property of the subjects of the frontier States bordering Tibet." *Ibid.*

86. This according to Chahroudi 1983, p. 150. Laden-La was one of the most unusual and talented border Tibetans ever to appear on the stage of frontier politics in this Himalayan region. "The son of an insignificant Sikkimese landowner" (McGovern), he was one of the first Tibetan boys to be educated by Jesuit priests, and became quite fluent in English and several of the languages native to the polyglot Darjeeling District of Bengal. It should also be noted that Laden-La was a nephew of a well-known Pundit-Lama Ugyen Gyatsho who, like the even more celebrated Pundit S.C. Das (see next), had undertaken several intelligence-gathering missions into Tibet during the late 19th century. Early on in his career, between 1894 and 1898, Laden-La worked with the scholar-explorer-Pundit Sarat Das in the preparation of the latter's Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionary. (Das, it will be recalled from Chapter 5 of the present narrative, was the one who in 1892 had befriended several of the missionaries of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission at Ghoom. Moreover, the entire set of Tibetan type matrices created and used for printing his famed Dictionary would much later be purchased by Tharchin Babu himself for use in the latter's Kalimpong press; see Ch. 23 for details.) During this same period Laden-La lived with and studied under Ghoom Monastery's learned Abbot, Lama Sherab Gyamtsho, thus furthering his knowledge of classical Tibetan

and the Buddhist religion. Moreover, the vast knowledge he increasingly acquired of both classical and modern Tibetan resulted in his being appointed Chief Examiner in Tibetan for both Civil and Military Officers.

In 1899 Laden-La joined the Darjeeling police department as a means of seeing more of the Himalayan region and was eventually promoted to higher posts, not least of which were Darjeeling Police Inspector and the District's Police Superintendent. He also served for a short while in liaison work in the Chumbi Valley on the staff of the Younghusband Expedition, after which, in 1905, he accompanied the Panchen Lama (whose support entourage, it will be remembered, also included two of Tharchin's friends of later years: Ghoom Mission School Headmaster, Karma Sumdhon Paul, and Church of Scotland missionary, Evan Mackenzie), on his tour of India's holy places. Then when Dalai Lama XIII fled Tibet to India in 1910, the border Tibetan police officer was placed in charge of organizing much of the Dalai Lama's visit with the Viceroy in Calcutta, his own Indian tour, as well as his two-year stay in the Darjeeling District. As a matter of fact, Tokan Tada, the Japanese novice who became one of the Great Thirteenth's disciples at Darjeeling and later at Lhasa, has written that the Indian government had appointed both Sir Charles Bell and Laden-La "to be in charge of entertaining the Dalai Lama and to negotiate with the Tibetan government-in-exile." Moreover, being "very clever and frank," notes Tada, Laden-La "contributed greatly to the mutual understanding of Tibet and Great Britain." Besides, adds the Japanese Buddhist priest, the Dalai Lama "thought very much of him because he was a Buddhist." Tada 1965, p. 58. The Dalai Lama would not always think of Laden-La this highly, however, as later events would reveal (see below).

As a consequence of his many personal assistances to both of Tibet's High Lamas, there was conferred upon him by His Holiness the title of *Depon* (General) as well as the Order of the Golden Lion, the medal for which—the first of its kind ever struck in Tibet—was a massive gold nugget bearing the name of the Dalai Lama. And His Serenity made him Lord Chamberlain of the Court of Trashilhunpo. These bestowals were made in 1912. The next year Laden-La would make his first trip abroad, accompanying a group of Tibetan boys bound for England to study; there he was presented to King-Emperor George V on two different occasions; and while abroad, Laden-La visited several other European countries as well.

The Himalayan border Tibetan would be awarded the title of Sardar Bahadur by the British Government of India for his help in recruitment and fund-raising during the Great War. So well thought of and respected by this time, Laden-La would be asked by Bell to serve as his personal assistant during his sensitive mission to Lhasa in 1920-21 referenced earlier in the present narrative. As a consequence of this, the Dalai Lama requested Laden-La's assistance in establishing a Lhasa police force. Beginning this work at the Tibetan capital in 1923, he would that same year receive the high-ranking Tibetan title of Dzasa. But because the British Government of India was so eager, based on Political Officer Bailey's persuasive argument that it was of "considerable political importance" to have the Darjeeling Tibetan at Lhasa again, "the ambitious Laden-La," in the words of historian Alex McKay, "was able to demand promotion to Superintendent [of the Darjeeling Police] as a condition of acceptance." McKay 1997, pp. 108, 251 note 19.

But as noted elsewhere in the present narrative's Text, there was a hidden agenda behind Bailey's argument: his desire to use Laden-La as his agent at Lhasa to effect, if he could, and in association with the Tibetan military there, a coup against the Dalai Lama and transfer secular rule to Bailey's choice for Tibetan leadership: the Army Commander-in-Chief, General Tsarong. The coup failed, of course, but Laden-La fell under heavy suspicion as having been involved in plotting against the Dalai Lama government. Indeed, when after returning to Darjeeling and assuming his Police Superintendent post the Government of India appointed him Yatung Trade Agent, the Dalai Lama, now mistrustful of Laden-La, objected to this promotion by the British. His Holiness stated in his objection that he "is not altogether a steady and straightforward man and it is not known how he would serve to maintain Anglo-Tibetan amity." Result: the appointment was canceled.

Yet Laden-La had other critics along the Himalayan frontier. William McGovern, for one, had accused him of using his office for profit. Indeed, further noted McGovern,

we found him the uncrowned king of the whole Darjeeling District. Every native in the place is absolutely under his thumb, taking, changing, and losing his post at Laden's command. It is almost entirely at his order that Darjeeling remained nearly free from the Gandhi movement that swept over the whole of India. In accordance with Oriental custom and tradition, his position has rendered it advisable for the natives to offer him slight tokens of their esteem from time to time, so that he is now in the possession of quite a considerable fortune.

Nevertheless, added McGovern, "we found him an exceedingly acute and able man, and so soon as he was good enough to grant us his favor we found things mysteriously expedited, for not only did he give us letters of introduction to various people in Tibet, but he enabled us to secure able and faithful servants."

Another critic of Laden-La, David Macdonald, wrote to Charles Bell that it was "amazing" to him "how Laden-La manages to mislead the powers that be!" Moreover, added Macdonald, "in Darjeeling he is liked

openly only by those he can override." Only because Bailey protected Laden-La did the latter avoid ultimate ruin. Knowing full well that Laden-La had only done at Lhasa what he, Bailey, had directed him to do, this Political Officer had for sometime denied that Laden-La had done anything amiss; but finally he conceded that his agent at Lhasa had in fact "certainly committed a serious indiscretion," he adding, however, that he hoped no action would be taken against Laden-La. None was; for as Rai Bahadur Norbu Dhondup later wrote Bailey some eight years after the failed plot, "through your favor Laden-La was saved, otherwise he was ruined." Despite such a negative press, as it were, Laden-La, noted McKay, nonetheless "continued to be regarded as a valuable agent and was employed by subsequent Political Officers on missions to Lhasa." McKay, in *ibid.*, 108-13, is the source for all information and quoted material appearing in this and the preceding two paragraphs, except the McGovern quotes, which can be found in McGovern 1924, pp. 23-4.

In 1929, for example, when a grave dispute arose between Tibet and Nepal, with both sides having already mobilized for war, India's Viceroy offered Laden-La's assistance to help mediate the dispute; which he indeed performed at Lhasa, it resulting in peace. A year before his retirement from his official duties in 1931, this distinguished servant of Himalayan nations was made a C.B.E. (Commander of the British Empire). He had also earlier been elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in recognition of the valuable service he had rendered in connection with the three Everest Expeditions during the 1920s.

Yet there was another facet to his career which ought to be pointed out. One authority on British frontier officers has noted that Laden-La had "dressed and in many ways behaved like a British officer." However, "this made him enemies among the local communities" and he came to be regarded with "some suspicion by many of the British." For the latter had in those days felt that their local ethnic employees should on the one hand "maintain the prestige of the Raj" but on the other "not abandon their own culture." See McKay, "Historical Foreword," in Richardus, ed., *Tibetan Lives*, xix. Reflective of Laden-La's breach of this expected attitude by the British of their employees was an incident in 1923 told of by an accomplished Tibetan monk-scribe from Central Asia, Phuntsog Lungtok, who had settled at Ghoom. He was acquainted with Laden-La and, like the latter, had been in the employ of the British, though by this time Laden-La had become extremely powerful in comparison with the lowly Phuntsog. One day the two happened to meet on the streets of Ghoom, and Laden-La invited the monk-scribe to attend a public meeting the following day that would feature the presence of the British Governor of Bengal. Laden-La had instructed his fellow Tibetan in the following manner: "Do not wear the clothes you have on now. For, dogs should mix with dogs and hogs with hogs!" The next day Phuntsog decided not to attend the function because Laden-La had not wished to see him dressed as a Tibetan, even though the monk-scribe had greatly desired to be present. See page 48 of Phuntsog Lungtok's personal narrative in *ibid.*

Chahroudi has noted that Laden-La was a devout Buddhist and an activist in the reconstruction and administration of the local monasteries and in various philanthropic activities during retirement. And shortly before his death he assisted in the translation of the Tibetan life of Padma Sambhava for *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, edited by W.Y. Evans-Wentz. "Laden-La," she concluded, "was intensely interested in his Tibetan heritage and in developing a true understanding of Tibetan religion and culture in the outside world. In 1912, he started making photographs and films of ceremonial occasions, customs, various peoples, and their living conditions. His interests were shared by his son, P.W. Laden-La, who has been able to preserve many of his father's plates and photographs." Chahroudi 1983, p. 150. Much more can be learned on the life and career of Laden-La by consulting the text pages referenced in the Index entry for him in McKay 1997.

87. Which was the last treaty document to be signed and fully recognized between the two governments until the infamous Seventeen-Point Agreement of 23 May 1951 that Tibetan representatives were pressured into signing at Peking (and about which fuller details are given in Ch. 24 of the present work's last volume). There was indeed another document in 1914 which had been agreed upon among the representatives of Britain, China and Tibet and *initialed* by them; but this action by Peking's representative was subsequently repudiated by the Chinese government of Yüan Shih-kai which thereafter refused to give its full signature to the document. This, of course, was the Simla Convention of Apr. 1914 that had been the result of the Simla Conference which had been convened at the British Indian summer capital in Oct. 1913 at the initiative of Great Britain and which met continually thereafter until a final draft of the Convention had been drawn up for initialing and ultimate ratification by the governments of the three parties concerned.

The chronicle of what happened was, in brief, as follows. As a consequence of the new situation in Tibet brought on by the Chinese Revolution of 1911-12 and the expulsion from Tibetan soil of all Chinese officials and troops, Britain had informed China's President that Chinese interference in Tibet's *internal* affairs could no longer be tolerated and that a new agreement should be concluded and signed by the three concerned parties so

as to have in writing an arrangement which would indeed reflect the prevailing situation in the Land of Snows and along her borders. And hence, it was to effect such an agreement that the Simla Conference was convened—first at Darjeeling, then on to Simla—in late 1913 among the three nations' representatives and their staffs. Sir Henry McMahon served as the British plenipotentiary at the conference, who soon called in from Gangtok as his expert adviser on Tibetan matters, a future friend of Tharchin's, Charles Bell, who remained with the Conference negotiations till their conclusion in April 1914. In Bell's absence at Gangtok, another future friend of Tharchin's, Basil Gould, was temporarily appointed to act as Political Officer in Sikkim.

Now besides settling the frontier border between the British Indian protectorate of Sikkim, China and Tibet (called ever afterwards the McMahon Line that would become the focal point of dispute much later between Independent India and Communist China), the Simla Convention finally agreed upon by the three participants called for the following main provisions (quoting in part from a Handbook on Tibet prepared by the British Foreign Office in 1920) : (a) a recognition of "Outer Tibet," the ancient Lama kingdom (where such cities as Lhasa, Shigatse, Gyantse and Gartok are located), as "an autonomous state under Chinese suzerainty and British protection"; (b) that because of this recognition of Britain's special interest and protectorate status over "Outer Tibet," China was "not to send troops... or to station troops or officials or establish colonies" or to "convert... into a Chinese province" the vast regions which were to the east and northeast of "Outer Tibet" which the Convention now termed as "Inner Tibet"; (c) that "nothing in the Convention was to prejudice the existing rights of the Tibetan government in Inner Tibet"; (d) recognition was given to the overall authority of China over Tibet externally, and even permitted China to re-station an Amban at Lhasa with a very limited military escort of 300 troops; (e) a re-affirmation of British rights to maintain certain Trade Marts and permission to station troops of her own at these Trade Agencies (such troop strength to be limited to three-fourths of the Chinese escort at Lhasa; in other words, 225), so long as Britain engaged not to attempt to annex any portion of Tibet; (f) that the British Trade Agency at Gyantse would have the right when necessary to visit Lhasa with his military escort; and (g) an attachment to the Convention of a number of Trade Regulations which provided for various matters affecting the right of British subjects to trade, and for the maintenance of telegraph lines between the Indian frontier and the Trade Marts.

Within two days of initialing this document, the Chinese government declared its refusal to abide by the decisions of its representative at the Conference and declined to sign in full or ratify the Convention. However, the British Minister at Peking informed the Chinese that Britain and Tibet considered the Convention concluded since all parties present had initialed it. In addition, he added, if China refused to permit her representative to place his full signature on the Treaty, then the other two Governments would proceed and sign the document independently (which is, in fact, what happened). Furthermore, these two governments declared that as long as China withheld her ratification, she would be debarred from enjoying all privileges accruing from the Convention. The upshot to all this was that the Lama Kingdom of "Outer Tibet" remained a British protectorate of sorts with the Dalai Lama as its head, although the Chinese government never afterwards openly recognized such a British protectorate over Central and West Tibet. Moreover, because of the outbreak of the Great European War a few months after the Simla Conference had been concluded, the whole matter of the Convention was pushed into the background. Nevertheless, at the end of the War, China made attempts to push her way back into Tibet, but she failed, with the Tibetans remaining their own masters for nearly forty years. A Chinese mission did arrive at Lhasa in early 1920 to negotiate a final agreement with Tibet, but after a few months' stay in the Tibetan capital, the mission returned to China having accomplished nothing in the attempt. See "Sir Charles Bell and Tibet," (written by one of Bell's former colleagues, but unnamed), *Asiatic Review* (July 1945):295; Sudershan Chawla, "Tibet: the Red Chinese Challenge to India," *Current History* (Mar. 1961):172; Gould 1957, p. 31; and Howard 1934, p. 342 (wherein, *inter alia*, the 1920 British Foreign Office Handbook on Tibet is quoted from).

88. Translated and quoted in Berry 1995, p. 127.

89. Even then, the General and some of his men would not depart Tibetan soil till Apr. 1913! Alastair Lamb chronicles Chung Yin's movement in 1912 and the following year in this way: "On 16 December Chung Yin surrendered his arms according to... agreement, and on 19 December he and his party, which included many Chinese civilians, traders and their families, were escorted out of Lhasa by a Nepalese officer and sixteen Gurkha soldiers of the Nepalese Residency guard.... General Chung... brought with him over 600 people, including a number of Tibetan women who had contracted local marriages with Chinese soldiers and who now wished to remain with their husbands.... He arrived at Gyantse a few days later and then on to Chumbi where he stayed till 14 April 1913.... exploiting every device he could think of to postpone his own departure.... From [Chumbi], with thirty companions, he left Tibet for India, reaching Kalimpong a week later [21 April]." Lamb 1966, II:383, 380, 385, 380, 385. But while in Chumbi, the General, in "a fit of despair," had attempted to hang himself in the

local custom house. He must have anticipated he would be executed in Peking anyway, which in fact did occur. Kuleshov 1996, p. 107.

90. Translated and quoted in Berry 1995, p. 128.

91. Quoted in Macdonald 1932, pp. 87-8.

92. The actual details of the manner in which this unique assignment came about are quite interesting and were recounted much later by Willoughby himself and in rather whimsical fashion: "On June 24, 1912, I paid my farewell official visit... to the President, Yüan Shih-Kai, at Peking, under the wing of my Chief, Sir John Joldan, who went to discuss Tibetan affairs. Naturally the plight of the beleaguered garrison in Lhasa cropped up [they had fortified themselves in the Tengyeling Monastery where they were holding out "for some months against some 15,000 Tibetans"], and Yüan suggested the possibility, in the last resort, of their withdrawal through India. Sir John, I remember, laughingly said to the President, 'See, here is a friend of the Chinese army going there. I am sure he will give them a helping hand if he can.' Well, 'there is many a true word spoken in jest'." Willoughby, "The Relation of Tibet to China," *JRCAS* (1924):197, the insert quote from 196.

93. *Ibid.*, 197.

94. The Calcutta Consul quote as well as the Kuleshov comment can both be found in Kuleshov 1996, p. 107.

95. Chung Yin's execution by beheading was ordered by a (Chinese Republican) Presidential Mandate of 19 Mar. 1915 which particularly leveled the charge against him of having left his post in violation of orders. Rahul 1961, p. 421. For a contrary view to the reasons for his execution, see Macdonald 1932, p. 113.

96. Actually, even before the late 1912-early 1913 evacuation, which constituted the main deportation program as called for by the Agreement, there had been an earlier departure of Chinese forces from Tibetan soil—from eastern Tibet, to be precise. The British Political Officer in Sikkim, Sir Charles Bell, has reported that Tibetan Ministers had frequently told him that the reason the Chinese had found this part of Tibet so easy to subjugate was the fact that, because any fighting by Tibetans would not be in accord with their religion, the Dalai Lama had discouraged those Tibetans in the eastern part of the country from doing so. But at a certain point in the difficulties between Tibet and China, and despite "adverse criticism" from his conservative Lhasan government, His Holiness had decided to order military opposition in the east. And as a result the Chinese forces there commenced to weaken in strength; so much so that a large number of troops were captured and subsequently sent off to Sikkim. Bell noted that because of the encouragement of his assistant in Tibet, David Macdonald (who was himself of Tibetan stock), the Tibetans treated the Chinese "with great humanity, providing ample food for all, and ponies for the old and weakly to ride." But because the British Political Officer felt these Chinese deportees "would prove a focus of intrigue and danger on the frontier," he persuaded the authorities in Sikkim to not allow the Chinese troops to remain in Sikkim but to return them to their homeland. On the way out of Sikkim via India a number of them, wrote Bell, were allowed by the Bengal government to remain in Kalimpong. Later on, however, the government "found them troublesome and shipped them back to China." Bell 1924a, p. 121. These actions must have occurred during the 1911-12 period, just prior to the more substantial wave of deportations from Lhasa that was to commence coming through Kalimpong some six months later as a consequence of the Three-Point Agreement signed in Aug. 1912.

97. Other than what has already been documented, the various other sources from which have been gleaned the information and quotes that have contributed to the account given here of the events which led to the influx of Tibetans and Chinese into Kalimpong in 1912-13 are: Bell 1924a, caption of photo opposite p. 122; Ronaldshay 1923, p. 119; Gould 1957, p. 21; Harrer 1956, p. 255; Goldstein 1989, p. 59; Lamb 1966, II:378-85; Mullin 1988, p. 84; Rahul 1961, pp. 420-4; Shakabpa 1967, pp. 228, 245; Ingram 1990, p. 6; Eric Teichman, *Travels of a Consular Officer in Eastern Tibet* (Cambridge, 1922), 40; and Tieh-tseng Li, *The Historical Status of Tibet* (New York, 1954), 67.

98. During the Younghusband Military and Diplomatic Expedition to Lhasa in 1903-4, war weapons and cannons were stockpiled at a place just above the Eleventh Mile in a suburb of Kalimpong. In the Hindi language, cannon is called "top" and store is called "khana"; and hence the name "Topkhana" was coined. The name is still in vogue even today. See GTUM TsMs, 141n.

99. Kalimpong districts take their delineation from the milestone markers that have been erected on the main trade route beginning in the Teesta Valley below at the well-known Teesta or Anderson Bridge, with the stone

markers continuing their numbering upwards to Kalimpong (the Ninth Mile) and through Sikkim as far as the Jelep Pass on the Sikkim-Tibet border. Up from the Teesta Bridge, the first signs of the Kalimpong community proper, in the form of thatched mud bustees (groups of poor huts which have been transformed, as it were, into small villages), appear at about the Seventh Mile. Another set of milestones was erected by the British (after 1904) beyond the Jelep La in Tibet all the way to Gyantse. A somewhat amusing incident has revolved around the milestones that were first erected on the Phari-Gyantse portion of the trade route: the local Tibetans "invariably destroyed them, alleging that they were gods put up by the British to destroy their faith. Only after many years did this belief die out, and even at the present time [1943] some of these cairns can be seen scattered over the plain." Macdonald 1943, pp. 76, 89.

100. Manuel 1914, p. 146.

101. The Arts and Crafts actually had their beginning one Saturday afternoon in 1894 when Mrs. Graham taught some of the local women, many of them very poor, how to make lace. "This lace was sold to relieve distress among the workers, and gradually the little party that held its meetings on her veranda developed into a larger gathering. Fingers accustomed to work became swift and accurate, the tidings spread that a new means of livelihood was to be found in Kalimpong, and when peasants came from neighboring districts it was decided to teach both men and women other useful crafts." Pares 1940, pp. 33-4. See also Manuel 1914, p. 193.

102. Perry 1997, p. 53.

103. Twan Yang 1947, p. 2.

104. Macdonald 1932, p. 90.

105. Perry 1997, p. 77 note 85.

106. Ronaldshay 1923, p. 119.

107. Per articles in *Times* (London), 18 Sept. 1912, p. 3 and 14 Oct. 1912, p. 5. Some of these Tibetan wives who remained behind, said the London *Times* correspondent at Kalimpong, were seen "weeping and cursing the Dalai Lama as the cause of the desertion [of their Chinese husbands]"! *Ibid.*

108. They were taught and employed in such various arts and crafts as carpentry, leather work, carving, the blacksmith's art, tailoring, carpet-making, dyeing, lace work and embroidery. This self-reliant cooperative handicraft production entity had continued on for many decades as the Kalimpong Arts and Crafts Center that had had its showroom situated at almost the center of town. Its handicrafts—such as appliqué, wall panels, firescreens, and embroidered bags and purses made after Bhutanese, Lepcha and Sikkimese designs, as well as the famous Kalimpong tapestry bags—had eventually gained a wide recognition all over India and had found their way to places all over the world. To show their deep appreciation for the many services rendered by Mrs. Graham, including her founding of the industrial complex, the community of Kalimpong erected an archway entrance to the former Arts and Crafts Center situated at the very beginning of K.D. Pradhan Road that leads the long distance up from the town to Deolo Hill. An inscribed commemorative plate in English was placed on the right-hand post of the Arch and is still there today. The English inscription (with a Hindi translation of it to be found on an inscribed plate located on the left-hand post of the Arch) reads as follows:

In memory of
Mrs. Katherine Graham
Founder of This Industrial
School Who from 1889 to 1919
Devoted Her Richly-Gifted Life
To the Glory of God in the
Service of the People of Kalimpong.
This Arch and Other Buildings
Were Created by the Community
To Mark Their Gratitude,
Admiration and Affection.

110. Quoting from Mark 6:34 in the Christian New Testament Scriptures; it was the observation made by Rev. Tharchin in his end-of-life "memoirs."

111. The identity of this Christian brother was made known to the author by G. Tharchin's son in his letter, S.G. Tharchin to the author, Kalimpong, 14 Jan. 1991.

112. "Shantiniketan, or the Abode of Peace, is a school that holds a unique place in cultural India." So wrote one of its visitors, who has perceptively written that whereas Cecil Rhodes had been "obsessed with the idea of building an Anglo-Saxon Empire to dominate the world," the founder of the Abode of Peace had "wanted, above all, a university where everyone should learn cosmopolitan tolerance of all cultures and religions in preparation for world cooperation." Situated about 150 miles north of Calcutta near the town of Bolpur, this institution and its environs as it was in the 1920s has been described with sensitivity by this same visitor in the following fashion:

In this beautiful grove of trees of many Indian varieties is a university, the Visva-Bharati [meaning "world culture"], where one may study various languages, religions, and philosophies; in fact, world knowledge and world culture are to be found there. In addition to the university, there is a college preparatory school, and below that there is the higher primary school. The presiding genius and the pervading spirit of the place is the great poet, Rabindranath Tagore. Here he has his home [called "Shyamali"]; and here he lectures to the students, here he writes his poems and dramas, and here in the heart of beautiful Bengal he sets his poetry to music.

The place was discovered and dedicated by the poet's father, Devendranath Tagore. He went there to find a place of meditation away from the noisy city, and at the sunset hours he would find himself daily drawn to a quiet spot under a group of chatim trees. Here he would talk to God, and would spend much time listening to God's voice. After his death his son felt that the only fitting memorial to so spiritual a father would help boys and girls, young men and women, to attain the higher life, and so it is that the poet has year by year seen his dreams for this school come into fulfillment. At the Chatim Tala, which means, under the shade of the seven-leaf tree, at the prayer place of his father, who was lovingly named the Sacrificer by his friends, the poet has placed a marble seat for prayer and meditation. Over the seat are the words with which his father had so often ended his prayer:

Thou art the Comfort of my life,
Thou art the Joy of my mind,
Thou art the Peace of my soul.

There is no hard and fast rule about uniforms, but most of the boys wear a garment of saffron color, and the girls sometimes a sari, or in the winter a shawl of that same color to keep them warm in their out-of-door classes. One of the prettiest sights in the place is to see the classes in session as one walks leisurely through the campus about eight o'clock in the morning. Under mango trees, pipal trees, and banyan trees scattered here and there are the classes and the teachers, seated and busily concentrating on their work. If it is algebra, there is a large movable blackboard arranged for the purpose. It may be history or reading; whatever it is, there sit the boys and girls robed in that beautiful color, peacefully and comfortably at work under the trees. The school is unusual for the reason that coeducation has been tried and has proved successful. Boys and girls grow up accustomed to sit in the same classes and to talk normally with each other. If one student has a talent for music, that talent is developed and given every opportunity. Indian music at its best has been revived and made an important part of the curriculum. If some other student has a talent for art, that talent is developed. Probably the best teachers of India are found here in this school. Poetry, music, the drama, and religion are all emphasized, and the atmosphere of the place is one of spiritual highmindedness.

(Mrs.) Welthy (Honsinger) Fisher, *Freedom: a Story of Young India* (New York, 1930), 73-5. The Cecil Rhodes comparison is from Fisher, *To Light a Candle* (New York, 1962), 201.

In the early days at Shantiniketan, wrote Mrs. Fisher elsewhere, Tagore had lived there "in a one-room mud hut of exquisite design, among his students, teaching, tutoring, laboring, carpentering, and cleaning, washing his own clothes." She went on (*ibid.*, 205):

Life was Spartan in the assemblage of thatch-roofed huts, in the mango and sal groves where banyans and the sacred neem tree grew, and all members shared in learning and labor. The original aim was to teach boys to live with restraint, free from evil passions and greed and to gain knowledge of their cultural heritage.

In Tagore's own home in Calcutta, a house of many mansions where his princely family had lived for a thousand years and where I first met him in 1925, I saw no single lavish object, but was enfolded in an aura of warmth. Later he sold many of his own valuable properties and helped build replacements for the huts at Shantiniketan, proper buildings but as low and indigenous as the huts and the classes were still held outdoors, where slates were hung.

After Tagore won the Nobel prize in 1913, his concept of his school broadened, perhaps as a result of his having crossed the "black water" to Europe. He made his institution coeducational and opened courses in all religions and cultures.

For further on the university at Shantiniketan, see Ravindranatha Thākura (Rabindranath Tagore) and Charles F. Andrews, *The Visvabharati* (Madras, 1923), 51 pp. And for further on Rabindranath's father, see Sir George Macmunn, *The Religions and Hidden Cults of India* (London, 1930?), 184-7. There the author provides an excellent presentation of the Brahmo Samaj, an early 19th-century reform movement within Hinduism greatly influenced by Christian teaching and which, after the death of its founder, Ram Mohan Roy, Devendranath Tagore led for many years till his own passing in 1905. The latter's own father had been a close associate of Roy's, and upon the demise of Roy, Devendranath, with 21 new members of the Brahmo Samaj (meaning the "Society of God Almighty"), drew up a solemn covenant. In it, faith in a Supreme Being was enunciated, with each member resolving to lead a new life, not unlike such an undertaking a follower of Christ would intend upon at Christian Baptism. Devendranath and the Samaj remained faithful to the end to the Society's very first principle, taught by founder Roy; which was a firm opposition to idolatry, a position which the Samaj, noted Macmunn, had adhered to for over a century. Being known himself as *Maharishi* or "the Great Seer," Devendranath, explained Sir George, "looked on the Society as an orthodox form of Hinduism and not a revolt from it; but his followers thought otherwise, and so early as 1865 were greatly steeped in Christian teachings and the fervor of religious reform. The leader of this party, Keshab Chander Singh, who had joined the Samaj in 1857, became an enthusiastic student and admirer of the life of Christ, and on this point split with Tagore, and formed the larger party.... The Samaj continued without gaining the wide adherence hoped for it, keeping outside any final movement towards Christianity yet always admiring it and sympathetic to it..." Chander Singh it was, incidentally, who penned one of the most moving passages in praise of Christ ever expressed by a Hindu: "Verily, when we read His life, His meekness, like the soft moon, ravishes the heart and bathes it in a flood of serene light; but when we come to the grand consummation of His career, His death on the Cross, behold, He shines as the powerful sun in its meridian splendor." Quoted in Graham, *The Missionary Expansion of the Reformed Churches* (Edinburgh/London, 1898), 2.

113. Prize-winning poet of India, aristocrat, educator, innovator, intellectual and spiritual influence, Tagore, in the opinion of one of his closest admirers, "was the most beautiful male I have ever seen in the flesh. When he rose from a low chair to greet me the first time I met him, unfolding to a towering six foot four and pressing the palms of his together to touch his massive forehead, I felt that I was looking at a portrait of a Bodhisattva. Silver hair framed his elegant features and deep-set eyes. His skin was ivory and simple robes fell gracefully the length of his superb body. He was a seer, but not a visionary seer, reaching up for spiritual things from the platform of the real world." Fisher, *To Light a Candle*, 201.

The Indian poetess, Sarojini Naidu, wrote of Tagore: "By his genius, his beauty, his wisdom and wit, the charm and prestige of his gracious personality, he was in his lifetime a unique and fascinating figure of romance. Now that he has gone he will become an exquisite legend, a fairy tale for all time. But his song, however, will remain, generation after generation, as fresh as the first flowers of the springtime and as enchanting as the music of moonlit streams." The Chief Justice of India, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, declared that Tagore "was the greatest figure of the modern renaissance. A poet of his qualities we have not had for some generations. He was in the grand line from Valmiki and Kalidasa." His very close friend, Mahatma Gandhi, once described Tagore as the greatest poet of the age, and wrote at the time of the Indian poet's death that "there was hardly any public activity on which he has not left the impress of his powerful personality." And within a month of Tagore's passing, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote from jail on 27 Aug. 1941 a fitting summation of the great life the poet had lived: "His death came as a grievous shock to me and the thought that I would never see his beautiful face and hear his gentle voice again oppressed me terribly. Ever since I came to prison this thought had haunted me. I wanted to see him once again so much.... However,.... let us rather congratulate ourselves that we were privileged to come in contact with this great and magnificent person.... I have met many big people in various parts of the world. But I have no doubt in my mind that the two biggest I have had the privilege of meeting have been Gandhi and Tagore. I think they have been the two outstanding personalities in the world during the last quarter of a century. As time goes by, I am sure this will be recognized, when all the generals and field marshals and dictators and shouting politicians are long dead and largely forgotten." All quoted material can be found in Krishna Kripalani, *Rabindranath Tagore, a Biography* (London, 1962), 398-9. A most dramatic comparison has been made, incidentally, between these two giants of recent Indian history. The American clergyman, Dr. Frederick Fisher, the Methodist Bishop of Calcutta during the decade of the 1920s, knew both men intimately. He once told his wife, the Mrs. Fisher quoted above already, that "Tagore is like Everest. He towers majestic and, I think,

alone. He seems to be in touch with the infinite, a seeker for abstract truth. Wherever he finds it he makes it his own and it adds to his stature the way snows add to the glacial heights of Everest." On the other hand, "Gandhiji is like the leaping cataract on the mountainside trying to reach the stream so that he may add his life to the parched plains below where the people thirst." Quoted in Norman Cousins, ed., *Profiles of Gandhi: America Remembers a World Leader* (1969; 2d ed., Delhi: Indian Book Co., 1970), 31.

Tharchin himself may have met the renowned poet, if in no other more formal way than simply encountering him on the streets of the hill town they both loved. Be that as it may, two of Tharchin's friends did know Tagore personally; Sadhu Sundar Singh and Dr. John A. Graham. The former, upon coming up to Bengal in July-Aug. 1918 for rest and peace after an exhausting speaking tour through South India and Ceylon that culminated in an attack of influenza at Calcutta, went after recuperating to the home of the great Indian poet and Eastern mystic at Bolpur some distance from Calcutta. There he spent a few days with Sir Rabindranath who was himself a close personal friend of the Sadhu's greatly beloved missionary friend Charles F. Andrews. Here also he had an opportunity for prayer in the quiet and seclusion of the poet's home, which was true to its name of Shantiniketan, "the abode of peace." Appasamy 1966, p. 113. These two—Sundar and Tagore—valued their friendship, and the latter once referred to the Sadhu, before a group of friends at Oxford in 1930, as "an eminent Indian Christian, a friend of mine." Quoted in Anthony Elanjittam, *The Poet of Hindustan* (Calcutta, 1948), 59. After his pleasant and relaxing visit with Tagore, Sundar returned to Calcutta and the active world once again, "to obey a call to visit Burma and the Straits Settlements." Parker 1968, p. 61. About this visit, another Sadhu biographer made this interesting comment: "Here was another example of what was now becoming so plain to the Sadhu. Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Moslem, Christian—they would all listen gladly to the Christian gospel proclaimed in an Indian setting by an Indian who interpreted it in the traditional Indian terms. The rest of India did not follow the example of the animistic, superstitious Buddhist lands of the closed far north. There was no persecution, only deep respect wherever he went." Cyril J. Davey, *The Story of Sadhu Sundar Singh* (Chicago, 1963), 120. And finally with respect to the Sadhu, it will perhaps be of interest to the reader to know of a comparison that was made between these two famous Indians—one a Hindu, the other a converted Sikh Christian—when the latter was being introduced to an audience in Sweden a few years later in 1922: "We are interested in three great Indians: Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and the Sadhu. The two former we find were influenced by Christ, the Sadhu, whom we now see, is wholly given up to Christ." Quoted in Parker 1968, 115.

Coincidentally, both Graham and Tagore were born the same year and died less than a year apart. And though of two different cultures and two sharply contrasting religious faiths, their views on many issues were remarkably similar, as Graham's biographer, James Minto, makes abundantly clear on pages 125-8 and 191-202 of his illuminating volume on the life of the Scottish missionary, Minto 1974. Because Tagore was a frequent visitor to Kalimpong (staying, as was his wont, at Gauripur House, one of his favorite haunts in the town and situated on the way to Durpin Hill some 2-3 kilometers from the center of Kalimpong), these two old gentlemen had opportunity to have long discussions on politics and philosophy. "They had a healthy respect for one another's views," with Graham often quoting from Tagore's beloved poems. His main contact with the poet occurred in 1938 just three or four years prior to both of their deaths. On that occasion Tagore had come up to Kalimpong to recuperate after a serious illness; from the hill station, in fact, the revered Indian poet had broadcast his 77th birthday message to a waiting nation. And when Graham had fallen ill himself that same year, Tagore kindly and sympathetically called on him. "The two men growing old together had much in common, their love of and belief in humanity being their closest bond. The ideal behind Shantiniketan, too, appealed to Dr. Graham." When finally in 1941 Tagore died, the Scottish Christian statesman "paid a glowing tribute to him not only as a poet but as musician, preacher, politician and educationist." Minto 1974, pp. 125, 126. The Gauripur House above mentioned, incidentally, had belonged at the time to the Maharaja of Gauripur; here at this "favorite summer villa for the great poet," Tagore would write many of his more famous poems and plays. In time, however, this house would be acquired by the Indian government and converted into a cooperative Teachers Training Center that no longer exists there today. See Jain (ed. & comp.) 1991, pp. 27-8.

114. "Rabindranath Tagore had been very fond of Kalimpong and had purchased land there on which to build a home for himself. He died before he could live there, but his son, Rutindranath, had completed the building and he and his wife were in the habit of spending part of every year there. However, their duties at Shantiniketan... only permitted them a few weeks in the year at 'Chitrabhanu,' as the Tagore house in Kalimpong is called. It was a lovely house in a magnificent situation, on a projecting platform of land that faced out on an uninterrupted view of the 28,000-foot snow-covered Kanchenjunga range, and with the mountains spectacularly dropping away just beyond the garden walls into the Teesta and Rangit valleys beneath. It was only a pleasant walk of about a mile to the center of the bazaar." Patterson 1959, p. 58. A Plymouth Brethren missionary.

Patterson himself was fortunate to stay in this home when in Aug. 1950 he fell deathly ill and was able after his recuperation to live within its pleasant surroundings. *Ibid.*, 48-58. A longtime resident of Kalimpong during the decade of the 1950s, Patterson developed a friendship with Gergan Tharchin during that turbulent period in the hill town. The house, grounds and setting of Chitrabhanu, incidentally, are as Patterson's description proclaim it to be, since the present writer had himself the privilege of visiting it on one occasion and being allowed to view nearly every room of this beautiful abode. According to a prominent local resident of Kalimpong, who herself had been a student at Shantiniketan, Poet Tagore had sought, through his son, to model the construction of Chitrabhanu after his "Shyamali" home in which he lived at Shantiniketan. And in commenting further to the present writer on this subject, she went on to say that having seen both homes she had to acknowledge that Chitrabhanu did indeed closely resemble Shyamali. Interview with Mrs. Sunkesri Pradhan, Kalimpong, Dec. 1992.

115. Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1955?, pp. 72-3.

116. Patterson, "Kalimpong: 'The Nest of Spies'," *Twentieth Century* (June 1958):525-6, in combination with Patterson, *Up and Down Asia* (London, 1958), 117. The "cashali" quote is from *ibid.*; the other two isolated quotes are from Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1955?, pp. 72-3.

116a. From a partially extant letter, Knox to a prospective-missionary inquirer, Kalimpong, date unknown, a copy of which is among the ThPaK. From both internal and external evidence, it is certain the letter was written between 1936 and 1939.

