

ASIA

HAN YING'S "LOST RED ARMY"
BY EDGAR SNOW
FROM CHIANG'S HEADQUARTERS
BY W. H. DONALD

I BECAME A LAMA
BY THEOS BERNARD

CHINA'S COÖPERATIVES
BY PEARL S. BUCK



JAPANESE FISHERMAN

W. H. DONALD, adviser to Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, is an Australian who began his career as a newspaper man. He covered the Russo-Japanese War, later became adviser to Chang Tso-lin, Manchurian war lord, and, after his assassination, to his son, the "Young Marshal," Chang Hsueh-liang.

ADET and ANOR LIN, sixteen and thirteen years old respectively, and Meimei, eight years old, are the daughters of China's famous author-philosopher Dr. Lin Yutang.

PEARL S. BUCK, winner of the Nobel prize for Literature in 1938, has been a contributor to *ASIA* since before her first book was published. Her latest book, *The Patriot*, a novel of China and Japan, appeared in March.

EDGAR SNOW, American newspaper man and author of *Red Star Over China*, wrote the first accounts of the "Long March" and of Mao Tse-tung to reach the Western World. It is the belief of Mr. Snow and of the editors that this is the first published account of Han Ying's "lost" Red army.

THEOS BERNARD, a few years after finishing law school, yielded to a desire, born of early reading and the interest of his parents in eastern religions, to obtain a thorough knowledge of Buddhism. Mr. Bernard's account of his experiences in Lamaism in Tibet will appear in his book, *Penthouse of the Gods*, soon to be published.

BHABANI BHATTACHARYA contributes to the *Spectator*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Bookman* and the *Christian Science Monitor*.

MYRON BEMENT SMITH and KATHARINE DENNIS SMITH spent five years in Iran, from 1933 through 1937, on an investigation (later raised to the status of an expedition) sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies. Mr. Smith, an architect, is Honorary Consultant in Islamic Archeology and Art in the Library of Congress. His series of monographs, "Material for a Corpus of Early Iranian Islamic Architecture," is the first attempt to present the monuments of Iran in exhaustive studies. Mrs. Smith, before her marriage, had traveled in the Near East and was on the staff of the Newark, New Jersey, Museum.

KENNETH PERRY LANDON came by his knowledge of the political and economic life of Siam in no academic way. Living in villages, he experienced with the people, during the years between 1927 and 1938, radical changes in government.

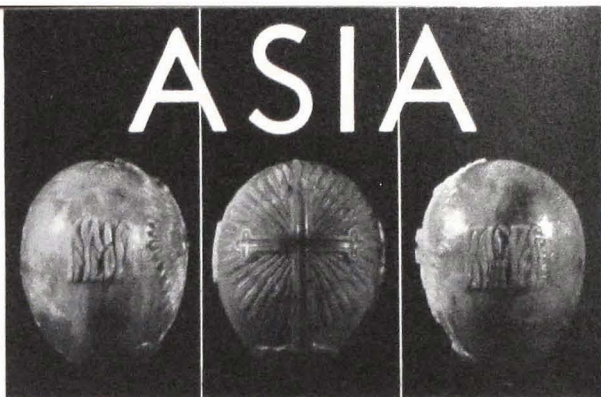
DOROTHY M. SPENCER went to Fiji as a pre-doctoral fellow of the Social Science Research Council, and spent about ten months in Nasauthoko, a village on the island of Viti Levu. Dr. Spencer is now a lecturer in anthropology in the Graduate School of the University of Pennsylvania.

REBECCA DRUCKER spent four months, in 1928, in Vienna—she was then a newspaper woman—where she became passionately interested in the local housing problem. Going on to the U.S.S.R., she observed the earliest beginnings of housing planned on a national scale. On her most recent visit to the U.S.S.R. she found the plan far advanced.

SALVADOR P. LOPEZ, daily columnist and magazine editor of *The Philippines Herald*, is twenty-seven years old, a graduate of the University of the Philippines, and active in the Philippine youth movement.

