

ALEXANDER CSOMA DE KÖRÖS

VOLUME - I

CSOMA KÖRÖS'S PLANET

P. J. MARCZELL

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P. J. MARCZELL



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by P. J. Marczell

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*In remembrance
of the stimulating discussions focussed on Csoma,
which the author held with the late Professor N.R. Ray,
Director of the Indian Institute of Historical Studies,
in Calcutta during 1992.*

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FOREWORD

It is a great privilege for me to present to serious students of Tibetology and Tibetan Buddhism the book “Alexander Csoma de Kőrös” by Dr. P. J. Marczell. The life and achievements of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös and his mission in life and the inspiration behind his mission need proper and objective reevaluation. Dr. Marczell in his research on Alexander Csoma de Kőrös attempted to delve into the mysteries of his life and achievements. This book based on latest available materials has thrown further light on Csoma de Kőrös and I hope, it would be greatly appreciated by all his admirers.

The Asiatic Society feels glorified by publishing this Volume on Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, the hermit scholar, since he lived, served and did his pioneering research work in the Asiatic Society.

Kolkata
February 15, 2007

Ramakanta Chakabarty
General Secretary
The Asiatic Society

PREFACE

The hero of this book is Alexander Csoma Kőrösi. This scholar from Hungary attained worldwide fame in the first half of the 19th century due to his heroism in compiling, in Zanskar and Kinnaur, a path-breaking Tibetan-English dictionary and a corresponding grammar and also for preparing later, in Calcutta, a concise review of the main body of Tibetan-Buddhist texts. His biographies provide incomplete and biased views because of their partisan spirit and insufficient database. This underlying deficiency is remedied to a considerable extent through the thirteen papers which comprise this body. These are based on the discovery of many new documents, original researches in the field and painstaking enquiries in Hungary and Romania which have enabled the author to throw new light on several important aspects of Csoma Kőrösi's character, behaviour and activities and to trace and relate such features to the respective traditions to which they belong. Although some of the studies are corrected or thoroughly rewritten versions of English texts published in specialized proceedings of learned societies, several of them are derived from essays published in Hungarian and one that appeared without proof-reading in an Indian periodical, they deserve to be added to the unpublished material and made available more definitively and conveniently in a separate book form.

The title *Csoma Kőrösi's Planet* suggests a special world, as Csoma Kőrösi was a special character. The papers

constituting the book provide insights into his peculiar case. The first four papers cover the phases of Csoma Kőrösi's engagement in Tibetan learning, the following two deal with aspects of his puzzling stay near the Sikkimese / Bhutanese border mainly at Tetulia, and the other six papers discuss historical perspectives with special references to sociological and political factors. The rather technical Addendum reproduces a contribution to an international seminar whose proceedings remain unpublished. Each paper forms an autonomous whole, which can be understood without reading any of the others. However, they sometimes overlap in important details, which adds useful emphasis to these detailed matters.

The author does not share the enthusiasm of hagiographers for Csoma Kőrösi, but he shows his particular respect for the man through an emphasis on sources and bibliographical references. The hitherto untapped handwritten records and other documents which he reproduces extensively are transcribed quite faithfully, that is verbatim. The original spelling is often closer to American than to present-day English usage. Tibetan names and other words are used as simply as possible (for example, Zanskar, Kanjur, Karmapa, Sangye Puntsog) but in discussions on levels of higher academic complexity they are transliterated according to Wylie's system and in quotations they are left unchanged. Quotations from such printed sources as the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (JASB) are reproduced in a style that endeavours to conform with the original typography and layout.

INTRODUCTION

On the scholarly achievements of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös I have little to add to the comments on his Dictionary by the finest of Tibetan lexicographers, H.A. Jaeschke :

“High praise, however, is awarded by the Professor [Schmidt] to ... the Tibetan-English Dictionary by Csoma de Körös, which appeared in 1834. This work deserves all eulogy The work of Csoma de Körös is that of an original investigator and the fruit of almost unparalleled determination and patience.”

I believe it is fair to say that the results of Csoma’s unparalleled efforts on his Dictionary and Grammar were superseded by those of Jaeschke himself--but superseded by incorporation and adaptations, with full and detailed acknowledgement, into Jaeschke’s own Dictionary and Grammar. Similarly his work on the Mahavyutpatti, eventually seeing the light of day in 1910-1916, was superseded by that of Sakaki. Would that our own work were superseded in such a fashion!

Csoma, however, lives on in roles other than that of a giant on whose shoulder later scholars stood. As Peter Marczell writes of the image of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös,

“In Hungary it satisfied the need for a saint hero of present days and the nostalgia for ethnic ties crediting a glorious past in the Far East. On the international scene it depended on the status of Tibetan.”

On the first sentence I am hardly qualified to comment, but the second, if one adds “Tibet” and “Tibetan Buddhism” to “Tibetan (language)”, seems to me broadly true still. If Csoma fills a need felt by some Hungarians for heroes, ethnic ties and a glorious past, Tibet fills perhaps more than ever a need in the outside world -- not just the “west” but increasingly parts of the “east” as well -- for an entity designated as “unknown”, “mysterious”, “hidden”, “lost” and so forth in the titles of so many popular publications : this despite the fact that Tibet must by now represent one of the better explored areas, languages and cultures of the world, thanks to Csoma and his successors.

On a more serious level the study of the “western” encounter with the “east” in terms of the motivations, presuppositions, reactions and psychologies of the participants on both sides is an academic bandwagon well under way in Tibetan studies as in so many others.

Thus the study of Csoma would seem to have plenty of life left in it from a number of angles : the strictly linguistic/buddhological; the popular Tibetophilic; and the academic “orientalist”, to say nothing of the intra-Hungarian.

What strikes me on reading this collection of papers by Peter Marczell is the sheer historical complexity of the whole process of the scholarly investigation of Tibetan and Buddhism, as exemplified by the ramifications of Csoma’s wanderings, activities and posthumous reputation which extend from Transylvania (now, with its Hungarian and German components, part of Romania) to the wider Hungarian area, Austria, Lower Saxony, the Balkans, the Middle East, Britain,

Kashmir, Ladakh, Russia, the Sikh Dominions, British-controlled Kinnaur and Bengal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Tibet and more. If the isolation of Tibet is in large part imaginary, how much more so is that of all these diverse regions, linked in an everchanging cultural and political web.

Csoma's career both before and after death traces a path through this web whose structure is marvellously illuminated by these thirteen essays and supplementary material. Peter Marczell has the advantage of familiarity with west European languages and with historical research in the relevant fields; a dogged ability to track down, assess and interpret disparate archival material; and readiness to travel wherever necessary in Europe and the Indian subcontinent. While he would not claim to be a Tibetologist he has the (rather rare) ability to ask the right questions of those who are. Not least, he has a Magyar insight into the history, culture and psychology of his fellow-countrymen.

I commend this collection of papers, with its multi-faceted approach, its discovery of new facts and its subtle and balanced interpretations. It indeed affords a glimpse into a whole "planet" of intellectual and cultural history.

Philip Denwood

Reader in Tibetan Studies

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October 2003

A SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF CSOMA KÓRÖSI

Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, correctly also named Alexander Csoma de Kőrös/Csoma Kőrösi/Kőrösi Csoma Sándor (1784?-1842), was a Siculo-Hungarian born in Transylvania, present-day Romania, who achieved fame in India as a pioneer of modern Tibetan scholarship. He is a cultural hero among his people because of his solitary search for the 'cradle' and the ancestors of his nation. It was this quest which motivated his impecunious travel, with no valid visa, to Asia; and his Tibetan studies were meant to form only a phase in his life-long quest.

Csoma studied at the Gábor Bethlen College of Nagyenyed with a view to becoming a Protestant clergyman. From there he graduated with a scholarship to the University of Göttingen in the Principality of Hanover, Germany, which he eventually attended for five terms. Before undertaking his long journey to the East, he learnt Slavonic languages in the Balkans. Although he aimed at Central Asia, he got sidetracked on his travel in that direction several times so that his route lead through Wallachia, Bulgaria, Thrace, Chios, Rhodes, Egypt, Cyprus, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, Afghanistan and India.

At Leh he did not dare to attempt crossing the passes of the Karakorum, and so he decided to return to Kashmir. It was

at this critical stage that he met, at Dras, W. Moorcroft, the superintendent of the East India Company's stud 'on deputation to Upper Asia', who privately hired him to produce a Tibetan grammar and a Tibetan-Latin dictionary and to collect Tibetan 'specimen texts'. The implementation of this project began in Zangla, in Zanskar, the southern province of the kingdom of Ladakh, with the assistance of a lama, but came to a halt sixteen months later at the British outpost of Sabathu.

After Csoma's presence in India had received government clearance, and his work government sponsorship, he took up his task again, first in Zanskar, later on British protected territory in Kinnaur. Editing and publishing, at government expense, the Tibetan grammar and the Tibetan-English dictionary took place in Calcutta under the auspices of the Asiatic Society of Bengal /ASB. These publications were delayed until 1834 by the exploitation-prone secretary of that learned institution; the concomitant burden of cataloguing Tibetan matter flowing in from Nepal; the shortage of funds and the lack of adequate type founts.

On its completion, all this work of 12 years was followed, presumably under the pressure to stand by as a translator near Siliguri close to both Nepal and Bhutan, by what in hindsight could be called sabbatical leave. The break provided the opportunity for him to concentrate on Sanskrit, the main original language of the Tibetan canonical scripts, and also to improve his fluency in Bengali, the local language. This "sabbatical" came to an end in Calcutta through his appointment to the post of librarian in the ASB. Thereby Csoma ceased to be a longtime government stipendiary and became the salaried employee of a private establishment.

His major contributions to the knowledge about the contents of the two main corpora of Tibetan Buddhism, the *Kanjur* (bKa' 'gyur) and the *Tanjur* (bsTan 'gyur) as well as his *Notices of the Life of Shakya*, were published in the *Transactions* of the ASB (the *Asiatick Researches*) in 1836 and 1839. His minor studies, notes and notices appeared in the monthly journal of the same institution (the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*) from 1832 to 1840 (with the exception of a posthumous notice).

By what seems to be a surprise move, Csoma relinquished his modestly paid yet widely coveted position with the ASB in May 1841 in favour of a plan to tour Central Asia on his own. This is to be approached, with stops for research, through Sikkim and Tibet. He died of fever as a celebrity at Darjeeling, still in British India, while waiting for the Sikkimese visa.

His death came when he had just normalized his situation. He travelled on a British-Indian passport good for ten years with sufficient funds to satisfy all his needs. Thus he cast off two decades of financial insecurity and humiliating intrigues stemming from his dependence on the generosity of a colonial bureaucracy and the cooperation of overambitious and jealous peers when his friends, W. Moorcroft and J. Prinsep, were no longer there to protect him.

The Hungarians lament his death as a blow which prevented their hero from ultimately realizing his patriotic plan for which he left his country. More plausibly, it deprived scholarship of a number of mature contributions in Buddhism and surely stripped Darjeeling of a colourful resident.

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In addition to the specific acknowledgements detailed in various chapters of this book, the author's sincere thanks are also due for the various archival facilities that made his work possible. To name them in alphabetical order :

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ALEXANDER CSOMA DE KÖRÖS

VOLUME - I

CSOMA KÖRÖSI'S PLANET

CHAPTER ONE

WILLIAM MOORCROFT'S AD HOC SECRETARY

The Moorcroft Collection in The British Library, London, contains six letters by Moorcroft which seem to be in the handwriting of Csoma. This peculiarity is noted in G.R. Kaye's 1937 catalogue but has been overlooked in the specialized literature despite its manifold biographical interest.

The correspondence highlights the sender's political background, his strategic options, his failures, his difficulties with his government and his plans for the near future; in addition, it carries sensitive appraisals of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's political and military power. At the same time it reveals some of Moorcroft's concern for the European scholar whom he had met at Dras and started to protect about two months earlier, who backtracked with him to Leh and whom he was turning into a pioneering Tibetologist by hiring him to produce a Tibetan grammar, dictionary and summary anthology. Giving such an insight into his preoccupation proves a lot of trust, it also amounts to a briefing on the British region and the key persons in it, that the Hungarian was likely to go to if his new patron failed to return from his big journey in search of 'parent stock' for his stud. Csoma was enabled to refer to this involvement of his when he arrived at the Himalayan military and administrative outpost of Sabathu, thus proving his patron's confidence in him.

The correspondence is addressed to army officers in the Protected Hill States (Himachal Pradesh today), with the sole exception of a high ranking friend who, nevertheless, was also closely associated with the Himalayas. The letters were put down on paper between 11 and 14 September 1822 at Leh, the capital of Ladakh. Judged by their dates and contents, they were indispensable to their author and quite important to their scribe. They must have teased the latter by their references to some of his chance acquaintances, like the Willock brothers (diplomats Henry and George) whose hospitality he enjoyed in Tehran for ten weeks during 1820-1821, or the officers Jean-François Allard and Jean César Baptiste Ventura, whose adventurous party he joined for Lahore at Dacca, on the Afghan side of the Khyber Pass.

Moorcroft's last days in Ladakh

The letters announce two setbacks which they seek to cope with. It was only a little earlier that William Moorcroft's companion, young George Trebeck, returned from Spiti where he had waited in vain for two months for a lieutenant from Kinnaur, Patrick Gerard, to show him to Leh. This failure put an end to Moorcroft's hopes to establish semi-official communication between the Protected Hill States and Ladakh subsequent to his departure from there. Yet a more serious blow came with the arrival of the envoy he had sent to Yarkand for a permission to proceed with his party to Nari and Chinese Turkestan. Moonshi Abdul Latif, the messenger, brought bad news : the Chinese authorities rejected Moorcroft's request to enter their territories. The superintendent of the stud of the East India Company 'on deputation to Upper Asia' spent two years in Ladakh

expecting to be allowed through the Karakorum to buy those breeds which the British Indian army needed but could not obtain by other means. His patience did not pay off. Yet, instead of acknowledging defeat and giving up his project, he only changed direction, pursuing his trip by Kashmir and Afghanistan, with Bokhara as target. He had to leave Ladakh without further delay because of the approaching season of bad weather and also in order to avoid taking cognizance of his official recall. He had to realize that his overambitious enterprise could no longer be sanctioned by his superiors, its original calculations were upset by Chinese enmity and its nature too openly compromised by threatening Ranjit Singh and the negotiating and signing without authorization of political and commercial agreements with Ladakh. It was therefore particularly important to him to ensure the success of his further moves by careful planning with realistic provisions for contingencies. He had to ensure, for instance, that his cheques were still accepted for purchases of goods and payment of services in neighboring British territories and that he remained able to make valuable presents to key personalities in order to secure their goodwill, without sacrificing his own equipment. Logistics also required special attention.

The addressees

It was through Sabathu, a former Gurkha stronghold near present day Shimla, that Moorcroft channelled from Ladakh his communications and supplies with his employers, the government in Calcutta, his business partners and his friends. He went along quite well with the local commander, Captain C.P. Kennedy, and took great pains to maintain friendly relations with him. Despite his higher military rank, the Irish officer,

however, was the assistant of the Deputy Superintendent of Sikh and Hill Affairs, Lieutenant W. Murray, who was particularly jealous of his prerogatives. As an Assistant at Ludhiana promoted to Deputy of the Resident at Ambala who represented the Governor-General in Council in Delhi, it was W. Murray who looked after British communications to the south of the Himalayas. Because of the rivalry between the two men, Moorcroft had to take special care not to offend the susceptibility of either. He had to secure the cooperation of both if he did not want to give up the jewels, rifles and ammunition he was expecting from Calcutta or to renounce the two field glasses which had been procured for him but forwarded to somebody else by mistake. Both shipments were critical for his progress beyond Ladakh. He approached Kennedy and Murray in different ways. He flattered the former by useful gifts to the chief of his Irish clan and to his wife, while trying to impress the latter by a military argumentation based on fresh information. His disparaging and rather inept rhetoric on Ranjit Singh should be appraised in the light of such motives. Actually, the maharaja managed to remain in power through 47 years until his natural death in 1839. In the defence of his flourishing empire he relied more on his army strong with elite corps commanded by French and Italian mercenary officers (the Fauj-i-Khas trained by Allard and Ventura and the brigades organized five years later by Court and Avitabile) than on fortifications.

Among the other addressees, Assistant Surgeon J.G. Gerard was serving in C.P. Kennedy's Gurkha battalion. He was in love with the Himalayas. He admired Moorcroft for his enterprising character and geographic findings. He could also

fully appreciate his efficiency in eye surgery and success with people thanks to his versatile medical skills. They were colleagues with the difference that Moorcroft had switched his medical specialization from humans to horses and came to India for the challenge of an exceptional and well-remunerated assignment. Both devoted much of their time to treat sick natives and to vaccinate the population against smallpox. It was Dr. Gerard who supplied Moorcroft with vaccine matter in Ladakh, where they would have liked to meet. The quoted letter makes quite clear the political justification of the projected meeting and alludes to the cause of its failure. The lines which follow it without stating to whom they are addressed were probably meant for J.G.'s brother Patrick, who was stationed at Kotgarh with the duty to facilitate the imports of, and trade in, Tibetan shawl wool (the fine goat fleece called pashm). Like his elder brother Alexander, the surveyor, he was going to obtain renown by his geographic accounts.

With his brother James Baillie, William Fraser explored the sources of the Jamuna and of the Ganges in 1815, and in 1819 he surveyed the geographic conditions, ethnic characteristics, economic situation and tax potentials of Garhwal in the Himalayas. In the last five years of his life brought to an untimely end by murder in 1835, he was the East India Company Resident Representative at Delhi. For Moorcroft his influential friendship in Northern India became very valuable in his exposure to attacks for overstepping his initial mandate. In order to understand the information provided on James Baillie, one must know that it was he who accompanied in 1821 Dr. Jukes to Persia, Meshed, Kurdistan and Tebriz.

Csoma's involvement

The Hungarian scholar must have fully shared Moorcroft's frustration upon the refusal of the Chinese authorities to waive for his sake the isolation imposed on their territory by the Manchu emperors since the ruling of 1793 by Quianlong. Coming via Lahore, Amritsar, Jammu and Srinagar, he had reached Leh on 9 June, 1822 with the intention of crossing the Karakorum. After a stay of 25 days in the capital of Ladakh, however, he had realized that the road to Yarkand "was very difficult, expensive and dangerous for a Christian" [D 28] and therefore decided to return to Lahore. When he encountered Moorcroft on his way back, he could expect that where he had failed alone he could still succeed by joining an experienced, rich and powerful Englishman. His new patron was as keen to get to Central Asia for buying Turk and Kalmuk horses there as he was eager to visit the land of the Uygurs in Xinjiang for ascertaining their kinship with his own people. As these projects were vital to them, their simultaneous sense of mutual failure in carrying them out must have brought them quite close to each other. Those were surely dramatic moments which, however, they did not share for long, as Moorcroft was leaving Leh for Srinagar at the end of September while Csoma, teaming up with Trebeck, lagged behind him by ten days.

Why did Moorcroft ask Csoma to take over from Trebeck the copying of a set of his letters during this period? One reason could be to help the young man take a rest after his strenuous 320 km. return trip from Dankar. Yet more likely he wanted to prepare the scholar's future as a productive Tibetologist dependent in his absence on the largesse of the East India Company. From a British utilitarian point of view the

knowledge of Tibetan could help the penetration of a vast area to the north of the Himalayas. For Csoma and the scientific world it could provide access to stocks of records shedding valuable light on the ancient history and Asian ramifications of his folk. The loan to him at that juncture of Father Augustino Antonio Georgi's 1762 *Alphabetum Tibetanum* in Latin is a pointer in this direction. Its confused chapters paved the way to "the conversation and instruction of an intelligent person [probably Ab'ul Latif] who was well-acquainted with the Tibetan and Persian languages". [D 28]

As we have seen, the addressees were key figures for any European who might approach India from Ladakh. Moorcroft introduced Csoma to them implicitly by his handwriting. He also introduced him in a similar fashion to the government in Calcutta by the copy and Latin translation of a Russian document which are extant. The latter deserves a separate study. Suffice it to say that the Russian text was a friendly diplomatic letter from the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Nesselrode, to Raja Ranjit Singh. It was dated in St. Petersburg, 1820, and carried by the envoy Agha Mehdi Rafailov who died [murdered?] before being able to deliver it. Moorcroft managed to intercept it in both its Russian original and its official 'Nogae Toorkee' [Chagatai Turk?] translation in Persian transliteration by Mirza Abu Turat at the service of the emperor. He had made Trebeck produce a facsimile of the Russian version and his aide, Mir Izzet Allah Khan, summarized in Persian the Turki translation, and he sent them to C.T. Metcalfe, secretary of the government's political department on 6th May, 1823. Csoma's new copy and Latin translation of the Russian original posted on 22nd September,

1822 was therefore a repeat exercise which confirmed the previous communications. They reached the government in Calcutta at the same time as the earlier contributions, i.e. as late as October 1823.

The Hungarian scholar could take no advantage of these measures when he arrived at the garrison of Sabathu on 20 November, 1824. There he was detained, asked to produce detailed reports on himself and his projects and cleared only after that ordeal. Curiously enough, the documents at our disposal do not mention or at all allude to Moorcroft's letters involved but through an official report by W. Murray they make a case of the Latin translation.

Csoma's letter of 30 November, 1835 to J. Prinsep shows that the scholar believed he was received with some suspicion by the Authorities in the Upper Provinces but he did not spell out what he thought he had been suspected of. The official records in our possession give no hint at his being taken for a Russian spy. Nevertheless, Reginald Heber, the Anglican bishop of Calcutta, did not trust him, referring to him 'in one of his letters, as a person "calling himself a Transylvanian, but who is shrewdly suspected of being a Russian spy." We have no clue to the basis of the allegation and therefore ignore whether it had anything to do with Csoma's Latin translation from the Russian. *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India & Its Dependencies*, which raised this issue three years after the Right Reverend's death, qualified the accusation as "one of those hastily-written passages whose maturer knowledge and experience would have induced the bishop to expunge". The prejudice, however, must have been

considerable in view of the status and influence of the prelate, who was vice-president of the Asiatic Society in 1825 and carried much weight with that institution. It is presumed that it deeply hurt the Hungarian who had enjoyed the confidence of such a resolute enemy of Russian imperialism as Moorcroft and who could expect a much better treatment than he received at his first personal contacts with the British-Indian authorities.

ANNEX 1 : The texts

My dear Fraser—

Three days ago my Agents returned from Yarkund with answers from the Chinese Authorities unfavorable to my wishes but more explanatory than on such a result was expected-The objects for which I have been struggling were a participation for Britain in a lucrative commerce and the facility of conveying Toorkee and Kalmak horses to Hindostan.—

To engross the former Russia had made extraordinary efforts and within the last year has prosecuted the design with great activity, energy and effect-But as far as I can judge from the evidence taken before a Committee of the House of Lords on the commercial relations of Russia with China the line in question is wholly unknown to British commodities and may therefore be supposed to possess little importance.

Within a few years, however, it may not be improbable that its political as well as its commercial value will be differently appreciated by the British Government-In respect to the second, the horses in question are distinguished neither by the

beauty of their exterior nor by their speed-They are possessed, however, of a spread and of a strength of frame combined with a hardiness of constitution and other peculiarities which fit them particularly well for Parent Stock-Added to these qualities their price is very low, they are procurable in great numbers and the road is perfectly safe-Had my points been wholly carried through these horses and the employment of English and of Arabian stallions British India would have speedily become independant as to a sufficient amount for every department of the Army-Under circumstances it is somewhat difficult to look back with calmness on the cause of my failure but willing to hope that I am neither querulous nor vindicative I shall pass over the odious subject with the consolation of no exertion on my part having been neglected-But though failed it might not be concluded that I am dispirited, on the contrary, the severity of the disappointment spurs me on the renewed efforts for attaining the same objects by a different road, and having already hired sixty horses I shall be in progress towards Kashmeer within the next fortnight-in that province I shall hope to receive the articles deposited at Delhi not being aware of the existence of any reasonable cause for their being with-held. Good grounds exist for believing that in Kabool much of accommodation will be afforded to my views and the only difficulty of considerable magnitude to be soucious consists in the temper of the Bokhara Monarch wayward and suspicious as it is known to be-The more than presumed views of Russia on Toorkistan, with the relative position of His Imperial Majesty and of the Ottoman Power square so remarkably well with the reports and prediction now current in Central Asia as to render the approach of any European Power humble his

occupations or his talents on object of suspicion-The king of Bokhara labors under a surgical complaint which has forced the efforts of the professional's assistance hitherto directed to its removal. And on this point hangs my hope of admission in the Royal presence-The practice of Medicine in Bokhara is somewhat ticklish there being a responsibility attached in the treatment of a patient which if applied Europe might have no small influence in thriving the Schools of Medicine-Bokhara had the honor of giving birth to Boo Ulee Seena the Avicenna [Abu/ibn-Sina, 980-1037] of our Authors, but if I am rightly informed there is now scarcely a single Physician in that City-In consequence of your letter from Hindostan I hoped ere this to have had the pleasure of hearing from you and am not a little discontented by the delayed return of a Kasid despatched to Delhi in the early part of May-I beg my regards to Mr. Ross and am, my dear Fraser yours sincerely-W. M. Leh, Sept. 12, 1822.

From the report of a person, who has reached me from Meshed vers [via?] Bokhara, I am led to think that your Brother did not visit the latter City-I hope your last accounts of him were satisfactory.

Leh September 14, 1822

My dear Sir !

My disappointment in not having the pleasure of seeing you at Leh is not trifling as independant of the personal gratification thence resulting the journey would have been the means of

effecting an easy intercourse little subject to subsequent interruption. As servants we are bound to obey the orders of our superiors, and we have each done as much as in our respective opinions promised to conduce to public benefit.

If you have any Vaccine Matter which can be depended upon I wish you would be so kind as to transmit some with due precautions to Capt. Murray informing that Gentleman of the contents and my wish to receive it.

Believe me

My dear Sir,
Sincerely yours,
William Moorcroft

Leh Sept. 14, 1822
J.G. Gerard Esq. & &
Sabathoo.

My dear Sir!

Your disappointment was equalled by mine on finding my friend returning alone and on public as well as on private grounds I consider the circumstance with regret-

Out of justice to Capt. Kennedy I think it right to endeavour to remove the impression of his having thrown any difficulty in the way of your advance by observing that in a postscript to a letter of the 22d July he stated that he conceived you would soon pay a visit to me at Leh [.] whatever obstacle has occurred must therefore have arisen in some other quarters-As

I am about to proceed in the course of the next fortnight to Kashmeer I shall there be able to form more correct notions of the shawlwool trade in general and of the influence of the deportation complained of-Accept my best thanks for the loan of the Papers which are herewith returned-With best wishes for your health and prosperity, I am, my dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

William Moorcroft

Leh Sept. 14, 1822

My dear Sir!

The answers of the Chinese Authorities are unfavorable to my applications and I am therefore preparing to go to Kashmeer-Certain articles of value expected from Calcutta by the Way of Subathoo being late in coming to hand, a servant has been despatched to the latter station there to wait their arrival until the 21st current at which time he must return by positive order whether they be arrived or not-Here contingencies present themselves-These articles parcels may have arrived, and having been carried by him towards Leh an untimely fall of snow may bar his further advance as happened last year, in which case he will return to Subathoo and proceed to you under the hope that you will be kind enough to take the necessary measures for his journeying to Kashmeer accompanied by a person who shall be paid in the manner you may be pleased to indicate-The chance, however, of this being stopped by the snow is it is presumed but small considering the vast quantity that fell last year and two greatly snowy years seldom occur in immediate succession-Or it may happen that

after the departure of my servant from Subathoo the parcel in question may reach the station in which case I have requested Capt. Kennedy to oblige me by forwarding it in safe charge to you with the expectation that you will have the goodness to cause it to be transmitted to me in Kashmeer by two special messengers and should both my Companion and myself have departed from that Province, it will be better that the parcel be returned to you than the risk of it being lost be incurred-Unless indeed the messengers be instructed to proceed to Peshour [?] with it to me, but in the latter event, more money should be furnished to them, and for their expenses I will return you a Draught on Mr. Fraser-All the contingencies have I conceive[d] been brought under your notice, but the latter seems little preferable through my being disposed to remain in Kashmeer until I can prosecute my journey, without delay from the snows beyond Bamean-There were two Telescopes sent to Raja Sunchar Chund from Calcutta above a year ago by mistake-These I am anxious to receive and from the wish I have expressed to Capt. Kennedy on this point I may willing to hope that they may accompany the present, or the articles from Dehli [Delhi]-Of the latter, however, I have heard nothing in reply to my application, nor of the Kasid despatched by me to that City in the month of May last-Whether the Kasid has been detained by the rains or by the disturbances said to have existed between the British Government and Raja Runjeet Singh-In respect to the latter a report has reached me that Runjeet Singh sent a force across the Sutlej to take possession of certain forts on the left bank belonging to his mother-in-law Ranee Suddha Kooi.. [?] [=Sada Kaur] and which was effected but that the latter were dispossessed by a British military force acting under your orders-All this seems not

improbable, it is added, however, that Runjeet Singh has not given the leave of absence to his Army usual during the rainy season, but has been occupied in levying an accession [?] to his military force and these reported facts are assumed as indications of a disposition hostile to the British Power-The whole of the latter is disbelieved by me as entirely opposed to the character and to the interests of the Singh Chief. The effervescence of his pride has been seen to subside quite as rapidly as it was evolved assuming rather the effusion of childish vanity than the feelings of a high mind-Besides the Singh cannot be so much exalted by the success of [2x] his operations such as they have been, or by the contemplation of his wealth as to be blind to the causes which have procured them or to the dangers of his situation-He cannot fail to know that the names of his friends might be inserted within a few lines but that those of his enemies might fill volumes-That many of the principal chiefs of his own caste pent for an opportunity to become temporarily independent of his rule.-It cannot be unknown to him that he must have disgusted his wisest best and most attached counsellor, that the whole of the Moossulman population of the plain would rise in almost simultaneous operations as soon as they should see the British standard unfurled in the Punjab and he must be equally well apprised that there is not a Hill Chief from the Sutlej to Kishtwar who would not immediately draw the sword against him. With the British in front, Mohammed Azim Kaan [?] in the rear the Juns [Juts?] on the right and the Hill Chiefs on the left flank and with insurrection raging in almost every Doab it is not easy to conceive how he could avoid almost immediate destruction in the field-And in his forts no better prospect is presented except perhaps in Kangra, which however, is not

now what it was in the days of Jeehangeer-To fill the ditch of Gobend Gurh [Gobindgarh] with water would be no more easy task and when filled the subsequent settling of its loose sandy soil acted upon by the pressure of the massive wall is more likely to bring down the revêment than to contribute to its defence ability [?]; its construction is defective and the faults of its defence will not probably be ascertained by the founder till too late to remedy their repercussions. Miserable indeed would be the condition of Lahore were the Raja depending upon its wall its ditch and its outworks to expose it to a fire-for many of the houses are so much out of the perpendicular that they would fall from the axial concussion produced by the first discharge of heavy artillery, and choke up the narrow streets and the building of the wall though more lineal is extremely unsound-Messrs Allard and Ventura, if consulted, would probably point out the defects of the works intended to defend the gates, but whether they would be permitted to endeavour to remedy is not equally clear from doubts that would be entertained of the candor of the advice-I am willing to hope that, however, Runjeet may be misled by a spirit of avarice or of pride he will not be tempted to quarrel with a Power who has been his best Ally and of whom the non-interference has mainly enabled him to make his best acquisitions-And in part I feel so much confidence from some knowledge of the Raja's character that affairs will be amiably arranged as to proceed with preparations for my journey to Kashmeer-The Vaccine Matter sent to me from the lower Provinces has unfortunately proved inert-I have written to Mr. Gerard at Subathoo to request that he would have the goodness to forward some Matter on which he could depend to you with my address-If the Surgeon of your Station could

favor me with a supply it would really confer a great obligation as the small pox sometimes commits great ravages in these regions and the Vaccine has not yet been introduced-Believe me my dear

Sir, very sincerely yours-

William Moorcroft

To Captn. Murray

Leh, Sept. 11, 1822

My dear Kennedy-

Your letter of the 23d of May was forwarded to me at Dras and that of the 22d and that 23d July given to me by my friend Trebeck three days ago-The first messenger received 14 Rs for his trouble-It is matter of much regret that no Gentleman of your Station returned with my friend, this measure being intended as introduction to a communication betwixt Europeans and the inhabitants of Ladakh after my departure in which it could scarcely have failed-Two days ago my messengers arrived from Yarkund with answers from the Chinese Authorities unfavorable to my application-In consequence of this refusal I shall depart for Kashmeer in fifteen days, but my friend will remain at this place until the 10th of November in expectation of Gholam Hyder with the Guard and with the pearls-The latter received positive orders from Mr. Trebeck to leave Subathoo on the 28th of this month in his return to Leh should the articles expected not have arrived before that period-In the event of these things coming to your hands subsequently to his departure, pray oblige me by forwarding them under safe conduct to Captn Murray at

Ludeehana to be transmitted by that Gentleman to me at Kashmeer in the mode best suited to ensure their arrival-With Maha Raja Sunchar Chund are two Telescopes which intended for me were sent to him by mistake-Of these we are much in want, and you would oblige me if you could cause them to be forwarded to Captn Murray for transmission along with the Pearls (or with articles expected from Dehli [Delhi] or alone, as may seem best) I wrote to Mr. Gerard the Surgeon on this subject but it has been perhaps escaped his recollection-I know not whether I can at all gratify the Marquis of Londonderry's taste as a Botanist but I dare almost promise to give him pleasure as a Patriot and an Agriculturist by affording to His Lordship the means of bestowing on Ireland (some agricultural gifts as) a wheat, which according to my view of the subject is more valuable than anything known in Europe, and also some varieties of Barley of which for meal and for malt are, I apprehend, superior to any cultivated in the British Isles-And the whole are apparently much more productive than our Barley-But perhaps the most valuable acquisition is the Prangos, a food for sheep, on which I may have disserted [? discussed?] too largely in a letter to the secretary of the Board of Agriculture, and to which I beg leave to refer His Lordship if he can find time or have patience to wade through its voluminous contents-There will be also other vegetables and fruits perhaps of minor importance yet as I conceive each in its way useful-

I think I may promise to the Marchioness a shrub and a tree of which the former is not a little conspicuous for the modest absence of its flowers and the latter for the beauty of its foliage and the delightful fragrance of its flower and forbearing. Also

a Drupe [Drape ?] of no small value to the cottages[?] Of minerals, I dare to say little because I should require a caravan for the transport of the collection and because my journey is of such a nature in these countries [?] as connected with the qualities attributed to Europeans with respect to metallurgy might involve us in adventure not quite desirable-I fear the Russian Ambassador has anticipated me in acquiring the medals which may throw light on the Bactrian Dynasty, and this disappointment in the first harvest as well as our refuge in Toorkistan may be attributed to the result of the kindness of the Great Khan [?], who has so much facilitated the advance of our party-I would submit the propriety of an application to Mr Willock at Teheran as Parthian and Grecian medals have been found at Hamadan-However, I will not be inattentive-Give my affectionate regards to your Brother and my thanks for his considerate conduct in communicating news of my welfare-I shall not attempt to express my sense of your conduct, but am yours most sincerely.

William Moorcroft

Leh, Sept. 14, 1822-

The preceding meant as a duplicate of the letter previously despatched to your address-In addition to the above I have to observe that if the Guard does not return with Ghoolam Hyder it will be too late to make the attempt and unless Mr. Trebeck or myself be at Leh the measure would not be advisable as different of language customs and might prove involving Mr. Trebeck provided for the arrival of the Pearls up to the 20th instant but it is possible that they may not reach Subathoo till

after that date-Now in this sort, I shall be glad if you will cause them to be conveyed under the charge of three men to Lodeehana to the address of Captn. Murray-I have requested this Gentleman to oblige me by causing them to be transmitted to me in Kashmeer.

It is very unlikely that snow will fall this year as early as it did last year, but as such an event is in the chapter of accidents it becomes expedient to provide against its effects in preventing the advance of Ghoolam Hyder to Leh-In this case he is directed to return to Subathoo to receive orders from you to proceed to Lodeehana in his way to Kashmeer in charge of the Pearls, or not as may happen through these having arrived in time or through having been previously despatched-Should it unfortunately happen that Ghoolam Hyder be compelled to return to Subathoo, it will be well to sell all the articles required from them [?] except the shirts. You will be aware that the Muskets could not be forwarded to Kashmeer by the way of Lodeehana without exciting curiosity and explanation which might in a certain degree prove involving-And I trust you will give me full credit when I assure you that nothing could be more painful to me than in any way to be the cause of injuring a friend. Some strange notion thus got afloat regarding my intentions.

You allude to my return-Under a conception that perhaps the Government might think my return on a view I presented advisable, I confidentially communicated my willingness but on an understanding that I was to come back with all possible speed to resume this journey for no consideration would induce me to give it up until I should be thoroughly convinced

that the attainment of its objects is impracticable, which at present is so far from being the case that I think myself merely assured of success-So that if I have an opportunity for personally thanking you for your kindness this is not likely to happen till after the lapse of 10 or 20 months. My friend who entertains the same feeling in regard to your friendly exertions as myself presents his best regards-If there had been any means of conveying to me the Vaccine virus I should be glad to receive it through Captn. Murray-

WM-

To Capt. C. P. Kennedy

Command. G at Subathu

ANNEX 2 : Complementary material

Account of Ghulam [Ghulam/Gholam/Gholaum] Hyder [Khan]'s Errand

...After staying two months at Dhunkur Peetee, Mr. Trebeck returned to Ludak, and Gholaum Hyder Khan returned again to Subathoo, with letters from Mr. Trebeck to Captain Kennedy, and sent by him a draft for Rs. 400 to buy sundry supplies; he also stated to Captain Kennedy there was a box of pearls coming from Delhi, sent by Mr. Palmer, which he requested him to give in charge of Gholaum Hyder Khan. The latter was obliged to halt twenty-two days again, and Captain Kennedy gave him the box of pearls, valued in Calcutta at Rs. 10,000. He also gave him some muskets, as many as two porters could carry, and two boxes of ball-cartridges; these

were carried on four men, and he hired twelve others for sundry articles of supplies. Gholaum Hyder Khan proceeded by a nearer route, called Babey, to Peen; this was a nearer route, but much covered with snow. From thence to Dhunkur; he was obliged to halt fifteen days there, and joined a party of Nono Akbur's going to Ludak. On his arrival, he found that Mr. Trebeck, who had waited for him for some time, had left Ludak five days previous to his arrival, and that Mr. Moorcroft had proceeded on the route to Cashmeer two months before, leaving Mr. Trebeck to wait his arrival; but the winter setting in, he set off without him. Gholaum Hyder Khan was obliged to halt fifteen days to procure carriage; a man named Hajee Zakur of Bokhara, accompanied him. He marched to Cashmeer by the following route : to Peetouk, three coss; to Neymo, eight coss; to Neeoondlah, six coss; Himmis, nine coss; Khuluchai, ten coss; cross sanga or spar bridge to Lamauri, ten coss; to Khurboo, eight coss; to Pushkoom, eight coss. Here resides a rajah, Momalai Khan, who is a Mussulman, and tributary to Ludak. From hence to Durrauz, in two days of twelve coss each, to Paendurrauz, ten coss. Here it set in to snow violently, and the men who had hired the pack-horses from Ludak ran away with them. It continued to snow for ten days, and all the roads were stopped up, and he was obliged to halt one month. From this village he was obliged to hire ten porters, besides five men to go a-head, with shovels and poles, to clear away the snow in many places. The first day they marched to Mutheain, ten coss, a village; to Meechoai, eight coss, inhabited spot : four coss beyond this place was the boundary of Ludak, and they came to the frontier of Cashmeer. On account of the slipperiness of the ascent, they left the pass to their right hand, and, rolling down

their loads into the bed of a small river, which was frozen, they slid down. One of the party, a Mussulman, was blown down above the pass, and frozen to death, and a Hindoo was frozen to death below. At the foot of the pass below, was a hut covered with snow, the entrance of which they cleared away, and got into it, and remained for the night, and lit a fine blazing fire, as there was plenty of dry fir-wood : the wind blew with such violence, and so piercing cold that, if it had not been for the hut, they would have all perished. This place was four coss in the Cashmeer boundary. Next day, they proceeded to Sonamurrug, a large village, ten coss, and put up in a house. The snow laid on the road all the way. From hence to a spar bridge, over a river, three coss; mostly frozen. They halted at Suddeek Mullick's village, eight coss, beyond the bridge-road, covered with snow all the way. This is a large village, built of timber, the houses two and three stories high. Here the chief of porters resides, who takes hire to Thibet. Next day, to Russool Mullick's village, called Gone, three coss, they halted one day, to get expenses, which not arriving, they moved on to Gundur Bul ké chowkey. Here is a custom-house, and the road becomes a plain. Cross a river several times, over spar bridges : it took him two days going this distance, sixteen coss. In the morning early, he proceeded; passed through Noshira, three coss, and three coss beyond entered the city of Cashmeer, and went to Dillawur Khan's garden, where Mr. Moorcroft had put up in a house that Motee Ram Dewan, viceroy of Cashmeer, had prepared for him, by order of Rajah Runjeet Sing. Here he delivered to Mr. Trebeck the box of pearls, the muskets, the two boxes of ball-cartridges, and all the supplies. [180-181]

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CHAPTER TWO

WILLIAM MOORCROFT'S
PIONEERING MEMORANDUM

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF
BENGAL ON THE LETTERS, WRITING, LANGUAGE
AND CULTURE OF TIBET AND ITS VICINITY

Hodgson's shadow

The reprint in 1991 of W. W. Hunter's *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson British Resident at the Court of Nepal* published in 1896 reopened the question of who first arrived in Buddhist studies in the first half of the 19th century. Its author took a fairly balanced view of Burnouf affirming in Paris B. H. Hodgson's priority, pointing out that the diplomat and Alexander Csoma de Kőrös "were both making similar discoveries in far separated regions of the Himalayas, unknown to each other, during the very same years". He qualified this statement by adding: "The letters of Csoma de Kőrös, published in Dr Duka's *Life*, prove that the discoveries of the two Himalayan scholars were contemporaneous, although Hodgson had the good fortune to communicate his first to the world".

In this paper I am going to challenge this conclusion on two points by drawing attention to an hitherto unpublished and apparently undiscussed major document which proves that, as early as 8 February 1823, William Moorcroft communicated

arrays of fundamental information on the subject with inputs from Csoma de Kőrös to the most prestigious and competent learned society in the field supported by carefully selected and explained samples.² The responsibility for not disclosing this contribution to the public until November 1825 lies with the addressee, H. H. Wilson, the Secretary of the Asiatic Society (ASB). Credit should be given to Géza Bethlenfalvy who criticized Wilson's attitude to Csoma in Hungarian.³

Adding also to the interest of the subject matter is the scathing criticism that Professor Lokesh Chandra levelled against B. H. Hodgson in 1991 for having "misled Buddhist studies for the last 160 years". The terminological misunderstandings which he had introduced into the view of the Buddhist Pantheon had arisen from the confusion of Hindu and Buddhist ideas leading to the "improper imposition of theistic constructs". This had happened because Hodgson had not been able to read and understand the original texts and had therefore relied completely on Nepalese informants like Pandit Amritananda, whom he had questioned in a theistic way, not realizing that his aid had been "conditioned [probably] more by Hindu ideas in general formulations than by complex Buddhist distinctions". Cross-checking such respondents might not have been easy and might have seemed unnecessary, given the coherence of the explanations obtained.⁴

My purpose, however, is not to belittle the merits of B. H. Hodgson, but rather to present W. Moorcroft's memorandum on its own: emphasize its significance as an initial project document intended to spark off the collaboration of The Asiatic Society of Calcutta; indicate its connection with Csoma

Kőrösi; describe its place in the ambitious personal diplomacy of its author; and to track what may be called its sabotage and show, however briefly, the struggle for saving the scheme and avoiding total marginalization by the surviving protagonist.

For putting B. H. Hodgson in the right perspective, suffice it to say at this stage that it was in 1828 that the British official in Kathmandu published his important, first *Notices of the Languages, Literature, and Religion of Nepal and Tibet*. He went from Kumaun to Kathmandu in 1820 as the new assistant of Resident Edward Gardner (appointed there after the ratification of the Treaty of Segauli), was brought into the Foreign Office, Calcutta, as acting Deputy-Secretary in the Persian Department in November 1822, but being unable to bear the local climate, returned to the Nepalese capital at the beginning of 1824 to assume the lack-lustre charge of the post-office. Fortunately enough, the following year he could be re-appointed assistant-resident and, in 1829, acting resident [practically confined to his residency through respect of the restrictions of an unfriendly country]. It was in December 1824 that he submitted to the ASB the memorandum in which he set forth the prospects of new discoveries available through Tibetan sources. This was how his formidable collection and much appreciated worldwide dissemination of Himalayan texts started, accompanied by researches in Buddhism. Through his scientific pursuits he escaped from the idleness concomitant with his special diplomatic position into a useful and intellectually rewarding occupation.