117. It was in 1926 that the foundation stone of the Leper Hospital was laid; and by 1928 eight houses had been constructed to house the leper patients and also the dispensary. The Leprosarium had been founded by Dr. Macdonald Smith, the then Medical Superintendent of the Charteris Hospital (which included both the General and Tuberculosis Hospitals). Located close to the Charteris Hospital (now known as the Kalimpong Municipal Hospital), the Leprosarium still functions today, but since Aug. 1973 it has been run by the government. Packard (comp.) 1964, pp. 14-6; and Minto 1974, p. 42n.

118. See GTUM TsMs, 144 and Manuel 1914, p. 150. Polhill Hall served as one of several residences for Tharchin and his family for a considerable number of years, and was also the place where Tharchin produced the first issues of his Tibetan newspaper. See later in the present chapter, and Ch. 17.

119. *Ibid.*, pp. 143, 150; and Graham 1897, p. 48. This is a reference to the Tibetan Pioneer Mission Band of Annie Taylor's, which later, but only briefly, he assumed responsibility for, as will be learned shortly in the present chapter.

119a. The observation regarding the age of the Hall is according to Rev. and Mrs. S.G. Tharchin in an interview, Mar. 2003. They indicated to the author that Polhill Hall is a structure easily a century and more old and that except for repairs now and then it had never been renovated during its long history. Furthermore, in this same interview Rev. Tharchin agreed with the observation put forward by his father in the latter's end-of-life "memoirs" that the building had been constructed to serve as a Christian Preaching Hall as a means of reaching Tibetans with the message of Christ. Interestingly, found among the ThPaK is a copy of a letter which Kalimpong Tibetan missionary Rev. Dr. Knox had written to Polhill, dated 19 Sept. 1932, in which he referred to one helpful interior alteration that had just then been completed: "You may also like to know that I have just had... the partition which separated the living quarters from the part used for meetings replaced by folding doors so that the [meeting] hall part may be used in comfort for large or small gatherings."

120. In the course of his research, the present author was brought into contact by letter with Rev. Polhill's grandson, Professor Victor C. Funnell of England but currently living in Italy. He at one time had been completely unaware of his grandfather's connections with Kalimpong and was surprised further to learn that a structure there had been named in his honor. Upon hearing about it in more detail, Prof. Funnell wrote to the author as follows: "I am keener than ever to see Kalimpong... and hope that it will become possible." (This desire he was at last able to fulfill in Feb. 1999, and was a guest at the Tharchin compound for a week.) He then added: "By the way, my grandfather was never ordained to the ministry, remaining plain Mr." Funnell to the author, Beijing, 6 Nov. 1995.

121. See Marston 1905, *passim*.

122. And missionary to India William Carey had this to say of Annie Taylor's incredible trek through the Land of Snows: "The real spell of the story lies in the significance of the deed. Miss Taylor's journey changed the whole face of missionary interest in Tibet. It sent a thrill round the world, and is the true beginning of the widespread eagerness for the evangelization of the land. . . . For solitary splendor and sudden quickening power no deed in the whole history [of missions] will rank higher than this of the lone woman who opened the closed door and deliberately walked through the country, carrying her life in her hands, for Christ's sake and the gospel's." Carey 1983, pp. 127, 128. The world is indebted to Carey for making known to it the narrative of her exploit. In 1899 he visited Taylor at Yatung in Tibet (where she had been allowed, under the Sikkim-Tibet Convention of 1893, to live as a small trader or shopkeeper since late 1895). As the two of them conversed together for hours "over the teacups in her little box of a room" (Carey's description, p. 166), the visitor, in the words of Taylor's biographer Dorothy Middleton, "handled with reverence the grubby little black notebook she took from a drawer when asked if she had kept a diary of her famous journey." Carey would afterwards incorporate this diary into his own book just cited, thus "doing posterity a service," wrote Middleton, "in putting on record the authentic account of Annie's lone and valiant attempt at storming Lhasa." Middleton 1982, p. 126.

123. Missionary Taylor was criticized, even by her friends, for using the term "Pioneer" in the name chosen by her for her newly-launched mission group. Her warmest admirers, wrote one of her biographers (Middleton), thought the name "cast something of a slur on the labors of the French Catholics on the Chinese frontier in the north and of the Moravians in western or 'Little' Tibet." As explained further by another of her biographers (Robson), the name was felt by some to be "scarcely well chosen," since "the real 'pioneer' workers among Tibetans were the French Catholics on the Chinese frontier and the Moravians. . . . Much good work had been done by [these Moravians] and many lives laid down during that half-century [of their labors]. . . . purely among Tibetans." Robson went on to point out that by their "splendid work" of the Bible translation in Tibetan and their compilation of Tibetan and English dictionaries and grammars, the Moravians had "removed one of the greatest obstacles to the work of the pioneer missionary." Indeed, the very Gospels which Miss Taylor had carried into the Tibetan interior in 1892-3 had been the fruit of their work.

Yet, in defense of Miss Taylor, it ought to be noted, as Robson did in her biography of this intrepid missionary, that Annie Taylor "claimed her right to the term. . . in that her work lay in Tibet itself, not in Little or Outer Tibet, and in that it was rather the work of the sapper, who goes forward to prepare the way for the following army." Taylor herself once said that in looking back on her life, "I see that I have seldom undertaken what everybody else was doing. I have always preferred to strike out a new road and then, when the way was made tolerably smooth, I have left it for others to travel. In this sense I may consider myself a pioneer." Her call, wrote Robson, was, in the words of the Christian Scriptures, to "regions beyond, where Christ has not been named" (2 Corinthians 10:16 and Romans 15:20). Robson 1909, pp. 82, 85; see also Middleton 1982, p. 124.

124. Quoted in Robson 1909, p. 86. See later, in the story now being recounted, regarding the trade law (actually a protocol) involving Yatung.

125. Carey 1982, pp. 143-4.

126. The information regarding the time spent in Kalimpong by the Mission members engaged in language study, and the date of their subsequent relocation to Ghoom, are per data gleaned from Marston 1905, pp. 170-2; and per data gleaned from p. 151 of Cecil Polhill-Turner's unpublished memoirs, a photocopy of which page was kindly provided the present author by Polhill's grandson, Prof. Dr. Victor Funnell.

127. The sources for much of the information and quotations to be found in this and the preceding paragraphs dealing with the Polhill-Turners and Annie Taylor are: *PA* (Mar. 1891):235-6; "Notes from the Wide Field," *ibid.* (Dec. 1892):647-8; "Letter from B. LaTrobe, London 21 Feb. 1893, to a Band Enrolled in the Tibet Prayer Union. . . ." *ibid.* (Mar. 1893):26-7; *ibid.* (June 1894):295; "Miscellaneous Intelligence," *ibid.* (Mar. 1895):485; *ibid.* (June 1896):97-8; Rev. Herbert Brown (CMS), "Notes on Tibet," *CMI* (Apr. 1895):256; Coelho 1970, pp. 20-1; *Bible Society Reporter* (Mar. 1901):57; *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (New York, 1911), 26:922; Bell 1924a, p. 61; Graham 1897, p. 48; Marshall Broomhall, *Hudson Taylor, the Man Who Believed God* (London, 1929), 183 with year 1896 of the "Chronological Summary" at end of volume; Frederick H. and Mary G. Taylor, *Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission; the Growth of a Work of God* (1918; reprint ed., London: Morgan & Scott, 1920), 556; Marshall Broomhall, *W.W. Cassels, First Bishop in Western China* (London, 1926), the chapter entitled "The Cambridge Seven," 40-5; Mary G. Taylor, *The Story of the China Inland Mission*, 2 vols. (London, 1900), Ch. 29 ("The Cambridge Band. . ."), II:438ff.; B. Broomhall, *The Evangelization of the World;*

a *Missionary Band: a Record of Consecration and an Appeal* (1885 under the title *A Missionary Band*; reprint & 2d enl. ed., London: Morgan & Scott, 1888), 1, 23; Manuel 1914, pp. 143-4, 150; Marston 1905, pp. 170-7; Polhill, "At the Tibetan Frontier," *China's Millions* (1895):169-70; Polhill unpublished memoirs, p. 151; Middleton 1982, pp. 110, 114, 116, 124-5, 127; Minto 1974, p. 97; Luree Miller, *On Top of the World: Five Women Explorers in Tibet* (New York, 1976), 56, 67, 69; Robson 1909, pp. 38-9, 79-81, 85-9, 112; Polhill 1907, p. 336; Carey 1983, pp. 142-5, 163-4; Charles P. Schmitt, *Root Out of a Dry Ground, a History of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Fellowship Publications, 1979), 126; F.B. Shawe (late of Leh), "The Siege of Tibet," *MRW* (Feb. 1897):93-5; Annie R. Taylor, *Pioneering in Tibet* (London: Morgan and Scott—Office of "The Christian," 1897?), *passim*; McKay 1997, pp. 91-2; French 1995, p. 205; and Susette M. Taylor (Annie's sister), "The Only Englishwoman in Tibet," *Wide World Magazine* (Aug. 1904):441.

128. The present author is indebted to both Polhill-Turner's grandson, Prof. Dr. Funnell, and research scholar-writer John Bray for much of the information in this paragraph which they had derived from various original sources recently researched: see their letters, Funnell to author, Hastings, 25 July 1999, and Bray to author, London, 30 July 1999.

128a. Discovered most recently among the ThPaK is a copy of a letter sent by the Guild Mission Tibetan missionary Rev. Dr. Knox to Cecil Polhill that is dated 15 Jan. 1933 in reply to Polhill's of 14 Dec. 1932. Its contents provide evidence of at least a third visit by Polhill to Kalimpong. Writing about the then current "prospects" for "our cold weather work" among the nomadic Tibetans coming down from Tibet to Kalimpong at that season, Knox shared the following:

Unfortunately, the Tibetan government seems to be discouraging people from coming down this year. Probably the increasing economic difficulties are also having an effect. At any rate, there are fewer visiting Tibetans than I have ever seen before at this time of year. In one way this is an advantage because it allows us to concentrate more definitely upon those who are with us here. You will understand the difficulty of connected preaching to the nomads and when you were here I think I pointed out [to you] the site which we hoped to get for a Christian Dharmasala [inn or hostel] where visiting people may stay....

Since missionary Knox had only joined initially the Tibetan work of the Scots Mission at Kalimpong (from his home in Australia) as early as the spring of 1928, the above excerpt from his letter would mean that sometime between 1928 and 1932 the retired missionary Polhill had paid still another and third visit to Tharchin's hill station. But one also can deduce from the letter the fact of Polhill's ongoing interest in the work of evangelism among Tharchin's ethnic brethren from the Roof of the World.

129. This excerpt is taken from the minutes of Council meeting (at Kalimpong), 27-28 Jan. 1927, p. 8. EHMC Minutes 1921-1935. No further entry concerning Polhill, whether before or after 1927, could be found in this particular Minutes volume, and no other EHMC Minutes documents were among the ThPaK.

129a. Polhill, "At the Tibetan Frontier," *China's Millions* (1895):170.

130. Once more, the present author is indebted to Prof. Dr. Funnell for this information; see again his letter of 25 July 1999 to the author.

131. In all, there were three magic lanterns in the Kalimpong area: (i) Dr. Sutherland's own magic lantern which had been used in Bhutan; (ii) the old Mission magic lantern; and (iii) this new one donated to the Mission by Polhill. Per GTUM TMs, 145n.

132. The amazement produced in the Tibetan onlookers of Kalimpong by Tharchin's gramophone in 1926 was not unlike the reaction of Tibetans in 1929 to Sir Edward Wakefield's gramophone during his ten-days' stay at Gartok, capital of West Tibet, not far over the Indo-Tibetan border from Tharchin's old home village of Poo. Wakefield describes how, of all things in his party's little camp there, "the chief attraction was our gramophone." He went on to relate what happened in *Past Imperative: My Life in India, 1927-1947* (London, 1966), 66-7:

When we played it for the first time a group of Dokpas [Tibetans] quickly gathered round. It was interesting to watch their reactions when we put on a recording of a Tibetan song. First they stared intently at the gramophone, the actual source of the music. Then, as they recognized the tune, they looked at their neighbors to see whether they too realized the miracle that was happening. Then, sitting with rapt faces, they beat time to the music. When one record was finished they did not wait for another. Bowing low to me, and putting out their tongues in token of respect, they hurried away to tell their friends of this extraordinary phenomenon.

133. Tharchin and Woodward 1975, p. 654.

134. Quoted from the Christian New Testament writing, Roman 1: 17 AV. (Cf. with the Old Testament book of Habakkuk 2:4, and with two other New Testament writings: Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38). The text of this entire paragraph was, after some minor editing by the author, derived in great part from the unpublished Tharchin "memoirs"; see GTUM TsMs, 145-6.

135. The reader should also be made aware of another analysis of why there has been evangelistic fruitlessness among Tibetans, which Tharchin himself had published as a part of the chapter on Tibet he and David Woodward co-authored and which has frequently been quoted from already. It appears in Tharchin and Woodward 1975, p. 655. Although there is some repetition, in many other respects it well serves to complement the analysis just now given, and is therefore felt worthwhile to quote here. Wrote Tharchin:

Tibetans fall naturally into three main classes: the nobility and priesthood, who have been steeped in and are relatively satisfied with lama Buddhism; the trader-middle class, who have been so busy making money that they have had no time for religion; and the poor, who, though sensing a need of help and having a desire to learn, have been held back by fear, superstition, and bondage to a primitive system imposed upon them by their nationality and culture.

In a special way Tibetans are bound by culture, by their religion, and by a willful stubbornness which tenaciously clings to old forms and beliefs even when these are shown to be impotent. Their culture is supremely one of bondage; all of life is prescribed for them, and they cannot even name a child without consulting an oracle or lama.

The Tibetans have been traditionally nomadic, moving so frequently that little prolonged contact with the gospel has been impossible.

Strong nationalism binds Tibetans to Buddhism. They are told that if they become Christians they are no longer true Tibetans. Community pressure further seeks to bar them from the gospel. A strong spirit of delusion binds them, and they are not able to see things in the proper perspective.

136. Proverbs 11:30b from an Old Testament book.

137. As a reminder to the reader, an account of market day open-air preaching in Kalimpong as conducted in the very early days of the Scots Mission by Tharchin's older friend Dr. Sutherland and the latter's SUMI teachers and students can be found early on in end-note no. 12 for Ch. 12 above. Needless to say, neither Dr. Sutherland nor Gergan Tharchin were ever guilty of conducting themselves in the manner of one preacher in the Kalimpong bazaar described by Tharchin's friend of later years, the young Austrian Baron, Nebesky-Wojkowitz, who in his book quoted from earlier recounted the offensive behavior of this so-called herald of the Christian gospel, as follows (in Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1955?, pp. 71-2):

A hoarse voice and the music of a concertina come from a corner of the market. They belong to a preacher of some obscure Christian sect, who is endeavoring to convince the Tibetans of the special advantages of his religion. . . . The man speaks very imperfect Tibetan, and the dense crowd of Tibetans gathered round him repeatedly roar with laughter at his bad pronunciation. To them this sermon is a glorious entertainment. After the fervent propagandist has concluded by damning all other Christian Churches as utterly heathen, he strikes up a hymn—accompanied by his wife on a squeaking concertina. At this the merriment of his audience reaches its climax. It undoubtedly takes courage for these two people to make a public declaration of their faith in the face of such derision. But does not their behavior damage yet further the already diminished prestige of the white man among Himalayan peoples? Most other missionaries do far more useful work in this field. Without any ado they perform valuable services to the community as physicians and teachers, making no distinction of race or religion.

138. *Ibid.*, 70-2.

139. Interview with Elder Subba, Nov. 1992.

140. For the specific source for the information regarding the origination of the Tibetan church kirk session by Graham, the length of his moderatorship, and the ordination of Tharchin as an Elder, see among the ThPaK: Rev. G. Tharchin, "Church News of the Tibetan Congregation, Kalimpong, for the Year 1970," p. 2 of this three-page typed document submitted (in early 1971?) for eventual publication in the *Eastern Himalayan Church News* (UCNI), and in which this latter-day ordained pastor of the Kalimpong Tibetan congregation, in honor of the Centenary Year of the founding of the Church of Scotland Mission in the Eastern Himalayan region, had recalled certain events and works associated with the early pioneers of the Mission, including the Revs. Macfarlane and Graham. The recognition date of 1918 is per Perry 1997, p. 74 note 47. And the date of Rev. Mackenzie's final

furlough departure is according to the minutes of Council meeting (at Siliguri), 24-5 Jan. 1924, p. 9, EHMC Minutes 1921-1935.

141. Sources: Graham 1897, pp. 140-1; Manuel 1914, pp. 14-15; Minutes, Tibetan Kirk Session, 1 Mar. 1925, copy in the ThPaK; letters in the ThPaK dating from the 1930s and later that reveal the titles and positions within the Tibetan congregation kirk session held by both Tharchin and Rev. Knox; cf. also Minto 1974, p. 30. With respect to this latter source, it needs to be mentioned that the late illustrious B.C. Simick Sr. of Kalimpong had taken exception to some of Minto's descriptions on pp. 30 and 31 of his work concerning the monthly congregational and the central or quarterly panchayats. On these pages of his copy of *Graham*, which copy is now in the possession of his son B.C. Simick Jr. and shown by the latter to the present writer, B.C. Sr. had made inked handwritten notations in the margins which either expressed contrary opinions to those of Minto or else gave additional details not included by Graham's biographer. For example, on p. 30 he indicated in the margin that the Burra (or Barhi) Panchayats was monthly, not quarterly, as stated by Minto, that the meeting of the said Burra Panchayat was held not at Graham's house but at "Church," that colporteurs were at the congregational panchayat as well as at the quarterly one, and that "deacons" as mentioned by Minto were not members of the congregational panchayat. Further in his margin notes on p. 30, B.C. Sr. wrote that "the Quarterly Panchayat was the meeting of Guild Mission-workers: pastors, catechists, teachers, colporteurs." "The Jan. meeting was the most important," he added, it involving "new teachers' appointment, transfer of workers, [and the selection of] delegates to the Eastern Himalayan Presbytery were made in that meeting." And finally, in the margin on p. 31 another informational note by B.C. Sr. was inked in as follows: "The *monthly* panchayat received reports from all churches, and problems presented before it were discussed and solved. In the evening all workers including students attended the monthly Guild Meeting. Its Chairman and Secretary were annually elected." It was "this Guild," added B.C. Sr., that had "resolved to send to Bhutan Sukhman as its evangelist in 1891-92, but ..." [sic].

142. The spring of 1928 for the arrival of Knox in Kalimpong is per the minutes of the Council meeting (at Kalimpong), 7-8 June 1928, p. 1, EHMC Minutes, 1921-1935.

143. It did so, though, more than three decades later in 1962 when Tharchin and his wife were inspired to establish a children's home almost singlehandedly and which is still in existence today. See Volume III of the present work, Ch. 26, for details.

144. The donation and purpose are per the minutes of the Council meeting (at Kalimpong), 3-4 Oct. 1935, p. 3, EHMC Minutes 1921-1935. It had not failed to materialize, however, in other places along the Tibetan borderlands. At both extremities of Tibet—east and west—such establishments for the demonstration of practical Christianity and the heralding of the Good News began to make their appearance and proved to be an unqualified success. The very first to appear and most likely the one that inspired Tharchin and Knox to propose it for the Kalimpong bazaar, had been established as early as 1923 at the provincial capital of Sining, an important crossroads for Tibetan traders near the Sino-Tibetan frontier. It had been started on Dec. 1st of that year by none other than missionary Frank D. Learner of the China Inland Mission. He it was whose prized photograph taken at the famed Kumbum Monastery in 1939 of the future Fourteenth Dalai Lama when the latter was but a boy of four provided Tharchin with an unexpected opportunity a year later at Lhasa to herald the gospel himself, in a most unorthodox way (see Chs. 21 and 22 of the present narrative's final volume for details). Writing in 1939 some 15 years after its inauguration, Learner describes the place the Inn had come to occupy in the missionary effort among the Tibetans on the China side of the Forbidden Land:

During these fifteen years some 15,000 people staying in the Inn have heard the gospel. It is true that the great majority of this number have come from near places on the border of Tibet, but a large number too have come from the more distant places, some even from Lhasa itself. The name of the Tibetan Gospel Inn in Tibetan is *Ntrun-tseng Chi Kang*, a literal translation of which is "Gospel Doctrine Hall."

...there are the ten guest rooms, furnished with a kang (brick bed which can be heated at will), a table, a fire stand, and a teapot... There is a kitchen where each guest can cook his food. In the large stable some 20 or 30 horses can be tethered. We have found this far too small, however, for Tibetans bring numberless horses with them. Besides other outhouses, there are apartments for the gatekeeper and evangelist. And, last but by no means least, there is the chapel. Thus you will see that the Inn is quite an attraction, and a very comfortable place for Tibetans staying for a time in the city.

...The majority of these Tibetans do not speak a word of Chinese, so it is essential that we have a Tibetan evangelist. What an opportunity!... If we are spared, the work will go forward as usual. guests will come and the gospel will be preached. What will be the result? This we leave with God Himself.

"The Tibetan Gospel Inn," *China's Millions* (May 1939):74. One of the positive consequences for Learner and his fellow laborers in the gospel resulting directly from the Gospel Inn itself was the fact that missionaries were often able to secure a night's lodging (and opportunity to spread the gospel further) in the numerous lamaseries in the surrounding district, including the Kumbum itself. This was because "many of the Tibetan priests, having themselves stayed in the Tibetan Gospel Inn run by Mr. Learner in Sining, or having heard of it from friends," wished at their own place of abode to reciprocate the kindness shown. L.A. Street, "Open Doors to a 'Closed' Land," *Ibid.*, 69.

More than a decade later, in 1937, the first such Gospel Inn made an appearance at the western extremity of Tibet's border: this time at the important trading center of Leh in Ladakh. And it was the Moravians who were responsible for its establishment in providing shelter and gospel enlightenment to the many wayfarers. First begun as "a venture of faith," it soon grew in size and effectiveness to the point where in just two short years it had ministered to the needs of over 4000 Buddhist, Hindu and Moslem pilgrims and travelers annually, and "nearly as many animals"! Moreover, in the words of the Moravian Himalayan Mission's superintendent, Walter Asboe, the Gospel Inn "has become an institution with which everybody in western Tibet is familiar, and which villagers from outlying districts do not fail to use." One might have thought, he went on, "that the Buddhist hierarchy would avoid a building which is expressly Christian, but it is quite common for a party of 20 or 30 lamas to shelter in the Inn." Asboe, "Annual Report of the West Himalayan Field for 1938-39," *PA* (June 1940): 4. Because of its effectiveness at Leh, other Inns soon sprang up at nearly all other stations of the Moravians in that part of the Indian borderland facing the "Closed" Land of Tibet. By this time, of course, the station at Tharchin's old home village of Poo had had to be abandoned long before. Ironically, however, two elderly local sisters in the Lord there, who had nonetheless continued to stay on at Poo for more than two decades afterwards (yet remained "strong and faithful, still reading their Bible and singing old Moravian hymns") when all other Christians had relocated to other places such as to Leh and Kyelang, at last themselves, now very lonely, asked in 1955 to join the Christian community at Leh where they soon thereafter became the new caretakers of the Gospel Inn! Pierre Vittoz, "Annual Report of the West Himalayan Mission for 1952-53," *ibid.* (1954):21; and Vittoz, "Report of West Himalaya for Jan. 1955-Mar. 1956," *ibid.* (1956):4.

145. Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1955?, p. 75.

146. Though the Tibetan dispensary is no longer in operation (having been closed down in the early 1970s), the original structure in which this medical facility had been housed still stands today, but now serves as an ordinary home. In a letter to the author, S.G. Tharchin further noted that "the last occupant of the house had been a Tibetan Christian family of our Church congregation." But with the death of the mother of this family in around the mid-1970s, he added, the other family members became scattered, with none of them at present living in Kalimpong. Since then, others have occupied the house, about whom Rev. Tharchin knows nothing. S.G. Tharchin to the author, Kalimpong, 14 Jan. 1991.

147. See Ch. 25 of the present biography's final volume for a description of his ordination service held in the Macfarlane Church building, Kalimpong.

148. These were: Tharchin's own son, Sherab G. Tharchin; Napa (N.P.) Tshering; Tshering Wangdi; and Peter T. Rapgey.

149. See again the source cited a few notes earlier: G. Tharchin, "Church News of the Tibetan Congregation, Kalimpong, for the Year 1970," p. 2 of a 3-page document found among the ThPaK, and probably submitted in early 1971 by the pastor for publication in the *Eastern Himalayan Church News* that was circulated widely among the UCNI churches in the region.

150. Interview with Tashi Dorje, Dec. 1992.

151. Except for the three quoted documents in the Text which have already been identified there as being a part of the ThPaK, the sources for much of the other information and all other quoted material in this and the preceding five paragraphs are per: (a) Dawa Norbu's observation recalled from the present narrative's first volume, as well as (b) interviews held with the following six individuals: R. Dorje, Dec. 1992; P. Hishey, Dec. 1992; A. Pradhan, Nov. 1992; B.C. Simick, Jr., Dec. 1992; V. Subba, late elder of Kalimpong's Macfarlane Church, Nov. 1992; and Twan Yang, Dec. 1992.

152. For more on this matter, see Chs. 25, 29 and 30 of the present narrative's final volume.

153. See 2 Peter 3:18a in the Christian New Testament.

154. GTUM TsMs, 152.

GTUM TsMs, 153-63; quotes: 153, 155, 156, 157, 157-8, 158, 159, 160, 160-1, 162, 162-3, 163.

1. For the sources used in this brief discussion of European development of the printing press, see: Henrik Willem van Loon, *The Story of Mankind* (New York: Pocket Library ed., 1956), 212, 214; Knapton, *Europe: 1415-1850* (New York, 1958), 73, 73n.; Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York, 1953), 606; Wells 1951, pp. 214-5; T. Walter Wallbank et al. 1967, pp. 281, 337; and James W. Thompson and Edgar N. Johnson, *An Introduction to Medieval Europe, 300-1500* (New York, 1937), 1033-4.

2. Various quotes are taken from Das 1969, pp. 78-9, 81, 82, 83; and for the arrival and setting up of the press in Jan. 1882, see Das 1902, pp. 50, 59, 105-7.

2a. For details on the execution, see Alex McKay, "The Drowning of Lama Sengchen Kyabying: a Preliminary Inquiry from British Sources," in Henk Blezer and Abel Zadoks (eds.), *Tibet Past and Present: Tibetan Studies I* (Leiden/Boston, 2002), 263-79. McKay writes that "later European language accounts of his execution blend pathos and the miraculous... [and] the general theme of [these] accounts... is of the victim calmly accepting his fate, while proving difficult to kill" (267).

3. Barber 1970, p. 31. Theos Bernard, the American who visited Lhasa in 1937 with Gergan Tharchin, has further described this highly developed art in Tibet. For he was deeply moved after viewing a number of examples of such illuminated manuscripts that were shown to him by his Lhasan host, General Tsarong, from the latter's own private collection. He writes: "Tsarong showed me some deluxe editions of small prayer books of perfect workmanship, with high-raised gold characters set in a thin wooden frame, to which the paper has been pasted. The frame itself was exquisitely painted, and covered with a strip of red silk with a layer of yellow. The rest of the book revealed alternate lines of gold and silver... Usually, the first two or three pages of such a book, and perhaps the last, have hand-painted deities at each end as borders. This gives only a brief description of the effort and care which go into the preparation of a fine Tibetan book, but there is no way to convey its beauty or give any idea of the hours of patient toil necessary to produce the sanctified results." Bernard 1939, p. 229.

4. The *Kangyur* (literally, *bkah-gyur*, or the rendering of the word—that is, the word of Buddha himself) is called "Tripitaka" in Sanskrit signifying the three divisions, or "baskets" (Pitakas), of the Buddhist scriptures: the Baskets of Discipline, Discourses and Metaphysics. It has also been known as the Pali Canon. Pali, which was a mixed dialect descended from Vedic Aryan, is for the most part a dead language today except that it still is used as the liturgical and scholarly language of Hinayana Buddhism. This latter usage derives from the fact that it was in this old Indic language that the original Buddhist scriptures had been written in India; and hence, the term *pali*, which in Sanskrit means "row," "line" or "series," came to be applied to the series of original Buddhist sacred texts. Translated from Pali into Sanskrit, then into Tibetan (with a few of the works translated indirectly through Chinese), the *Kangyur* consists of 100, sometimes printed in 108, volumes, comprises 1083 separate works, and is supposedly the closest to the original teachings of the Buddha, though higher criticism will not allow for an instant the claim often made that these volumes constitute a record of the actual discourses of the Buddha.

The *Tengyur*, on the other hand (which literally is *bstan-gyur*, or rendering of the teachings), is a general but official commentary and interpretation-giver of the *Kangyur*. This collection reveals something of the rational and philosophical side of Buddhism, with "the crudities and absurdities of the *Kangyur*... softened down." Some of the *Tengyur*'s commentaries were taken from Sanskrit, while others were originally composed in Tibetan. Besides those works of a purely exegetical or philosophical nature, the *Tengyur* also consists of books containing knowledge of several sciences such as art, grammar, poetry, astronomy, medicine, etc., all of which formed part of Buddhism in its medieval development. Most of the *Kangyur* and *Tengyur* works were translated or composed between the 9th and 10th centuries a.d., which was the period of Tibet's greatest literary achievements.

An interesting use to which the *Kangyur* as a *physical set* of 108 printed volumes were put was witnessed by the Austrian Heinrich Harrer in 1945 as it related to the cornfields surrounding the village of Kyirong in south central Tibet near the Nepal border. He writes: "Springtime came, work in the fields began and the winter corn came up in lovely green shoots. Here, as in Catholic countries, the cornfields are blessed by the priests. A long procession of monks, followed by the villagers, carried the one hundred and eight volumes of the Tibetan bible round the village accompanied by prayers and sacred music." Harrer 1956, p. 71. This was no small feat for the monks to perform, as the following information will attest: each of the 108 volumes numbering 1000 pages per

volume weighs 10 pounds, with each forming a package 26 inches long, 8 inches broad, and 8 inches deep. These Tibetan scriptures require a dozen yaks for their transport, and “the carved wooden blocks from which they are printed need rows of houses, like a city, for their storage.” It is said as well that a tribe of Mongols “paid 7000 oxen for a copy” of these 108 volumes of Tibetan sacred writing! “The Tibetan Bible,” *MRW* (Sept. 1906):708.

Another way in which this “sacred number” of 108 figures in Tibetan Buddhism is manifested in the erection of the famous prayer flags that dot the landscape of Lamaist countries, and especially in Buddhist Tibet. Surrounding many monasteries and larger private homes can be seen high poles to which have been affixed long strips of printed cloth. These are the ubiquitous prayer flags. According to the Buddhist faith, of course, whenever these flutter in the wind the prayers inscribed on them are carried aloft to the gods for the benefit of the one whose name has been inscribed thereon. Now to have even erected these flags constitutes in itself “a merit-gaining act”; but there is an increase in merit “if the sacred number of 108 are put up.” Macdonald 1943, p. 14; see also Pemba 1957, p. 55.

The number 108 figures in Tibetan Buddhism in still another way, almost all adherents of this faith having created strings of prayer beads or rosaries (called in Tibetan “tengwar”) in much the same fashion as those used by adherents of the Roman Catholic faith; only, in the case of the Tibetans, there must be exactly 108 beads of uniform size in theirs. When being counted these beads are held in the right hand, and when not in use the rosary is usually wound round the left wrist as a bracelet or worn around the neck. Such beads may be of wood, seeds, bone (“often human”—Hopkirk), coral (Hopkirk), glass, crystal, turquoise and ivory. Bonavia and Bartlett 1981, p. 10. “A bead is slipped each time a prayer is repeated, until a complete circuit has been made of the rosary. Also attached to the rosary are two or more secondary strings, each consisting of ten much smaller beads. These are used to register each completed circuit of the rosary. Thus very large numbers of prayers can be recorded.” Hopkirk 1982, p. 16. The act of telling the beads, incidentally, is called by Tibetans *tan-c'e*, literally meaning “to purr like a cat”—doubtless derived from the sound which is evoked when saying the rosary in rapid-fire fashion. See Tung 1980, Plate 87’s caption. These beads are used, in the words of one traveler through Lahul in Little Tibet, for two purposes: “to secure benefits in heaven [by telling off their prayers] and to keep their business accounts on earth [as though the beads were those of an abacus].” Edith Waugh, “Black Magic in the Himalayas,” *Travel* (Nov. 1931):21; see also McGovern 1924, p. 296.

Still further applications of the sacred number can be found in Tibet. In the vicinity of the Monastery of Tabo in Spiti, Lesser Tibet, one can find many long rows of small chortens, often 108 in a row. And the illustrious translator-scholar earlier discussed in the present narrative’s end-note no. 5 for Ch. 1, Rin-chen-bzang-po, who became spiritual adviser to King Ye-shes-'od of Guge in southwestern Tibet, was said to have founded, in holy observance of the sacred number of Tibetan Buddhism, exactly 108 monasteries, temples and chapels throughout West Tibet and Ladakh. See Finegan 1986, pp. 186, 188. And it will be recalled that one of these 108 temples was the one constructed at Gergan Tharchin’s village of Poo. And in Dawa Norbu’s home town of Sakya in South Central Tibet, exactly 108 monasteries and temples had at one time been scattered among the hill slopes of this ancient prestigious monastic community. But by the time of the Cultural Revolution of Mao’s Red Guard rampage (1966-68), all but the central cathedral had been razed to the ground. See Norbu 1987, p. 262. Finally, it will perhaps come as no surprise to the reader to learn that in his exodus to India from Lhasa on that fateful night in Mar. 1959, the young Fourteenth Dalai Lama had worn beneath his soldier’s disguise “a jacket of 108 patches of multicolored brocade.” Heinrich Harrer, “Flight in a Sandstorm: a Miraculous Escape,” *Life* (4 May 1959):30.

5. Quoted in Luree Miller, *On Top of the World: Five Women Explorers in Tibet* (New York, 1976), 156-7.

6. This information about the Shoparkhang is found in Lokesh Chandra, *Tibetan Works Printed by the Shoparkhang of the Potala* (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1950?), 120-2.

7. “The actual method of paper-making,” writes David Macdonald, “is very crude and unpractical, but the results are satisfactory to the Tibetans, who seldom use any paper but that made in their own country, either for correspondence or for printing.... The paper factory [at Gyantse]... is the main center of the industry in this part of Tibet. Large quantities of paper are made there, mostly for the Tibetan government, which uses it for the printing of sacred works for distribution to the monasteries, especially the *Kangyur* and *Tengyur*.... The thicker and coarser kinds [of paper] are used for printing and packing, while the finer qualities are used for letter-writing.” Macdonald went on to describe the process for making paper by the slow and tedious hand method (in Macdonald 1932, pp. 171, 169, 171):

From the hills around Gyantse large quantities of the bark from a species of a small poisonous shrub are collected by forced labor, each village, according to its size, having to send out so many workers. This bark, having been steeped in water for several days, is pounded by foot in a specially constructed trough. The resultant glutinous mass is then spread on one side of a fine gauze net, stretched on a wooden frame, about four feet square, and then washed in gently running water to remove impurities. It is then respread to the required thickness, and the frame is placed in the open air to dry. After the moisture has evaporated the sheet of paper is peeled off, trimmed, and is then ready to use. It is a peculiar fact that few insects will attack Tibetan-made paper, owing to its poisonous content, and for this reason also one must be careful not to remain too long in a room where large numbers of Tibetan books are stored, or severe headaches will result.

Though Tibetans seldom used any paper not made in their own land, as stated by Macdonald, Theos Bernard and other writers (e.g., Sir Charles Bell, in Bell 1924a, p. 86) have indicated that the best quality paper to be had in Tibet was that made in British Bhutan some 350 miles distant, thus increasing the price of paper due to the transportation costs involved. Reporting on his visit to Lhasa in 1937 with Tharchin, Bernard writes that the paper from Bhutan "comes in oblong sheets of about four or five feet long and two-and-a-half feet wide. The printer cuts up these sheets to the size of the manuscript and pastes several of the small sheets together, and after the paste has been generously applied and the paper ironed out, the book is ready for printing." Bernard 1939, p. 228.

8. Harrer 1956, pp. 225-6. It should be pointed out that even as late as the 1950s in Tibet, certain kinds of literature—such as anecdotal material, poems and songs—were still being produced in loose-leaf handwritten manuscript form, copied over and over again by skilled monks, but not gathered between boards like block-printed books would be. These obviously fetched an even higher price than books did. The poems of the Sixth Dalai Lama, however, formed an exception to this handwritten rule, for they were printed as a volume. He was the ruler who became famous (or infamous, as the case might be) as the Dalai Lama who chose to satisfy his need for women by slipping out of the Potala late at night in disguise to have secret rendezvous with various lovers in the capital. "His people," wrote Harrer, "did not begrudge him his desire to satisfy the needs of his poetic soul." Harrer added that he was not the only person to appreciate "the verses of this lonely prisoner: many Tibetans love the poems of their long-dead ruler" too. *Ibid.*, 226.

9. Sources for the discussion of Tibet's development of printing and bookmaking, other than those already noted, are: Finegan 1986, p. 26, and p. 13 in conjunction with Wallbank et al. 1967, p. 337 on the Cave discovery; Pemba 1957, p. 31; "Narthang Press Inaugurated [at Dharamsala, NW India]," *TR* (June 1989):6; J. Chinlei. "Palaces, Monasteries and Their Art," in Jigmei et al. 1981, p. 207; again Macdonald 1932, p. 170; and Bell 1924a, p. 86.

10. Letter, Tharchin to Political Officer Sikkim, Kalimpong, 16 Dec. 1963. ThPaK.

11. Quoted in Urban 1967, p. 10. The authoress, a European-born missionary from Canada, had visited for two weeks in the Tharchin home at Kalimpong in 1964 and had put the question to her host.

12. Interview with D.K. Khaling, Dec. 1992. Khaling served in Tharchin's latter years as his Advocate but who later became a school principal in the Kalimpong area. He had even been considered a candidate at one time for selection as Principal of the famed SUM Institution in Kalimpong.