CHARLOTTE CHANDLER WYCKOFF, the daughter and granddaughter of missionaries to India, is the head of the Sherman Memorial Girls' High School at Chittoor in Madras Presidency.

LEFT: SOVIET ARMY TANKS AT TACTICS, TRANS-BAIKAL PRELUDE



THREE VIEWS OF A RHODONITE EASTER EGG, SHOWING CHRIST IN RUSSIAN LETTERS, THE PAVED RUSSIAN CROSS, "SIBIRSKY." COURTESY THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

FOUNDED IN 1917 BY WILLARD STRAIGHT

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Editors' Note: This is the second of two articles by Theos Bernard on the experiences of his recent stay in Tibet, a land rarely entered by Westerners.

I BECOME A LAMA

By THEOS BERNARD

On the day before my departure from Lhasa, two lamas called on me. They revealed to me every thought I had had since my arrival in Lhasa and the nature of my reactions to the various ceremonies at the Tibetan monasteries. I had thought that this life was exclusively my own, but my lama visitors seemed to have some mystical power that gave them an insight into others.

They explained that all that remained for me to do was to go through with the final initiation ceremony, which would make it possible for me to make contact with my inner self at will, to the end of my days. They said that word had come from Ganden, the great monastery north of Lhasa, that the T'ri Rimpoche, the head lama of Ganden and next in rank to the Dalai Lama in Tibet, had returned and that preparations were being made to receive me there for this last ceremony.

It was not a question of whether I would go or not. It was a question of how quickly I could leave. There was no time to be lost. I had journeyed to Tibet hoping for this, the privilege of a lifetime, and here it had come to me on the day before my departure. It was a four days' journey east of Lhasa to the third largest monastery in Tibet. That very night runners were sent to the monastery to report that I was leaving in the morning. Long before sunrise everything was helter-skelter in the effort to get the last-minute details taken care of.

Dressed in a Tibetan robe and accompanied by my bodyguard, I headed toward Ganden. The lift from the floor of the fertile valley was somewhere between two and three thousand feet. It was a continuously ascending, zigzagging trail worn in loosely strewn limestone. Ganden was at the very top of the mountain, some fifteen thousand feet above sea level. It was a steep, quick climb, with the soaring eagles for company.

Just before we reached the summit, our trail went through a narrow cut in the rock ridge. At this point was stationed a lama to warn every passer-by to remove all bells from animals; for the T'ri Rimpoche, the Most Precious One, was at the monastery, and nothing was to disturb his meditation. This, to my mind, was the ideal monastery, tucked away as it was in a hidden corner in the bend of one of the higher ridges which jut out into the valley. Below it the mountain drops straight down two thousand feet. Could one ask for better protection and isolation?

We had to descend a few hundred feet to reach the level of the trail leading to the main temple, where arrangements had been made for me to live during my visit. Monks met me to conduct me to my monastic cell, where I would live like a Tibetan lama. I

knew I was being honored; for I was permitted to live in a sacred chamber in the main temple building, where the great ceremony would take place on the following morning at the break of day.