Moorcroft's memorandum

Moorcroft's seminal letter preceded Hodgson's by almost two years. It was an overview of the writing, language and culture

of Tibet in their interaction with neighbours. It took the guise of a long [21-page large size] covering letter for “alphabetical specimens”. To start with, it provided explanations for the enclosed two sets of samples, going into orthographic and orthoepic details of Tibetan. Then it tried to give a further idea of that language by featuring its grammar. At the end, it broadened its linguistic scope to embrace aspects of history and culture.

The “alphabetical specimens” of scripts encountered in Tibet seem to comprise two sets. One seems to include ten Tibetan types of script, Sanskrit, two types of Hindustani and Hor characters. The other displays three varieties of [Tibetan] Lantsa, 19 other scripts and examples of Chinese transliteration by Tibetans “that may have not fallen under the notice of Anglo-Orientalists”. The drafts mention “specimens of combinations of [...] varieties of [...] letters [...] in repetitions of the same sentence”, which runs: “*Chog-gee pul ldun lama tum-pa, / rik-dzin tse-wung norpoo yup stre / zhup-la chag tsul-lo*”. Marked A, the varieties concerned are (1) of the Lantsa character, (2) a series of numerals also of Lantsa with the addition of Gyatosee and (3) yet “another variety of Lantsa to which is subjoined the Hor or Tartaric Alphabet in the order of the Oochun character with some difference in the application of the vowel signs”.

The discussion of the Tibetan alphabet focuses on the association of consonants with vowels and on their markings. It is based expressedly on Father Georgi's 18th century *Alphabetum Tibetanum* so closely that it cannot be understood without that monumental tome. Another authority

exploited by the paper is Dr Gilchrist with his Orthographical and Orthoepical system. (Lesser references include Fry's *Pantographea*, Bayer's work on "fragments of the Kaghyoor found near the Upper Irtysh", Dr Hyde's *Hist. Relig. Antiqua Pers. Medi et Partherum*, Delacroix-not consulted directly – and P.C. Lévesque's *Histoire de Russie*.)

Information on Tibetan grammar bears on the article, the noun, the personal pronouns and the reciprocal or compound personal pronouns. The latter three are declined on the Latin model of five cases singular and plural (i.e., nominative, genitive, dative, accusative and ablative).

The final part depicts Tibet as a peaceful, tolerant country offering "a secure asylum to refugees of different religious persuasions at different periods" and becoming, through its store of books, the historical repository "of the rise and progress of religion itself as well as of its dogmas and its ordinances". Its inhabitants accumulated such a knowledge of history and probably of medicine (going back to the very early ages of Christianity and perhaps beyond) that it "would surprise the learned in Europe". Their proficiency in sciences, their artistry reached in drawing, painting, architecture and sculpture all "may challenge some claim to merit". British research could derive valuable aids from the peculiar treasures of the land to the promotion and diffusion of science and outcompete Russia in her drive for primacy in this area.

It is worth echoing the emphasis in the write-up on "The Kanyoor or Kaghyoor a book found in all the principal Monasteries [which] consists of a hundred and eight folio

volumes [etc.]”, on the book’s first sentence : “In the language of India, in the language of Pot [Tibut]” and on the learned elite’s familiarity with Sanskrit in Tibet. Moorcroft also suggested a relationship between Shamanism and Lamaism and hinted at similarities between Buddhism and Jainism.

Hints at Csoma

Another notable feature of the report is its special interest in Hor with its race of Tartars. Most probably this reflects the preoccupation of its co-author as does the following : “But the greatest treasures are expected in respect to the latter times of the Parthian Empire, to the Kingdom of Bactria, and to the former connection of China with Egypt to the migrations of the Scythians and perhaps more especially to the History of the Iegors interesting in many accounts but particularly through its bearing upon Nations now naturalized in Europe”. Called “assistance from a source far more competent” [than me], the prompter was later identified by H. H. Wilson as Csoma Kőrösi.⁵

What was the point of submitting such a report to the ASB? It is not stated in the letter. The fifth paragraph speaks, however, of “anticipating disappointment in the expectations of the Society from the scantiness of the materials now submitted”, which may imply an understanding on Moorcroft supplying a second, more comprehensive survey. Details on difficulties in obtaining local books and drawings may look like excuses for not quite fulfilling a mission or keeping a promise. But they can also be taken for facets of mannerism. Was the letter meant to be published? As it stands, it seems hardly suitable for that. Its broad geographic scope and vague time

span are not brought explicitly into relation with its sharp linguistic focus on Tibetan, as the relationship between the samples of non-Tibetan and Tibetan scripts is left undetermined. The discussion of the complicated Tibetan writing and primary rules of pronunciation and of grammar can hardly be digested without the accompanying samples and the knowledge of the *Alphabetum Tibetanum* [written in Latin]. The overview, basically in praise of Tibetan culture, is chequered by digressions, estimates of reward for prospective researchers and by allusive political exhortations. Yet there was a precedent establishing that Moorcroft's "rambling" notes or journal had been processed into an article by others, probably by the addressee of the paper under discussion himself.⁶ And short of being printed, a document could be read at meetings, [e. g., at the monthly meeting of the members of the ASB], or aired, as often it was, by gossip and circulation among those who might be concerned.⁷

The significance of the memorandum as a preamble to, or basis for an ambitious programme and the purpose of its writer to arouse curiosity and create awareness in an institution susceptible to be interested in joining forces is clarified by Moorcroft's correspondence shortly in its wake.

Under this head, the most important piece of evidence is the letter written to the secretary of the Political Department, George Swinton, on 24 March, 1823.⁸ It is justified by its author by the possibility of his "experiencing disasters which might preclude the conveyance of farther intelligence". It opens with a reference to a letter to the Secretary of the Asiatic Society in which "mention was made by me generally of an arrangement determined upon for the purpose of procuring to

Europeans a knowledge of the language and of the lit[e]rature of Tibut and of Tangoot” [the two Russian targets specified by the quoted Lévesque] and positions the Society as an instance “from whom the Europeans would might expect some efforts towards exposing a country...rendered...accessible to European research by the extension of British rule up to its very border”. It also makes it clear that the scheme will be carried out under contract by a European traveller backed by local protectors and assisted by local informants in his work on written sources available in the region.

Moorcroft introduces this scholar as follows : “Mr. Alexander Csoma of Koros in Transylvania resolved to penetrate the eastern parts of Asia for the laudable and patriotic object of ascertaining, if practicable <...> the truth of the reported former connection of the Hungarians with the natives of the bothi [?] country”. He then describes the Hungarian explorer’s background, charts his itinerary to Leh, locates their encounter on the “western frontier of Ludakh” [i.e., at Dras on 16 July 1822] and takes on himself their journey together back to Leh and afterwards to Kashmir. Mr. Csoma accepted the proposition to devote “a certain portion of his time to obtain an acquaintance with the language and literary treasures of Tibut and Tangoot” [as attested by his Latin postscriptum] because it coincided “with the accomplishment of the aims originally entertained by” him. He believes “that in about twelve months he shall be able to collect materials for a vocabulary in Tibutan and Latin and also for a grammar”. In pursuance of this design he returns without a companion to Ladakh. For his mandate, Moorcroft gave him “letters... along with other requisite of introduction addressed to the minister

and to other officers of the Govt. as also to the Superiors of certain monasteries with whom...[he was]...in terms of intimacy”. Beside a good map of Asia, for his studies, Mr. Csoma requires [the] six books listed [for Mr. Swinton], which Mr. H. H. Wilson would, no doubt, obligingly procure as early as possible against payment by Moorcroft’s agents in Calcutta. However, the interference of the government is solicited “for their being conveyed to Subathoo and for directions to the officer Commanding that Station to cause them to be transmitted to...the Imam of Leh...to be forwarded to the...Monastery of Zangla, in Zanskar by a special messenger”.

Contingency planning

“In the hope that...the Govt. might themselves be disposed to patronize the undertaking”, Moorcroft proposed recruiting a suitable companion to his Hungarian philologist in order to diminish dependence on “the industry, health and facilities of [solely] one individual”. In case of need, he was “ready to advance Five Hundred Rupees to any Individual, who may be selected by Drs. Carey and Marshman” of the missionary Society at Serampore to such an end and enclosed his draft for that amount [to match the summary description of the indispensable profile : “observe the gait of a Fuqueer or persons in indigent circumstances; a mild, conciliating disposition, and the most cautious avoidance of religious controversy”]. Other provisions for contingencies spelled out in the letter include naming his critical contacts with their potential substitutes and the request to transfer the whole communication to his agent in Calcutta if the Government refuses to take any steps in the affair.

Further precautionary measures by Moorcroft involved three more documents extant. First, a note "To the Officer Commanding at Subathoo" [Captain Charles Pratt Kennedy, officially "Commanding the 1st Nasiri Battalion at Subathu and Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent for Sikh and Hill Affairs", according to the *Records of the Delhi Residency and Agency*], recommending Mr. Alexander Csoma, or Sekunder Begh of Transylvania to him, asking for facilitating "the prosecution of his studies, along with some well-informed Lama in the northern part of Besarh" if events in Ladakh interrupt his work there and soliciting to remit to him two hundred rupees if in the absence of Moorcroft the government desired him to proceed to Calcutta. Second, an order to pay to the commanding officer concerned Rs. 200 advanced by him to Mr. Alexander Csoma. Third, a certificate to the Siculo-Hungarian researcher.

Moorcroft and H. H. Wilson were well-known to each other. Their acquaintance must have gone back at least to the early 1800s. During his big journey, the first Englishman to explore Ladakh had addressed various reports to the secretary of the ASB [the latest apparently on 13 July 1820] "On the writing called *Taukîa*".⁹ He might feel that pressure was needed for the endorsement of his plan on studying the Tibetan language and culture. Whatever be the case, he tried to bring into his venture two key officials : George Swinton and C. P. Kennedy. The first was one of Moorcroft's high-flying contacts in the government to whom he was supplying fairly regular reports on a vast range of findings. He could trust the second as a friend stationed "in the field" through whom he was transiting all his English correspondence in that period.¹⁰ It was very much like

him to turn in such a fashion a free-lance initiative into a major international scheme with the participation of private individuals (like Csoma Kőrösi), private institutions (like the ASB), commercially interested private sponsors (like Palmers') and the government. It was also typical of the era in which top officials of the mint were engaged in linguistics and literature, charities or cultural entertainment and the advancement of learning (e.g., H. H. Wilson and James Prinsep), army officers on duty took the liberty of carrying out archeological and epigraphic surveys (e.g., Markham Kittoe) and army doctors undertook geographic surveys and educational planning (e.g., Dr James G. Gerard).

Moorcroft, however, went too far in taking advantage of its formula for imposing a line of foreign policy of his own, with the objective to pre-empt Russia in, and even beyond, the Himalayas. As the extremely high salaried superintendent of the stud of the East India Company (i.e., of the armed forces of British India), he was still on a paid leave trying to buy good breeders when he signed a Commercial Treaty between the ruling authorities of Ladakh and himself (on 4 May 1821 in English, Persian and Tibetan versions). To this agreement he added blueprints for a British protectorate over Ladakh and a threatening "keep-off" letter to the powerful ruler of Jammu-Kashmir, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, an ally under prevailing geopolitical conditions against the former enemy, Nepal. The extravagance of this scheming topped all the abuses of status of the enterprising veterinary, who had taken only a too active interest [without being asked to] in practically everything he came across in his slow progress to Bokhara. It was categorically and openly disavowed at the end of March 1822

by the Governor-General in Council. Moorcroft's other services were also discounted, his drafts [cheques] dishonoured by Major-General Sir David Ochterlony, the victor of the war against the Gurkhas and British Resident at the Court of Delhi¹¹ and his salary discontinued. This loss of credit amidst rebuke was let known to all the insiders in British and Sikh government circles.

Neglect

Is it surprising then that with Moorcroft no longer in favour with the establishment and now on the way of no return, that his memorandum towards opening up Tibetan culture obtained no response? As Csoma Kőrösi reminded in writing H. H. Wilson of this breakdown of communication on 21 August 1829 : "In 1823, in April...being destitute of books, Mr. Moorcroft, on my behalf, had requested you to send me certain necessary works. I have never received any. I was neglected for six years".¹² He plodded on with his project as much as he could until late 1824. Being stuck, he called then on C. P. Kennedy and after repeated shilly-shallying was eventually salvaged, amidst great humiliations, thanks, no doubt, to this influential officer. Another sympathetic and consequential friend of Moorcroft's and C. P. Kennedy's in the Hills, assistant surgeon Dr James G. Gerard also came to his rescue and lobbied for his cause. He had his Tibetan anthology ready in Tibetan by 1825 but his Tibetan dictionary and grammar were not completed before the end of 1830 and could not be published before the end of 1834. It was the government that took over sponsorship of Csoma's endeavour [allocating him Rs. 50 a month from March 1825 on].

As far as we can tell, before the end of Csoma's assignment [in late 1830] H. H. Wilson got in touch with him three times, twice directly and once indirectly. First, on 10 August, 1825 when he sent the scholar "pamphlets which contained some interesting articles on the subject on which [the addressee] was employed". Second, on 14 November, 1826 when he asked Captain C. P. Kennedy to make Csoma check nine words of a competing Tibetan dictionary printed near Calcutta by Drs Carey and Marshman. Third, when on 15 July, 1829 he informed the Tibetologist of his willingness to provide him with books and of the ASB offering him Rs. 50 towards covering his expenses.¹³

The first communication deserves especial attention. Apparently, it comprised Nos. V & VI. released in one issue in Vol. III. of *The Quarterly Oriental Magazine* (January & June, 1825) which provided a rather consequential anonymous "Observations on the Language of Tibet-derived from its most recent cultivators, Klaproth and Remusat" in Paris. Right at the beginning it alleged that "nothing has been effected by our countrymen, whose situation in the vicinity of Himalaya, should afford them ample facilities for the investigation". This ill-founded criticism was made good to some extent, however, by presenting, also anonymously, a track-record of Csoma based on the latter's autobiography (produced, upon government request, for facilitating British clearance one year earlier). Both contributions can be ascribed to the editor, H. H. Wilson, as it is hard to see who else their author could be.¹⁴

Csoma reacted as H. H. Wilson deserved, but not as his own interests would have dictated. He did not conceal before this

prestigious and influential Orientalist authority that “whatever [he] found on the Tibetan language in the Quarterly was very incorrect” and added from Phuktal : “I will not now enumerate the defects. I hope I shall be able to fix a standard for this curious language, founded on indubitable authorities”. He also dismissed the sample of the dictionary rival to his [under preparation] as wrong in five cases out of nine.¹⁵ Three years later [Kanam, 21 August 1829] he refused the ASB's subvention. It was to George Swinton that he presented his works in Calcutta, not to H. H. Wilson. Yet he was forced by still untoward circumstances to comply with the Governor-General's [Lord Amherst's] arrangement for his future : in 1831 he accepted to be placed in the ASB, which, however, did nothing to facilitate the release of his dictionary and grammar.^{16,17}

In the article in which Bernard Le Calloc'h exposes H. H. Wilson's procrastination in the above matter, he ascribes it, on the one hand, to political prudence in view of Moorcroft's unfavourable image, on the other hand to Csoma's incapability to compromise.¹⁸ In the conference commemorating the 150th anniversary of the death of the Hungarian scholar at his birth-place in Transylvania, Dr. Géza Bethlenfalvy, however, stressed the empathy [collusion?] between B. H. Hodgson and the secretary of the ASB. Both relied heavily on the assistance of learned natives without acknowledging their contributions. H. H. Wilson seems to have reserved the same treatment for Csoma whom he apparently disliked, formally disparaged/belittled to the government and employed for annotating the Tibetan manuscripts flowing in from the British resident at Kathmandu. While jeopardizing the printing of Csoma's

dictionary, this service enhanced the international prestige of B. H. Hodgson and provided H. H. Wilson with material to be published as his own. Had not the secretary of the foreign department intervened, Wilson would have taken Csoma's dictionary and grammar with him back to England for publication there [probably under his name].

It may be added to this on the basis of two letters extant [by Csoma from Kanam, 30 December 1829 and 29 April 1830] that Hodgson used the Siculo-Hungarian scholar to cross-check his papers on Tibetan writing, language and literature and brief him on various points in the same areas.¹⁹

Tentative conclusions

Against such a background one may be tempted to conclude that Moorcroft's memorandum of 8 February 1823 was quietly taken over by Wilson, Hodgson, Carey and Marshman. Supplanting the role of Moorcroft, Hodgson supplied the books and general ideas based on them, Carey and Marshman obtained, processed, edited and printed at their press [in 1826] a Tibetan dictionary and grammar compiled and left behind by Frederick C.H.G. Schroeter, a German missionary who had died in 1820, and Wilson acted as an opportunistic coordinator, restricting competition [by Csoma and his lamas] or channelling it to his own use.

Moorcroft has been described in Hungary as an initial sponsor who had sidetracked the Siculo-Hungarian traveller from his drive to seek out the land where his people had come from, by engaging him in Tibetology. So far he has not been given any credit for his own contributions in this area of research.

Annotated references

1. HUNTER, William Wilson 1896. *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson British Resident at the Court of Nepal*. AES Reprint. N. Delhi, 1991. 280, 63-66, 70, 262-66, etc. [particularly Chap.XI.] Hodgson himself went out of his way to establish his priority in the field and diminish the value of contribution by Csoma. See, e. g. "Notices of the Languages, Literature, and Religion of Nepál and Tibet" : "It is needless now to say, how fully these views have been confirmed by the researches of De Körös. It is but justice to myself to add that the real nature of the Kahgyur and Stangyur was expressly stated and proved by me to the Secretary of the Asiatic Society some time before Mr. De Körös's ample revelations were made. Complete copies of both collections have been presented by me to the Hon. East India Company, and others procured for the Asiatic Society, Calcutta; upon the latter Mr. De Körös worked.-Or :...Csoma de Körös's attainments in *Tibetan* lore had been comparatively useless"-In *Asiatic Researches*, xvi. 1828, reprinted in *Illustrations of the Literature and Religion of the Buddhists*, Serampore, 1841, reprinted in *Essays on the Languages, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet*, AES reprint, New Delhi, 1991. Part I, 22, 65.
2. OIOC/The British Library, London : (a) MSS. Eur. G. 28, 297-306. In Kaye 955 : "49, ff. 10 : *To the Secretary of the Asiatic Society, Kashmeer, 8 February 1823*....This is...the original received by the Bengal Government." (b) MSS. Eur. D 264, 3-23. In Kaye *cf. supra* 924 : "33x18cm...[Letter Book] N^o 6, February to July, 1823. 1, 3-23 : *To the Secretary, Asiatic Society, Kashmeer, 8 February 1823*. Moorcroft sends specimens of Tibetan alphabets, writing and printing, and gives some grammatical notes.
3. BETHLENFALVY, Géza 1993. "Új levéltári források Kőrösi Csoma indiai útjáról". Fábián, E. (ed.). *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor nyomdokain*. KCsSKME. Kovászna-Csomakőrös. 42-50. [particularly 45.]
4. LOKESH CHANDRA 1991. *Buddhist iconography*. International Academy of Indian Culture & Aditya Prakash New Delhi. 55 : "The history of Buddhist art in India is conditioned by the paradigms

created by Brian Houghton Hodgson (1800-1894) whom Eugene Burnouf called the 'founder of the true study of Buddhism.' 57 : The most serious violations have been the erroneous terms Dhyā ni-Buddha and Dhyāni-Bodhisattva. They have misled Buddhist studies for the last 160 years. 58 : The wrong terminology of Dhyā nī Buddha and Dhyānī Bodhisattva, started by Hodgson in his brilliant simplification of complex Buddhist ideas was fostered by Burnouf through his *Introduction à l'Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien*. The blunder was aggravated when the Five Buddhas were taken as a core element of Buddhism in general and weaned away from the Vajradhātu-maṇḍala to which they belonged...The Tibetan pantheons compel a reconsideration..."

5. KAYE, George Rushby 1937. *India Office Library Catalogue of Manuscripts in European Languages II*. Part II : Minor collections and miscellaneous manuscripts. HMSO. London. 881-962. [particularly 924 on item 345 : "1 : Wilson writes (364, p. 11) 'This must have been Csoma's work chiefly'."]
6. WILSON, Horace Hayman, prepared by, 1841. *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Panjab from 1819 to 1825 by William Moorcroft and George Trebeck*. OUP reprint. Karachi, 1979. [Ixx : "the present Editor...occasionally digested some of Mr. Moorcroft's rambling epistles for the public press of Calcutta, and the use of the Asiatic Society."]
7. Moorcroft's memorandum was eventually read at the ASB at the meeting of 2 November, 1825, after direct contact had been made with Csoma. See NAIR, P. Thankappan 1996. *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society 1871-1832*. III./I. The Asiatic Society : Calcutta. 538.
8. MSS. Eur. G. 28 searchingly reviewed under 357 by Kaye 950-56. "53 : (d) *To George Swinton, Secretary, Political Department, 24 March, 1823....*" The additional three documents by Moorcroft presented in the paper precede the quoted letter to Swinton in the same set. See also (a) DUKA, Theodore M. D. 1885. *Life and works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. London : Trübner/Manjusri

- Publishing House 1972 reprint. N. Delhi. (b) *Records of the Delhi Residency and Agency*. Lahore : Punjab Government Press, 1911. 255-323.
- 9,10,12. KAYE, G. R. op. cit. 952-956 (956 quoting Duka op. cit. 103-104).
11. ALDER, Garry 1985. *Beyond Bokhara. The Life of William Moorcroft Asian Explorer and Pioneer Veterinary Surgeon 1767-1825*. Century : London. 271-72, 281-82.
13. DUKA, T. op. cit. 71-73, 103.
14. *The Quarterly Oriental Magazine, Review, and Register*. Thacker & Co. Calcutta, 1825. III. 5-6. (Jan. & June). 95-103, 160-62. On this source see LE CALLOC'H, Bernard 1991. "Le 'Quarterly Oriental Magazine' de Calcutta et son article 'Langue et littérature du Tibet' de mars 1825. *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hung.* XLV (1), 121-131. Strangely enough, this contribution, which provides an annotated reprint of the note mentioned in the title, has nothing to say on the ambitious "Observations on the Language of Tibet" pinpointed in the present paper, despite the reference made to it in the first sentence of the Calcutta text. It also passes unnoticed the correspondence between Csoma's biography in English supplied in that note and Klaproth's "Voyages de M. Csoma de Kórös dans la Haute Asie" in the *Journal Asiatique* [VIII. 224-27]...*publié par la société Asiatique* in Paris. The parallel is so close that it warrants to consider the French note as an unacknowledged translation of the English one. Both misspell Bethlen College, Zangla and Zanskar by taking them for Dehtlen College, Tangla and Tanskar, respectively, but Klaproth makes N. Enyed precise by writing it correctly in full Nagy Enyed. [Subsequently others converted N. Enyed erroneously into Novo Enyed, as if it had been Slavonic.] H. H. Wilson later used Yangla instead of Zangla [and Duka followed suit], but got Zanskar right. [6]
15. See Kennedy's letter to Wilson. Subathu, 17 January 1827. In DUKA, T., op. cit., 72-73.

16. DUKA, T. op. cit. 112-113. Supporting in more details the tenets of the whole paragraph : DUKA, Tivadar Dr. 1885. *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor dolgozatai*. Buddhista Misszió reprint. Budapest, 1984. 72, 102-06, etc. (On the period 1830-32 in Csoma's life Duka is more explicit in the Hungarian version of his biography than in the English one).
17. See the summary of conditions by H. H. Wilson to the government, Calcutta, 15 July 1831.
18. LE CALLOC'H, Bernard 1991 / 93. "Une curieuse affaire : l'allocation de la Société Asiatique du Bengale à Alexandre Csoma de Kőrös". *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hung.* XLVI (2-3), 289-298. It stresses in Csoma's character "une raideur qu'il tenait à la fois de sa fierté native et du puritanisme calviniste". (p. 297) It implies—without spelling it out—that French traveller Victor Jacquemont could not be wide of the mark when he depicted repeatedly Csoma Kőrösi "roi des originaux" and the like [a sore point for Csoma's Hungarian fans, indeed]. It overlooks the true nature of the behaviour of H. H. Wilson and of his accomplices, as this may be inferred from the data at our disposal.
19. DUKA, T. op.cit. 106-111.

CHAPTER THREE

CSOMA KÖRÖSI'S ZANSKARI GUIDES IN TIBETAN LEARNING [1]

Background

Alexander Csoma Kőrösi published in Calcutta *An Essay towards a Dictionary Tibetan and English, A Grammar of the Tibetan Language in English* and various studies, including abstracts and analyses of the Kanjur (*bKa' 'gyur*) and Tanjur (*bsTan'gyur*). Some works of his, like the *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English vocabulary being an edition and translation of the Mahavyutpatti*, were printed posthumously as late as the 20th century, while some others, like his 'catalogue raisonné' of literature in Tibetan transiting through, or acquired by, the Asiatic Society (ASB) in Calcutta, were not published at all [and may be lost]. He also made diplomatic translations, was asked at least once to act as an interpreter in an important political mission in Bhutan and gave private lessons. Of all these lesser activities, precious little is known. What is certain is his envied reputation of being the only white man in his time in India to read, write, and speak Tibetan and to be truly knowledgeable of the ways of the 'Roof of the World'.

Csoma stands critically apart from previous pioneers in Tibetan studies by the fact that, despite his long formal training in Protestant theology culminating at the University of Göttingen, Lower Saxony, he was not a missionary and that the intellectual tools which he forged with stubborn heroism were intended by him for the general public, irrespective of their further use.

He also differed markedly from celebrated contemporary colleagues and rivals like H. H. Wilson and B. H. Hodgson, who took advantage of their overwhelming financial, civil and social superiority over him. Unlike them, he learned in the field the language of his speciality thoroughly and acknowledged publicly his indebtedness to his teachers and helpers. Thus, in the original title of his 'Tibetan-English Dictionary', he specified that his compilation had been "prepared, with the assistance of Bandé Sangs-Rgyas phun-tshogs, a learned láma of Zangskár, during a residence at Kanam, in the Himálaya Mountains, on the confines of India and Tibet. 1827-1830". Clearly, he was an 'homme du terrain'. As a 'Curator of the Buddha', i.e., one of those figures who played an important role in the creation and maintenance of Buddhism as an object of study and scholarly inquiry in the West, he distinguished himself by obtaining his insight into that teaching according to lamaistic rules.²

Since then, hagiography has described him as a secluded ascetic, who, however sidetracked, had never given up the fantastic idea of his youth to seek out in Central Asia the ancient homeland of his proudly assumed Siculo-Hungarian stock of Transylvania (now Romania).

Successors to his researches on the Indian borders of Tibet took a more appropriate view of his personality and achievements. This is particularly true of the ecumenical-minded German Protestant clergymen of the Moravian Church ('Die Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine' / 'Brüder-Unität') in their Transhimalayan outposts. A. H. Francke among them had raised the issue in 1926 and went back to it two years later in the *Ungarische Jahrbücher* in connection with two texts kept at Dzongkhul (rDzong khul or Rjon khul) Monastery, viz. an alleged diary of a monk mentioning Csoma, and a corpus of answers set out in writing by Kunga Choleg Dorje (Kund dgah chos legs rdo rje) in Naropa's big cave at Dzongkhul in reply to Alexander from Europe (Rgya gar rum yul). Thereby he triggered off a chain reaction in Hungary which led eventually to three publications in 1976, including the *Tibetan compedia written for Csoma de Kőrös by the lamas of Zans-dkar*.

This is the authoritative 'full' edition of the so-called 'Alexander Books', i.e., MSS answering sets of specific questions put to their authors by Csoma. (Following Francke : "von Alexander Csoma de Körös hervorgerufene tibetische Schrift [en]".) All the contributions were put down in stitched exercise books of the same shape, size (12.5cm ´ 25cm) and quality of paper (English or Kashmiri, quite different from the usual Bothi type). The notebooks had presumably been given to the authors by the Siculo-Hungarian scholar himself. There are altogether eight such booklets devoted to discussions on five subject matters by three lamas : Sangye Puntsog (Sans rgyas phun tshog), Kunga Choleg (Kun dgah chos legs) and Tsultrim Gyatso (Tshul Khrims rgya mthsho).³

Who were these aides – In his most detailed progress report Csoma characterized all three of them.

The authors of the ‘Alexander Books’

In Csoma’s letters his guru [Sangye Puntsog born ca. 1774] is called simply the Lama or later the Zangla Lama. He was approximately 52 years of age. About twenty years earlier he had spent six years visiting many parts of Tibet, Tashilhunpo, Lhasa, Bhutan etc. and also Nepal. He did not reside in any monastery having married the widow of the Raja of Zangla around the age of 40. He acted as the chief physician of Ladakh and sometimes also as the chief government secretary taking care of correspondence with Tashilhunpo and Lhasa. Medicine, astronomy and astrology were his professions. Being familiar with the whole system of Tibetan Buddhism, he had a thorough knowledge of the contents of its books. He was well versed in the customs, manners, economy and the polite language used among the nobility and in the sacred volumes and knew how to speak respectfully to superiors (which means he was cultured). He wrote very well both the capital and the small characters, was acquainted with the grammatical structure of Tibetan and had a good experience in arithmetic, rhetoric, poetry and dialectic. The Lama was also quite conversant with the geography and the history of Tibet and its dependencies.⁴

Meeting him in 1828 at Kanum, Kinnaur, Dr. J. G. Gerard described him as follows : “The Lama is a man of vast acquirements, strangely disguised under modest confidence of superiority, the mildest and most assuming address, and a countenance seldom disturbed by a smile”.⁵

The Scottish physician and the Zanskari amchi seemed to entertain friendly relations. The latter wrote to his European colleague (unaware of his death) in 1835 informing him of the advance of Sikh troops to Leh, of a battle between the invaders and the Ladakhis with heavy losses for the locals and of a Sikh demand for a tribute (Nuzzaranah <Nuzzer) of Rs. 50,000 per annum, telling him about his employment as instructor of the Rajah's son, inquiring about Csoma, inviting Dr. Gerard to Leh, and requesting him to send some English broadcloth, chintz or "anything pretty amounting to 1.000 Rs" as well as vaccine matter and medicines.⁶

According to the lonpo of Karsha, Sonam Wangchug (Bsod nams dban phyug), who claims to be a descendent of Sangye Puntsog, Csoma's guru was a Dukpa Kargyud ('Brug pa bKa' rgyud) monk trained at Dzongkhul Gonpa (rDzong khul dGon pa) but attesting strong Nyima (rNying ma) affinities, an interest unique in his family. [Unlike this ancestor of his, the headman himself is now a Gelugpa (dGe lugs pa) lama.] His family possessed valuable properties at Testa (sTe sTa on the Kargyak, not far from Purne/Pur na), at Karsha (dKar sha, near Padum/dPal gTum, etc., on the other side of the river), and at Dankar (Brang dkar, close to Ating and Dzongkhul).

The second helper, a relative and friend of this Lama, enjoyed great reputation.⁷ As already mentioned in connection with A. H. Francke's philological discoveries, he identified himself in his tilen (dris lan) prepared for Csoma as Kunga Choleg Dorje. He was a [spiritual?] grandson of Mahasiddha Dubchen Nawang Tsering (Grub chen ngag dBang Tshe ring, 'Khrul Zig Rin po che, 1717-94) and the [spiritual?] son of, and heir to, the great yogi, poet and painter, Zadpa Dorje

(Bzad pa rdo rje or Tsultrim Djung ne (Tshul khrim s 'byung gnas, 1745-1816), the head lama of Dzongkhul Gonpa. His handwriting and chorten (mChot rten) art received much praise in his region. He went on pilgrimages to Karja at Lahaul and to various Buddhist holy places of India and Nepal and initiated disciples throughout Ladakh and Lahaul, among whom the foremost was Lama Norbu of Khardong [at the gateway to Nubra]. One beneficiary of his spiritual recommendations was Sangye Puntsog, despite being older. He had married and had two sons, but his wife and children died of smallpox and the abbot did not remarry despite pressure on him to continue his lineage.⁸

Csoma's third invited author was a celebrated doctor of philosophy of 65 years. He had lived for twenty-five years in Lhasa, a detail which suggests a Tibetan origin.⁹ According to Professor Peter Schwieger, Bonn, his colophon identifies him as the rab 'byams pa Tshul khrim s rgya mtsho (+attribute), who is called Rang ldum mkhan (Rang ldum is a monastery in Zangs dkar, mkan po has the meaning of 'abbot'), and who composed his treatise at an (unspecified) date of the (year called) Nyi sgröl byed (that is the 18th year of the 60 years cycle) in the 14th 60-years-cycle (that equals 1824) at his own place (called) gZhi nyi'od at an auspicious day.¹⁰

However, another lead was proposed to me during my visit to Dzongkhul monastery in 1993 when the caretaking lama (chagzot, phyag mDzod) identified Tsultrim Gyatso without the slightest hesitation as the famous 'Tsultim yung tang Karma stanging yab' (sic), in short : lama Karma pa of Kham Province. If this equation is correct, we can know much of the

learned monk from his life story and songs which were published. If it is wrong, the biography is still worthy of consideration because it implicitly poses the problem of possible relations between Csoma on the one hand, and the learned Karma pa and his disciples other than Kunga Choleg, on the other hand. This is why I am summarizing it.

The *Life and Songs* of Lama Karma Tenzing

The manuscript comprising this source was published in Delhi (in 1975?) by Tobdan Tsering (alias 'Ashok'), a Tibetan publisher from Kawring village, Lahaul, who is said to keep a restaurant now at Majnu ka Tilla, near the Ladakh Buddha Vihara, on the northern outskirts of Delhi. It bears the title *Bla ma'i karma'i rnam thar dang mgur 'bum mkha' sbyor dang bces*. So far I have submitted its photocopies to four khenpos [see credits] from whom I obtained the following intelligence.

The document is written in dbu can letters. It is set out in 73 frames of 5 lines each. It seems to be incomplete for two reasons. First, it does not contain such traditional formal parts as the statement of the motivations of writing (bodhicitta) to begin with, followed by the taking of refuge (in guru/s), and a dedication to sentient beings at the end. Second, the biography is too short by common standards. As many words are misspelled, the text is probably a dictation put down by a young, insufficiently trained lama.¹¹ The whole is made up of two parts : the 7 plus-page biography (which ends in the 2nd line of p. 234) and the poems collected by pupils. (The anonymous writer himself said to provide what he could collect.)

The songs are all teachings which aim at absolute truth. They fall into two categories in a mixed order, viz. poems addressed to disciples and spontaneous songs. Their lengths vary from 1-2 lines to 2-3 pages. Their spirit reflects Mahamudra inspiration. Many of them are dedicated to Kun dgah chos legs and the younger son of Drang dkar mgon po [but apparently none to Sangs rgyas phun tshogs].

The life story is adventurous

Beggar Karma bstan 'dzin was born at rDe dge (Khams, Eastern Tibet) in the powerful Klu dgah clan. In the 9th year of his life, he travelled to dBus. He went to the 13th Karma pa sDud 'dul rdo rje in sTod lung Tshur bu [sic; the seat of the Karmapa order], where he became a monk receiving bKa' rgyud teachings, in particular from bKa' rgyud 'Brug pa 'Phrin las shing rta. Subsequently he came in contact with dGe lugs-, rNying ma- and 'Brug pa teachers in dBus and gTsang and travelled to many holy places in Khams, China, dBus, gTsang, Byar, dGa' and Kong, Nepal and sTod (including Mount Kailash and lakes Manasarowar and Rakshas Tal). From mNgah ris Gu she [sic] he went to Gar zha.

Having been attracted by the name, he went to see bla ma bZhad pa rin po che in Zangs dkar whom he met at a Dharma ceremony at rDzong khul under very auspicious circumstances. He studied under him for two years, receiving the complete instructions /guidances (khrid), initiations (dbang) and reading transmissions (lung) of the 'Brug pa dKa' rgyud pa. In the winter he travelled to Jalandha [Jalandhar, Punjab] and especially stayed for two weeks on the great charnel /

cremation ground in rDo bar. Then he returned to rDzong khul and received again teachings from bZhad pa rin po che, e.g., the bSre pho snyan rgyud.

After that he visited teachers in dBus and gTsang, travelled on to bDe chen chos 'khor, where he called on the yongs 'dzin and asked for teachings, then proceeded to Khar chu [sic] in lHo brag. Further he practiced on many charnel grounds in dBus, gTsang, Nepal, mNga' ris, etc.

On his return to Zangs dkar he met his teacher who died afterwards. As all the monks and disciples and especially A yum Tshe ring and Drang dkar mgon po urged him to stay on in rDzong khul, he did so and gave Mahāmudrā instructions to A yum Tshe ring, Ga ga mgon po [sic], 'Phrin las kun dgah chos 'phel, etc. He spent four years in rDzong khul and sTag tshog, etc. Under him the younger son of Drang dkar mgon po, i.e., no no Tshe dbang dpal 'byor, became a monk and received the name Chos dbyings bsTan 'dzin rdo rje. That year he stayed in Yang rdzong bDe chen phug and composed the treatise "Phyag rgya chen po bden gnyis dbyer med kyi bstan bcos" (*The Invisible of True Truth?*). One winter he had gone to Kashmir, visiting Phu la ha ri [one of the holy places of Naropa], and stopped for the year in rDo ma 'bar in Purig. dGul sbi bka 'blon va zir etc. offered him his service and became his patron. The king of Zangs dkar, 'Chi med rnam 'rgyal and his wife etc. asked him for religious instructions. In the summer he regained Zangs dkar. As Dharma was flourishing in Naropa's footsteps, he had many disciples, in particular A yum Shakya cho sgron and chos mzad bDe chen skal bzang and also 'Phags pa sangs rgyas

phun tshogs from Ru sho. His consort was Bunye Dharma. After having worked for many years in rDzong khul, the residence of Naropa, he died there in the 7th month of horse year [1834].

This account is confirmed by the *mKhas grub chen po dpal bzad pa rdo rje rnam thar mgur 'bum ma rig mun sel dran pa'i klo 'phren* produced presumably by the same hand in similar conditions, which was also communicated to me by Lonpo Sonam Wangchug. We have here a learned, mobile and open-minded Karmapa of Khams, who travelled from Central Tibet south-west to Punjab and back, stopping here and there for meditation and receiving teachings. His two-year stay in Zanskar as a disciple of Zadpa rinpoche of Dzongkhul Gonpa determined the rest of his life, for he returned there eventually for good, enjoying great popularity [at least among the local elite] and high status.

Were Karma Tenzing and Tsultrim Gyatso the same person?

We have seen that Zadpa Dorje was also called Tsultrim Djun ne. This example indicates a practice which would permit our lama Tenzing to be also named Tsultrim Gyatso. Yet his biography hardly allows for a stay of 25 years (or for stays making up 25 years) at Lhassa and does not mention any work prepared on Csoma's request. [The 45-page *Dris lan : Grub mthái rgya mtshor 'jug pái gru rdzin* (*Answers to questions : A boat for the voyage to the Ocean of Grub mtha.* (Grub mtha philosophy is one of the Buddhist Commentaries in Sutra) –apparently in reference to Buddha's 84,000 teachings.}]

There is a further discrepancy rendering the equation implausible : Rangdum Gonpa towering at 3,950 m. on a hillock out of the gravelly outwash plain of the Suru River and one of its tributaries north of the Pensi La, is part of the Gelug (dGe lugs pa) network, whereas Dzongkhul Gonpa on the side of the gorge leading down from the Umasi La (5,342 m.) and its monks belong to the Dukpa Kargyud ('Brug pa bKa' rgyud) order.¹² Nevertheless, such a difference would not rule out choosing a Karmapa lama for heading a Gelugpa monastery. Among the four khenpos who helped me with the Bhoti texts discussed, that of the Karmapa's Sherabling is a Sakyapa (Saskya pa) and the guru of the Karmapa one at Tashi Dzong had also been a Sakyapa. We cannot exclude then that the Kham immigrant Karma Tenzing who was temporarily abbot at Dzongkhul acted one time as khenpo at Rangdum.

Whatever be the case, it is certain that in his researches in Zanskar Csoma benefited from the assistance of eminent protagonists of Buddhist learning who made religious knowledge flourish at Dzongkhul and its vicinity in the wake of a Mahasiddha and his versatile yogi son.

Bibliographic references and other notes

1. A revised version of Marczell, P. J. 1999. "Csoma Kórósi's Guides in Tibetan Learning from Rdzong Khul Dgon Pa, Zangs Dkar, with Special Reference to Tshul khrim rgya mtsho". Beek, Martijn van, Bertelsen, Kristoffer Brix and Pedersen, Poul (eds.) *Ladakh : Culture, History, and Development between Himalaya and Karakoram*. Aarhus : Aarhus University Press. 271-83.

Credits :

For their patient help to understand the Tibetan texts discussed in this paper, I wish to thank four abbots in India, viz., The Reverends Losall Tenzing/Sherabling, Kangra, H. P. [interpreter : Sutram, an English monk]; Lobsang/Tashi Jong, Taragarh, Kangra, H. P. [interpreter : Mr. Thupten Jampa, school teacher]; Tenzing Phontsok (with lama Tsultrim Sangpo)/Karma pa International Buddhist Area, New Delhi-16; and Stanzin Dorjay/Rangdum Monastery, Kargil, J&K [interpreter Mr Sonam Dorjay, tourist officer]. I am also very grateful to To lonpo Sonam Wangchug, Karsha and his eldest son Mr. Tondup Namgyal, tourist officer at Padum for their explanations and friendly 'logistic support'. These and other liabilities are also acknowledged in my exposé.

While I was editing the first version of this paper, Professor Peter Schwieger was nice enough to follow up my request and take a look at both Tshul khriṃs rgya mtsho's colophon in Terjék 1976c and lama Karma Tenzing's biography in the hardly legible photocopy of previous photocopies I had supplied him. As a result, he proposed very important corrections to the translation of the former and provided a page by page summary of the latter which enabled me to revise and complete my own compilation, especially with regard to transliterations and a few details. I am pleased to acknowledge this indebtedness to a valuable friend especially because it may lead to further breakthroughs. A visit to SOAS in February 1998 provided the opportunity to ask Professor Philip Denwood to decipher the title on an improved print of p. 232 in Karma bstan 'dzin's life story. Of course, all the errors, which may still remain, are mine.

2. To echo Lopez, Donald S. 1996. *Curators of the Buddha*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press. Chapter 6 : Foreigner at the Lama's Feet.
3. Terjék 1976a : 76, 1976b : 67, 1976c : 7 :

Terjék, József 1976a. *Kőrösi Csoma dokumentumok az Akadémiai Könyvtár gyűjteményeiben*. Budapest : MTAK.

Terjék, József 1976b. *Collection of Tibetan MSS and Xylographs of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. Budapest: MTAK

Terjék, József (ed.) 1976c. *Tibetan Compendia Written for Csoma de Kőrös by the Lamas of Zans-dkar*. New Delhi : Society of Csoma de Kőrös and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. (Sata-Pitaka Series Indo-Asian Literatures Vol. 231.)

4. Duka, Theodore 1972 (1885). *Life and Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. New Delhi : Máñjuśrī. (London : Trübner) [Hereafter abbreviated : D], 42.

5. D 84.

6. East India Co. Board's Coll'n IOR/F/4/1642 No 65650 (1838) : No. 52- No. 2. "Extract Agra Residency Political Proceedings of 3 June 1835". On the word nuzzer, see Yule, Henry & A.C. Burnell 1886. Hobson-Jobson. Bengal Chamber Ed. 1990. Calcutta: Rupa, 633-664.

7. D 46.

8. The main sources for this para are the following. Nawang Tsering on the Mahasiddha, Nawang Tsering and Bethlenfalvy on Bzad pa rdo rje, Nawang Tsering Shakspo and some of his co-authors on Kun dga' chos legs [The latter's informations were corroborated to me orally in 1993 by Lonpo Sonam Wangchug (Bsod nams dbang phyug) at Karsha (dKar sha)]:

Nawang, Tsering 1979. *Buddhism in Ladakh*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.

Bethlenfalvy, Géza 1980. "Bla ma Bzad pa and the Rdzong khul Gompa". *Acta Orientalia Hungarica*, XXXIV. 1-3: 3-6.

Crook, John, and Osmaston, Henry (eds.) 1994. *Himalayan Buddhist Villages*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. (In particular, chapters 14, 18 & 19: Crook, John H. "The History of Zangskar" 435-474; Nawang Tsering Shakspo "Lamas of Zangskar and the Origin of Tibetan Studies in the West" 553-558; and Crook, John, and

Tsering Shakya “Monastic Communities in Zangskar: Location, Function and Organisation” 559-600.) [With these readings one may also recommend Crook, John, and Low, James 1997. *The Yogins of Ladadh*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.]

Dr. Géza Bethlenfalvy presented the biography and songs (rnam thar and mgur ‘bum) of Kun dga’ chos legs in 1997 at the 35th ICANAS in Budapest and again in 1998 at the 18th IATS Seminar on the basis of copies he had obtained from Dzongkhul Gonpa.