13. He bore the same names, in fact, as those of his famous ancestor (1663-1727), the German divine and philanthropist who was the leader of the Halle Pietists and the Halle University teacher of none other than Count von Zinzendorf, the restorer of the Moravian sect. Born in 1870 at Gradenfrei in Silesia, the later Francke joined the Moravian staff of the West Himalaya Mission in 1896, arriving at Leh that year, and generally where he remained on the field through 1909 (except for infrequent furloughs). While on the field and then back in Europe after 1910, Francke went on to become one of the great contributors to the translation of the entire Bible into Tibetan, and until his death in 1930 worked closely with probably the greatest of all the translators of the Bible into Tibetan, Yoseb Gergan. Their joint venture in that work is more thoroughly treated in Ch. 28 of the present narrative's final volume.

Early on in his career he had set himself to master the Tibetan language thoroughly: the classical as found in the Buddhist sacred writings as well as the vernaculars found among many of the groups he came into close contact with on his various missionary travels. One of his most famous journeys took him through Tharchin's home village of Poo in 1909 where he spent several weeks studying the antiquities of the region. The entire trek, most of it done on foot, began in June from Simla along the Hindustan-Tibet Road and the Sutlej Valley through the hill states of Rampur and Bashahr, on then into Spiti and over the Pharang Pass into Ladakh, and finally on

to Srinagar which he reached in mid-October. All his findings were in time published by the British Government of India in two massive volumes, they appearing in 1914 and 1926, respectively, and under the general title of *Antiquities of Indian Tibet*. As a result, he was recognized as one of the great authorities in Tibetan studies, especially in literature, folklore and history, as well as a specialist in the archaeology of Little or Lesser Tibet.

His other great journey occurred in 1914. It began in May from his home territory of Silesia just a few months prior to the outbreak of the Great War and took him through Russia in Europe and Asia and on into Chinese Turkestan, finally ending at Leh in Sept. He had been commissioned by the Royal Ethnological Museum of Munich to carry out research in scientific interests and to secure for the Museum various manuscripts from among the finds in Turkestan. Francke's trip was successful, but upon arriving at Leh he learned to his great surprise that war had broken out in Europe and was affecting the future of certain missionaries worldwide. He himself was soon "ordered down" to the Indian plains where, because he was a citizen of a country at war with Britain, he was interned at a camp at Ahmednagar as a German subject of military age. A few others among the West Himalaya Mission were also treated in this fashion or else deported immediately to their native land. Francke was himself repatriated after a lengthy period in the camp, and at the end of the war he joined the faculty of Berlin University in the post of Professor of Tibetan.

Besides his academic responsibilities Francke continued with his labors on the Tibetan Bible, maintaining constant contact with his colleagues and other Tibetan translators in Ladakh, Lahul, Darjeeling (here with David Macdonald) and elsewhere. He died at Berlin on 18 Feb. 1930.

As mentioned elsewhere in the present narrative, Francke had the privilege while on his Central Asian journey to meet at Sarepta among the Mongolian Calmucks in southern Russia the son of Edward Pagell the pioneer of the West Himalaya Mission and founder of the Poo mission station. Born himself at Poo, Pagell's son went on to become a schoolmaster at Sarepta, bearing a witness to the Mongolians whom his father was never able to reach with the gospel in his own lifetime. Sources for this profile of Francke were: (a) A.W., "August Hermann Francke" (obituary), *MM* (Apr. 1930):28; (b) "Dr. A.H. Francke" (obituary), *Times* (London), 1 Mar. 1930 and quoted in *ibid.*, 28-9; and (c) Bishop Benjamin LaTrobe, "Dr. Francke's Journey through Russian and Chinese Turkestan to Leh," *ibid.* (Sept. 1915):134-8.

14. The sources consulted for the discussion of this earliest journalistic enterprise in the Tibetan language were: (a) "Language Problems in Tibet: an Interview with the Editor of the First Tibetan Newspaper," *BW* (June 1905):167; (b) Hutton 1923, p. 361; (c) LaTrobe, "Monthly Missionary Review," *MM* (Mar. 1904):44-5 and "Moravian Missionary News in Brief," *ibid.* (July 1905):108; (d) "Annual Report of the West Himalayan Mission for 1906," *PA* (Sept. 1907):689; (e) a one-page article from *Tibetan Bulletin* that, downloaded from its Internet website, was simply entitled, "Tibetan Bulletin – 1999 (Jan-Feb)," and which discussed both Francke's and Tharchin's journalistic creations; and (f) cf. also Pierre Vittoz, "Annual Report of the West Himalayan Mission for 1951-2," *ibid.* (1953):56; F.W. Thomas, "Preface," in A.H. Francke, *A History of Western Tibet* (London, 1907), ix; Bray, "A.H. Francke's *La dvags kyi akhbar*: the First Tibetan Newspaper," *TJ* (Autumn 1988):58-60 (Bray acknowledged later, in a letter to the present author, his mistake in the Tibetan spelling here of *agbar*); and "The Story of the Tibetan Newspaper," *MM* (June 1930):46, in which the author of the article states that "the little paper which he [Francke] started ceased when he left the field."

15. The sources consulted for the discussion of this second newspaper publishing attempt for Tibetans are: (a) *MM* (Oct. 1908):197; (b) the *Times* (London), 24 Aug. 1907, p. 8 and 14 Mar. 1908, p. 7; (c) "A Newspaper in Tibet," *MRW* (Mar. 1908):232; and (d) McKay 1997, p. 33.

16. See "List of Exhibits Shown after the Annual Meeting of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. on the 1st of February 1926—No. 12. Exhibited by Mr. Johan van Manen: Three Tibetan Newspapers," listed and described in the *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, New Series, vol. 22, no. 6 (1926):xxxii-xxxiii.

17. Goodman 1986, pp. 109-10.

18. As reported in 1933 by the editor of one of the Moravian publications, "the curator of the Oriental MS. Department of the British Museum, having seen a copy of the Kyelang newspaper, has written asking for a monthly copy, for which he was willing to subscribe. He said he had some copies of the Ladakhi newspapers, published in 1906 by Dr. A.H. Francke, and that the Kyelang paper would form a useful pendant to the series." *MM* (June 1933):42.

19. The sources for the discussion and quoted material dealing with the revival of the Moravian journalistic tradition, as reflected in both the *Kyelang News* and the *Ladakh Herald*, are as follows: the Asboe Reports to be found in *PA* (June 1927):143, (June 1929):263, (June 1931):10, (June 1934):14, (June 1935):9-10, and (June 1938):5; in letters by Asboe which appear in *MM* (Aug. 1927):58, *ibid.* (Dec. 1927):90, *ibid.* (Sept. 1937):70, and *ibid.* (July 1938):54; also, "The Story of the Tibetan Newspaper," *ibid.* (June 1930):46-7; "Winning the Tibetans," *MRW* (Mar. 1936):154; Bray's article again, in *TJ* (Autumn 1988):60-1; and Hutton, *By Patience and the Word; the Story of the Moravian Missions* (London, 1935), 189-90. A typical example of one of the earliest monthly issues of the revived *La dvags kyi agbar*—handwritten but beautifully executed, nonetheless—can be seen on page 47 of *MM* (June 1930). As described by the missionary editor himself, here were its contents: "News about various countries; an article by Br. Yoseb Gergan on the soul's needs; events in Lahul; an appeal on behalf of an orphan boy; the death of the King of Roumania; the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican; on kindness to dumb animals; the continuation of a series by Br. Francke on the Kings of Ladakh." *Ibid.* (Dec. 1927):90. The scribe who assisted the editor by writing out by hand the Tibetan text of this early issue of the revived newspaper was none other than Gapel, a local Tibetan from Lesser Tibet. *Ibid.* (Aug 1927):58. He would go on to become famous as the chief scribe who so sacrificially assisted Yoseb Gergan, the great Bible translator, and others in laboriously preparing for publication in handwritten form the first complete Bible in Tibetan ever to appear (in 1948). See more on this Bible endeavor in Ch. 28 of the present narrative's final volume. Gapel would later be replaced on the newspaper staff at Kyelang by Zodpa, another Christian national there. *Ibid.*, and *ibid.* (June 1930):47. Zodpa not only served as a scribe for the newspaper editor but also corrected mistakes in grammar and the use of idioms. "Without his scholarly aid," wrote Asboe, "I should find the writing of the paper more difficult than ever." A European writing a paper of this sort, he added, "is apt to express himself in a 'foreign' way." *Ibid.*

20. Tsering 1985, p. 20.

21. Tharchin 1942, p. 1.

22. That he was successful in this second journalistic goal is reflected, in part at least, by the fact that by the 1940s and '50s the readers of the newspaper he finally succeeded in launching had recognized the *Tibet Mirror* (an equivalent name in English) as a vital organ for the dissemination of important news events and analyses. To give but one example (this one from the year 1954), George N. Patterson, a former Scottish missionary from the Plymouth Brethren who had worked along the Sino-Tibetan border area during that period and was later stationed in Kalimpong for a while, quotes extensively on pages 123-4 of his book, Patterson 1959, from an article which appeared that year in the issue of Tharchin's newspaper for 1 June 1954. The article quoted by Patterson was a letter to the newspaper's Editor (Tharchin), and its opening sentences quite unconsciously reveal the important place which Tharchin—and his newspaper as a two-way dissemination organ for news, opinions, etc.—had by that time come to occupy in the minds and hearts of the Tibetan readership. Note the following excerpt:

To Most Learned Tharchin-Ja, Printer and Publisher of World News:

I have some very important information for you. Having read the detailed news of the recent Sino-Indian Trade Pact, I enclose copies of the two Simla treaties of 1914.

As you have the fixed interests of Tibet at heart I request that you publish the enclosed. (Name given but withheld.)

To Leaders, Officials, Monks, Soldiers, Traders, Craftsmen, Agriculturalists, Nomads—the People of Tibet:

This is to alert you to the great danger threatening our common cause, the independence of Tibet, regarding which I feel compelled to speak a few words.

The last edition of the *Tibet Mirror* carried translations from Indian papers of a trade pact signed at Peking between India and China regarding Tibet. [etc. etc.]

23. Interview with Simick, Jr., Nov. and Dec. 1992. A longtime Lecturer of Tibetan at Kalimpong College. Simick was a close younger-generation Christian friend of Tharchin's and one who has himself long had a burden for the evangelization of Tibet and Tibetans.

24. Quoted in Urban 1967, p. 11. The quotation dates from 1964.

25. The marble tablet on the building reads: "The Anderson Office, the Gift of Miss H.R. Anderson, Deaconess of the Church of Scotland, a Lifelong Worker for the Extension of Christ's Kingdom, 1907." She was a sister of Mrs. Charteris, wife of the man for whom Charteris Hospital in Kalimpong was named. Manuel 1914, pp. 52.

150. This structure was also sometimes referred to by the missionaries and other hill station residents as the "white flat" because of the immaculately white exterior of its walls that even to this day appear as such. Per interview with S.G. Tharchin. Jan. 1998.

26. Roneo: a trademark for a kind of machine that produces duplicated copies of material that is similar in principle to the mimeograph, the latter machine of which consists of (1) a frame in which a stencil is stretched, and (2) an inking roller for pressing ink through the porous lines of the stencil onto paper.

27. Norbu 1975, p. 18.

27a. The information and various interpretations found in the preceding paragraphs of the Text dealing with the content of the *Tibet Mirror's* masthead and various examples of its office stationery letterheads are per eight main sources: (a) several interviews with Rev. G. Tharchin's son S.G. Tharchin and other members of the latter's family, conducted over an eight-day period between 2 and 9 Mar. 2003; (b) conversations held in Kalimpong with a number of friends of the late Tharchin Babu; (c) letter, Bray to the author, London, 23 Aug. 1997; (d) Norbu, "Introduction," in H. Louis Fader, *Called from Obscurity: the Life and Times of... Gergan Dorje Tharchin* (Kalimpong: TMP, 2002), I:xi; (e) a random perusal of a number of issues scattered throughout the run of Tharchin Babu's newspaper; (f) information on Tibetan Buddhism's *Dorje Ge-trum, Norbu Me-bar*, and the *Tashi Takgye*—all gleaned for the author by S.G. Tharchin from Phurbu Tsering of Kalimpong on 8-9 Mar. 2003; (g) Claude B. Levenson, *Symbols of Tibetan Buddhism* (Paris, 1996), 56-7; and (h) certain conclusions the present author came to as a result of the foregoing seven sources.

28. See a discussion of the *Tibet Mirror* in Tsering 1985, p. 20.

29. McGovern 1924, p. 426. His Holiness was quite sensitive, it seems, to outside critical judgments of Tibetans and their culture. McGovern, in a lengthy account of his 1923 exploits in the Forbidden Land, commented as follows:

The Dalai Lama is also possessed of two or three books in English about Tibet, and he has had portions of these translated for his benefit, but he takes very much to heart the criticisms which have been made regarding his people and their civilization. The Japanese priest Ekai Kawaguchi, who managed to get to Lhasa in disguise, won his intense dislike on account of a criticism [he made in his celebrated book, *My Three Years in Tibet* (1909)] of the character of Padma Sambhava, the wine-bibbing and sensual founder of Lamaism. I sometimes wonder what he will think of some of my own remarks about Tibet. . . . And a certain English official who was in Tibet made himself very unpopular with the Lhasa court on account of an article he wrote in a Calcutta newspaper on the filthiness of the town of Phari. *Ibid.*, 426-7.

30. *Ibid.*, 427.

31. Bhuchung K. Tsering, "Time to Think!" *TR* (Nov. 1981):10.

32. Bell 1924a, pp. 205-6. That the practice never really died out is confirmed by what happened in 1952 and succeeding years to the new Panchen Lama that had been foisted upon the Tibetan government and people by the Chinese Nationalists and Communists in the 1940s and early '50s against the will of Tibet, whose Dalai Lama should have had the last say in approving such a choice, but could not. So that when this imposed Panchen Lama finally made his first appearance in hostile Lhasa in 1952, numerous songs about Mao's "puppet" Panchen suddenly appeared on the lips of the Tibetan capital's streetwalkers, none of which was complimentary to His Serenity. The most popular of these derogatory ditties, roughly translated, runs as follows:

In holy quarters in Lhasa
There dwells a young pretender.
He is as tall in body as he is conceited in ignorance.
If the dawn had not broken
The thief would have committed robbery.

"The last two lines meant that the thief (Mao's Panchen) would have robbed the Dalai Lama of power if the dawn of enlightenment had not awakened in time the Tibetan people to the evil plan of the Chinese." Quoted and described by Lowell Thomas, Jr. in Thomas Jr. 1959, pp. 117-8. (It should be pointed out, however, that much later this same so-called puppet Panchen would come to be loved and venerated by the Tibetan masses for the strong stand he finally took against the Chinese overlords and the courage he evinced in declaring publicly in Lhasa his loyalty to the Dalai Lama as the rightful ruler of Tibet.) That the practice henceforth engaged in by Tibetans of regularly lampooning their Chinese masters in satirical verse was having the desired effect is made

dramatically evident by the fact that the new Lord of Tibet, Chinese General Chang Ching-wu (Tan Chen Woo) felt it necessary to suggest "that the Tibetan government issue a proclamation" that among other things would place a ban on singing in the streets! Goodman 1986, p. 188. (This was the same foreign Lord of Tibet, incidentally, who would personally experience several confrontations with Gergan Tharchin at Kalimpong before he trekked over the Himalayas to assume his overlordship of the Land of Snows. See Ch. 24 of the present narrative's final volume.)

For a thoroughly absorbing discussion of this subject, see Melvyn C. Goldstein (a cultural anthropologist specializing on Tibet), "Lhasa Street Songs: Political and Social Satire in Traditional Tibet," *TJ* (Spring/Summer 1982):56-66. Goldstein writes that these songs constituted "a remarkable genre of open political and social criticism...that lampooned the vice, folly and misdeeds of the mighty and summed up important political and social events, often with biting sarcasm and irony....Because they normally consisted of only one or two stanzas (4 or 8 lines), they were heavily dependent on imagery. Like political cartoons, they caricatured political, and sometimes social, events and people with a few deft strokes, but here the strokes were alliterations, extended puns or names, allusions, etc. Moreover, although the songs were normally sung to well-known folk tunes, the lyrics were also recited orally and are really a brilliant form of oral verse which express scorn and ridicule at the foibles of the most powerful figures in Tibet including even the Dalai Lama and Regent."

After citing numerous examples from throughout Tibetan history and up to recent times, the author concluded by saying that "they illustrate the manner in which events perceived to be important by Tibetans, generally the intelligentsia, were aired in public in a [social] system which normally required deference and which possessed no radios or newspapers through which to communicate opinions. These songs, however, were more than mere 'popular opinion.' They were also an important weapon in the intense and bitter competition for power that existed within the Tibetan political system. Although they rarely were directly responsible for a change or reform, they were a means of embarrassing one's enemies and of shaping the opinions of others in the elite. Similarly, they were a vehicle for the expression of strong feelings and frustrations about political events and figures which could not otherwise be publicly expressed. They represent a sophisticated and beautiful expressive art form which reflects the deep-seated independence and wit that is inherent in Tibetan character and culture."

Incidentally, despite what Bell had asserted, Goldstein makes it clear that it was more often the case that competing personages among the Tibetan leadership or intelligentsia, rather than individuals among the laboring classes, were the ones who actually authored these satirical verses, which were then surreptitiously and quite cleverly fed to the masses, who in turn willingly filled the streets with the sound of their lyrics set to the tunes of familiar folk songs. Here are but two representative examples cited and described by Goldstein, one from 1904, the other from the mid-1950s. The first is concerned with one of the major events in the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama's reign, the British invasion of Tibet under Younghusband and General Macdonald. "The song comments sarcastically on the weakness of Tibetans' resolve to oppose the enemy and the underlying reason for the amazingly rapid transformation of popular opinion regarding the invaders.

At first they were known as enemies of the faith;
And then they were known as 'foreigners.'
But when (we) saw their English dollars,
We called them Honorable Sahib.

"This song," Goldstein writes, "makes use of some of the popular terms used to depict the British, first as evil 'enemies of the faith' whose presence endangered the continuation of Buddhism in Tibet, and then derogatorily as 'foreigners.' However, it concludes that the change in popular opinion that occurred after the actual British occupation of Lhasa, and the use of the very honorific form 'Honorable Sahib' for the Expeditionary leader Younghusband, derives from the fact that the British paid for their food and transport in silver dollars and that many Tibetans were making substantial profit from their presence in Lhasa. Thus, these 'enemies of the faith' became honorable gentlemen when people saw that they would pay for goods and services, implying, of course, how shallow was the concern with religion among the business and governmental sectors."

The second song is a commentary on the coming of the People's Liberation Army to Lhasa from Communist China. It ran as follows:

The Liberation army has arrived.
The herd of beggars has arrived.
Everyone has been liberated.
Everyone has been made beggars.

"This song," explains Goldstein, "sarcastically comments on the Chinese liberation of Tibet. It states that the Chinese PLA has arrived but has become like a herd of beggars, i.e. has brought no food or supplies. It continues this theme by saying that while everyone has been 'liberated,' because of the inflation caused by the presence of

the PLA, everyone has become like beggars due to high prices and the inability of common people to buy foodstuffs." *Ibid.*, 56, 62-3, 65, 66.

33. Interview with Dawa Norbu and recorded in Norbu 1975, p. 19.

34. Goodman 1986, p. 198.

34a. Tsering, "Babu Tharchin's Biography," *TR* (Oct. 2002):26.

35. When preparing his "memoirs" Tharchin mentioned that he had the letter from the Dalai Lama somewhere in his personal files. See GTUM TsMs, 160.

36. Goodman 1986, p. 110.

37. This English translation appears in Tsering 1985, p. 20.

38. Goodman 1986, p. 110.

39. Tharchin to Bell, Kalimpong, dated July/Aug. 1929 (handwritten note, translated from Tibetan, but not in Tharchin's handwriting), Bell Papers.

40. Typewritten letter, Tharchin to Graham, Lhasa, 6 Dec. 1927, Graham Papers. According to Rev. S.G. Tharchin, his father had at times carried to Lhasa his precious tiny portable English-language typewriter, which even after these many decades is still sometimes used by Rev. S.G. in his own office at the Tharchin compound!

41. Tharchin to Bell, Tsarong House, Lhasa, 25 July 1937, Bell Papers.

42. Letter, Tharchin to Political Officer Sikkim, Kalimpong, 16 Dec. 1963, ThPaK.

43. This was not unlike the mocking which Tharchin related many years later during an interview of him held by *Tibetan Review's* editor-in-chief, Dawa Norbu, in late 1975. "When I was first trying to start a Tibetan press," reported Tharchin, "a Nepali friend of mine who ironically enough later started his own Tibetan press, told me: 'Why are you wasting your money? There is no future.'" See Norbu 1975, p. 18.

44. Tharchin to Bell, Lhasa, 25 July 1937, Bell Papers.

45. Tsering, *Short Biographical Notes on Some Prominent Kinnauris at the Turn of This Century*, a Paper presented at the Seminar on Development of Himalayan Art, Culture and Religion for Peace, Manali, H.P. India, 18-20 Oct. 1987 (Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1987), 8, 9 (mimeographed).

46. The Panchen's "Letter of Refutation" was printed in *JRCAS* (1936):720.

47. See both his earlier book, *Nowhere Else in the World* (New York, 1935), 295, 255; and his later volume, *Foreign Devil; an American Kim in Modern Asia*, (New York, 1942), 240-3, 245-6, 265-6, 271-3, 284-5, 296, 304. The source for some additional information about the Panchen Lama which is included in the discussion of this fascinating episode is Richardson 1945, pp. 37-8.

48. Tsering to Tharchin, Gangtok (but on his way back to Lhasa), 3 Feb. 1943; and Tharchin to Tsering, Kalimpong, undated but a penned handwritten draft of his reply found on the reverse side of Tsering's letter. ThPaK.

49. A page from the 2nd of Jan. 1938 issue of his paper, incidentally, has been reproduced as it appeared in Tibetan in *TJ* (Spring 1983):57, with an English translation of the page provided alongside it.

50. The article appeared as a reprint in *Living Age* (Boston) (Dec. 1939):377-9.

51. The writer of this article was unaware, of course, of the Moravian Mission's *La dvags kyi agbar* newspaper published monthly at the other end of northern India, discussed earlier, that was even then (1939) penetrating the forbidden fastnesses of Lamaland somewhat successfully.

52. Anon. 1950, p. 13. True, the periodicity of Gergan Tharchin's publication flitted from one time-frame to another over the years, but generally speaking, one could say with a certain degree of accuracy that the paper was a *monthly*; although the editor-publisher acknowledged in 1964 that one of the reasons for its irregularity had been "a lack of financial means." This, at least, helped to account for its irregular appearance in the declining

years of the *Mirror's* publication; another reason put forward by him: "owing to my poor health." However, he noted retrospectively that "the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago has helped me tremendously financially, because it [was] very interested in the [newspaper's] Christian pages." All as told to Margaret Urban in 1964, and quoted in Urban 1967, p. 11. Indeed, among the ThPaK were found several letters from 1957 signed by the Assistant Director of that American institution's Literature Mission Department indicating a wish to resume—after a lapse of several years—the purchase of advertising space for further "Gospel Ads" to appear in the *Mirror* that would again feature portions from the Christian Scriptures in the Tibetan language as would be supplied to Tharchin by the Scripture Gift Ministry of India at Bangalore. See Peter Gunther to SGM, Chicago, 12 July; SGM's Joint Secretary P. Singh to Tharchin, Bangalore, 18 July; Gunther to Tharchin, Chicago, 4 Sept.; and Tharchin to Gunther, Kalimpong, 3 Dec.—all in the year 1957. In the latter letter the Tibetan newspaper Editor had also indicated that in 1955 Rev. Homer C. Duncan of Darjeeling had sent to Tharchin "money for six months' advertising" to fund the publication of "selected portions" from "mostly...the Book of Revelation," which Tharchin did in fact publish "in the Christian pages" of his Tibetan newspaper.

53. The second of the three priestly classes in Tachienlu (and elsewhere in Tibet) and the largest of the three to so avidly read Tharchin's newspaper. The first is the *lama* or ordained priest, "who has studied the Tibetan scriptures closely, done religious penance, and practiced meditation"; the second is the *draba* or *trapa* who as "an aspirant monk" has "yet to pass his examinations"; and the third is the *amcho* or lowest order in the Tibetan Buddhist rank of priests or monks. See Moraes 1960, p. 32n.; Matthiessen 1979, p. 241; Hermann G. Schneider, *Working and Waiting for Tibet; a Sketch of the Moravian Mission to the Western Himalayas*, trans. & rev. to date by Arthur Ward (London, 1891?), 67; and for a description of all three priestly ranks, see Rev. R. Cunningham (CIM missionary based in West China), "Prayer and Priests in Tibet," *MRW* (Feb. 1916):128-30.

54. By the Tibetan postal runner system (in which runners run from dawn to dusk in relays of about eight miles) it would require at most ten days for delivery, and more than likely only seven or eight; but "it could take a month or more for a caravan to ply the 300 miles from Kalimpong to Lhasa." Goodman 1986, p. 110; see also F. Spencer-Chapman, "Lhasa in 1937," *GJ* (June 1938):503. Sir Charles Bell has noted that this postal service was under the Indian government as far as Gyantse, and from there to Lhasa under the management of Tibet. In his estimation the service was "remarkably efficient," with letters and newspapers requiring only eight to eleven days to reach Lhasa all the way from Calcutta (doubtless via Kalimpong where the *Tibet Mirror* could easily be slipped into the postal packets bound for the Tibetan capital). Bell 1924a, p. 202. Insofar as the postal run between Lhasa and the western Tibetan outpost of Gartok was concerned, the Government's special couriers in the 19th century gave a good account of themselves in the opinion of Nain Singh Rawat. He had been British India's "Chief Pundit" (or disguised explorer of Tibet). Traveling by caravan along the same route in 1866, the Pundit, according to author Charles Allen, was greatly impressed by the frequent sight of "special messengers galloping between staging posts, exhausted men with cracked faces and sunken eyes, often with wounds and sores on their bodies. This relay system was the key to Tibet's security, for these messengers were required to cover the 800 miles between Lhasa and Gartok in 20 days and were forbidden to halt except to eat and change horses. The letters they carried were tucked inside their long-sleeved, all-enveloping chogas and closed at the breast with a special seal that only the official to whom the letter was addressed was allowed to break." Allen 1983, pp. 139-40.

54a. Anon. 1950, p. 13.

55. Tharchin 1942, p. 1.

56. Harrer 1956, pp. 147-8.

57. John Bray, "Hugh Richardson—In Memoriam," *Ladakh Studies* (Autumn 2000):25.

58. It should be observed that the first *Lepcha* newspaper (which appeared in a four-page format), edited by the Lepcha pastor, Rev. G.T. Sitling, was printed by means of the Litho process in Tharchin's press (1930-1). In addition, the second *Lepcha* Primer, compiled by Rev. Sitling, was also printed by the same process and in the same press. The first *Lepcha* Primer had earlier been compiled by a missionary who had already had it printed at the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta. For all this information see GTUM TsMs, 163n.

59. Quoted in Urban 1967, p. 11. As said by Tharchin to the authoress in 1964 at Kalimpong.

GTUM TsMs, 164-76; quotes: 169, 169-70, 170, 170-1, 172, 174, 175-6.

1. The latter was the former Miss Betty Graham, the youngest daughter of Rev. Dr. John A. Graham. Mrs. (Bunty) Odling was the next youngest daughter of the Grahams. Per Minto 1974, pp. 34, 35.

2. Interview with Khaling, Dec. 1992.

3. See McKay 1998, pp. 309-10.

4. See Ch. 28 of the present biography's final volume for more regarding this relative of Tharchin's by marriage.

5. Letter, Tharchin to ? , Kalimpong, 21 Jan. 1931, MCHA.

6. Typewritten letter, Tharchin to Graham, Lhasa, 6 Dec. 1927, Graham Papers. And as explained in the documentation for this same letter in the preceding chapter's End-Notes, Tharchin had at times taken his tiny portable English-language typewriter with him to Lhasa. The Tharchin source written years afterwards and quoted from about his visiting Lhasa to see his mother-in-law and other relatives is: letter, Tharchin to ? . 21 Jan. 1931 (cited more fully in note immediately above).

7. Sources for the information and quoted material in this and the preceding paragraph about the Rai Bahadur Dhondup are: typewritten letter, Tharchin to Graham, Lhasa, 29 Sept. 1927; Neame 1947, pp. 172-3; McKay 1997, pp. 72, 127-8; and Pemba 1977, pp. 23-4.

8. Typewritten letter, Tharchin to Graham, Lhasa, 25 Oct. 1927, Graham Papers.

9. *Ibid.*, 14 Oct. 1927.

10. The quotation of the Head Lama is taken from the English translation of Sundar's Urdu book and is found in Appasamy 1966, p. 45. Additional information on the Sadhu's little Urdu volume itself can be found at the beginning of Ch. 11 in the present narrative's initial volume. The complete response of the Head Lama concerning the Tibetan king, as recorded by the Sadhu and quoted in Appasamy, is as follows: "Certainly it is true that a few hundred years ago great preachers came here and converted one of our kings to Christianity, but after his death his successor banished the Christians from the country and from that time until now Christians have no permission to come here." The "great preachers" to whom the Lama referred were the European Jesuits, who were the first ever to establish a mission station anywhere in Tibet; but as a matter of fact they were never able to convert the Tibetan king as claimed by this Head Lama. In the third decade of the 17th century these Portuguese Fathers of the Catholic Church, led by Father Antonio de Andrade and Brother Manuel Marquis, had made the then major West Tibetan town of Tsaparang (Chabrang) their Mission headquarters to Tibet, having arrived there in 1624 from Agra. With some 15 Jesuits being able to serve there over the next few years, they did prosper for a time and were almost able to persuade the "King" (actually Governor) of Guge (another name at that time for this particular semi-autonomous area of West Tibet) to become a Catholic Christian. A church and Mission house were constructed at Tsaparang in 1626 as well as a Mission branch established at the town of Rudok, but evil days then fell upon the missionaries as a result of the "King" having antagonized the Lamas by his favors to the foreign priests; for in 1630 a revolution broke out in Guge, with the "King" and the two Jesuits in charge being carried off to Leh and the church building and Mission at Tsaparang being sacked and its 400 converts reduced to slavery. When in August the following year the Jesuit Visitor Francesco de Azevedo reached the sacked village, he encountered considerable hostility from the new ruler (a Governor). And hence, the Visitor, together with John de Oliviera, trekked northwards to Leh. Here they obtained permission to preach their faith in western Tibet; but the Mission appears to have eventually spent its course, for the Jesuit Mission had to be abandoned around the year 1640, with Brother Marquis being last heard of as a prisoner at Tsaparang in 1641.

According to Kenneth Mason, writing in the explorers' magazine *Himalayan Journal*, since that time Tsaparang had seldom ever been visited by European travelers. Nonetheless it was visited by Mackworth Young in the same year as the Sadhu had himself been traveling in West Tibet (1912); and in searching diligently for any trace of the old Mission at Tsaparang, he discovered only "a weather-beaten cross lying on the top of a large 'chorten' opposite the Dzongpon's [Governor's] house." Mason, "Expeditions: Messrs. F. Williamson and F.

Ludlow in Western Tibet,” *Himalayan Journal* (1933): 104-5. In reality, though, even the earlier assumption by Young that this “cross” represented hard evidence of a prior presence of Catholic Christianity has been convincingly shown by Giuseppe Tucci and Eugenio Ghersi to be grossly inaccurate. Having themselves visited Tsaparang in 1933 on a scientific expedition into West Tibet, they discovered this so-called Christian cross “to be a delusion.” In explanation of this charge, they write: “that cross is none other than the central axis of the chorten... on which is fixed transversely a stick which serves as a framework for that symbolic ornament with which every chorten must be finished off at the top: that is to say, the half-moon and the solar disk, made usually of stucco which therefore must have a support. Every chorten in a ruinous condition might give this illusory impression of being surmounted by a cross...” Tucci and Ghersi 1935, p. 179; see also *ibid.*, viii, 178-81. Even Mason later revised his opinion on the matter somewhat when in the early 1940s he made the following comment at a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society: “When Mackworth Young visited Tsaparang in 1912 he found a number of houses well preserved, but the only trace of church or Mission, and that rather doubtful, was a weather-beaten wooden cross on the top of a chorten. The population then only consisted of four families.” Lt. Col. Mason, quoted in Capt. Robert Hamond, “Through Western Tibet in 1939,” *GJ* (Jan. 1942): 13 (emphasis added).

Nevertheless, the disproving of this “cross” to be Catholic Christian in origin does not at all invalidate the fact of the presence of Catholic Christianity in the region during the 17th century. It merely removes from authentic historical records the last assumed trace of such influence there centuries ago. Written evidence by Europeans and others can provide whatever is needed to document the evanescent spread of Catholicism to this remote region of Tibet. For example, a full documented historical description of this Mission can be found in C.J. Wessels, S.J., *Early Jesuit Travelers in Central Asia, 1603-1721* (The Hague, 1924), 43-89.

11. Per Beskow, *Strange Tales about Jesus*, trans. Per Beskow from the Swedish (1979; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 5.

12. The complete publishing history of Notovitch’s account of his alleged manuscript discovery at Hemis and the Issa story it tells is as follows: First published in French in 1894 at Paris by Paul Ollendorff under the title of *La vie inconnue de Jésus-Christ*, this was followed in the same year by the first American English-language edition entitled *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*, published in New York by G.W. Dillingham. These were then followed even later in 1894 by the 2d French edition issued at Paris and published again by Ollendorff. Its success was so phenomenal that there appeared at least six other French editions—and all still in 1894! This prompted the release yet that same year in either New York or Chicago (or both) of a series of at least three more new English-language editions: all under the main title of *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*, and all using different translators to translate from the French. These were followed in early 1895 by the first British edition: a fresh new English translation from the French by Violet Crispe under the title of *The Unknown Life of Christ* and published at London by Hutchinson & Co. It included not only the author’s original Preface to the first French edition but also a lengthy note by him “To the Publishers” that constituted a ringing defense against the attacks of his critics which had been leveled since the book’s very first appearance. But the *Unknown Life* also found its way into other European languages: German, Spanish, Swedish and Italian. A new edition, revised and enlarged, came out in Paris in 1900, followed by another English-language edition at Chicago in 1907 and still another there in 1916. And in 1926 the Dillingham edition of 1894 was reprinted in New York by R.F. Fenno & Co., but with an incorrect original copyright date of 1890. Yet even in more recent times there have appeared numerous reprints of the work in the U.S. published in 1973, 1974, 1980, 1984, 1989, 1996 and 1997, as well as a reprint of it in English at Calcutta in 1981 and two successive English reprints of it in Indonesia by the same publisher at Jakarta in 1999.

One typical subtitle in English ran: *From an Ancient Manuscript, Recently Discovered in a Buddhist Monastery in Thibet*. The one most full edition which the present author consulted was the first British edition of 1895 (see above). Its Table of Contents includes a Translators Note (by Crispe); the already mentioned Author’s Note to the Publishers; a Preface by the author which in summary form tells of his 1887 journey to Leh and Hemis; A Journey to Thibet that gives much more detail; Ladak, a descriptive essay on the history and culture of that land; A Festival in a Gompa—namely, Hemis, in which the author tells of his extraordinary conversation with the Head Lama there about Buddhism, Comparative Religion, and the Life of Issa; The Life of Saint Issa, which is the text of the Life set down by Notovitch in chapter and verse form; Résumé, the author’s commentary on the Issa Life; and Explanatory Notes by the author on the said Life.

13. The (Calcutta) *Telegraph*, 29 Nov. 1987, p. 3.

14. Louis 1894, p. 98. The source for the Müller quote is his Postscript appended to the article by J. Archibald Douglas, "The Chief Lama of Hemis on the Alleged 'Unknown Life of Christ,'" *Nineteenth Century* (Apr. 1896):678.

15. Yet Louis was not alone in having been deceived by the Russian arch-hoaxer during those years which immediately followed upon Notovitch's proclaimed discovery. For Professor Archibald Douglas, one of the earliest investigators into the affair who soon exposed both forger and forgery, writing five years later, could report what the unfortunate consequences had been as a result of the fraud perpetrated by Notovitch upon an unsuspecting credulous public: "there were a large number of religious people, in Europe and America, who accepted as genuine this marvelous 'discovery'; and one well-known religious paper, *The Christian*, published a discussion as to the authenticity of this 'New Gospel,' as it began to be called." Nevertheless, Douglas could add this: "The exposure of the Notovitch forgery was accepted everywhere except in the case of an ingenious Hindu editor, who regarded my statements simply as 'a striking instance of the racial prejudices of the English against the Russ [Russians].' I had several letters from people in England and America thanking me for my work, and acknowledging that they had been deceived by M. Notovitch's book..." Douglas, "Supplementary Note," in F. Max Müller, *Last Essays*, 2d Series, *Essays on the Science of Religion* (London, 1901; reprinted.. New York: AMS Press, 1978), 208, 209.

16. Schary, *In Search of the Mahatmas of Tibet* (London, 1937), 70. The Kashmiri *pandit's* story is recited in Swami Rama, *Living with the Himalayan Masters* (Honesdale PA USA, 1978), 291.

17. This Theory was apparently first propounded by Karl Heinrich Georg Venturini (1768-1849); yet even though the theory was soon refuted by far more rational men among the Rationalists than he for the illogical and ludicrous hypothesis that it was, a slightly different form of it, though still basically the same outline of the original theory, has more recently been propagated. Its main proponents are a heterodox group of Moslems called the Ahmadiyya, named after its founder Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, an East Punjabi who died in 1908.

In its more embellished Ahmadiyya form, the theory claims that the following took place: Jesus did not actually die on the cross, though it is true, goes the theory, that He was nailed to the cross and endured shock, pain and blood loss. Yet He did not die but only fainted (swooned) from intense exhaustion. Even Pilate, are we not told, was surprised Jesus was already dead. So, it is theorized, mistaking Him to be dead, His disciples buried Him alive. The supporters of this theory next say that because medical knowledge was insufficient in those days, the disciples of Jesus were easily misled, they not realizing the reviving effects that the considerable spices with which their Master was embalmed could have. So that the medicinal effects of the spices, combined with Joseph of Arimathea's cold tomb in which Jesus was laid, revived Him. But the ignorant disciples could not believe only resuscitation had revived Him, and hence they claimed it to be a resurrection from the dead. But the Ahmadiyya theorists add a further touch to the Swoon Hypothesis in that, once Jesus was delivered from ultimate demise on the cross, it allowed Him—after a respite in Palestine for recuperation—to journey Eastward to Kashmir. Not only there but much farther afield and even into Tibet He engaged in further ministry among the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel and their converts, got married, had children, and finally at the ripe old age of more than a hundred years He died, like any other mortal would, at Srinagar in 110 a.d. where even today on Khanyar Street one of His alleged descendants—Saleem by name—guards the reputed burial site of Jesus (though known by Kashmiris as the tomb of Yuz Asaf).