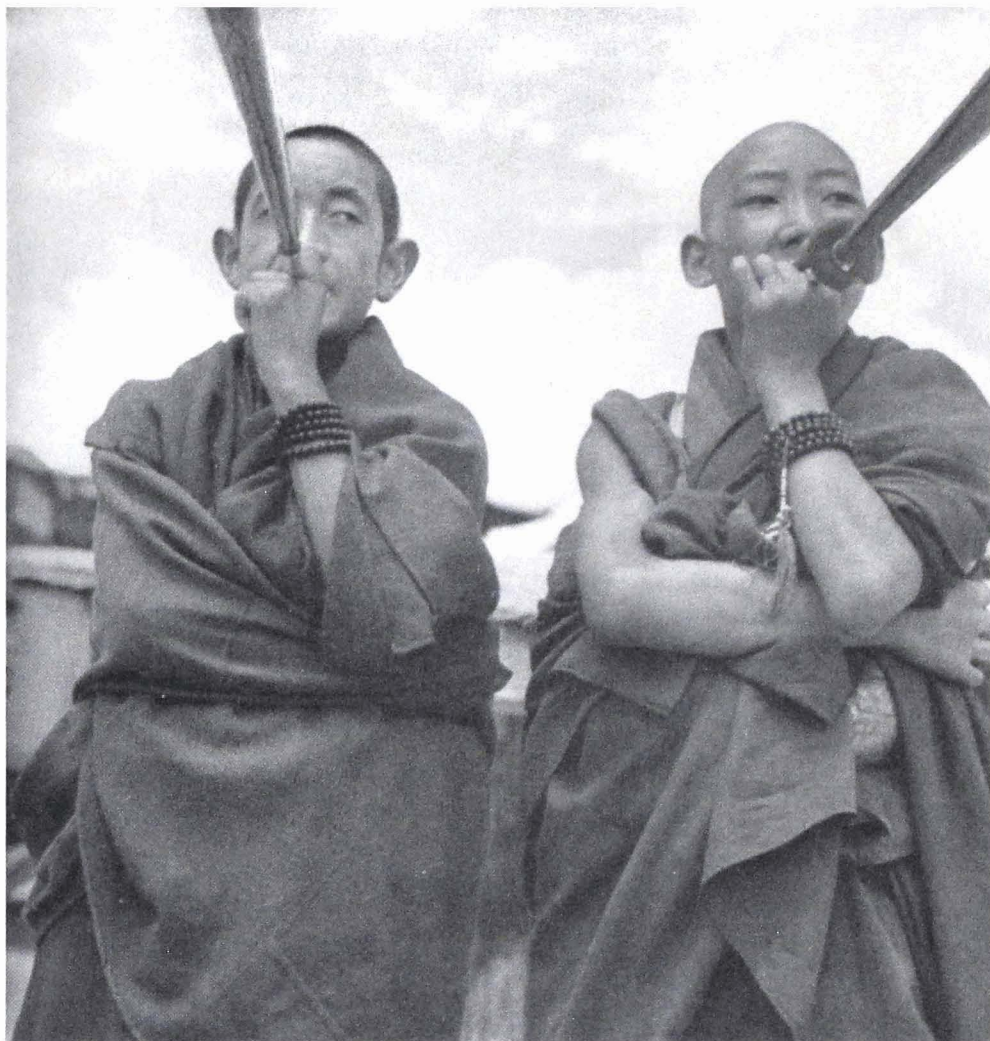
There was tea when I arrived, and from the moment I occupied my cell a tiny acolyte came running in every five minutes to refill my cup. Beside the shrine in my quarters were the *Kangyur* and *Tengyur*, which had been studied by Tsong-ka-pa, the founder of the Ge-luk-pa sect and of Ganden, the oldest and most sacred of all the Ge-luk-pa monasteries.

LIFE BEGAN TO STIR in the middle of the night, as preparations were made for the great ceremony. With the dawn I was awakened by the rhythmic beating of drums, the ceaseless drone of sixteen-foot trumpets and the vibrant chanting of thousands of lamas, filing their way to the slab-paved courtyard of the famous temple.

There was unusual significance in this particular initiation. The fact is, I, the person about to be initiated into the Tibetan sacred mysteries, was no Tibetan, not even an Oriental, but an American, hailing from Arizona. And here, at the end of the ceremony, I should become a full-fledged Buddhist monk, a lama. This was for me the day of days: I was to appear before the T'ri Rimpoche, who was to install me with my vestments after this final ritual initiation.