9. D 46.

10. Correspondence in September 1997. In the light of this summary, the translation published in Terjék 1976c: 14-15 missed the khenpo (mKhan po) status because of a misunderstanding.

11. Probable mistakes underlined by Professor P. Schwieger which I marked by “[sic]”: sDud=bDud, sTod lung Tshur bu=sTod lung mTshur phu, Gu she=Gu ge?, Khar chu=mKhar chu, Ga ga mgon po= Drang dkar mgon po?]

12. Like the monasteries of Bardan (Bar gDan), Stakrimo (sTag ri mo) and Sani (Sa ni), the latter are affiliated to the rinpoche of the religious centre of Stagna (sTag sNa) in the Indus valley, east of Leh. Locals in its neighbourhood /at Ating/ would stress that they are Lho Buddhists, i.e., followers of the southern subsect of Bhutanese Kargyud lamaism. (On the significance of this distinction in political history, see Bray, John 1997. “Ladakhi and Bhutanese Enclaves in Tibet” in *Recent Research on Ladakh 7*, edited by Thierry Dodin and Heinz Räther. Ulm:Ulmer Kulturanthropologische Schriften, Band 9:90-91.)

There has been a misunderstanding about Dzongkhul’s allegiance under Francke’s influence who presumed the monastery he had never visited to be under Gelug management. His mistake was a result of erroneous extrapolation from the involvement of Ridzong Gonpa (Ri rdzong dGon pa) in the dissemination of copied MSS from Dzongkhul : “Das gleichzeitige Vorkommen von Rirdzong und rDzong-khul in Joseph Gergans Bericht zeigte mir nun, dass es sich bei Csomas Freunden um jene linie von dGelug-pa-Mönchen

handelt, welche auch in bZangla beheimatet sind. rDzong-khul ist wahrscheinlich immer nur als Aussenposten von bZangla angesehen worden; und somit ist Dukas Angabe, dass Csoma in bZangla (richtig für Yangla) in Zangsdkar gelebt habe, nicht ganz zu verwerfen". Francke, A. Hermann 1926. "Neues über Csoma de Kőrös". *Ungarische Jahrbücher*. 6:320-22, 322. The update to this article is : Francke, A. Hermann 1928. "Die Fragen des Alexander". *Ungarische Jahrbücher*. 8:375-77.

Appendix

The 'Alexander Books' : Annotated Bibliographical References.

The concept of 'Questions by Alexander' was introduced in a set of two articles by Francke, as already mentioned.

Alexander is the German equivalent of Sken dher/Sken dhar, whom Tshul khriims rgya mtsho and Kun dgah chos legs mentioned in their respective compendia as the bheg/bhig from Rum/Rgya gar rum yul whose questions they tried to answer. It was this Persian/Arabic/Turkish-like form of his Christian name that Sándor (=Alexander) Csoma Kőrösi (Csoma de Kőrös) used in his Oriental travels. Francke made quite an exulting case out of it by stressing a legendary precedent in the history of Buddhism : the parallel of the Indo-Greek king of India, Milinda (=King Menander, who ruled from 155 to 130? B. C.) asking questions on the philosophy, psychology and ethics of Buddhism from a learned monk called Nagasana. In traditional belief, the result was translated into Pali (probably in the first century B. C.) and is known as the '*Milinda Pañha*'/'*The Questions of Milinda*', Whatever be the origin

of the compilation, it covers most of those questions commonly asked by Westerners and therefore is a good introduction to Buddhism from a Western point of view. [See, for instance : Pesala, Bhikkhu 1991. *The Debate of King Milinda -an Abridgement of the Milinda Pañha*. Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass and also : Narain, A. K.1980 (1957). *The Indo-Greeks*. Delhi : Oxford University Press.]

Francke's publications sparked off consistent research on the matter in Hungary, leading to three basic conclusions, viz.,

1. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences owned a collection of Tibetan blockprints and MSS which Csoma Kőrösi had given to his pupil, the Rev. Solomon Caesar Malan, in 1839 in Calcutta. This collection was donated to the Academy in 1884 through Dr. Theodore Duka.
2. The collection seemed to comprise 36 + 2 catalogue references, of which 13 MSS. The latter consists of five MSS written in dbu med characters (Nos. 1, 2, 5, 7, 9) and eight in dbu can characters (Nos. 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 32).
3. In 1974, the MSS were supposed to include four 'Alexander books' (Nos. 3, 4, 6, 8) addressing five subjects as follows: In 44 ten-line stanzas #3 by Tshul khriims rgya mtsho provides an overview of the ocean of Buddhas's teachings. The untitled #4 by Kun dgah chos legs is divided into six numbered chapters on Buddhist cosmology, the three jewels, Buddha's life, the spread of Buddhist sutras and tantras in India and Tibet, the gist of lam rim and the eight areas of pratimoksa. It

is fairly long (189 stanzas of 7 lines each, spread out in four separate booklets.) The two booklets of #6 contain two separate texts by the same author, Sangs rgyas phun tshog, as attested by the colophon pertaining to both. The first (90 stanzas, 7 lines each) surveys in four parts the eight-branched medical science as set out in the Rgyud bzi (Amrtahridayastanyaguhyopadesatantra). The second (26 stanzas, 7 lines each, including the appendix), supplies a summary of Tibetan time-reckoning and astrological systems mainly on the basis of Suresamati's teachings. #8 gives guidelines on 37 pages to Tibetan correct speech, the correct use of names and stylistics. Although it does not spell out the name of its author and its lines show a European pattern (13 lines per page), it is presented in the same form of stitched booklet and on the same quality of non-Tibetan paper as Nos 3, 4 and 6. For this reason and also because it fits one of Csoma's description of the work done for him by his lama aide, it is also considered as an 'Alexander book' and is attributed to Sangs rgyas phun tshogs.

Thus, we have altogether four or five 'Alexander Books' recognized as such by the scholars of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the number depending solely on whether we regard #6 as one 'book' dealing with two quite different subject matters or prefer viewing it as a reference covering two 'books' [# 6a & # 6b, set out in two booklets; #6a taking one booklet and a half].

We should be aware of two more conjectures in this area, viz..
 1. MS # 32 of the Csoma Collection under review could also

be assumed to be an intellectual tool prepared for Csoma by Sangs rgyas phun tshogs, even if it is set down on Tibetan paper; 2. The collection may well be incomplete.

Two final considerations to conclude the matter. The Collection displays remarkable consistency, as it contains a good number of works recommended or referred to by some others. Scholars have never followed up Francke's somewhat romantic Milinda comparison. The Hungarian specialists showed how far-fetched it had been by pointing out that the *dris lans* aiming at teaching or dispelling doubts are common in Tibetan religious writings, that they were usually included in the collected works of their authors and have often provoked consequential commentaries so much so that they make up a literature of their own. Their genre is represented in the Csoma Collection in Budapest by Nos. 25, 26 & 27.

(The catalogue of the 'Alexander Books' in the Oriental Collection of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is currently being revised.)

[Besides Francke's quoted articles and Terjek 1976b op. cit., the main sources of this review are —

Apor, Éva 1977 "Oriental Collection of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences." *Bulletin of the Csoma de Kőrös Symposium* (ed. Terjék, J[ózsef]). Budapest: MTA, 19-20.

Ligeti, Louis. 1933. "Ouvrages tibétains rédigés à l'usage de Csoma". *T'oung Pao* XXX, 1-2: 26-36. (A somewhat belated reaction to Francke's articles.)

Nagy, Louis J. 1942. "Tibetan Books and Manuscripts of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences". Ligeti, L. (ed.) *Analecta orientalia memoriae Alexandra Csoma de Kőrös dicata*, Budapest: Sumptibus Academiae Litterarum Hungaricae et Societatis A Csoma de Kőrös nominatae, 29-56].

Moorcroft's, for after a call on him at Kanam in Kinnaur in September, 1828, he produced a long eulogy in praise of his heroic character and linguistic achievements.⁴

Sanctions

Dr. Gerard's memorandum was immediately endorsed by the Commanding Officer cum Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent, Sikh and Hill States (Captain C.P. Kennedy) and passed on to his immediate superior (Captain W. Murry) who forwarded it without comment to Fort William, Calcutta, (G. Swinton, Secretary, Political Department) through the Resident in Delhi (C.T. Metcalfe). Although the records of the Bengal Political Consultations kept in England do not contain any entry on the official position taken on this letter, the appeal (copied without date but put through by W. Murray 25 October 1826) which followed it from J.G. Gerard, implies that it was very ill received by the Military Department that decided to remove from Sabathu the overenthusiastic Surgeon. Csoma rejected it out of hand. He blamed his former patron for his excessive confidence in his munshee and stressed that if he was inconsiderate enough to comply with the surgeon's design, he would lose his life in the venture. He also pointed out that the large number of British-Indian government correspondents [agents] in Turkestan made it unnecessary to expose himself to certain and inevitable danger by tracing Moorcroft's progress in those parts and by trying to discover his and his party's relics and effects.⁵

The Scottish doctor seemed to disregard the fact that Moorcroft had been *persona non grata* to General Sir David Ochterlony at least from 1822 on, that his high-handed diplomacy in Ladakh was formally disavowed by the British-Indian Government, his salary suspended by the East India

Company and he himself eventually recalled to India. The British authorities also realised that the jealousy of their "Tibetan neighbours had been excited by the attempts made by British Officers travelling in the Hills to pass the frontier of the British protected territory". In June 1825 they already hesitated for many months before letting Kórösi return to Ladakh and two years later they plainly ordered the Political Assistant at Sabathu "to intimate verbally to all British Officers, Civil and Military, wishing to travel within the Hills, that they are strictly prohibited from attempting to pass beyond the frontier of the protected Territory".⁶

Moreover, J.G. Gerard had asked for a raise in salary not long before his demand for permission to go with Csoma to collect the late Moorcroft's belongings in Afghanistan, and he was imprudent enough to stress in the latter submission that he could be easily replaced in his Punjabi outpost by colleagues on leave. His army employers could be led to believe that he had over-reached himself and they sanctioned his unwanted zeal in Central Asian affairs by transferring him somewhere off the northern borders. The ostracized surgeon "threw himself upon the Compassion and Clemency of his superiors" for avoiding such a punishment. Following the intervention of the Vice-President in Council with the Commander-in-Chief permission was eventually given to restore the status quo ante.⁷

Later developments

The recovery of Moorcroft's 'manuscripts and property' was left to natives. Thanks to Punjabi banker Guru Das Singh at Kabul, batches of papers were retrieved by the spring of 1827 and a 'Muslim agent' returned from there with a few horses and other goods in the same period of time. However, the

veterinary surgeon's printed books together with important maps, accounts and loose papers from the last days were brought back only as late as 1833. They had been channelled to the Asiatic Society of Bengal where they later disappeared.⁸

The rest of J.G. Gerard's unfulfilled ambition of 1826 was realised to some extent in 1832-33 by Lieutenant Alexander Burnes in the frame of a major spy operation covering "Cabool, Tartary and Persia" and also the Indus. The officer took the Surgeon along with him (but not Csoma) from Ludiana and his journey led through the Punjab of Ranjit Singh instead of Ladakh. The travellers visited on their way the graves of both George Trebeck and William Moorcroft (with the tomb of their team-mate Dr. George (William?) Guthrie on the latter's side). Their exploit was told by Burnes in a best-selling travelogue which made him rich and famous, as reflected by eulogies, honorary memberships, medals, a knighthood and the title of CBE, without due credit to the original conceptor. (The same holds true of the model of the 'Sekunder Burnes' "garb" or "gait", Csoma Kőrösi.) Although J.G. Gerard took notes during his trip and "communicated the details of his journey in private and unofficial communications to Sir C.T. Metcalfe and to the Secretary to the Governor-General, as he was not vested with any Political Authority, these documents... [were]... not... brought on the proceedings of Government."⁹

Notes

1. Ben Pol Con 30 June Nos 10-11: BL/IOR/P/244/48.
2. E.g. "... there will be seen, and Savage Nations will not behold it unmoved, there will be seen at the extremities of the World, pious

Travellers enquiring with concern about the fate of their Brothers, of Men and of Deserts, of Bones, of Rocks, and even of barren Lands, there will be seen Men wandering in search of other Men to throw themselves into their arms to succour and to save them”.

3. The records of this episode are kept in the Moorcroft Collection of MSS, OIOC, The British Library, under five different shelf-marks.
4. This was a well-timed intervention enabling Csoma to go to Calcutta with a government stipend at the end of his fieldwork in the Himalayas and eventually publish there the Tibetan dictionary and grammar for which Moorcroft had hired him in 1823. It was addressed to William Fraser but leaked to whoever cared to read it so that versions of it had been published in both learned periodicals and the popular press all over the world. (See Duka, Theodore M.D. 1885. *Life and Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. London: Trübner & Co /Mánjuśrī 1972 reprint, New Delhi./)

Such a pressure was necessary because of H.H Wilson's procrastinations in matters related to Moorcroft and Csoma; moreover, in his semi-official role of government adviser in the Hungarian's very special case, he tended to abuse the financial and administrative dependence of the foreign Tibetologist. (See Marczell, P.J. 1997. "William Moorcroft's Pioneering Memorandum to the Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal on the Letters, Writing, Language and Culture of Tibet and Its Vicinity". In : Thierry Dodin & Heinz Räther eds. *Recent Research on Ladakh* 7. Ulm: UKAS 271-296. Based on less circumstantial evidence, a more outright accusation of Wilson for Csoma's mistreatment had been published in Hungarian by Bethlenfalvy, Géza. 1986. 'Csoma dokumentumok indiai levéltárakban'. *Keletkutatás*. 75-81.)

5. BL/IOR MSS Eur C 951 presented in the English original and Hungarian translation by Bethlenfalvy, Géza 2004. "Moorcroft hátrahagyott írásai és Kőrösi Csoma Sándor". Pál Judit & Sipos, Gábor eds. *Emlékkönyv Csetri Elek születésének nyolcvanadik évfordulójára*. Kolozsvár [Cluj]: EME. 66-71. (For a rejoinder, see Marczell, Péter 2006. Kőrösi Csoma Sándor erélyes puktáli válasza

CHAPTER FIVE

CSOMA KÓRÖSI'S
INTERVENTION BETWEEN
HODGSON AND TURNOUR

The statement to which I wish to draw attention positions Csoma among the highest authorities on the early Buddhism of his time and provides both a clue for the importance of these men in the Hungarian scholar's spiritual world, and gives a valuable insight into the Tibetologist's employment during the least documented and understood period of his life. It has been overlooked by Csoma's biographers despite the fact that it was reprinted at least twice.¹ At the time of its original publication it was praised as a model of genuine philological breakthrough by James Prinsep, one of the most brilliant and versatile students of Indian ancient history and most efficient organizer of Indian historical research. It runs as follows:

“My friend Mr. CSOMA writes from *Titalya* in the *Purniya* district: - “In reference to your and Mr. TURNOUR'S opinion that the original records of the Buddhists in ancient India, were written in the *Mágadhi* dialect, I beg leave to add in support of it, that in the index or register (...*dkar-chhag*) of the *Kahgyur*, it is stated that the *Sútras* in general - i.e., all the works in the *Kahgyur* except the 21 volumes of the *Sher-chhin* and the 22 volumes of the *rGyud* ... class, after the death of SHÁKYA, were first written in the *Sindhu* language

and the *Sher-chhin* and *rGyud* in the Sanskrit: but part of the *rGyud* also in several other corrupt dialects. It is probable that in the seventh century and afterwards, the ancient Buddhistic religion was remodelled and generally written in Sanskrit, before the Tibetans commenced its introduction by translation into their own country.”

This explanation, so simple and so authentic, ought to set the matter at rest, and that in the manner that advocates of either view should most desire, for it shews that both are right!²

Aspects of the debate

The protagonists of the controversy thus settled were two close rivals in scholarship, both enjoying superior social positions and enviable financial resources: Brian H. Hodgson, based in Kathmandu as full Resident of the East India Company in Nepal, and George Turnour, Senior Civil Servant in Ceylon.³ James Prinsep acted as an exceptionally potent catalyst in their scientific confrontation. He added remarks to it not as the Secretary, that is, the actual head of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (ASB), but in an editorial capacity, as it was to him that Hodgson addressed his paper in response to an article of June 1837.⁴ He released the JASB monthly in the name of the ASB at his own expense and under his personal responsibility.⁵ His essay in the June 1837 issue of the JASB marked just one step in the contemporary exploration of the history of Buddhism. It contributed to the ongoing “cross-fertilization” launched and pursued by enterprising, amateur observers and collectors mainly in Nepal, Ceylon and India. Recognizing how tentative their probings were and perceiving much scope for advance, J. Prinsep warned in his footnotes of

giving unconsidered credit to the working assumptions and findings reached in their field and anticipated hosts of new data leading to new concepts and new theories at the expense of old ones.

Hodgson approached the language of the Buddhist religion from a chronological point of view. He distinguished two important stages in its development. On the one hand, the phase of preaching and missionary propagation. On the other hand, that in which the teaching's philosophers had elaborated the speculative principles so as to produce a religion. In his opinion the language of the latter was exclusively Sanskrit, the only one used to expound, defend and record the tenets of the philosophic founders, whereas the primary dissemination of the creed to the crowds had taken place in the "vulgar tongue". In Ceylon, where Buddhism was imported from the "Metropolis" (Magadha, Kosala, Rajagriha), the vernacular was the Prakrit. "If not translations, the books ... [there] have all the appearance of being ritual collectanea, legendary hearsays, and loose comments on received texts", plus "some very important annals" - claimed Hodgson. Nepal fared better, as the "standard written authorities of the sect which regulated belief and practice ... were transferred directly and *immediately* to the *proximate hills*". Sanskrit itself might be newer and less Indian than Hindi and, maybe like Prakrit, its primitive form had come from "Tartary" [that is, from Turkestan or Turki-Mongolian Central Asia].

The Sanskrit and Prakrit versions of Buddhist literature showed a linguistic refinement received in India. They and the

Tibetan books could be considered neither old, nor exotic. For “Buddhism (the doctrines of the so-called *seventh* Buddha) arose in the middle of India in comparatively recent times, and expressly out of those prior abominations which had long held the people of India in cruel vassalage to a bloated priesthood”. In fact, it bore witness of a “characteristic ... aversion to gods and priests, and ... [of] enthusiastic self-reliance ... in express opposition to the servile extant reference of all things to heavenly and earthly meditation ... If Buddhism furnishes *internal* evidence throughout its most authentic records that it is the express antithesis of Brahmanism, its posterity of date to the latter is decided, *as well as its jealousy of priestly pretensions*”.

Some of the above basic arguments were levelled indirectly against Turnour who had held that the local Pitakattayan texts were older than the Himalayan ones. In his comments Prinsep brought out their cleavage. With some hypocrisy, he feigned reluctance to compete with the two champions whose cases carried the weight of exceptional learning. He gave further impetus to the debate by asking “whether ... the Life of SÁKYA called the *Lalita Vistára*, found by Professor WILSON to agree verbatim with the Tibetan translate examined simultaneously by Mr. CSOMA, has a greater antiquity than the *Pitakattayan of Ceylon*?” In order to facilitate the answer, he referred mischievously to a comment just received fortuitously from Turnour on Csoma's study of that work in the Asiatic Researches and went on by quoting from it a critical passage on the dream of Buddha's mother Maya Devi, which suggested that the Ceylonese narration of the episode [the second deed of Buddha out of twelve] was

more plausible, therefore more rational than its parallel from Tibet. If so, one could presume it to be older too. Of course, only a full Pali-Sanskrit comparison could validate such a conclusion...⁶

The prolonged controversy between Hodgson and Turnour was summed up by Sir William W. Hunter as follows:

It “bifurcated into two sets of conflicting theories. In the first of them, that Buddhism issues out of ancient forms of the Brahmanical faith and to a certain extent hostile to Brahman institutions, Hodgson was correct. In his second theory, which claimed for the Sanskrit texts of Northern Buddhism priority over the Pali sacred writings at least in the region of philosophic doctrine, Hodgson went too far. He himself, with characteristic honesty, afterwards recognised “that the honours of Ceylonese literature and of the Pali language are no longer disputable”.⁷

Biographical interests

The letter by Csoma from which Prinsep quoted as described above was dated in Titalya during the most mysterious period in the Tibetologist’s life. By its sheer existence it puts in doubt the second part of the belief that the Siculo-Hungarian scholar “did not quit Titalya ... till the end of November 1837, and [that] all the time he was there he was absorbed in the study of the Sanskrit, Mahratta [Mahrati], and Bengali languages”.⁸ This testimony by the British Agent in the area had been recorded and spread by Csoma’s first biographer, Dr Duka, amplified by his followers, and it is now taken for granted by many scholars.

B. H. Hodgson and G. Turnour deserve to be recalled, for yet another, somewhat special consideration. For, apart from Professor H. H. Wilson, it was both of them that Csoma evoked in April 1842 shortly before his death in Darjeeling, in the presence of his administratively high-placed, cultured physician, who was a fellow-member of the ASB.⁹ “What would Hodgson, Turnour, and some of the philosophers of Europe, not give to be in my place when I get to Lassa”, was a frequent exclamation of his during the conversations I had with him previous to his illness’ – reported Superintendent Dr Archibald Campbell.¹⁰ According to this testimony Csoma on his deathbed ‘produced “Hodgson’s Illustrations of the Literature and Religion of the Buddhists” ... and ... said, “He sent me this copy, it is a wonderful combination of knowledge on a new subject, with the deepest philosophical speculations, and will astonish the people of Europe; there are however some mistakes in it.”’

This kind of talk could be prompted to some extent by the awareness that before his Darjeeling appointment Dr Campbell had been deputy to, and scientific assistant of, B. H. Hodgson (*Residency Surgeon and Honorary Assistant Resident*). Such hypocrisy, however, would not alter the fact that Hodgson played a significant role in the life of the Tibetologist in India.

They carried on a proven correspondence in 1830. In the first years of his stay in Calcutta, Csoma was hired by the ASB to receive, sort out and process the wide range of donations flowing in from Hodgson who later invited Csoma from Titalya to his place “but when the latter found that he could not pass

into Tibet viâ Nepal, the proposed visit was abandoned".¹¹ Hodgson also tried to help Kőrösi in the project to translate the *Lalita vistara*.¹² They shared a common interest in public education in the vernacular as attested, on the one hand, by Hodgson's letters "on the Education of the people of India" from 1835 onward, and, on the other hand, by Kőrösi's bequest of a consistent set of French schoolbooks to the ASB.¹³ His work "on Buddhism in Nepal" (most probably *Illustrations of the Literature and Religion of the Buddhists*, Serampore, 1841) was one of the books and MSS that Csoma carried with him in four boxes on his last trip that came to a fatal end in Darjeeling.¹⁴

They would have had plenty of opportunity to converse about their reciprocal areas of research in Buddhism if Csoma had survived at least a few years after 1842 (without being able to proceed to Lhasa), as Hodgson retired at that hill station during 1845-58.¹⁵

Complementary information

As to the background of the statement discussed in the first place, it may be pointed out that, apart from proving fairly quick and steady communication with Calcutta, the intervention and its circumstances indicate that Csoma had a consequential collection of books and notes at hand in "Purnya district". He seems to have taken quite a library with him to his presumed, tentatively explained seclusion there. For his apparent retreat he had borrowed from his learned Society the *Bhagavatgita* by Wilkins, Sir W. Jones's *Hitopadesa* and Rosen's *Radices sanscritica* together with all the Sanskrit works published by the ASB.¹⁶

He needed part of this stock for the tasks that his Tibetan expertise was put to through Prinsep. This is how he worked out three constructions, one of which has been so far overlooked. The first was the “Interpretation of the Tibetan Inscription on a Bhotian Banner, taken in Assam, and presented to the Asiatic Society by Captain BOGLE”. It was published in May 1836 by the JASB.¹⁷ The second was called for approximately two months later by the request of the British Agent in Titalya, Major George W. Aylmer Lloyd, and provided the translation of the motto on the margin of a white satin embroidered scarf believed to have belonged to a Tibetan priest.¹⁸ The third presented an attempt to decipher an inscription found by Godfroy Thomas Vigne, a British traveller and writer of travelogues, on a granite rock near Iskardo under the bas-relief of Buddha.¹⁹

It may be useful to conclude this paper with some basic information on Titalya for those who are tempted to visit it. Today it is called Tetulia in Bangladesh. It is a modest picnic area in Panchagarh district on the Mahananda River which separates the country from India (from where foreigners are not allowed to cross the border at the check-points near-by). Prior to 1829-1830 it was an unhealthy but important military base. Its senior officer in Csoma's time, G. W. A. Lloyd, the one who had enquired at the ASB about the white scarves of Tibetan priests, in 1839 was dismissed as agent on special duty, N. E. Frontier, by one of Prinsep's brothers, Henry Thoby, and his personal property development project at Kurseong in the Darjeeling tract was shattered by Dr A. Campbell. Despite this setback, it was in Darjeeling that he retired at the end of a military career which had culminated

with the rank of major-general, but had collapsed in a scandal because of his failure to suppress the “Sepoy Rising” at its onset in 1857.²⁰ With the elegant, high-rise obelisk erected by his wife, his tomb, not far from Csoma’s, is still very visible.

Notes and references

1. Original publication: Hodgson, B. H. “Note on the Primary language of the Buddhist writings”, *JASB*, VI. 68. (Aug. 1837), 682-688. 1874 reprint: Hodgson, Brian H. *Essays on the Language, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet*. London: Trübner. (1991) reprint: 120-126. New Delhi: AES.
2. This comment was reformulated in a shortened version in J. Prinsep’s article “On the Edicts of Piyadasi...” *JASB*, VII: 75. 281. (March 1838).
3. As the biography of the second is much less known than that of the first, we may note here some details. G. Turnour was born into an aristocratic family in Ceylon but educated in England, entered the Ceylon civil service in 1818 where he rose to the eminence of Supreme Councillor. His pioneering and greatest contribution to Pali scholarship was the edition of the Mahawamsa, the most important source on the ancient history of Ceylon. It was published in 1836 with an English translation and “a masterly historical introduction”. The other epoch-making achievement of his, the identification of King Piyadasi, the author of rock and pillar-edicts, with Emperor Ashoka, the grandson of Chandragupta who had made dharma (Buddhism) an official religion of the state, was disclosed in the *JASB* in two parts, respectively one month before and one month after B. H. Hodgson’s article “An Examination of the Páli Buddhistical Annals”. In 1837 he also released “Further notes on the Inscriptions on the columns at Delhi, Alahabad, Betiah, &c”. See Sidney, Lee, ed. (1909). *Dictionary of National Biography*. XIX: 1301. London: Smith, Elder, & Co.

4. See J. Prinsep. "Note on the Facsimilies of Inscriptions from Sanchi near Bhilsa, taken for the Society by Captain Ed. Smith, Engineers, and on the drawings of the Buddhist monument presented by Captain W. Murray, at a meeting of the 7th June", *JASB*. VI. 66: 451 ff.
5. To form an idea of his influence, one may recall that he had 11 brothers and sisters. His family was characterized by close ties and strong mutual support. From 1832 his position of Assay Master in the Mint of Calcutta yielded a high income against great responsibility and enabled him to study and make representations for dissemination of ancient coins and inscriptions. This brought about a deepening involvement in the pursuit of archeological and historical research viewed as a collective enterprise which he volunteered to stimulate and coordinate. When the cultural policy of the Presidency discredited any interest in the past like his, he then turned to outspoken opposition. However, instead of pamphleteering or confining his protest to the channels of a political party, he sought backing from the international scientific community. See Staples A. C. (1989). "The Prinsep Family". *Bengal Past & Present*, CVIII: 206-207, 4-41.
6. To be complete one may add that on the same occasion J. Prinsep also queried the identity between the *Sindhu* language and the *Mágadhi* dialect, which issue remained open, discussed their rationale and in this connection again posed the problem of the origin of the "SÁKYA". In his conclusions he took sides against the priority of Hindi, Sindhi and Pali to Sanskrit, questioned their independence and stressed Pali as a derivative.
7. See Hunter W. W. (1896). *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson British Resident at the Court of Nepal*. London: 1991 reprint 279. New Delhi: AES.
8. Duka, Theodore, M. D. (1885). *Life and Works of Alexander Csoma de Körös*. 139. London: Trübner & Co.
9. Upon his appointment as Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford,

- H. H. Wilson left to J. Prinsep his positions of Secretary of the ASB and Assay Master at the Mint in Calcutta. See Sidney, Lee ed. op. cit. XXI: 568-70.
10. "Report of the death of Mr. CSOMA DE KOROS, made to G. A. BUSHBY, Esq., *Officiating Secretary, Political Department, from A. CAMPBELL, Esq. Superintendent, Darjeeling and communicated to the Society*". *JASB*, XI: 124. (April 1842), 302-9. Reproduced by Duka, Theodore. op. cit. 145-53.
 11. Duka, Theodore, M. D. op. cit. 140.
 12. "Mr. B. H. HODGSON having been informed of the Society's wish to publish the text of the *Lalita vistara* in Sanskrit and Tibetan with translation by M. CSOMA DE KÖRÖS, sent down two more manuscripts of this standard Buddhist work for collation with the Society's copy as it passes through the press. One of these copies bears the marks of great antiquity, and both are more correct than the copy in the library." Proceedings of the ASB. *JASB* VII / I, 77. 459 (May 1838).
 13. See (a) Hunter, W. W. op. cit. [7], Chapter XIV., especially 314; and (b) P. J. Marczell, "Alexander Csoma de Kőrös and the Bengal Renaissance", lecture delivered at the ASB, 2 December 1992.
 14. See Duka, Theodore, M. D., op. cit. 161.
 15. Apparently their competition and some disparaging statements by Hodgson did no harm to their relationship. In his op. cit. p. 280. W. W. Hunter expressed the following opinion on their respective merits: "In the little temporary controversy between the friends of Hodgson and Csoma de Kőrös as to their dates of work, Burnouf assigned to Hodgson the honours of priority. But, as we know, the two solitary workers were both making similar discoveries in far separated regions of the Himalayas, unknown to each other, during the very same years ... The letters of Csoma de Kőrös, published in Dr. Duka's *Life*, prove that the discoveries of the two Himalayan scholars were contemporaneous, although Hodgson

had the good fortune to communicate his first to the world."

16. See the handwritten Proceedings of the ASB of the meeting of its members on Wednesday, 2 December 1835 kept in the Museum of that institution.
17. See *JASB*, V: 53, 264-66. (However, it was a reply read on the 1st of June to the question asked on the 4th of May.)
18. *JASB*, July 1836, V: 55, 383-84 where the initials of the author's first names are T. H. A. (Read on the 6 July 1836).
19. It was in *JASB*, V: 54 (June 1836), 348, that J. Prinsep mentioned it the first time. Csoma acknowledged having received its copy from Jalpaiguri on 7th March 1836 but given its damaged state, he requested some time to do the job. ["Read a letter from M. CSOMA DE KÖRÖS, saying that although the facsimile from Iskardo, taken by Mr. Vigne, was evidently Tibetan, it was in too imperfect a condition to be decyphered." Proceedings of the ASB. Wednesday Evening, the 6th April, 1836. *JASB* V: 51. 189 (March 1836). The translation was eventually printed in *JASB* VII / I, 73. 33. (January 1838).]
20. See Pinn, Fred. (1990). *The Road of Destiny - Darjeeling Letters 1839*. Calcutta: Oxford University Press.

CHAPTER SIX

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS BY ALEXANDER CSOMA DE KÓRÖS PUBLISHED IN HIS LIFETIME BUT OMITTED IN HIS COLLECTED WORKS

The two extracts which follow were learned responses by Csoma de Kőrös to requests by James Prinsep, the secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and editor of their Journal, who published them in his monthly. They were omitted in Csoma's Collected Works despite the fact that they show how the Hungarian scholar's expertise in Tibetan was put to use by his friends around 1836-1838.¹ The transliterations have been kindly provided by Professor Philip Denwood, SOAS, University of London, to whom the author's sincere thanks are due.

I. JASB 1838 Jan., Vol VII. No. 73: 38-39

Title: Facsimilies of Ancient Inscriptions, Continued [Series starts p. 33.]

Tibetan Inscription from Iskardo.

One of Mr G. VIGNE's first cares, on visiting *Iskardo* for a second time, has been to re-examine the inscription on the

base of a mutilated image of BUDDHA of which a sketch was published in Pl. IX. of the fifth volume of this Journal. He has kindly transmitted the facsimile to me, and I have the pleasure to state that it has proved immediately legible to Mr. CSOMA, who has favored me with the subjoined transcript in modern Tibetan Character, and with a literal translation. He deems it to be an injunction to the people that they should pay respect and adoration to the image, and to the priesthood that they should keep it always in repair.

The facsimile is lithographed in Plate II.

sku.yon. brgyad.cu.....
 yang. //yun. ring.por /
 bo. mchod.pa. mdor.bgyis. legs.pas//kun.gyis.kyang. //mos.pa
 brgyad.dang.smon.lam.rgya.cher.gdab.pa.dang.//slad.rjes. tshun.chad.kyang.//
 dad.pa.can[.] rnam.kyis//dus.dus.su/tshon.gsal.bar.byā (or bgyi) mchod
 gnas.kyis.tshul.ma. nyams.par.bgyi'o //

[This breakdown corresponds to the lines in Tibetan script.]

Translation.

“ - the eight excellencies of the body (visible in the image representing BUDDHA) also (too or again), for a long time (for long continuance sake) - with collected clean offerings, by every one the eight-fold prostration (i.e. touching the ground with his two feet, two knees, two hands, the breast and the forehead) and prayer at large must be performed. And then afterwards also, by the faithful ones, at certain times, the paint (or color) must be cleansed, and the Sacristan (he that has charge of the image) must inviolably observe the established rule”.

II. JASB 1838 March, Vol. VII. No. 75 : 281-282

Title: *On the Edicts of Piyadasi, or Asoka, the Buddhist monarch of India, preserved on the Girnar rock in the Gujerat peninsula, and on the Dhauli rock in Cuttack; with the discovery of Ptolemy's name therein. By James Prinsep, Secretary, As. Soc. &c. [pp. 219 ff.]*

That there were many provincial dialects prevalent, even in the time of BUDDHA has been already proved from the books of his followers. I cannot however close my present hasty notice better than by inserting the very words extracted from the Tibetan authorities by my friend Mr. CSOMA de KŐRŐS at my request, since in the discussions which may ensue upon this prolific theme it will be always more satisfactory to refer to the author's own words than to the translation. Mr. CSOMA writes:-

“I beg leave to lay before you a passage from the Index or Introduction to the one hundred volumes of the *Káh-gyur* (as quoted there from the fourth abridged commentary on the *Kála chakra Tantra*) showing that the doctrine of SHÁKYA, after his death, was compiled in different languages in different parts of India, and in some other foreign countries.”² The quotation, in Tibetan is thus :

dus.'khor.'grel.chen.gyi.mdor.bsdu.s.bzhi.pa.las/de.bzhin.gshegs.pa.mngon.par
rdzongs.par.sangs.rgyas.pa.'phags.pa'i.yul.'dir.bcom.idan.'das.yongs.su.myangan.las.
'das.par.gyur.pa[.]na/ sdud.par.byed.pa.po.dag.gis.theg.pa
gsum.glegs.bam.la.bris.te.de.bzhin.gshegs.
pa'i.nges.pa'i.sde.snod.gsum.ga.de'i.skad.kyis.bris.so//mdo.sde.ni.sin.dhu'i.
skad.kyis.so.//pha.rol.tu.phyin.pa'i.tshul.dang.sngags.kyi.tshul.ni.legs.

par.sbyar.ba'i.skad.kyis.so. rgyud.dangrgyud.gzhan.dag.ni. legs.par.sbyar.ba'i.
 skad.dang.tha.mal.pa'i.skad.dang./zur.chag.gi.skad.dang./legs.par.sbyar.ba[?]
 ma.yin.par.ri.khrod.pa.la.sogs.pa.kla.klo'i.skad.kyis.te/
 de.lta.bu.la.sogs.pa.thams.cad.mkhyen.pas.
 bstan.pa'i.chos.mams.sdud.par.byed.pa.po.dag.gis.bris.so// de.bzhin.du.
 bod.kyi.yul.du.par.si.ka'i.skad.kyis.so//chu.bo.si.[ta.]'i.byang.du.tsam.pa.ka'i.yul.gyi.
 skad.dang./spreu'i.yul.gyi.skad.dang.gser.zhes.byab.a'i.yul.gyi.skad.kyis.so //
 zhes.gsungs.pa.&c.

Translation.

From the fourth abridged commentary on the *Kāla chakra* :

'After TATHÁGATA, the most accomplished Buddha, the *Bhagavan* had been delivered from pain (or sorrow, i.e., had died) here in *A'ryadesha*, the compilers writing in books the three vehicles (or works on the three-fold principles) they expressed all the three true repositories of Sútra of TATHÁGATA in his language. The *Sútra* class in the Sindhu language. The *Prajnyá páramitá* and the *Mantras*, in Sanskrit The several sorts of Tantras, in several languages: Sanskrit, Prákrit, Apabhransha, in that of the mountaineers, and all sorts of mlechchhas. The compilers thus collected all the doctrines taught by the all-knowing. Accordingly all the three vehicles (*Yánam*) in Tibet were written in the Tibetan language. In China, in Chinese; in great China in great Chinese. In the *Parsika* country, in Parsik language. On the north of the *Sita* (*Jaxartes*) river, in the language of the *Champaka* country, the Ape or Monkey country, and of the Gold-land (or country). Thus it has been said.'

24th March, 1838.

A. CSOMA.

Notes

JASB : Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal

[1] Terjék, J. (ed.) 1984-1986. *Collected Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. Budapest: MTAK. However, one should allow for a short paper by Bernard Le Calloc'h which draws attention to Csoma's transcription and translation into English of the fragment communicated to the Asiatic Society of Bengal by G.T. Vigne from Iskardo: "Addendum à la liste des écrits d'Alexandre Csoma de Kőrös". *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hung.* XLII (2-3), 321-324 (1988).

[2] This observation had been communicated with more details as a quotation from Csoma by J. Prinsep in B. H. Hodgson's "Note on the Primary language of the Buddhist writings" / "Note on the language of Buddhist Scriptures", *JASB*, Vol. VI, No. 68. Aug. 1937, 688.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CSOMA, THE LIBRARIAN AND HIS LOWER SAXON BACKGROUND

This paper examines the advantages of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös's librarianship in the Asiatic Society and explores the extent to which he could be influenced in that position by the model of the world-famous library of the University of Göttingen where he had been a student.

Conditions in Calcutta

Alexander Csoma de Kőrös was the first specialized, regular, full-time paid librarian of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (ASB) from May 1838 to his resignation in May 1841. His immediate predecessor, Lieutenant Markham Kittoe, who obtained renown for his inventory of the antiquities in Orissa, had filled his paid double position of librarian and curator of the museum only provisionally, for approximately four months.¹ Kittoe's predecessor, L. Burlini, an Italian physician from Florence, did not draw any salary, only a monthly allowance of Rs. 50 for costs of transportation. At that time, all the officers of the Society occupied their charges on a voluntary basis, they made their living elsewhere.² Csoma's job carried a fair remuneration. It involved interesting tasks affecting cultural history, it also offered considerable scientific and social

advantages and envied status. Although it did not demand protracted attendance, it required excellent preparation. These advantages may be spelled out in some details.

Under the leadership of James Prinsep, Secretary, ASB grew into an organization equal to the best scientific institutions of the world. It was the only one of its kind in India whose library and museum could sustain competition with similar facilities in Europe.³ Its building stood practically at the corner of Park Street and the arterial Chowringhey Road bordering the greens of The Maidan and opened on a garden. In other words, it was located in a central, pleasant and expensive area. In this house Csoma's free 'apartments' were worth of a rather high rent.⁴ If so, his monthly salary of Rs. 100 was quite good.⁵ As the ASB's librarian, Csoma headed a subordinated 'establishment' of eight persons consisting of an assistant, a duftury, two derwans, a farash, a gardener, a sweeper and a seculgur. After the departure of James Prinsep, a cook room was set up for him (and his men) in the Secretary's Office. His working hours were probably quite flexible.⁶ No wonder then that the librarianship provoked envy and attracted ten official candidacies on the death of Dr. Burlini at the age of 79. In preference to these, the ASB members unanimously voted for Csoma despite the fact that he did not show interest in the function and declined the offer at first.⁷

His duties seemed to be rather simple: (a) reception, cataloguing and arrangement of ordered encyclopedias / handbooks as well as of publications and manuscripts spontaneously flowing in, (b) issuing items for studying or reading on the spot, in special cases for taking home, (c) in

exceptional conditions, evaluation and possible fulfillment of requests for loans by distant applicants, (d) evaluation of manuscripts sent for publication and assessment of proposals for exchanges and subscriptions, (e) monthly listing of acquisitions, preparation of annual reports. The discussion of readings with visitors could be a further obligation.⁸

The use of the library was free of charge. Those who availed of its facility were ASB members entitled to it through their membership, teachers like Professor S. C. Malan of Bishop's College, other local and Indian interested parties, researchers, copyists of precious old texts and foreign specialists like the sanskritist Hubert Theroulde. Its turnover, however, could not be high as Calcutta had no university prior to 1857. As a rule, it was open from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. Most probably the presence of the librarian was not a precondition to access, for he could delegate members of his staff to be on call. Thus, Csoma's successor was asked to attend for four hours a day only. This might be longer than the previous requirement introduced in a period of less bureaucracy. It is attested that Csoma could stay away from his office when he felt like it.⁹

The stock of books had increased by 336 copies two years before Csoma retired, one year earlier (in 1838) the increment had been 482. By June 1841 the holding comprised 5,005 works.¹⁰

What made the librarian's job difficult was the very wide range of subjects dealt with in various scripts of a host of languages. The fields covered stretched well beyond the broadly defined sphere of interest of the Society, i.e., everything that nature

produced within the geographic confines of Asia. They extended to all sorts of special areas due to presents which had nothing to do with Asia. Basically, however, the library bore on the humanities on the one hand, and it provided literature relating to the items kept in the ASB museum of natural history on the other hand. The collections of statues, inscriptions, prints, drawings, medals and coins belonged to fringe specializations between the library and the museum. The picture gallery contained paintings by Rubens, Dominichino, Guido (Reni?), Bassano (J.), Canaletto and Sir Joshua Reynolds. These works of art were exhibited mainly in the hall on the ground floor and in the staircase which led up to Csoma's modest 'apartments'. They provided a beautiful and prestigious decoration to the scholarly surroundings of the Hungarian philologist.¹¹

The system in Göttingen

From April 1816 to September 1818 Csoma passed five terms at the German-speaking Georg-August Universität of Göttingen in the Lower Saxon State of Hanover. One of the prides of that university was the library which was part of the establishment right from the beginnings around 1734-37. From the outset, its role and budget were so important that one may wonder which mattered more, the university or its library. It aimed at facilitating the free, direct study of phenomena, their connections, the knowledge accumulated on them and associated techniques. The other institutions serving the same purpose which followed in its wake were the observatory, the experimental botanical garden where economically useful plants were also grown, the museum, the picture gallery, the collection of machines and industrial models, the storehouse

for physical instruments, the chemical laboratory, etc. They reflected new social ideals and policies for the promotion of learning. The way in which they determined the functions of the staff could be compared to that of Protestant Reform: while the religious intermediaries acted as guides to educated communities whose faith was based on their reading of the Bible, the professors and other aids were employed to train and accompany pupils in wielding the scientific tools put at their disposal.

The core of the library (11,774 volumes) came from the bequest of Governor (Grossvogt) J. Hinrich v. Bülow, from the secondary school (Gymnasium) of Göttingen and from duplicates of the Royal Library of Hanover.¹² It grew through gifts and legacies. More significantly, it was enhanced by liberal, carefully chosen purchases focusing on superior quality at the expense of fictions and publications catering for the popular taste. In Csoma's days the overall stock was nearing the level of 170,000 volumes. It included a rich segment of manuscripts. These as well as manuals, rarities, other items of particularly high value, prints and drawings, etc. could be consulted on the spot free of charge by the professors, the students and authorized learned individuals. It seems that the readers had to stand, leaning over their archival material placed on rather high desks with the assistance of official attendants. The impressive but uncomfortable reading room was open to the public only eight hours a week: on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 1 to 2 p.m. and on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 2 to 4 p.m. To students borrowing books the process for taking them out, however, was fairly simple. It required only the endorsement of a

professor (a restriction waived for peers). The requests had to be made through filling in standard octavo forms to be deposited according to the rules. The specified items had to be collected the following day. A maximum of three books could be taken out in one day for a duration not exceeding four weeks (with the exception of special cases). Extensions were permitted. Users were allowed to keep as many as six books at home at a time. Passing them on to others was forbidden. At the end of each term (and also before the departure of the borrower) the borrowed books had to be returned irrespective of the duration of their loan.