Ghulam Ahmad certainly knew of Notovitch's work for he mentioned it in his book *Jesus in India* (Rabwah, W. Pak.: Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions Department, n.d. but Preface 1962), first published in Urdu in 1899 as *Masih Hindustan mein*. And concerning in particular the notion of Jesus traveling Eastward, most likely Ahmad was even inspired by Notovitch, though probably he did not understand its true character, otherwise, he would have perceived how contradictory the Russian's Issa Life was to his own theory at several key points and would thus have left it unmentioned or else been critical of it. As it developed, however, much later Ahmadiyya writers, quoting Notovitch's Life of Issa as an authentic document about Jesus, have united it with their resuscitation story, thus positing the notion that Jesus journeyed East twice: once *before* His Palestinian ministry and one final time after His alleged escape from crucifixion short of death. Likewise, Faber-Kaiser embraced this same "double voyage" notion as well, citing approvingly the works both of Notovitch and of the earliest and later Ahmadiyyan literature. So also has Holger Kersten embraced the "double voyage" notion, he too referring approvingly to the works of the Russian journalist and Ghulam Ahmad in his book *Jesus Lived in India: His Unknown Life before and after the Crucifixion* (orig. published in German, Munich 1983; English edition, Shaftesbury: Element Books, 1994). But so, too, finally, did Kashmiri Professor F.M. Hassnain, in his long

promised study on the subject entitled *The Fifth Gospel* (Srinagar: Dastgir Publications, 1988), co-authored by Jewish Rabbi Dahan Levi of Paris. Much the same criticism could be said about this work (and for that matter about much of Kersten's study) as was said by Per Beskow about the entire Ahmadiyya legend which serves as the centerpiece for Hassnain's volume. A Swedish theologian, scholar and Professor of Patristic Studies at the Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Beskow wrote the following in a critical study on modern apocrypha, legends and forgeries about Jesus: "The Ahmadiyya legend is generally supported by reference to diverse Oriental sources, which are said to confirm the story, but which in fact do not carry any weight at all. There are also references to earlier legends, which we have already encountered" and which, Beskow could have added, he, along with University of Chicago Professor Edgar J. Goodspeed and others, have labored to discredit—those such as *The Life of Issa*, *The Crucifixion by an Eyewitness* (also known as *The Essene Letter*), *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, *The Nazarene Gospel*, *The Gospel of Barnabas*, and of course the Resuscitation Theory of Venturini and Ghulam Ahmad itself.

Despite the fact that the event of Christ's death by crucifixion has been the most thoroughly scrutinized of all throughout mankind's history and has been found to have held up quite well against every conceivable critical inquiry undertaken since it occurred at Jerusalem, the Resuscitation Theory in one form or another continues to be put forward again and again in an attempt to convince people that Jesus, though indeed crucified, never truly expired but survived that experience and lived on for many years afterwards. Yet as one critical writer, Josh McDowell, has cogently argued, proponents of this theory would also have to assent to all the following facts surrounding Jesus' Calvary experience:

that (1) Jesus went through six trials—three Roman and three Jewish; (2) was beaten almost beyond description by the Roman flagrum; (3) was so weak He could not carry His own *patibulum*—the wooden cross bar; (4) had spikes driven through His hands and feet as He was crucified; (5) the Romans thrust a sword into His side and eyewitnesses said, "Blood and water came out," a sign of death; (6) four executioners confirmed His death—they must have all been mistaken; (7) 100-plus pounds of spices and a gummy substance were encased around His body—He must have breathed through it all; (8) He was put into a cold, damp tomb; (9) a large stone was lodged against its entrance; (10) a Roman guard was stationed there; and (11) a seal was placed across the entrance.

Then, an incredible thing happened, according to this theory. The cool damp air of the tomb, instead of killing Him, healed Him. He split out of His [*tightly woven*] garments, pushed the [nearly two-ton] stone away, fought off the guards [whose fate, historical research has confirmed, would have been instant death should they have fallen asleep on duty, and hence out of fear of such a fate would never have done so], and shortly thereafter appeared as the Lord of life to His disciples [with two of whom that same day He walked seemingly unaffectedly for seven long miles to Emmaus village]. *The Resurrection Factor* (San Bernardino CA USA: Here's Life Publishers, 1981), 98.

In the face of an hypothesis which so completely ignores the evidence, it is almost unbelievable that so many 18th- and 19th-century Rationalists found this ludicrous explanation at all appealing and that it continues to be disseminated widely up to the present day. Indeed, even Bishop E. LeCamus, a later-day Rationalist who certainly denied the resurrection of Christ, had to reject such an absurd notion out of hand. For concerning the truth of the Swoon Hypothesis, he quite cleverly but logically concluded that "it would be more miraculous even than the resurrection itself"! *The Life of Christ* (New York: Cathedral Library Association, 1908), III:486, quoted in McDowell, 98.

The Beskow quotation is taken from *Strange Tales about Jesus*, 63. Cf. also Edgar Goodspeed's *Strange New Gospels* (Chicago, 1931) and his later revised and enlarged edition of that work under the title *Modern Apocrypha* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1956), *passim*.

18. It is the view of the present writer that besides her conversations at Leh Mrs. Merrick had also read Roerich's *Himalaya* (New York, 1926), in which all the points she mentioned—save one—can be found. For instance, he tells of hearing in Leh the legend of Issa from several prominent individuals; he also mentions Issa documents he claimed to be 1500 years old from which he apparently translated, and subsequently published, portions of the text that in reality are nothing more than selected extracts that in both content and wording are nearly literal equivalents to sixty of the verses which can be found spread over 10 of the 14 chapters comprising the fraudulent Issa Life published by Notovitch himself. But then, on page 153 of *Himalaya* Roerich cites yet another document which, however, he significantly pronounces as "historically less established" but which nonetheless, he says, tells "about the life of Jesus in Tibet" proper. He then quotes at length from this alleged ancient document that, among other things, speaks of Jesus at Lhasa but even more so of His days at Leh on His return journey westward back to Palestine. As later scholarship has discovered, however, the source of this "historically less established" allegedly ancient document of Roerich's was none other than an extract from

Chapter 36 of Levi Dowling's *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ*, first published at Los Angeles in 1911, its author having acknowledged that the contents of this Gospel was the result of his supposedly having received by inner illumination during the early morning hours one day in California a heavenly message describing the life and ministry of Jesus. See Dowling's *Aquarian Gospel*, Ch. 36; Roerich's *Himalaya*, 153f. and *Altai-Himalaya* (New York, 1929), 93-4; and cf. all this with Beskow, *Strange Tales about Jesus*, 62 (Ch. 16 there should read: 36), 76, 78. Now the particular published passage from this other Roerich document which, upon her reading it, may have inspired Mrs. Merrick's statement, reads as follows: "Finally Jesus reached... the chief city of Ladakh, Leh [where] he was joyously accepted by monks and people..., [and] wherever the simple people gathered—there he preached." This passage, with certain of its words highlighted, is strikingly similar to Merrick's assertion. The one point she mentions which in *Himalaya* its author did not was the identity of the place specifically where the 1500-year-old documents were supposedly kept: namely, Hemis. After consulting two other Roerich published works, however, the present writer is himself certain that it was Hemis which Roerich had in mind when penning his words about these documents. These additional two works, published in 1929, had likewise dealt with Roerich's travels through Ladakh, and it is therefore not unreasonable to believe that Merrick had probably read these, too, before her own work was published two years later. Furthermore, after Notovitch's publication in 1894, gossip about Issa legends and manuscripts began to grow rife in and around the Leh-Hemis area; so that by the time Mrs. Merrick visited these two places, she could quite easily have been given to believe, by those she spoke with, that Hemis was the site which allegedly housed these supposed ancient Issa documents.

19. Yet this very commentary by Bray could also be said of another contemporary writer whose research on the Notovitch affair proves to be equally unreliable and inexcusably faulty at numerous points that are spelled out in greater detail in the present author's published study on the Notovitch fraud. For Holger Kersten, already cited two end-notes earlier, is likewise guilty of mishandling Merrick. In his book mentioned previously that was published first in German six years after Faber-Kaiser's work, Kersten, in quoting this same passage from Merrick, makes the following statement (as taken from p. 17 of the English translation, 1994): "Lady Henrietta Merrick confirmed the existence of the [Issa] writings in her book *In the World's Attic...*" Thus Kersten, who studied theology and pedagogics for several years at Germany's Freiburg University, has perpetuated the same flawed documentation in his own research as was first perpetrated by Faber-Kaiser in his!

20. The various sources for this paragraph are: Bray, "Nicholas Notovitch and the Tibetan Life of Christ," *TR* (May 1981):22; all Vittoz quotes are from *PA* (1955):4; and the sources for the identity of the sadhu are two: *ibid.*, and Vittoz *Un autre Himalaya* (Lausanne: Éditions du soc, 1957).

21. For the Swami's account of his 1922 visit to Hemis and alleged corroboration of the Notovitch "find," see his *Journey into Kashmir and Tibet*, rendered into English (from the Bengali) by A. Dasgupta and K.B. Kundu (Calcutta: Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 1987), 117-19, 121. For the Swami's partial English translation of his own Issa "find" at Hemis, see *ibid.*, first 164-6, then 119-21. And for the English text of the supposed Notovitch find at Hemis 35 years earlier, the version translated from the French by Violet Crispe (London, 1895) has been included in the Abhedananda volume in its entirety and appears in the book's Appendix Two. The Notovitch text can also be found in the present author's published study on Notovitch and in Prophet's *The Lost Years of Jesus* (Malibu CA USA, 1984).

In its very first edition, Abhedananda's book (a) appeared in Hindi in 1929 under the title *Paribrajak Swami Abhedananda* (after the completion of the book's serialization had appeared over a two-year period in *Visvavani*, the Hindi monthly journal of the Swami's religious society in Calcutta, the serialization having begun in late spring of 1927), (b) was later issued in Bengali under the title of *Kashmir O Tibbate* in four further editions, and finally (c) was issued in its first English translation from the Bengali in 1987 under the present title as shown in the paragraph above. This latter translation bears a Preface dated Calcutta 1 October 1986 and is signed by Abhedananda's close disciple, Swami Prajnananda. Interestingly enough, so convinced was the latter of the authenticity of the Notovitch "find" that he provided an introduction to an English-language reprint of *The Unknown Life* that was published in India in 1981 (Calcutta: Nababharat).

22. It is surprising, however, that though in the late 1970s the Dalai Lama was ignorant of these things, his eldest brother, Thubten Jigme Norbu, was aware by 1968, if not earlier, of both the legend and Notovitch, reference to which can be found in his and his co-author's book: Norbu and Turnbull 1968, pp. 267-8:

It is said that at Hemis, until recently, there was a document telling of how Jesus Christ, following an argument with his parents, ran away and spent some years in India, studying the scriptures and

finally residing at Hemis Monastery in Ladakh, and embraced Buddhism before he returned to his own country to preach a new religion. A Russian traveler named Notwich [Notovitch] took away the manuscript, and later sent a translation to the monastery, but this in turn was taken away by some foreign traveler. There is no further evidence concerning this story, which may or may not be true.

23. "Nicholas Notovitch and the Tibetan Life of Christ," *TR* (May 1981):22.

24. McGovern 1924, p. 244 (emphasis added). Much the same has been written by Per Beskow, the Swedish scholar and Professor of Patristic Studies already referred to in an earlier end-note. Criticizing Notovitch on this very point, on page 59 of his *Strange Tales about Jesus* (1979, 1983) he writes: "Actually, Pali, which is the sacred language of Theravada [or Southern] Buddhism, has never been used in Tibet, and the Tibetan translations have usually been done from Sanskrit or from Chinese."

25. Typewritten letter, Tharchin to Graham, Lhasa, 6 Dec. 1927, Graham Papers.

26. Tharchin shared this unusual story with the European-born missionary from Canada, Margaret Urban, during her two-week visit in his Kalimpong home in 1964. She later included it in her book, Urban 1967, p. 9.

27. Letter, Tharchin to Graham, Lhasa, 25 Oct. 1927, Graham Papers. In this same letter Tharchin had forewarned Graham that he feared "we may not be able to reach Kalimpong by the 20th of November," the date he had originally planned to return; so he requested of the Scots Mission leader that "if we are a little late, then please grant me leave." Extra leave would be required, indeed—much much more, since the Tharchins did not arrive back till March of 1928!

28. *Ibid.*, 14 Oct. 1927.

29. Interview with Nini (Mrs. S.G.) Tharchin, Dec. 1992.

30. This advice to Tharchin in 1923 by the former Darjeeling Police Officer was communicated by the future Tibetan publisher to Jesuit Fr. Henry Hosten in a lengthy conversation he had at Darjeeling in June 1925 with the Catholic priest, who in turn reported it to Swiss pastor Oskar Pfister and was published in the latter's book, Pfister 1926, p. 215.

31. Bray 1993, pp. 186, 194.

32. Interview with Simick, Jr., Nov. and Dec. 1992.

33. These various passages from Tharchin's several letters to Graham from Lhasa in 1927 dealing with his witness to the Lhasan relatives were culled from those dated 14 Oct., 29 Sept., again 14 Oct., and finally 6 Dec. Graham Papers.

34. *Ibid.*, 6 Dec. 1927.

35. The reader will recall that Doring Thaiji was one of the four high-ranking Tibetans who figured so prominently in Tharchin's first visit to Tibet and Lhasa, as discussed earlier throughout Chs. 14 and 15.

36. "By the force of his character," Indian historian Ram Rahul has observed, Tsarong had risen to a very high position of wealth and influence since having much earlier become the Dalai Lama's personal favorite and young attendant. One contemporary account (Easton) has described the general as a person of tremendous drive and sound sense and as "an extremely able and honest man, with great strength of character." Furthermore, wrote Rahul, Tsarong had possessed a large following among the lay civil and military officials for whom he created "more openings to power." Yet even though Tsarong, in Rahul's opinion, was in a large sense "the creator of Tibet's modern army"—he having strengthened, equipped and trained it efficiently—the Commander-in-Chief never proved to be popular among the Buddhist clergy. They, noted Rahul, looked upon his various advanced ideas calling for progress and modernization "as a danger to their own influence in the country." Due to this and other factors, therefore, Tsarong had in time been deprived of the post of Army Commander just two years prior to Tharchin's latest arrival in Lhasa; yet even so, he still remained a Chief Minister (*Shape*) in the four-member *Kashag* (Cabinet) of the central Tibetan government for four more years, when in 1929 he was removed from this office and fell somewhat further out of favor with the Dalai Lama. Tsarong would nonetheless remain "the leading figure" in the *Tsongdu* or National Assembly and be "its moving force" for many years after 1929. Rahul 1969, pp. 64-5. The Easton quotation is from Easton 1928, p. 89.

Coincidentally enough, ten years later Tharchin and his traveling American host companion, Theos Bernard, on the latter's pilgrimage to Lhasa, were to lodge with General Tsarong and his wife during their lengthy stay in the Tibetan capital. See Ch. 20 for details.

37. These trumpets or horns, made of bronze, required such great lung power that no player could cope with them for more than a few minutes at a time. Added Gordon B. Enders, "They have a low booming sound, not unlike the moo of a full-lunged cow, but its most remarkable characteristic is that it finds sympathetic reverberations in the mountain valleys" of Tibet, announcing that something special is either happening or about to happen in a particular temple, monastery, village or town. Enders 1935, p. 420.

38. Barber 1970, pp. 17-19.

39. The quoted material concerning the Tibetan *khata* is taken from: Tucci 1956, p. 74; Phuntso 1981, p. 93; Harrer 1956, p. 122; and Robson 1909, p. 52. The statement about khatas and magic power is per Ribbach 1986, p. 61, note 11.

40. See end-note no. 84 for Ch. 15 for the pertinent Scripture reference from Exodus 20:3-5 that is quoted verbatim there.

41. For the sources for the descriptive material, including the quotations, concerning the Norbu Lingka Palace and grounds, see Barber 1970, pp. 71, 163; Williamson 1987, pp. 122-4; Dalai Lama XIV, *Freedom in Exile; the Autobiography of the Dalai Lama* (New York, 1990), 35; and Goodman 1986, p. 282. "In 1783 the Eighth Dalai Lama, who followed the then current custom of spending the month of September in tents in a park outside Lhasa, decided to build permanent buildings on the site. The complex of buildings was called Norbu Lingka, ... [and] since the time of the Eighth Dalai Lama, all the Dalai Lamas spent the summer months at Norbu Lingka." Tung 1980, p. 201. (But see Finegan 1986, p. 146, where he states it was the Seventh Dalai Lama (1708-57) who in 1755 constructed the Norbu Lingka Park.) Although the building of the Royal Summer Residence had been initiated by the Eighth Dalai Lama, it was never entirely completed until the time of the Great Thirteenth. Harrer 1956, p. 159.

42. Riencourt 1950, pp. 114-6.

43. McGovern 1924, pp. 402-3.

44. Norbu and Turnbull 1968, p. 12. The Great Thirteenth's successor was wont to waive this custom much later, at least in the instance when just a year before Tharchin's death the latter had had his final audience with the Fourteenth Dalai Lama at Kalimpong. Out of consideration for the venerable age of Tharchin, His Holiness sat on the same level. See Ch. 29 of the present biography's final volume for details.

45. Harrer 1956, p. 160. Historian Wei-Kuo Lee, on the other hand, asserts that Tsong Khapa's Gelugpa Reformist Sect had chosen yellow because "this color, representing gold, was first used by the Buddha himself." Lee 1931, p. 82n.

46. As an indication of the strict protocol which those in private audience with the Tibetan Buddhist Pontiff felt they had to adhere to, an amusing story is told of the time U.S. Army Colonel Ilya Tolstoy had an audience with the current Dalai Lama when the latter was but seven years old. This grandson of the world-renowned Russian literary giant, Leo Tolstoy, was on a special mission through Tibet into China on behalf of President Roosevelt during World War Two. His journey had brought him and his companion Brooke Dolan to Lhasa in late 1942; and on a bitterly cold winter day at the equally cold and drafty Potala Palace. Col. Tolstoy was invited to have a private audience with the Child-King of Tibet. He had the misfortune, however, "to be seated directly under a ray of brilliant sunshine that suddenly emerged from one of the small windows high above the floor of the audience hall. He was uncomfortably hot, but protocol demanded that he not move from the cushion on which he sat." The tender-aged Priest-Sovereign, reported the latter's biographer, "watched in fascination as beads of perspiration formed on the officer's forehead, then blended into tiny rivulets that streamed down his face. 'How strange it is,' thought the child, 'how one can be so warm on such a cold day.'" The story is recounted in Goodman 1986, p. 98. The grandson of the famous Tolstoy, incidentally, made an effort to see the Dalai Lama once again some 20 years later in northern India, despite failing health. For as Goodman declared, Col. Tolstoy's wartime mission to Tibet "had resulted in an abiding affection for the Tibetan people and their leader that ended only upon his death in 1970." *Ibid.*, 99.

In an extraordinarily beautiful and rather scholarly yet readable volume prepared by Rosemary Tung already cited in these End-Notes and entitled *A Portrait of Lost Tibet* the authoress drew heavily upon the photographs and diaries of both Tolstoy and Dolan, as well as her own composition, to weave together a remarkable picture-and-text portrait of a Tibet that is now no more and probably never will be ever again.

47. Tada 1965, p. 85.

48. Dalai Lama XIV 1962, pp. 102-3.

49. Spence 1991, p. 48.

50. Ever since Sir Charles Bell had been able, in his negotiations with Tibetan authorities (including the Great Thirteenth) during his year-long stay at Lhasa in 1920-1, to secure permission for a limited number of European visitors to visit Tibet, a series of mountaineering expeditions was subsequently allowed to reconnoiter and attempt to climb this highest peak in the world from the Tibetan side. Whereas an earlier request in 1916 by the British Mountain-Climbers Association had been rejected by the Tibetan government, permission was granted in 1921, 1922 and then the current one of Bailey's time at Lhasa in 1924 (costing famed mountaineer George H. Leigh-Mallory his life), to be followed by still others—a total of seven successive attempts from the Tibetan side between 1921 and 1938. But Heather Spence has noted an ironic twist to these grants of permission: "The fact that many officials within the Tibetan government could not understand why foreigners would want to climb the mountain, and the comprehension that they (the Tibetans) did not even realize that the tallest mountain in the world was actually within Tibetan territory, was viewed by the pro-British faction in Lhasa as indicative of the urgent need for a greater understanding of the outside world which they believed would result from the adoption of an open-door policy." *Ibid.*, 44. Her source for Tibetan ignorance regarding the location of Everest is Tada 1965, p. 72. For another view of the role of the Everest expeditions in Anglo-Tibetan relations during the 1920s and early '30s, see Hensen 1996. Though Chomolungma (i.e., "Mother Goddess of the Winds," as the Tibetans call Everest) was in Tibetan territory on the border with Nepal, the Chinese—and others, too—claimed that within China's territory was to be found the world's highest summit. Even today, many still believe that Mt. Minya Tonka, the highest of the snow-capped peaks among the spectacular chain of mountains known as the Amne Machin Range located south of Kokonor, is higher than Mt. Everest. But as Hisao Kimura points out, "it is only the remoteness of the region and the lack of surveying ability on the part of the eccentric American naturalist Dr. Joseph Rock that allowed the legend to persist." In time, the peak was more accurately measured at 24,982 feet, well below Everest's elevation of 29,030! Kimura 1990. p. 106.

51. Spence 1991, p. 48.

52. This widespread belief is supported by the testimony of Frederick ("Derrick") Williamson, a former holder of the dual post of British Trade Agent at Gyantse and Yatung, the Officiating Political Officer in Sikkim in 1926-7, and later *the* Political Officer Sikkim, 1933-5. While on leave in early 1927, Williamson visited China and "was able, with the full permission of the Government of India, to visit the Panchen Lama" at a small monastery in Mukden, Chinese Manchuria, where the Panchen was then residing. In her *Memoirs of a Political Officer's Wife in Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan* (London, 1987), Williamson's wife sets forth what transpired in the meeting of her husband with the Panchen (page 40): "During the interview, which took place on 28 February, Derrick told His Serenity that he came in a purely private capacity but that if there was anything that he could do to help him, he would be pleased to oblige. The Panchen Lama thanked him and said that he had sent a message both to the Government of India and to the Dalai Lama to the effect that he had left Tibet 'entirely owing to my own fault' and that he proposed to return as soon as possible. Derrick got him to repeat this to make sure that he had heard it correctly. Further to that His Serenity had no definite plans, but he and Derrick discussed various routes by which he might eventually return to Tibet, Derrick favoring one by sea via British India rather than an overland one, which would take him through areas 'tainted by Bolshevism.' The Panchen Lama's manner through the interview was cordial but somewhat nervous. They were never alone for long and, as the room in which they were meeting was just a temporary structure with matting walls, there was always the danger of being overheard by eavesdroppers. For this reason the more confidential parts of their conversation were spoken in whispers."

53. Michael 1982, pp. 113-4. These other issues regarding jurisdiction, power and authority did indeed surface, but only after the Panchen Lama had fled the country. These other apparently less vital but nonetheless important differences which also came between the two High Lamas—or at least between their respective parties—were the Panchen's reported desire "to control not only the three principal districts of the Tsang Province

(immediately surrounding his ecclesiastical seat of Trashilhunpo) but also the detachments of the Tibetan Army stationed there. He also claimed the return to his followers of the estates which had been confiscated when they went into exile with him." Richardson 1962, p. 144.

54. All quotes in this and the preceding two paragraphs by Bailey's biographer are from Swinson 1971, p. 224; cf. also p. 49 where Bailey's growing friendship with the Panchen Lama is discussed. Apparently the Dalai Lama's decision to demand payment of the Panchen Lama was based on matters which, unknowingly to the Dalai Lama, had been misrepresented to His Holiness by the very Lhasa officials whom he had then sent down to Shigatse to demand the said payment. When His Serenity, "deeply hurt" by subsequent actions of the Lhasa government, fled the country, he secretly left Shigatse for Mongolia through the barren northern steppes of Tibet called the Changthang. The central Tibetan authorities sent two to three hundred troops in hot pursuit after him, under the command of Lungshar and another General, to prevent his escape, but the Panchen and his party had already moved into Chinese territory and thus avoided capture. P.O.S. 1938, pp. 5-6.

55. Typewritten letter, Tharchin to Graham, Lhasa, 6 Dec. 1927, Graham Papers.

56. Macdonald 1932, p. 185.

57. Lang-Sims 1963, p. 160.

58. This profile of the Dalai Lama is a composite of impressions Tharchin gave twice, combining as it does into one what he related to his amanuensis when recounting his so-called memoirs (see GTUM TsMs. 172) and also to Dawa Norbu in an interview Tharchin gave to the latter as recorded in Norbu 1975, p. 18.

59. Taken from the same interview Tharchin gave *Tibetan Review's* editor-in-chief, Dawa Norbu (see previous note), at his Kalimpong home just a few months before his death. *Ibid.* (with emphasis added). It should be noted here that Tharchin also commented in the same interview that "the present Dalai Lama (14th) seems to follow the same line initiated by his predecessor." *Ibid.*

60. Bell 1946, p. 15.

61. Interview with Sonam T. Kazi, Oct. 1991. The Kazi had been a staff member of both British and Independent India's Mission or Consulate at the Tibetan capital between 1949 and 1956; and so far as is known, he currently resides in the U.S.

62. Quoted in *MM* (Jan. 1906):20.

63. British and Foreign Bible Society, *Annual Report for the Year Ending March 1909* (London, 1909), 324-5.

64. *BW* (Mar. 1909):69-70.

65. The source for the approximate period in which Mackenzie had finished his translation is the minutes of the Eastern Himalayan Mission Council meeting (at Darjeeling), 7-8 June 1923, p. 3, EHMC Minutes 1921-1935, which reads: "It was reported that Mr. Mackenzie had completed the translation of the *Pilgrim's Progress* in Tibetan and was making arrangements for its publication privately." The Mackenzie illustrated edition was so well thought of that the retired missionary's old station, the Scottish Mission at Kalimpong, itself ordered 200 copies in 1928. See "*Pilgrim's Progress* in Tibetan," *MRW* (Sept. 1928):764, where the article also noted that Mackenzie had been able to preach in four Oriental languages!

66. The reader will learn in the next chapter that Macdonald was only visiting in England temporarily, and returned to Kalimpong the same month (Mar. 1932) in which this letter of the Dalai Lama's had appeared in the *Times* of London.

67. *Times* (London), 9 Mar. 1932, p. 9. Additional source for the other information found in this paragraph: "*Pilgrim's Progress* in Tibetan," *MRW* (Sept. 1928):764.

68. Dr. Karl Marx at Leh, the first Moravian medical missionary to be posted to that Church's Himalaya Mission, was the one on whose heart had first been laid the burden to translate this Christian classic into Tibetan. During the last winter of his life (1890-1) he had translated the first half of the book, and had set himself

the task of completing the second half of the classic during the following winter. But Marx's untimely death occurred in late May 1891 before he could return to the project. *PA* (Sept. 1891):342. It now remained for Br. Jorjuntsog at the same Mission station of Leh to take up the task and complete it. This Moravian brother took the Christian name of Paulu, and became one of the very first indigenous Christian evangelists to be raised up in Ladakh. Not only did he serve as an Urdu teacher at the Mission school in Leh; he also made his greatest contribution as one of the translators of the Tibetan Bible: he alone translated seven of the Old Testament books into Tibetan. In commenting upon *Pilgrim's Progress* and the work he performed in translating it into Tibetan, Paulu had this to say [as quoted in *MM* (Dec. 1926):90 and *ibid.* (Apr. 1929):26]:

... It was a strange thing for me to perceive that Bunyan saw his dreams in succession without failure, and that he gave names suitable to those who were seen in his dreams. It seems to me that the vision was heavenly. If a reader ponders it, he must become astonished at its references. But I cannot tell what the Buddhists will think about it, when they get it.

The language in which I have translated it is neither the common nor the book language, but the medium one, so that everyone may easily understand it. Most of the Tibetans are illiterate, and even those who can read and write have generally had little education. I have never used such words as would not be easily understood by the reader, and even if a word appears hard to him, he will himself be able to make out its meaning if he thinks for a moment.

69. More than likely the message received by Sir Charles from Lhasa via the telegraph department had been sent to Kalimpong by Kunphela (variant of Kumbila—see below), the Grand Lama's favorite attendant mentioned earlier, and was probably worded similarly to the one the attendant had sent to C. Suydam Cutting, a Trustee of the American Museum of Natural History, in New York. It read:

Regret delay in wiring sad news of temporary passing away of His Holiness on 17th after short illness. Government being carried on as before. Knowing your constant correspondence with late Holiness, hope to receive assurance of continuance of your friendship at this unfortunate juncture.—Kumbila, personal assistant.

Quoted in Cutting, "Forbidden Lhasa Revealed," *Illustrated London News* (12 Mar. 1938):430. This demonstrates the powerful influence Kunphela had been wielding in Tibetan affairs just prior to his fall from grace. He ended up managing a wool godown in Kalimpong years later, where he became a close friend of Tharchin's. For details see later in the present narrative.

70. Bell 1946, pp. 383, 396. Bell, incidentally, did indeed make a private visit to Tibet in 1934, spending a period of four to five months there. See Christie 1977, pp. 59-60; see also Williamson 1987, p. 138. Years later, while preparing *Portrait*, Bell would be dependent upon Tharchin for other information—this time for details relating to the Great Thirteenth's young successor for inclusion in the closing pages of his biography. Now living in British Columbia, Canada, Sir Charles sent a letter to his Tibetan friend asking questions about the new 14th Dalai Lama and requesting the newspaper publisher to supply him with photographs of various Tibetan personages such as Kunphela and Tsarong. Bell to Tharchin, Victoria, B.C., April 1940, ThPaK.

71. Taring 1970, pp. 113-4. She also related the story of how the absence of her "father" and former husband Tsarong Shape from the capital at the time of the Dalai's death saved his life: "Early in 1933 Tsarong had been granted a year's leave from Lhasa to go to our estates of Tsarong and Lhanga, so he was away when the Dalai Lama died. He came back to pay homage to his master's body and said to me that had His Holiness not granted him leave he would have lost his own life, because if he had been in Lhasa he would never have refrained from giving the Dalai Lama a few aspirin to reduce his temperature—and therefore would have been accused of poisoning him. He was really thankful for his escape and took this great act of foresight on His Holiness's part as a reward to his faithful servant." *Ibid.*, 116-7. Even so, in the years to follow, Tsarong, by his own admission, felt he had to remain vigilant continually against those who sought him harm. Tharchin's much later friend, the Japanese spy Hisao Kimura, who came to know the Shape very well in 1948, writes in his reminiscence of the period the following: "Like other favorites he lost all real power on the death of the Dalai Lama in 1933. This may have been fortunate, for in retirement he remained alive, rich, and one of the most influential men behind the scenes in a capital where the powerful had a habit of meeting nasty ends. Even so he often told me that he needed to be constantly on guard, for he was always looked upon as an upstart by the other nobles." Kimura 1990, p. 197.

72. Lhalungpa 1983, p. 35.

73. Typewritten letter, Tharchin to Graham, Lhasa, 6 Dec. 1927, Graham Papers.

74. Per John Bray's written summary of 10 July 1999 to the present author of Bray's conversation with Richardson at St. Andrews, Scotland, 23 June 1999.

75. All information and quoted material have been derived from the following sources: (1) Abdul Ghani Sheikh, "Tibetan Moslems," *TJ* (Winter 1991):86-9. This authority is a Ladakhi Moslem holding an M.A. in history and is an author of numerous articles on the history of Ladakh. (2) An even more detailed longer treatment of the subject has been published by another equally authoritative writer, Ataulah Siddiqui, in his article appearing in the same issue of *Tibet Journal*, pp. 72-85, entitled, "Moslems of Tibet." He studied at the University of North Bengal, Darjeeling, and has served as a Librarian in Kalimpong College. Since 1982 he has been a research scholar for the Interfaith unit of Leicester, England's Islamic Foundation and was a Ph.D. candidate in Christian-Moslem Relations at England's University of Birmingham. (3) José Ignacio Cabezon, "Islam in Tibet," in *Radhu* 1997, pp. 20, 32 note 55. And (4) *Radhu* 1997, p. 160. The stated approximate number in the Text of one to two thousand as having comprised the Moslem community in Lhasa represents a composite estimate from the available data that according to Cabezon and Siddiqui was defined as "upwards of 2000," according to *Radhu* was noted as "never having gone beyond a thousand," and, according to Thomas Arnold in *Preaching of Islam* (Lahore, p. 296) and cited by Cabezon, was defined, probably incorrectly, as "more on the order of 2000 families." Cabezon went on to write that "the number 2000 [may have] achieved a mythical status.... which, though perhaps accurate at a certain point in history, may today represent more a collective memory than an accurate representation of the actual Moslem population of Lhasa."

Heinrich Harrer, who resided at Lhasa during the late 1940s into the early 1950s, has observed that "in point of numbers the Moslems form an appreciable part of the population of Lhasa. They... enjoy full freedom to practice their religion.... Their religious zeal led them at first to demand that their Tibetan wives should be converted, but here the Tibetan government stepped in and made it a condition that their native women could marry Moslems only if they kept to their own faith." The Chinese Moslems known as the Hui-Huis (Hu-Hus) from the Koko Nor region of Tibet's northeastern border area of Amdo owned the slaughterhouses in Lhasa that were situated in a special sector of the Holy City outside the Lingkhor (the five-mile-long Pilgrims' Road which ringed Lhasa). "Buddhists look askance at them because they take the life of animals, but they are allowed to have their own place of worship." Harrer 1956, pp. 153, 130.

It must be remembered that one of the central tenets of Buddhism is the prohibition against the taking of any life, regardless how insignificant. Yet Tibetans, although Buddhist, eat a diet consisting largely of meat due to the paucity of suitable land for growing fruits and vegetables. They therefore have had to find a way to get around their Buddhist conviction about not killing animals: they have left it largely to Moslems in their midst to do the dirty work for them. But even though the taking of life was involved, Tibetans felt that killing *large* animals for food—those such as yaks, cattle, sheep and pigs—minimized the number of deaths required to feed the nation. But the killing of small animals for food was greatly frowned upon by all Tibetans inasmuch as a person would have to kill great numbers of smaller animals to secure a sufficient food supply. Although the Tibetan conscience may have been appeased by these fine theological distinctions, the Moslems were victimized to some extent in that because of their willingness to become the butchers of Tibetan society—at least in Lhasa—they came to be looked upon as "something of a caste unto themselves and were, in a special way, analogous to the untouchables in India." Tung 1980, p. 92.

The current Dalai Lama's eldest brother, Thubten Jigme Norbu, tells the touching story of how the first mosque came to be built in Lhasa, where already for a long time Moslems had been living. During the latter part of the Great Fifth's rule, there came to Lhasa a very renowned holy Mohammedan who frequently visited with His Holiness, would have long talks with him, and the two would even take meals together. One day when both were up on the Potala's roof, the holy Moslem said how earnestly he wished to have a quiet place of his own where he could practice his religion. Calling for a bow and arrow, the Dalai Lama said "that wherever the arrow dropped would become a place for all Moslems to worship in their own way. He fired the bow, and the arrow fell in a place called Gyangdrag Lingka, nearby. There to this day stands a mosque where generations of Moslems have followed their religion since the 17th century." Norbu and Turnbull 1968, p. 267.

Sir Charles Bell, writing in the 1920s, has provided further details on the Moslem community, their relationship with the Tibetans, and the attitude of the latter towards them (in Bell 1924a, pp. 243, 63, 132):

The Ladakhi Mohammedans are... an unaggressive community [in Lhasa] that goes quietly about its business and is amenable to the Tibetan jurisdiction. It was a common sight, when I was in Lhasa, to see them wending their way back to a park three miles west of the capital, where they often spent the day offering prayers, reading books, and enjoying themselves in the open air....

Tibetans have often told me that they can worship in Hindu temples and in Christian churches—their religion is of a wide toleration—but they can have nothing to do with Mohammedan mosques. They find no excuse for the doctrine of Mohammedan Ghazis, who kill in cold blood persons of other Faiths, and believe that, in doing so, they have gained a passport for paradise. “Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism,” said the Prime Minister of Tibet during one of our conversations, “are all good religions. But Islam is not. It makes the killing of those who belong to their Faiths an act of merit. That is a horrible thing. The true spirit of religion cannot be present where killing is regarded as an act of merit.”

The violence and desecration done to the Hindu religion by the Mohammedan conquerors of India are remembered by the people of Tibet. Their books of prophecy warn them against the Islamic nations, and the prophecies of olden times exercise always a potent influence over Tibetan feeling.... [There is one] old prophecy to the effect that the Turuka (Turks) would do their utmost to destroy the Tibetan religion and would very nearly succeed in destroying it, but the Chi-ling (Europeans) would not harm it.... [Another old Tibetan prophecy has it] that the Mohammedan power will overrun the whole world until some three hundred years later a Buddhist king will arise in a country north of Kashmir [previously Buddhist but now Buddhist-Moslem]. The country will be known as North [or Chang] Shambala and its king will break the Mohammedan power and restore Buddhism.

Finally, Wong Man-How has noted that the religious differences between the Moslems and the Buddhist Tibetans have sometimes led to distrust. Although no area was forbidden to Moslems in Tibet, he observed that “none of them would ever enter a lamasery.” By the same token, he continued, “no Tibetan would enter a mosque, for Tibetans believed that the Moslems deliberately buried Tibetan holy books under the thresholds of their mosques so that visiting Tibetans would inadvertently sin by treading there.” Told of in his article, Wong 1984, p. 301.

76. The source for the departure date is per a letter in Tibetan, handwritten by Tharchin and addressed (in English translation) to “my intelligent bosom friend”—a person at Phari, Tibet, and dated in Tibetan at the end of the letter as the 12th of the 12th Tibetan month (and which Tharchin identified in Western reckoning as 1 Feb. 1928 by having dated it that way himself by having inked in at the upper right corner of the letter’s first page the following: Lhasa, 1/2/28. In the text of the letter itself, a copy of which was among the ThPaK, Tharchin wrote (as translated for the present author by Phurbu Tsering): “We have decided to leave from here on the 16th of this month” (i.e., on the 5th of Feb. 1928).