The servants had brought my early morning buttered tea, which it is customary to take upon awakening. They appeared to be more excited than I. Never before had an American been accepted. It was, indeed, not as a stranger that I was being permitted to receive this divine benediction; I had been accepted as a reincarnation of a celebrated Tibetan saint. Fate had brought it about that I should be reborn in the Western World that I might learn of its forms and customs, and now the same fate had restored me to my homeland that I might have my inner consciousness reawakened. This was how they interpreted my action in leaving America and in coming to them. So it was not a mystery to them that I possessed a comprehension of their teachings. My subconscious self had directed my thoughts and guided my desires so that I was impelled to come to them, and each successive initiation was no more than a further reawakening of my true self.

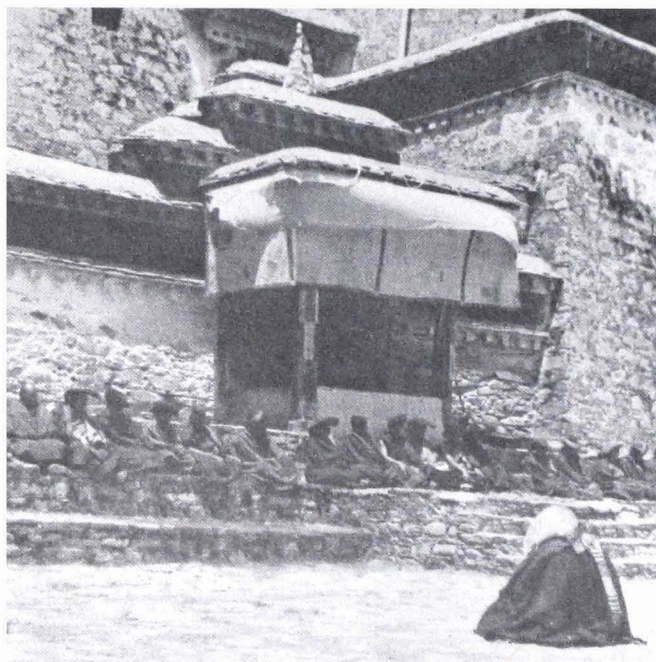
My emotions ran high; little time was wasted in preparing to descend to the temple room. I donned a golden silken robe with a sash around the waist. At last the summons came. With the attendant lamas

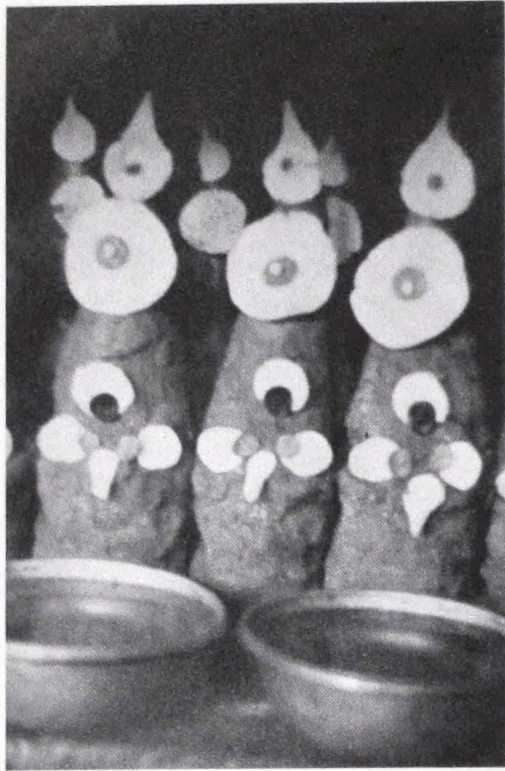


THEOS BERNARD

Deep-toned, sixteen-foot trumpets were blown at the initiation of Theos Bernard as a lama at Ganden Monastery. Each day, in the courtyard, the young lama students debate philosophy before their teachers

Just after the ritual of taking his vows, Mr. Bernard was photographed, in a room adjoining the big temple room of Ganden Monastery, with one of the head lamas, who was his guide in the initiation ceremony