The search for / selection of books was facilitated by catalogues. The first, so-called 'Akzessionskatalog' which entered new acquisitions was fairly soon superseded by Georg Matthiae's alphabetical and subject catalogue. (In 1743 the latter comprised 10 volumes and twelve years later 73 more.) The basis for the present system, however, was laid by Jeremias David Reuss (head librarian from 1812 to 1837) through his new systematic 'Realkatalog' in 147 volumes. The professor provided one page for every author and, in the case of anonymous editions, for the keyword which characterized the subject concerned. This method permitted to add new pages to the old ones without upsetting their order. He stated the names of the authors, the titles (abridged according to set rules), the names of the publishers and the places and dates of publishing. In his arrangement by subject he complied with the contemporary hierarchy of scientific sectors and branches. The specialists who went on refining on this system for more than 150 years have introduced into it elements of chronology and geography. The shelfmarks reflected and still reflect the entries

in the catalogues. For each work they refer to the size, to the subject (defined in Latin) and to the number of the volume concerned.¹³

This type of organization has been the model for the big public libraries of Berlin, Münster, München, Breslau, Giessen, Halle, Leipzig, Stuttgart, Weimar and Würzburg.¹⁴ Reuss's approach also marked the alphabetical catalogues of the British Museum. The working of the library in the latter, however, was quite different from the German praxis: it served a narrow, privileged class of people admitted to the reading room. Its operating principle was introduced by the Bodleian Library at Oxford whose system was adopted all over England. It was also taken over by the ASB who applied it with the flexibility shown earlier in this paper.¹⁵

Csoma's constraints

A comparison between the library in the Georg-August Universität and that of the ASB show significant contrasts in scale and in resources too. The number of books in the ASB's possession represented approximately 3 per cent of the supply at Göttingen. It increased mainly thanks to donations from authors, editors and members leaving India, gifts from friendly institutions and the Oriental Translation Committee of the Royal Asiatic Society and shipments by the Commissioner of Records back home. The budget for purchases sufficed only for buying much needed manuals and settling the bill for a few acquisitions made in England on behalf of the Society by H. H. Wilson, the former Secretary, who had been appointed Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford. The items were catalogued by language and within that division they were

entered in alphabetical order. They were stored on shelves also by language according to size. Their listing seems to have been entrusted by Csoma to his assistant. The first thing his successor from Braunschweig did was to change this classification according to principles allegedly applied in Berlin, Göttingen and Wolfenbüttel. He based his distribution on subjects. Within his categories he sharply distinguished between literature dating back to the period BC (Greek and Roman classics) and more recent material. He subdivided the ancient collection into two and the remainder into three.¹⁶

Conclusions

Csoma's librarianship with the ASB was a nice office. Because of marked differences in underlying conditions, however, he could make little use in Calcutta of the insight he had obtained as a student into the organization of the library in the university of Göttingen. Apparently, he did not attempt to run the library at the ASB in line with German methods.

Notes

1. From December 1837 / January 1838 to April/ May 1838. See *JASB* 1837. No 72. 1098, and 1838. No 76. 364.
2. "... the Secretary, the Treasurer, although their labours were very heavy, even the librarian, Burlini, received no pay". *JASB* 1837. No 69. 797. On patterns of plurality of offices see *JASB* 1939. No 96. 1064.
3. The 'Asiatick Society' was founded in January 1784 by Sir William Jones, Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court at Fort William in Calcutta. The men who formed it "were then, or subsequently became, the leading officers of the East India Company" on the sub-continent "and included among them all the principal

contributors to the pages of the Society's Transactions". Conscious as it was of its primacy, it refused affiliation with the Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland when this 'privilege' was proposed in 1829, soon after the establishment of the London counterpart. It also rejected the concomitant suggestion to change its name into the 'Asiatic Society of Bengal'. James Prinsep, however, adopted the local designation for his monthly Journal in 1832 for the sake of convenience. "In 1843, when this Journal became the property of the Society, the new name had already become familiar, and it was formally introduced in the Code of Bye-laws published in 1851". (Quotations from the 1885 *Centenary Review of The Asiatic Society 1784-1884*. Calcutta: The Asiatic Society [1986 reprint], 2-4.) See also *JASB* 1839. No 95. 959 (para. 85) and 1840. No 99. 336-337. Other useful references: *JASB* 1832. No 12. 563/567; 1835. IV and No 41. 292-293; 1836. No. 52. 245. For a comprehensive view Kejariwal, O.P. 1988 *The Asiatic Society of Bengal and the Discovery of India's Past*. O.U.P. (1999 reprint: Delhi: Oxford University Paperbacks.)

4. Despite its being identified today with a small room. This assumption is made plausible by the case of J. T. Pearson, Curator of the Museum of the ASB in 1835. If he is given a good salary (Rs. 150 a month), he can afford to move close to the ASB premises. And if he cannot find suitable lodgings near-by, he can still afford to finance his commuting between his home and the museum. (See *JASB* 1835. No 40. 232.) Thanks to his free accommodation at the ASB headquarters, Csoma saved such extra expenses which one can estimate at Rs. 50 per month.
5. This opinion can be substantiated by several data. For instance, in Baron A. A. K. Hügel's testimony, a monthly remuneration of Rs. 150-200 in 1835 could very well meet the expectation of a competent director of a museum of natural history recruited from Europe. This was the range Pearson was satisfied with over 1835-37. (He drew Rs. 200 a month from which he paid, up to the global amount of Rs. 50, his assistant, the needed showcases and display

cabinets, etc.) In that period Csoma's assistant in the Library obtained Rs. 30 a month (until 1839. See *JASB* 1839. No 89. 439.). Eduard Roer, who succeeded to the Hungarian scholar as the librarian of the ASB, took over this assignment with a pay unchanged. (*JASB* 1841. No 114. 588.) It is worth-mentioning that from 1820 to 1832 the Society's book-keeper-accountant-cashier was paid Rs. 70 per month, which he renounced in 1832 when the financial situation of the ASB markedly deteriorated. (*JASB* 1832 No 12. 559.) The papers in the *JASB* suggest a moderately rising trend in the Rupee's purchasing power over time at least in terms of the prices of industrial products and raw materials. (*JASB* 1832. No 12. 572-573). It is true, however, that the Company Rupee, which replaced the Sicca Rupee under the unifying currency reform of 1835, was somewhat weaker than the former.

6. See, *JASB* 1839. No 89. 440; 1839. No 85. 74; 1839. No 95. 965-967 and 1839. No 96. 1063.
7. See *JASB* 1837. No 69. 797-798; 1837. No 70. 890 and 1837. No 72. 1098.
8. See, *JASB* 1840. No 98. 216 concerning the needs of the interpreter of Captain Jenkins; 1838. No 76. 366; 1839. No 87. 248. etc.
9. See, *JASB* 1837. No 52. 253; 1834. No 34. 525; 1837. No 66. 494; 1838. No 77. 456 and 1838. No 78. 568; 1834. No 34. 525; 1841. No 115. 588; Malan, Rev. A.N. 1897 *Solomon Caesar Malan, D.D. Memorials of His Life and Writings*. London: John Murray, 48.
10. See, resp., *JASB* 1839. No 87. 248; 1840. No 97. 92-94; 1841. No 115. 589.
11. On the official scope of the ASB activities see *JASB* 1832. No 7. 299.

Examples of irrelevant gifts include a 15-volume shipment by The Royal Agricultural and Trading Society of Caen of which two publications discussed potato growing and apple production in

Normandy, another one surveyed the oyster business, a fourth enclosed the annual report of the local Philharmonic Society, etc. (*JASB* 1832. No 7. 299.) The Industrial Society of Mulhouse sent copies of the catalogue of their exhibitions, of their annual report and of their brochures... (*JASB* 1838. No 74. 168.) The Commissioner of Records of Great Britain transferred the Domesday Book, its index, its separate introduction and addenda, etc., he also forwarded a ten volume selection of the texts of the decisions reached in the Scottish Parliament, etc. (*JASB* 1836. No 58. 673.) There was a lot of printed matter coming from such learned societies in Pennsylvania as the local university, the museum of medicine, The Academy of Sciences and the Philosophical Society of America.

Csoma was held responsible for the numismatic collection at least to some extent. (See *JASB* 1841. No 115. 593.) After J. Prinsep's departure specialization within the ASB was intensified. According to the Committee of Papers, around 1839 the Museum of the Society embraced "two very distinct departments: 1st. That of Oriental Antiquities, Literature, Architecture, and Numismatics. 2nd. That of Natural History." (*JASB* 1839. No 96. 1060.)

The Lucknow legacy of R. Home included 29 paintings (of which 13 were portraits), castings and 300 books bearing mainly on architecture and the history of art. (*JASB* 1839. No 96. 1060.)

12. The description which follows summarizes the informations supplied by Kind-Doerne, Christiane. 1986 *Die Niedersächsische Staat- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen - Ihre Bestände und Einrichtungen in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harassowitz.
13. For instance, 4° Hist. lit. libre (or H.I.I.) VII, 5462; 8° Theol. thet. I, 604/7; etc.
14. On the prestige of the library in the Georg-August Universität, see, for instance, Dziatzko, Karl 1904 "Die Göttinger Bibliothek in

Westfälischer Zeit". *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Schrift-, Buch- und Bibliothekswesens*. Halle s. S.: Rudolf Haupt.

15. With the ASB, the stock held by borrowers outside the library in October 1841 amounted to 205 books and 14 pamphlets. Compared to the global level of holdings, this volume is modest but not insignificant. (*JASB* 1841. No 115. 589.)
16. E. Roer allowed for 9 disciplines, etc. (*JASB* 1841. No 119. 930-933.)
In view of the holdings involved, his catalogue was probably too complicated to be readily usable. If so, his exercise breaking with Csoma's management was more demagogical than useful. On the handling of books in the ASB, see *JASB* 1841. No 115. 590. On M. Bouchez's catalogue, see *JASB* 1839. No 92. 688. In leaving the preparation of the catalogue of the ASB library to an aide, Csoma might have followed a precedent noted in Göttingen. There, instead of Johann-Matthias Gesner, the Director of the library, it was one of his subordinates, Georg Matthiae, physician by profession and first keeper ('Custos') who conceived and compiled the first big catalogues of the university.

CHAPTER EIGHT

PIA MEMORIA : ALEXANDER CSOMA DE KÓRÖS, DR. THEODORE DUKA AND SIR AUREL STEIN

In her detailed, meticulous biography, Jeanette Mirsky referred to Csoma, Duka and Stein as “three Hungarians associated with work in India.”¹ She did not elaborate this idea so broad that it could go without saying. The statement sounds, however, particularly flat if compared to Luciano Petech’s regarding Desideri, Kőrösi and Tucci as members of a trio of outstanding European scholars who set the tone of Tibetology. The first was a precursor in a prescientific age, the second introduced an unbroken line of researchers who loved their subject and the third developed the discipline into a major science.² All three derived their informations by working in the field in close contact with the inhabitants.

Csoma, the peregrine scholar, Duka, the Surgeon-Colonel, and Stein, the archeologist, formed a cluster of another kind. Despite differences in character and social situation, they shared common features. More interesting, their row of successive generations strikes as a sequence of inspirations: Csoma inspired Duka who inspired Stein. The latter recognized this chain of indebtedness and gave it a lot of thought. These are the issues I am going to discuss.

The most important spiritual link of the three men was their Magyar mother tongue, even if they stemmed from different regions. (Actually, Hungarian did not command exclusivity in any of these geographic areas.)

Backgrounds

Csoma came from a small village in the south-eastern corner of Transylvania (now Romania). The hamlet was inhabited mainly by Székelys, an ethnic group within the Hungarian nation, whose collective noble status went with the historical obligation of defending militarily the border near by. Alexander's family had been ennobled by royal decree. They cultivated their own plots of flat land close to the Carpathian Mountains and were rather poor. Like others around them, they followed the Protestant creed established by Jean Calvin in the 16th century in Geneva. This is how the boy was brought to the Gábor Bethlen College at Nagyenyed (now Aiud, Romania) to be trained for the charge of a Calvinist pastor. He earned his scholarship to the Faculty of Theology of the University of Göttingen by his good results with that school. He attended the German-speaking Georg-August-Universität at Göttingen for five terms. On his return home, instead of settling down in his country as a clergyman and tutor or teacher, as it could be expected, Csoma had gone to study Slavonic languages at Temesvár (today Timisoara, Romania), Karlóca and Zágráb (at present Zagreb, Serbia) and in 1819 he set out for the East on his own without an imperial passport and with very little funding.

Duka of Dukafalu and Kucsin, in the county of Sáros, belonged to the Hungarian landed gentry in the northern

stretches of Hungary, now Slovakia. This condition determined as much his studies sanctioned by the advocate's diploma as his participation in his country's war of independence of 1848-49 despite his traditional loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty. As a captain and General Górgy's aide-de-camp liable of punishment after the defeat, he fled to Paris. His move from there to London and enrolment as a medical student at St. George's Hospital, however, contrasted with the choices of most of his émigré friends, many of whom turned professional conspirators. His army references might help when the father of one of his fellow students, Field-Marshal Sir George Pollock, secured him the position of Surgeon on the Establishment of the Bengal Presidency.

The horizon of Stein was that of a Jewish bourgeois in the capital city. He was born in Pest, on the east bank of the Danube, and got baptised in the Lutheran Church according to a typical German orientation. He went to Magyar schools expecting the Lutheran gymnasium in Dresden where he stayed for four years. However, he attended German-speaking universities, starting with Vienna, shifting on to Leipzig, and obtaining his doctorate at Tübingen. It was in German that he corresponded with the members of his family. Nevertheless, in his journals he used Magyar in which he probably continued to think. The scholarship from the Hungarian Minister of Cultural Affairs, which enabled him to graduate from Tübingen, was extended to allow him to study oriental collections in Oxford, London and Cambridge from 1884 to 1885 and again from 1887 to 1888. In between he underwent compulsory military training at the officers' academy in his native town where he learnt surveying and mapmaking. His family prepared him for

an academic career or at least for government employment in the cultural sphere. As their hopes materialized neither at home nor abroad, Aurel opted for an opening in Punjab. He expected to capitalize in India on his knowledge of Sanskrit, Comparative Philology, Indology and Old Persian and he looked also forward to putting his surveyor capabilities to good use there.

Inspirations

The model for Csoma's quest for the Asian homeland of his people was set in 1235 when the Magyar prince who became king Béla IV financed the trip of four Dominican friars to the East to make contact with Magna Hungaria (Ancient Hungary) in the vicinity of the Bulgarian Turkish territory at the confluence of the Volga and the Kama. According to its report by Fr. Julianus, the mission was successful. The second journey by the same monk in 1237-38 failed, however, as Magna Hungaria and Magna Bulgaria had been devastated and occupied by the Mongols so much so that they recovered never after.³ The exploit of Julianus remained an ideal. In the XVth century, king Mathias Corvinus also planned to send scouts to trace related peoples in the East. And the prince of Transylvania and one time king, Gábor Bethlen, the name giver of Csoma's college at Nagyenyed, dispatched a young man with the same purpose at the end of his reign. (The envoy died in Constantinople in 1627 on his way back from India, Persia and Arabia and his journal was lost.)

News of Magyar villages in Crimea and of the ruins of an important Magyar town on the Kuma, a tributary of the Caspian, reached Hungary from Astrakhan around 1725 through a letter by a Hungarian émigré, Sámuel Turkolly. As

the evidence of a former student of the College of Sárospatak and a freedom fighter in prince Ferenc Rákóczi's anti-Austrian campaigns who enlisted in czar Peter the Great's army against the Persians, the account made a big impact through copies. Such copies were also circulating among Csoma's patrons and in his college. They sparked off dreams of patriotic discoveries through travel. It is believed unconvincingly that under their influence Csoma and two of his school-mates swore around 1806 to follow up their lead. The solemnity of the oath was enhanced by the fact that it was made at an important juncture, viz. at the stage of "subscriptio", when the boys were passing to the upper grades of their school. (The promotion entitled one to a scholarship and a toga but also obliged to teach formally at the lower grades.) The teachings of Kőrösi's professors of history (György Kőrösi, Ádám Herepei and Sámuel Hegedüs, partly based on international authorities like Joseph de Guignes) must have reinforced the pupil's romantic determination.

Later, in his Lower Saxon University, the ethos valorising exotic exploratory journeys, A. H. L. Heeren's courses on the structures of empires, trade routes and maps in the room of the ethnographic collection, G. F. Benecke's insights into the old Germanic civilization and T. C. Tychsen's lessons of Oriental languages, probably rekindled the youthful enthusiasm. The final impetus came from Transylvanian public personalities (like government councillor Mihály Kenderessy and the cultured historian, supreme court assessor Miklós Cserei) and their circle, including the distinguished proponent of the Finno-Ugrian linguistic kinship, Sámuel Gyarmathi.

Shortly after his arrival at Calcutta, Duka started to search for the traces of his hero in the town where the scholar had spent

most of the last decade of his life. Two years later “with a pilgrim’s pious enthusiasm” he visited the solitary compatriot’s grave in the Christian cemetery at Darjeeling and ensured its upkeep through his colleague, Dr. Collins, the local Civil Surgeon. In the earlier 1870s, he looked after the tombstone personally, thanks to his appointment to the hill station. Stein, who provides these details, does not explain the origin of Duka’s fervour, although he spells out its leading motives, viz. *pietas* and the patriot’s “desire to secure credit for Hungary’s share in the advancement of science, and his eager wish to stimulate interest for Oriental research in the country of his birth.”⁴

In the absence of more information, one may only guess at the circumstances which triggered off his biographic reconstruction. The impetus might have come from László Berzenczey of Görgény-Szt. Imre (1820-1884), a political refugee like him. As it was mentioned above, Miklós Cserei of Nagyajta, the grandfather of this Transylvanian nobleman on his mother’s side and owner of an exceptional library in his castle at Györgyfalva, had been one of the supporters of Kőrösi’s venture. This is how the grandson could decide to repeat Csoma’s attempt by a trip to Dzungaria which had been brought into Magyar focus through the theories of K. F. Gützlaff, a German missionary, linguist and traveller based in Hong Kong.⁵ He planned to compensate for the loss of the Hungarian war of independence of 1848-49 through teaming up with kindred folks in Central Asia. Given this potential and the prominent status of the proponent among the political leaders of the Magyar émigrés, it stirred up considerable agitation and its news could also affect Duka. In 1852,

L. Berzenczey had set out for Hong Kong - Singapore - Calcutta by boat in New York but as he did not manage to obtain permission to enter the Chinese empire, he returned to London empty-handed. His failure might increase the stature of Csoma, who had got much nearer his goal and when sidetracked, contributed much more to the advancement of learning, than his freedom fighter imitator. Duka could very well appreciate this point and the case could induce him to make the most of it.⁶

Stein's interest in Asia had arisen early from his family's traditional fascination for travels in far-away lands and it was reinforced in the boy's gymnasium in Dresden by a professor who drew his attention to Arrian's account of *The Campaigns of Alexander*.⁷ Two of his favourite university professors went to study original texts in the Bodleian Library in Oxford and in the archives of the East India House. The German model of a successful academic career in England then was Max Müller who taught comparative philology at Oxford. Such examples must have been instrumental in Stein's seeking a grant for researches in their wake. It is supposed that in 1884 in London he paid frequent visits to Duka who was just finishing his ardent monography on Csoma. He told the young man of opportunities in India and introduced him to Sir Henry Rawlinson and Sir Henry Yule, two powerful members of the India Council. These gentlemen-scholars 'in the grand tradition' became his patrons. They enabled him to satisfy his father's wish by finding him his first job in India.

Careers

In the absence of a passport authorizing travel through Russia and because of untoward developments, Csoma's big journey

took a southerly slant which he tried to correct by passing eventually from Leh to Yarkand through the Karakorum. When this attempt failed, he turned back penniless and on his way to Kashmir he met an adventurous high official on leave from the East India Company. The Englishman hired him for preparing a Tibetan dictionary and grammar and supplying some supporting material to them. Upon the death of this sponsor, W. Moorcroft, the private project was endorsed by the East India Company and was realized approx. twelve years later. By then the Hungarian scholar became a unique authority in Tibetan through his publications under the auspices of the Asiatic Society. Somewhat later, his status of a government stipendiary was superseded by that of a salaried librarian with that society, a position he gave up in 1841, one year before his death at Darjeeling. He expired at the end of the first leg of his intended, private journey to Sikkim, Tibet and Turkestan.

Stein's dual post of Registrar at the Punjab University (an examining body only) cum Principal of Oriental College (the teaching affiliate) in Lahore from 1888 to 1899 permitted refreshing escapes to Kashmir under the project of translating for publication Kalkhana's *Rajatarangini, a Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir*. Other assignments (like cataloguing the Jammu library) also increased possibilities of 'topographical peregrination'. He developed a pattern of employment in the Indian Civil Service (ICS) in which official duties (like inspectorates, superintendent functions and curatorship) combined with leaves on 'special duties' were means of exploratory work. His final retirement from ICS brought him scope for much of the action he had wished for. Thus, he conducted successfully four expeditions to Chinese Turkestan, four in Iran as well as tours in Swat, Baluchistan, Punjab,

Rajasthan, Bahawalpur, Chilas and Las Bela, he also carried out aerial surveys over Iraq and Trans-Jordan. He processed his results mainly in England, preferably at Oxford. Beside scientific communications, he presented his achievements in popular accounts.

These books were translated from English into other languages. His credits brought him honours and awards. Sir Aurel's travels stopped only at the age of 81 in Kabul, where he died of stroke and had an Anglican funeral. His ventures on the silk road countered on the side of Britain the challenges of such rivals as the French Paul Pelliot, the German Albert von Le Coq and Albert Grünwedel, the Russian Dimitri Klementz and Beresovsky brothers and the Swedish Sven Hedin teaming up with the Chinese. All these men were plunderers. Yet without them we would know still little of the caves of Dung Huang and of other sites of special cultural significance.

In comparison to the hardships and insecurity endured by Csoma and to Stein's multifarious forays, expeditions, tours and explorations, Duka's career in India was smooth and uneventful. It started in 1854 by learning Hindi in Calcutta and continued, unexposed to the Mutiny of 1857, with the charge of Civil Surgeon of a large, thickly populated district at Monghir on the Ganges. After the furlough of 1864-66 passed in Europe, the former refugee was appointed Civil Surgeon of Simla, the elevated summer capital of the Viceroy and the Government of India. In 1868 he took the medical charge of an asylum for the children of soldiers at near-by Kasauli and two years later he moved to Darjeeling as Civil Surgeon of that "sanatorium". The second furlough came in 1874 at the end of which he exercised his right to retire with full pension and the

rank of Surgeon Lieutenant-Colonel. He settled down in South Kensington, western London, where he lived comfortably in good health for three more decades. In order to palliate asthmatic troubles, he spent his last two years at Bournemouth.

Characters

The three compatriots stand out by their exceptional drive, determination and tenacity with the benefit of good health and physical fitness.⁸

In his commemorative lecture on Duka, Stein stressed the man's "strongly developed sense for the realities of life".⁹ This realism of the no nonsense kind varied probably with his own mentality merely to the extent that his chosen path to self-fulfillment and his life style deviated from widely accepted standards. He took considerable risks all along his progress to world fame. Without shrewd calculations and correct planning providing for contingencies, his ventures would have failed and their series would have been stopped at an early stage. The chances Csoma took were more extreme and more difficult to weigh up but the enterprising scholar was resourceful and lucky enough to prevail in his gamble. Excellent organizational capability, efficiency in carrying out tasks and conscientious approach to work are added qualities which distinguish the three as a group. With regard to other features, however, they differ, even if one finds several of Csoma's traits also manifest in Stein albeit in smaller degrees, whereas Duka's robust psyche resembled theirs only in few respects.

The Tibetologist and the archeologist stand close to each other by their spirit of independence, apparent loneliness, frugality

and 'little aptitude for conventional social life', while the physician met professional prerequisites with ease, passed for a very convivial gentleman, loved bourgeois comfort and lived in corresponding opulence.

Unlike Duka, who had an English wife and two sons, Csoma and Stein remained bachelors without any convincing record of sexual attachment.¹⁰ Researchers on Csoma, whom they placed on a superhuman pedestal, have not been puzzled by such a question.

Neither scholar was convivial, outgoing like Duka.

Csoma's legendary studies in lamaseries in Zanskar and Kinnaur mostly in the company of his 'Brug pa bKa' rgyud pa guru made him look hermit-like, he appeared highly eccentric and diffidently subservient to V. Jacquemont, unduly shy and reserved to S. C. Malan and withdrawn to G. W. A. Lloyd and Th. Pavie, although A. Campbell described him quite talkative. With his excessive modesty, he declined honours he was entitled to.¹¹ There is no correspondence extant to prove that he kept in touch with any of his relatives or friends.¹²

Stein led a life of self-imposed solitude, concentration on his work required isolation. As a matter of principle, he travelled accompanied only by servants and subordinates who could not question his authority. He loved "to feel in camp and unencumbered" and spent actually many a summer under tents at Mohan Marg overlooking the Sind Valley some 5000 feet below, where he employed usually about twenty servants and staff of some sort. During his winters in Kashmir he also hired servants to take care of him in the houses he rented. "At the

numerous dinners, meetings and lectures to which he was invited, he was a self-effacing guest, unskilled in the art of small talk though always attentive and scrupulously polite in carefully pronounced English and other languages". His mild agoraphobia, 'maverick ways' and unassuming manners in public, however, did not deprive him of good friends, possibly married couples, like the Allens, whose "manifest affection, concern and pride in his life preserved him" from being as lonely and uprooted as Csoma. He maintained carefully his friendly ties over distances through extensive correspondence "and wherever he went, he never forgot to send birthday greetings, gifts and special notes from places particularly interesting" to his contacts. For his projects, he lobbied all of them unabashed so much so that he was stigmatized in some quarters as a regular beggar in requests for financial and practical help. He also fought for recognition unhampered by his seeming modesty and scepticism regarding authorities.¹³

Patriotisms

In their adult life, Csoma and Duka were structured by patriotic projects: the former set out to seek out peoples related to the Hungarians in Central Asia, the latter tried to make his compatriots familiar with Indian culture through articles and donations and prove his fellow-countrymen's scientific abilities by establishing Csoma's merits on a documentary basis. Stein had no such motivations.

Csoma had received belated moral and financial support in his enterprise and reciprocated with a premium through foundations but had few other ties in his country and died

intestate and stateless without having ever returned home for a visit. Although Duka expired in Dorset as a well settled English citizen, he had close relatives and many good friends in Hungary, which he had visited in 1864 (on furlough), 1885, 1890, 1892, 1899 and where he was the Academy's highly respected benefactor. Stein's early nationalistic enthusiasm in the elite gymnasium of a Catholic monastic order was quelled by his uncle pater familias and his brother. On entering British service, he had to renounce to his nationality and after having completed the required five years' service to the Crown in 1904, he took the oath of allegiance that made him a British subject. "His reflexes had become, at least as far as public affairs were concerned, completely Anglicized." With the improvement of sea traffic, he lived commuting between India and England. This is how he got to Afghanistan where he passed away. In his mother country his family base gradually disappeared and the evolution of the political situation, with its overtones of anti-Semitism and populism, made him feel increasingly a stranger.¹⁴ In this perspective, his repeated trips there suggest considerable attachment.

Continuity

The links discussed do not amount to a lineage in the lamaistic sense of the word because they do not involve a master and his disciples. What they characterize, however, is a system of references shared by compatriots who stroke out to the far East. By their Magyar culture the three men reviewed inherited a common dream world (the French would call it *l'imaginaire*) which inspired them to undertake pioneering research projects leading to sets of scientific results and self-realization.

Their course has attracted others. Aurel Stein had at times a Jewish Hungarian assistant, Károly (Charles) Fábri from the University of Pécs, who had studied under Sylvain Lévi in Paris and J. Ph. Vogel in Leiden. Fábri had been invited to India by Rabindranath Tagore and remained there until his death. He was best known as an art, theatre, music and traditional dance critic with the *Statesman*.¹⁵ More recently, academics from Budapest took teaching positions in Delhi. Among them Géza Bethlenfalvy had been one of the editors of the successful Hungarian symposiums dedicated to the memory of Csoma, was secretary of the Society Csoma de Kőrös within the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for a while and directed the Hungarian Information and Cultural Centre in New Delhi in the 1990s. His colleague, Gyula Wojtilla, had published *A list of words Sanskrit and Hungarian by Alexander Csoma de Kőrös* and was the guest speaker of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor commemorative exhibition in the University Library of Tübingen in 1991. Magyar postgraduate students working in India have become commonplace by now. While on the subcontinent, practically all of these young scholars undertake pilgrimages in honour of Csoma.

Of course, other ramifications could also be established. A case in point would be Philippe-Edouard Foucaux, “the first professor of Tibetan in the western world”, who claimed to continue the work of Csoma de Kőrös in Paris. In his wake French contributions focusing on the early Magyar Tibetologist and his peregrination have become particularly frequent over the last two decades thanks to the communications of Bernard Le Calloc’h. On a superior level of sophistication, Csoma

appears as one of the “Curators of Buddhism”, for he belongs to “those figures who played an important role in the creation and maintenance of Buddhism as an object of study and scholarly memory in the West”. He set the example of the “Foreigner at the Lama’s feet” of whom there are quite a few outstanding representatives in our days.¹⁶ However, their sphere falls outside the scope of this paper.

Notes and references

1. Mirsky, Jeanette 1977. *Sir Aurel Stein. Archaeological Explorer*. Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press, 20-21.
2. Petech, Luciano 1989. “Ippolito Desideri, Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, Giuseppe Tucci”. *Acta Orient. Hung.* XLIII, 2-3: 155-161.
3. Following its first confirmation by the pope in 1216, the Dominican order charged its new Hungarian section to proselytize in the Balkans and among the Cumans. It took three years to four of their members to locate Magna Hungaria, as attested in a report by Fr. Richardus. The subsequent assignments were overshadowed by Mongol advance. They had proved soon the urgency of a defensive alliance which, however, could not materialize for lack of time. The kingdom of Hungary herself was attacked and ravaged by the Mongols in 1241-42. (Fortunately to the country, the predators withdrew in the wake of the death of their great khan.)
4. See Stein, M. Aurel 1914. *In Memoriam Theodore Duka (1825-1908)*. Privately printed, 17, 18, 4, 24.
5. On this influence, see Szilágyi, Ferenc 1987. *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor élete nyomában*. Budapest: Gondolat, 92-94, and its quoted source: Jancsó, Elemér. Pásztorút, 1942, 542-543. Szilágyi’s book also sheds valuable light on “the Turkolly letter”, Csoma’s professors and Cserei.
6. There is a remark on Berzenczey’s inquiries in Calcutta in his Hungarian monograph but not in its English version. See Duka,

Tivadar 1885. *Körösi Csoma Sándor dolgozatai*. Budapest : MTA / 1984 reprint Budapest: Buddhista Misszio, 157. (In 1874 L. Berzenczey made a second attempt at visiting Dzungaria. Then he had travelled by land through Russia and got as far as Yarkand but there he panicked and turned south under the reluctant protection of T. D. Forsyth's diplomatic mission. He crossed the Karakorum, passed through Ladakh and left India by boat at Bombay.)

7. Walker, Annabel 1995. *Aurel Stein. Pioneer of the Silk Road*. London: John Murray, 11. (For further references, see below.)
8. It is true that Csoma seems to have lost some of his stamina during his last years in Calcutta but the two others remained in good shape until the end of their long lives. Stein's affliction with recurring dyspepsia, indifference to food and loss of toes because of frostbite caused no serious inconvenience. His prostate operation in Vienna at the age of 74 went so well that he rallied immediately. See Walker, *op. cit.* 136-137 and 310-311.
9. *Op. cit.*, 10.
10. The claim of the latter's liaison with pandit Ram Chand Bali's younger sister in Srinagar has been dismissed by Walker as unlikely in her *op. cit.*, 322-324. She thought it perfectly possible that he had "experienced no sexual passion" (*op. cit.*, 57).
11. Nevertheless, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences elected him corresponding member in 1833 and the Asiatic Society followed suit by voting him honorary membership in 1834.
12. Save his request to his brother to mortgage some land on his behalf. It is presumed, respectively, that his father and his mother – died (a) at unknown dates, (b) prior to 1790, (c) the former in 1801 and the latter in 1809. Opinions on his sisters also differ. (In one belief, among his five sisters only Julianna survived, she married József Dancs.) According to consensus, his only brother, Gábor (born in 1788), lived until 1850. The positions on these sensitive issues would require a separate study without the possibility to

conclude. As to Csoma's letters of 1836 from northern Bengal to J. Prinsep, they were semi-official / semi-business-like.

13. Points made successively by A. Walker in her op. cit., 192, 152, 210, 323, 189, 75, 138, 116, 314.
14. Quotations (preceded by a paraphrase) taken from Walker, op. cit., 226 (and 124). Aurel lost his mother Anna Hirschler in 1887 and his father Nathan one year later, his eye surgeon uncle and influential protector, Ignaz Hirschler, died in 1891. His brother Ernst, by 21 years his senior and therefore a paternal figure in his life, had moved around 1879 to Jaworzno in Galicia (now Poland) to become company secretary of an ill-fated coal-mining concern; as he married a woman of Vienna ('Jetty'), his wife returned with her children to her Austrian Jewish family after his death in 1902. Due to these developments, by the earlier 1930s, Aurel's private contacts in Hungary dwindled to that of cousin Rosa, the geographer-statesman Count Pál Teleki and the translator Gyula Halász. (See Walker op. cit., 305, on changes in the political climate: 188-89.) His trips to Budapest, where he gave anonymously to the Academy 20,000 Hungarian crowns (Walker op. cit., 251) took place as follows: 1890, 1897 (furlough), 1901, 1902/1903?, 1909/1911 (twice), 1919/1920?, 1932, 1934/1935 and 1937. A commemorative exhibition cum symposium was organized in the MTA in May 2002 when the *Catalogue of the Collections of Sir Aurel Stein in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences* edited by Éva Apor and Helen Wang was released. On that occasion a wreath was placed on the large commemorative plaque on the site of the house very near-by where M. A. Stein had been born.
15. See Bethlenfalvy, Géza (with Wojtilla, Gyula). *India in Hungarian Learning and Literature*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 36-38. The book provides the panorama suggested by its title. It was followed by a monograph on *Charles L. Fabri, his life and works*.
16. See Lopez, Donald 1995. *Curators of the Buddha*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

CHAPTER NINE

CSOMA KÖRÖSI'S PSEUDONYM

Even fans and scholars familiar with Csoma Kőrösi's adventurous life ignore a significant biographical detail, viz., that in his travels in Asia and fieldwork in the Himalayas and beyond, the scholar used an adaptation of his given name instead of his surname. To put it in another way, he resorted to a pseudonym. When they are reminded of this, they are often baffled. The present paper wants to dispel their embarrassment. It explains what a pseudonym is, establishes its systematic use by Csoma in contradistinction to his genuine patronymic, overviews interpretations of this practice of his with an aim at synthesis and concludes with a somewhat dissident opinion. My sincere thanks are due to Mr. Neil Howard for having obliged me with reading my full text and suggesting corrections. Of course, all the errors, which may still remain, are mine.

Preliminary semantics

According to the dictionaries which I currently use, the compound word "pseudonym" denotes "a fictitious name adopted, esp. by an author"; "an assumed name adopted by the author to conceal his identity; pen name." In its latinised Greek origin the first part (pseud, pseudo) refers to constructions implying "sham, false, spurious, deceptively resembling," the second (onyma>onoma) means "name". However, such a view is simplistic. It is true that in French

literature, for example, Molière (Poquelin), Voltaire (Arouet), Stendhal (Beyle), George Sand (Amandine Lucie Aurore Dudevant), Lautréamont (Ducasse), Apollinaire (Kostrowitzky), Saint-John Perse (Alexis Léger), Ajar (Romain Kacew>Romain Gary), etc., are not genuine family names. But this holds also true of modern artists from Russia called Aliagrov (Jakobson), Sonia Delaunay-Terk (Sara Ilinitchna Stern), Férat (Yastrebtsov), Naum Gabo (Néhémia Abramovitch Pevsner), Iliazd (Zdanevitch), Jeguine (Schechtel), Klioune (Kliounekov), Pirosmeni (Pirosmenashvili), Pougny (Puni), Survage (Stürzwage), Werefkin (Veriovkina). Moreover, such revolutionaries of the 20th century as Lenin and Stalin, were born resp. Ulyanov and Dzughashvili, and many others took similar models. (For instance, the writer Pyeshkov when he opted for Gorki.) In the three sets of enumeration, the substitutions can be ascribed to different reasons, viz., dissociation from a well-known parent or sibling, keeping stigmatized intellectual and artistic pursuits distinct from mainstream economic and commercial activities, protection of sensitive official (e.g., diplomatic) status, concealment of social deviance or foreign descent / mask to avoid social or racial prejudice, convenience of a shortened, simplified appellation, stress on a militant commitment reminiscent of the religious engagement of monks and nuns. Some of these may overlap.¹

A cumbersome patronymic to start with

Kőrösi Csoma Sándor's name has been a headache for most non-Hungarians. His family name was Csoma, and the reference to his noble lineage was Kőrösi, comprising a place name and a suffix. The given name Sándor stands for

Alexander, it is still quite common among the Magyars. The French translation, conforming to contemporary Western diplomatic credentials, Alexandre Csoma de Kőrös, is therefore quite correct, and the same holds true of its Anglicized version, Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, more plainly Alexander Csoma of Kőrös. It follows that its bearer can be adequately called both Csoma and Kőrös. (The aristocratic usage would prefer the latter, dropping the nobiliary particle [France : la particule nobilaire] among insiders.) Another difficulty is the pronunciation, leading to misspellings in documents recorded under hasty dictation and endorsed at face value on that basis. In everyday life dominated by commoners uncultured in such subtleties, a less tricky, more homely equivalent simpler to pronounce was likely to prove more expedient. However, Csoma was not a happy-go-lucky person. One may presume that his free choice of a pseudonym had to reflect his 'essence'.

Proofs of an Oriental identification

Correspondence by contemporary eyewitnesses, references in treatises in Bothi, British-Indian passports and their files, and legends recorded at Zangla and Phuktal (Zanskar), and Kanam (Kinnaur) concur. They attest that in northern India (including Ladakh), Csoma Kőrösi assumed, for his identification amongst natives, the Turkish / Persian variant of his Christian name and an adverbial phrase combining place and title. He changed his title preference around 1835.

Eyewitnesses

The first mention of the pseudonym we are aware of, occurs in a letter of recommendation dated 21 April 1823. It was set

out in Kashmir by the initial sponsor of Csoma's Tibetan enterprise, William Moorcroft, and was addressed "to the Officer in Command at Subathoo". The warrant was given to the Hungarian scholar out of precaution, should his project go somewhere wrong and require government intervention. It starts as follows: "The object of this address is to bespeak your good offices for Mr. Alexander Csoma or Sekunder Begh of Transylvania whom I now take the liberty to introduce".²

The second testimony goes back to 11 May 1828, when at Giarghi, 'a village two miles beyond Dingchan', one mile and a half off Dr. James Gilbert Gerard's camp, a British-Indian officer noted the following: "In the evening a Lama, the tutor of Mr. De Koros, who is studying the Thibetian language in Kinour, came to pay me a visit, he was on peregrination to 'see the world', and had gone round by Munde and Sokeet as far as Subathoo, he was furnished with a certificate from his pupil, the Hungarian (who signs himself 'Secunder Roome')..."³

During his expedition in Kinnaur, the French naturalist, Victor Jacquemont, met the Hungarian Tibetologist at Kanam several times over the period 26-31 July 1830 when he was moving eastward to the Tibetan border, and also on his way back on 21 September 1830. He described his host in several passages of his journal and in various letters sent to his father, to his elder brother and to friends. Most of these observations were included in vol. II. part. 4 of the posthumous book *Voyage dans l'Inde pendant les années 1828-1832* and in similar editions of his collected correspondence. There are

three passages which bear expressly on “Secander Beg”. Here are their translations:

“I shall see soon at Kanum this incredible original Hungarian, *Mr. Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*, of whom you have no doubt heard; he has lived for four years under the, by no means modest, name, Secander-Beg, i.e. Alexander the Great, dressed oriental fashion...”

“I have seen at Kanum, in Kinnaur, Mr. Csoma de Kőrös - Rumi - or *Secander-beg* (Alexander the Great), well, this original Hungarian of whom you have surely heard; travelling in Asia for ten years under a miserable travesty in order to discover, by the comparison of languages, the horde from which his nation is a swarm”.

“*Mr. Csoma* is not known by the Kinnauras under his name but under that of *Rumi* (Roman in Hungarian) ... Elsewhere he travelled, says-he, under his Christian name, Alexander, which is also an oriental name, *Secander*, to which he adds *Beg*, to imitate the Orient’s bombast. The people of Kanum treat him as Saheb, and I saw Vizir Busuntranme withdraw respectfully when one day Rumi Saheb drew close to speak to me”.⁴

Records by Zanskari abbots

In 1824, Csoma alias the Rumi Skandher Beg, induced the headlamas of Dzongkhul and of Rangdun Monasteries to write treatises for him on Buddhism. Both complied and acknowledged the request in their respective *dris lans*.

Thus, Kun-dgah-chos-legs’ compendium bears the title: *Answers to the questions of the European Sken-dha*, its dam-

bcah part confirms that “Having arrived from Europe, Sken-dhar bhig begged me to write this pell-mell little study which does not bring luck to wisdom” and its colophon on p. 221 specifies that “The answers to the European Skendha’s questions were written by Kun-dgah-chos-legs rdo-rje in the big cave of Rdzong-khul”.

In the *Answers to questions entitled: “The ship penetrating into the sea of philosophical systems”* by Tshul-khrims-rgya-mtsho, the colophon on p. 43 runs as follows: “The Rumi Skandher beg, who is like the vast, open skies in his unshakable fortitude and his insight demonstrated in sciences, undertaking the arduous journey from the large ocean of the Orient to jasmine-covered Upper Tibet, in his search for Learning, not for his own selfish purpose but for the salvation of all people, and arriving at Zangla, obtained knowledge, through the power of prayer, of me,” etc.

In the two texts, the key references are, resp., *rgya-gar rum-yul-nas byon-pahi Sken-dhar bhig-gis / rgya-gar rum-yulpa Sken-dhas* and *rum-pa Sken-dher bheg*.⁵

British-Indian passports

After roughly one year and a half of research in Ladakh, Csoma walked to Sabathu, the British military base and communication centre in the Punjabi Hills near Simla, to avail himself of his voucher from Moorcroft. His clearance there took six months, ending, before Moorcroft was dead and his expedition broken up, in government endorsement of his Tibetan project, modest pecuniary assistance and permission to return to Zanskar. The ensuing second stay in Ladakh ran

into difficulties probably because of overall insecurity. It yielded an impressive collection of Tibetan manuscripts and xylographs but suffered from insufficient local collaboration so much so that it had to be discontinued when the winter of 1826/1827 set in. This shortfall was made good by a three-year extension of the Tibetan program to be carried out on British protected territory at Kanam. Seeing the grammar, dictionary and other basic compilations through the press in Calcutta was slowed down by cataloguing duties and the lack of adequate founts. When it came to completion and the dissemination of the publications was finished, Csoma took up residence at the site of a former garrison near Siliguri, overlooking Sikkim. For this move, on 30 November 1835, he requested from the British authorities, through the secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, a passport for three years. His request was forwarded by James Prinsep to W. H. Macnaghten, Secretary to Government, Political Dept, in the following terms:

“Sir,

I have been requested by Mr. Alexander Csoma de Körös to report for the information of the Honorable the Governor General of India in Council, that he is desirous of terminating his residence in Calcutta and of proceeding to the interiors for the purpose of further prosecuting his studies in the Oriental languages. He begs me accordingly to solicit permission for his continuing for three more years within the British Indian territories, and further to request that he may be furnished with two passports to be produced when occasion may require - one in the English language; - in which he would wish to be

designated by the simple title of Mr. Alexander Csoma, a Hungarian philologist, native of Transylvania; - and one in the Persian language describing him as 'Molla Eskander Csoma az Mulk-i Rum -'

This demand was satisfied on 14 December 1835. The translation of the Persian passport runs as follows:

“East India Company Bahadur

Alexander Diamolla of Rome is given three years permission from His Highness Nawab Mastab Ali on behalf of Governor General Bahadur in Council to conduct studies and research in Hindustan and all army and civil help is to be assured.

Dated 14 December 1835 (1251 Hijri) Issued by the Governor-General in Council at Fort William.”⁶

Local legends

Several travellers to the places where Csoma lived, inquired into memories lingering on about their hero among the elders of the inhabitants. Three of them published their findings in travelogues.

Gottlieb William Leitner, the founder of Punjab University, longtime rector of the Government College in Lahore and editor of the Asiatic Quarterly Review, who passed by Phuktal in 1866, described the high esteem in which his path-breaking compatriot was held at the monastery, where he was affectionately remembered as the Philangi Dàsà.

In his account of his 'discoveries and adventures in Tibet' released in three vols., the Swedish geographic explorer Sven Hedin devoted a whole chapter to the learned lama from Hungary' whose abode he visited and sketched in 1908 at Kanam. The hut was known as the former dwelling of a European lama, 'Lama-Sahib', and it fitted Dr. Gerard's description from 1828. The oldest man of the village, named Yangpur, testified that his father had used to call the foreigner 'Ganderbek', who had been regarded by the local monks as a colleague.