GTUM TwMs, Ch. 17, pp. 1-7; quotes: 1, 2, 3, 5, 5-6.

1. All quoted material in this and the preceding paragraph is taken from typewritten letters, Tharchin to Graham, Lhasa, 14 Oct., 25 Oct., and again 14 Oct., all 1927, Graham Papers. And as explained in the documentation for these same letters in the End-Notes for Ch. 17 above, Tharchin had at times taken his portable English-language typewriter with him to Lhasa.

2. *Ibid.*, 25 Oct. 1927.

3. Interview with Gyan Jyoti (formerly of Kalimpong but now living in Nepal), Feb. 1993.

3a. Much of the information to be found in this and the preceding paragraph has been derived from Dr. Knox's various Annual Reports on Tibetan Work which he had submitted to his Guild Mission superiors for the years 1930 through 1938, copies of which are a part of the ThPaK.

4. "...I drove under an arched gateway, through a flower garden, and stopped under the porte-cochere of the two-storied Himalayan Hotel, a nine-room bungalow, vine-covered, with two wide verandas overlooking the snow ranges. The proprietor and his wife spared no pains for my comfort, and I settled there to make the final preparations for my journey." Merrick 1933, p. 72. This Hotel is owned and operated even to this day by the Macdonald family, even though Tharchin's longtime friend, David Macdonald, and his wife are no longer living.

5. It was not without firsthand knowledge of his experience that Bunty Odling could feel so confident in recommending Tharchin as a guide for Mrs. Merrick. For it will be recalled, as pointed out at the beginning of the previous chapter, that the Tibetan just four years earlier (1927) had accompanied both Mr. and Mrs. Odling on a journey as far as Gyantse, from whence Tharchin and his wife then went on alone to Lhasa for his audience with the Thirteenth Dalai Lama.

6. The reader is referred back to Ch. 16 above for a discussion of this missionary from Australia and his relationship with Gergan Tharchin as it related to the Tibetan community and Tibetan Church in Kalimpong.

6a. The "end of April" quotation is from the minutes of the Guild Mission Council meeting (at Kalimpong). 15-16 Oct. 1931, the 15 Oct. section, p. 8, EPMC Minutes 1921-1935.

7. He was a high Tibetan personage, indeed, with the official rank of Kenchen (Khenchung). Born in 1880 with the name of Lobsang Jungne, he in time became a monk official and assumed the honorary title of Gyami Lortsawa (Chinese translator), having spent 15 years in China studying Buddhism at the Yung-ho Monastery (Peking) where he learned to speak Chinese fluently, though he could not write it. He also spoke Mongolian and served as interpreter to Dalai Lama XIII, whose confidence the Kenchen enjoyed. Once he fulfilled his tenure as Tibetan Trade Agent at Gyantse in 1934, the Kenchen went on to be appointed Dronyer Chempo (Lord Chamberlain) that same year, only to be deprived of the post in 1935, doubtless in the wake of the political intrigues following the death of His Holiness in Dec. 1933. He was then sent in 1937 to supervise the repairs of Yerpa Monastery outside Lhasa. P.O.S. 1938, p. 41. See Macdonald 1932, p. 89 for the former British Trade Agent's quote.

8. According to long-established Tibetan custom, however, it would appear Tharchin was *not* overdoing it: since the requirements of the "honorific" and the "high honorific" forms of speaking by an inferior to a superior demanded nothing less than these elaborate ways of expressing oneself, although as one writer on the subject, William McGovern, has observed, these distinctions mandated by the long-held customs of the Tibetan language "have been carried to absurd lengths." McGovern 1924, p. 281. One of the best explanations of this honorific language of the Tibetans has been provided by one of Tharchin's valued friends from the West, Marco Pallis from England, who in a masterful volume on Tibetan culture and religion (in Pallis 1949, pp. 68-9) has included a passage that gives some clear insight into the conduct of Mrs. Merrick's humble interpreter *vis-à-vis* the Dalai Lama's personal representative at Gyantse:

It should be explained that the Tibetan language reflects in its vocabulary the nicely judged grades of feudal society. For every noun, pronoun, or verb and for many of the adjectives, not one but two words must be learned, a common one, which applies to ordinary folk, and an honorific, which must be used when speaking to or about persons of quality. Turning the idea into an English equivalent,

my gardener simply "walks," but my readers "proceed." Similarly, a thing is "shown" to a servant, but in the case of an aristocrat one "petitions the coming of the honorable eye." Sometimes even three words exist for the same notion, the third being a "high honorific," which can be applied only to representatives of the most exalted political or ecclesiastical authority. A subtle play of compliments can be introduced by timely selection of this or that word, especially as at the other end of the scale a further weapon lies to hand in the form of self-deprecatory words, denoting one's own worthlessness or humility. Normally, one simply uses the ordinary non-honorific words in referring to oneself; but in extreme cases, especially in letters, it is possible to use in place of "I," the "trifle" or "the naughty boy" ("the insignificant trifle petitions for His Holiness's absolution"). Even words like "liar" or "murderer" have their honorifics; they are an essential part of the language, employed by all classes, and not a precious affectation of the educated, though the latter naturally have a fuller command of them. A few especially high expressions can be used only about the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama, the two senior Pontiffs. There is, for instance, a word meaning "to come" which is normally applied to any dignitary over a certain rank: but it can, by special extension, be used of the arrival of a cup of tea for the Dalai Lama. "The goblet of honorable tea," as it were, "ambulates into the Dalai Lama's chamber," or rather what I intended to say was not "chamber" but "location of the cushion of repose."

Now because the differences between these three styles of address apply to nearly every word in the Tibetan language, it is impossible, writes McGovern, "to infer from the ordinary word what the honorific term will be and vice versa; consequently, when one wishes to learn Tibetan one *must* learn two and in many cases three words for every single object, because to use an honorific word to an inferior or an ordinary word to a superior is considered the grossest insult." McGovern 1924, p. 281.

All this would come to an end in Tibet with the coming of Communist Chinese occupation of the country after 1950, and especially with the inauguration of the ten-year-long Cultural Revolution in 1966. For during that infamous period in Sino-Tibetan relations, the Communist idea of an "egalitarian language" based on the Marxist notion of a classless society was, in the words of one modern-day Tibetan historian, "taken to its extreme." As explained by Tsering Shakya, the pamphlets put out by the Cultural Revolution's Red Guards "demanded the abolition of the honorific in Tibetan, the elaborate system of which was regarded as a remnant of feudal tradition... and as the language of the aristocracy..." Indeed, a passage from one such pamphlet proclaimed "that the *Tibet Daily*, Radio Lhasa and other broadcasting offices must use and propagate the language of the working class... and seek to eradicate the language of the aristocracy and the upper class."

The elimination of the honorific tradition, however, prompted a great deal of debate—that in some instances even bordered on the farcical—among the Red Guards and office staff at the publishing houses. Shakya reports that one of his informants described one argument which had occurred regarding the kind of language that would be appropriate in referring to Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Tse-tung: should it be the honorific or the colloquial (*phal-skad*) form? Reported Shakya's informant: If the former were used, then "you were likely to incur the wrath of a particular faction of the Red Guards and be accused of harboring feudal sentiments." But if the common speech were employed, then "you could be condemned by another faction of the Red Guards for not respecting Chairman Mao"! See Shakya, "Politicization and the Tibetan Language," in Barnett and Akiner (eds.) 1994, p. 160.

9. In point of actual fact these gestures of humility exhibited by Tharchin were, along with others not mentioned here, all part of a manner that was assumed by most Tibetans to express respect toward superiors or to extend greetings to another, or both. One American traveler, on his way from Gyantse to Lhasa in 1942, stayed as an overnight guest in a Tibetan home. The owner, explained the American later, bustled about trying to make his guest comfortable, at the same time "constantly bowing, bringing up the thumbs, sticking out the tongue and hissing—Tibetan ways of showing respect." The American further explained that "the higher the station of the person addressed, and the lower the station of the one who addresses, the lower the latter must bow, the more he is to stick out the tongue, and more constant must become the hissing, done with quick little intakes of breath." Tolstoy 1946, p. 184. This latter practice—hissing done with quick little intakes of breath—was what Tharchin was exhibiting in the presence of the Kenchen, the high Tibetan personage at Gyantse.

A Chinese-American journalist was told by a hotel manager in eastern Tibet in 1982 that as an ancient and very courteous form of greeting, when a Tibetan addresses a person for the first time, he may stick his tongue out at him and "show his open palm at waist level." The manager went on to say that "the outstretched hands show that no weapon is hidden, and thus no harm is intended. The display of the tongue dates back to an old superstition that one who poisons others has a black tongue." As told to Wong Man-How, in Wong 1984, p. 291.

Tharchin's good friend from England quoted from in the previous note, Marco Pallis, tells an amusing story told him by a general who, while still a subaltern, had accompanied the military expedition which had occupied Lhasa in 1904. Pallis writes: "As he was going along the road a man passed him on horseback and of course

politely thrust out his tongue at him. Enraged at the fellow's apparent insolence, the officer seized hold of him and pulled him out of his saddle. The more he shook him, the more the wretched man tried to propitiate the angry Englishman by stretching out his tongue still farther, to the great mirth of a Gurkha orderly who had seen the joke, but had no intention of enlightening his superior officer!" Pallis 1949, pp. 49-50.

In another place in her book, Tharchin's American friend Merrick sheds further light on the origin of this unusual practice of the tongue and why the color black, as well as gives a description of additional customs associated with the showing of respect by Tibetans towards others (Merrick 1933, pp. 103-4):

Tibetans exchange no word of greeting with those they meet on the road. The lowliest ones instead stick out their tongues. It is related that this custom originated during the religious wars, when the red sect Lamas had power to cast spells from great distances by means of the simple recitation of mantras. Their oft-repetition of the malevolent spells turned their tongues black, it is said, so in order to detect their enemies, the opposing yellow cap Lamas [those to whom the Dalai Lama belongs] forced all captives to show their tongues, that those found to have black ones might be put to death. The voluntary showing of the tongue is intended to prove that they are not hostile. [Another explanation for its origin is the legend that it began under the wicked anti-Buddhist ninth-century King Langdarma "who was supposed to be able to tell from certain marks on the tongue who were his friends and enemies." Tseten 1971, p. 27]

Sometimes an inferior will push his left ear forward with his hand in sign of humility when addressing a superior. This too is a survival of the days when the ears of prisoners were cut off by successful generals and offered to their rulers as tributes.

But the most frequent greeting in Tibet is the quick raising of folded hands to the forehead, a gracious if not a graceful gesture.

Another Western acquaintance of Tharchin's, Englishwoman Lois Lang-Sims, somewhat differed with Mrs. Merrick on this latter form of greeting: "We saluted one another, palms together, a gesture which had become natural to me and which I found a great deal easier and more gracious than the Western handshake." Lang-Sims 1963, p. 238. This physical gesture used in greeting, incidentally, is usually accompanied by a verbal show of respect as well: the utterance of the word "Namaste!"—a Sanskrit term for both greeting *and* parting that means, "I salute you." Matthiessen 1979, p. 22.

10. Caravanserai: a word formed from caravan plus *serai*, the latter a term indicating a rest house and stabling place for the men and beasts of caravans. Wrote Merrick: "The serais consist of a wide open space often with mud troughs for beasts, and around this are rooms, usually open in front, with dirt floors, and guiltless of furniture." Such places "were the first hotels; traders were the first travelers; and provision was thus made to take care of their caravans as well as to afford them a place to rest and sleep at intervals along the trade routes." Merrick 1933, p. 112.

11. The mention of Hannibal and the Alps is a reference to what happened during the Second Punic War that began in 218 b.c. between Carthage in North Africa and Rome. Hannibal the Carthaginian General had made his way through Spain and Gaul to the Alps where he successfully led his army of 50,000 soldiers, 9000 horsemen and 37 fighting elephants across the Alps down into Italy in Oct. of 218 b.c. to threaten the existence of Rome. But after wandering about the Italian boot seeking an engagement with the clever unwilling Romans, Hannibal finally had to withdraw from Italy altogether and sail back across the Mediterranean Sea to Carthage in the year 203 b.c. without ever having seen Rome. In the end he was chased from one city to another in the eastern Mediterranean area of western Asia, where he finally committed suicide by poison in 190 b.c.

Mrs. Merrick was here quoting from Waddell's account of the Younghusband Expedition, first published in London, 1905. She was correct in stating that no snow was encountered, even though the Expedition surmounted the Pass in midwinter, on 12 Dec. 1903. But it was bitter cold, nonetheless. Arising early that morning at Gnatong where at four miles below the Jelep La the overnight temperature had dipped to -2° F., Macdonald's little army of 3000 men plus some 7000 followers headed upwards towards the Pass. Writes Waddell (in Waddell 1972, pp. 78-80):

...the crossing of this formidable pass in the rarefied air and cold of such a high elevation was extremely trying to everyone, man and beast. Our column, winding like a snake up the steep zigzag track to the pass, was over four miles long, and seemed to crawl along up amongst the bleak black rocks almost at a snail's pace, as everyone, oppressed by the rarefied air, had to stop for breath every few yards. Scarcely anyone, even those who rode most of the way, escaped having aching temples and eyeballs; many suffered from actual mountain sickness, and several of the transport animals succumbed on the roadside. A good deal of the delay was due to frequent halts to readjust fallen loads. Fortunately there was no snow, and very little wind.

... On gaining the summit of the pass, ... we found it was swept by a merciless icy blast, which cut painfully like a knife, snatched away our breath, and pierced through our thickest garments as if they were mere gauze. This made it impossible to stand on the top for more than an instant. In that instant we caught a glimpse of a sea of wild hilltops in front of us, dashed here and there with snow, above which towered far on our left the graceful horn of Chumolhari; and from our feet a stony track sank rapidly down into a deep ravine of dark pine trees far below us, in which the Kargyu Monastery seemed a mere white speck. Diving down this slope, we got out of the wind almost immediately...

12. The cairn, a pile of stones, is usually topped with sticks and rags, with an opening on the eastern side for offerings. Tibetan Buddhist tradition says the strips of rags or "wind prayers" are meant to bring good luck to travelers who are crossing the pass for the first time. The Tibetan traveler, whether it be his first or subsequent journey, will usually place another stone atop the cairn as an expression of thanksgiving for his safe arrival at the pass. Matthiessen 1979, p. 97. One traveler who had reached the top of the Natu La not far from the Jelep La wrote later what happened: "Shouting and throwing rocks to frighten away evil spirits, we added our bit to a cairn which had grown to a height of 30 feet as a result of the stone offerings of previous passers-by. Some of the Buddhists in our working party [the porters, etc.] devoutly kept repeating their chant: 'Om Mani Padme Hum!' 'Om Mani Padme Hum!' to drive away the demons, who are believed to make their home on Natu La, as on all mountain passes." Thomas Jr. 1951, p. 60.

13. In 1934 the fortunes of Tharchin's friend improved somewhat, for he was promoted back up to the fourth rank that year, and in 1935 was dispatched to East Tibet as a Tibetan government representative to the Panchen Lama to arrange for his return to Tibet and to escort him back if all went well. By 1936 the latter, after a voluntary exile from Tibet for 13 years, had moved to the eastern Tibetan border at Jyekundo poised on the China side to return across the frontier and back to his ecclesiastical throne at Trashilhunpo near Shigatse. But in late 1937 the Panchen Lama died at Jyekundo. Nevertheless, during this period of the mid-1930s Doring Thaiji served the Central government at Lhasa as its direct link with His Serenity. The negotiations had lasted interminably. See Shakabpa 1967, pp. 281-2 and Rahul 1962, p. 187. Doring returned to Lhasa from his long drawn-out mission where he was appointed chief lay custodian or Supervisor of the late Dalai Lama's property, including the Norbu Lingka Palace complex. Even his noble title of Thaiji was restored to him soon thereafter. He was to lead a retired life at his Gyantse estates after this, although in about 1944 he was sent to the British Mission at Dekyi Lingka in Lhasa for training in wireless work. In 1956 Doring Thaiji became totally blind and eventually died at Gyantse in 1959, most likely as a consequence of the upheavals in Tibet between the Tibetans and the Chinese Communists that finally led to the complete absorption of that land into the People's Republic of China. See Petech 1973, pp. 63-4; see also Tung 1980, p. 201; and see also P.O.S. 1938, p. 22 with 6, together with Tharchin's inked handwritten notation (on his own personal copy of this volume) next to the entry for Doring Thaiji which reads simply: "Past [Passed] away in 1959."

14. All the quoted material, except those already footnoted, dealing with the Tibetan journey of Mrs. Merrick, Tharchin and the rest of her party, and beginning with the quote about Sikkim by Younghusband in London, are from Merrick 1933, in the following order of pages: 46, 118, 79, 161-2, 80ff., 102-3, 106-7, 112, 118-9, 119, 119-20, 120, 121. The data on Doring Thaiji and Jigme Taring are found on pages 170-3, and the final segment from the Kenchen interview is taken from pages 162-3. At page 188 is an excellent map which outlines in detail this journey of Merrick's and Tharchin's. Additional data on Doring Thaiji was also provided by P.O.S. 1938, p. 22.

15. See Ogilvie 1922, pp. 118, 132.

16. Per Perry 1997, p. 47.

17. Minto 1974, pp. 104, 103, 112.

18. While in England he paid a visit to Fetter Lane in London, the British Province headquarters of the Moravian Church Mission. This occurred in Mar. 1931. According to one Moravian journal, while on his visit at Fetter Lane Macdonald "spoke most kindly of the work our missionaries are doing in western Tibet; and emphasized again the call to prayer in order that the Tibetan people may be won for Christ. 'Prayer,' he said, 'will open Central Tibet.'" *MM* (Apr. 1931):25. By "Central Tibet" Macdonald meant Tsang Province (where Gyantse and Shigatse are located) and U Province (where Lhasa is).

19. This date is per the minutes of the Guild Mission Council meeting (at Kalimpong), 13-14 Oct. 1932, p. 2, EHMC Minutes 1921-1935. Strangely, even though according to p. 10 of the 15-16 Oct. 1931 (repeat: 1931) Council meeting minutes (also held at Kalimpong) a motion had been made and seconded, and then "after some discussion" had been carried "that Mr. Tharchin be taken back as Tibetan catechist," the Indo-Tibetan had nonetheless refrained from rejoining the Guild Mission as its Tibetan catechist for almost an entire year! It should be added that further confirmation of this date is provided by what Rev. Knox had himself written in a letter to Cecil Polhill, dated 19 Sept. 1932, a copy of which is part of the ThPaK: "You will no doubt be interested to hear that Tharchin has re-entered the service of the Mission from this month."
20. Upon Dr. Graham's retirement in early 1931 Rev. Scott was the one to succeed him as the new Head of the Kalimpong Mission. He in turn would be followed much later (in 1946) by Rev. George Mill. Eventually Rev. Scott would also retire as the last Scottish missionary Principal of the SUM Institution in Kalimpong. He had in fact served as Principal of that educational and training facility on three occasions: 1943-5, 1947-52 and 1957-63, only leaving Kalimpong for good in Mar. 1963—per Simick 1986, pp. 14-5. He had worked in the area since 1924, and hence he knew the Kalimpong subdivision of Darjeeling District quite well. *Ibid.* In his many years of missionary service, Scott rendered valuable help as well in the initial stages of a fresh revision of the Nepali Bible that was undertaken after 1951. Hooper 1963, p. 150. Of interest, too, is the fact that Rev. Scott's daughter had married Rev. Evan Mackenzie (presumably his second wife), the first missionary to the Tibetans in Kalimpong whose life and ministry were briefly sketched for the reader in Ch. 16. It should be noted that the Mackenzies' baby boy lies buried in the Kalimpong Mission's cemetery ("God's Acre") where many of the other early saints of the Mission and indigenous church are also buried. Graham 1897, p. 63.
21. Minto 1974, p. 44.
22. See Perry 1997, pp. 30, 37 note 27.
23. *Ibid.*, 57, 79 note 120. For a rather full account of all these splits, separations, defections, etc., see *ibid.*, 57-9, 69, 80 notes 126 and 127, 85 note 196.
24. Letter, Macdonald to British and Foreign Bible Society, Kalimpong, 10 Aug. 1932, BFBS Archives, Cambridge University Library, England (quoted in personal letter, John Bray to the author, London, 23 Sept. 1991).
25. See his travel volume, *Dans les marches tibétaines; autour du Dokerla, Novembre 1906-Janvier 1908* (Paris, 1909), 215 pp. Bacot had nothing but good things to say about the Tibetan people after his experience in their land: "The Tibetans impress one at once by the dignity of their persons. One sees them on horseback and nobly clad, scattered about the open spaces of their deserts.... In all Tibet one would be hard put to it to discover one fool.... The Tibetans are not barbarous or uncultivated; nor for that matter is their country. Under their rough hide they conceal refinements that we lack, much courtesy and philosophy, and the need for beautifying common things, whatever happens to be useful to them, be it a tent, a knife, or a stirrup.... Moreover, they are gay, these Tibetans, and happy as is not the case elsewhere today, more so than our wretched workers in their wretched factories, armed with the whole arsenal of their rights.... The more densely the country is populated, the tamer is the wild game. The Tibetans are not much addicted to hunting. They have long since lost the taste for killing that we still retain.... I love their companionship during the long rides, for they are taciturn, or else they only speak with good sense, originality, and a taste for speculative things." Quoted in Pallis 1949, pp. 202-3. For additional information on Prof. Bacot's scholarly work in Tibetan studies, see the End-Notes for Ch. 23 of the present work's final volume (in the second of two which describe the work of Prof. Shoju Inaba of Japan). Two other books of note among his many publications are *Le Tibet révolté* (1912) and *Trois mystères tibétains* (1921).
26. See Finegan 1986, p. 13.
27. Interview with "Dr." N. Tshering, Nov. 1992.
28. For a time from 1963 onward Dr. Duncan served as Medical Superintendent of the Charteris Hospital in Kalimpong. For additional details concerning her medical work and that of others in the Himalayan hill station, consult Packard (comp.) 1964, *passim*.
29. A much fuller picture of the work of these three Christian women workers—especially the labors of the two WMPL missionaries—can be found in (a) L. Carlson, "Progress and Promise" and (b) D. Christianson, "Reminiscence"—the final two chapters of Carlson et al. 1988, pp. 43-122.

Chapter 20

GTUM TwMs, Ch. 18, pp. 1-6; quotes: 2, 3, 4.

1. The American would later author such well-known works as *Heaven Lies Within Us* (New York, 1939)—“the way of life taught by yoga,” the foreword said; *Philosophical Foundations of India* (London, 1945); and *Hindu Philosophy* (New York, 1947). Bernard would also author *A Simplified Grammar of the Literary Tibetan Language* (Santa Barbara: Tibetan Text Society, 1946). Indeed, a copy of the latter volume was found in Tharchin’s personal library, presented to him in person at Kalimpong by the American in July 1947.

2. The Lhasa telegraph system by this time was most efficient. In the 1930s it had been placed in the charge of a Tibetan monk who had been trained at Kalimpong and who spoke adequate English. The telegraph line had originally been laid by the Younghusband Mission of 1904 from Kalimpong over the Jelep La to as far as Gyantse in order that it might keep in touch with the Indian government and London. The line was then continued up to Lhasa in 1921-2. At this time Nepalese line-men were the ones charged with its maintenance, with occasional visits being made—as far as Gyantse—by English engineers. The Potala in Lhasa was connected by telephone with the Post Office where the Telegraph also had its office. F. Spencer-Chapman, “Lhasa in 1937,” *GJ* (June 1938):503. Spencer-Chapman added that “the muleteers sometimes take the posts for firewood and amuse themselves by throwing stones at the insulators.” *Ibid.* An amusing story is told of when the original segment to Gyantse had been constructed. Tibetans, and particularly the Buddhist priests, were highly suspicious and bewildered by the strange actions of the foreigners in erecting the poles and stringing wire between them. Hence, a delegation of them went to the chief engineer to inquire what this was all about and why. “This officer, realizing that his line was vulnerable to sabotage, told them that the British had no intention of remaining in Tibet once a treaty was negotiated. However, he explained, as it was such a big country they would probably get lost while trying to find their way back, so he was stringing wire along the poles to guide them when they returned to India. It is said that the answer completely satisfied the delegation, which had no concept of modern communications, and the telegraph was left undisturbed,” at least while the Expedition and its military mission remained in Tibet (which was until 1908). Tseten 1971, p. 22.

3. Bernard 1939, p. 95.

4. Bernard, “American Who Penetrated Mysteries of Tibet Tells of Strange Pilgrimage,” *New Haven Register*, 26 Dec. 1937.

5. Here is evidence, if evidence was necessary, that Tharchin had still not “kicked” the smoking habit—in this case, the use of cigarettes—which had so gained a grip on his life. The entire matter, so important a personal issue to the Tibetan from Poo, has been thoroughly covered in the earlier volume of the present narrative, especially in Chs. 3 and 5.

6. Bernard 1939, pp. 150-1, 268.

7. Bernard was later to comment that his Lhasa host was “one of the wealthiest men in Tibet, was a cosmopolitan person of broad views, with a home relatively comfortable, even by American standards. Tsarong kept in touch with the outside world through Calcutta and London daily broadcasts, brought in on his English radio set, followed English custom in serving 4 o’clock tea with an English silver tea service and with imported cookies and cake, and had Western trees and plants in his garden, including apple trees from America, and was an accomplished photographic technician.” *New York Times*, 26 Dec. 1937, II, p. 1.

8. Harrer 1985, p. 7. The “house” which Tsarong had opened to the two Austrians in 1946 and where they lived for an entire year was actually a small home which Jigme and Rinchen Dolma (Mary La) Taring had constructed on the Tsarong House compound in 1932 and in which the young couple had lived until 1938. That year, and on Tsarong’s advice, they then built what came to be known as Taring House located at Metok Dumra, a four-acre site on the Lhasa outskirts. Jigme had drawn up the architectural plans himself in consultation with

Hugh Richardson, the British Representative in Lhasa at the time; and once completed in 1938, Jigme's parents—Raja and Rani Taring—came up from the old Taring Estate at Gyantse to live with them in their old age.

Taring House, however, suffered a most ignominious fate at the hands of the Communist Chinese when almost immediately after the Tibetan Uprising of Mar. 1959 had been quelled at Lhasa, it was converted into a Chinese prison. In 1961 Arthur Bonner wrote about how many of “the worst Tibetan criminals in the Chinese view—the so-called ‘upper strata’—... have been put into the most dreaded prison of all—Taring House, the former spacious home of a Tibetan nobleman now in India. The Chinese do their brain-washing there. Sometimes various sentences are pronounced for prisoners from Taring House... They range from a few to twenty years in prison, including a certain period to be spent at hard labor. Few have much chance of surviving this initial period.” In fact, a more ultimate sentence was meted out upon one of the leaders of the Lhasa Uprising, who immediately after his arrest “was executed in the ‘Taring Prison’...”

But even Tsarong's palatial home, begun to be built in the very year of Tharchin's first visit to Lhasa (1923), ultimately served as a Chinese prison also. Mary La relates in her memoirs of 1970 how her “father's” home became a prison immediately after all shelling by the Communists had ceased in their successful attempt at putting down the city's uprising, with over 200 people, she wrote, having been shut up in its main hall, leaving no room even to sit down. Much later, however, Harrer could report after his return visit to Lhasa in 1982 that it was used to accommodate Chinese officers. *Ibid.*, 92. It was still standing as of late 1996 and still under the control and use of the military command in Tibet; this according to a Western eyewitness, Andre Alexander, founder of Berlin's Lhasa Archive Project, in remarks made to the present author following his and Heather Stoddard's slide-illustrated lecture, “Lhasa: Restoring the Old City,” presented at the Asia Society Washington (DC) Center, 14 Apr. 1997. This Tsarong villa, incidentally, had been built as a replacement for the old Palace of the Tsarongs (the original Tsarong) which had overlooked the Central Cathedral square in the very heart of the city. Apart from the country estates in the Takpo Valley and elsewhere in Tibet, the original Tsarong family had possessed three mansions in the vicinity of Lhasa: two of them a mile or so outside the capital and the one city palace near the Cathedral which had in late 1923 been abandoned by General Tsarong as his place of abode.

Visiting Lhasa in the early part of that year, William McGovern, who was interviewed secretly by Tsarong at the latter's old palace, reported later why it was that this second most powerful personage in Tibet was at that time constructing a new villa “only a few hundred yards away from his present establishment.” McGovern wrote in 1924 that “the real reason” for doing so was that Tsarong Shape “believes the present palace to be haunted by the old Tsarong and his son, who were murdered, and whose estates and women-folk he has inherited. Tsarong has had several children who died in infancy, and there is left to him only one sickly little boy. Medical science would account for this in another way, but even the modern and progressive Tsarong believes that these calamities are due to the ghosts of his predecessors who are thirsting for revenge, and he believes that in a new building the shades of the dead will be powerless.”

It is most interesting to speculate about the deeper significance, if any, there may have been to all this. It is well known from Mary La's memoirs that her “stepfather”—the General, Tsarong Shape—was deeply religious. This is confirmed by the story Melvyn C. Goldstein has related in his volume on modern Tibetan history, where he reports how on one occasion General Tsarong had invited the Abbots of the three largest and most influential Lhasan monasteries to his home. “In the course of the party,” Goldstein writes, “he showed them his chapel room. They expressed amazement that he had so many statues and religious texts since they had believed he was basically irreligious.” The testimony of Tharchin, too, lends credence to the notion that the General was a deeply religious man and a faithful Buddhist adherent; for as was reported in Ch. 18 above, he testified to the fact that Tsarong had even maintained a daily devotional period every morning, though naturally Buddhist and not Christian in character. Furthermore, one need only read Tsarong 2000, pp. 72-3, wherein a detailed description is given of not only the main family chapel of the Tsarong household but also the latter's shrine room set aside to house the family deity, the Goddess Palden Lhamo, with a resident monk having been in constant attendance for making offerings to this deity on behalf of the Tsarong family members. Now it has been discussed elsewhere in these End-Notes that no *firm* evidence has yet been found linking General Tsarong to the murder of the previous Tsarong and his son, although much suspicion and even some circumstantial evidence had been directed towards him. But given the General's deeply religious bent, and the unusual motivation for his building a new home a mere stone's throw from the old Tsarong city palace, it is conceivable that if he had indeed been directly

involved in the plot to murder his predecessor, it may very well have developed that General Tsarong's conscience had become so smitten with guilt over the years that it may have finally compelled him to cease living day after day within the precincts of the very home of these murdered men—the memories of whom, if not their ghosts, had perhaps haunted him unmercifully and without respite ever since the two had met their bloody demise some ten years before. See Harrer 1956, pp. 134ff.; Taring 1970, pp. 111, 127-8, 268; Goldstein 1989, p. 89n.; Bonner, "The Tragedy of Tibet," *Saturday Evening Post* (9 Sept. 1961):66; "Tibetan Women's Demonstration Against the Chinese, 12 March 1959," *TR* (Mar. 1959):14; and McGovern 1924, pp. 360, 384-5.

9. Williamson 1987, pp. 108-9.

10. Bernard was only the third American ever to be permitted to visit Lhasa. And prior to the Chinese Communist invasion in Oct. 1950, only fourteen Americans had ever been able to reach Lhasa under any circumstances in all U.S. history. The very first of them to visit the Tibetan capital, though not permitted to do so, had, of course, been William McGovern, who in disguise had made his way there and back in 1923 just a few months before Tharchin had made his own first trip there from Gyantse later that same year. McGovern had even been received in secret by the then Tibetan ruler, Dalai Lama XIII, and at the latter's own request had been summoned to go *at night* to the Potala for the audience lest the secular and ecclesiastical enemies of His Holiness should learn of such a dangerous rendezvous by Tibet's Grand Lama with this foreign intruder at a time when tensions were already at their height during the Tibetan New Year celebrations in the crowded capital. And thus McGovern had the privilege of being the very first American ever to have had an audience *at the Tibetan capital* with the Great Thirteenth and only the second American to have done so anywhere with any of Tibet's Dalai Lamas (the first to have had *that* distinction having been the U.S. Envoy to Peking, Wm. W. Rockhill, who in 1908 had had many conversations at the Chinese capital with the exiled Thirteenth Dalai Lama). Charles S. Cutting, the naturalist and leader of museum expeditions, was in 1930 the next American to reach Lhasa. He paid another visit to the Tibetan capital in 1935. By this time the Dalai Lama had died and the Lion Throne of Tibet would remain vacant till 1940. Two years after his second visit, Cutting was invited again to come to Lhasa, this time with his wife, the latter thus becoming the second American to be permitted to visit, but the third to reach the Tibetan capital. Next, of course, was Bernard, as the third *invited* visitor from America, who found the Cuttings already there. The fourth and fifth authorized guests in Lhasa, two U.S. Army officers, Lt. Col. Ilya Tolstoy (grandson of famed Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy) and Capt. Brooke Dolan, became the very first Americans ever to have an audience with the Fourteenth Dalai Lama (and were only the third and fourth to have an audience anywhere with any Dalai Lama of Tibet). These two officers, with the approval of the Tibetan government, had been sent to Tibet by the American Office of Strategic Services (the precursor to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency) to try to find a new Central Asian route by which to transport supplies to China then under siege by Japan. They carried a personal letter of introduction from President Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed to the young ruling Dalai Lama. This was in 1942. The sixth *authorized* visitor to Lhasa, and only the third American to meet the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, was Arch T. Steele, at the time a *Chicago Daily News* foreign correspondent who was covering Asia for his newspaper during World War II, and who would write an informative series of articles on Tibet. Steele would make his way up to Lhasa from Gyantse in company with Sir Basil Gould, the British Political Officer for Tibet, in the summer of 1944. (A few months after Steele's visit, in late 1944 five U.S. airmen had to parachute to safety at night when their plane veered off course flying the Himalayan "hump" to India from China and ran out of fuel after circling Lhasa itself. These were of course five uninvited visitors to Lhasa to where they had made their way after regrouping on the ground. See Sinclair 1965 for additional details.) The last two Americans—the seventh and eighth ones—*permitted* to see Lhasa were the well-known news commentator Lowell Thomas and his son Lowell Thomas, Jr., who in late 1949 became only the thirteenth and fourteenth persons from the U.S., whether authorized or not, ever to reach the Tibetan capital prior to 1950 (which would thus include the six uninvited: McGovern and the five airmen), only the fourth and fifth Americans to have an audience with Dalai Lama XIV prior to that year, and only the sixth and seventh Americans to have met *any* Tibetan Dalai Lama before 1950. See Thomas Jr. 1951, p. 25; Cooper 1986, pp. 11-15; Gould 1957, p. 239; and Steele 1946, pp. 14-15, 77-8.

11. The main sources for this update of Tsarong are: P.O.S. 1938, pp. 73-4; McKay 1997, p. 107 for the “wide-awake” remark by Frank Ludlow; Petech 1973, p. 138; Ford 1957, p. 250; Taring 1970, pp. 66-7, 71, 105-6, 115; Spence 1991, pp. 37, 53-4; Harrer 1985, p. 8; Bell, “The Struggle for Mongolia,” *JRCAS* (Jan. 1937):51; Radhu 1997, p. 167 for the “clever as Tsarong” comment; and McGovern 1924, p. 385.

It should be added that Tsarong continued to play a prominent though decreasing role in Tibetan public affairs as the years went by; until finally, as Tharchin himself noted in an inked handwritten notation at the end of the entry for Tsarong in his personal copy of the *Who's Who* volume, he “passed away under Chinese communist oppress[ion]—1959” along with so many other residents of Lhasa who became victims of the tumultuous upheaval which engulfed the Tibetan capital that tragic year. Remaining to the last a patriot, Tsarong, out of office at this time of crisis and on another pilgrimage in India—this time in company with Dalai Lama XIV who went there in late 1956, returned to Lhasa in 1958 to help the Dalai Lama as he had done so often before. While other Tibetans (both aristocrats and officials) who had gone to India with His Holiness had decided to make for themselves a new home in the Subcontinent, Tsarong had resolutely followed his own maxim that “what you don’t like in your country you must fight from within your country.” Quoted in Taring 1970, p. 209. He was one of a few aristocrats and Government officials who took part in the Lhasan uprising, he being the most notable.

Now Heinrich Harrer, after an absence of 30 years, made a return visit to Lhasa in the spring of 1982. There he learned much about those days of upheaval in Mar. of 1959. He learned, for example, that Tsarong had had a conversation with Phala, the Chief Chamberlain of Dalai Lama Fourteenth, who urged him to convince His Holiness to leave Tibet. Tsarong apparently did have at least two conversations with the Tibetan Pontiff about the matter. Then, when the Uprising finally did erupt, Tsarong was asked to attend the National Assembly (the *Tsongdu*) which was in continuous day-and-night session in the Potala. Present at its sessions as requested, Tsarong was more or less commanded, as an experienced Tibetan government official, to remain behind in Lhasa. Harrer 1985, pp. 7-8. Indeed, at the height of the Uprising, it was he who was selected by the Tibetans in Lhasa to head up a delegation to negotiate with the Chinese there. Unfortunately, these negotiations never materialized, for prior to finalizing them, the Chinese military launched its brutal attack on the Tibetans in the capital, and Tsarong himself was arrested. Spence 1991, p. 35.

By this time the Potala had been turned into a Tibetan stronghold of resistance. And it is said that before the final curtain fell on the Uprising, Tsarong “was last seen digging [defensive?] trenches at the Potala.” Per Tsarong’s son, Kungo D.N. Tsarong to Franz Michael and reported in Michael 1982, p. 165. After the shelling of the Norbu Lingka Palace a few days later, Tsarong was taken prisoner by the Chinese. Harrer reports how he “managed to copy a frame from a Chinese film which showed three nobles being marched past the Chinese as prisoners, with hands raised high. One of these was Tsarong.” Harrer 1985, p. 8. Upon his arrest and imprisonment, the Chinese “gave him hard work to do—which he was not afraid of because he loved working.” Taring 1970, p. 261. But before any public trial could take place, he died on 14 May 1959 in a Communist prison cell. This, according to three sources of information, the first two of which are quoted by Michel Peissel: (a) a cable sent on 24 June 1959 from Peking and received by Tsarong’s daughter “Betty La” at Kalimpong, and which simply read: “Tsarong has died in prison.” But as Peissel has commented, “What tragedy lay behind those words no one will ever know for sure.” (b) Later, according to Peissel, a Communist report declared the following: “Another big ‘rebel,’ Tsarong, had been captured in the Potala surrender. His serfs demanded a ‘struggle meeting,’ but Tsarong was 70 years old [in fact 72, Peissel inserted] and died of a stroke before any meeting was held.” Peissel 1972, p. 159. And (c) One of Tsarong’s fellow prisoners was Dromo Geshe Rimpoche, a High Lama who was eventually able to get to India. He informed Mary La of the end of Tsarong as follows, as reported by Mary La: “One day the Chinese ordered Tsarong’s servants to humiliate him next morning, but when morning came [14 May 1959] he did not turn up to work as usual—so another high official went to wake him and found the old hero dead in his bed. His body was then handed over to his sister, Tsering Dolma.” Taring 1970, p. 261. Harrer would seem to confirm much of this when he states that Tsarong, “on the morning of 14 May 1959, the day he was to have faced a great People’s Court, to be humiliated by his own servants, . . . was found dead on his mattress in his prison cell,” although the cause of death he speculates differently from the Chinese report (see below). Harrer 1985, p. 8.