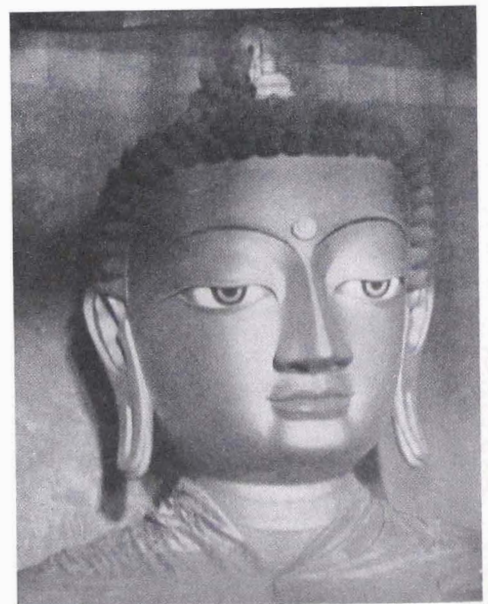


Offerings of sacred bread (above), decorated with designs in butter, were presented during Mr. Bernard's initiation. The bread is made of barley flour, the chief food staple of Tibet

The Bodhisattva Chen-re-zi (below), Lord of Mercy, is the patron deity of Tibet; each Dalai Lama is recognized as his reincarnation. At the right are two images of Cham-pa, the Future Buddha



THEOS BERNARD



carrying the long silk scarves—the *kata*—used as offerings before all Tibetan shrines, we hastened to the temple room.

Our descent to the temple led us through the immense kitchens, where the great vats in which the tea is made, were steaming. These huge kettles, some of them four feet deep and eight feet in diameter, made of heavy metal cast in Tibet, stand on high brick ovens, stoked with large quantities of yak dung, filling the rooms with soot, which has been collecting on the walls for centuries. We crossed the kitchens, holding our skirts high to protect them from the grease and filth on the floors. We left one dark cell only to enter another and another, until at last we emerged in a court packed with lamas sitting in silent prayer, waiting for the rising sun.

The impressive silence of the morning was being rent with the low muffled sounds of the long sixteen-foot trumpets. Their vibrant volume, swelled by the chants of the lamas, filled the air with a strange ecstasy. Life was born again, and each soul lived for a new beginning. Once the sun appeared, all lapsed quietly into the peace of the morning.

The time had come for all to file into the temple room. I approached the great bolted door, which was guarded by a lama who waited until I had recited my *mantras* that I might purify myself before entering the holy sanctuary. For an instant I hesitated; as if there were another person within me, advising me, I paused on the threshold, my head bowed, while I uttered a silent prayer. The door slowly swung open.

As I stepped across the sanctified threshold, I found myself enveloped in a stream of sunlight flowing in from an opening above the first story roof. At once I prostrated myself in that cascade of sunbeams, and, while lying there in humble devotion, I dived for a fleeting instant into the innermost depths of human consciousness. An overwhelming emotion filled me. I rose to my feet, and stood aside. The great hall was vibrant with the prayers chanted by countless lamas seated cross-legged, heads bowed, upon rows of raised flat benches.

The flickering of a thousand and more butter lamps lighted the way for us as we advanced slowly toward the high throne of the T'ri Rimpoche, and it was as if I were being borne along on the waves created by the tremulous murmurings of the chanting lamas. The dais upon which the T'ri Rimpoche sat was twelve feet above the floor; and it was needful to perform many cleansing rites before the altars below, upon which stood the deities molded in gold and gleaming in the yellow light of the sacred offerings.

Hours went by in these devotional rites. While I was reciting the *mantras*, the Lamaist choir went on with its heavy bombardment of monotonous chants, occasionally broken by the tinkling of thousands of tiny bells. The mere movement of the monks' hands and twisting of their fingers, as they went from one *mudra* to another, acted as a hypnotic spur.