Although he did not visit Kanam, the Hungarian pilgrim Ervin Baktay covered both Zangla and Phuktal. According to his testimony, in 1928 Skander beg was still remembered at both places as 'the sage from Rum', who was associated with lama Sangs rgyas phun tshogs and Dzongkhul monastery.⁷

British comments

William Moorcroft, who had led in 1812 from Kumaon, through the Niti Pass and Gartok to Lake Manasarowar, an unauthorised clandestine expedition under the personal disguise of a gosain named Mayapoori, was quite impressed by the ease of travel of 'Secunder beg' on dangerous terrain. His offer to find him a suitable companion hinged on requirements of appearance and character modelled on the Hungarian: "... the gait of a Fuqeer or person in indigent circumstances a condition which will ensure his personal safety - Whatever his other qualities may be, a mild, conciliating disposition, and the most cautious avoidance of religious controversy are indispensable to success as a contrary

conduct would not only defeat the primary objects of the expedition but expose the British interests which have now taken root in Ladakh to risk of injury.” * To Moorcroft, the Sekunder Begh appellation must have looked a well-chosen accessory of the ideal ‘gait’.

The friendly assistant political agent and commanding officer of the first Nasiri (Gurkha) battalion at the former Nepalese fortification, Sabathu, to whom Moorcroft recommended Csoma, was Captain Charles Pratt Kennedy. Without quoting the pseudonym of his Hungarian protégé, he hinted at it on 3 September 1829 in his letter to H. H. Wilson, the Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal : “Mr. Csoma ... appears anxious to avoid the society and attentions of Europeans, chiefly, in my opinion, to retain the *incognito* he lives in...” What he meant by the French word was probably a relative anonymity assumed for fear of a barrier of too much difference or distinction. Before him, Captain Stacy had described the Tibetologist to Wilson in a similar way: “Csoma expends very little upon himself; he dresses in the coarse blanket of the country, and eats with the natives.”⁹

In his recollection of Csoma’s stay at the former military base close to Siliguri, Titalya (today Tetulia, Bangladesh), put in writing on 12 December 1843 upon the behest of Dr. Archibald Campbell, superintendent at Darjeeling, former Government Agent N. E. Frontier, Colonel G. W. A. Lloyd confirmed this picture: “... he would not remain in my house, as he thought his eating and living with me would cause him to be deprived of the familiarity and society of the natives, with whom it was his wish to be colloquially intimate....”¹⁰

Gallic interpretation

Csoma's most lively and scathing portrayal can be found in the journal and correspondence of Victor Jacquemont. The quotations in the first part of this paper contained their gist. The French traveller stressed the Tibetologist wearing local garments: sheepskin with the hair inside and black lambskin cap typical of Tartar herdsmen; native Kinnaura cap, gown of blue serge, coarse pants of white cotton, silk stockings with leather soles. This 'bizarre' outfit seemed to determine his behaviour, stubbornly subservient before Europeans so much so that it might look defiant. The incredible eccentric from Hungary lacked commonsense, he was somewhat crazy. So were the Tibetans, a people of lunatics or idiots, let God protect us from their language!

In Jacquemont's judgement, the indigenous races of India did not fare better: they were all most barbarous. Yet, with all his exaggerations, his remarks concerning Csoma who, unlike him, travelled as a beggar or *fakir*, pose two interesting problems. One, the scholar's identification with Alexander the Great. Two, local incomprehension of his geographic background mixed with indifference.

In connection with the first point, we may recognize that because of his Christian name, the emeritus Protestant theologian could consider Alexander his spiritual patron. If so, he could be tempted to follow the Macedonian king's conquering itinerary admired by the German romantics he got to know at Göttingen. His sidetrip to Egypt in 1820 and much of what followed might then be motivated by an 'imitatio Alexandri' rather than by the logistic impediments of a much

publicized patriotic project too hazy and amateurish to be convincing.

A Swedish view

Sven Hedin's intelligent reconstruction of the original setting is much more respectful. More important, it is sympathetic with the advantage of being truthful. Thanks to deep insight, for Csoma's *incognito* alluded to by Captain P. C. Kennedy, it introduces another French word. The employed vocable, *nom de guerre*, is more telling. It suggests a fighter's option to signify through a fairly simple chosen name his determination in a long combat. This intuition promotes Jacquemont's mad Hungarian *fakir* into a Nietzschean character *avant la lettre* (irrespective of the anachronism involved) whom people in the 20th century should recognize and appreciate as such. In fact, in the light of the German philosopher's teachings, there is not much need to decide what a hero's big project was really about and how consistent it was, whether it failed and to what extent, for what matters is that it was driving him despite and against everybody.

Francke's communication

The leading personality of the Protestant Herrnhuter Bruder-Mission Unitas Fratrum in the Himalayas was August Hermann Francke. He ended his career as the first German professor of Tibetan at the University of Berlin in recognition of the competence he had acquired in Ladakh and Lahul. At that stage, he was informed of the discovery in 1924 at Dzongkhul by a British official, H. Lee Shuttleworth, of Kun dga' chos legs' *dris lan* mentioned earlier in this paper, together with a

corresponding biography. He had the report cross-checked by one of his local fellow-missionaries of distinguished Tibetan origin, Yoseb Gergan, followed up the details received and published in German his conclusions on them in two instalments in Hungary. The second of these contributions explained that the addressee of the abbot concerned was Skandhar Bhig, i.e., Csoma coming from Central Asia to the Tibetan-speaking area, that Iskander stood for Alexander and Bhig for the Turkish beg, lord, prince. It took the home country implied, *Rum-yul*, for Turkey and *Rgy-gar-rum-yul* for India, Turkey, perhaps Indian Turkey. It added that all that sounded very beautiful, yet at the time when the text involved was produced, Tibetans knew of Europe practically nothing anyway.¹¹

Hungarian consensus

Francke's enthusiastic disclosures on 'Skandhar Bhig' sparked off research within the institution which disseminated them, with good results. These were summarized at an early stage in 1933 in *T'oung Pao* by one of Paul Pelliot's Hungarian disciples, Louis (Lajos) Ligeti. His article was a reminder of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences being the depository of a sizable collection of Tibetan manuscripts and blockprints secured by Csoma, including the critical *dris lan* by Kun dga' chos legs. It disagreed with A. H. Francke's translating *rgya-gar rum-yul* by Turkish India, proposing Europe in its stead on the ground that the words *Rum* and *rum-pa* of Persian origin referred to Byzantium and by extension to all the countries that had once been subject to the Byzantine Empire. In time, Ligeti became a Turkologist of international renown who organized big scientific jamborees in honour of Csoma.

As a prominent figure of Stalinist and post-Stalinist cultural gatherings, he was fully aware of the Transylvanian lexicographer's passionate assumptions of some sort of a relationship between the Siculo-Hungarians and the Huns and also of the continuing popular support of such a representation. It is then quite astonishing that he took so clear a stand on *Rum* in Kőrösi's pseudonym signifying Europe, period. It is not less remarkable that this view of his has survived without any caveat whatever and is still shared by the community of well established Hungarian specialists despite ferocious populist attacks. (For a proof, see the Appendix.)

The author's opinion

In the perspective of the comments and controversies reviewed, it is timely to hazard a series of remarks.

To start with, one may recognize a parallel between the traveller's and fieldworker's oriental pseudonym and the signature in his major works produced for English-speaking Westerners.¹² Their structures are similar. The variants 'rum-pa Sken-dher bheg' / 'Rgya-gar rum-yul-pa Sken-dhar bhig' / 'Molla Eskander Csoma az Mulk-i Rum' built on a Christian name and an adverbial phrase combining place and title, correspond closely to the stamp 'Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, Siculo-Hungarian of Transylvania'. In the latter, the universal given name (Alexander / Iskander) is replaced by the surname Csoma, the title (suggested by 'bheg' and 'molla') is expressed by the handle de Kőrös (through the nobiliary particle with its geographic cross-reference) and the vague indication of origin (rum-pa, etc.) becomes tightened into the epithet 'Siculo-Hungarian of Transylvania'. If so, one may

presume that Csoma's reference to Rum was a rough equivalent of the status he wished constantly to be associated with, viz., a Siculo-Hungarian of Transylvania. Because of its conscious double redundancy, this extraordinary emphasis should be grasped in all its implications.

The word Transylvania is derived from the Latin *Ultra Silvas* > *Ultrasilvana*. Its official use seems to have started as late as 1461 to cover a hilly basin of appr. 5700< km² west from the Carpathian Mountains in their semi-circle from Máramaros through Cronstadt / Brassó to the Danube where the river separates present-day Romania and Yugoslavia. It stretched to the flatlands melting farther into the Hungarian Plains. As to its past, it had belonged to the Roman Empire within the administrative frame of Provincia Dacia Augusti from its conquest by Trajan from 102-06 to its official loss by Aurelian around 271-75. It then passed successively under the supremacy of German / Turkic / Mongolian invaders and their coalitions. These waves of Visigoths and Gepids, Huns and Avars gave way to the rule of a mixed Turki-Slavonic stock, the Bulgars, stopped by the 'Onogur' tribal union dominated by the Magyars or Hungarians. The latter were speaking a non-Indo-European, non-Turki-Mongolian language of the Ugorian family. Their state tended to oscillate as loose vassal between two antagonistic poles, viz., the Byzantine Empire (called Roman Empire after the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476) and the Frank German Empire. This opportunism came to an end in 1453 with the occupation of Constantinople by the Osmanli Turks who 73 years later also crushed Hungary so that it split into three. The eastern part, Transylvania, became an autonomous principality under

Ottoman protection for almost two centuries. It was eventually reunited with the kingdom of Hungary and incorporated into the Habsburg's Austrian Empire to which it belonged until 1918, when it was taken over by Romania. Suffice it to say, that Transylvania looks back to a mild Turkish dependence never experienced in the rest of Hungary. In Csoma's time it was tempting to recall this relationship in opposition to the harshness of Austrian rule, bearing also in mind the precedents of shifting loyalties during the Middle Ages.

The Seculians / Secklars / Szécklers / etc. (= Latin sing. *Siculus*, pl. *Siculi*; Hungarian sing, *székely*, pl. *székelyek*; Romanian n. sing, and adj. *secui*) were originally a nation (Latin *natio*) of free Hungarians more or less exempt from corvée and taxes in Transylvania who shared within their class the collective ownership of land against the obligation of personal military service. Their special status made them equal to the nobility. They have lived as small agriculturists and handicraftsmen in 'Székelyföld' (*Terra Siculorum*), divided at present into four districts (Romanian sing. *judet* /*judetul*, pl. *judeturi* /*judeturile*): Covasna, Harghita, Mures and Cluj [Hungarian Kovászna (Háromszék, Erdővidék, Kászonszék), Hargita (Csikszék, Udvarhelyszék, Gyergyó), Maros (Marosszék), Kolozs (Aranyosszék)]. All of them are both Hungarians and Transylvanians.¹³ Their appellation in question may reflect either that of the Askil / Iskil tribe of Turko-Bulgars or the (totemic?) Turkic word *sikül* / *säkül* for a 'horse with white stockings'. According to another heroic assumption, it covers a group descending from the Qabars who had broken away from the vast and multinational Khazar (probably Kök Türk) qaganate on the Lower Volga

close the Caspian Sea, joined the (proto?)-Magyars in the early 9th century and accompanied them all along their westward migration. Whatever be the case, they are distinguished from the other Hungarians supposedly by the runic-script (of Central Asian origin) which they used in the Middle Ages, by the traditional shafts which mark their tombs, by the typical portal of their houses and by other peculiarities. Csoma thought that they were Hungarians related to the Huns who settled in ancient Dacia as early as the 4th century.¹⁴ This belief is no longer tenable but it reflected the legends in the first Hungarian chronicles and other sources.

We may then conclude in three points. First, the names by which Csoma wanted to be addressed and remembered suggest Byzantine and Turkic links and affinities. Second, this contrasts with his actual subjection to the Habsburg empire before he got rid of it by leaving his country illegally with the consequence that the Austrian authorities refused to restore or reconfirm his nationality in India through an imperial passport. Third, as a stateless traveller whose *nom de guerre* could rightly be understood to express political defiance, he behaved in a way foreshadowing the heroic Sicilian participation in the Hungarian war of independence of 1848-49.

Notes and Bibliographic references

1. There are plenty of handbooks on pseudonyms. Eg., Heylli, Georges d', 1887 *Dictionnaire des pseudonymes*. Paris. (Slatkine reprints, Genève, 1971); Kennedy, James- Smoth, W. A. & Johnson, A. F. 1926 *Dictionary of Anonymous and Pseudonymous English Literature* (Samuel Halkett & John Laing) I-VII. 2 suppl. London: Oliver & Boyle; Coston, Henri 1961 *Dictionnaire des*

pseudonymes. Paris: Lectures françaises; Sharp, Harold S. 1972. *Handbook of Pseudonyms and Personal Nicknames*. I-II. Metuchen, N. J.: The Scarecrow Press.

2. British Library, OIOC, MSS. Eur. G. 28., 49 (draft), and also P/124/5, N° 69 (Ben Pol. Cons., 24 December 1824) and F/4/987 (Boards Coll.). Transcript published in Duka, Theodore 1885. *Life and Works of Alexander Csoma de Körös*. London: Trübner, 34-35.]
3. Archer, Major, late aide-de-camp to Lord Combermere 1883 *Tours in Upper India and in parts of the Himalaya Mountains*, I-II. London: Bentley. Vol. I, 2nd Tour: Journey across the Sutledge from the 4th to the 29th of May, 1828. 233.
4. Extracts taken, respectively, from his letters to his father in Paris, dated 15 July 1830 and 26 August 1830, published in *Correspondance de V. Jacquemont avec sa famille et ses amis pendant son voyage dans l'Inde -1828-1832 - Nille éd.* I-II. 1868. Paris: Michel Lévy, T. I. 247 & 277; and from op. cit. 1841-44. Paris. Vol. I, Part 4. 256. Yule, Henry, and Burnell A.C. *Hobson-Jobson* 1886. (The Bengal Chamber ed., with Rupa & Co., Calcutta, 1990) provide useful details on "Sahib, s. The title by which, all over India, European gentlemen, and it may be said Europeans generally, are addressed, and spoken of, when no disrespect is intended, by natives. It is also the general title (at least where Hindustani or Persian is used) which is affixed to the name or office of a European, corresponding thus rather to *Monsieur* than to *Mr.*" etc. etc.)

We may note that in his famous description of Csoma at Kanam in 1828, Dr. James Gilbert Gerard, who had met the Tibetologist several times, did not refer to the 'Secunder Beg' aspect. He stressed the lonely hero side instead. (See his letter to William Fraser in Duka, op. cit., 83-85.)

5. The translations are borrowed from Terjék, József (ed.) 1976. *Tibetan Compendia Written for Csoma de Koros by the Lamas of Zans-dkar*. New Delhi: Society of Csoma de Kőrös and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. (Sata-Pitaka Series Indo-Asian

Literatures, vol. 231.) This publication reproduces the original scripts in Bothi preserved in Budapest, which, however, are copies. Their authors and their collection in Hungary are discussed in Marczell, P. J. 1999. "Csoma Kőrösi's Guides in Tibetan Learning from Rdong Khul Dgon Pa. Zangs Dkar, with Special Reference to Tshul khrim s rgya mtsho". Beek, Martijn van, Kristoffer Brix Bertelsen and Poul Pedersen (eds.) *Recent Research on Ladakh*, 8. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 271-83.

6. The original documents are kept at the National Archives of India, New Delhi. The translation has been kindly provided by a friend from Delhi, the well-known scholar, filmwriter and painter Serbjit Singh, to whom all my thanks are due.
7. The corresponding references are, respectively: Duka, op. cit., 160.; Hedin, Sven 1923. *Trans-Himalaya*. III. (1991 reprint. New Delhi: SBW. Chapt. XXXII. esp. 416-17.); Baktay, Ervin 1930. *A világ tetején*. Budapest: Lampel. (3rd ed. 1934, 242-44, 267-70). One may be sceptical about the methods of investigation of the three authors because all three had made clear to the locals what they were looking for and thereby provoked the expected replies. They arrived at the region with powerful recommendations, enjoyed the backing of the top dignitaries there and all this could well lead to scenarios especially constructed to please them. Baktay's approach was peculiarly crude and aggressive. His principal motives seemed to boil down to placing commemorative plates, taking photographs of them to authenticate him as a gentleman explorer and telling the story in lectures, articles and books as often as he could. He imposed on the lamas of Phuktal a slab with an inscription he knew was incorrect, in order to drive home a dubious thesis, viz., that Csoma had lived in their gonpa for approximately 15 months as an inmate.
8. Postscript of 5 May 1823 to the letter to George Swinton Esq., Secretary to the Govt. Pol. Dept - Fort William, dated 24 March 1823. [Drafts: MSS. Eur. D. 266. 4, 25-29 and MSS. Eur. G. 28. 53. OIOC / British Library.] The lot was described in detail by Kaye, George Rusby & Johnston, Edward Hamilton 1937 *India Office*

Library Catalogue of Manuscripts in European Languages. Vol. II. Part II. Minor Collections and Miscellaneous Manuscripts. London: HMSO, 955-56. In the same institution a further copy of this document is stored under shelfmark P/123/50. (Cons. 10 October 1823. No 43.) Another copy found in the National Archives of India, New Delhi, was reproduced with many misreadings by Bethlenfalvy, Géza, in his contribution "Alexander Csoma de Kőrös in Ladakh" to Ligeti, Louis (ed.) 1978. *Proceedings of the Csoma de Kőrös Memorial Symposium Held at Mátrafüred, Hungary, 24-30 September, 1976*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 17-18, 23-25.

9. Duka, op. cit., resp. 102 and 104-05.
10. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. XIV. (1845) No 167 (Nov.) 825.
11. On Francke's rapport with Csoma, see Meier, Gudrun 1995. "A.H. Francke - a 'Brother in Spirit' to Alexander Csoma de Kőrös". Osmaston, Henry & Philip Denwood (eds.). *Recent Research on Ladakh 4 & 5*. London: SOAS, 398-403, which gives the needed bibliography.
12. The Tibetan grammar and dictionary published separately and his four contributions to the *Asiatic Researches*, viz., a consistent series of analyses of the bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur and "Notices of the Life of Shakya, extracted from the Tibetan authorities".
13. The opposite, however, is not true. Beside other Hungarians, who were living in the graded order of the counties / sing. *Comitatus*, pl. *comitati*, and growing strata of Romanians (*Vlachoi / Olachi*), there used to be yet a third people in significant numbers in Transylvania from the 13th century onward : the official German immigrants (*hospites*) from the Rhine region, and their descendants, whose privileged segments formed the *natio Saxonica* administered according to Saxon law (*ius*).
14. Letter to C. P. Kennedy, Sabathu, 28 January 1825. reproduced in Duka, op. cit, 24-32.

APPENDIX : A Recent Assessment by Prof. Mária Ivanics, Institute of Altaistics, University of Szeged, Hungary

1. In that period [1820-42], Beg meant already no more than “Mister”. In polite address its use is compulsory even today but its present Turkish form is Bey, e.g. “Mustafa Bey = Mr. Mustafa”. The word has depreciated over time, since originally it meant prince, e.g., Erdel Begi = “Prince of Erdély”, high ranking official, on the steppes chief of clan. In early Hungarian history perhaps “nagyúr” [high lord] would have corresponded to it. ‘Skander Beg’ is correctly derived by Ligeti from the Persian Iskander, which is the equivalent of Sándor in Hungarian. Iskander Beg can therefore be translated by Mr. Alexander.

2. Molla is the vulgar form of the arabic mevla = “God, the lord, a master, a patron, a chief-Justice of a province”, however, in that period it meant only / simply “learned person”.

In the expression *Molla Eskander az Mulk-i Rum*, the “az” (correctly *ez*) is a Persian preposition, which means “of, from, out of.” The original meaning of Mulk is “Possession, a sovereignty, a state”.

Originally, *Rum* meant Roman, later on the meaning spread to the East-Roman Empire, and further to its succession state, the Ottoman Empire. It was quite often that the sultans qualified themselves as sultan-i Rum, i.e., *sultan of Rum*, emphasising thereby their claim over the territory of the Eastern Roman Empire. The meaning of *Rum* of our concern is “Name, given by Persians in modern times to the Ottoman Empire and its

subjects” according to Redhouses’s dictionary, in the dictionary of Steingass, it covers “Greece, Rome, the Roman Empire, Roumelia, Turkey”, in the expression *bilad-i rum* “The cities, kingdoms, or empire of Greece, or of Europe in general”, *bilad* signifies town, country; it also designated every country lying farther west.

As, in that period, family names were not yet used either in the Ottoman Empire or (as far as I know) in Persia people were quite often identified according to their geographic origin. For example the famous Turkish historical writer of the 16th century, Ibrahim Peçevi, obtained the Peçevi, i.e., of Pécs, adjective, as he had been born at Pécs. In this case, the Arabic *î* adjectival suffix was applied. In compound words, the hyphenated *-i* is the Persian possessive case (*izafet*).

Therefore, “Molla Eskander az mulk-i rum (word by word, *molla Eskander from the country of the Rums*) can be safely translated by “Eskander molla from Europe”, or “the European molla Eskander / Iskander”, or colloquially “Student Alexander from Europe”. [Private communication to the author in Hungarian, 6 November, 1998. English translation by P. J. Marczell, who expresses herewith his sincere thanks for it.]

Observation : Had Csoma wanted to stress in Asia a simple European origin, he might have used the term *Philingpa / Peling-pa*, of which he was fully aware already at an early stage of his Tibetan researches. {As attested in his letter addressed on the 5th May 1825 ‘to Captain C. P. Kennedy, Assistant Political Agent and Commanding Soobathoo’. See British Library, OIOC, P/124/22 (Ben Pol. Cons., 15 July 1825, No. 86) and F/4/987 (Board’s Coll. No. 27719 [87])

reproduced in an edited and somewhat erroneous version by Duka in op. cit. 41-65. The text contains examples of “certain signs denoting distinction in gender or definitive and emphatical locution ... such particles being affixed to the nouns”.} Csoma’s contribution to the JASB, vol. II. providing a “Translation of a Tibetan Passport, dated A.D. 1688” includes the following footnote: “The name *mGo-d’kar* (properly white-headed, but rendered by me, above, by Mohammedans) formerly was applied in Tibet both to the Mohammedans of India and to the Europeans. But of late the Tibetans have commenced calling the Europeans by the name of *Philing-pa*, and an European of British India by that of *rGye-Philing* (-pa) or Indo-European.”

On p. 2. of his *Physical Geography of Western Tibet*. 1854 London: William Clowes & Sons, Strachey, Capt. H.[enry], F.R.G.S., drew attention to the observation that “*Filing* is a corruption of the Persian and Turkish *Farang*, denoting Europe.” However, he qualified this statement by adding that “*Gyafiling*, i.e., *Great Frankland*, though properly signifying Europe, is commonly applied to *British India*.” Yule, Col. Henry and Burnell, A.C., in their *Hobson-Jobson* 1886. [1990 Bengal Chamber ed. 352-54.] devoted a lengthy discussion to the word “Firinghee, s. Pers. Farangi, Firingi;...”. In this they admitted that it could mean especially in southern India (black) Portuguese in India or Christians, or both, and could have pejorative connotations. They ended their explanations by noting that “The Tibetans are said to have corrupted Firinghee into *Pelong* (or *Philin*). But Jaeschke disputes this origin of *Pelong*.”

Csoma must have known that the first (Christian) king of Hungary, [since 1083, Saint] Stephen I. (1000- 1038) of the House of Árpád, received his crown [as a vassal] from the [French] Pope Sylvester II. of Rome, whom the Byzantine Church considered as the Frank Patriarch [i.e., a religious factotum of the Frank emperor]. One may presume that he felt little inclination to endorse this pro-western option, in line with the simultaneous policy of the Piasts in Poland and of the Premysls in Bohemia, as it provoked a revolt in Hungary suppressed by ruthless means.

My friend Neil Howard tells me, however, that “if hearers in India might have thought ‘Peling-pa’ pejorative, or signifying a native of India, I guess Csoma would not have thought it appropriate”. Persian usage was well established throughout India, and probably understood in Ladakh, too. The diplomatic language of the East India Co. was Persian, etc.

CHAPTER TEN

CSOMA KÖRÖSI : HIMALAYAN HERMIT OR NATIONALISTIC ACTIVIST?

From about 1823 to his death in April 1842, Alexander Csoma Körösi devoted nearly two decades to his specialization in Tibetan.¹ To use the modern jargon, roughly half of this time was spent on fieldwork, the other half being used mainly for data processing, collateral studies and the preparation of a trip to Central Asia via Sikkim and Tibet. This project, which took a contractual form at a fairly early stage, had started in present-day Jammu-Kashmir, passed its critical hurdles in Ladakh - Zanskar in two rounds and reached its basic objectives in Kinnaur late in 1830. It aimed at the preparation of a Tibetan dictionary and grammar, to be extended to Tangut, if possible. It also covered Tibetan science, geography, religion, history, literature and culture, and entailed the collection of “specimen texts” (i.e., literary extracts and material samples like MSS and xylographs). Editing and publishing took place in Calcutta under the auspices of the Asiatic Society [of Bengal] (ASB). They were delayed by the exploitation-prone Secretary of that learned institution, the concomitant burden of cataloguing Tibetan matter flowing in from Nepal, the shortage of funds and the lack of adequate founts. At its completion, all this long-term work was followed by what in hindsight could be called sabbatical leave. The

break provided the opportunity to concentrate on Sanskrit, the original language of the Tibetan canonical scripts, and also to improve fluency in Bengali, the local language. It lasted almost two years, spent mainly near Siliguri close to both Nepal and Bhutan, but ended again in Calcutta through the appointment to the post of librarian in the ASB. Csoma relinquished this modestly paid yet widely coveted position in May 1841 in favour of a plan to tour Central Asia, to be approached, with stops for research, through Sikkim and Tibet. He died of fever on his way at Darjeeling, still in British-Indian territory, while waiting for the Sikkimese clearance.

His character, incentives and achievements have been described and interpreted chiefly by admirers, especially in Hungary and present-day Romania, with strong echos from India. The result is a hagiography stimulating a cult with plenty of feedback down to the present. Of course, hagiographies are what they are. Here suffice it to say that in celebrations of the icon, the most popular banners show a terrific patriot setting out against all odds in search of (the land of) his ethnic ancestors or depict the unflinching “peregrinus” / pilgrim scholar / weather-beaten wanderer / enterprising traveller, they also venerate the hermit-hero and invoke the European bodhisattva, praising the staunch idealist all through. The present paper provides a brief overview of these aspects before making its point in stressing, to both complement and contrast, Kőrösi’s involvement in “the Bengali Renaissance” through orientalist militancy extended to the spread of public education in the vernaculars. The fascinating north-eastern Indian background is well-known in the subcontinent but not

elsewhere and it had been missing from Csoma's picture before the author's 1992 commemorative lectures in Paris, Budapest and Calcutta eventually published in Hungarian but not in English. The exposé is kept fairly short through confining much information to the notes. The motivated reader, however, might find it worth his or her while taking a look at these as well.

The quest for a "cradle"

Perhaps the most pungent ingredient in the nationalistic tonic of Csoma Kőrösi's legend is his epitaph devised in 1859 by the reformist, Count István Széchenyi, a major figure in Hungarian history on his own: "Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, a poor lonely Hungarian, without money or public acclaim, but inspired by determination and staunch patriotism, who sought to find the cradle of Hungarian people, finally succumbed to the fatigues of his journey here. He sleeps with his everlasting dream far from his homeland, but lives still in the heart of every good Hungarian". It is unusually convincing because heart-felt in glorifying the exemplary self-sacrifice of an underprivileged yet worthy marginal - to be ranked as a nearly contemporaneous saint martyr.² The message alludes to no achievement, neither does it credit its laureate with any success. It resorts to several metaphors and stereotypes dramatised by a twist, e.g., cradle; traveller of a peculiar kind; fatal outcome; tragic separation in space transcended by pious remembrance. All these deserve comments.³

Csoma Kőrösi, who rightfully signed his most prestigious publications as Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, Siculo-Hungarian of Transylvania, claimed that his nation was a tribe of those

Hungarians who settled in ancient Dacia in the 4th century AD. Despite the affinity between the Hungarian and the Finnish languages established as from the end of the 18th c, he thought that they were related to the Huns and more specifically to the “Yoogurs” / “Yoogars”, whose “land he believed to be to the East and North of Lassa and the province of Kham, and on the western confines of China”.⁴

In support of these assumptions, he had many respectable references.⁵ However, his beliefs have been proved to be unlikely by main-stream linguists, if not by many ethno-musicologists and students of comparative ethnography.

The underlying questions of great complexity have been so hotly debated ever since that the quarrel would deserve an anthropological assessment. As a collective idiosyncrasy, it may be ascribed to the complexes of a nation of Eastern origin in a Slavonic setting, a foreign enclave in Central Europe.

According to consensus based on studies of vocabulary and structure, the Hungarian language as such should be considered 3000 years old and undoubtedly a Finno-Ugorian one (linked to Finnish, Estonian, etc.). Nevertheless, when moving East over the Ural from the area of the Volga-Kama confluence, its speakers had adopted a typically Turkish way of life. In other words, from the 5th century AD. on, they had come close to, and mixed with, Turki and other groups, some of whom accompanied them in their westward migration to their present settlement reached around 895. Parts of their former coalitions had remained in the East and were dispersed, assimilated or wiped out by the Mongol Empire founded by

Genghis Khan in the 13th century. Significant Turki and Iranian groups also sought refuge in Hungary during the Middle Ages.

As motley ethnic coalitions / tribal unions can have no common origin and homeland, it does not make much sense to look for their common “cradle” or geographic base. Attempts at tracing back the lineage of a long-standing nomadic people to a precisely fixed origin in the absence of written records can lead only to conjectures, at best, or otherwise to dreams. However, there is harm neither in trying to check complex theories, nor in visiting far away countries that may reveal links, provided a distinction is made between random parallels / coincidences and true traces / indicators. In this context, one should also recognize that in popular beliefs held among the Uyghurs and even the Mongols down to the present, the Hungarians are kinsmen. Byzantine sources, the first Hungarian Chronicles and many much later authors conveyed the same impression.⁶

Csoma Kőrösi's patriotic interest in Tibetan stemmed from the assumptions that Tibet had been a refuge for persecuted people(s) carrying with them their most precious documents and that these writings were carefully stored in monasteries, as attested by the vast corpus of religious translations from Sanskrit. He presumed that the highland sanctuary also kept texts on the migration of Indo-European peoples, on groups the latter had encountered in their wanderings, and even on other nomads, like Mongols and Turks. Such records have been discovered by Paul Pelliot and other explorers of Dung Huang, and their analysis is still in progress. Nevertheless, Csoma was wrong in attributing to Tibet during the period when he was accompanying W. Moorcroft a much more ancient recorded

history than is warranted by our present state of knowledge. At that time he was misled by Moorcroft's gift, the *Alphabetum Tibetanum*, composed by Antonio Agostino Georgi and published in 1762 in Rome. This should not diminish his merits.

“The Pilgrim Scholar”

In contrast to neighbouring Prague (1347), Vienna (1365) and Cracow (1364), the first university in Hungary took shape under episcopal patronage in presentday Slovakia (Nagyszombat / Trnava) as late as 1768-70. It changed status and moved to Buda (Budapest now) fairly soon afterwards. Prior to this development, so belated that it is a national shame, those Hungarians who wanted the benefit of an advanced education had to go abroad. They were mainly would-be clergymen, at least on paper, who matriculated at the theological faculties. In the 16th-17th centuries, most of the Catholics went to Vienna and Rome, the Calvinists enrolled at Heidelberg and subsequently at the Dutch universities; it was only at the end of the 18th century that their flow to the politically conservative Göttingen gained momentum. In the preferences of Lutherans, Wittenberg had been the earlier choice but it was superseded by Jena and Halle with the advent of Pietism. Those happy few who could afford it, shifted from one centre of learning to another, making other trips on the side.

In German-speaking countries where it has survived to the present, the ideal of such programs is called “Bildungsreise(n)” [= Formative travel(s)]. The elegant term in post-Medieval

Latin is “*peregrinatio academica*” and those who undertook foreign studies were titled “*peregrinus*”. [< *per ager / per eger*; pp. *peregrinatus* (=having travelled)]. For Hungarians deprived of a university of their own until an advanced phase of the European Enlightenment, its prestige can be compared to that of a *hajji / hadji* among the Muslims (the adept who has made the *hajj / hadj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca). Poor students felt no shame in raising funds for their “*peregrinatio*” by preaching in friendly parishes and knocking on the doors of patrons; peddling books to improve their finances was also taken for a matter of course, and to reduce costs, they walked, welcoming lifts.

By realizing the “*peregrinus*” model to the full, as he did not cease to peregrinate from one stronghold of learning to another until his death, Csoma became an archetype. This awareness must have given him a lot of strength. It may well explain much of his odd mixture of great humility and extreme arrogance.⁷

In its primary meaning, a pilgrim [word taken from the Middle Latin *peregrinus*] is “a person who undertakes a journey to a sacred place as an act of religious devotion” -says the dictionary. One needs this reminder to appreciate the ambiguities in the title of W. W. Hunter’s seminal, centenary biography of Csoma which, however, did not elaborate on his qualifying the Sicilian pioneer “A Pilgrim Scholar”. Instead of clarifying his concept, he resorted to associations from the classics, comparing Csoma at Darjeeling to the aged Ulysses, who “had become a name for always roaming with a hungry heart; and though made weak by time and fate, yet strong in will, he resolved ‘to follow knowledge like a sinking star’”.⁸

Whatever we may think of it, the label “Pilgrim Scholar” stuck as an *epitheton ornans*. It should pinpoint rather than cloud the fact that Csoma had a purpose which he confirmed over and over again. He wanted to localize the original territory of his mythic forefathers by two methods, viz., with the help of texts and live informants, on the one hand and by getting to the spot on foot, or by any other, more suitable means of transportation, on the other hand. His German university at Göttingen had provided both the romantic spirit and the models for such a project through one of its most famous professors, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, who encouraged his students to explore the sources of major rivers and other goals in the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere. His enthusiasm had been inspired by James Cook’s maritime exploits and was kindled by contributions mainly from Britain. However, it took so heavy a toll that despite its sensational results, it was petering out by the time Csoma fell under its spell.

In India, following back a venerated river to its source is a pilgrimage, one of the most saintly undertakings. Let us insist on the difference. At Göttingen, Csoma’s analogous search for the origin of his people must have been taken for the foolhardy adventure of a late disciple, whereas in religious India it appeared as a passionate pilgrimage. One can easily tell which stand was the more congenial to the Seckler.⁹

In their record-keeping on Csoma, the East India Company bureaucracy adopted the alternate usages “philologuer” and “enterprising traveller”. Both were correct, especially if combined. However, the latter is a misnomer if it is construed to imply that the gentleman was a nomad or that he would fit

contemporary British-Indian categories. Enough has been said above about the Seckler's culturally determined type of mobility. Yet he should be further differentiated from the well-known Himalayan models of geographic surveyors, like the Scottish Gerard brothers (Alexander, Patrick and James Gilbert), and their protective friends, the Fraser brothers (James Baillie, and William) or Captain R. Boileau Pemberton. His approach had not much in common either with those of botanist explorers like Dr. William Griffith, the French Victor Jacquemont or the Austrian Anselm Hügel. His provincial drive of an oppressed lonely folk can bear no comparison to the utilitarian quests of his first Himalayan sponsor, the very special, extremely commercial-minded imperialist, William Moorcroft. Of course, in a sense they were all crazy, constantly staking their health and their lives in particularly adverse physical, material and political conditions. For what? The elation of penetrating into worlds beyond the charted confines?¹⁰

“The Hermit-Hero”

Although Csoma Kőrösi's perception is not associated with such mythical stereotypes as the ever wandering Jew or the Flying Dutchman, long-haul travel and the visit of many hardly accessible exotic places are essential to the aura of the man. They seem to be incompatible with the image of a sage shunning human contacts for the benefit of meditation in unperturbed seclusion. Yet this is the way he has been described by a host of biographers. Among these Hirendra Nath Mukerjee called him Hermit-Hero from Hungary in the subtitle of his commemorative book. The description continues to echo through the work of later authors.¹¹

This portrayal goes back to a very successful pamphlet by Dr. James Gilbert Gerard, who launched an energetic campaign in defence of the Sicilian scholar at a critical moment. He paid a visit to Csoma in September 1828 at Kanam, Kinnaur, and was impressed by the Hungarian's perseverance in the pioneering Tibetan project which he had started approx. eight years earlier with Moorcroft. He must have realised that his host was finishing his programme with poor prospects for further backing and that even the publication of his results was at stake. Any remedy for this situation required strong pressure on both the government and the ASB. Thanks to his connections, the surgeon could alert and mobilise the elite for a happy ending by a dramatic letter to be publicized by the Frasers. That was exactly what he did. The press relayed his compassionate plea all over the world. He made his hero a model of self-sacrifice and a paragon of Spartan self-abnegation fired by the ideals of high scholarship.

His message, stressing biting cold, penury and solitude, deserves extensive quotations, as has been demonstrated by W. W. Hunter. In Kanam, "the cold is very intense, and all last winter he [the Seckler] sat at his desk wrapped up in woollens from head to foot, and from morning to night, without an interval of recreation or warmth, except that of his frugal meals, which are one universal round of greasy tea". Things had been even worse in 1823/24 at Zangla, where "he, the Lama [his guru], and an attendant, were circumscribed in an apartment nine feet square for three or four months". ... The cold made "it a task of severity to extricate the hand from their fleecy resort to turn over the pages". The worthy "appears, like one of the sages of

antiquity, living in the most frugal manner and taking no interest in any object around him, except his literary avocations; which, however, embrace the religions of the countries around him. ... In his conversations and expressions he is frequently disconsolate, and betrays it in involuntary sentiment, as if he thought himself forlorn and neglected". This despondency could be compared to the despair of Christ.

Hunter, however, gives it a Buddhist parallel. He depicts his Siculo-Hungarian hero bearing his Temptation in the Wilderness, alone and hungered, like Buddha; but without angels bringing comfort after his struggles with the Doubting Enemy of mankind.

The portrait is confirmed in several posthumous recollections. In his official communication on the Hungarian's death, Dr. Archibald Campbell reports that his effects included "the suit of blue clothes which he always wore and in which he died. ... His food was confined to tea, of which he was very fond, and plain boiled rice of which he ate very little. On a mat on the floor with a box of books on the four sides, he sat, ate, slept, and studied, never undressed at night, and rarely went out during the day. He never drank wine or spirit, or used tobacco or other stimulants". The negotiator, who obtained the Darjeeling tract from the Sikkim Raja, Col. G. W. A. Lloyd, recalls that in 1836-37 the Tibetologist lived at Titalya on 7-8 rupees a month and was absorbed all the time in the study of Sanskrit, Marathi and Bengali. Theodore-Marie Pavie, the successor to Eugène Burnouf as professor of the languages and literatures of India at the Collège de France, Paris, testifies in the same vein: "I saw him often during my stay in Calcutta, absorbed in phantastic thoughts, smiling at the course of his

own ideas, taciturn like the Brahmins, who, bending over their writing-desks, are employed in copying texts of Sanskrit. His room had the appearances of a cell, which he never left except for walks in the corridors of the building”. A still later (1854) reminiscence from one of the Seckler’s schoolmates, depicts the young comrade wearing always the same sort of clothes, never taking sweets or alcoholic drinks, sleeping on the bare ground or wooden floor, training through such exercises and fasting for the hardships of his projected journey.

Whatever be the case, Csoma’s much publicized self-denial might well be determined by Himalayan preconditions and traumatising financial insecurity on subsistence level entailing the risk of zero income ahead. That they had nothing to do with self-mortification is demonstrated by the scholar getting himself an oven as soon as he could. Incidentally, this very fact discredits outlandish presumptions about the Magyar lexicographer having been initiated in the yogic generation of heat from his own body (tumol).¹²

Anyway, the picture is too simplistic to be true. It is based on mutually reinforcing fragments of partial information, contradicted by other reports. In his quoted letter, Col. Lloyd observes, for instance, that Alexander Csoma did not accept his invitation to remain in his house, “as he thought his eating and living with me would cause him to be deprived of the familiarity and society of the natives, with whom it was his wish to be colloquially intimate”. Jacquemont, who called twice on the famous “Secunder Begh” of Transylvania at Kanam, noted his excellent knowledge of local social conditions and his great popularity blended with high respect in the village. Clearly, there was no need for the famous “Iskander Beg” to go out to

meet people, as visitors were not lacking. In Major Archer's account, he received and helped a whole group of natives coming a long way to see him. In Calcutta, S. C. Malan, who became his pupil, encountered him early in the morning out of town in a garden.¹³ In central Park Street, where he had his rooms, he handled the incoming and outgoing parcel post of the Asiatic Society library and museum and apparently also took care of selling the institution's publications. This involvement will be discussed in its political setting at the end of the present chapter.

The praise of the hermit-hero is often linked with the veneration of the honorary monk, which stems from the belief that during his fieldwork, the Sicilian researcher lived in lamaseries. This is a misrepresentation. The monastery in which he was supposed to stay in 1823-24 at Zangla is non-existent and in 1825-26 he probably spent most of his time in the family domain of his guru at Testa on the Kargyak River, not to be confused with Phuktal (Phug dar) Gonpa overlooking the Tsarap River. At Kanam in Kinnaur he had a well-attested "hamlet" for more than three years, but although this "abode" belonged to the cluster of buildings of the local monastery, it was autonomous. In 1836-37 at Titalya he rented a cheap hut. Yet poetry is free to transcend reality, as with Lajos Áprily, in whose poignant vision the Transylvanian pilgrim disappeared as if engulfed by the giant range of the monastic Himalayas.¹⁴

The Bodhisattva

What made the bonzes who ran Taisho University in an outskirt of Tokyo adopt as Bosatsu a little man from

Transylvania, even if he combined the virtues of a pilgrim scholar, a poor but determined and resourceful traveller seeking the origin of his ethnic group, a Himalayan hermit and a pioneer of modern Tibetan studies? Especially if we consider that the designate himself had no contacts whatever with Japan.

Apparently, Csoma embodied threatened Japanese ideals on the power of will over materialism. His great feat of opening up Buddhism to the West had to be imitated without sectarian or racial considerations. The claim to an official “sanctification”, however, is so extravagant that few people have given it full credit. And outside of Nippon, who can appraise the significance of the honour?

The Hungarian representative at the alleged ritual of recognition on 23 February 1933 covered the event as both the official envoy of the Hungarian Oriental Society and as a professional reporter. As a cosmopolitan journalist and editor in foreign affairs, he was known for his exalted ideas and elated style and records show that he liked to borrow money without paying his debts. The bodhisattva celebration seems to have been his brainchild supported by a dubious society set up only one year earlier. Strangely (or typically) enough, today precious little is known of his life and true identity behind the pseudonym Félix Vályi. Facing these facts and the contemporary political background, I had felt very sceptical of the authenticity of the Buddhist status until it was confirmed to me orally by the professor of Chinese Buddhism from Taisho University in a corridor at the very end of the 35th ICANAS

Congress, Budapest, 7-12 July 1997. Unfortunately, this very friendly contact has failed to generate further information.¹⁵

The militant Orientalist of the Bengal Renaissance

The almost twelve years spent in Bengal by Alexander Csoma Kőrösi (from May 1831 until his death) coincided with the period of socio-cultural revival known as the Indian Renaissance. This renewal started in Calcutta from where it spread all over the subcontinent. It was manifest in literature, language, social organization, political expectations, religious beliefs and manners, often with the hallmarks of the Brahma Samaj and other competing or complementary forums. One of its major focal points was the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the first important learned society of its kind and a model of liberal scientific thinking and outward-looking attitudes. Renowned as a prestigious club of independent means, it successfully pursued any path it felt appropriate. Most of its members belonged to an elite composed of men whom we should call brilliant amateurs, versatile army officers, senior government officials, learned clergymen and high-flying socialites, if they lived today. They broke new ground in research by drawing upon the resources available to “the antiquarian, the linguist, the traveller and the naturalist” in their part of the world.

Csoma worked officially under their auspices throughout his stay in Bengal so much so that he was intimately linked to their projects. The latter became strongly politicized in 1835, when the Governor-General of India in Council, Lord Bentinck, reversed the policy of the East India Co., which had encouraged traditional scholarship in India by pecuniary aid but otherwise had not interfered with education. Backed by

Evangelical and Utilitarian pressure groups, Sir William decided that "... the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and ... all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed on English education alone". As a result, the expenditure on stipends to students of Arabic and Sanskrit for 12 or 15 years came to an end and the publication of selected works in those languages (including the Mahabharata) stopped immediately.