Tsarong is said to have had “his tongue cut out” and then to have been “beaten to death with iron rods.” Quoted from, respectively, Lang-Sims 1963, p. 81 and Jamyang Norbu (Tibetan National Democratic Movement spokesman

and Director, Tibetan Institute for the Performing Arts, Dharamsala, India), "A Revolt Long Ago." *TR* (Mar. 1984):19. No confirmation of this reported mutilation and manner of death for Tsarong has ever been presented. Still another account has it that Tsarong "apparently committed suicide after being publicly beaten by some of his servants and a few pro-Chinese monks and humiliated before his people." Moraes 1960, p. 168. Again, no confirmation of this report has ever been presented, either. The latter parts of Moraes's statement would appear to be untrue in the light of the above reports and what Heinrich Harrer can add to the testimony, as given next. For he speculates that "perhaps" Tsarong had indeed taken his own life "by swallowing some diamond splinters which—as he had once told me—he always carried secreted about his person. Death spared him the worst humiliation and injustice, a public trial by the People's Court." Harrer 1985, p. 8.

Needless to say, whatever may have been the actual manner of Tsarong's demise, it was, in the words of Peissel, "a tragic and undeserved end for an aged man known to all as the most progressive Tibetan." Peissel 1972, p. 159. In summing up Tsarong's life and career, the well-known American radio news commentator, Lowell Thomas, who had met the Tibetan leader when he had visited Lhasa in the late 1940s, broadcast the following on his regular CBS Radio program for 23 June 1959, just a few days after word of the General's death had reached the outside world: "...He rose to be the most powerful man in the country, next to the God-King himself...The story of Tsarong will be told and retold for centuries to come. If there is a more dramatic story about any of the top statesmen in the world, I haven't heard it. It's Horatio Alger with Oriental trimmings, plus much more." Quoted in Spence 1991, p. 55. See also Petech 1973, p. 138; Surkhang 1982, p. 16; and also Taring 1970, p. 26. "Betty La" mentioned above was the only child of Mary La and Tsarong before Mary subsequently would be released from her marriage to Tsarong that she might marry Jigme Taring, one of Tharchin's pupils at Gyantse.

12. Bernard 1939, p. 327.

13. Quoted in Jonathan Mirsky, "Lost Horizons," *The New York Review of Books* (20 Dec. 1990):53.

14. Bonavia and Bartlett 1981, pp. 118, 116.

15. *Ibid.*, 16-17.

16. Ward 1980, p. 238.

17. Incidentally, at Gyantse, and on the group's subsequent journey to Lhasa, Bernard had already offered a thousand lamps in the main worship hall at each of the monasteries visited. In fact, it was at the Palkhor Chhode Monastery in Gyantse that he had been told he was the first foreigner who had ever "been permitted to set foot across these sacred thresholds." (This, however, was incorrect, inasmuch as it may be recalled that as early as 1904 nearly all of the buildings comprising the Gyantse monastery—including especially its Central Temple, the chief place of worship—had been shown on guided tour by the lamas of that day to the London *Times* special correspondent attached to the Younghusband Expedition; see earlier in Ch. 14.) Here Bernard had been honored with the burning of a thousand lamps: "the highest tribute that can ever be paid to one by ceremonial worship," he later reported. It was a small monastery compared to the ones he was to visit elsewhere, with only about 1500 monks (in 1904, only about 1000 were there; see Ch. 14); but its wealth and its ritual were quite impressive to the American. He was shown jeweled golden images that gave him his first concrete idea of the "fabulous wealth hidden away in these impenetrable dungeons of faith." Thus, early on in the course of his visit to Tibet he could say that there was "no question that this was the greatest experience I had ever had in my life up to this time." Bernard 1939, pp. 63, 64, 67.

18. McGovern 1924, p. 160.

19. Located in close proximity to the Tibetan capital, at one time these three great monasteries (all belonging to the Gelugpa or Yellow Sect, the Order of the Dalai Lama) had interesting features about them (all three, however, having for the most part been destroyed since 1950 by the Chinese Communists):

The first, *Drepung*, lay to the west of Lhasa at the foot of the hills which flank the plain on the north. According to Bernard, its name in Tibetan meant "a pile of rice"; and he goes on to observe that "its three or four

stories of whitewashed dormitories give it the appearance of a pile of the auspicious rice—that is, if you see it at a proper distance”! Bernard 1939, p. 257. And thus it had come to be known as “The Rice Heap Monastery,” or “the Rice Heap” for short! In the center of its buildings rose a kind of pavilion—brilliant with color and gilding—which was occupied by the Dalai Lama whenever he would visit the monastery once each year and expound to its monks. It being the superior monastery to the famed Kumbum Monastery in Amdo, eastern Tibet (from where the current Dalai Lama comes), the place had been frequented by the Mongol student monks who came to Lhasa to graduate, and had hence been known in the land as the Mongol Monastery; furthermore, it had also been noted for being a center of political intrigue, inasmuch as the majority of its monks and Lamas had come from the same area of eastern Tibet which, if not having always been under China’s occupation, had certainly been under its pronounced influence; and thus “the desire to conciliate these faraway overlords of their birthplace” had made the inmates of Drepung “consistently pro-Chinese and anti-Western” and had therefore fomented intrigues at various times against the more widespread loyal Tibetan view held by most other monks and by the populace of Tibet as a whole. Riencourt 1950, p. 145. Heinrich Harrer, who had been invited to stay within Drepung’s precincts and to witness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama’s religious debate with an assemblage of monks and abbots there as proof of his maturity, has given a graphic description of the layout and organization of this one-time vast monastic city, in Harrer 1956, pp. 208-10.

Sera to the north had been situated on the acclivity of the hills and near to the road by which pilgrims had entered from Mongolia. It had gotten its name from *Se-ra*, “The Wild Rose Fence,” so-called because when first built on a much smaller scale than what it later became, it had been surrounded by bushes of wild rose. In Bernard’s day an extensive complex of buildings and temples had risen in amphitheater against a backdrop of rocky mountains. In the hill’s recesses high above the Monastery were scattered numerous cells of lamas that had adopted a solitary life. *Sera*’s main temple, very ornate, had had the special reputation for being the resting-place of the *Vajra* or Thunderbolt of Jupiter—the symbol of the strong and indestructible—which the priest would grasp and manipulate in various ways during prayer. It is a bronze instrument, like a dumbbell in shape with pointed ends, and was carried solemnly to Lhasa’s Central Temple, the *Jo-khang*, during the New Year’s Festival.

And finally *Ganden* (from *Gal-den*, thus meaning in Tibetan “The Joyous” Monastery), situated eastward on the far side of the *Kyi Chu*, and regarded as the greatest center of learning in Tibet, had been the oldest monastery of the ruling Yellow Hat Sect of Lamaist Buddhism in Tibet, it not only having been founded by *Tsong Khapa* but also having had him as its first superior; it was here, also, where the founder died. His body was said to have been preserved here with miraculous circumstances. Here, flanked by the tombs of two of his chief disciples, had been his *chorten* tomb, constructed of marble and malachite, within a great shrine said to have been of gold; and here also were other of his relics, such as the impression of his hands and feet. The position of Abbot or Superior at this Monastery had been determined not by heredity or by supposed reincarnation (as was customary in most other great Tibetan monasteries) but by election from among *Ganden*’s most learned Lamas. Sources: except where noted, the above adapted from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed. (New York, 1911), 16:531, and from Finegan 1986, p. 149.

These great monasteries at one time had formed a trio known as “The Three Seats,” and was “the most potent priestly force in the Tibetan government.” Bell 1946, p. 52. In fact, these “three Pillars of the State”—as Heinrich Harrer and others have dubbed them—played “a decisive role” in the political life of Tibet. The Abbots of these three religious institutions, together with eight particular Government officials, had presided over the National Assembly of the country. No decision was ever taken without the assent of these Abbots, who naturally were concerned above all in the supremacy of the monasteries. And it must be conceded that their intervention had precluded the implementation of many progressive ideas. Harrer 1956, p. 210.

The reader, incidentally, should by this point in the biography of Gergan Tharchin not have been surprised to learn of the incredibly large numbers of monks that Bernard found in these three vast monastic facilities. It may be recalled from an early chapter above that it has been estimated that between one-fifth and one-third of the total Tibetan population had been identified with a monastic institution, with one son at least, and usually the firstborn, having customarily been sent to the monastery by every family in the land.

Finally, like other writers on Tibet before him and since, Bernard himself was later to explain the significance of these huge numbers of monks, when in 1939 he wrote that while the *official* number of inmates housed at

these three major monasteries was, respectively, 7700, 5500 and 3300, "these numbers are mystical rather than factual." He went on to say that "the real figures in each case exceed those given by thousands." Bernard 1939, p. 257.

20. Tsong Khapa in Tibetan means "The Man from the Land of Onions," and was the name of the great Tibetan saint born in northeastern Tibet (since 1928, a part of Ch'ing-hai Province of China proper) and a famous religious reformer who later belonged to the Yellow Hat Sect in Tibetan Buddhism. Tsong Khapa revived the religion in a purer form, preaching the observance of the laws and discipline, insisting on the celibacy of the priesthood, and forbidding the consumption of alcoholic liquors. "To lessen the multitude of lower gods and devils from the Tibetan religion was indeed beyond his power, but in a marked degree he curtailed the attention paid to them by this magic-loving people." Bell 1946, p. 32. His followers came to be known as "the Yellow Hats" in view of the fact that he began to require his priests to wear that color in contradistinction to the red-colored hats then being worn by the earlier sects. In his book *Seven Years in Tibet* (p. 160), Heinrich Harrer has related the legendary and somewhat amusing story of how Tsong Khapa is believed to have been indirectly if not directly responsible for why the color yellow was the one chosen for the reformed Lamaistic Sect. What Harrer related can be found in the text of Ch. 18 above of the present narrative.

Perhaps here would be an appropriate place to correct a long held misconception among many Western writers on Tibetan Lamaism that the colors which differentiated the reformed from the unreformed lamas extended to their garments as well as their hats. But as André Migot has pointed out, all Tibetan priests, "whatever sect they belong to, wear the same garment of coarse material, brick-red or garnet-red in color; this consists of a voluminous robe tied round the waist with a golden girdle, a sleeveless jacket which leaves the arms bare, a toga-like vestment called the *zen*, and the usual heavy Tibetan boots. The head is closely shaved and is generally bare, though during ritual observances a hat is worn; it is only by the color of this hat that the reformed sects, who wear a yellow one, can be distinguished from the unreformed, who wear a red one." *Tibetan Marches*, trans. Peter Fleming (London, 1955), 108. But as another much earlier writer has observed, the priests of Tibet do, nonetheless, carry out their distinction in other ways. Writing in 1902, William Carey had noted that "these distinctive colors, especially the red and the yellow, are carried through all the details of life. The Red Hats live in houses with red stripes, and use red rosaries, and love the red lotus, while the Yellow Hats rival them with their own special tint." Carey 1983, p. 96.

During the last 300 years or so the Gelugpa ("The Virtuous Order") or Yellow Hat Sect has constituted the most powerful one in Tibet; and all the more so because the Dalai Lama is its head. "So strong is the stamp which Tsong Khapa has imprinted on Tibetan Buddhism, that by many he is called 'The Second Buddha'." Bell 1946, p. 32.

21. Pemba 1957, p. 80.

22. Richardson, *Ceremonies of the Lhasa Year*, edited by Michael Aris (London, 1993), 107. See also Bell 1928, p. 290 for the Tibetan name for this monastic site, its English translation and exact location of the gumpa.

23. P.O.S. 1938, p. 41.

24. It will no longer be surprising that Bernard's guru lama had required him to bow down before a painting of Milarepa after one is made aware of this revered poet-saint, whom Nikolai K. Roerich once called "the Tibetan Orpheus." Born in the year 1040 a.d. near Kyirong some 50 miles north of Kathmandu on the Tibetan side of the Nepalese frontier, he had a wealthy merchant for a father who died when the future poet was but an infant. The father had committed the child—named Thopaga, meaning "Delightful to Hear"—and his mother, who was known as the White Garland of the Nyang, into the care of an uncle and aunt. Instead of caring for them, these relatives proceeded to appropriate the inheritance for themselves, made mother and child work as slaves, provided them with the poorest of food and nothing but rags for clothing, and left both widow and son absolutely destitute. Moreover, the couple often beat Thopaga. Suffering so much, his mother decided to send the boy to a sorcerer to study the black arts, with the intent that once he became proficient in these, mother and son would take revenge upon the merciless relatives.

Indeed, one day Thopaga was able to cast a magic spell over the house of the uncle and aunt during a festive occasion at which were gathered with the couple most of his guilty relatives. Through magic employed by the boy the roof was literally brought down upon all their heads, destroying all who were within. The spell also wrought much disaster upon the entire village.

Thopaga, repenting of this terrible sin, went forth in search of the Truth, hoping to find a religious guru who could help him in his quest. In the end he met St. Marpa (1012-97), the Great Translator, who refused to impart to him the teachings of truth until he had made expiation for his sins, that is to say, until he had wiped out all the bad *karma* he had accumulated through practicing the black arts. To this end, and under Marpa's direction, Thopaga spent years in wanderings, meditating in caves, suffering deprivations, and building with his own hands a tower of stone as a gift for his teacher's son. Though he was a powerful youth, he found this latter task a physically grueling and even painful one, and utterly frustrating. Nevertheless, he was willing to suffer through this six-to-eight-month test, Thopaga finally completing the tower's construction at the village of Do Wo Lung not far from the Tibetan border with Bhutan. This structure, now nearly a thousand years old, and named Se Khar Guthog (meaning the "Tower of Nine Stories, Built for the Son"), still stands today. (Its gilt copper roof, however, was removed during the notorious Chinese Communist Cultural Revolution, thus leading to water infiltration that as of 1997 was seriously damaging this ancient structure's rare interior wall paintings, among which are the earliest known images of Thopaga and his guru Marpa and dating from ca. 12th-13th century.)

At the conclusion of all these trials, wanderings and deprivations, Enlightenment at last came, the threshold of Nirvana was reached—all, like that of Sakyamuni himself, in a single lifetime. Now Thopaga at some point in his career came to be known as Mila Repa because as a great wandering yogin and master of "mystical heat" it was not necessary for him to wear more than a single white cloth or *repa* even in the coldest winter; and hence, he took on the more familiar name of Milarepa, "the cotton-clad mila." As a member of the Kagyupa Sect of Tibetan Buddhism, founded by his renowned teacher, Marpa (who obtained his doctrine from Naropa, the head of the great Indian Buddhist center of Nalanda in what is now Bihar State), in about the year 1050, the latter's most famous follower was soon having disciples of his own, who flocked to him from everywhere. In addition, as a mendicant friar, Milarepa, during intervals of his meditation, would travel widely through the southern region of central Tibet, "instructing the people..., proselytizing, refuting and converting heretics, and working manifold miracles." But though he taught the people and his disciples a great deal, his prose teaching did not become as well known to Tibetans as did his hortatory verses, his "songs" as it were. Their subjects ranged from the wonders of nature and the destiny of Tibet to various sacred themes. He sang of both his land and its people in beautiful poetry. As transcribed by his disciples, Milarepa's poems, of which there were countless, came to be loved by all Tibetans; in fact, one of the most popular and widely circulated books in Tibet is called *The One Hundred Thousand Songs of the Venerable Milarepa*. So that no matter of what sect, all the people of Tibet have revered him greatly to this day. In the words of Tharchin's friend, Rinchen Dolma Taring (Mary La): "We Tibetans consider Milarepa everything that a great saint should be." And the present Dalai Lama has himself often remarked that Milarepa can rightly be viewed as Tibet's national poet.

As the great poet-saint was preparing for death (1123 a.d.), the teaching he gave at that moment could easily have been something which the Buddha himself might have uttered: "All worldly pursuits have but the one unavoidable and inevitable end, which is sorrow: acquisitions end in dispersion; buildings, in destruction; meetings, in separation; births, in death. Knowing this, one should from the very first renounce acquisition and heaping-up, and building and meeting, and...set about realizing the Truth....Life is short, and the time of death is uncertain; so apply yourselves to meditation...." The poet laureate of Tibet is said to have died at or near Lachi Kang (Mt. Everest). Said one Tibetan Buddhist Lama living in New York, and believed by Tibetans to have been a reincarnation of an abbot in Kham, the story of Milarepa's life "is one to encourage us all to believe that no matter how black our sins may be, salvation is possible here and now, if we repent and enter the Path." Sources for this note: Taring 1970, p. 252; Rato 1977, p. 154; Finegan 1986, p. 92; Lowell Thomas Jr., *The Dalai Lama* (New York, 1961), 31; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th ed. (New York, 1911), 26:921; Roerich 1929, p. 396; and Matthiessen 1979, pp. 93, 96, 326. The teaching the poet-saint gave as he prepared for death is quoted in *ibid.*, 93 as taken from W.Y. Evans-Wentz, *Tibet's Great Yogi: Milarepa* (New York, 1969). Finally, the most recent status report about Milarepa's Tower is according to remarks made by Heather Stoddard and

Andre Alexander during their slide-illustrated lecture, "Lhasa: Restoring the Old City," presented at the Asia Society Washington (DC) Center, 14 Apr. 1997. According to a brochure distributed at the lecture by their cultural preservation organization, the Shalu Association, they "have promised to raise funds to put a new roof on in 1997" as a means of preserving this Tibetan Buddhist cultural site.

25. Bernard 1939, pp. 174-5. One can speculate a great deal, but investigation by the present author has not yielded success in uncovering for certain the identity of this former powerful friend of Tharchin's. The name of Lungshar, of course, comes to mind as one possibility.

26. Tharchin to Bell, Tsarong House Lhasa, both 1 July and 25 July 1937, Bell Papers.

27. This date is according to two entries—"Lhasa to Nyethang 15/9/37; 16/9/37 Nyethang"—found, among others, in a small diary/travel expense notebook Tharchin kept while on the trip. ThPaK.

28. Bell 1937, p. 430.

29. See *TR* (Sept. 1973):8.

30. Much of the information on Gedun Drubpa, Kadrub, and Tsong Khapa in relation to Drepung and Trashilhunpo Monasteries can be found in: Bonavia and Bartlett 1981, pp. 115, 116, 119; and Bell 1937, p. 430.

31. See McGovern 1924, p. 221.

32. Tharchin's quote of Bernard is found in GTUM TwMs, Ch. 18, p. 3.

33. Per an "NBC Nightly News" television broadcast from New York on 21 July 1989.

34. See Harrer 1985, pp. 147-8 for a discussion of the wanton destruction and looting which has occurred in Tibet since 1950. As but one evidence of the damage done by the Chinese occupiers of Tibet, it was stated by Thubten Jigme Norbu, the current Dalai Lama's eldest brother, that of the 20,000 monks and lamas at the "Big Three" monasteries of Lhasa, only 300 were left by 1965. And by 1968, when he wrote, Thubten Norbu believed even these were gone. He further stated that all but 200 of Trashilhunpo's body of 4000 clergy were deported in 1962 to concentration camps "for being pro-Tibetan and for praying for the long life of the [Dalai Lama]." Norbu and Turnbull 1968, p. 337.

As still further evidence of the alarming diminution of Tibet's cultural and religious heritage, it was reported that by 1976, which ended the decade-long radically destructive era of Mao Tse-tung's Red Guard rampages that had characterized much of the so-called Cultural Revolution, the cost in cultural loss to Tibet was well-nigh "irreversible." Michael Weisskopf of the *Washington Post*, one of the 40 foreign journalists invited by the Chinese government on a six-day visit to Lhasa during Aug. of 1983, observed that "only a handful of Tibet's 2100 temples and monasteries escaped ruin" during the systematic destruction that was heaped upon this Buddhist land. "Thousands of lamas," he added, "were persecuted and Buddhist shrines were smashed to dust." Weisskopf, in a *Post* article of 13 Aug. 1983 and appearing in *TR* (Sept. 1983):15. Another of the 40 journalists, Melinda Liu of *Newsweek* magazine (USA), reported after the visit that only 45 temples and monasteries had been repaired or restored and then reopened in the years between 1977 and 1983. Liu, in a *Newsweek* article of 29 Aug. 1983 and appearing in *TR* (Sept. 1983):16.

And after a visit which he made to Tibet in the summer of 1979, free-lance photographer-writer Fred Ward wrote that he was told by Kesang Wangdin (who had been the general manager of the Tibetan mint in 1959) that three years following the conclusion of the Cultural Revolution (1979) only nine monasteries with monks and lamas remained. Moreover, in an interview Ward had had with Tudeng Danda (a former Tibetan noble and the former secretary-general of the current Dalai Lama), the free-lance writer learned that the monks and lamas were no longer allowed, as it were, "to live off the labor of others." In fact, as of 1979, the former noble reflected, "there are no more than a thousand" of these Buddhist clergy, and "they all must perform useful tasks in addition to being monks. Most work in the fields or orchards around the monasteries." Ward 1980, p. 238.

For an up-to-date but highly unmitigating "catalogue of horrors" and devastation perpetrated by the Chinese occupiers upon all facets of Tibetan life and culture, see Goodman 1986, pp. 328-9. See also Hicks 1988, pp. 78-

81. And finally, the reader should consult Ingram 1990 pp. 10-13, wherein among other things, the author described the desecration of Tibet's *objets d'art* as follows: "The Chinese began deliberately and systematically to destroy Tibetan monasteries and temples, expertly dynamiting them after special teams had selected various valuable religious objects which were then taken out of Tibet, many of them being sold in foreign exchange markets (notably in Hong Kong and Nepal), bringing in much needed foreign currency. Ancient religious artifacts, priceless Tibetan paintings (thankas), art treasures and statues were either smashed to pieces by the Chinese or by terrified Tibetans obeying their orders. Sacred *mani* stones were used to make toilets; slaughterhouses were deliberately sited in the precincts of former monasteries, one monastery (the Jo-khang in Lhasa—which is the most holy temple in Tibet) was used as a pigsty and sacred scriptures were ploughed in with manure."

35. Macdonald 1932, pp. 215-6.

36. Hayden and Cosson 1927, p. 133. Hayden also noted that for the same reason the Lamaist faith in Tibet generated "a prejudice against mining operations throughout the country" and, therefore, "it is always difficult to find labor for the purpose." *Ibid.* Sir Henry had formerly been Director, Geological Survey of India, and as a geologist had been requested by the Lhasa government to come to Tibet to advise regarding the development of Tibet's mineral resources. As a consequence, he and his colleague had gone to Lhasa in 1922 and shortly afterwards had undertaken a scientific expedition into the Highlands regions of the country. Moreover, most Tibetans looked upon the act of mining as almost sacrilegious, viewing it as "a desecration of nature." Norbu and Turnbull 1968, p. 343. But the religious objection was intensified by an economic one. For Charles Bell has pointed out that when a mine is ever located, the local citizenry concerned were expected to work it for the Government without any pay; yet this motivated Tibetans to conceal the existence of natural wealth, they even at times showing up to attack those who might attempt to exploit a mine. Bell 1928, pp. 110-11.

37. Phuntso 1981, pp. 90, 91.

38. Wong 1984, p. 291.

39. Tseten 1971, p. 58; and Phuntso 1981, p. 90.

40. Norbu 1987, p. 48.

41. Phuntso 1981, p. 90.

42. *Ibid.*

43. Tung 1980, p. 104.

44. Norbu 1987, p. 49.

45. Quotations re: remuneration are from Taring 1970, p. 10 and Tolstoy 1946, p. 181. Perceval Landon, London *Times* correspondent who accompanied Colonel Younghusband and his famed Mission to Lhasa in 1904, walked through the ragyapa quarter of the Tibetan capital and found that this social group dwelt in the most appalling poverty. With great revulsion he described what he saw there: "It is difficult to imagine a more repulsive occupation, a more brutalized type of humanity, and, above all, a more abominable and foul sort of hovel than those which are characteristic of these men. Filthy in appearance, half-naked, half-clothed in obscene rags, these nasty folk live in houses which a respectable pig would refuse to occupy." Quoted in Hopkirk 1982, p. 185. These "undertakers" lived on the eastern outskirts of Lhasa in "curious huts made of horns and mud." Indeed, one of the famed British Indian Pundits, Lama Ugyen Gyatsho, reported that in 1883 the ragyapas were only permitted to live in such houses, "no matter what their present wealth or former position may have been." In fact, one Tibetologist and former Pundit himself, S.C. Das, has reported that one theory for the name of ragyapa asserts that the word means "the horny ones" and comes from this very custom by this class of people of in part fashioning the walls of their homes with animal horns. Das also reports another theory that maintains that the word is best translated as "corpse-vulture" (*ro* meaning "corpse" and *go-vo* meaning "vulture").

Besides playing the part "of scavengers and corpse-cutters," these "ruffian outcasts of the city" (they having been outcasted from society for various offenses) also engage in begging and pilfering. "In former years they

were very turbulent and caused the city authorities a great deal of trouble, but now the strong measures of Tserong Shape, backed by his army, have very considerably checked their power." McGovern 1924, p. 452. The author was there in 1923. Interestingly, one who was a victim of ragyapa turbulence in the past was the clandestine Pundit already mentioned, Lama Ugyen. The compiler of this Pundit's secret report of his time in Tibet in 1883, Thomas Holdich, narrates what happened to the Lama at Lhasa at the hands of the ragyapas there: "These ragyapas appear to be the pest of Lhasa. Hardened by crime and deadened by their occupation to all sense of humanity, they band together in a turbulent and unruly crowd, and endeavor to extort blackmail from all strangers and travelers. The Lama was hunted by them into the marketplace of Lhasa, where, to his dismay, they began to denounce him as a British spy. It seemed that amongst their number was a man who had served as a *Jhampani* [?] at Darjeeling who recognized him. He only avoided an unpleasant exposure by sending for his friends [in the city]...and paying up the [extortion] fees demanded for secrecy." See *Report on the Explorations of...Lama U.G., 1883...in...Tibet* (Compilation from the Narrative Account of Lama U.G.'s Third Season's Explorations in Tibet, by Thomas H. Holdich; Dehra Dun: Printed at Office of Trigonometrical Branch, Survey of India, 1889), 32-3. See also Das 1902, pp. 63n., 164. The ragyapas have been further described by R.D. Taring (Mary La) (in Taring 1970, p. 9):

They had their own guild and were responsible for the difficult work of putting up and down the four huge prayer-flag masts of the city of Lhasa. Their own responsibilities included such dirty work as disposing of...**dead bodies**, providing the monks with human skulls and thigh-bones for special rites, **putting out the eyes or chopping off the limbs** of a few criminals who were punished in this manner, **and keeping other beggars away from parties** if people did not want to be troubled by too many of them. **Wherever anything was being celebrated**, or even at houses where a death had occurred, they **demand big sums of money**, shouting that they were entitled to it because of their great responsibilities and refusing to leave until they had been paid and given lots of beer. They always went home quite drunk and were satisfied with their gifts. The ragyapa were well off and never begged like the other really poor beggars.

46. Phuntso 1981, p. 90.

47. Sinclair 1965, p. 165n., and Bell 1928, p. 291.

48. Tseten 1971, p. 58.

49. Norbu 1987, pp. 50-1.

50. All the quoted material here dealing with the flay rock and the vultures' initial response is per *Report on the Explorations of...Lama U.G., 1883...in...Tibet*, 32-3; and the fire description is per Phuntso 1981, p. 90.

51. Recounted by the Hong Kong-born American journalist, Wong Man-How, in Wong 1984, pp. 304-5. He traveled in the region mentioned in 1982-3.

52. Quoted by Waddell in Waddell 1972, p. 422.

53. Phuntso 1981, p. 90.

54. Quoted in Berry 1989, p. 308.

55. Taring 1970, p. 40.

56. Das 1902, p. 255.

57. Sinclair 1965, p. 166.

58. Tung 1980, p. 104 (emphasis hers).

59. Phuntso 1981, p. 91.

60. *Ibid.*

A part of the cemetery was converted into a garden, where the Moslem community used to hold their major functions. There were some very old unknown graves of those who came to Tibet as preachers. The cemetery at Kygasha was 15 kms outside the capital. [Here] there was an area of ½ sq. km where mainly Moslems of Chinese origin used to bury their dead. This cemetery contained 14 graves [in particular], known as *Papa Chupshi*. The story goes that some Moslems from Suilling or Huilling [a small area in present-day China that at one time had been a small independent state in the north of Tibet around the Koko Nor region and whose Moslem people were known as Siling or Hu-Hus] passed through Tibet for Hajj (holy pilgrimage to Mecca). They preached their religion in every city and village they came across. When they neared Lhasa the then Minister, Shuta Desan, became aware of them and their activities. He concocted some allegations against them and ordered them to be killed. Each of them offered special prayers before they became martyrs." Ataulloh Siddiqui, "Moslems of Tibet," *TJ* (Winter 1991):75-6. For further details on the Moslem community at Lhasa, see a brief discussion of both the Nepali and Moslem communities in end-note no. 82 for Ch. 16 above, as well as a much longer discussion of the Moslem community both in the Text and in end-note no. 75 for Ch. 18.

62. Phuntso 1981, p. 91.

63. *Ibid.*, 90.

64. *Ibid.*, 90-1.

65. Harrer 1954, p. 151. This was doubtless at Rigya just two or three miles NE of Lhasa where, for example, the body of Lady Tzarong (Mary La's sister Pema Dolkar) was taken in 1957 "by truck to the foot of the hill from where it was carried by servants" up to the disposal site. Taring 1970, p. 219.

66. See Bernard 1939, pp. 325-7.

67. Taring 1970, pp. 39-40. In comparing this account by Mary La and that given a few pages earlier in the present narrative by another observer of such proceedings, the reader may have noticed a discrepancy surrounding one particular detail of the ragyapa procedure at the flay rock. Here, Mrs. Taring noted that the body was placed on the slab with the "face downwards," whereas just the opposite—"...their faces to the sky..."—was the position employed by the "corpse-cutters" in the earlier-related incident. It would appear from this that the practice was not uniform among the ragyapas.

68. *Times*, 28 Nov. 1963, p. 79.

69. Wesley Needham's bio-data, incidentally, is as follows: disciplines of study were Tibetan Buddhist literature and art, he having received his B.A. from the University of Connecticut in 1925, with an honorary M.A. degree from Yale in 1954, a year after he became that institution's Library Adviser on Tibetan Literature and therefore one of those who in 1963 served on the Committee which determined the purchase for the University of part of Bernard's collection of Tibetan materials. From 1947 onward Needham would also serve as Consultant to the Newark Museum's well-known Tibetan Collection at Newark NJ USA. Needham's chief fields of research interest were: Tibet, Tibetan language, history and culture. See Jacques C. Press, ed., *Directory of American Scholars*, 7th ed., Vol. III: *Foreign Languages, Linguistics and Philology* (New York, 1978), 350.

70. Long before this time (1937) there had arisen an ongoing assembly of Christians here dating from the days when David Macdonald's wife's private school at Yatung had served as a place for the believers to meet together for worship. It will be recalled that Tharchin had on two previous occasions been present when Dr. Sutherland (in 1920) and Dr. Graham (in 1921) had conducted a Sunday worship service here (see Chs. 13 and 14). By 1924 Macdonald had retired from the scene to live in Kalimpong.

71. The dates for Tharchin's movements into and out of Gyantse and Yatung are derived from two sources which are a part of the ThPaK: (a) Letter, E.A. Ollila to Tharchin, Ghoom, 1 Dec. 1937, that reads in part: "I am in receipt of your letter dated at Gyantse, Tibet, 14.X.37. As you mentioned in it that you would arrive at Kalimpong in a few days, I did not write for a long time." (b) Four diary entries—"8/11/37 Gyantse to Saugang"; "9/11/37 Saugang"; "20-21/11 Yatung"; "22/11 Tarachang" etc.—found, among others, in the aforementioned

small diary/expenditure notebook Tharchin kept while on the trip. Tharchin's projected arrival plans at Kalimpong were considerably delayed, no doubt partly because of his responsibilities connected with Bernard's huge amount of luggage.

72. Cooper 1986, p. 14.

73. See handwritten signed note, Bernard to Tharchin, undated, requesting a Tibetan copy of [*Root of Treasure*]; and see signed typed note, Bernard to Tharchin, again undated, inviting the Babu to lunch "for a long visit." ThPaK. Both notes (1) mention Senge, Tharchin's servant who would soon accompany the Bernards to Kulu; and (2) use the plural pronoun "we," thus indicating Helen Bernard's presence in Kalimpong; and therefore, these two "clues" are evidence that these notes date from Bernard's 1947 visit to Kalimpong, and not his earlier visit in 1937.

74. Thomas Jr. 1951, p. 106; Kimura 1990, p. 154.

75. The name of a highland valley in the Kangra District of what was then the northeastern territory of the Punjab in British India. After Indian Independence on 15 Aug. 1947, the Kangra was separated from the Punjab, thus making the Kulu Valley a part of the Indian State of Himachal Pradesh. The Valley serves as a gateway to the high Himalayas whose stark and muscular strength encircles this so-called "Valley of the Gods." In fact, Hindu writers of the past had regarded Kulu "as the end of the inhabitable world." H. Lee Shuttleworth, "Border Countries of the Punjab Himalaya," *GJ* (Oct. 1922):241.

One of these high Himalayan regions is Lahul (where Kyelang is) and Spiti to the north and east of Kulu, and was the area of interest for Bernard's research in 1947. By 1922 the population of Kulu, Lahul and Spiti combined was still only about 125,000, and was composed "of the most diverse elements, representing Aryan, Mongolian, and what may perhaps be called survivals of a very early Himalayan race. In a region where elevation varies from 2590' on the Sutlej River to 23,050' in Spiti, ... we find an extraordinary diversity of climate, vegetation and fauna ranging from the sub-tropical to the arctic." *Ibid.* The people of Spiti are almost all Buddhists of Tibetan stock, while Lahul is split about 50-50 between Buddhists and Hindus. The Buddhists in both follow a Tibetan form of Tantric Buddhism with a panoply of demons, saints and followers. The monasteries in Spiti belong to the Nyingmapa or Red Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism, an early sect dating prior to the reformation of Tsong Khapa and his disciples of the 14th and 15th centuries. These monasteries in Spiti are colorful places where the monks and Lamas lead lives ordered by complicated regulations and rituals. Many similarities exist between these people and the Ladakhis farther north. For more information on the Spiti region see again the Text of Ch. 4 of the present work's initial volume.

76. Kimura 1990, p. 154.

77. Two letters, Helen Bernard to Tharchin, Great Eastern Hotel, Calcutta, 31 Oct. and 3 Nov. 1947, ThPaK.

78. This account appeared on an introductory page (vi) to a later reprint edition of Theos Bernard's *Hatha Yoga: the Report of a Personal Experience* (New York: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1970).

79. *Explorers Journal* (Summer 1950):21. See also *ibid.* (Spring 1948):3; (Winter 1949):22; and (Summer 1950):6. Austrian Baron Nebesky-Wojkowitz, also a friend of Tharchin's at Kalimpong, states that Prince Peter was a cousin of the King of Greece and nephew of the English Duchess of Kent; while his wife, Princess Irene, who was of Russian origin, would often accompany her husband on his research trips. Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1955?, p. 78. In 1957 these Royals would be ousted from India by the central government because they allegedly engaged repeatedly in activities and continually made statements which were considered to be inimical to India's best interests.

80. Thomas Jr. 1951, pp. 106-7; letter, Richardson to Tharchin, Lhasa, 2 Jan. 1947, ThPaK; Kimura 1990, p. 154; and see Cooper 1986, pp. 11, 14 and McKay 1997, p. 173.

81. See Kimura 1990, p. 154; Bernard 1939, pages as indicated in the present narrative's Text; and Cooper 1986, pp. 11, 14 (emphasis Cooper's).

82. The last two entries in his diary/expenditure notebook for the journey shows that Tharchin's stay on the Tibet-Sikkimese border at Gnatong Dak Bungalow was for two days: "23/11 Gnatong" and "24/11/37 NGAtong [Gnatong]"—from where would require only some three or four trekking days' descent down to Kalimpong. This would mean he arrived home on or about 27 Nov. 1937, a date that is confirmed by what Tharchin himself subsequently reported to Sir Charles Bell in a letter he wrote the former Political Officer from Mackenzie Cottage on 11 Dec. 1937. In it the Tibetan states his "arrival from Tibet" at Kalimpong was "on 27th Nov." See ThPaK.

83. Up until that time separate departments of Government had been maintained for the mint, the paper currency factory, and the ammunition factory. In 1931, however, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama joined all three together under the one Drapchi Lekhung Department, and placed at its head both the newly-deposed *Kashag* member and former Tibetan Army chief, Tsarong (who just prior to this change had been in charge of the Mint Department), and the Dalai Lama's current favourite, the monk-official, still in his twenties, Kuchar Kunphela. See Rahul 1969, pp. 64-5; Taring 1970, p. 107; and Goldstein 1989, pp. 151-2. According to the Tibetan historian, W.D. Shakabpa, this new department "improved the quality of paper currency, imported ammunition, and established electrification in Lhasa, using the services of Ringang, who had been educated at Rugby in England." Shakabpa 1967, p. 267.

The wife of the British Political Officer for Tibet in the mid-1930s, F.W. Williamson, has described what they both witnessed at Drapchi on their two visits to the factory in 1933 during their diplomatic stay that summer at the Tibetan capital (Williamson 1987, pp. 124-5):

Our first visit took place at the invitation of Kunphela. He met us on arrival with a band and a guard of honor complete with flying colors. We visited the new workshops run on the electric power generated at Dote, some six miles away and the original site of the workshops. The electrical machinery had all been acquired by Ringang in England in 1924 and ran very quietly. Rather incongruously it had been installed in a room of many pillars gaily painted and decorated in the usual Tibetan style—not at all a typical factory interior. Silver coins were being cut, milled and stamped, banknotes printed, rifle barrels bored, and shell and cartridge cases filled. The products were given their finishing touches by a row of workmen sitting on a verandah and using hand-tools. They sang merrily as they worked but the noise of their files set my teeth on edge.