Finally I was conducted into the black chamber of horrors, hidden away behind bolted doors. A young acolyte guided our footsteps with a small butter light,

which he held close to the floor that the way might be seen. With my attendants I paused at an altar. Above it reposed an image which represented the destructive aspect of that great creative force within, on the verge of release. This enormous demon stood in an arch of flames, crushing beneath his feet the bodies of human beings, while from the great pedestal upon which he rested there seemed to trickle endless rivulets of blood. His many arms, each carrying a weapon of destruction, symbolized the many avenues the human being is offered for self-destruction, which he may escape only by understanding. The same chamber harbored other demons, standing in sexual embrace with their deified consorts, draped with necklaces of human skulls, intended to convey the transitory nature of human existence with its fleeting passions of the senses. It is taught here that there is only one force in life, but that it has an infinite number of manifestations; only through knowledge is it possible to direct this force. This vast chamber is always kept under guard and under lock and key so that the uninstructed may not have the opportunity to see these hideous forms; there is too much danger of their being interpreted literally. It is argued that the revelation they offer is esoteric, and that it is impossible to pass on knowledge until the individual is prepared to receive it.

We seated ourselves below the altar which pedaled the image symbolizing the destructive aspects of energy. I heard the low rumbling drone of the high priest's chants, which he repeated for the purpose of preparing us. Then his assistants slowly joined in, intensifying the vibrant echoes of this dungeon of holiness. Soon I began to repeat the *mantras* which had been provided for me, until my entire being felt like the buzzing wings of a bumble-bee. I knew that I had to control and direct this energy which was being stirred up through the channels of the sympathetic nervous system. My months of training in the Yoga practices were useful here. The test was yet to come. Had I developed sufficient power of control to direct that energy so as to draw upon the hidden reservoirs in the subconscious? With each succeeding step the internal pressures of the body became more fierce, and I began to understand their power of destruction. It was only by sheer will power that I was able to hold on. The agony became terrifying, and had I given vent to the fears which were beginning to beset me I should have burst forth screaming and not stopped running until I either went mad or touched the borderline of madness. But I was determined to hold on.

I observed an assistant speaking to the officiating high priest. Then the vibrations were changed, and a new *mantra* was being chanted, and another was given me. Slowly I began repeating it after my mentor. Each line was the same, but a different syllable was stressed at the end of each phrase. My entire internal rhythm was changing, ever swelling. The walls almost seemed to sway with the ever increasing drone of beating drums, blaring horns and clashing cymbals. My imagination was beginning to run wild.

I had learned by now how to sit apart and watch the inner self function. Yet I was in constant fear of being swept away by these mystical rites, which utilize every known emotional phenomenon.

In the midst of this spiritual storm, everything suddenly seemed dispelled as by some mysterious magic; the tinkling bells could be felt, when all receded, and we meditated in the dead silence of darkness. It will never be possible for me to express in words what actually took place. It was something beyond the realm of the mind and, therefore, beyond the expression of name and form.

The ceremony was over. Now it was for me to remain and reflect upon this volcano of subconscious power in the light of the teachings which had been previously given me, of which these fiendish plastic forms were symbols. Beginning with the first image which had caught my eye upon entering the chamber, I was deliberately to study each and to interpret its inner meaning. Not until then did I fully realize the wisdom of those who had created these hideous forms of devastation. Before me—so it had seemed at first—had stood a fiend of destruction; but now it had become a symbol of the greatest force of nature in the eternal battle to emerge from the subconscious into the conscious, giving intelligent guidance to each separate personality.

I had no way of telling how many hours had passed; for I was in a world in which the phenomenon of time did not exist. It was as if I had come back for a rebirth, memory of my past lives assisting me in my new orientation, with future experiences in prospect, since this was merely the beginning of that for which I was being prepared. It was, indeed, a test.

NOW I WAS CONDUCTED to the altar below the dais, upon which sat the T'ri Rimpoche, shut away from the vision of all, yet in full command of every one within this vast temple chamber.

The officiating lama turned from the altar with a silver jar of holy water. This he poured into my hands, from which I sipped, placing the remainder on my head. Then the lama who had been conducting me through the ceremonies returned with a small image of Buddha, a Tibetan book and a sacred scarf, symbolic of the eternal truth, knowledge and the divine knot of life. This signified that I was to be accepted and permitted to receive the blessing of the T'ri Rimpoche, who, in some mysterious way, knew that I had gained the inner realization.