James Prinsep, the successor of H. H. Wilson as the ASB secretary, and many of his friends, disagreed and counter-attacked. They brought their case to the Court of Directors back in London, but to little effect. They also alerted their contacts worldwide to the conflict and continued the publication programme of Sanskrit and Arabic classics using their own funds. This burden strained the budget of their learned institution to the utmost. To make things worse, the presidency's economy lapsed into crisis through spectacular commercial failures and concomitant bankruptcies. In order to keep afloat, the ASB had to tap the international market. This imperative depended not only on heroic leadership and strategic connections but also on menial tasks and manual inputs in a reputedly snobbish and lazy environment. In the light of the autograph letters published in the Appendix for the first time, the vital marketing and handling functions were taken care of by the would-be Bodhisattva Csoma on his return from the North. The librarian also participated in editing the orientalist's emblematic annual, the Asiatic Researches. He shared some of these chores with an illustrious member of the famous Tagore dynasty, Babu Herambanath Thakur.

The Transylvanian could understand full well the ASB executive committee's "conviction that the improvement of the vernacular dialects, nay the very grammatical formation of them, required the cultivation and preservation of the parent and classical languages". He must have also shared their fears that the neglect of oriental studies would free the way to the demoralization and debasement in the native institutions and perpetuate superstition and defective morality among the people. The whole issue must have reminded him of the Hungarian resistance to the absolutist regime of Joseph II (1780-90). In 1784, that monarch imposed German as the sole official language under his rule, making non-German native tongues, like Hungarian, marginal. Public indignation against such a humiliating move had stirred up patriotic feelings, given momentum to the renewal of the Hungarian language and literature and sparked off a revival of nationalistic traditions. On his deathbed, Joseph II cancelled most of his radical reforms, including discrimination among languages. But the coercive nature of his orders continued until 1825 under the conservative reign of Francis II (1792-1835). It was from this world that Csoma had fled in search of the roots and ancestry of his people in a pursuit that was as passionate as it was unrealistic.

The expatriate vernacularist

By common consent, the Hungarian Enlightenment started with the poet György Bessenyei proclaiming in 1772: "It was in its native tongue that each nation has become intelligent". This awareness sparked off intensive work to prove the equality of the native tongue in comparison with German and Latin, the latter being preferred as a bypass to the former. It went hand in glove with the improvement of technical and scientific

knowledge. Public education played a critical role in the process. The shortage of good teachers was offset by “monitorial” methods as propagated by Andrew Bell, who had derived his system from children playing in Madras. By his formula, advanced pupils in a school taught those below them.

It was within such a frame that Csoma was trained at his school at Nagyenyed (now Aiud in Romania). He was also familiar with the success of the model with French liberal aristocrats. Such an experience and intelligence enabled him to help design curricula and schoolbooks in Bengal. His bequest to the ASB of part of his collection of personal reading before the start of his terminal tour, points to this kind of input. The donation contains eight French reports on, and teaching aids for, primary education, all from 1840. As the scholar had no family in France, a country he never visited, even if he had a predilection for French authors, one may presume that his interest in the field had local impetus.

The decisive impulse might have come from Dewan Ramcomul Sen, the native secretary and accountant with the ASB. The “babu” had been close to the Seckler since the latter’s arrival at Calcutta, it was he who paid his salary and bills of expenses incurred under his duties with the library. He was the one who master-minded and pushed the “patsala” scheme with the native managers of the Hindu College. Under this project, Bengali classes were attached to the mainly English-speaking elite institution. Each admitted boys of five to ten years of age. The model had to be propagated all over the country. The network so established could then impart the knowledge of the West to many at low cost through the vernacular by improved

methods, using textbooks brought into line with those in Europe. It was to train young native moherers, munshis, teachers, tahsildars, sircars, etc., enabling those who could afford it, to graduate to higher English education. In his search for European blueprints, Ramcomul Sen went as far as to enlist the assistance of his protector and former boss, H. H. Wilson, Boden Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford, whom he asked to send to him a set of school books worth 100 Rs. For French precedents and ideas, he could rely on the Hungarian librarian with whom he was in constant touch and with whom he had much in common.¹⁶

Summing up. The above paper is a scrutiny of the most formidable European hagiography relating to the Himalayas. Its overview of Csoma Kőrösi's mythical facets reveals that these correspond to culturally pre-conditioned stereotypes. In fact, a careful reconstruction of the hero's biography shows that he acted consciously a whole set of legendary roles and tried to avail himself of their advantages with varying success. These foibles, however, do not diminish his pioneering achievements in Tibetology and Buddhology, for which he paid dearly. The way in which he described himself in two crucial moments is unassuming, straightforward and simple. I have quoted in footnote one of the two confessions in full. Its moving authenticity would deserve another cult than the prevailing one, which, however, offers a psychosociological interest of its own. It reveals on a small European nation, within which many entertain nostalgia for a Central-Asian origin and enjoy sympathy from the remote East. Out of this belief have come schools of Turkologists and Mongolists such as few other countries can boast of.

Credits, notes and references

Credit : I wish to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Neil Howard for having obliged me with reading my full text and suggesting corrections. Of course, any errors, that may still remain, are mine.

1. From “*Siculus* in Latin, *Székely* in Hungarian, *Székler* in German and other continental languages”, as pointed out by Duka, Theodore M.D. 1885. *Life and Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. London : Trübner & Co., 9. [Mánjusíri 1972 reprint, New Delhi.] Term also adopted by W. W. Hunter as a matter of course. [See infra.] It designates a member of a longtime privileged nation in the Carpathean Basin of Transylvania, formerly part of Hungary, now annexed by Romania. Not to be confused with Sicilian.
2. Ferenc Szilágyi shed new light on the historical background of these pious exhortations, which the Hungarian Academy of Sciences put on a slab in 1910 for the funeral monument of their member originally erected at Darjeeling in 1843 by Superintendent Dr. Archibald Campbell. He established that the first version of the text had been engraved on the frame of a gilt-edged medallion showing, in oil painting on tin, Csoma’s grave. The picture had been obtained in London by Count István Széchenyi’s son, Béla. The father converted it into a memento designed by himself. He kept this perhaps on his desk for a while (as legends claim), then he gave it to his brain-child, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. (See 1999. “A legnagyobb magyar - a legnagyobb székely-magyar” in Gazda, József (ed), *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor és tudományos műhelyeink*, Kovászna-Sepsiszentgyörgy: KCsSKME, 220-27.) The commemorative inscription is clearly derived from a passage by the Sicilian himself in the Preface of his Dictionary, given in full in note [8] infra.
3. In considering these methophors etc., the reader should be warned that the “cradle”-metaphor is far from being as romantically old-fashioned as it may appear to some. It recurred in the title of Ármin Vámbéry’s (Arminius Vambery) posthumous 1913 volume *A*

magyarság bölcsőjénél, which depicts the start and progress of Hungarian-Turkish relations as viewed by the author. More recent examples include Lang, David Marshall 1980 (3rd ed.). *Armenia, Cradle of Civilisation*. London: Allen & Unwin; Feuerstein, George, Subash Kak & David Frawley 1999. *In Search of the Cradle of Civilisation: New Light on Ancient India*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

4. The Finno-Ugorian relationship had been demonstrated by Sajnovics, Joannis 1770. *Demonstratio Idioma Ungarorum et Lapponum idem esse*. Hafniae; and by Gyarmathi, Sámuel 1799. *Affinitas Linguae Hungaricae cum linguis Fennicae originis grammatica demonstrata*. Gottingae; they were endorsed in the University of Göttingen. Lower Saxony, a state in personal union with Great Britain through the king. On the stated affiliation, see the Sicilian scholar's letter to Captain C. P. Kennedy, 28 January 1825 in Duka, op. cit, 24. The quotation on the Yoogurs / Yoogars is taken from the official "Report of the death of Mr. Csoma de Kőrös" from Dr. Archibald Campbell, Superintendent at Darjeeling, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. 1842. XI. No 124, 303-309 (306-307), reproduced, with some further distortions by Dr. Duka in op. cit, 145-153 (150). Reflecting oral communications in Kashmir, Csoma's first hint at the "Iegors" in English is to be found in W. Moorcroft's letter of 8 February 1823 to H. H. Wilson. Curiously enough, it is followed by a reference to the Tanguts borrowed from a French best-seller on Russian history, Pierre Charles Lévesque's *Histoire de Russie, tirée des chroniques originales, des pièces authentiques et des meilleurs historiens de la nation*, Paris. 2nd or 3rd ed. [See Marczell, P.J. 1997. "William Moorcroft's Pioneering Memorandum to the Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal on the Letters, Writing, Language and Culture of Tibet and Its Vicinity." Dodin, Thierry & Heinz Räther (eds.) *Recent Research on Ladakh* 7, Ulm: UKAS. 271-96, particularly 294-95].

Csoma's mentions of the Iegors / Yoogars / Yoogurs seem to correspond to one of two linguistically and genetically close, yet

quite separate, peoples in both space and religion, or to both. The Uyghurs, whose Tibetan designation is Yugar, are Muslims who live at present in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Territory (capital Urumqi), while the Buddhist Yugurs or Sarig (=Yellow) Uyghurs are located in Gansu province.

In their isolated highlands, the latter have preserved an exceptional treasure of ethnographic characteristics, e.g., pentatonic scale folksongs showing remarkable resemblance to those of the Hungarians. See *inter alia* Kara, G. 1978. "Uiguro-Tibetica". Ligeti, Louis (ed.). op. cit. infra 161-67; Czeglédy, K. 1984. "The Foundation of the Turfan Uyghur Kingdom". Ligeti, Louis (ed.). *Tibetan and Buddhist Studies Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Birth of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. I. Budapest: MTA, 159-163; Bárdi, László 1992. "An Overview of Xiongnu Research from the Early 1930s to the Present". *The International Academic Conference on Archeological Cultures of the Northern Chinese Ancient Nations*. I. Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, China].

5. E.g. Deguignes [de Guignes], Joseph 1756-58. *Histoire générale des Huns, des Turks, des Mongols et des autres Tartares occidentaux*. Paris: Desain & Saillant; Fischer, Johann Eberhard 1768. *Sibirische Geschichte von der Entdeckung Sibieriens*. St. Petersburg: Kaiserl. Akademie der Wissenschaften; Schlözer, August Ludwig v. 1771. *Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte*. Halle; Thunmann, Johann 1774. *Untersuchungen über die Geschichte der östlichen europäischen Völker*. Leipzig: Crusins; Schmidt, Isaac Jacob 1818. *Fundgruben des Orients VI*. St. Petersburg.
6. Part VI. of the VIIIth vol. of the prestigious best-seller, Lévesque, Pierre Charles. Nlle. ed. 1800. *Histoire de Russie*. Hambourg et Brunswick: Pierre-François Franche et Cie., available at the British Library, London, p. 456 supplies two interesting tables on parallels between the Hungarian and the Vogul, and the Hungarian and the language of the Tartars, respectively. From these comparisons it draws the following conclusion: "The Hungarians are a mixture of

Finns (of whom the Voguls are a branch), of the Tartars, and most probably of several other peoples.” [“Il résulte de ces deux parallèles que les Hongrois sont un mélange de Finnois, (dont les Vogoules sont une branche) de Tartars, et vraisemblablement de plusieurs autres peuples.”] This conclusion does not allow for loan-words adopted through contacts without concomitant genetic or demographic mixing and it disregards linguistic structure. Nevertheless, it is not wide of the mark. Csoma knew the book (probably in one of its somewhat earlier versions, as he quoted from it with W. Moorcoft in their joint memo of 8 February 1823 to H. H. Wilson. See footnote [4] above.)

7. The following note, dated 11 May 1828, bears witness to Csoma propagating the European pilgrimage tradition, in the broad sense of the word, among his native teachers and friends in the Himalayas: “In the evening a Lama, the tutor of Mr. De Koros, who is studying the Thibetian language in Kinour, came to pay me a visit; he was on peregrination to ‘see the world’, and had gone round by Mundee and Sokeet as far as Subathoo; he was furnished with a certificate from his pupil, the Hungarian, (who signs himself ‘Sekunder Roome’,) which stated that the Lama was on a tour of curiosity to see foreign countries”. Archer, Major, late aide-de-camp to Lord Combermere 1833. *Tours in Upper India and in parts of the Himalaya Mountains*, I-II. London: Bentley. 2nd Tour: Journey across the Sutledge from the 4th to the 29th of May, 1828. 233.
8. W. W. Hunter 1885. *Csoma de Kőrös : A Pilgrim Scholar*. Allahabad: The Pioneer Mail. Reproduced as a prologue to the 1972 reprint of Duka’s monograph mentioned supra. In Homer’s epic, Ulysses travels because he wants to get home to his wife, even if the excessive length of his journey raises doubts about his determination to return and is full of adventures. The parallel with Csoma is unfortunate, for the Transylvanian was neither a tramp, nor a vagrant, he stayed at his staging posts, for systematic work, incomparably longer than on the road. Of course, he could be

accused of reading for reading's sake, learning for learning's sake, striking out simply for the pleasure of seeing unknown lands in the "terra incognita of orientalists" and for mixing with all sorts of people.

In the Preface to his 1834 *Essay towards a Dictionary, Tibetan and English*, Calcutta, he assumes such propensities by describing himself as follows:

"... he had not been sent by any Government to gather political information; neither can he be accounted of the number of those wealthy European gentlemen who travel at their own expense for their pleasure and curiosity; but rather only a poor student, who was very desirous to see the different countries of Asia, as the scene of so many memorable transactions of former ages; to observe the manners of several people, and to learn their languages, of which, he hopes, the world may see hereafter the results; and such a man was he who, during his peregrination, depended for his subsistence on the benevolence of others."

Although Sir William quotes part of this passage, his polite assessment strikes rather by its repeated emphasis on the student's dream going back to a [not proven] boyish pledge made "with two fellow-pupils, to penetrate Central Asia in search of the origin of his nation". The promise led to the future Tibetologist refusing flattering offers of tutorships and professorships so as "to spend his remaining twenty-three years in this world as a poor wanderer in fulfilment of his vow." (This view shows remarkable conformity to the Greek equivalent of "peregrinatio": *xeniteia*, which implies expatriation, voluntary exile. As in the project of a mediaeval monk who leaves his home base for a foreign country where he would always feel himself to be an alien. (Concepts in 1980 "Cahiers de Franjeaux 15". *Le pèlerinage*. Toulouse: Edouard Privat.)

9. Points made in Marczell, P.J. 1998. "A göttingeni egyetem sajátos (tudományos) kihívása". Gazda, József (ed), *Kőrösi Csoma*

Sándor szellemútján. Kovászna-Csomakőrös: KCsSKME, 10-20. The paper puts to use two interesting books by Hans Plischke, director of the ethnographic museum at Göttingen: 1931. *Die Ethnographische Sammlung der Universität Göttingen, ihre Geschichte und ihre Bedeutung.* Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht; 1937. *Johann Friedrich Blumenbachs Einfluss auf die Entdeckungsreisenden seiner Zeit.* Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht.

We may also add that the “peregrinus” (more commonly “deák” > “diák” in Hungarian) of the Academic sphere has two major counterparts in Magyar popular ballads and nostalgic patriotic songs. One is the fugitive outlaw (“bujdosó”), who did not surrender in a lost war / defeated revolution / crushed insurrection and shifts in hiding from one place to another to avoid arrest. In his marginality, he is close to rural criminals (“betyár”) on the run. In general, he is featured as a down-and-out, with his profile often blurred. The other standard character is the sorrowful emigrant (without being identified as such), who had to leave his mother country and must eat the bitter bread of alien lands. (E.g., “Erdők-völgyek, szűk ligetek”; “Sirass édesanyám, mig előtted járok”; “Elindultam szép hazámból”; “Ha kiindulsz Erdély felől”. These examples are recorded with their musical transcriptions in Kodaly, Zoltán & Vargyas Lajos 1969. *A magyar népzene.* Budapest : Zeneműkiadó, Nos 114, 178, 117, 176.) In many ways, Csoma behaved as a political emigrant. No wonder then that after his illegal escape to Asia, the Austrian authorities did not react to his application for a passport and that he never tried to return to his native country. [On this aspect, see the last part of the present paper.]

10. The Gerards specialized in Kinnaur, Lahul and Spiti. Like the other professional surveyors around him, Alexander recorded his daily marches with a view of the potential for troop movements. Pemberton was the chief operating officer in the gambit for the pacification of Bhutan. Dr. Griffith, who accompanied him on his mission “to the court of the Deb and Dhurma Rajahs”, undertook.

on his own, several covert reconnaissance trips as well, e.g., to Ava. A brilliant young man with whom Maharaja Ranjit Singh and many of his vassals fell instantly in love, Jacquemont represented the French genius in a large part of the globe where France, three decades earlier, had lost her strategic clout for good. His tour in India was even more an act of defiance and make-believe, than was Ranjit Singh's Punjabi army trained by European mercenaries, several of whom fraudulently passed themselves off as French generals. Hügel was more amateurish, his Indian journal is a Central European gentleman's account of his travels in a far off, highly exotic subcontinent which few others like him managed to see. As the very well paid superintendent of the East India Company's stud near Patna, Moorcroft had to supply suitable horses to the British-Indian army. On his big and fatal journey, he tried to buy good breeds where these could be found, progressing farther and farther north-westward. Overstepping the limits of his official job, he wanted to foster international market expansion in favour of Britain through innovations in the wake of the demented Napoleonic wars, so he strove to introduce Himalayan products through British intermediaries and imitators into the flow of internationally traded goods and to open India and Central Asia to British exports. In the international power struggle he anticipated the "Great Game" between Russia and Great Britain over Central Asia. All of these men had the opportunity to know Csoma, who, unlike them, left no journal or travelogue whatever to posterity.

Csoma was asked to produce a detailed curriculum vitae by the British authorities who ordered his polite detention when, in November 1824, he turned up at Sabathu, the border garrison near Shimla, with a written recommendation from Moorcroft. Later, as a government stipendiary on a Tibetan project, he had to produce progress reports to be able to pursue his researches. These memoranda were leaked to amateur insiders at fairly early dates but originally they had been imposed in a rather humiliating and therefore painful process.

On the explorers mentioned, see, inter alia, Gerard, Capt. Alexander 1841. *Account of Koonawar in the Himalaya, etc.* / 1993 reprint, New Delhi; *Political Mission to Bootan, comprising the reports of Ashley Eden, Cpt R B Pemberton with W Griffith's journal and the account of Baboo Kishen Kant Bose* / 1972 reprint. New Delhi; Jacquemont, Victor 1936 tr. *Letters from India, 1829-1832*, Tr. by C.A. Phillips. London; Hügel, Karl Alexander (Anselm) 1840-1842. *Kaschmir und das Reich der Sikhs. I-IV*. Stuttgart; Alder, Garry 1985. *Beyond Bokhara. The Life of William Moorcroft Asian Explorer and Pioneer Veterinary Surgeon 1767-1825*. London: Century.

11. 1981 and 1984. *The Great Tibetologist Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. New Delhi: Sterling. Kubassek, János 1999. *A Himalája magyar remetéje*. Budapest: Turán. A hermit is a person living in solitude, especially for religious reasons. In the Christian world, he belongs to a tradition set along the Nile in the 4th and 5th centuries. As the original Greek word *eremites* implies, the custom involved retreat into the desert. It was exemplified by St. Jerome and many other saintly misanthropes. Their early West-European imitators include St. Martin of Tours (c316-397).
12. The quotations from Dr. Gerard and Th.-M. Pavie are borrowed from Duka, op. cit., 83, 84-85 and 140, in that order. Pavie's observations were embedded in his remarkably balanced study from 1847: "Le Thibet et les études thibétaines". *Revue des deux Mondes* XIX, 37-58. They are part of a fine appraisal of Csoma Kőrösi's significance in European researches on Tibet. W. W. Hunter's Buddha-comparison is to be found in his op. cit., p. 17. Dr. Campbell's report was disclosed as mentioned supra. Colonel Lloyd's testimony produced on the request of the superintendent was published by the latter in the *JASB* XIV. (1845) No 167. 825. As to Újfalvy, see "Újfalvy Sándor: Emlékezés Kőrösi Csoma Sándorra" in Terjék, József 1984. *Emlékek Kőrösi Csoma Sándorról*. Budapest: MTAK, 213-16. The witness gives so many details that his sincerity and accuracy are hard to question. Yet

on more than one point (like the looks of his illustrious friend) he seems to break loose from reality and his allegations about Csoma's diet and sleeping habits reflect contemporary legends about the preparation of the young Göttingen explorers touched on above.

13. See Malan, A. N. 1897. *Solomon Caesar Malan, D.D. - Memorials of his Life and Writings*. London: John Murray, 48.
14. The Zangla fallacy originated with Moorcroft, who recommended his Hungarian protégé “especially to the particular attention and friendship of Sange Puntzo the principal Lamma of Zangla in Zanskar” into whose establishment he confidently expected the student would be received. He clearly presumed that “the principal Lamma” was the head of a lamasery and his last paragraph asked specified books “to be forwarded to the Gonpa or Monastery of Zangla”. (Letter to George Swinton, Secretary, Political Department, 21 March 1823. British Library, OIOC, MSS. Eur. G. 28; 53: (d) [draft] and MSS. Eur. D. 266; 4, 25-29. [draft]; P/124/5, No 69 (Ben Pol. Cons., 24 December 1824) and F/4/987 Board's Coll No 27719 (87). Actually, “Kaka Sangye Puntsook” (as for Major Archer, in academic transliteration Sangs rgyas phun tshogs) was born at Padum, trained most probably at the ‘Brug pa bka’ rgyud pa dgon pa of Dzongkhul (rdzong khul), near Ating, on the way to Umasi La (5842 m) and Chamba far beyond. He was linked to Zangla only through his marriage with the king's widow there. The local royal family owned a castle and a palace above the village, with an old convent but no monastery near-by. These critical details were discovered separately in the mid 1970s by Dr. Géza Bethlenfalvy from Hungary and Michel Peissel from France. (In English translation see the later's *Zanskar* 1979. London: Collins & Harvill, 107.) Before these travellers, biographers like Duka and visitors like Ervin Baktay in 1928 had endorsed the prevailing assumption, giving them extra support of their own.

In op. cit., 68-72. Duka went out of his way to suggest that his hero's second phase of researches in Zanskar had been carried out

at Phuktal. By repeating that name as often as he could, he made it a critical reference for Csoma's moves to, and from, the region. However, to substantiate this bias, he quoted only one letter set down for H. H. Wilson, Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, "In the monastery of Pukhtar, 21st August 1826", which provides no clue whatever about the Transylvanian's presence there. His motive might have been the purchase of Tibetan texts. In fact, what the scholar had to say on the logistics of his second sojourn in Zanskar was the following: "I reached Teesa in Zanskar, the village of the Lama, on the 12th of August [1825]. He was then absent on some mercantile affairs in the deserts of Tibet. I looked every day for his return. He arrived on the 26th of September. Now I have made arrangements with him for finishing the works I have planned. He has engaged to dwell and labour with me from the 10th of November till the summer solstice of next year, in an apartment belonging to his own family". (Letter dated Tetha, 16 October 1825, to Cpt. C. P. Kennedy, in Duka op. cit., 70. The certified true copies preserved in OIOC, The British Library, resp., provide a somewhat different, more interesting wording: "I reached Tessa, in Zanskar, the village of the Lama, on the 12th of August. He was absent in mercantile affairs, on the deserts of Tibet I expected every day his return. He arrived on the 26th of September - Now I have made arrangements with him for finishing my planned works- He has obliged himself to dwell and labour with me from the 10th of November till the summer solstice, next year, in the monastery of Pookdal, in an apartement belonging to his own family-" F/4/987 Coll N° 27719 /87/.) The writer never gave any details on the location of that apartment. To paraphrase his "Pukthar" letter (whose original is extant in the ASB, Calcutta), it turned out that the Lama was very negligent in assisting him as he desired. He passed but a few months with him, and he could find and employ no other person able for his purpose.

Since Csoma's death, there have been two noted attempts to ascertain his residence at Phuktal, one by Leitner, the other by Baktay. According to Duka [op. cit., 160], the former, who visited

the monastery in 1866, attested that the abbot still cherished the memory of the Hungarian guest, calling him the “Philangi Däsa”. The latter’s old informant from Yugar village, on the other side of the river opposite the monastery, recalled hearsays on Skander Begh and Sangye Puntsog having occupied an abode within the precincts of the gonpa. As the small building had collapsed, only its site could be seen. Although the head lama and his retinue denied this story altogether, the Hungarian pilgrim and his guide, the Padum namgyal, imposed on them a slab stating that “A. Csoma de Kőrös - from Hungary - a heroic pioneer and scholar - lived and worked here - from 12. Aug. 1825 to Nov. 1826. (Baktay, Ervin 1930. *A világ tetején* I-II. Budapest: Lampel [3rd ed. 1934]. 266-78.) The inaccurate and intentionally misleading inscription has been preserved to date but the present occupants of the place disown it as firmly as their predecessors. –Csoma’s secular dwelling at Kanam was publicized not only by contemporary callers like Dr. Gerard and V. Jacquemont but also by later pilgrims like S. Hedin passing in 1908. (*Trans-Himalaya* I-III; 1991 reprint. New Delhi: SBW. T. III. Chapter XXXII: “A learned lama from Hungary”, 401-19.) The blockprinted Tibetan corpus which the Seckler was working himself through, belonged to a private individual named Balee Ram (in Csoma’s spelling). It was stored at the “Khanjur lhakang” with foodstuffs like dried mutton and grapes.

15. My views on the ambiguity of the Japanese endorsement are spelled out in the next chapter of this book. There I suspect a collusion between a politically isolated country engaged in an ostracised, escalating war in Manchuria flooded with Chinese immigrants, and a territorially mutilated, humiliated nation suffering from a similar problem of demographic imbalance. In their cultural loneliness, both tried to give vent to their frustrations through delusions of grandeur. They indulged in an ideology of affinity and brotherhood. On the Hungarian side, their vehicle was the Hungarian Nippon Society founded in 1924, which operated in connivance with the Japanese Imperial House. Over 1932-33, it

organised an exhibition of Japanese painting in Budapest. The Japanese reciprocated with the Csoma commemoration thirty years after the foundation of the host, Taisho University, which had opted for a Jodo-orientation few years earlier. To boost the impact of the event, the Hungarians supplied a portable statue in bronze by Géza Csorba. The artefact was stated to evoke “Kőrösi Csoma Sándor the Bodhisattva of the Western World” in the posture of an Amitabha Buddha. During the Communist era, its supposed continuous veneration gave rise to fantastic tales in the Hungarian media with no validity whatever.

16. The last two sections of the paper are derived from a lecture in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 2 December 1992, whose text was published in Hungarian only. They were based mainly on researches in The British Library Oriental and India Office Collections, London, on findings in the Museum in the ASB, Calcutta, on proceedings and other communications published by JASB, cross-checks in the National Library of France, Paris, standard history books and Ray, Pradyot Kumar 1990. *Dewan Ramcomul Sen and His Times*. Calcutta: Modern Book Agency.

APPENDIX: Supporting material

Autograph letters by Csoma Kőrösi from, and with the kind permission of the Museum of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta*

(1) To Babu Herambanath Thakur /

Dear Sir, / Accordingly as you desired [?] I have sent this day the Establishment's Bills to Babu Ram Comul Sen. / I send herewith to you also the file of the 20th Vol. of the As. Res. formerly kept by Mr. James Prinsep, to show it to Professor O' Shaughnessy. It ends with p. 512, but has been outlined [?] now as far as p. 552 - I have not yet received the clean sheets of the last 40 pages - I have put also the 1st Part both of the 19th and 20th Vol. of the As. Res. that Professor

O'Shaughnessy may see their content, and where they end; since I understand [that] [?] the 2nd Part of the 19th Vol. is now in the press, and will be soon finished; but I have not seen any file of that text. / Pray, please return me all these 3 Volumes, and to inform Prof. O' Sh. that since 5 August last 246 copies of the 1st Part of the 19th Vol. and 234 of the 1st Part of the 20th Vol. of the As. Res. together with some pamphlets of Arabic, had been sent to the Society's Library, from the Military Orphan Press without the Volumes being stitched up. It will be proper to send these also down to the Bishop's College when the 2nd Parts are finished that the whole volumes be stitched together - / Pray, favour us from the Mint with some tickets ("Asiatic Society") to mark the Society's Books - / Yours sincerely / Alex. Csoma / 28th Febry-. 1838.

(2) To Professor W.B. O'Shaughnessy / Officiating Secy. As. Soc. &c /

Sir, / At your desire I was requested some days ago by Babu Herambanath to make ready One Hundred Copies of the Asiatic Researches for transmission to England, I beg leave therefore to send to you in these two wooden cases 50 Copies of Vol. XIX Part 2nd. and 50 Copies of Vol. XX, part 2nd placed into tin boxes, that you may despatch them whenever it will be convenient. / I remain with much respect / Sir, / your obedient servant / Alex. Csoma / 17 Der. 1839.

(3) To H. Torrens, Esq. / Acting Secy. As. Soc. &c /

Sir, / I beg to send to you the Box (containing four volumes in loose leaves, in Sanscrit) that was lately received by you from Nepal, and was put here by B. Herambanath. in the beginning of Sept. last, to be properly packed up - This has been done.

the volumes being placed in a tin box and the wooden case covered with cloth -If this box was intended for M. E. Burnouf, it requires now only to be addressed and despatched for Professor E. Burnouf, in Paris; which, I hope, you will kindly direct to be done - I beg to remain / Sir, / your obedient Servant / A. Cs. Kőrösi /21st Octr. 1840.

(4) [To W.H. Bolst, Esquire]

My dear Sir, /I beg you will receive the enclosed 305 CRs and 7 As (the price of the oriental publications sold by me for the As. Society) together with two copies of lists specifying the works with their prices; and shall feel much obliged, if you kindly will return me the one of these lists, after Dr. Torrens has signed it. /I remain / Yours obediently / A. Csoma / 24th, Dec. 1840. Ps. The Bengal Bank N ...?... of Nos: 923, 24, 839, 26442

* The author wishes to express hereby his thanks to the former administrators, to the staff and to the reprographic services of the famous institution for their warm welcome and ready help in his researches in February 1992. He is particularly grateful to Mrs. Manjula Chowdhury for her guidance in a maze of records and manuscripts.

These letters were published in English for the first time in an earlier version of the present paper : *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, Vol.5 No. 2 (April-June 2001). 49-51.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

BODHISATTVA CSOMA KÓRÖSI : MYTH OR REALITY?

In 1948, the Hungarian art historian Lajos Fülep (1885-1970) received a letter in English from Rome stating :

“The One Hungarian who has won universal significance since the beginning of the 19th Century, Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, the founder of Buddhist Studies and of Tibetology in the Western World, who has been canonized as a Buddhist Saint in Japan in February 1933, in my presence and at my initiative, is almost forgotten by the new generation of Hungary, while in India thousands of Scholars, Christians and Buddhists, Hindus and Chinese, Japanese and others go on pilgrimage to Csoma’s tomb, 20,000 feet high in the Himalayas, above Darjeeling, where Csoma died of malaria in 1842. His tomb is a National Monument cared for by the Government of India”.¹

The event mentioned in this extract has been described in different terms in Hungary and Japan, its meaning constructed in different, sometimes extravagant, ways, while its timing, the protagonists and the motivations behind it have been paid little attention. Under its impact, Csoma’s veneration became a worship at least by one community enjoying serious official status. The alleged eastern sainthood has impressed and

intrigued the biographers and the public alike but still awaits impartial appraisal. As it is believed to stand mainly on merits accumulated in Zanskar-Upper Bishawar,² I take the opportunity to submit the case to learned opinions on this occasion. In doing this, I am trying to act as a substitute for someone with much more competence in this field, Dr Bulcsu Siklos, who finally declined to discuss the matter in March 1992 at the Csoma de Kőrös Symposium in Paris, partly for lack of access to the literature on the subject. I have taken advantage of his bibliographical researches, and added on the subject. The alleged “canonization” seems to have been induced by a present made by the Hungarian Oriental Society to the Japanese people. This is indicated by the official invitation to the presentation ceremony, as reported by Vályi, which runs as follows:

Taisho University, Tokyo. Commemoration for Alexander Csoma de Kőrös (1784-1842)

Hungarian Pioneer of Oriental Learning. Author of the first Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary (1834) and the first Sanskrit Vocabulary of Buddhism, one of the most heroic figures in the History of Knowledge, whose memory is honoured all over the world on the occasion of the arrival of his Statue in Japan, offered by the “Hungarian Oriental Society” of Budapest as a gift to the Japanese people and as a manifestation of the Hungarian friendship in appreciation of the great services of Japanese Scholarship to Oriental Research and International Co-operation, to be held on February 23, 1933, Wednesday Afternoon 3 o'clock in the

Auditorium of Taisho University, Nishi Sugamo-machi, Tokyo.³

The statue involved was 29.1 cm (9.57 inches) high, made of bronze by Géza Csorba⁴ and represented an idealized Csoma sitting like an Amitabha Buddha.⁵ Inscribed on the figure are the words: “KŐRÖSI Csoma Sándor / THE BODDHISATTWA OF THE WESTERN WORLD. CSORBA”.⁶

Both the Hungarian and Japanese reports concurred on the importance of this ceremony attended by several hundred people, including high-ranking government officials, diplomats and distinguished scholars. After the greeting by Dr Shiio Benkyo, Dr Félix Vályi, the representative of the Hungarian Oriental Society delivered his commemorative address.⁷ This was followed by a ritual carried out by the President of Taisho University. The programme continued with three lectures. (According to Vályi, it ended by singing sutras in front of Csoma’s statue surrounded by burning candles.)⁸ If we trust Vályi,⁹ the contents of the three lectures can be summed up as follows:

Junjiro Takakusu, Sanskritologist, editor of the *Encyclopedia Buddhica*: Japan should learn from the example of Csoma, imitate his self-sacrifice in order to preserve its lead in Buddhist studies which have been taken over by Western universities, as under the impact of materialism, Japan has neglected its own spiritual values. Csoma risked his life in establishing the scientific foundations of Buddhist studies and deserved the great thankfulness of the Japanese spiritual world as the *first Western hero of Buddhism*. Buddhism is not a

sectarian movement, it is not restricted by racial limits and therefore is glad to include Csoma among the historical heroes of Buddhism, among the canonized “bodhisattvas”.

Forty-one years earlier than this ceremony, Professor Ekai Kawaguchi, the famous Tibetologist, who visited Central Asia four times, had decided to continue Csoma’s work. It was the study of Csoma’s life which induced him to go to Tibet. In 1896 he made a pilgrimage to Csoma’s tomb in Darjeeling and tried to penetrate into Tibet secretly through Nepal. He obtained his visa for entry into that country only when the Nepalese consul noticed that he was studying Csoma’s dictionary. Csoma was venerated everywhere that Kawaguchi went in Nepal and Tibet. He was considered as a bodhisattva a long time before it was realized that his tomb attracted many Buddhist pilgrims who copied and cherished its inscriptions. He is one of the greatest saints of Buddhism. As the Hungarian Bosatsu [the Japanese term for bodhisattva], Csoma will live forever in the hearts of Japanese Buddhists.

The historian Kurakichi Shiratory, who had spent half a year in Hungary studying historical research there, dwelled on the contribution of Hungarian Oriental researches to world history and stressed that the Japanese people had special reasons for treating the Hungarians as brothers.

Vályi’s address itself was published in English in the *Journal of the Taisho University*, Tokyo, Vol. XV, June 1933, 1-6. It described Csoma as “one of the greatest Orientalists of the Western World”, who discovered for the Western mind the Three Treasures of Buddhism so long hidden before the

Christian world, “one of our Holy Men in the West”. After meeting Moorcroft in 1822,

“Twenty years of untiring devotion and sacrifice followed in Kőrösi Csoma’s life, devotion to a field of study of which the world the then was entirely ignorant and which became the starting point of Western Research on Buddhism. The years passed under privations such as have seldom been endured, and his patient labours in the cause of science, have given the mos. powerful stimulus to Oriental Research ... Kőrösi Csoma’s Life and Work symbolises in the face of the sceptical Western mind *the great miracle of Will Power*. Japan, herself a miracle of Will Power in face of a sceptical world, will certainly appreciate the symbolism” of Csorba’s statue presented by the Hungarian Oriental Society. “Legend took hold of the solitary Hungarian. The Lamas visiting his tomb ... take their visitors to the grave for a moment of silent prayer. They accepted Kőrösi Csoma as a Holy Man, as one of *their own* bodhisattvas, who came from Magyaristan to open the heart of the Western world to the study of Buddhism”.

Unlike Vályi, the Japanese account also provides details on the commemorative exhibition staged before and after the ceremony in the Sanskrit Seminar Office, where works of Csoma and related materials were shown publicly with the cooperation of the Taisho University Library and the Tokyo University Library. Along with those were also the personal belongings of Ikegami, Ikeda, and Arimatsu. Csoma’s Tibetan-English Dictionary, Tibetan Grammar, Tibetan studies, and Tibetan Mahavyutpatti, along with the bronze image, all were exceptionally interesting exhibitions. Rev. Tokan Tada was kind enough to send, via Professor Jiko Hazama, a picture of Csoma’s tombstone from far distant Tibet.¹⁰

Vályi, however, added that on March 7th, prior to meeting Secretary of State Oaya, he had been to a reception given by the Minister of the Imperial House, the President of the Imperial Museum and the Head of the Department of Fine Arts. It was after these preliminaries that Csorba's statue was solemnly accepted - against a calligraphic receipt - by the Museum of the Imperial House. The hosts reciprocated with two albums reproducing in colour the silk collection at the *Sosho-in, Nara*.¹¹

At this point, one may question Vályi's report on what the Journal of the Taisho University called simply the "presentation ceremony of the bronze image from Dr. Vályi to President Fukuda of Taisho Univ". Here is the writer's translation of Dr Vályi's version on what happened :

"In accordance with the third point of the programme, the Rector of Taisho University, Abbot Fukuda took solemnly thereafter from the hands of the Hungarian speaker the statue of Csoma, he placed it on the lotus-throne of the Buddha-altar, then, in complete silence, *he embarked on the 10-minute sanctification* which, in Tendai rite, is made effective through the symbolical gestures of Buddhism. These are wonderful motions of the hands. In old Sanskrit such mystical gestures of the fingers are called *mudras*,...

The artists in the public commented with wonder for days the manual magic of this prestidigitation. These symbols stem from a tradition of two thousand five hundred years, they stand for the deepest mysteries of the Asian soul. In this case they signified that the head priest of the Tendai Monastery made Alexander Csoma de Kőrös a saint, a saint of Buddhism,

whose Sanskrit name is *Bodhisattva* (the Buddha to come), while in Japanese the Sanskrit word became *Bosatsu*. Only the canonizing rite of the Roman Church can be compared to the extraordinarily impressive Buddhist ceremony, which tremendously surprised all the European and American guests who were present. It was only then that they realized that Japanese Buddhism bestowed one of the highest honours in world history on the Hungarian ascetic buried at Darjeeling one hundred years earlier, who had opened the soul of the Western world to the values of Buddhism, and gained such a tremendous importance for Hungary”.

Would the Japanese protagonists have endorsed this rendering?

The Dean of Academy, Taisho University, Masao Ichisima, recalled the 1933 commemoration in March 1981, apparently as a supplement or background information to the presentation of a new theory on Csoma's birth. He relayed Prof László Kádár's claim on Csoma having been born five years later than that held by consensus.

He headed his contribution with the title “Kőrösi Csoma Sándor - Further information concerning the birth date of the first Western Bodhisattva and his bronze image”, recounted how he took on Nov. 9th, 1973 the son of Prof. Kádár, Dr Imre Kádár, to the image and paid their respects to the great Hungarian hero” and concluded : “He was recognized as the first Western Bodhisattva in a ceremony at Taisho University on 22 February, 1933”. In this wording he used no quotation marks. However, his conclusion was accompanied by a footnote referring to L. Kádár.

In the last minutes of the 35th International Congress of Asian and North African Studies (ICANAS), 7-12 July 1997, Budapest, I had the opportunity to ask the Professor of Chinese Buddhism of Taisho University in the corridor of the venue whether his learned institution considered Csoma a *Bosatsu*. His answer was decidedly positive. Unfortunately, he could not provide any details on the matter.

The subtleties of bodhisattvahood are not easy to grasp. In this regard, we may ask three questions: “What is a Bodhisattva? Could Csoma qualify for being one? Could the Japanese involved have taken him for one?”

I shall answer the first question on the basis of Dr N. Bakshi’s study on the *Iconography of the Bodhisattva (Bosatsu) images in Japan and India*.¹²

In a simplified Mahayanist view, the Bodhisattva (*Bodhi*: Enlightenment; *sattva*: essence) had acquired great spiritual merit, and was capable of attaining Enlightenment, that is, Buddhahood.¹³ He was, however, foregoing this since he had taken the vow of helping all beings to reach the same ideal state and until this was achieved, he would not become a Buddha. As a personification of boundless compassion and refusal of *Nirvana*, he is an ideal. He is supportive, able and willing to lead the faithful to the paths of Enlightenment, to confer unbound benefits and provide reliefs from afflictions. The Theravadins or the Hinayanists, however, would hardly subscribe to such a doctrine, as in their belief *Bodhi* could be achieved only by the great *Arhat* (worthy), like Sakyamuni, while Arhathood itself lies beyond the reach of others except

disciples or monks (*Bhiksu*). The followers of their system (*Sravakas*) seek only their own liberation through their own individual practices.¹⁴

Other schools of religious thought appreciate the status of the Bodhisattva still otherwise. While the Sāilā school regards the Bodhisattvas as average beings, who “may be born in the lower states of existence”,¹⁵ the spiritual successors of the Mahasanghikas in the early period of Mahayanist Buddhist history hold that “the Bodhisattva, like the Buddhas, are supramundane and they do not pass through the embryonic stages in the mothers’ wombs like the ordinary beings”.¹⁶

In the *Sambhogakaya* (Body of Enjoyment) concept derived from *the Trikaya* (three bodies) doctrine,¹⁷

“All the Bodhisattvas assuming various names are but the spiritually glorified transcendental Personages, possessing wisdom and compassion, beyond all historicity”. With the Buddhas and various lesser divinities, they belong to a specific category of the Buddha-nature.¹⁸

In *Tantrik* belief, all these deities are the “bright influences of the “bright essence uncreate” of the Absolute”.¹⁹ Through the combined concentration and meditation of esoteric *yoga*, one can visualize their forms.²⁰

In the Buddhist pantheon of Vajrayanists, the five central Dhyani (meditative) Buddhas (also considered as *Jina* (conqueror) “split themselves up in the form of Bodhisattvas and their female principle who are responsible for creating everything found in existence”.²¹

They are the progenitors of almost all the Bodhisattvas. Their spiritual families serve “as the *upaya* or means or something material of perceptible for devotion in the process of realisation of higher truth”.²²

They “lead to the “formless” existing beyond discriminative knowledge”.²³

This is how their material representations, the icons, are integrated into the process of one’s efforts to realise the Ultimate Truth.

Biographical data on Csoma do not allow an easy fitting of him into any of the classical spans of these interpretations. There is no evidence of his being a Buddhist and even less on taking the vow to cultivate the perfections of different magnitudes and various forms of ascetic practices, progressing thus through the various stages of sanctification, the *dasabhumi* or ten fields, analysed in the *dasa-bhumika-sutra* with their respective *paramitas*.²⁴

Apparently, Csoma did not engage in strict religious practices. However, he was a religious specialist who acquired his theological knowledge of Buddhism by conscious, painstaking work, despite inhumane hardships. He showed abnegation and other moral qualities and made Buddhism accessible to Westerners. In the light of texts like *the Upayakausalya-parivarta*, he might have approached Buddhahood through these virtues.²⁵

One may wonder if the fate of Csorba’s statue in Japan can give a clue to the stand of the Taisho University monks on the issue.

The Tokyo National Museum registered the Hungarian donation on 23 March 1933 as “Name - Csoma image ... Csoma, Hungarian, Tibetan Buddhist Scholar”. - “The image of Kőrösi Csoma Sándor (1784-1842), a pioneer Buddhist Scholar in Europe”. In 1972 the statue was located by Dr Dénes Balázs, a prominent Hungarian geographer visiting Japan. He found it in an air-conditioned storage room of the National Museum at Ueno Park. It was carefully wrapped in a cloth and kept in a glass showcase. Since the Second World War, it has been exhibited to the general public only once, when a Buddhist Conference was held in Tokyo.²⁶

Clearly, it was not used as a vehicle for invocations in search of Enlightenment, for removing distress or for enlightening the souls of the departed ones in the next world - the three possibilities that come to mind regarding Bodhisattvas. It seems that the image did not conform to Japanese Bosatsu iconography. According to D. N. Bakshi, the Bosatsu icons generally feature Prince Siddharta before he became Buddha. They are, therefore, ornate with princely crowns, earrings, necklaces, a thin scarf and other stately paraphernalia. Maitreya Bodhisattva (*Miroku*) figures, however, may portray an ascetic “dressed in the fashion of the Buddhas” (which they will become).²⁷

Typically, they are then represented on a seat put on a lotus pedestal and covered with cloth, with the right foot bent horizontally and placed over or near the knee of the left foot which remains pendant. The fingers of the right hand slightly touch the cheek, while the image is in a contemplative mood.²⁸

Csorba's portrayal of Csoma as a Buddha appeared probably

not less incongruous to Japanese Buddhists than it would to European Christians a Japanese Catholic martyr crucified by Hideyoshi, depicted on a Japanese painting as God Almighty in, say, Michelangelo's style. If so, Abbot Fukuda's presentation ceremony might have been propitiatory of Hungarian fantasy rather than canonizing.²⁹

The inscription "KÓRÖSI CSOMA SÁNDOR - THE BODDHISATTWA OF THE WESTERN WORLD" was perhaps easier to put up with. It could be taken at its face value, letting the Hungarian donors take the responsibility for its tenets. Csoma's bodhisattvahood would then be a Western status *sui generis*.³⁰

I suspect that Csoma was accepted by a group of Japanese Buddhists - but not as *one of their own bodhisattvas*, a difference crucial to Vályi. Kőrösi's uncritical worshippers felt free to project into it their notions of Catholic saintliness. As Catholic sainthood is validated officially by the Pope, Christians expected something similar to be done for Csoma de Kőrös by a Buddhist hierarchy.