Nearby there was a large and well-built armory in which several thousand rifles and a large quantity of ammunition were stored. Apparently there were plans afoot to build more rooms for the storage of machine-guns and other weapons. When we next visited Drapchi a few weeks later we were amazed to see that the projected new storerooms had already been completed. Two hundred coolies, seventy carpenters and sixty masons had put them up in thirteen days flat. A little later, on the adjacent range, we saw some of the machine-guns in action. Accuracy was pretty good.

Further details of this new department and the output of its factory are provided in a London *Times* article which appeared in early 1934. In it the writer points out that Ringang, who had developed an aptitude for engineering, had become "the right-hand man" to Kunphela and Tsarong in the establishment of this factory of Drapchi (located just outside Lhasa to the north three miles away) since it was he who had created the hydroelectric power facility nearby which made it possible for the factory to engage in some of its activities. Said the article further: "This is indeed an innovation—Tibet's first factory. Here are minted copper coins, the dies of which were carved in Lhasa. Paper notes are also artistically printed in three colors. These coins and notes constitute the currency of Tibet, and they compare favorably with those of other countries. At Drapchi the uniforms and equipment for the Tibetan Army are made, and repairs of war material are carried out. The machinery in the factory is worked by electricity produced by water power. The responsibility for the entire equipment rests on Ringang. It was he who knew the kind of machinery to be ordered, and his knowledge of English enabled correspondence to be conducted with the British firms who supplied it. The masters of Rugby would be surprised could they see their one-time pupil wearing a pigtail, a turquoise earring, and all the picturesque ornate uniform of a high Tibetan official." *Times* (London), 29 Jan. 1934, p. 13.

83a. Radhu 1997, p. 170.

84. Lungshar (personal name: Dorji Tsegjal) was the one who had been chosen by the Dalai Lama to accompany the four Tibetan teen-aged boys who in 1913 had been sent off to England for education. He and the boys even had an audience with Their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary in June of that year at which Lungshar presented letters and presents from His Holiness to Their Majesties. When Tharchin's 1937 host in Lhasa, Tsarong, was deprived of his post as the Tibetan Army's Commander-in-Chief in 1925, Lungshar was immediately appointed as one of its top co-Commanders by the Dalai Lama. He held this post and that of Tsipon (Financial Secretary) until 1931, when he lost the Army post but continued as Tsipon. Although he was intelligent, well informed and quite influential with the late Dalai Lama, he inevitably made many enemies. Moreover, within four months after the Dalai Lama's death in late 1933, his nefarious plans to overthrow Tibet's theocratic government in favor of a republic under his control were uncovered. And hence, when he was arrested, Lungshar, as punishment, had his eyes gouged out—a rare penalty reserved for acts of high treason—and was imprisoned initially in the Potala's dungeon. P.O.S. 1938, p. 44; Shakabpa 1967, p. 276; and other sources.

84a. Radhu 1997, p. 170.

85. Perhaps this is an appropriate place to append a few words regarding the incidence of homosexual practice in pre-1950 Tibet. While Tibetan monasteries—at least those belonging to the predominant ruling Gelugpa or Yellow Sect—enforced heterosexual celibacy, it has been pointed out by Melvyn Goldstein that “homosexual intercourse was generally overlooked so long as no orifice was penetrated. Thus, if a monk engaged in homosexual intercourse, it was typically done between the legs of the partner.” Goldstein 1989, p. 23n. Prince Peter of Greece and Denmark, in his extensive anthropological study of polyandry, including that of Tibet, has remarked that “the monasteries in Tibet proper have... a very strong reputation for male homosexuality, and jokes about master-novice relations are often made along these lines.” One Christian missionary in eastern Tibet for three and a half years during the late 1940s, George N. Patterson, who would later find his way in the early 1950s to Kalimpong and there become an acquaintance to the Prince (and, incidentally, to Gergan Tharchin also), had “assured” Prince Peter “that in Kham, interviewing patients medically in the course of his work, he was often called upon to treat monks for venereal disease of the anus, fistulas and other ailments, which were admittedly the result of homosexual contact, and which the people who came to him for medicine made no attempt to dissimulate.” *A Study of Polyandry* (The Hague, 1963), 385.

Further evidence of this practice in East Tibet and in Mongolia has been provided by Tharchin's friend of a later day, Hisao Kimura, the young Japanese intelligence agent who disguised as a Mongolian monk had been dispatched on a spy mission into Mongolia and Tibet, among other places, in the mid-1940s. He tells of having been sexually accosted by a 75-year-old Outer Mongolian monk nicknamed Khalka Lama who was living at the time near the Amdo town of Shan, site of the well-known Panchen Monastery belonging to the Panchen Lamas of Tibet. From the dialogue of the story related by Kimura, it becomes obvious that this kind of sexual contact between monks had often occurred in these Buddhist lands.

Now this old lama had been to Lhasa eleven times, and at the time of Kimura's encounter with him he was maintaining a neat and clean mud house at his home. Having been invited to spend the night there, the 21-year-old Dawa Sangpo (Kimura's alias as a pilgrim monk) was awakened from his initial slumber by Khalka Lama, who whispered to his young guest: “If you are a monk you will know what is expected of you.” Young Dawa evinced a strong disinclination to respond to such an overture; but the old monk would not be put off so easily. “Which way do you like it, young fellow, from the front or back?” he asked, his breath coming in short gasps. “I'm Mongolian,” he continued, “but I've spent long enough in Tibet that I can go either way.”

Immediately recalling a conversation with his older fellow pilgrim Danzan earlier on the journey they were taking, Dawa remembered that he had told him that the better-looking young boys had to be careful in the monasteries. Danzan, wrote Kimura, had then “explained to me that it is the boys' thighs that provide the necessary friction.” But Kimura, alias Dawa Sangpo, made it clear in his book that *his* preference was to escape the scene altogether when Khalka Lama, not taking “no” for an answer, had tried to pin him down and pull up his robe. Much as he had not wanted to, Kimura was compelled, as a way of defending his honor, to throw the heretofore likable old monk against the wall, grab a pillow and rush outside to sleep the rest of the night with the camels. “At least they were gelded,” Kimura wryly concluded. Kimura 1990, pp. 87-8.

Another informant of Prince Peter's, a Ladakhi Tibetan at Leh, whom the anthropologist met while there in 1938 for his polyandry investigations in Ladakh, commented about Central Tibet that homosexuality was known to be practiced in the large monasteries of that area of Tibet proper. "as any monk returning from Lhasa or Shigatse where he [the informant] had gone for his studies could tell." It was this same informant's opinion, however, though based on rather weak reasoning, that the practice did not exist in Ladakh inasmuch as in Kashmiri law (which governed both Kashmir and Ladakh) it was a punishable offense. Anyhow, he observed to Prince Peter, it was looked upon with great disfavor by the Ladakhis, and he "felt sure that no one indulged in it, not even in the monasteries." On the other hand, the Prince received a contrary and far more convincing opinion about Ladakhi practices when paying a visit to the Kashmiri State Hospital at Leh. There he talked with the Chief Physician in charge, Dr. M.S. Diwani, a Dogra medical officer. Reported the visiting anthropologist: "To my question as to whether he knew of homosexuality in Ladakh, Dr. Diwani said that it was widespread in the monasteries, where the relations between master and novice were universally known to take that character." Moreover, another of the Prince's informants there, Rev. Walter Asboe, the then Superintendent of the Moravian Mission at Leh, had also heard that this sexual practice was prevalent in the Ladakhi monasteries. "and since, he said, [Moravian missionary Heinrich] Jaeschke's *Tibetan-English Dictionary* (1881) contained all the numerous Tibetan terms for various sexual perversions, it seemed from this that these were widespread throughout Ladakh." *Study of Polyandry*, 386, 458. It would appear from all this that homosexual activity, far from being an isolated phenomenon, was fairly widespread in its practice among the inmates of the Tibetan monasteries in both Lesser Tibet and Tibet proper.

This was certainly the testimony of one English traveler to Tibet, Theodore Illion, in the course of his recounting an incident he witnessed at a gumpa in Tibet proper in an intriguing and quite candid book of his travels. Before traveling to the East, Illion (aka: Theodore Burung) had studied Tibetan sufficiently enough to be able to understand the language and to speak it, albeit with a foreign accent. But whenever he visited Tibetan monasteries he would disguise himself and never open his mouth lest by his accent he betrayed his true identity. His travels took him in 1934 into western and southwestern Tibet, from whence he exited opposite the Pithoragarh area of Northwest India. At one point in his book the English author shared an experience he had had in one of the gompas visited. Wrote Illion:

Many things a Westerner would call unnatural go on... within the walls of a Tibetan monastery. Those who have traveled in the Orient may know that the Oriental view is much more lenient than the Western one. The number of lamas having formed a certain type of union with one of the younger lamas seems to be considerable, and in some monasteries conditions in this respect are such that even a solitary pilgrim is not immune from certain unmistakable invitations extended by some young lamas. Although it would be too much to say that these practices are general, it is obvious that they are fairly frequent.

On one occasion when I walked about in the company of a few other pilgrims we saw a happening which would make an average Westerner repeat "Shocking!" for several weeks in succession. The Tibetans were hardly upset at all. While they calmly discussed the matter I of course reserved my opinion, as I never opened my mouth within the precincts of a monastery.

"This is somewhat unusual," observed one of the Tibetans calmly.

"I never thought the lamas could do such a thing," returned another.

"Do not forget," put in a third pilgrim, "that the lamas are very wise. Even if they do a thing that seems strange to us, they do it for the good of the world."

"I have always been told not to find fault with a lama's action," said the first pilgrim.

"Perhaps these two lamas are very holy," returned the third pilgrim. "They were coming too near to Nirvana and as they wanted to remain in their bodies so as to be able to help the world, they voluntarily committed a sin in a spirit of sacrifice."

A devout silence followed the conversation. The Tibetan pilgrims looked very sheepish and credulous and I had to take some pains to conceal my merriment.

See *In Secret Tibet; in Disguise amongst Lamas, Robbers, and Wise Men; a Key to the Mysteries of Tibet* (London, 1937), 107-9

Yet not only were there homosexual lapses in celibate observance among the inmates of the monasteries, there apparently had occurred such lapses among some monks who were elevated to high political office in Tibet. Reting Rimpoche from the famed Reting Monastery north of Lhasa, who achieved the Regency of the land in 1934 after the death of the Great Thirteenth Dalai Lama, has been cited as an example of this by at least one Western historian, Melvyn Goldstein, already quoted from above. Writing on one page of his 1989 volume,

Goldstein states that after 1936 Regent Reting's "private life became more blatantly hedonistic—he appears to have had sexual relations with men and women, to have filled his time with amusements such as kite-flying and shooting, and to have spent money lavishly." On a subsequent page, the author writes more pointedly that a young monk official, Phunkang Jetrun gla, the son of one of the Regent's own Cabinet Ministers, "was widely reputed to have been one of Reting's lovers. When Reting was in power, Jetrun gla was his constant companion..." Goldstein adds that "a commonly heard story asserts that because Jetrun gla had become too old to continue as the ex-Regent's lover he remained in Lhasa" rather than withdrawing to Reting Monastery with Reting Rimpoche upon the latter's voluntary retirement from the Regency. See Goldstein 1989, pp. 330, 445, 445n.

That Reting continued his lavish and sensual lifestyle during retirement at his monastery outside Lhasa is confirmed by Hisao Kimura. By chance the Japanese intelligence agent met Reting Rimpoche as the spy and his party disguised as monks and pilgrims were nearing their goal of Lhasa from far-off Mongolia. This was in the warm month of August 1944. Now it so happened that Reting's servant monks, in preparing for a picnic, were seen pitching luxurious-looking festive tents about twenty yards east of where young Kimura and his companions were encamped not far from Reting Monastery. "Judging from the carpets and furniture going inside," he wrote, the Reting camp was "more like a traveling palace than a camp. Soon, some of the cleanest and neatest monks I had seen in a long time, with freshly shaven pates and spotless robes, began arriving on fine horses." Curious to meet such a high personage who was said "to be at once so holy and so corrupt," Kimura and his party begged for an audience at his tent. **And once having prostrated themselves** before him and received Reting's one-handed blessing in return, **Kimura, now invited to a seat nearby, was drawn into a convivial conversation in Mongolian by the former Regent, the latter having made the monk in disguise feel very much at ease.** "Again and again," reported Kimura later, **Reting, still well below middle age at this point, had "jokingly suggested that I should join his monastery and become his disciple. I noticed that many of his attendants were handsome young boys and declined as politely as I could,"** the Japanese spy obviously remembering with distaste what had happened just a few months earlier with Khalka Lama! "I could certainly not have foretold that Reting's violent death two years later would very nearly be the occasion for my own," concluded Kimura. Kimura 1990, pp. 113-4.

In both Goldstein's and Kimura's works there is given what would appear to be the definitive reason for why Reting inexplicably resigned from the Regency at the height of his power. Writes Goldstein: "one must turn to Reting's sexuality... that [he] was not celibate" enough, or at least not discreet enough in his non-celibacy to satisfy the taste of the populace. Wall posters which suddenly appeared in 1940 on the Lhasan streets and at the influential Drepung Monastery would seem to have said it all; for they read in part as follows: "It is important that the Abbot who will ordain the [new Fourteenth] Dalai Lama has to be a person who observes the *vinaya* [monastic] rules properly and is pure without any question... It is not all right for Reting to give the Dalai Lama his religious vows because he [Reting] has no vows." Goldstein 1989, pp. 359, 359n.

On his part, Kimura had heard that there were two causes rumored about to account for this resignation. The Japanese agent had been told that one reason was that Reting's "government ran on nothing but bribery" and as a result the Regent had in the process become pro-Chinese. The explanation for this was quite simple: since those in government who could not pay enough were unable to get anything done, the opportunity was open to the Chinese to insinuate themselves into influence by having paid the Regent more than anyone else. In the end, though, explained Kimura, it would seem that the overriding reason for the surprising resignation was the fact that in an ancient shamanistic priestly ritual the State Oracle at the nearby Lhasan monastery of Nechung had predicted that the Regent's life would be cut short if he did not change his sensual lifestyle and instead devote himself to prayer and meditation. "This was enough to frighten even him," reported Kimura's Mongolian traveling companion. "No one defies the State Oracle. He therefore resigned, but there was supposed to have been an agreement that he would return to power when his retreat was over." It would appear that Reting's retreat, if indeed there was one, did not have any lasting effect on his lifestyle, if Kimura's testimony is any indication. Kimura 1990, p. 113.

Then there is the case of what happened at Lhasa to 18-year-old Tashi Tsering in 1947. Young Tsering was a member of the *gadrugba*, the Dalai Lama's ceremonial dance troupe. As was not at all unusual among monks and monk government officials in those days at the Tibetan capital, Tashi Tsering was invited by the monk Wangdu, steward to a very important monk official, to become Wangdu's "homosexual partner"; which service he performed for a number of years thereafter. In quite a candid discussion, Tsering, a non-conformist Tibetan

born near Shigatse in 1929, describes at some length in his autobiographical narrative the entire phenomenon of homosexual practice as it had existed at the very center of the Buddhist Church in pre-1950 Tibet, and explains in some detail the culture surrounding such practice as it had evolved over the centuries within the traditional Tibetan monastic structure. Indeed, in one of the most telling passages of all, Tsering pulled no punches in writing thus:

I didn't find the invitation strange at all. To see it in proper perspective, you have to understand how the old Tibetan society was structured... The bureaucracy that ran the government consisted of two kinds of officials—lay officials and monk officials.... As Tibet was a theocracy, monks should participate in administering the country. However, over the years, these monk officials became token monks in the sense that they neither lived in monasteries nor engaged in religious rites and prayer ceremonies. They were really bureaucrats who took religious vows. They wore a version of monks' robes but worked as full-time government officials. Living in houses in the city like other officials, they wielded equal power and status with their lay aristocratic counterparts... However, though they were "token" monks in most senses, they were required to obey the monks' vow of celibacy.

In traditional Tibetan society, celibacy was defined specifically to mean abstaining from sexual acts with a female or, in a more general sense, from any sexual act that involved penetration of an orifice whether with a female or male. Consequently, anal sex with a male was as strictly prohibited as vaginal sex with a woman, and if discovered would mean expulsion from the monk rolls.

However, human nature being what it is, monks over the years developed a way to circumvent the iron law of celibacy. Monastic rules, it turned out, said nothing about other forms of sexual activity, and it became common for monks and monk officials to satisfy themselves sexually with men or boys by performing the sex act without penetrating an orifice. They used a version of the "missionary position" in which the monk official (the active, male-role player) moved his penis between the crossed thighs of a partner beneath him. Since no monastic disciplinary rule was technically violated, this behavior was condoned and rationalized as a pleasurable release of little significance.

The typical relationship was between monks—an adult monk (the male role) and a younger, boy monk—but there were several types of lay boys who were particularly desirable. One was the boys or young men who performed in the Tibetan opera, many of whom played women's roles. Another was the young gadrugba dancers. Thus Wangdu's request was not really unusual....

The Tibetan word for a boy in my situation is *drombo*. In our language the word literally means "guest," but it also is a euphemism for "homosexual (passive) partner." Because of Wangdu's status and visibility, I became a very well-known *drombo*... Once a powerful monk from the Sera Monastery became attracted to me and made several abortive attempts to abduct me for sexual pleasure. The monks of Sera included many famous *dobdos*, or "punk" monks.... They were notorious for fighting with each other to see who was toughest and for their sexual predation of lay boys. All schoolboys in Lhasa were fair game for these *dobdos*, and most tried to return from school in groups for protection against them.

... One fateful day... the Sera monk caught me after a gadrugba performance in Lhasa and forcibly took me to his apartment in the monastery.... It was distasteful, but he released me after two days. The incident, however, reawakened my ambivalent feelings towards traditional Tibetan society.... I wondered to myself how monasteries could allow such thugs to wear the holy robes of the Lord Buddha. When I talked to other monks and monk officials about the *dobdos*, they shrugged and said simply that that was just the way things were.

For the complete discussion, see M. Goldstein, W. Siebenshuh and T. Tsering, *The Struggle for Modern Tibet: the Autobiography of Tashi Tsering* (New York/London: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 26-30.

But there is also the testimony of Hisao Kimura's traveling companion and fellow spy for the British, Kazumi Nishikawa. Before these two had teamed up at Lhasa on Kimura's spy mission to East Tibet for Gergan Tharchin. Nishikawa, like Kimura, had served as an intelligence agent for Japan, and, again like Kimura, disguised as a Mongolian monk under the name of Lobsang Sangpo. Now in his 1968 published account of his journey to Tibet from Inner Mongolia, he comes across, in the words of Scott Berry who translated the work into English, as

particularly caustic over the popularity of boys in their mid-teens. Monks would treat these boys just like women, inviting them for fine meals or giving them new clothes. Young, handsome, plump, fair-skinned monks were like popular *geisha* and would be called one night to the room of one monk, the next to that of another. Though he was thoroughly distraught when propositioned himself by a couple of... monks, his friends made light of it. "Don't get angry, Lobsang. Just go and they will treat you really well."

And a few pages earlier in his travel account to Tibet, Nishikawa, according to Berry, mentions

the good-natured homosexual banter that often took place in monasteries when "a well-dressed, plump, fair-skinned monk" passed by: "Since there are no women in the monasteries, many monks revert to other means of satisfaction, and in their leisure time gossip not about women, but about boys."

But at the conclusion of his discussion about homosexuality among the Mahayana Buddhist monastic population in Central and East Asia, Nishikawa made an observation which appears quite at variance with much of the foregoing evidence from others and with that which will conclude this end-note hereafter. "Scornful as he could be" about having been propositioned, Nishikawa, writes Berry, had ended his discussion of the subject by pointing out that "it was mostly at the smaller and poorer monasteries that the rules were broken. Many monks kept strictly to their vows, and the best of the monasteries made quite sure that they did so." Berry 1995, pp. 216, 209, 216.

And finally, there is the further testimony of George Patterson, the missionary in East Tibet cited earlier. In one of his more recent volumes on his quite varied experiences in the Land of Monks and Monasteries, Patterson revealed more of what he had discovered about this particular sexual phenomenon that was clearly prevalent among the generality of the monastic inmate population in pre-1950 Tibet. Indeed, in a very early page of his book, *Requiem for Tibet* (London, 1990), he observes that he became aware of the fact that "the monks, who were supposed to be celibate by religious decree, were notorious for their homosexuality and pederasty" (31). And on a subsequent page Patterson writes: "I had read and heard reports of the high incidence of VD [venereal disease] in Tibet, some figures quoted being as high as 90%. I was hesitant about accepting such a figure, but over the past few years I had established [by virtue of my medical missionary] experience that it could not be far off... The monks had a high incidence of sodomy and pederasty, and so they too were not immune from VD" (82). It is obvious from this testimony of Patterson and that of others that the stricture against the penetration of an orifice was repeatedly violated throughout the Land of Monks and Monasteries with apparent impunity, little punishment seemingly having been meted out upon those who may have been discovered engaging in such prohibited practice.

Nevertheless, in explaining what he had learned while for three years living with, and being educated by, the famed Pangdatsang brothers and their friends in East Tibet concerning "the complex manifestations of Lamaistic Buddhism" in both its "good and evil aspects," Patterson reported the sharp criticism each of these two brothers had leveled at the vast Tibetan monastic community of that day: "The scholarly Rappa, who had translated some of the works of Karl Marx into Tibetan, was stringently critical of many of the practices of the priesthood; while the extrovert and sardonic Topgyay was scathingly humorous regarding the pederastic sexual habits of the majority of the priests..." (52) In fact, in a moment of high merriment over the fact that this dear friend of theirs, the Christian missionary Patterson, had made it clear that his religion did not permit him to accept the offer made by them repeatedly of women for his pleasure, they then offered an alternative: that he "could have a boy" instead of a woman, inasmuch as "that was the common religious practice of the monks!" (84)

Much of the same data and observations can be found in this former missionary's most recent publication, *Patterson of Tibet: Death Throes of a Nation* (San Diego, 1998), *passim*.

85a. Per Lhazom Tseten Dolkhar (Kunphela's later wife), "Kuchar Thupten Kunphela," in Appendices of Dhondup 1986, p. 214.

85b. *Ibid.*, 214-5.

86. Goldstein 1989, pp. 471-6, especially 475. It can be stated with perhaps some irony that Reting's avarice finally did him in; for had it not been for his inordinate greed his coup attempt might have prevailed, and certainly he would not have died prematurely had he not been so stingy towards Kunphela over a small failed investment. As it was, the party sent by the Tibetan government up to Reting Monastery north of Lhasa to arrest the ex-Regent seized his private property that included "much gold secreted in the latrines" there. That Reting's excessive lust for material possessions was proverbial is attested by the fact that at the time of his resignation as Regent in early 1941, posters immediately went up on the streets of the Tibetan capital and slogans began to be shouted forth unabashedly by monks of his rival monastery of Drepung that unitedly expressed the criticism that the Rimpoche "was too much devoted to trade"! See Hugh Richardson, "The Rva-sgreng [Reting] Conspiracy of 1947," in Aris and Kyi (eds.) 1980, pp. xix, xvii. One very revealing piece of evidence of Regent Reting's inordinate interest in wealth and trade is demonstrated by what happened at Dekyi Lingka, the British Mission

headquarters in Lhasa around the year 1938. In that year the Tibetan government (read: the Regent) had decided to establish a small school at the Mission compound to be run on Western lines. It was Reting's privilege to select the small number of boys who attended this school; they being selected to learn English and Hindi, in particular, solely for the day when they might be sent to his Reting Trading Co. at Kalimpong and elsewhere in India, since with a proficiency in such languages, these matured youths would be able to work more effectively on behalf of Reting's trading interests there! For additional details, see, in the final volume of the present work, one of Ch. 27's End-Notes that describes Dekyi Lingka and its history.

87. Sources for this and the preceding paragraph: (a) letter, Dawa Sangpo (alias for Hisao Kimura) to Tharchin, [Calcutta], 29 Aug. 1948; (b) note in ink, Atuk Tsering to Tharchin, Kalimpong, 4 Sept. [1948]—both (a) and (b) being part of the ThPaK; and (c) Goldstein 1989, pp. 475-6, for date of Kunphela's arrival at Lhasa.

88. Gould 1957, p. 240. Gould went on to relate some humorous and quite interesting details surrounding the *Kashag's* ultimate approval of the Tibetan text of the *Report on the Discovery...* and how it was finally printed by means of the old wooden-block method (*ibid.*, 240, 241):

I had brought the Tibetan version with me [from Gangtok] and submitted it to the Lord Chamberlain. One day there was some uneasiness in Lhasa. It had become known that on the previous day the Cabinet had been in practically continuous session from midday until far on into the night. Actually they had been going through the translation word by word. They had pasted in a few small corrections. They informed me that, apart from these, one or more of them could vouch from his own knowledge for the accuracy of every word.

Permission having been obtained for the account to be printed at the Potala Press, the text was first written out in uncial script on long narrow slips of transparent rice paper. It was then pasted, in reverse, onto long hardwood boards, on which skilled men carved out the letters with graving tools. These boards were then delivered to me at Dekyi Lingka [the Lhasan Park compound which housed the British Mission] and printed off at a great pace by pressing sheets of Tibetan paper down on the boards with rollers. This is a very strong beige-colored paper, insect-proof because it consists largely of daphne bark, which is made in Bhutan and Nepal for the Tibetan market. Another copy on thin white paper was written by the best scribe in Lhasa....

On a round of farewell visits [to Lhasan officials and friends before leaving the capital for good in 1944] I took with me gifts in the form of copies of the Tibetan version of the *Discovery* and *Installation of the Dalai Lama*, wrapped in golden brocade. The recipient would rise, lift the book to his forehead and reverently place it on the family altar. I also presented sets of the records of Tibetan music made by us at Dekyi Lingka and manufactured by the Gramophone Company, Calcutta. These parting presents eclipsed any that I had ever given before.

89. *Ibid.*, 200.

90. Both letters, Sherriff to Tharchin, "Crookety" Kalimpong, 25 Dec. 1942 and 1 Feb. 1943, ThPaK.

91. This according to Sonam T. Kazi, in an interview he gave the present writer, Oct. 1991.

92. Tharchin to H. Dayal (Indian Political Officer Sikkim), Kalimpong, 9 Feb. 1950, ThPaK. In this letter the Babu spelled out in some detail the dimensions of this already initiated enterprise: "As regards...*Portrait*..., so far I have published up to page 32, and this coming issue Ch. III (or up to page 38) will be published. I still have 4 chs. [left to do] of the former translation done by Kungo Kung Kusho and others. After that I can use the translation done by Mr. K.S. Paul. [According to other letters by both Tharchin and Dayal back and forth, Sumdhon Paul was responsible for *Portrait's* Chs. 8-32; while Macdonald and the Geshe worked on the remaining Chs., 33 to 60.] So far, almost every month I have devoted one-third or sometimes two-thirds of a page of the newspaper [to *Portrait*]. For the remaining 4 chs. [of the book's first seven], if I use one full page of the newspaper every month, it will take ten months more to finish them; after that, from Ch. 8 the translation done by Mr. Paul will be used...."

93. The sources for this and all other material (except where already documented) regarding Changlo Chen, Tharchin, Kunphela, Lungshar and Rapga Pangdatsang were found in: P.O.S. 1938, pp. 3, 4, 7, 10, 12, 34-5 (especially Tharchin's handwritten notation on page 35), 44, and the very bottom line of page 79; Bell 1946, pp. 369, 392-3; letter, Tharchin to Bell, Kalimpong, 25 Dec. 1937, Bell Papers; letter, Tharchin to Bell, Kalimpong.

17 Mar. 1938, ThPaK; Petech 1973, pp. 214-5; Rahul 1969, pp. 58-9; Rahul 1962, p. 192; Shakabpa 1967, p. 277; Goldstein 1989, pp. 147, 151-2, 168, 175, 178, 191, 191n., 450, 451, 451-2n.; Williamson to Government of India, letter, 6 Jan. 1934, quoted in *ibid.*, 151; Williamson 1987, pp. 109 with 124; Taring 1970, pp. 67, 105-10, 115-8; the Special Correspondent Lately at Lhasa, "Crisis in Tibet: the Death of the Dalai Lama," *Times* (London), 29 Jan. 1934, p. 13; Cutting 1940, p. 220; and Gould 1957, pp. 200, 240.

94. Tharchin's "memoirs" are incorrect in having stated that upon his return to Kalimpong from Tibet in late 1937 he found the Rev. William M. Scott there as the in-charge of the Tibetan Mission work. See GTUM TwMs, Ch. 18, p. 6. This is known to be inaccurate when one consults the Annual Reports on the Tibetan Work for 1937 and 1938 that were prepared and submitted to the Scots Guild Mission by the then current supervisor of the Tibetan Mission himself, Dr. Robert Knox. Indeed, in his 1937 Report, Knox wrote this: "...the catechist [Tharchin] was away in Tibet for several months and, since September, I have had to give a great deal of my time to the District work in Rev. Scott's absence." (It so happened that in 1931 when he replaced the retiring Dr. Graham, Rev. Scott had assumed the headship of the entire Kalimpong Scots Guild Mission and would continue in that office till 1946.) And for the year 1938, Knox opened his Report thus: "For the greater part of the year I was unable to put as much time as I wished into the Tibetan work on account of the [continued] absence of Mr. Scott." As it apparently turned out, missionary Knox must have left for his Australian homeland in early 1939 (never to return to Kalimpong), since in the Annual Report for that year, and submitted this time by Rev. Scott, the following are the opening words: "The report for this year is being written by a substitute [a reference to himself], who had to take over the work at very short notice." Copies of these Reports are a part of the ThPaK.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR FREQUENTLY CITED PERIODICALS

<i>BW</i>	<i>The Bible in the World; a Record of the Work of the British and Foreign Bible Society, London</i>
<i>CHI</i>	<i>The Catholic Herald of India, Calcutta</i>
<i>CMI</i>	<i>Church Missionary Intelligencer</i>
<i>CMR</i>	<i>Church Missionary Review</i>
<i>GJ</i>	<i>Geographical Journal, London</i>
<i>IS</i>	<i>International Studies, Bombay</i>
<i>JRCAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, London</i>
<i>MRW</i>	<i>Missionary Review of the World</i>
<i>MM</i>	<i>Moravian Missions</i>
<i>MQ</i>	<i>Moravian Quarterly</i>
<i>NG</i>	<i>National Geographic, Washington DC</i>
<i>PA</i>	<i>Periodical Accounts Relating to the Missions of the Church of the United Brethren (or Moravians), Established Among the Heathen, London</i>
<i>TJ</i>	<i>Tibet Journal</i>
<i>TR</i>	<i>Tibetan Review</i>

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS—VOLUME II

Formal interviews were conducted with the following individuals, listed in alphabetical order.

At Kalimpong:

SIB Officer (retired) Dawa Babu, 22 November 1992.

Drasho Rigzin Dorje, 5 December 1992.

Commandant Tashi Pempa Hishey, 22 November 1992.

Advocate D.K. Khaling, 17 December 1992.

Dr. Andrew Pradhan, 30 November 1992.

Shri P.R. Pradhan, 3 January 1995.

Mr. Shanti K. Pradhan, 21 November 1992.

Mr. B.C. Simick, Jr., 28 November and 15 December 1992.

Elder Victor Subba, 25 November 1992.

Nini (Mrs. S.G.) Tharchin, 12 December 1992.

Rev. S.G. Tharchin, 14 January 1998.

Rev. and Mrs. S.G. Tharchin, 8 March 2003.

“Dr.” N. Tshering, 23 November 1992.

In India Outside Kalimpong:

Mr. Pandey Hishey, Gangtok, Sikkim, 10 December 1992

Mr. Twan Yang, Deorali (Gangtok), Sikkim, 10 December 1992.

In America:

Sonam T. Kazi, Montclair NJ, 22-3 October 1991.

In Nepal:

Mr. Gyan Jyoti. Thamel, Kathmandu, 8-9 February 1993.

TEXT INDEX

Code:	Bsm	—	Buddhism
	Bst(s)	—	Buddhist(s)
	Ch	—	Church
	Cst(s)	—	Communist(s)
	Darj	—	Darjeeling
	DL	—	Dalai Lama
	dt	—	district
	GT	—	Gergan Tharchin
	Kpg	—	Kalimpong
	La	•—	mountain pass (Tibetan term)
	lang	—	language
	lit	—	literature
	msn(s)	—	mission(s)
	msny	—	missionary
	PL	—	Panchen Lama
	SSS	—	Sadhu Sundar Singh
	SUMI	—	Scottish Universities' Mission Institution
	TM	—	<i>Tibet Mirror</i> newspaper
	Tn(s)	—	Tibetan(s)
	Xtn	—	Christian

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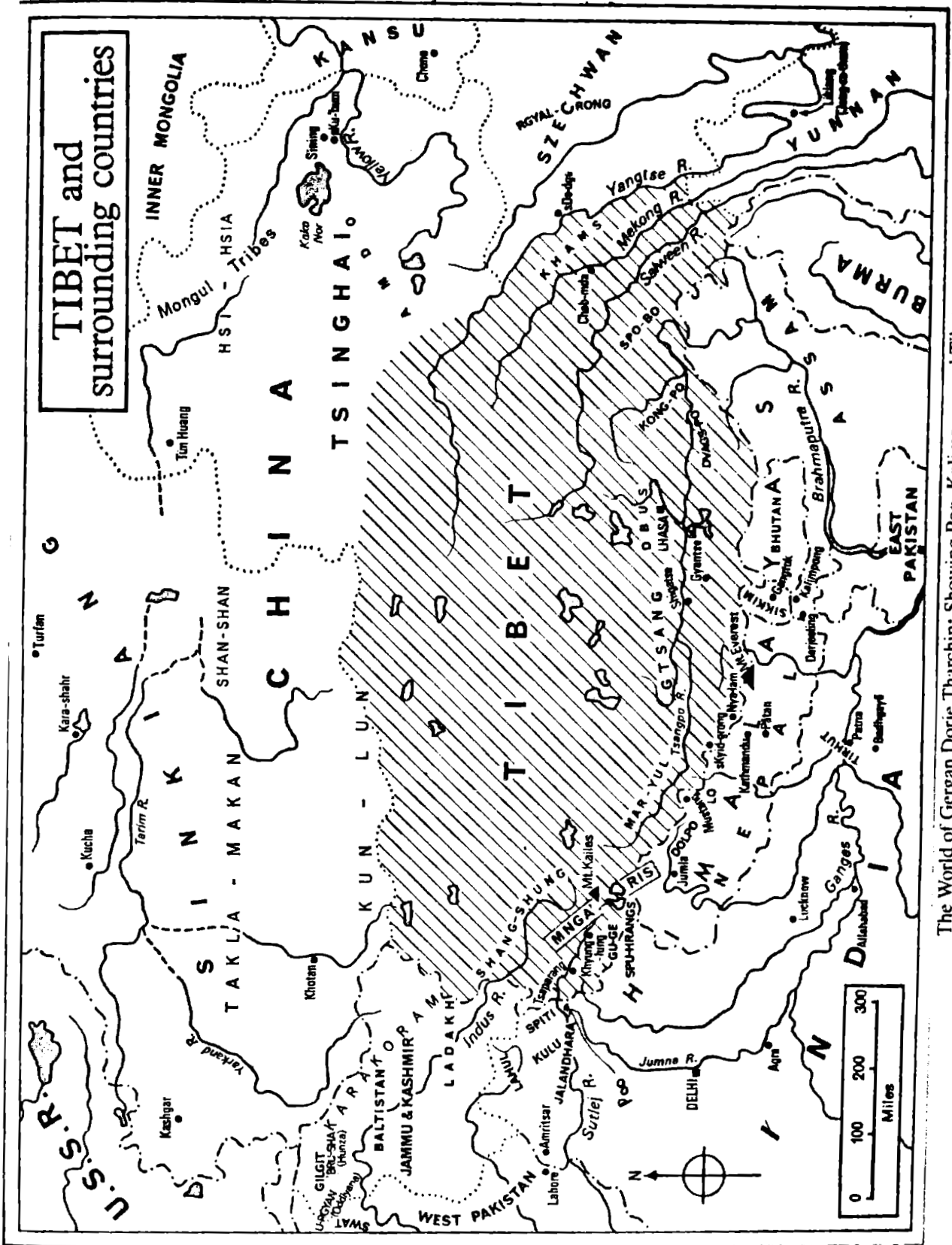
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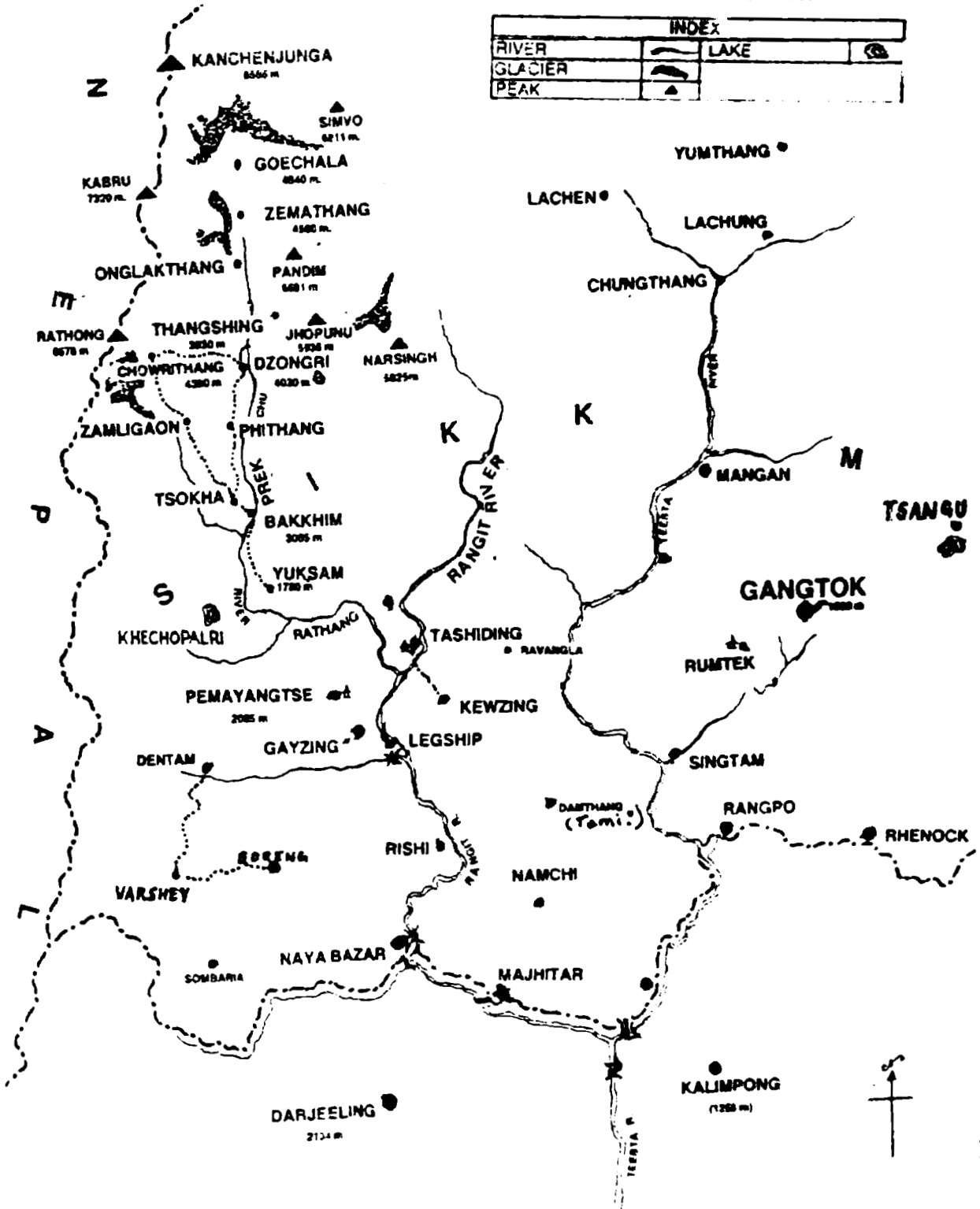