Slowly we ascended the stairway. With each step my vision grew increasingly obscure until complete darkness encompassed me. What was the meaning of this? Was I to be deprived of the glory of seeing the T'ri Rimpoche after this arduous ritualistic ordeal? Even in the midst of this reflection I caught a glimpse of a ray of light. I did not know whence it came, but after I had climbed high enough for my eyes to fall above the floor of the T'ri Rimpoche's throne I looked up, and I saw his radiant face silhouetted against a tiny ray of sunlight that filtered through a removed panel in the upper wall of his sanctuary. Promptly I

paid my deep respects with the three customary prostrations before him, after which I took my place on a low raised platform set apart for me. What was I to do next, and what was going to happen to me?

Soon his hands began to move slowly in the air as they gracefully formed different mudras, before proceeding to the reading of prayers, to which I responded. To this day I wonder how I knew what to say, though I do not now remember what I did say. Acting upon a prompting within, I rose from my cross-legged posture, and as I stood up before him a strange feeling came over me. I suddenly realized that I was about to receive from him the power and authority to pass on to others what had been given me.

As I offered each symbolic object to him I felt the warm pressure of his fingers and his forehead touching my head; something was generously released in me when, finally, his divine hands formed a spiritual cap over my head. No one spoke; words were superfluous here. When the ceremony was over, I felt that I had been talking with him for a lifetime and had spent years studying under his guidance. A torrent of thoughts poured through my mind, as I reviewed the years of my life; yet they appeared to have nothing to do with me as I had known myself.

After a blessing from the T'ri Rimpoche, I left his presence, overflowing with the energy which he had caused to be released from my subconscious. It yet remained for me to make a devotional tour of the sacred shrines of the monastery and to circumambulate the monastery walls, before he would install me with my vestments and give me my last instructions prior to taking the vows and being clothed with the authority to pass on the teachings to others.

Cautiously we descended to the temple room below, where the lamas were still repeating their chants. The acolytes were waiting for us at the foot of the stairs, with their small butter lamps to guide us through the long narrow passages leading to the innermost sanctuaries. We began the tour by visiting the tomb of Tsong-ka-pa, the founder of this religious sect. Before the altar of the *chorten*—containing the body of the honored saint—I offered the sacred scarf. My lama escort then guided me around the monastery walls, pointing out the places about which religious tradition had gathered. Almost every crack and crevice of the hillside had some story connected with it. There were many places where the Precious One had come for an hour's reflection. We stopped at a tiny meditative chamber, chiseled into a cliff of solid rock. It was built at some distance from the main part of the monastery so that the Precious One could be left wholly undisturbed; and it was cut into the ground to allow him to get away from all the vibratory effects to which the surface of the earth is continually subjected. When a person is ready to enter such a cell of solitary confinement, he is already highly sensitized to the vibrations of the world. An individual may spend a lifetime in the effort to prepare himself to undergo the experience of solitary confinement as the final step in the final initiation. The mentally impoverished will often go insane in

a solitary cell; so extreme caution is used in permitting one to undertake this preparation. The length of time to be spent in the cell depends largely upon the individual and the measure of his development.

After my return to the monastery, a Tibetan meal was served me on a large tray, and then word came that everything was ready for my installation. The vestments were brought, and I was folded into the flowing Lamaist robes of garnet homespun. I then went to worship in the temple of my monastic division before appearing before the T'ri Rimpoche.

The T'ri Rimpoche's tiny private chamber contained only a small altar and a couple of modest Tibetan banners. What impressed me most was the happiness manifested by the radiant face of Tibet's highest lama. A signal honor was paid me in that I was permitted to sit on a seat placed next to the T'ri Rimpoche. We recited various prayers, and I took the vows, after which I was invited to ask the T'ri Rimpoche any questions I might wish to have answered before he prepared me to face the coming ordeal of solitary confinement. Had this opportunity been granted me before this day, I should have poured out a stream of questions; but coming as it did, after the initiation, I had nothing to ask, except to implore that the privilege of confinement in a solitary cell be granted me promptly.