An approach of such a nature seems to underly a French article of 35 pages by Bernard Le Calloc'h on "the Hungarian bodhisattva".³¹

In another context, this author pointed out that sometime before 1975, a stupa had been erected to the memory of Kőrösi in Vietnam presumably by a Japanese bonze.³²

In his Presses Universitaires de France contribution, he described in detail the building and inauguration in Budapest of

another stupa in Tibetan style, consecrating Csoma's proclamation as bodhisattva by the Japanese Buddhists 50 years after that event.³³

The ambiguity under this head became a well of fertile inspiration. It could even secure legal status, political recognition, advantages in kind and a source of pecuniary income. In fact, five years after the jubilee inauguration, yet another stupa honouring Csoma was set up at Szilvásvárád, Hungary, by the same community. This samgha enjoyed considerable renown through its seminar, the Kőrösi Csoma Institute for Buddhology, established jointly by the Hungarian Buddhist Mission and the Budapest Centre of the Arya Maitreya Mandala (founded by Lama Anagarika Govinda). It benefited from government approval as an institution of higher education.

More recently, further stupas have been constructed in Hungary by other Buddhist groups, whose religious movement seems to gain momentum.

Csoma's popularity, however, spreads far beyond Buddhist circles. It is not only nationwide but international. This is attested to by a treasury of articles, poems, novels, works of visual arts and the number of educational, cultural and other institutions glorifying his name.³⁴

Contests among schools, youth rallies, conferences and exhibitions perpetuate his memory.³⁵

We live in a complex world, where opinions and behaviour are

easy to manipulate and sincerity may be corrupted by incompetence. This is no reason for getting discouraged. In pursuing my attempt to clarify somewhat the true meaning of the celebration organised jointly by a club of Hungarians and a congregation of Japanese scholars, I shall try to determine the interests of the main protagonists on three levels: individual, institutional and governmental.

These motivations had to be strong, as the commemoration under review did not mark any particular event in Csoma's life. In other words it was probably not easy to justify. On the Japanese side, Le Calloc'h perceived the 30th anniversary of Kawaguchi's return to Japan. From this observation he jumped to the following conclusion which he did not substantiate: "This is why ... on hearing that the Hungarian Orientalists intended to present to his country a statue of their illustrious compatriot, he, who was full of admiration for this brave pioneer of Buddhistic studies, decided that one had to do something spectacular in his favour to strike the imagination. It was at that moment that he took the initiative to organise the ceremony during which the Hungarian scholar had to be proclaimed bodhisattva".³⁶

The French biographer could also have established, that it was opened to the Amidist Jodo current (as well as to the esoteric Shingon creed) five years prior to the presentation of Csorba's statue (which represented precisely an Amitabha Buddha).

On the Hungarian side, there were probably personal and institutional ambitions at play. In 1932, Vályi set out to realize his old dream of a trip to the Far East, stopping over in India (for

one month), Ceylon, China and Japan and possibly staying in historical monasteries at Buddhist Centres.³⁷

He was a cosmopolitan journalist and writer who liked to take personal initiatives to recommend and sponsor colleagues, organize lectures, launch periodicals, open schools and promote philosophic ideas.³⁸

It was most probably he who masterminded the deputation to Japanese Buddhist circles, bringing with him a small statue as a gift. He placed high hopes on such a mission, pointing out: “in the history of Japan, the arrival of Buddhist statues from abroad gave often rise to lasting spiritual movements. It was with the help of works of art that the Chinese emperors gained the friendship of Japan 1,200 years ago. The beginning of Japanese Buddhism itself can be traced back to the present of a statue which arrived from Korea 522 A.C.”.

In his adventurous plan, he obtained the support of a banker and former prime minister, Sándor Simonyi Semadam (1864-1946), who was the co-president of the Hungarian Nippon Society founded in 1924. This public figure had good contacts in Japan, as it was he who prepared the exhibition of Japanese painting in 1932 in the National Exhibition Hall (Nemzeti Szalon), Budapest.³⁹

Actually, thanks to its Japanese relations, the Hungarian Nippon Society would have been a more obvious donor to Japan than the Hungarian Oriental Society. The latter came into existence only in 1932, at the time of Vályi's first trip to the Far East and did not compete with the Nippon Society, whose scope was much more limited.⁴⁰

The celebration staged in Tokyo in honour of Csoma Kőrösi was an ingenious means of publicizing its birth to the general public.

Broad-based, the Hungarian Oriental Society could cover all the Near, Middle and Far East, including India, reaching also farther out than yet another oriental association, the Turan Society (founded around 1911 but penetrated by the “Casino-spirit” of the era and turned unscientific).⁴¹

Higher political considerations could also militate in favour of the type of celebration which Vályi provoked in Tokyo. Japan had to fight against its isolation brought about by the so-called “Stimson doctrine” and the moral condemnation by the League of Nations in reaction to its invasion of Manchuria in 1931-32, the creation of the Manchukuo satellite state, its political recognition and the claim of the right to occupy it. Increasing international hostility to Japanese dumping also prompted the search for foreign sympathy. Hungary did not recognize Manchukuo until 1939. However, as a nation fighting for the revision of the Treaty of Trianon which deprived it of historical possession of territories in the wake of the first world war, it could understand Japan’s grievances against millions of Chinese immigrants submerging and provoking its citizens and threatening its communication lines in southern Manchuria.⁴²

Hungarian ambassador Pelényi reported reaching reciprocal sympathy along such lines in Geneva with Japan’s ambassador Sugimura on 19 January 1933.⁴³

Diplomatic ties, however, remained loose until 1939, when the two countries stationed consuls and ambassadors in each

other's capital cities for the first time. By then the Hungarian Orientalists had withdrawn from Far East - West lobbying, leaving the responsibility of managing Hungarian-Japanese relations to the government.

To sum up: Csoma was used to promote East-West understanding by an intellectual adventurer and nationalistic lobbies six years before these were superseded by professional diplomats. His credit has been drawn upon, sometimes in a similar fashion, ever since without lasting damage to its rating.⁴⁴

The specialists, who respect Kőrösi's achievements, should see to it that his memory is protected against partisan politics combined with charlatanism and the practice of make-believe.

Notes and references

1. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Department of MSS: 4590: 174.
2. At Zangla (3 May 1823 - 6 November 1824), allegedly at Phuktal and Testa (6 June 1825 - end of November 1826), at Kanum (early June 1827 - 18 November 1830). [See, e.g., Le Calloc'h, Bernard (1986). "Sur un point d'histoire concernant Alexandre Csoma de Kőrös". *La Nouvelle Revue Tibétaine*. No. 13. 82-91.]
3. The original title of Csoma's dictionary was *Essay towards a Dictionary Tibetan and English*. The compilation did not supply Sanskrit equivalents to the English words. Csoma's Sanskrit Vocabulary of Buddhism was not printed in his lifetime. Nevertheless, he published a *Grammar of the Tibetan Language* simultaneously with his Dictionary.
4. See Ichisima Masao (1981). "Kőrösi Csoma Sándor". *Annals of the*

Institute for Comprehensive Studies of Buddhism, Taisho University. No. 3 (March). 47-58, 58.

5. Remark by Dr Ernest Hetényi to the author, 9 May 1992.
6. Op. cit. [4], 54.
7. Vályi Félix (1933). "Kőrösi Csoma Sándor (1784-1842)". *Journal of the Taisho University*. Vol. XV. June, 1-6.
8. Vályi Félix (1933). "Kőrösi Csoma Sándor szentté avatása Japánban". *Pesti Napló*. 2 April, 34-35. [In this article the Japanese invitation to the commemoration is reproduced in English. Its claim stating that Alexander Csoma de Kőrös was the author of the first Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary (1834) is incorrect. See [3] above.]
9. Instead of taking his words in op. cit. [2] with a big pinch of salt. See e.g., my doubts on Kawaguchi's testimony.
10. Op. cit. [4], 53.
11. Op. cit. [2], 34.
12. Calcutta: The Centre of Japanese Studies. 1991.
- 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. See op. cit. [12], respectively, pp. 10, 12, 16, 14, 17.
- 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24. See op. cit. [12], respectively, pp. 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29, 18 and 115-117.
25. On the importance of religious specialists who did not take the full set of precepts (*upasampada*) in the development of Mahayana (which "itself should be properly called Bodhisattvayana" - as claimed by B. N. Bakshi in op. cit. [11], 11. see Hirakawa Akira (1987). "Stupa worship". *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. New York: Macmillan. Vol. 14, 92-96.
26. Balázs Dénes (1981). "Megvan Kőrösi Csoma Sándor japáni

szobra”. *Magyar Nemzet* 23 February, 9. (Dissemination through the press of a finding communicated to the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society by Dr Balázs on 17 June 1972. The text of this communication is deposited at the Magyar Földrajzi Múzeum, 2030 ÉRD, Budai út 4.)

- 27, 28. See op. cit. [12], respectively, pp. 33, 37.
29. In fact, it is hard to see why such a ceremony was needed if the statue was given to the Museum of the Imperial House (as Vályi informed the Hungarian public) or offered to the Japan Oriental Society (as Dr Balázs was told in 1972).
30. It reminds one of Father Gabet and Father Huc, two French Lazarist missionaries, introducing themselves in Mongolia and Tibet as “Lamas of the West”. That happened around 1844-1846. See Thevenet Jacqueline (1989). *Le Lama d'Occident*. Paris: Seghers.
31. Le Calloc'h, Bernard (1987). “Alexandre Csoma de Kőrös le Bodhisattva Hongrois”. 353-388. *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*. CCIV. 4. (Oct.-Dec.).
32. Correspondence with Dénes Balázs and Ernő Hetényi, reported by the former in 1991. “Kőrösi Csoma sztopája Vietnámban”. *Földrajzi Múzeumi Tanulmányok*, 10. 68-69.
33. Op. cit. [31], 354-358.
34. See Estéli József - Hetényi Ernő (1984). *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor dokumentáció*. Budapest: Buddhist Mission.
35. See, e.g., the provisional programme in Hungarian and French on the events to mark the 150th anniversary of the death of Csoma de Kőrös, produced in March, 1992 by the Committee for the Commemoration.
36. Op. cit. [34], 363.
37. See his letters in Hungarian to L. Fülep, respectively of April 9th, 1932 from the Hotel Bristol, Budapest and of October 21st, 1932 from

the “Conte Verde” liner of Lloyd Triestino at Colombo. (The Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Department of MSS: MS. 4590: 170.

38. Conclusions reached on the basis of the correspondence kept by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Apparently, he had no scruples in improving on facts for the sake of a good story. Thus, he introduced Csorba as a Székely - like Csoma, whereas the sculptor was born in the Lipto district, northern Hungary, where his family had a documented Jewish past for generations. (Finding based on researches at the Database of the Hungarian National Gallery.) One should also put in doubt his report of Kawaguchi’s words on Csoma’s influence on his trip to Tibet. Kawaguchi published a detailed journal of this venture without any mention of Kőrösi. (1909). *Three Years in Tibet*. Benares and London: Theosophical Publishing Society.

There he tells us how reading in Chinese the *Aphorisms of the White Lotus of the Wonderful or True Law (the Saddharma Pundarika)* “determined” him at Kyoto “to undertake a visit to Tibet”, and compare the Chinese texts with Tibetan translations as well as with the original Sanskrit texts contained in Mahayana Buddhism. To this purpose he decided to attempt to study the Tibetan language and Tibetan Buddhism, and “to discover Sanskrit manuscripts in Tibet, if any were there available”. (Preface: pp. V-VI.) Before setting out in earnest, he spent 17 months at Darjeeling, studying Tibetan with the assistance of Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Das.

This highly educated Bengali “posing as a pious Buddhist scholar, although actually on the British payroll and a Hindu ... twice visited Tibet, first in 1879 and again in 1881”. [Hopkirk Peter (1987). reprint of *Trespassers on the Roof of the World*. 55. Oxford, etc.: Oxford University Press.] Kawaguchi was quite aware of his background. He learned vernacular Tibetan language at the local Government School. (Tutor: Prof. Tumi Onden. Head Teacher of the language department of Tibetan in that School. [pp. 12-13.] He entered Tibet from Nepal where he had been admitted with a pass

obtained at the border at Beeganj in no time under the identity of a Chinaman living in Tibet. [p. 31.] This formality was certainly facilitated by a companion of his, the Lama of the Great Tower of Mahabodha in Nepal, to whom he had been recommended «by Mr. Jibbahadur, an official of the Nepalese Government, then residing in Calcutta». [p. 29.] Two and a half years later, Kawaguchi had returned from Tibet through Darjeeling, where he worked three months on a grammar of the Tibetan language to append to the Tibetan-English dictionary of his old friend and host, Sarat Chandra Das. [p. 676.] In this endeavour, they tried to improve on what Csoma had produced 67-79 years before them. [The page references provided here pertain to Kawaguchi's *Three Years in Tibet*.]

39. See *A Magyar-Nippon Társaság Magyar-Japán Emlékkiállítására*. Budapest, 17. (in its summary in English).
40. As it had been set up to cultivate the memory of “the Hungarian prisoners-of-war being redeemed from the Bolshevik captivity” by the Japanese interventionist forces, it devoted itself to “Bushido” (“the code of behaviour attributed to the warriors of feudal Japan”), and it tried to popularize the poet Sándor Petőfi (1823-1849) and the pianist-composer Ferenc Liszt (1811-1886) in Japan. See the quarterly journal *Távol Kelet*, February 1936.
41. Personal communication by Mrs Marianne Mészáros, daughter of the Orientalist Dr Zoltán Felvinczi Takács (1880-1964).

The Hungarian-Nippon Society, however, also seemed to tamper with history. In the catalogue of its 1936 exhibition, for instance, it described item 28 as follows: “The statue of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös. Copy by Géza Csorba of his own work, which had been sent to the University of Tokyo by the Hungarian Oriental Society and is standing, at present, in a Buddha-temple”. (Op. cit. [39], 14.) The Taisho University was probably not identical to the Tokyo University. More to the point: Csorba's statue could hardly stand in a Buddha temple, as it belonged to the National Museum.

Information on such details could not be lacking from Tokyo because contacts with the Taisho University were good. Otherwise Dr Metzger could not have lectured in the same year at that institution on "The Hungarian spirit and Petőfi's works". (Reported in the *Young East*, 1936, winter.) Actually, there seems to be a policy based on parallel reciprocity at work - as earlier. (In 1932-1933, the Hungarians organised an exhibition of Japanese painting in Budapest, while the Japanese staged a commemoration of Csoma de Kőrös in Tokyo. As simple as that.)

42. The "Stimson doctrine": Condemnation and non-recognition of conquest expressed by the United States in the note addressed simultaneously on January 7th, 1932 to China and Japan. It referred expressly to American rights in China and to the Briand-Kellogg Agreement of 1928 trying to outlaw war. The League of Nations had sent the "Lytton Commission" to enquire on the spot, which recommended to declare Manchuria autonomous under Chinese sovereignty. On February 24th, 1933, the League followed suit, stressed that the Manchukuo had to be deprived of recognition but did not qualify Japan "aggressor". See Duroselle, Jean-Baptiste (1960). *De Wilson à Roosevelt*. Paris: Armand Colin, 225-231.
43. Records kept at the National Archives, Budapest: K 63 KUM 15/7.
44. I refer to two breaches of journalistic ethics under this head, respectively in *Lobogó* and *Új Ember*.

The first published an article by Gy(ula) N(agy) (*Tókiói randevú*. 18 August 1965, 11.) pretending that Csoma's two main tutors in Tibetan lore acted on high instruction to enable their pupil to prepare the descent to earth of Maitreya Bodhisattva, the Buddha of the future, bringing to humanity peace and love. They supplied to their superiors regular reports on his advance in learning, on his character and on his spiritual progress and taught him how to generate heat from his own body so as not to be handicapped in his studies by the temperature of his ice-cold room. The role

assigned to Kőrösi was to produce the Tibetan dictionary and grammar helping Westerners to understand Buddhism through original texts. Zen Buddhists consecrated the Hungarian scholar Bodhisattva to express the high esteem in which they held him. Statues of Csoma can be found not only in the temple of the Buddhist University in Tokyo but also in many other temples of Zen Buddhism (left unspecified). This message was put into the mouth of a professor Imaoka (otherwise not identified) to whom two pretty local girls had introduced two young Hungarian tourists (who had known Csoma much less than their charming Japanese guides). Prior to the meeting with the professor, they dated in front of Csoma's Bodhisattva statue in the temple of the University! The article ended by concluding: "how interesting that, beside his world famous scientific work, the great Hungarian scholar also helps in such a way the establishment and development of present relations between the two nations".

The second example of unchecked reporting I wish to quote goes back to 25 August 1968 ("Kőrösi Csoma Sándor mint Buddhista". *Új Ember* XXIV, 34:3). According to the core information from the Romanian periodical *Magazin Istoric* (author: István Korda) on which it enlarged, the Japanese erected in a temple in Tokyo a gilt statue to exalt the bodhisattvahood of Csoma de Kőrös on the 125th anniversary of his death (location unspecified). "The Japanese Buddhists presented on that occasion Csoma de Kőrös as Bodhisattva to their faithful, as we present in our churches the pictures and statues of our saints as examples to the faithful". No wonder. For Csoma realized and proved the religious depths of Asian Asceticism through his own life.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE CULT OF CSOMA AND POLITICS

“Alexander Csoma Kőrösi is a solid figure in the Hungarian nation’s pantheon” ¹ who has withstood every swing in the country’s political system. His cult is so amply demonstrated that it seems to go without saying. Yet it has been seldom spontaneous. In order to bring out this point, I am going to identify and characterize the main promoters in its 180-year history. After this overview, I shall examine developments towards the monopolization of the cause and list the criteria that could authorize control. General considerations on man’s need for heroes moderate the critical approach at its end. The long period covered has made approximations hardly avoidable; disproportions in details, prejudices and other subjective judgments may jeopardize balance; the recurrence and versatility of key personalities can preclude full chronological coherence and lead to overlapping. However, it is hoped for that such shortcomings will be weighed against the study filling significant gaps in national self-cognizance.

The cult’s main promoters

It was Csoma himself who launched his own legend when in 1820 he wrote for help from Tehran to the patrons of his former college at Nagyenyed and his dramatic letter led to a

national collection of money.² Useful as they were, his foundations at the Gábor Bethlen College of Nagyenyed and at the military school of Kézdivásárhely helped self-aggrandizement, they staved off oblivion. The popularization of Kőrösi's performance, the propagation of his reverence and the perpetuation of his memory fell upon exceptional individuals who, with institutional support, used his aura for promoting projects prompted by political considerations (or at least tinged with political interests).³ This process matured into cult only among the Hungarians.⁴ In Hungary, its evolution from enthusiasm to lasting piety put into play particular and collective forces often difficult to separate.

The Scientific Collection (Tudományos Gyűjtemény, 1817-1841) was a monthly publication financed and produced by printer publisher Mátyás Trattner (1745-1828). As much as the Scientific Union (Tudományos Egyesület) of its editor during the period relevant to Csoma, i.e. from 1820 to 1836, it met national expectations. Its articles were reliable, as they were hallmarked by recognized specialists and writers. Reflecting Count József Teleki's ideas, it publicized the ideal of a new, well educated bourgeois nation instead of the hierarchy of the old feudal type. Among its cherished values, work and action were those for which Kőrösi set a welcome example by his patriotic enterprise, painstaking research and unassuming manners. It is easy to understand, therefore, that the first editor of the periodical up to 1827, lawyer András Thaisz (1789-1840) systematically appealed to the public for funding the far-eastern search of that poor yet meritorious student and that it was his publisher who managed the proceeds of the ensuing national collection.⁵

Reformer József Teleki distinguished himself as the president of *The Hungarian Learned Society - The Hungarian Academy of Sciences* (Magyar Tudós Társaság - Magyar Tudományos Akadémia / MTA /, 1825/1827/1830. With financial backing by István Széchenyi and other noblemen, this institution was initially a patriotic one devoted primarily to the cause of the Hungarian language. It was this option which determined its profile for a very long time. Beyond linguistics, it tried to counter manifestations of neighbouring absolutist superiority (or its threat) by fostering intellectual capabilities inherent in the nation. Thus, for more than one hundred years, it channelled most of its resources into the study of the Hungarian language and of Hungarian history. During Csoma's productive period in India, it engaged in the compilation of basic dictionaries, so it could appreciate particularly well the efforts of the Transylvanian Tibetologist in this area. Thanks to Duka's additional impetus, the Academy, however reluctant, has remained to date the most prestigious and most competent forum for preserving Kőrösi's memory.

Before his emigration to England, *Theodore Duka* (1825-1908) studied law in which he obtained a diploma. In London, however, he switched to medicine and became a physician who volunteered to make his career in the army in India. No formal education prepared him to specialize in the life and works of Csoma Kőrösi on which he published simultaneously two seminal books, one in English, the other in Hungarian. In his remarkably methodical, persistent and efficient biographical and philological researches as well as in his donations to MTA, he was led by love of his country. Although he took part in the Hungarian war of independence

of 1848-49 as an aide-de-camp to general Görgey and fled abroad with other officers when the commander surrendered to the Russians, his service in India separated him from political life in his home country. It was only in 1864, after having supplied many scientific contributions, been elected corresponding member of the Academy and having received amnesty, that he visited Hungary, where he confined his activities to scientific collaboration. Under this head he procured for the Academy several original letters as well as the bulk of the personal collection of Tibetan manuscripts and xylographs of his hero, gave a large wall-case to host them in the Library, and endowed 2,000 crowns for organizing from 1900 triennial lectures in the month of April on some subject connected with Orientalist studies.⁶ Duka wanted to dispel unworthy misunderstandings about Csoma even if he stemmed neither from his province, nor confessed his type of Protestantism. According to Aurel Stein, he was guided by two motives, viz., “his desire to secure credit for Hungary’s share in the advancement of science, and his eager wish to stimulate interest for Oriental research in the country of his birth”.⁷ Despite his commitment to nationalistic ideals, it was in England that he retired and he died in Bournemouth.

The Turan Society (Turáni Társaság, 1911-1944) stemmed from the Turan movement which endeavoured to instigate and develop cultural, economic and political cooperation among the Turan peoples, states and regions. Its outstanding reference abroad was the Orientalist Max Müller (1823-1900) despite the fact that he had abandoned the Turanian concept after a while. In Hungary, where the Turan peoples were equated to the Ural-Altai linguistic phylum (without excluding the Finns

and the Estonians), the guiding spirit of the organization was Alajos Paikert, while its actual leaders were Jenő Cholnoky and Pál Teleki. The latter assumed the Society's presidency as soon as he was received into the Academy, i.e. from 1913 to 1916, when he became vice-president of the Oriental Cultural Centre for two years).

Count Széki Teleki Pál (Pál Teleki de Szék, 1879-1941) was a Transylvanian landowner by birth who gained prominence as a consequential statesman, a geographer of international renown and a strong personality in public life. In politics, he was elected member of parliament representing the Constitution Party in the wake of his doctorate in political sciences (1905-1910, 1915-1918), he took for three months resp. the charge of religious and cultural affairs, and that of foreign affairs in the contrarevolutionary government of Szeged (1919), then he acted as minister of foreign affairs and prime minister (1920-1922), returned to the parliament (1922-1926), moved to the Upper House (1927-1938), was appointed minister of religion and education (1938), and accepted to be prime minister for a second time (1939-1941). In the field of science, he started his career as Lajos Lóczy's cartographer-statistician; went to study geographic conditions in North America and became professor of economic and political geography and member of MTA. Jenő Cholnoky was first his professor, then a colleague and friend to him. He was looked upon as a tireless modernizer of scientific education and training, the prime mover of several scientific institutions and the eulogized leader of the Hungarian boy scout movement. As a geopolitical strategist, he strived to stimulate economic growth in the Balkans, he also fought in the league

of revisionists opposing the territorial slicing up imposed on his country by the Treaty of Trianon which sanctioned Hungary's defeat in the first world war. As he believed in the importance of ethnic origin in shaping settlements, he championed ethnic purity. His foreign policy was anti-Soviet and pro-French and it tried to moderate the influence of Germany when it turned dangerous under the Nazis.⁸ It cannot be denied that he was a humanist who believed in principles and kept his word even at the expense of his life. Today he is very popular in right-wing circles but challenged among leftists.

Turán, the periodical of the Turan Society, appeared from 1913 to 1944 but its issues were numbered only since the end of Pál Teleki's presidency. The XXVth volume was dedicated to the memory of Csoma Kőrösi. The group launched a campaign for a statue to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the scholar's death, a centenary dinner party had been thrown under the same auspices somewhat earlier. Cholnoky's bulky monograph on the traveller was released in the same year.

The first Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society (1920-1949) was established following initiatives by Pál Teleki, Gyula Németh and Zoltan Felvinczi Takáts. It was terminated in 1949. One of the pretexts of the closure was Pál Teleki's presidency from the start until the count's suicide. (The office thus left vacant was taken over by Bálint Hóman.) While it lasted, it was a representative forum for Hungarian oriental researches in general, even if it was dominated by Turkology owing to the number and quality of the students of that discipline in Hungary. Since the ending of the review *Keleti Szemle* in 1932, its periodical, the *Kőrösi Csoma Archivum*,

became the sole scientific organ of the Hungarian orientalists. Its papers and other communications in Hungarian and in foreign languages enjoyed high esteem worldwide. As its four series [I. 1921-1925, II. 1926-1932, II. supplement 1935-1939, III. 1941-1943] did not focus on researches related to Csoma, it did not include every study of such a kind by its best contributors (editor Gyula Németh, Lajos Ligeti,...). However, it joined the 1942 centenary celebration by a compilation by Lajos Nagy.⁹

The Hungarian Nippon Society (Magyar Nippon Társaság, 1924-1944?) and *the Hungarian Oriental Society* (Magyar Keleti Társaság, 1932-1943/1944) showed some overlapping and also attested considerable interaction with associations similar in spirit. The former was managed by István Mezey, a lawyer who knew Japanese. With the motto “Gratitude and Chivalry” taken from the samurai, they cultivated the memory of Hungarian prisoners of war freed by Japanese interventionist troops from their Bolshevik camps. In Japan, they tried to popularize the poet Petőfi, the novelist Jókai and the composer Liszt. An objective base for their activity was provided by the parallel opposition of Japan and Hungary to the orientation and policies of the League of Nations: Hungary did not want to assume her territorial mutilation in the peace settlement of the First World War, while, in the international isolation punishing her occupation of Manchuria, Japan was glad to benefit of the friendship even from a small country.

Endorsed by Zoltán Felvinczi Takáts and Gyula Germanus so as to give them credit, *the Hungarian Oriental Society* defined its geographic and thematic scope much more broadly

than the Hungarian Nippon Society, so it did not interfere with the latter's relations with Japan. One year after its foundation, it made itself widely known to the public through the publicity around Csoma's lionization in Tokyo. The mastermind of the Buddhist 'canonisation' was most probably Félix Vályi, the journalist who represented the Hungarians at the 'consecration' by a gift statue suggesting the Buddha Amithaba's incarnation in Csoma. During its ten-year existence, it organized 82 lectures in Hungarian, German, English and French in cooperation with such friendly organizations as the Hungarian Nippon Society, the Turan Society, the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society and the Hungarian Geographic Society. Its periodical, the *Acta Societatis Hungaricae Orientalis* was edited by Zoltán Felvinczi Takáts, but only appeared three times (in 1944). Only four of the lectures and one of the issues concerned dealt with Csoma. The key backer of both societies was a rich banker, Sándor Simonyi-Semadam (1864-1946) who, in the wake of admiral Horthy's election to governor in 1920, took the portfolios for home and foreign affairs in the government and later remained a close trusted friend of the head of state.

Beside theosophical affinities, the interest of *Ervin Baktay* (1890-1963) in India might be explained by the marriage of his sister, Marie Antoinette Gottesmann (-Lévi), with Sikh Sirdar Umrao Singh Mijithia, the eldest son of Raja Surat Singh. After the wedding in 1912 in Lahore, the couple moved to Hungary but returned to India in 1921 and settled down at Shimla. Baktay, who was a freelance painter at that time, paid them a visit there in 1927. This reunion and the three-year stay in India which followed, enabled the artist to learn a lot from

his brother-in-law astrologer and philosopher and to take advantage of his connections for tours marked by high-flying hospitality and lucrative business.¹⁰ His books tracking Kőrösi's stay in the Himalayas adopted a model set by Sven Hedin, with the difference that in the absence of geographic competence, their writer postured as a travelling gentleman of independent means. Despite their superficiality, the travelogues and the biographies into which they were converted, scored genuine success at home. Unfortunately, their author accepted only too easily the polite hypocrisy to which he was treated in the field and did not try to distinguish between serious information and oriental flattery. In that period he did not yet bother about archival research and dispensed with the readings which would have allowed him to understand the genuine contemporary background to his stories. His biographies indicated no political links worth mention. As his quiet studies in the history of Indian art were unobtrusively approved by the Academy, the communist regime decided not to persecute him. In time, this tolerance turned into approval, and eventually into outright backing. At the present time Baktay is viewed as an illustrious Orientalist and one of the nation's worthies.

The Buddhist Mission (1952-) has undergone significant organizational changes to date. Five years after its foundation it grew an offshoot named the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Institute for Buddhology (1957-/1988/1989), an International Establishment of the Arya Maitreya Mandala, mainly for releasing propaganda material and running programmes of higher education. In the last decade of the preceding millenium when the communist regime collapsed, the subsidiary was converted into a Buddhist Information Office (1990-) and an

educational facility called The Gate of Dharma Buddhist School (1990/1991-). Their founder, operator and initial host, Ernő Hetényi, was a journalist with an interest in theology who became both an active Marxist and a Buddhist enthusiast in 1933. He read a lot about his fresh faith and passed his newly acquired learning on to others through publications of his own. He hailed the victory of Soviet troops in Hungary among the armed fighters resisting the Nazi regime. His antifascist merits earned enough official indulgence for his Buddhism for extensive travel in Europe and visits to northern India, Mongolia, Laos, Burma, Vietnam and the Soviet Union. This freedom was exceptional in a period when few of his compatriots were allowed to leave the country. From 1953 he represented the order of Lama Angarika Govinda until the network “fell into German hands” around 1989. In this quality he was often invited to official diplomatic receptions. With his community he could make the impression that the socialist regime of the Soviet type showed more leniency towards small religious congregations than Horthy’s Roman Catholic state, which they blamed for recognizing the Calvinist and Lutheran Churches, but not doing better than tolerating the “unions” of Jews and Baptists and banning Buddhism. As a teaching which opposed aggression, Buddhism was supposed to carry the aspirations of the ‘camp of peace’. While referring to Csoma, the social underdog deaf to the lure of imperialism, its Hungarian adapts were well advised to justify the collective practice of their religious philosophy in this spirit. However, with the law of 1990 on the freedom of conscience and religion and on the status of churches, this situation has changed: the Hungarian state regulates the churches within its sphere of authority by contracts based on mutual recognition

according to the principle of 'cooperating separation'. There is no need for special ideological legitimation; in the increasing number of small religious communities the Buddhists compete for the public's favour under several separate denominations.

The second Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society (1968-) was created 21 years after the first one stopped working. Its founder, Professor Lajos Ligeti, a versatile Altaist, imposed it within the frame of MTA of which he was the Vice President converted to Marxism-Leninism. The Society aimed at facilitating professional cooperation among Hungarian orientalist lecturers, researchers and university students. On the first Tuesday of every month, one of the members presented his or her scientific results to the others. The organ of the circle of approximately 30 specialists is *Keletkutatás* (meaning *Orientalist Research*), which only uses Hungarian excepting the English summaries of its papers.¹¹ Within the series Csoma de Kőrös Mini Library (the word mini standing here for the word "kis", i.e. small), it is supposed to publish every year a specialized book of strict standards yet easy to understand by the general public. Under its auspices more technical treatises are also published, together with sets of language manuals, introductions to eastern religions and special dissertations. Its symposiums and publications have made a considerable impact in its field worldwide. At home it is particularly proud of its merits in vocational awakening and confirmation, and it lists as its biggest success the Csoma bicentenary in 1984 with its extraordinary mobilization of younger generations. Even quite recently, the members regarded Csoma as their 'patron saint' because in his name it was possible to obtain much sought after government funds for researches, publications and

long-haul travel. This liberality seemed justified to the party state on grounds similar to those warranting support to the Buddhist Mission. During the period of politically audacious big loans raised in western capital markets, it became important to ensure sympathy or at least neutrality on the part of Hungarian emigrants who could be won over thanks to the said bicentenary. Today such political motivations have dwindled to almost nothing.

Ödön Jakabos (1940-1979) provoked an unprecedented upheaval by re-enacting Csoma's passion in the early 1970s. He set out with five U.S. dollars in his pocket to pay homage to his Székely fellow countryman through his trip to the grave at Darjeeling. For his progress, he relied on a carefully prepared chain of sympathetic pen friends. His project seemed to actualize a well-known motto in Madách's philosophical drama *The Tragedy of Man* ("Think up something grand and bold and pledge your life on it!"). Despite the fact that his journey did not aim at and produce any scientific results, on his return home he received a welcome as ecstatic as that of a glorious champion in ancient Greece. He was also perceived as a mediaeval confessor born again to exalt Csoma's virtues. In Transylvania, he embodied the hope that liberty will triumph over totalitarian restrictions, that socialist oppression will cease as people break out of their dreary, crippling isolation. His fans cared neither about his lack of education nor of his exhibitionism and self propaganda; to them he demonstrated that nothing was impossible, that miracles could happen. His supporters applauded all his public appearances and they took his premature death for the fulfilment of a martyr's self-sacrifice. They handled his posthumous Indian journal as a

breviary or a relic. To them Ödön Jakabos set an example vital for survival not unlike a torch lighting the way out of a dark cave for those who were shut up there. His pilgrimage stroke as a brave cry to the rest of the world comparable to Lajos Magyari's poem about Csoma in its battery of translations.¹² His critics, however, blame him for starting a demagogic, costly and harmful process.

The Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Cultural Union (Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Közművelődési Egyesület, 1990-) was established at Kovászna / Covasna, a health resort famous for its thermal baths, medical applications of natural gas and heart clinics 3 km away from the scholar's birthplace. The presidency of József Gazda brings it close to the Hungarian Democratic Association of Romania (RMDSz). It has two aims with two sets of tasks. On the one hand, it cultivates the memory of its illustrious son, collects documents related to his life and works, holds scientific symposiums and organizes feasts in his honour, etc. On the other hand, it shapes the cultural life of the spa. Thanks to local foundations and subsidies received from Budapest, it has met almost all of these objectives since 1991, although the local authorities and the local religious, educational and cultural institutions which cooperate with it, would not let it interfere with their regular activities. Every April it coordinates and hosts with the municipality the so-called Alexander Csoma de Kőrös days consisting of solemn commemorations, academic seminars, round tables, workshops, quizzes and similar competitions for prizes, exhibitions, events of the performing arts, etc. The majority of the participants are school groups and cultural ensembles from Transylvania and Hungary (Budapest, Pécs,

Nagykanizsa, Pápa, etc.) The best of them are awarded medals and diplomas. Most of the guests leave with gifts of handicrafts. The presence of high-level government delegates from Hungary has become a regular feature. It is through their intermediation that the proceedings of the symposiums are published. The latter strive to accommodate pent-up demand as it is felt that the publications of the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society no longer live up to patriotic expectations. The project of erecting a representative multi-function Székely house at Csomakőrös was realized in 2000 thanks to Hungarian subsidies. The building of the planned Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Museum and Documentation Centre, however, had been interrupted for lack of funds. (The project of this institution is regarded as inordinate by many: it is supposed to function eventually as a cultural and research centre supplied with a library, catalogues, a computerized database, an art gallery and conference rooms, it should also provide accommodation for invited guests.) The events mentioned are believed to demonstrate productive Hungarian cultural cohesion in the south-eastern corner of the Carpathians. Their effect on tourism has been clearly valuable but the choice of subjects and intellectual level of the meetings of historians have been questioned in some quarters. Despite (or owing to?) this apparent weakness, every specialist of Csoma (except one) has taken part in the conferences at least once.

Authorization and monopolization

With its pejorative connotations in mind, the concept of monopolization can be applied to (1) the cult itself, (2) to its hero and (3) to the hero's legacy. As the overview above

could reveal, I am interested mainly in (1),¹³ i.e. in who is representing the cult and its cause, who is ensuring its organization and management, who is determining its contents and its weight and who is producing the discourse to which it can give rise. These questions should also bear on the extent of such a domination; begging, for instance, how much the preponderance degenerates into abuse and entails censoring or silencing others, marginalizing or eliminating rivals. In dealing with this problem, analogies from ancient Rome and the history of papacy may help. In their models the pontifex or pontiff and his college or bodies exercise their authority over the official cult under a pontifical mandate (pontificate). In this sense, as far as the discourse is concerned, colloquial French seems to attest the spread of the pejorative verb “pontifier”, which has several meanings, viz., to command significant authority in a given area or monopolize such an authority; to show self-importance in a discussion; to speak or write in a bombastic or dogmatic manner.¹⁴

In the cult of Csoma the right to pontificate has been admitted by meeting the following criteria: proven knowledge of the cult's themes (competence implying reverence); pilgrimage(s); scientific status or renown, social rank, political position, membership in prestigious institutions; delegation or backing by, or solidarity of, ethnic communities, pressure groups, religious congregations, patriotic associations; protest in the name of justice against discrediting manipulation and alleged mismanagement by vested interests; popularity; the market place. In such perspectives no private individuals have obtained central positions in the cult of Csoma but legal entities (e.g., MTA and her subsidiaries) and the state have played

decisive roles in its history. The same would hold true of the concomitant themes. These statements, however, need qualification.

Among the private individuals who may be taken into account under this head, Theodore Duka attained overwhelming authority in the field of research on the life and works of Csoma through his monograph when this book was recognized by outstanding specialists as a major contribution. This standing improved further through his donations to MTA, which eventually rewarded him with an honorary membership. Although the eight editions of Ervin Baktay's successive four books over 33 years earned considerable popularity for their author in Hungary, they had not much new to say about their hero's Transylvanian background, university training, patriotic quest, contributions to Tibetology and to Buddhology. Their shortfall in calibre and professional competence left a lot of room to others. Since the centenary of 1942, so many historians, geographers and linguists let themselves be heard on the matter that none could gain supremacy over the others. This diversity has diminished since the 1990s because of lack of interest among young professionals and weak effective demand for serious books, but the future may still hold surprises for us.

Besides the party state, it was only the Hungarian system of higher education and its complement reinforced with numerous branches and units, MTA, that was able to "pontificate" while a totalitarian regime stemmed in byzantine traditions held sway. This situation took its roots in the millenary rationale of guilds. The hierarchical corporations involved regulate their own

activities and restrain the rivalry of their members while they offer protection from outside competitors stigmatized as charlatans, crooks, swindlers and the like. They are truly harmful when they impede the achievement of people more efficient than their own members. In Hungary this system controlled intellectual production by arbitrating among the “triple T” options (“támogatott, túrt, tiltott”): it backed or tolerated or forbade realizations in its sphere. Apparently, every player had a role going with his or her position within the institution, overstepping its limits led to penalties and eventually to professional asphyxiation. Gifted rebels were well advised to go abroad at least for a while. Under such circumstances no open argumentative debate could develop around Csoma’s accomplishment. For instance, those insiders who taxed privately Kőrösi as a swindler or a madman did not express their views in public. Hypocrisy slowed down the pace of biographical research which took no heed of changes in professional requirements elsewhere.

As far as the police was concerned, in 1949 (“the year of the turn”) the continuation of the cult of Csoma was forbidden. Three years later, however, the Buddhist Mission had been allowed to surface and it was legalized by 1957. Secured by sufficient guarantees under the auspices of the politically subservient Academy, a new A. Csoma de Kőrös Society was allowed to replace the old one a decade later. Kőrösi’s outright political rehabilitation was signified in 1976 through head of state Pál Losonczi’s visit to the Transylvanian scholar’s grave at Darjeeling. (After the fashion of the Academy, the high profile pilgrim placed then a commemorative plate on the tomb.) In 1991 President Árpád Göncz followed his suit in a

private capacity. Since then the political system has undergone further changes but the Hungarian state still intervenes in this sphere through financial and diplomatic arrangements despite her fears of Chinese resentment and other susceptibilities. One of the reasons for such a commitment is keeping alive the loyalty of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania without indulging in excesses.

What can worry observers today, however, is not state interference but the campaigns of irresponsible adventurers and activists who take advantage of the demise of communist-type scholarship and of the criticism of the surviving corporate structures. Through 'alternative' institutions, publications and panels, segments of these firebrands try to use the cult of Csoma to pursue ends of their own.

Conclusions

The cult of Csoma has maybe never had a natural channel. Its current has been filled with passions, at times enthusiasm whipped its surface into foams of emotions and turned it into patriotic flood. Quite often opportunistic agents tried to set its course according to changing political interests. More important, however, it has generated much positive collective awareness and has remained a factor in Hungarian national cohesion to date. Beside offering an example of courage, sense of purpose, will power, stamina and diligence matched with austerity, frugality and modesty, it satisfied nearly sacred needs. In view of its success, it still has a good future. The romantic enterprise of its protagonist may look increasingly banal with the facility of Asian travels but growing occupational exposure abroad may bring about new sympathy and respect.

One may bet that there will always be distressed Hungarians who will cheer up at its thought. The quotation from József Eötvös on the base of the first statue in the garden of the Geographic Museum at Érd points to this: “His example proves that strong will can overcome any difficulty”. The scientific problem of piety is its association with hagiography, which makes its evolution into an enlightened approach very slow and subject to big swings. As it is used to pleasing simplifications, it is reluctant to accept the criticism and rectification of former false beliefs, especially when the fault-finding is based on fairly complex analyses. Adapts take easily for personal affront, treason or sacrilege the objective rebuttal of the spokesmen of their cause even if these are dishonest or misinformed.

Notes

1. Farkas, Attila Márton 1998. *Buddhism in Hungary or the anatomy of a type of alternative religiosity*, [in Hungarian] Budapest. MTA PTI Etnoregionális Kutatóközpont Munkafüzetek 50. MTA PTI Etnoregionális Kutatóközpont, 152. The commonplace is worth quoting because it is a recent formulation. It was used at the 5th Congress of Hungarian Studies by Csaba Dallos, a researcher who is emancipated from past bias by his youth. His present-day informations are drawn upon repeatedly in my study.
2. J. Prinsep was wrong in attributing Csoma's Hungarian aid to “the Viceroy and several noblemen of the Hungarian dominions”, as the money came from a very wide spectrum of donors. (On Prinsep's view, see the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, May 1832, 1. 5: 204.)
3. The only exception seems to be Ervin Baktay.
4. Abroad, Csoma's first admirers and helpers were conscious imperialists on the payroll of the East India Company

(W. Moorcroft, J. G. Gerard, A. Campbell); his employer, the Asiatic Society (ASB), however, functioned as an independent learned association and pursued a strategy opposing the cultural policy of the government in Calcutta; among the later generations one also finds several politically committed specialists holding the scholar in high esteem (e.g., Th.-M. Pavie, J. Barthélémy Saint-Hilaire; C. R. Markham, L. A. Waddell).

The first group and their government did not fail to make use of the linguistic resources and Himalayan presence of their Transylvanian protégé, nor did shy away from partaking in his glory but, with one exception, they did not try to capitalize on his dependence. (The exception was a plan to include Csoma in a diplomatic cum reconnaissance mission to Bhutan, in which the Hungarian managed not to participate.) The subsequent homages and celebrations followed mostly from the praxis of academic Asian studies and they were boosted by the rise in status of Tibetology. In their perspective, the formal recognition of Csoma as a bodhisattva (bosatsu) in 1933 in Tokyo seems to have been prompted mainly by joint foreign policy considerations by Japan and Hungary. (See P. J. Marczell 1995, "Bodhisattva Csoma de Kőrös : Myth or Reality?" Osmaston, Henry A. & Philip Denwood (eds), *Recent Research on Ladakh 4&5. Proceedings of the Fourth and Fifth International Colloquia on Ladakh*. London: SOAS, University of London, 383-396.)