The World of Gergan Dorje Tharchin: Showing Poo, Kaimpong and Tibet

Source: D.L. Snellgrove and H.E. Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet* (New York/London, 1968)

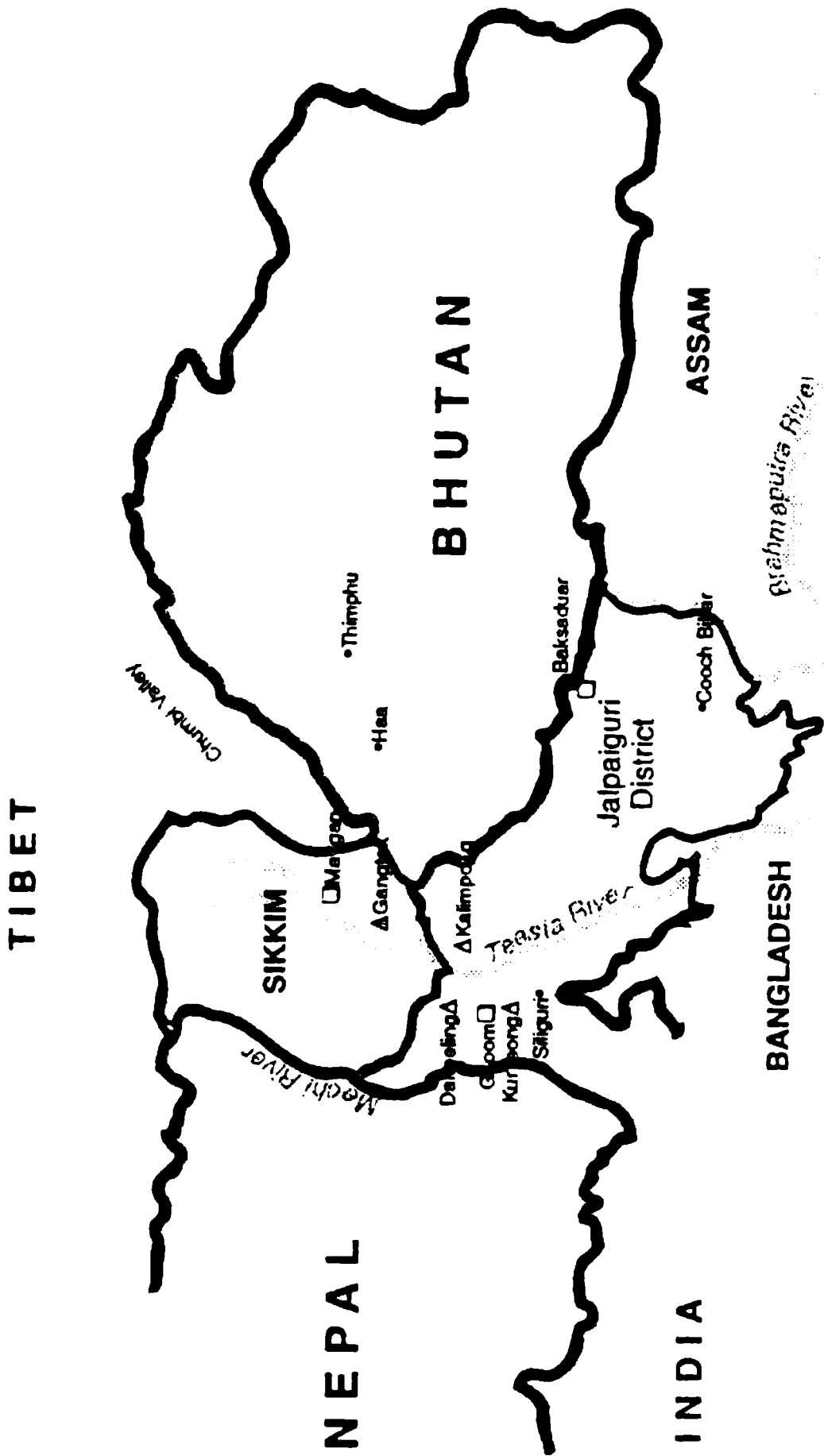
MAP OF SIKKIM

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GLACIER			
PEAK			



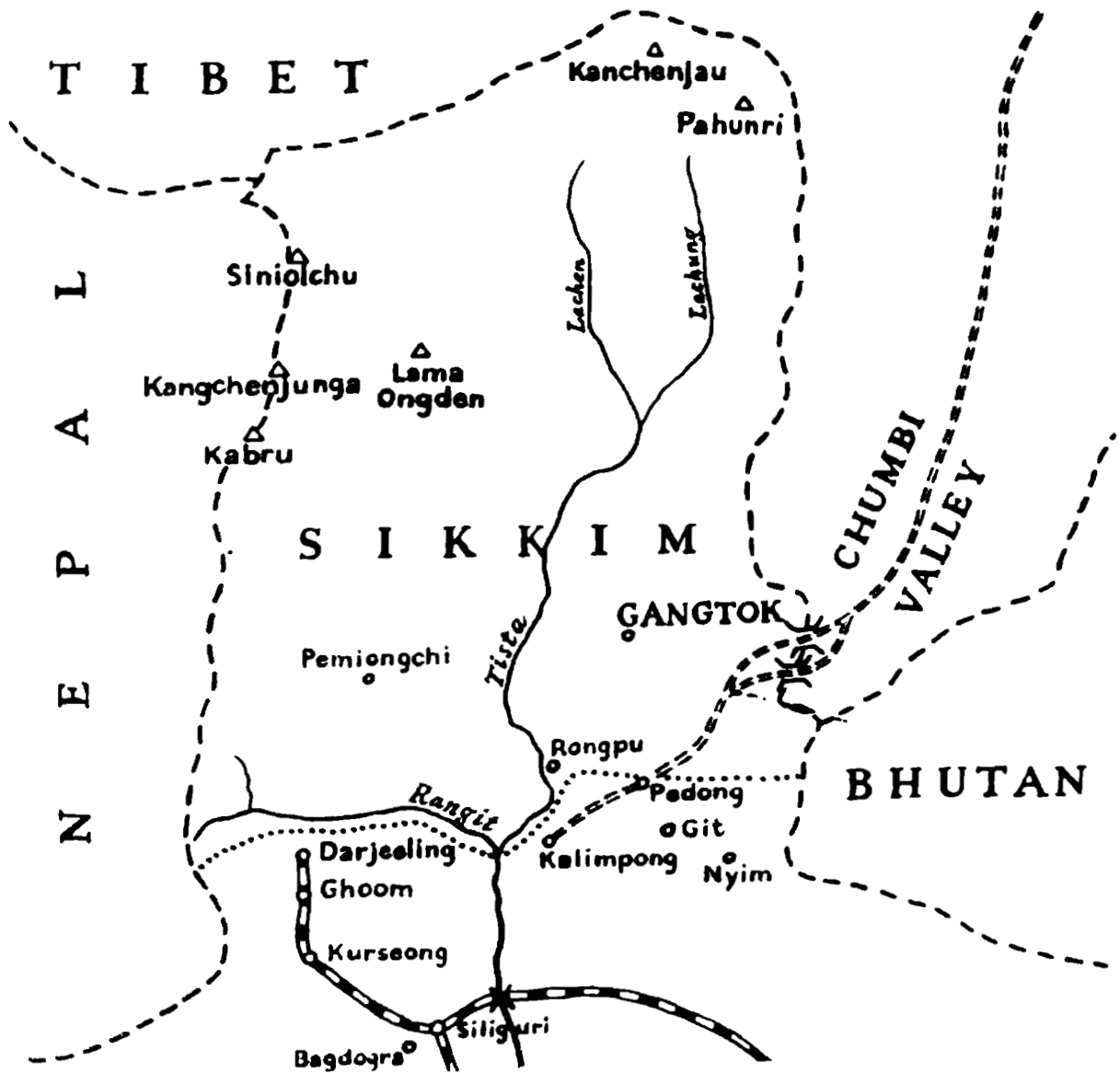
Source: Adapted from Holiday & Trekking in Sikkim & Bhutan, a Traveler's Guide 1999-2000 (New Delhi: Nest & Wings, 2000)

Locale of Tharchin's Trekking in Sikkim from Kalimpong in 1917 (to Pemionchi, i.e., Pemayangtse, and Tashiding)



Geographical Relationship of the Eastern Himalayan Kingdoms to One Another and to the Indian Subcontinent

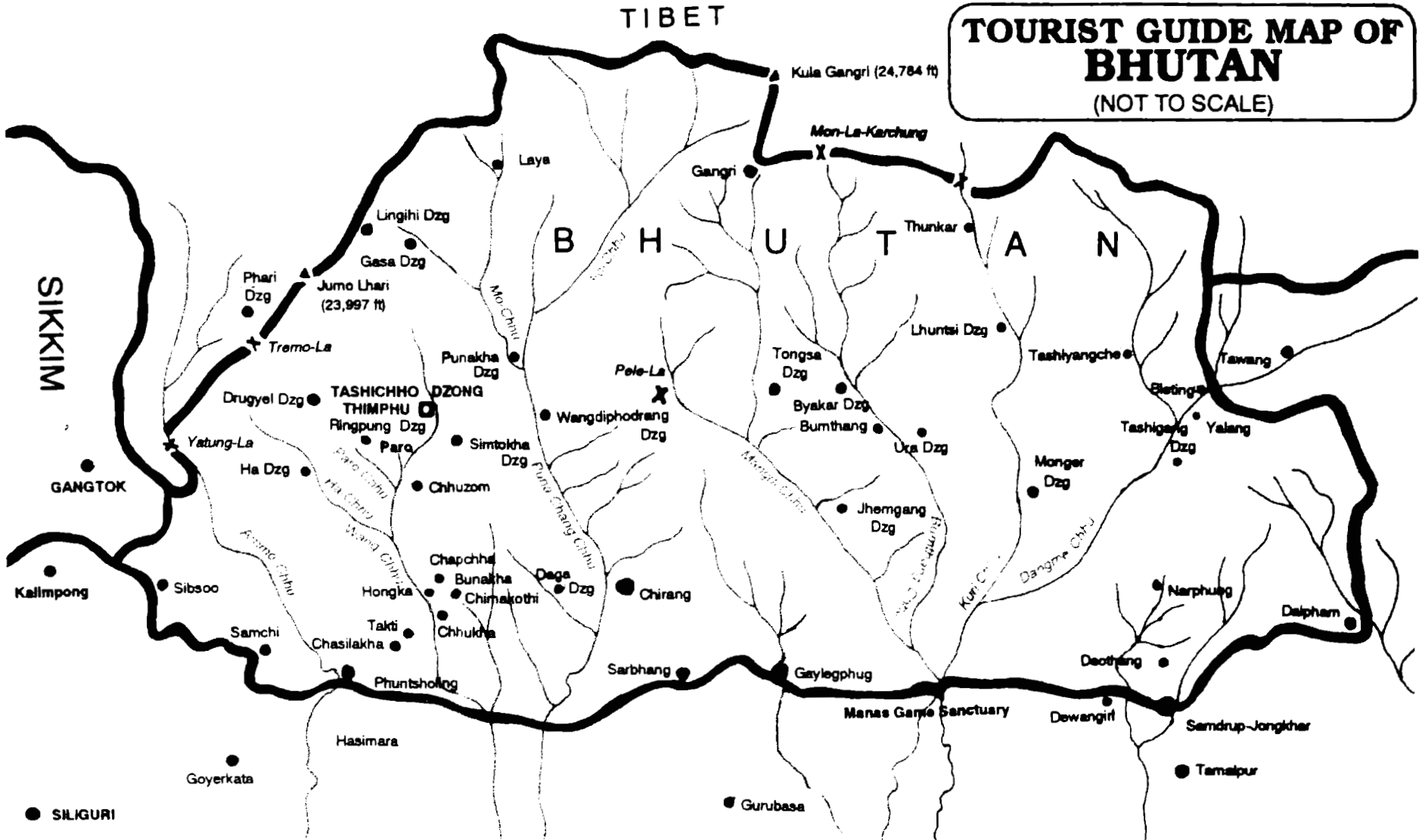
Source: Adapted from C.L. Perry, *Nepali around the World* (Kathmandu: Ekta Books, 1997). Artwork Credit: KIIRTI Studio, Kathmandu



Source: René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, *Where the Gods Are Mountains*, trans. Michael Bullock (New York: Reynal & Co., 1955?)

Upper West Bengal's "Toy Train" Route, Kalimpong, and the way into Tibet's Chumbi Valley

**TOURIST GUIDE MAP OF
BHUTAN**
(NOT TO SCALE)



Source: Adapted from Holiday & Trekking in Sikkim & Bhutan, a Traveler's Guide 1999-2000 (New Delhi: Nest & Wings, 2000)

Locale of Tharchin's Two Education Mission Treks through Bhutan, 1917 and 1919-20



Tibet in Relation to the Rest of Eurasia

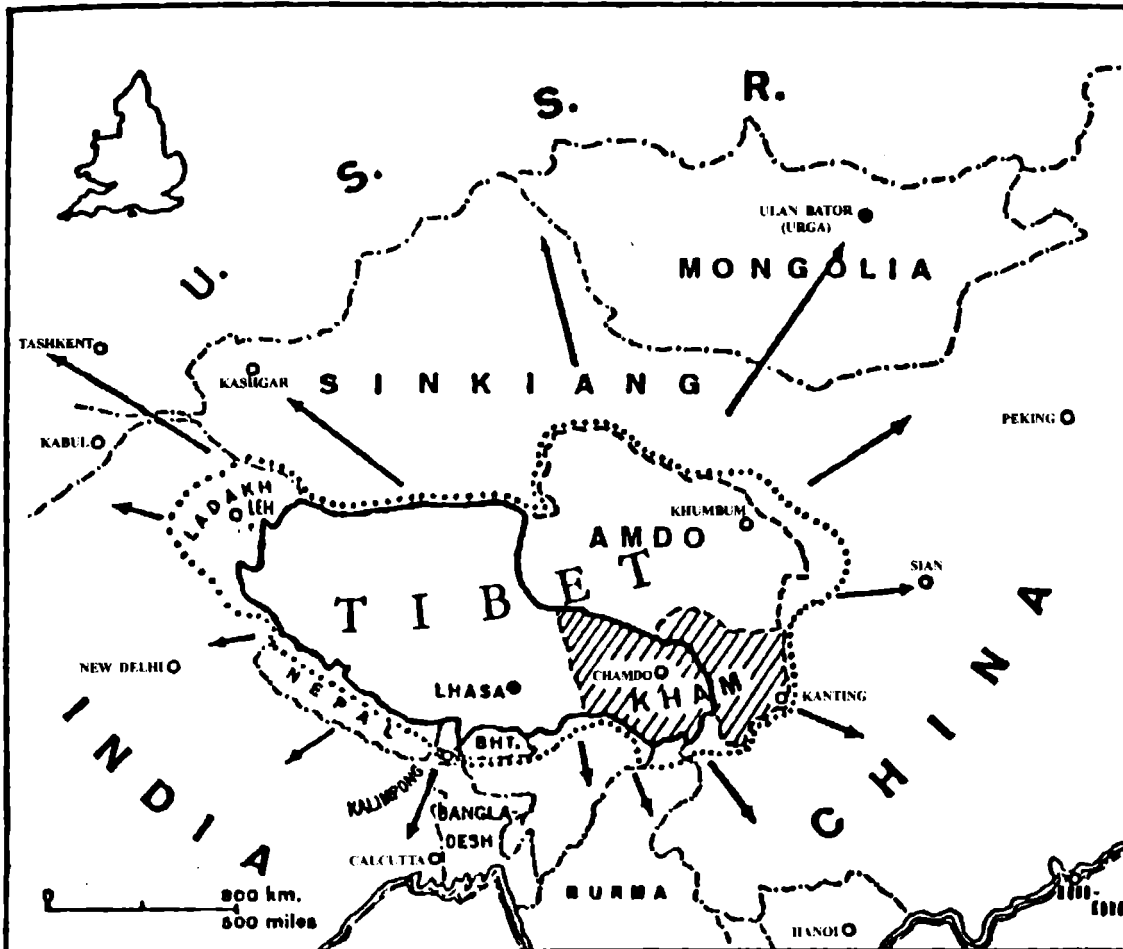
Source: *Catalogue of the Tibetan Collection ... in the Newark Museum (Newark NJ: the Museum, 1950)*



Source: *Catalogue of Newark Museum Tibetan Collection (1950; rev. ed., Newark NJ: the Museum, 1983)*

Tibet, the Roof of the World, Is Totally Surrounded by Still Higher Mountains

Greater Tibet Historically: Its Expansion and Limits



Source: Michel Peissel, *Cavaliers of Kham; the Secret War in Tibet* (London: Wm. Heinemann, Ltd., 1972), p. xi

GREATER TIBET

- Limits of Songtsen Gampo's conquests and empire.
- · · · Limits of ethnic, linguistic, and cultural Tibet in 1970 and of political Tibet until 1850.
- - - Boundaries of Greater Tibet, 1914.
- Tibet of Dalai Lama, 1950.

Ulan Bator (Urga). Capital of Mongolia and seat of the Urga Lama, religious head of the Mongolians, who until 1924 was a Tibetan.

Sian. Ancient capital of China, conquered in 763 by the Tibetan King Tri-song De-tsen, great-grandson of Songtsen Gampo.

Khumbum. Largest monastery of eastern Tibet, close to birth place of present Dalai Lama.

Kanting. Better known by its Tibetan name Tachenlu. Trade centre and Kham's door to China.

Kalimpong (Kalemphu). Tibetan village incorporated into West Bengal, market town and India's door to Tibet.

Tashkent. Western limit of advance of Tibetan soldiers of Songtsen Gampo.

Calcutta. Southern limit of Tibetan conquest.

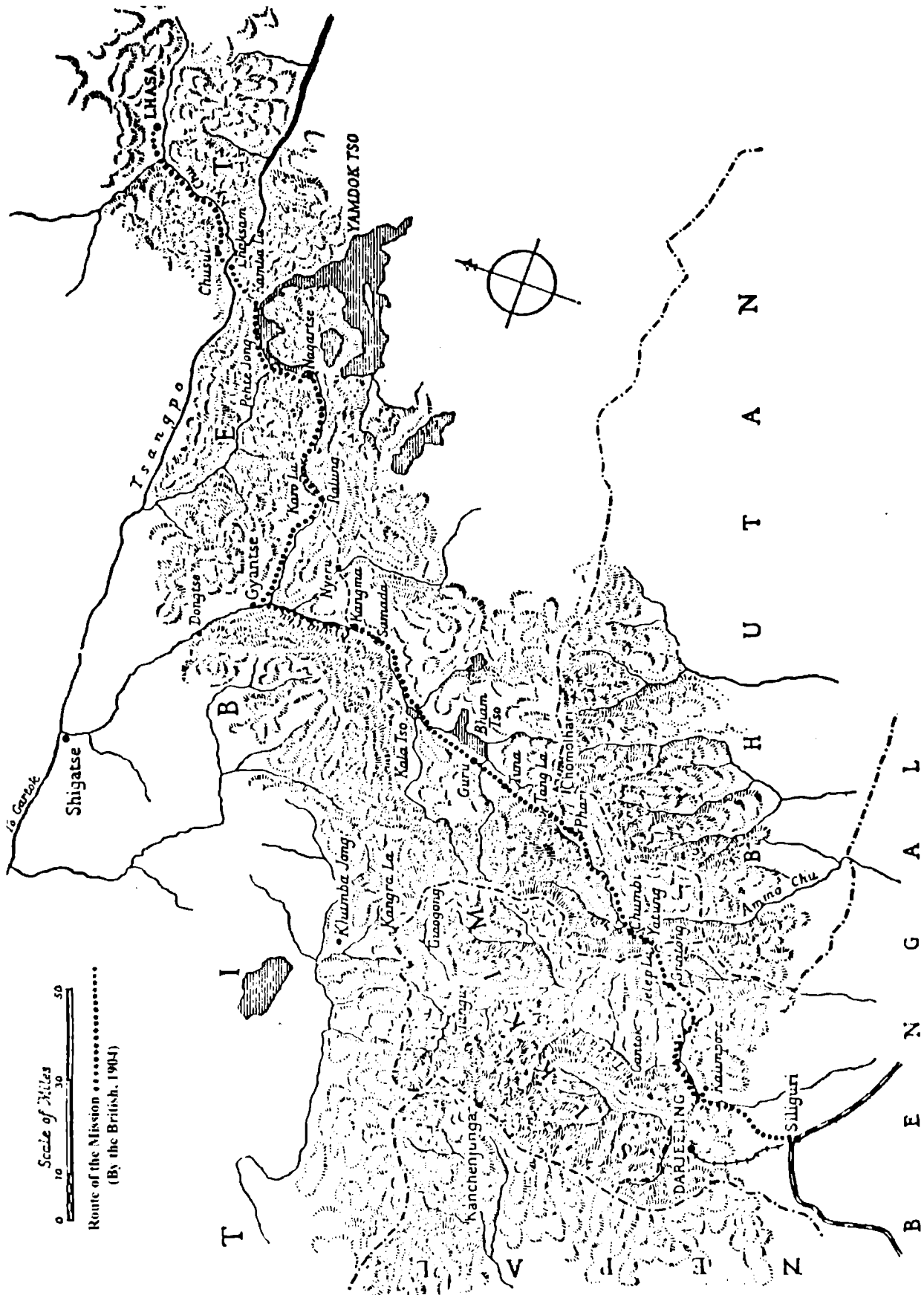
Leh. Capital of western Tibet and of Tibetan realm of Laddak; often called Little Tibet.

The distance between Leh and Kanting or Leh and Khumbum is equal to the distance between Paris and Moscow.



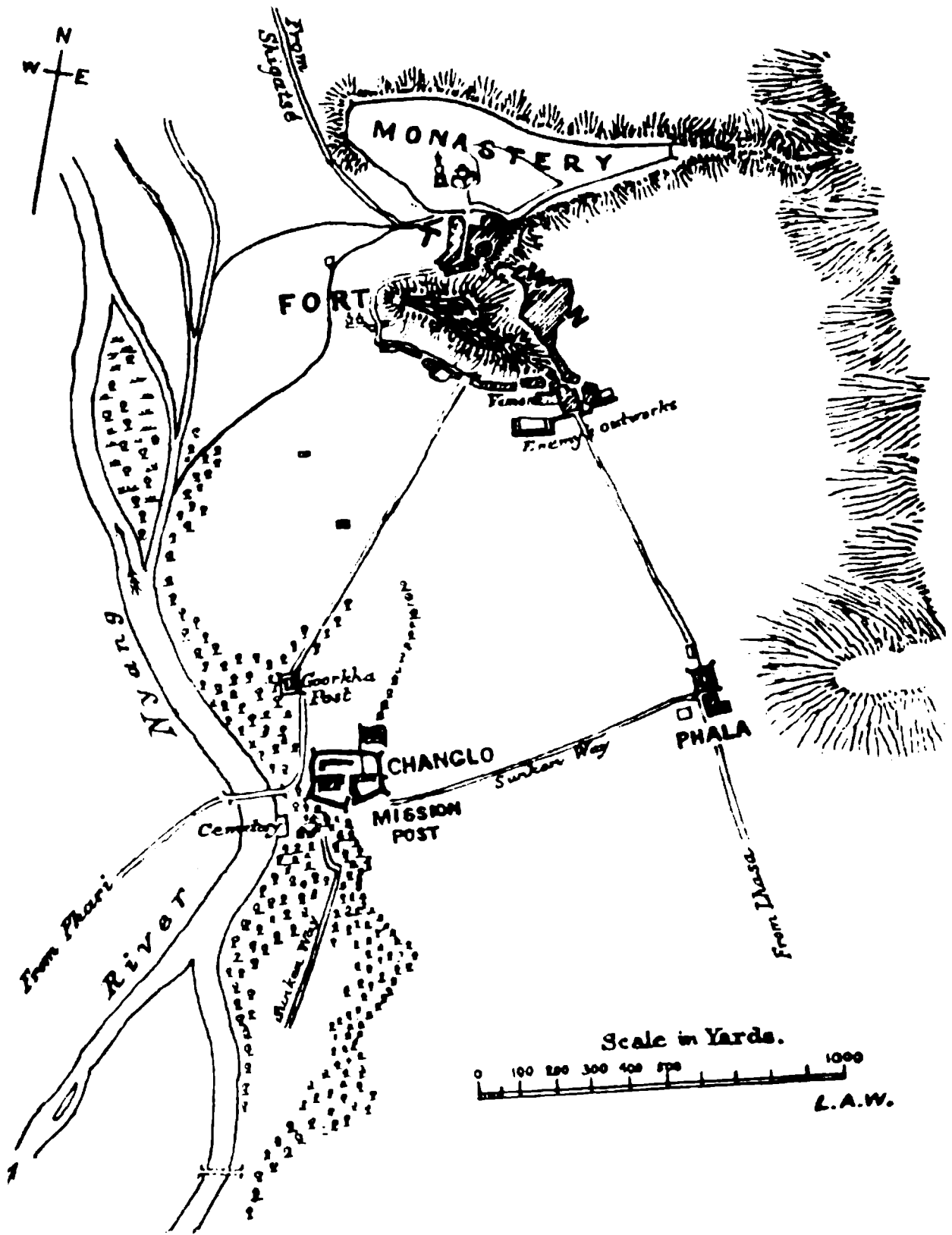
Source: Adapted from Henrietta (Sands) Merrick, *In the World's Attic* (New York/ London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931)

The Territorial Focus of the "Great Game" Intrigue between Russia and Britain for Control of Central Asia, 1840-1920



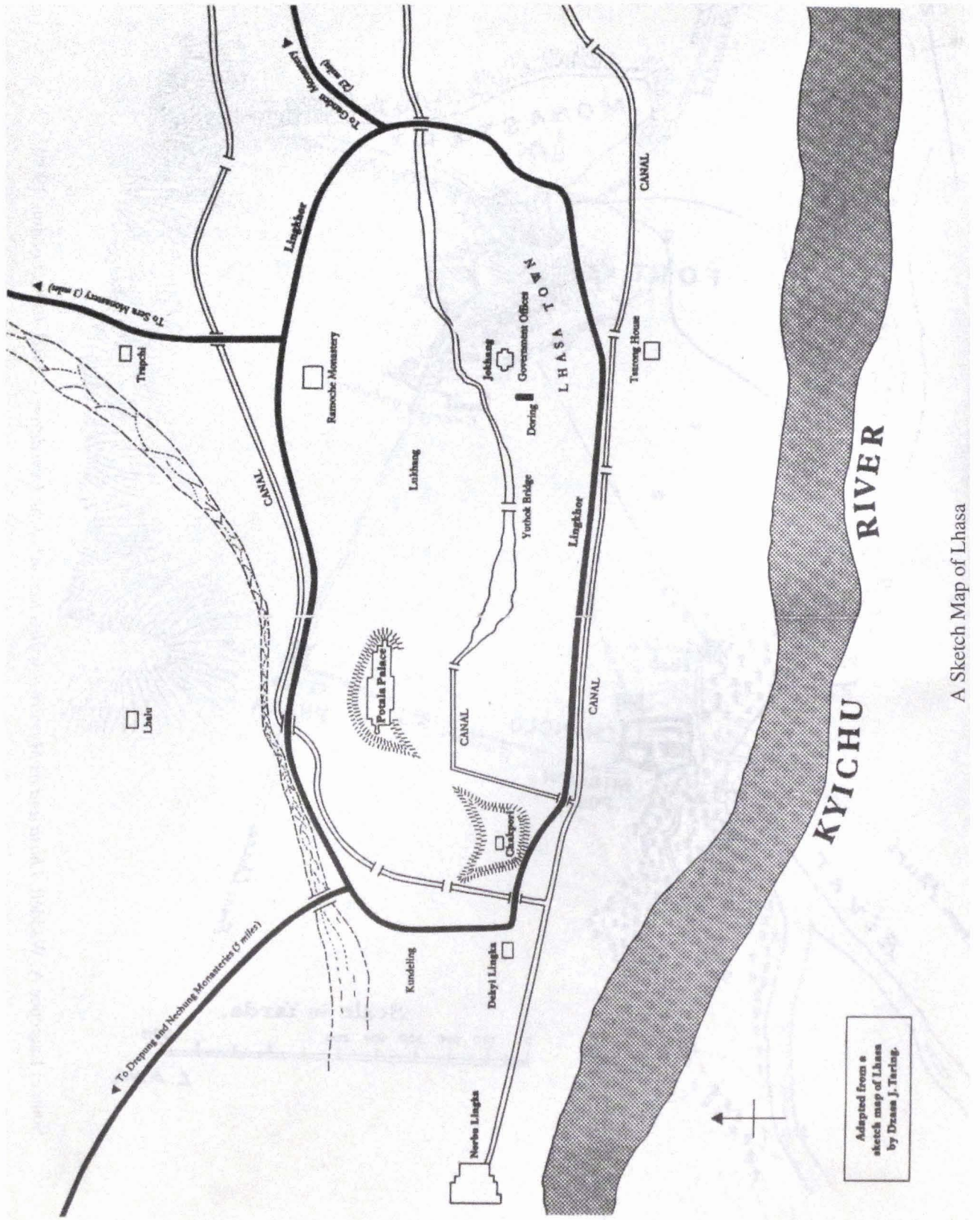
Source: Adapted from Peter Fleming, *Bayonets to Lhasa; the First Full Account of the British Invasion of Tibet in 1904* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1961). Original Title of Map: "The British Expedition to Lhasa 1904."

The Route via Jelep La Which Tharchin Would Take to Yatung and Gyantse (in 1921) and from There to Tibet's Holy City (in 1923)



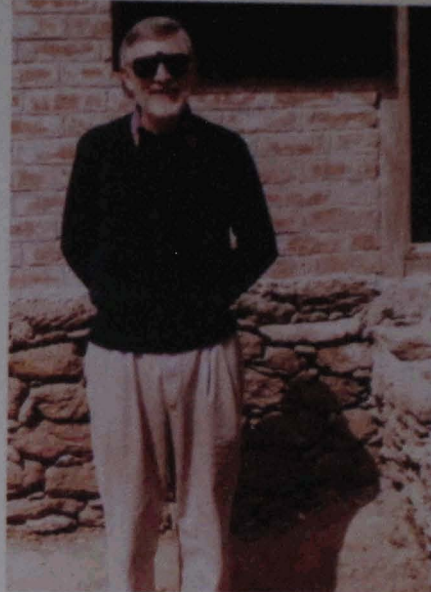
Map of Mission Post and Fort of Gyantse (1904)

Source: Laurence A. Waddell, *Lhasa and its Mysteries, with a Record of the Expedition of 1903-1904* (London, 1905)



A Sketch Map of Lhasa

Source: M.D. Williamson, *Memoirs of a Political Officer's Wife in Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan* (London, 1987)



H. Louis Fader

Mr. Fader studied Western and Asian history at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, receiving his M.A. in history there in 1958; and also received an M.L.S. degree in Library Science (with particular emphasis on the social sciences) from Columbia University, New York, 1960; and he engaged in further postgraduate study in American and European history for three years at Columbia during the mid-1960s. From 1960 to 1976 Mr. Fader was a full-time tenured Instructor on the faculty of Queens College, City University of New York, where he served in that institution's Library Department Social Science Division. In addition, from 1965 to the present the author has likewise served as Editor for Christian Fellowship Publishers, New York, having edited and prepared for publication in English some 55 titles of Asian Christian authors.

Since 1982 Mr. Fader has made numerous trips to India, Nepal, China (only once) and other parts of Asia, where he has often remained for five to six months at a time. Currently the author divides his time each year between his home in Washington DC and "Babakul"—his recently-established residence at Pokhara, Nepal, where he is engaged in ongoing research and writing.

Mr. Fader's first book, *Up from the Ash Heap* (Guntur, 1987), is a biography of a well-known Christian evangelist of South India. He has completed another work, *The Issa Tale That Will Not Die*. It is a fresh investigative study concerning the infamous nineteenth-century Russian journalist Nicholas Notovitch and a supposedly ancient Gospel of Issa/Jesus manuscript he claimed he had discovered in 1887 at a Tibetan Buddhist monastery in Ladakh, NW India but which has been proven to have been a literary creation of the Russian hoaxer himself. This latest volume of the author's has very recently been published by University Press of America (Lanham MD USA, October 2003), and is available in paperback at bookstores or may be ordered online at www.univpress.com.

It is no exaggeration to say that if the ruling classes in Lhasa and New Delhi had heeded what Tharchin Babu was saying, Tibet's modern fate might have been different.

So declares Dawa T. Norbu, the distinguished Professor of International Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, in his "Introduction" to this, the first full-length biographical study ever to be published on the life and career of one of the most remarkable personalities in modern Tibetan history. Too often only briefly mentioned in passing or else totally ignored today by writers and scholars on relevant Tibetan themes, the Rev. Gergan Tharchin, observes Professor Norbu, was nonetheless a pioneer in several important fields of endeavor: "the first Tibetan journalist in the entire Tibetan-speaking world, a towering *modern* man of letters in a field traditionally dominated by lamas, a lone modernizer in a tradition-bound society, and above all the most articulate spokesman for Tibet's freedom through his pioneering newspaper, the *Tibet Mirror*" that throughout its history (1925-62) he had published in the Northeast Indian hill station of Kalimpong. Indeed, Tharchin Babu "remained right up to 1950 the sole Tibetan window to the outside world for the isolationist Tibetans."

But according to Dr. Norbu, the Babu was also, in the long course of his multi-faceted career, "to explode several Tibetological myths." One of these myths which Tharchin forever laid to rest was the notion "that in order to be a man of Tibetan letters and a fighter for Tibet's freedom, one had to be a Buddhist. He was neither a lama nor a lay Buddhist. He remained a profoundly sophisticated Christian throughout his life, despite his love for Tibetan literature and culture." Moreover, adds Norbu, who had initially come to know Rev. Tharchin when a student in Kalimpong, "he was perhaps the most eminent Christian in the Tibetan-speaking world." Indeed, Babu Tharchin "had truly integrated into the Tibetan cultural fabric into which he was born those Christian values he had adopted. There was neither any sign of identity crisis nor confusion of values. He was at peace, and shared peace and wisdom with whomever he came in close contact."

Though born in Indo-Tibet and early converted to the Christian faith from his family religion of Tibetan Buddhism, even so, Gergan Dorje Tsering Tharchin (1890-1976) was a Tibetan through and through, as the pages of this projected three-volume biography will amply attest (the concluding volume is expected to follow in due course). Babu Tharchin loved the Land of Snows, became an enthusiastic student of her language, history and culture, sought at all times the highest and best for her people, and stood—in the hour of greatest peril to her freedom and independence—as one of Tibet's strongest advocates in his near-legendary journalistic defense against the machinations of the frightful Invader from the East: Communist China. And for these and other noteworthy contributions to the welfare of Tibet this humble-born Tibetan from the Northwest Indian mountain hamlet of Poo eventually came to be respected, loved and admired by all and sundry among his fellow ethnic countrymen—whether ruler or ruled, rich or poor, educated or ignorant, Buddhist or non-Buddhist. He was even a personal friend of the two most recent ruling Pontiffs of the Tibetan Buddhist Church: the Great Thirteenth and the currently reigning Fourteenth Dalai Lama. As one of his many Tibetan admirers was wont to say about Rev. Tharchin, his Christian affirmation never seemed "to get in the way of his relations with all sections of the Tibetan community," who "held him in such high esteem."

Recognizing, however, "the danger of popular forgetfulness" which "even Gergan Tharchin's remarkable achievement faces" in this current age of information explosion, Professor Norbu was moved to express his profound appreciation to the author of *Called from Obscurity* in the following laudatory terms:

We—all the Tibetan-speaking peoples in the Himalayas and Inner Asia—are deeply grateful to H. Louis Fader. For he has resurrected the saga and legend of Tharchin Babu for our own generation and posterity I am glad to say that this important task has gracefully fallen into the able and careful hands of Mr. Fader ... [whose] initial interest had been centered around the life of a famous Christian convert from Sikhism, Sadhu Sundar Singh of India, which opened the door to the author to the world of Tharchin Babu.... The author had free access to the entire Tharchin family records and the pertinent Christian missionary documents on Tibet that had scarcely been researched before. He has also spared no pains to engage in extensive research on Tibetan history, culture and politics, within whose broad context he has empathetically placed the life and times of Tharchin Babu. The result is not only a highly *researched* biography ...; it is also a significant contribution to Tibetan Church History, woven around the spirit and activity of a great Tibetan Christian....

As a Tibetan, I personally thank the present author for resurrecting the life and times of this eminent Tibetan Christian. As a fellow writer, I congratulate Mr. Fader for his wonderful book.