After a prolonged philosophical discussion I bade my holy host good-by, and followed my escort to the small rock sanctuary which had been made ready for me. Just before I crossed the threshold of the solitary cell, there had been a brief pause for silent prayer, and the lamas with me repeated certain chants which were supposed to give me the needful strength to accomplish the purpose of this experience. At the same time the lamas in the main temple were finishing the repetition of the prayers which they had begun at daybreak. The precise number of repetitions was one hundred and eight thousand. Every soul in the monastery was with me in thought at this moment, and somehow I sensed the strength of their complete confidence in me. My last thought before entering the cell was to try to retain a memory of myself as I was, since I knew a different individual would emerge from that cell.

Never shall I forget the ecstasy which swept over me as I stepped into the tomb of holiness. The sun had long left the slope of the mountain. There was no light in the tiny anteroom in which the attendants were to leave my food each day. The door opening from this into my cave was far too small to enable me to enter upright. Indeed, the cave itself only permitted me to stand erect provided that I kept my legs apart. There was only a narrow slit in the side of the rock wall, which had been built up to form this cave, permitting a little fresh air and very little light to filter in. The room was bare of everything but a *thanka*, or sacred banner, of the Lord Buddha and the Wheel of Life, which I could use to help me in my meditations.

For once in my life there was no rush. All the externals of life were wholly banished, but the inner

life went on, the mind was still active, the body continued to function—so now what to do? Noise itself ceased to exist. There was nothing left to do but to bring the mind under control, to delve into self and live there deep in the subconscious. I spent hours in doing absolutely nothing but watching the mind wander as the thoughts continued to pour into my consciousness. I had all the time in the world in which to banish nonessentials. Most important of all was that I should become attuned to the rhythm of nature rather than strive to set up a rhythm of my own. Deliberately, at the beginning, I stayed far within conservative bounds with my practices, adding a little to my discipline as I gained inner strength; for I did not want to suffer defeat by making a false start.

The periods between my practices, which had to be done at sunup and at sundown and at midnight and at noon, were allotted to reflection. I went back to the earliest recollections of childhood and reviewed every detail of that early memory in the steady effort to find a stimulus which would permit me to delve even deeper into the past. Once I had reviewed all the facts, I tried to gain some insight into the meaning behind the facts; this was to enable me to look into the workings of the law of Karma.

IT WAS LIKE BEING REBORN AGAIN to emerge into the world after three days and four nights spent in the cave. Not a single moment had I lain down to sleep, having spent the entire time in contact with the inner force. Not a word was spoken to me by the monks who had been sent to conduct me to the T'ri Rimpoche. No one was allowed to enter his meditative chamber with me. A strange mood possessed me as I stepped into the private shrine of my teacher, and took my place beside him. Not a word was exchanged between us, only an understanding glance.

The sun had not yet come up, and the light within was very dim; there was but the dull flicker of a few small butter lamps before his altar. I arranged myself in the customary meditative posture, and the two of us remained in dead silence to greet the dawn, symbolic of a new world for me. Thus we remained for three hours, like two frozen images, but the light within was more illumining, more eloquent, more active, than anything I had ever experienced.

Our silence was broken at last by the repetition of a few sacred syllables. A short conversation followed, during which the T'ri Rimpoche explained the meaning of everything that had taken place. He pointed out to me that now I had gained contact with an old soul that was within me; this was, he said, the reason for my coming to this land. Now I could continue my development throughout life.

Secure in the knowledge that I had a way of communing with the mind of my teacher at the monastery from any corner of this earth, I could now return to the world of affairs. And my own land, America, suddenly beckoned to me. My return to it, I was aware, would be fraught with meanings which I had not even suspected when I left for my wanderings in India and Tibet.