Almost all the other manifestations of piety were organized or at least initiated by Hungarian private individuals or (often with their cooperation) by the Hungarian state itself. (An exception to this pattern seems to be the rehabilitation of Csoma's *Mahavyutpatti* or *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary* - and through this leverage of its author - by Sir E. D. Ross in Calcutta.)

5. On this background see Csetri, Elek. "Kőrösi and the Academy". [In Hungarian] *Századok*, 2001 / 1: 103-120.
6. The series comprised ten lectures before its end in 1935. The English style furniture contained five compartments, it was installed in the library's reading room, it suffered considerable

damage during the second world war, in the early 1950s it was transferred to the Oriental Collection which was instituted at that time, but has been removed (thrown out?) since then, its contents were dispersed among various departments in the Library. See, for instance, Terjék, József 1976. *Kőrösi Csoma dokumentumok az Akadémiai Könyvtár gyűjteményeiben*. Budapest: MTAK, 62-68. Idem 1976. *Collection of Tibetan MSS and Xylographs of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. MTAK, 3-5, etc. Ferenc Szilágyi blamed the caretakers for negligence / mismanagement / voluntary sabotage of the bequest in his 1999 "A legnagyobb magyar - a legnagyobb székely magyar". Gazda, József (ed). *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor és tudományos műhelyeink*. Kovászna - Sepsiszentgyörgy: KCsSKME, 223.

7. Stein, Aurel M. 1914. *In Memoriam Theodore Duka (1825-1908)*. (A lecture read before the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, October 27, 1913.) Privately printed.
8. See *Magyar életrajzi lexikon*. II. 1969. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
9. In Ligeti, L. (ed), *Analecta orientalia memoriae Alexandra Csoma de Kőrös dicata*. Budapest: Sumptibus Academiae Litteratum Hungaricae et Societatis A Csoma de Kőrös nominatae, which contains a descriptive catalogue of Csoma's collection of Tibetan books and manuscripts in the possession of the Library at MTA.
10. See N. Iqbal Singh 1984. *Anrita Sher-Gil*. Delhi: Vikas.
11. The official English, German, French and Russian language review of MTA in the field of oriental philology and culture is the *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*. It had started in 1946 and it has also published contributions related to Csoma. (E.g. in 1989 under the title "Inner Asian and Buddhist Studies" it published the 28 papers presented at the Visegrád symposium of 1984. XLIII. 2-3: 145-474.)
12. See Kubassek, János 1999. *The Hungarian hermit of the Himalayas*. (Also in English) Budapest: Magyar Óstörténeti Kutató és Kiadó Kft.

13. Nevertheless, we may ask: Who can claim Csoma for his or her departed or hero?
- (a) His family, who inherited his financial assets? The family tree produced by the group which turned up to represent the relatives was discredited by László Kádár. [1974. *Adalékok Kőrösi Csoma Sándor származási rejtélyének megoldásához*. Keletkutatás, 193-211; 1978 *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor származásáról és életkoráról*. Magyar Nemzet, XXXIV /190 (13 August); 1978. *Mikor született Kőrösi Csoma Sándor? A Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Intézet Közleményei*, 1-2: 18-27]. The family stemming presumably from Zágón seems to be so dispersed and hard to trace that it might well be extinct. Whatever be the case, it may be blamed for having burnt Alexander's documents with its archives in 1916. [See Szilágyi, Ferenc 1984. *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor levelesládája*. Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 351]. Thus, nothing proves that Alexander corresponded with his relatives with any intimacy or that his family ties were warm. If so, sceptics may regard Alexander Csoma as emotionally and de facto distant from the individual members of his family.
- (b) The village, where he was born? He has no descendants there. In a way this absence is compensated by the commemorative plaques from 1934, 1967 and 1968 in the Protestant church, the bust of 1969 by Áron Orbán and the Székely building of the Museum erected in his remembrance in 2000. In 1910 the local population had sent to Darjeeling (simultaneously with the plaque of the Academy) a slab of black marble, a box of local soil and a wreath of willow. As the village can hardly be separated today from the much larger, neighbouring Kovászna, the latter must also be accounted for, especially that it has fervently cultivated Csoma's memory over the last fifteen years.
- (c) Darjeeling, where he died and where he is buried? Yes, although the present local authorities may take little spontaneous interest in worthies belonging to the colonial past. Without its protected status and the watch of the Hungarian state, the grave would have

disappeared like the other tombs of the abandoned Christian cemetery.

- (d) His school, the college of Nagyenyed, where he has a slab, although the building was destroyed in 1849? Yes. It was the patrons of this establishment whom he addressed successfully for help, etc.
- (e) The University of Göttingen? Yes, although it did not confer on him the title of doctor honoris causa, nor did its learned society elect him honorary member and the Hungarian lexicographer's figure is overshadowed by professors and students of the institution. (It was to two professors in Göttingen that Kőrösi dedicated his Tibetan dictionary and a third one praised in writing his zeal in attending his classes.)
- (f) The Hungarian Learned Society, predecessor of The Hungarian Academy of Sciences? Yes. It elected Csoma a member, the secretary wrote to him, asked for contributions, offered help. It is true, however, that MTA has been stigmatized of late for not showing itself worthy of his legacy.
- (g) The Asiatic Society? Yes. Csoma lived under their roof as a government stipendiary finalizing his Tibetan grammar and dictionary and summarizing inflowing Tibetan material under the supervision of its secretary. He became one of its honorary members and its first paid resident full-time librarian. The institution has been happy to assume these links to date.
- (h) The successive Csoma de Kőrös Societies? Perhaps. Even if it is difficult to tell to what extent their handling of the bequest entrusted to them by Duka can be qualified satisfactory. (Nowadays the successors profess that their name does not bind them to anything.)
- (i) The nation? Without doubt. If for no other reason, because it organized successfully a large-scale collection for him.

- (j) Hungarian emigrees? Yes. They can see in Csoma a predecessor who weathered all the difficulties of migration they had to face. He withstood extraordinary physical hardships and culture shocks, and prevailed over existential uncertainties. The competitive handicaps and humiliations linked to his status left his determination unaffected; while the pangs of homesickness and the pain of ambivalent relations with his home country did not break him. Many of his projects failed and he could not realize the foremost ambition of his life, yet he preserved his identity, much of his patient scientific work was successful and he died in socially and financially well-balanced conditions as a world-famous scholar.
- (k) The British? Yes, although they do not seem to attach importance to it.
- (l) The Japanese, where the monks of a serious denominational university revere him as a bodhisattva? Who can tell?

When we translate the question into personal terms, we may say that Csoma can be the departed or hero of anybody.

14. "Avoir, s'attribuer de l'autorité, de l'importance dans un domaine particulier; se donner un air important; faire montre de solennité, d'emphase dans ses paroles, dans ses écrits." 1988. *Trésor de la langue française. Dictionnaire de la langue du XIXe et du XXe siècle*. Paris: CNRS / Gallimard, 770.

APPENDIX

THE MOST CONSEQUENTIAL AGENTS IN CSOMA'S CULT, THEIR BACKGROUND AND EFFECTS ON THE HERO'S IMAGE

It was almost simultaneously that Csoma was surrounded by a halo in Hungary and abroad but that shining image was different in the two contexts despite interactions. In Hungary, it satisfied the need for a saint hero of present days and the nostalgia for ethnic ties crediting a glorious past in the Far East. On the international scene it depended on the status of Tibetan: by the end of the 1830s it was overshadowed by the exaltation of Sanskrit [and Pali?], the principal vehicle language[s] of both India's ancient Brahmanic culture and of Buddhism in its early phase. (It was also put at a disadvantage by the lack of British political interest in Tibet until the 1870s). The present vogue of Tibet's particular culture, religion and language was brought about only fairly recently by the scholarship of Giuseppe Tucci (1894-1984).

1. Hungarian factors

- 1.1 It is Csoma himself asking for help who drew public attention to his case in 1920 in a letter from Tehran to the patrons of his former college at Nagyenyed, his signal of financial distress in the middle of an apparently successful enterprise led to a nationwide collection.
/The pathos of the letter determined the tone of the empathy to which it gave rise./
- 1.2 Although Csoma did not receive in Persia the first quick transfer of 86 pieces of gold raised for him in

Transylvania because of the resumption of his travel, in 1832 he was paid in Calcutta the full amount of the proceeds of the collection (£ 132 and 18 pieces of gold net of fees) which had stopped only in 1825. Three years later he returned more than double of this sum of 300 pieces of gold (which did not include the 86 pieces mentioned and had probably been returned earlier) : he sent 200 pieces of gold to The Hungarian Learned Society and 400 to his brother, to the inhabitants of his native village and to institutions in his mother county, while 50 pieces were transferred to be kept on deposit at his disposal. After his death his fairly substantial savings went eventually to his relatives. Meanwhile, the Hungarian public was informed of Csoma's adventurous Asian journey and Indian career through sensational reports in the Hungarian press (mainly through the *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* and the *Erdélyi Hiradó*). From 1834 it was *Tudománytár*, the new periodical of the future Academy, which released news of him as of one of the corresponding members of The Hungarian Learned Society, its owner and editor.

/Apparently, Csoma's original purpose could not be realized as quickly as expected but during this delay the scholar earned glory for his nation with his pioneering, universally acknowledged achievements in the fields of Tibetology and Buddhology./

- 1.3 At his demise his merits were eulogized by such illustrious admirers, personal friends and political thinkers as Ferenc Toldy (1805-1875), Zsigmond Kemény (1814-1875), József Eötvös (1813-1871): Samuel Hegedüs

(1781-1844), Sándor Újfalvy (1792-1866), Márton Ungi (1792-?), József Szabó de Borgata (1789-1885); and István Széchenyi (1791-1860). Their piety, however, did not alter the fact that after his death the romantic enthusiasm of the 1820s and 1830s subsided about him for twenty five years.

/Csoma embodied romantic clichés./

- 1.4 The orientalist Arminius Vámbéry (1832-1913) visited Central Asia from 1861 to 1864 with halts at Khiva, Bokhara and Samarkand, but his venture could be ascribed to the maturation of early linguistic interests and Turkish orientation rather than imitation of Csoma.

/With Vámbéry, Leitner and Stein in the forefront (who all ended up in British service), the Jewish line of early orientalists born in Hungary actually owed precious little to Csoma; they did not take him for a model./

- 1.5 Duka's visit to Darjeeling in 1854 being assumed away, the first man of Hungarian origin who can be considered as a de facto pilgrim to one of the monasteries where Csoma might stay, was an expatriate linguist, Gottlieb William Leitner (1840-1899). In 1866 a tour from Punjab made him stop at Phuktal, Zanskar, where the abbot told him of former contacts with the Transylvanian Tibetologist. There is a very short (perhaps not quite reliable) account of this visit in his summary journal of the trip. [See Duka, op. cit., 160].

/He became a corresponding member of MTA in 1873. His life and work, however, is little known in Hungary and his notes on Zanskar are ignored [as they are elsewhere].

- 1.6 László Berzenczey (1820-1884) is believed erroneously to be the first pilgrim coming from Hungary who followed Csoma's traces even to sites as little accessible as Zangla in Zanskar. (He was a Transylvanian nobleman noted as a political reformer who took part in the uprising and war of independence against Austria; after the defeat of his cause he emigrated and travelled around the world. On his return home he benefited from a general amnesty and resumed politicking but became disillusioned. After the fashion of Csoma, he set out for Dzungaria to explore the cradle of his people and got as far as western Chinese Turkestan. From there he was sidetracked south to India through the Karakorum, passing through Ladakh he had no opportunity to trek to Zanskar, a possibility he did not think of; soon after his arrival home he turned insane.)
/The obsession of Hun-Hungarian kinship might spur ill prepared followers of Csoma's example to crazy undertakings ending in tragedy./
- 1.7 Geologist Lajos Lóczy, Sen. (1849-1920), who became a public personality in Hungary thanks to the popularization of his explorations in China, paid a visit to Csoma's tomb at Darjeeling in 1878.
/This explorer exercised great influence on his pupils and on stein and made the Far East a fad in his country./
- 1.8 Csoma's unparalleled biographer, exegete and promoter, Dr. Theodore Duka (1825-1908) devoted most of his spare time to saving his hero from oblivion undamaged by disparagement for his belief in Hun-Székely kinship and fanciful etymologizing. His magnum opus was his

book on Csoma but he should also be credited with other merits. He obtained for MTA five holograph letters by Csoma and the bulk of his personal collection of Tibetan manuscripts and xylographs. He provided a big wall case for the latter to store relevant newspaper clippings and copies, notes and correspondence of his own, he also made an endowment for cultivating Csoma's scientific legacy by inviting submission every third year of an academic paper dedicated to the great man's memory. (The arrangement worked until 1935. The studies were published in the series *Dolgozatok Kőrösi Csoma Sándor emlékére.*)

/Csoma had to be regarded as a paragon of Hungarian science and a model of patriotic commitment. Blessed was his memory. (The fundamental political motives of Duka's project concerning Csoma were spelled out before the Academy by Aurel Stein in his memorial lecture of 1913.)/

- 1.9 In 1920 the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society was established whose periodical edited by Gyula Németh, *The Kőrösi Csoma-Archívum*, was issued with interruptions from 1921 to 1944.

/The collaboration of Count Pál Teleki, a geographer and statesman who was repeatedly minister and prime minister under the Horthy regime, sufficed later to discredit the institution./

- 1.10 During the period 1920-1945, prominent scholars other than Gyula Németh (1890-1976) also undertook researches on the purpose and achievements of Csoma.

At the same time, dilettantes having good connections, especially Ervin Baktay (1890-1963) and Félix Vályi (?-?), did much to popularize the travels, virtues and works of the Transylvanian scholar.

The Turan Society, which had been founded long before they had any effect on public opinion, and its periodical named *Turán*, which appeared for 27 years, went through several phases. Thus, during the Second World War, one of its fractions exploiting the credit of Professor Jenő Cholnoky (1870-1950), steered them in a populist direction.

/Baktay was a gentleman traveller of independent means, Vályi and the *Turán*, however, served political movements. The academic world took interest mainly in Csoma's motives, projected destination and collection of the Tibetan texts kept in Budapest (without translating anything from the latter, excepting the colophons). The politicians tried to take advantage of the patriotic scholar's reputation in the Far East, others were attracted by the cult's potential for travel and by related representative functions. The elite was confronted by ambitious, travel thirsty, populist adventurers (but did not clash openly with them)./

- 1.11 Since Sándor Debreczy's romantic biography and the preparation of the bicentenary of 1942, in Transylvania the main stream of researchers on Csoma was represented by András Bodor, Elek Csetri, László Musnai (1888-1967) and Zsigmond Vita. Elek Csetri's (1924-) conscientious and efficient archival researches deserve particular praise because they set a model for

tapping primary sources in a field full of misconceptions, fantastic allegations and cheap clichés. His lectures and data published in books, conference proceedings, specialized reviews and articles bear on the hero's childhood and education in Transylvania, his passport, terms at the University of Göttingen and other stays in western Europe, etc. They have clarified many details in our picture of Csoma.

/As a student educated at the Gábor Bethlen College of Nagyenyed, Csoma takes pride of place in the Hungarian Pantheon of eminent Transylvanians. He gives us valuable lessons of heroism, his example might be compared to the deeds of Buddha whose narration he made available for us in a translation./

- 1.12 The period 1945-1990 was warped almost at its onset by the dissolution of the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society whose name giver might kindle nationalist sentiments through the example of his patriotism. Csoma was put down for a crook turned 'British imperialist agent' whose cult had been discredited by its most influential spokesmen. The society was recreated, however, in 1968 under the auspices of the politically tamed MTA by Lajos Ligeti, Vice-President of that institution from 1949 to 1970 and President of the Society of Hungarian-Soviet Friendship, who remained its president until 1973 (when he passed this office on to Károly Czeglédy, an Islamist). [On Ligeti, see in English Kara, G. "Louis Ligeti (1902-1987)". *Acta Orient. Hung.* XLI. 1:3-6] The avatar and Ernő Hetényi's Buddhist Mission - Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Institute

for Buddhology promoted the Transylvanian Tibetologist in a progressive spirit as their model and as their bodhisattva, respectively. As attested during the bicentenary, this celebration led to an overflow of enthusiasm. [On the foreign relations of the forums mentioned, see 2.10 below].

/Changing its initial condemnation, the materialistic, anti-imperialistic communist regime sought to capitalize on its endorsement of the cult of Csoma, who had been an emigrant Buddhologist active on the stipend of the East India Company (until May 1838). Who can tell with any certainty who for what reason did participate in this game? The question is muted by the cult gaining enough momentum to escape to close political control, in fact quite a few politicians could not help joining its crowd./

- 1.13 Standing apart of the ideological manoeuvres of the party state there were self-willed adapters who promoted Csoma's figure and legacy in ways of their own. Ferenc Szilágyi (1928-), a philologist, felt much affinity with the Transylvanian scholar who became his guiding spirit as much as the poet Csokonai. He noted marked similarities between these two men whose examples testified to him that one could create and serve the nation even in dire conditions. He decided to provide sustained propaganda in their favour and he realized this objective through his lectures and publications. He was an admirer of young Ödön Jakabos (1940-1979) whose much publicized pilgrimage to Darjeeling and subsequent public appearances elated many Hungarians, especially in Transylvania.

/As he was not an orientalist and did not pretend to be one, he was not eligible to Ligeti's Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society, who remained courteous to him all the same. Although he was a practicing Calvinist, he was well received in the Buddhist Mission too and the same holds true of publishing companies and the media. All this shows much flexibility within the outlined system./

1.14 The 200th anniversary of Kőrösi's birth strikes participants and passive observers alike by the unprecedented mobilization of the younger generations (of whom more than ten thousand were pupils). Almost every school joined the commemoration through clubs and working parties. The extraordinary interest was manifest through papers, competitions and plays opening new vistas, as the knowledge acquired in their preparation went well beyond the regular curricula in the fields of history, geography, ethnography, anthropology and religion.

/Csoma's cult conveys excellent pedagogic potentials./

1.15 Around 1984 the literature bearing on Csoma reflected growing domination by Bernard Le Calloc'h (1925-), a Frenchman fluent in Hungarian, owing to the sheer number of his contributions which dealt mainly with the traveller's successive surroundings and casual acquaintances. He proved that beside British friends, Csoma also had French contacts and helpers and that the circumstances of his Asian journey could be reconstructed even in the absence of relevant journals or correspondence.

/Several of his studies have been published by the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society and MTA whose enemies also appreciated his output for its contrast with the scanty results obtained by specialists at home./

- 1.16 P. J. Marczell (1936-), a former Hungarian political refugee in Switzerland, views Csoma as a valuable common reference of intellectual curiosity and endurance for Hungarians irrespective of their place of residence. At the start of his interest in the matter at Göttingen as he became aware of the need to cross-check both quoted archival sources and received ideas on Kőrösi's working and living conditions, in 1990 he embarked on the systematic exploration of the sociopolitical contexts of Csoma's major halts during his peregrination in order to deduce their likely effects on the scholar's psyche and course. He has also provided a clearly defined base for further research and interpretations by compiling a British-Indian source book.

/His study on Kőrösi's involvement in the Bengali renaissance and his other findings based on primary sources have been presented mainly at international and Hungarian conferences and in their proceedings as well as in the monthly review of the Calvinist Church of Hungary. The Hungarian studies were collected into a book in 2003: *A valósabb Csoma-képhez*. Budapest: Püski./

- 1.17 In compliance with basic conclusions reached in the country by the end of the Kádár era, the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society and the Buddhist Mission

replaced their heads and updated their ideology. They had to confront other Buddhist groups, among which a Karmapa community availed of the advantages of the law of 1990 on the recognition of churches and thanks to the charisma and management skills of their Danish teacher, obtained quickly numerical superiority. The Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Institute for Buddhology was phased out in favour of a Buddhist Information Office and a school of higher education proposing improved training.

Among parallel developments one should note the establishment of the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Cultural Union (KCsSKME) at Kovászna (Covasna), in Transylvania (Romania). István Kiszely found efficient private sponsors for his peculiar line of anthropology and survived to the scandal of his most sensational claim, which was refuted by the Academy. A committee of his backers rejected this verdict and continued the contention about whether or not a skeleton attributed in Mongolia to the poet and freedom fighter Sándor Petőfi (who vanished in battle in 1849) is actually that of a female. The review *Turán* was rehashed by a firm engaged in ancient Hungarian historical research and editing and in 1999 organized an alternative symposium in Csoma's honour under the title 'Our Eastern Roots'. Further to precedents in 1984 and 1992, the World Federation of Hungarians devoted the year 1999 to the memory of Kőrösi without attracting any following worth mention.

/The former comprehensive intelligence on the state of research bearing on Csoma has fallen apart in Hungary.

what survives does not keep pace with scientific advances in the rest of the world. Opinions vary on the level of sophistication and use of the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Cultural Society. In this respect it is feared that characteristics of the 1930s, which discredited the cult and its adepts, have re-emerged./

2. Foreign factors

2.1 Csoma's lionization goes back to such contemporary figures of outright British imperialism as Dr. W. Moorcroft (1767-1825), Dr. James G. Gerard (1793? or 1795?-1835) and Dr. A. Campbell.

/Csoma adopted "the gait of a fuqueer or person in indigent circumstances" which ensured his personal safety, he was a diligent philologist "who resolved to penetrate the eastern parts of Asia with the laudable and patriotic object, if practicable, of examining the truth of the reported former connection of the Hungarians with the Natives of the latter country", he was characterized by a most prudent conduct and a patient fortitude supported by ardent enthusiasm. He was very resourceful, remarkably efficient, quite cheap compared to his use but quirky so that it might require patience to put up with him./

2.2 This reputation was strengthened and enriched with details by witnesses like V. Jacquemont (1801-1832) and T.-M. Pavie (1811-1896), whose reports were echoed by their circles.

/Csoma was an eccentric of strange manners whose knowledge of languages was amazing, he was a unique

expert in a particularly difficult linguistic and cultural area, in his studious retreat he was surprisingly well informed; he stood (nevertheless?) aloof in his world of ideas like pandits who live absorbed in the study of Indian classics./

- 2.3 The renown was enhanced by the Tibetologists among the Moravian missionaries of the Herrnhut Brotherhood (Herrnhuter Evangelische Brudergemeine), viz. H. A. Jäschke (1817-1883) and A. H. Francke (1870-1930), as well as E. D. Ross (Sir, 1871-1940), who published in two steps Csoma's Sanskrit-Tibetan-English edition of the Mahavyutpatti. [The third part was published in 1944 by D. C. Chatterjee].

/Csoma was a respected, heroic predecessor./

- 2.4 The image received massive documentary evidence through two parallel (English and Hungarian) monographs by T. Duka (1825-1908), a Hungarian lawyer turned officer in the tragic war of independence, who fled to England, studied medicine there and made an army doctor's career in India.

/Csoma is the all-time self-sacrificing patriotic hero of a search for knowledge, his life and his results prove the cultural openness and scientific capabilities of his nation. In recognition of his monumental work and lesser contributions, in 1990 Duka was elected honorary member by MTA./

- 2.5 The homage was carried on by western scholars like J. Barthélémy-Saint Hilaire (1805-1895) who summarized in French Duka's assessment and biographical account.

In an independent approach Sir W. W. Hunter (1840-1900), however, completed and indirectly countered the rendering of the Hungarian author.

/Csoma entered the world history of sciences./

- 2.6 Other cognoscenti in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century also paid tribute to Csoma. In the literature in English one finds among them such authors as C. R. Markham (Sir, 1830-1916), L. A. Waddell (1854-1938) and the Swedish S. A. Hedin (1865-1952). [Waddell's *Lhasa and its Mysteries* (1899) was translated into Hungarian and several of Hedin's travelogues were also published in Budapest in Hungarian. On the French side, P. E. Foucaux (1811-1894) and L. Feer (1830-1902) referred systematically to Csoma's results in their teachings and publications.
- /Csoma was treated as a predecessor in Tibetology./*

- 2.7 It is with remarkable consistency that The Asiatic Society (ASB) is cherishing the memory of its former Hungarian librarian. In this enduring veneration two of their members seem to have played critical roles, viz. linguist and librarian R. Mitra (1824-1891) whom MTA received as a corresponding member in 1876, and British Iranist Sir E. D. Ross (1871-1940). During his stay in India, the latter became secretary of the linguistic department of ASB and it was in this capacity that he delved into the Tibetan language and literature. His Tibetan studies made him enthusiastic about Csoma so much so that he republished both his contributions to the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1912) and

the first two parts of his manuscript of the Mahavyutpatti (1910, 1916). He delivered his inaugural lecture in MTA in Budapest in 1928, eighteen years after his election as honorary member there. 1910 is a landmark. In that year, on E. M. Löffler's initiative in Calcutta, the Academy ordered a commemorative plaque to be fixed on Csoma's tomb at Darjeeling. She also sent a bronze copy of Barnabás Holló's marble bust of the Tibetologist (the original is still standing in Pest) to express her gratitude for the erection and maintenance of the monument. The inhabitants of the celebrity's native village accompanied the gift by a plaque of their own, a handful of native soil and a wreath made of the twigs of a local shrub.

/Csoma is an outstanding scholar in the history of ASB, as an esteemed former employee, he is particularly close to the institution./

- 2.8 The very detailed and precise catalogue by G. R. Kaye and E. H. Johnston published in 1937 in England lists and occasionally comments on many documents relating to Csoma and to his friends and other correspondents (e.g. W. Moorcroft, J. G. Gerard, B. H. Hodgson, etc.). /These could have revolutionized researches on Csoma by permitting to shed their provincialism. Hungarian insiders, however, have made no use of this data./
- 2.9 The very careful, painstaking critical edition by Luciano Petech of the texts of Italian missionaries active in Tibet and in Nepal rehabilitated the early European students of the Tibetan language and religion. (1953-1956. *I missionari italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal*. Il nuovo

ramusio. Roma: La Libreria dello Stato / Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato.)

Petech's master, G. Tucci (1894-1984) stressed these antecedents before the Hungarian public as early as 1942 when, upon the invitation of the Hungarian section of The International Intellectual Cooperation, he lectured in Kolozsvár (where he was made doctor honoris causa) and in Budapest. (1942, *Alessandro Csoma de Kőrös / Kőrösi Csoma Sándor. Acta Philosophica 1. Universitas Francisco-Josephina, Kolozsvár.*) On Tucci see, for instance, "In Memoriam Giuseppe Tucci". *Acta Orient. Hung.* XXXIX. 2-3, 361-368.

In the wake of Jesuit predecessors, the results of Italian Capuchins in the 18th century wither Csoma's laurels, even if it was for their church and not for the general public that the fathers had prepared their glossaries / vocabularies / dictionaries, translations and reports so that these remained unpublished (if we assume away prelate A. A. Georgi's bulky *Alphabetum Tibetanum* published in 1762 in Rome, and the so called Serampore Dictionary.)

- 2.10 The international symposiums of the second Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Society (Mátrafüred, 1976; Csopak-Balatonfüred, 1979; Visegrád, 1984) attracted numerous western Turkologists, Mongolists and Tibetologists, a *Bulletin* published in English in Budapest from 1978 to 1988 kept their circles informed of developments in their disciplines. The flow of the proceedings of the seminars published separately ended with two impressive volumes to commemorate Csoma's 1984 bicentenary (with no

international gathering). [The 28 papers of the Visegrád Conference were published in *Acta Orient. Hung.* XLIII. /1989/ 2-3: 145-474].

In Budapest, the Buddhist Mission and the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Institute for Buddhology were also successful in establishing and taking advantage of international relations.

In 1976, with the visit of the president of the Presidential Council, Pál Losonczi, to Csoma's tomb hallmarked by the Academy, the grave became a target for pilgrimage for Hungarian heads of state.

In its wake, under Hungarian impetus and subsequently in the organization of the Hungarian Information and Cultural Centre set up in 1978 in New Delhi, commemorative seminars and other events (1977, 1984, 1992, 1999) also added to the aura of the 'pilgrim scholar' in India.

/Csoma lived in saintly self-abnegation for the advancement of science, he remained poor because he was not willing to help British colonial expansion with his knowledge of Tibetan. He sought the proximity and trust of natives instead of the company of privileged Europeans. It is internationally ascertained that in Hungary he is a widely celebrated cultural hero; like his cult, Vajrayana Buddhism is also popular there, it is freely practised and benefits from the support of local institutions of international renown. Thanks to the legacy of the patriotic traveller turned Tibetologist, Indology and Tibeto-Mongolistics are flourishing in Hungary, their

adapts enjoy excellent connections abroad and provide high-level scientific forums for serious foreign colleagues. Recently a twofold, East-West, i.e. Eurasian, humanistic ideal has evolved from this state of affairs, it tends to eclipse the memory of cold war manoeuvring./

2.11 In the University of Vienna a team was formed in the late 1970s for Tibetan and Buddhist studies who published systematically their results in booklets. It was typical that in 1981 they convened a symposium in honour of Csoma de Kőrös. More important from a Hungarian point of view, they integrated into their activities Hungarian researchers who had then little scope to form a school at home. (They invited to lecture such Altaists and Tibetologists as A. Róna-Tas, G. Uray, J. Szerb, and also published papers by such specialists as E. Csetri.) [Since then, they have obtained official mandates for researches in India (at Tabo, etc.). Of late, they have stepped up collaboration with colleagues in Rome and in Paris.]

2.12 In Zurich, in 1977 a conference of Young Tibetologists laid the base for the International Association of Tibetan Studies (IATS), which was formally established in Oxford two years later and has held regular seminars ever since. The three member board which emerged from it in 2002 represent IAS / Leiden, SOAS / London and Oxford University to oversee the Tibetan Studies Library of Brill Academic Publishers.

/ The meeting of Tibetologists at international symposiums became regular outside Hungary. which lost her

former pivotal role in the field. Stepped-up specialization in Tibetan at these meetings has eliminated Hungarian (and other) Mongolists at their venues. Members tend to regard Csoma's grammar as inadequate on the grounds of its conformity to Latin grammar, they also discount the approach of its author to Tibetan Buddhism because of his pantheistic view close to that of B. H. Hodgson./

2.13 During the last fifteen years, Csoma's Himalayan background and subsequent impact has been discussed repeatedly at the colloquiums of the International Association of Ladakh Studies (IALS), who have published their proceedings under the auspices of host universities.

/As the members of the Association have become familiar with the life and works of the Transylvanian Tibetologist, the subject now looks too stale to them to deserve more than marginal treatment in their varied programmes./

2.14 Even if the anthropological approach in vogue among young Himalayists in the academic sphere does not favour Csoma's cult, new books reflect the continued interest of the general public.

/See, for instance, Fox, Edward 2001. *The Hungarian who walked to Heaven*. London: Short Books / Faber./

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[It describes the activities of the Scientific Union (Tudományos Egyesület) and their brainchild, the *Scientific Collection* (*Tudományos Gyűjtemény*) in favour of Csoma, it then dwells on the relationship between the Hungarian Learned Society (founded in 1825 but confirmed by the king and fully operational only from 1830 on) and the Transylvanian Tibetologist until the latter's death. It emphasizes that from 1919 on the editors of the periodical took sides against feudal principles ("rendiség") in favour of a new social order, in which the nobility let the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals also fit in. Amongst the ideals of their advocated system, work replaced bravery and action prevailed over word. Csoma proved to be an excellent embodiment of such values, no wonder that the news received of him was disseminated as it arrived.]

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[The biography presents Professor Musnai of Bethlen College, Nagyenyed, as an outstanding student of the cultural history of Transylvania and of the most famous pupil of his school. The portrait is based on ignored and unpublished manuscripts.]

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[It provides an overview of Csoma’s monuments in India, including the tomb at Darjeeling and its attendance; it reviews the posthumous publications of Csoma’s works and related literature on the subcontinent; and it describes in the federation the commemorative events and the role of the Hungarian state in them up until 1995...]

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[p. 24:"... two leading motives in Duka's literary activity- his desire to secure credit for Hungary's share in the advancement of science, and his eager wish to stimulate interest for Oriental research in the country of his birth".]

Szilágyi, Ferenc 1984. *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor levelesládája*. Budapest: Szépirodalmi.

[Also in chronological order and with more fluidity but less clarity than Terjék, the author compiled and translated when necessary all of Csoma's known letters and personal writings together with related letters, notes and personal reminiscences as well as newspaper clippings and other documents, which provide a background to the scholar's correspondence and fit it, so to say, into his itinerary. He pointed out that "it was Duka who drew anew public and scientific attention to the great linguist when in 1858 he published two of his letters in the *Akadémiai Értesítő* (the Academy's Bulletin) and from 1857 on sent continuously biographical details to the newspapers and periodicals back home ... It was the Hungarian Academy of Sciences who asked Duka as her corresponding member since 1863, to work this material into a monograph. Unfortunately, after the release of this important book, the Csoma-philology felt dispensed of new research for a long time, although, to mention just one gap, Duka's book omits Csoma's letters to Hungary despite the fact that many of them had already been published scattered in the home press". (p. 13).

Idem 1987. *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor élete nyomában*. Budapest: Gondolat.

[See chap.: VII. The country stirs, 211-240. This chapter stresses the triple role (that of initiator, organizer and treasurer) of András Thaisz, editor of the *Tudományos Gyűjtemény* (*Scientific Collection*), in giving financial help to Csoma. It narrates the story of the collection from its start in the county of Pest and its palatine endorsement through the complications

brought about by the Asian journey of János Besse to the loss and reimbursement of the proceeds in Calcutta.]

Idem 1999. "A legnagyobb magyar - a legnagyobb székely-magyar". Gazda, József (ed.) *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor és tudományos műhelyeink*. Sepsiszentgyörgy: KCsSKME.

[This covers the simultaneous 'damnatio memoriae' in Hungary of Count István Széchenyi and of Csoma by the party state during its straightforward opposition to both deep-rooted national ideals and romanticism. Széchenyi's rejection was motivated by his wealth, pro-British capitalistic spirit, moderation in his drive for political reforms and relative loyalty to the Habsburg empire. Csoma's ostracism was aggravated by preoccupations about the esteem he enjoyed in eastern theosophical circles. The discussion ends by sketching the rehabilitation of both characters starting in 1966-1967.]

Terjék, József 1971. *Tudosítások Kőrösi Csoma Sándorról*. Budapest: Kőrösi Csoma Társaság.

[A compilation of 16 items from *The Scientific Collection (Tudományos Gyűjtemény)* and Two from *The Store of Science (Tudománytár)*.]

Idem 1976. *Kőrösi Csoma dokumentumok az Akadémiai Könyvtár gyűjteményeiben*. Budapest: MTAK.

[This book is introduced by a foreword in both Hungarian and English by Lajos Ligeti and its table of contents is also provided in both languages. It gives a summary appreciation of Csoma as the founder of Tibetan scholarship from the double perspectives of the origin of the Hungarians and of Tibetology.]

devotes a separate chapter to Theodore Duka's achievements in fostering Csoma's memory; and publishes in its frame a 19 page correspondence with S. C. Malan in English and in Hungarian translation. It describes the Hungarian Academy's Csoma Collection and outlines its history; offers interesting information on István Szécheny's «relic» of Csoma; supplies a list of 86 items on archival materials known by its author about Csoma's life (without specifying the whereabouts of these documents, even when they are kept with the Hungarian Academy); takes stock of contemporary recollections of, and press covers on, Csoma; includes a chronology of the Székely Tibetologist's life and a bibliography of his works and enumerates the principal events which marked Csoma's cult.

Idem 1984. *Emlékek Kőrösi Csoma Sándorról*. Budapest: Kőrösi Csoma Társaság - MTAK.

[This book provides letters by, to, and pertaining to Csoma, official documents, necrologies, recollections and two prefaces (introduced by a short biography of Csoma set down on their basis). They are presented in Hungarian in chronological order.]

Idem 1984. "Alexander Csoma de Kőrös – A Short Biography". Terjék, J. (ed.). *Collected Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös: Tibetan–English Dictionary by Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, VII-XXXVI.

[A clear and very useful overview.]

Zágoni, Jeno 1984. *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor bibliográfiája*. Bukarest: Kriterion.

[An improved, independent version of the bibliography by Estéli and Hetényi.]

B. Foreign authors

Kaye, George Rushby & Edward Hamilton 1937. *India Office Library Catalogue of Manuscripts in European Languages. I. II.* London: HmsO.

[For researches on Csoma, particularly valuable is Vol. II, Part II: *Minor Collections and Miscellaneous Manuscripts.*]

Kejariwal, O.P. 1988/1999. *The Asiatic Society of Bengal and the Discovery of India's Past 1784-1838.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

[It describes with much clarity Csoma's host and employer in her haydays.]

Le Calloc'h, Bernard 1984/88. "Bibliographie de langue française relative à Alexandre Csoma de Kőrös". *Bulletin of the Csoma de Kőrös Symposium.* 1-2. Budapest: MTAK, 19-80.

[Among other things, it quantifies the mentions of Csoma's name in French articles bearing on, or referring to, Csoma's character, life and works.]

Idem 1986 / 1987. "Un témoignage capital sur la vie d'Alexandre Csoma de Kőrös". I-II. *Acta Orient. Hung.* 1986. T. XL (2-3), 249-281 & 1987. T. XLI (1), 83-124.

[The second part provides an anthology (in French, the original language) of Jacquemont's communications on Csoma.]

Idem 1988. "Csoma de Kőrös dans l'oeuvre de Louis Ligeti". *Études finno-ougriennes*. (Paris-Budapest: Klincksieck-Akademiai Kiadó.) XXI, 7-30.

[An obituary; as such, it avoids sensitive political issues.]

Marczell, P. J. 1992. "Alexandre Csoma de Kőrös et la renaissance indienne / Kőrösi Csoma és a bengál megújulás / Alexander Csoma de Kőrös and the Bengali Renaissance". A paper read before (1) the Hungarian Institute of Paris (Institut Hongrois de Paris) at the Alexander Csoma de Kőrös Conference of 30-31 March 1992; (2) the Csoma de Kőrös Jubilee Symposium, Budapest, 29-30 April 1992; and (3) the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 2 December 1992. (It was published only in Hungarian in 1993 under the title "Kőrösi Csoma Sándor és a bengáli megújulás" in Fábrián, Ernő (ed), *Kőrösi Csoma Sándor nyomdokain*. Kovászna-Csomakőrös: KCsSKME, 59-72.)

[The paper shows that Csoma could not live like a withdrawn sage in Calcutta, as he took an active part in the fight of his host and employer, the Asiatic Society, for the continued edition of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic classics and scientific works and for the cause of public education in the vernaculars.]

N Iqbal Singh 1984. *Amrita Sher-Gil*. Delhi: Vikas.

[A detailed biography of the painter Amrita Sher-Gil, one of Ervin Baktay's nieces; it covers the story of her family and Baktay's role in her education.]

Petech, Luciano 1989. "Ippolito Desideri, Alexander Csoma

de Kőrös, Giuseppe Tucci”. *Acta Orient. Hung.* XLIII, 2-3: 155-161.

[A paper presented at the bicentenary symposium at Visegrád making the following remarks: Desideri should be remembered as the “first Western tibetologist in a prescientific age”; Csoma was “the starting point for an unbroken line of scholars who did research in and on Tibet and above all who loved Tibet and the Tibetans.....A special place of honour in this line belongs to Giuseppe Tucci... homo religiosus...”.]

Stein, Aurel M. 1914. *In Memoriam Theodore Duka (1825-1908)*. Privately printed. [Its Hungarian translation was read before the MTA in 1913.]

ADDENDUM

THE TIBETAN MSS OF THE MALAN BEQUEST IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY AND THEIR RELATION TO THE LIFE AND WORKS OF CSOMA KÓRÖSI

With help from Kusho Rala and
Nicole Gullu, *Genève*

Abstract

The MSS kept in the Bodleian Library, Department of Oriental Books, Oxford University, England, as the Tibetan segment of the 'Malan Library', can be defined under three headings, viz.,

1. A bound book of 279 leaves which lacks both global title and colophon and provides no clue as to date or authorship;
2. Another bound book of 408 pages whose cover bears the pencilled indication "Outline of a Tibetan Dicty. (which belonged to Csoma Kőrösi.)";
3. A box containing several batches of MSS held between boards with leather strips.

This addendum is based chiefly on the substance of a paper presented by the author at the 8th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (IATS) in Bloomington, Indiana, USA, 25-31 July 1998, whose proceedings have not been published.

They were catalogued by hand by Mr John E. S. DRÍVER, who is no longer with the Institution.

According to Mr DRÍVER's short description, the first document was copied from the *bKá 'gyur* and the *hsTan 'gyur*. It is "a rather handy anthology of the translated canonical literature, that seems to have been compiled for an early student of Tibetan (? S.C. Das or Csoma ?) by some helpful lama. Could possibly be useful in teaching." The "Outline of a Tibetan Dicty." is doubtless a first draft of the *Dictionary, Tibetan and English* (1834) by CSOMA de KÓRÖS. The boxed material (10 items) "are all rites from the cycle of Mahākāruṇika (Avalokiteśvara) in his eleven-faced form after the style of the nun dPal-mo."

I became acquainted with all the above during my visit to *the Bodleian Library* in June 1994 when I recognized immediately that the anthology befitted perfectly the description given by CSOMA KÓRÖSI of one of the major contributions to his work by his lama tutor (Sangs rgyas phun tshog). [Letter of 25 May 1825 to Captain C.P. KENNEDY.] I confirmed in detail this finding to my counterpart in the Library in a letter of 27 June 1994.

My IATS paper 1998 carries this research in a hitherto neglected primary source area further by

1. Defining and commenting on the extracts of the anthology in the light of CSOMA's letters and publications and summarising their story in relation to the *Csoma Collection* in *The Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences*, with special reference to the so-called 'Alexander books',

2. Comparing it to “The Milinda Pañha” (A. H. FRANCKE’s parallel to put into perspective CSOMA’s intelligence methods, and a convenient introduction to Buddhism from a Western point of view),

3. Examining the relevance of the *smyung gnas* texts concerned to both CSOMA and MALAN.

Contents of the paper

Discussion

The Subject Matter

The ‘Anthology’ (Items located in the NEDKT by Nicole Gullu)

Comparison with Csoma’s Report and Publications

The *Smyung gnas* Texts (Catalogued by Kusho Rala and Nicole Gullu)

Acknowledgments / Credits

Abbreviations and Notes

Appendices :

- A. The *Milinda Pañha* Analogy.
- B. The Paradox of the Tibetan Segment of the ‘Malan Library’ at Oxford
- C. Table of contents of the ‘Anthology’ by Kusho Rala (draft translation by Nicole Gullu)

[Areas Tibetan philology (19th century aspects - Alexander Csoma Kőrösi /1784?-1842/, S. C. Malan (1812-1894/); Buddhism (Western interest in,)]

Discussion

Let me start with an overview of the items referred to in the title of my paper, then focus on the book of canonical extracts and finish my presentation with the texts relating to the *Sā dhanā* of the Great Compassionate One set against the relevant pieces in the *Csoma Collection* in *The Hungarian Academy of Sciences*. I shall use most of my time discussing the extracts, examining their description in one of CSOMA's letters and looking for their reflection in the scholar's publications. To this I shall add a brief comparison with *The Debate of King Milinda* brought up by H. A. FRANCKE, a note on S. C. MALAN and his bequests and a summary of the contents of the 'anthology'.

The Subject matter

As summarized in this paper's abstract, the MSS kept in *The Bodleian Library, Department of Oriental Books*, Oxford University, England, under the marks MS. Ind. Inst. Tibet. 1-3 (R) (Malan Library) comprise three items, in the following sequence:

1. A "stoutly bound book of 279 leaves 17.5 cm. x 29.5 cm., not Tib. paper. Script : dbu can 28 lines per page" which lacks both global title and colophon and provides no clue as to date or authorship;

2. Another book "bound European fashion. paper covered ...

408 pages, non- Tibetan paper, 20.5 cm. x 31 cm. ... Script: dbu can professionally neat. Some 36 lines per page (in 2 columns). Title : bod skad kyi min gi mjod (Treasury-of-names of the Tib. language')” whose cover bears the pencilled title “Outline of a Tibetan Dicty. (The which belonged to Csoma Kőrösi.)”;

3. A box containing several batches of MSS held between boards with leather strips. Script: “dbu-med, much abbreviated, 6 lines per page... [Size:] 38.8 cm. x 9.25 cm., portions separately numbered”.

They were catalogued by hand as quoted by Mr John E. S. Driver, formerly of St. Anthony’s College, who provided a description and appraisal on the Bothi MSS and xylographs acquired by the Bodleian Library up to c. 1970. (He is no longer with the Institution.)

According to his short presentation, the first document falls into seven parts, parts 1-4 were copied from the *bKa’ gyur* and the rest from the *bsTan gyur*. It is “a rather handy anthology of the translated canonical literature, that seems to have been compiled for an early student of Tibetan (? S.C. Das or Csoma?) by some helpful lama. Could possibly be useful in teaching.” The *Outline of a Tibetan Dicty.* is doubtless a first draft of the *Dictionary, Tibetan and English* (1834) by Csoma de Kőrös. It “has been taken as far as the stem ‘ga (Csoma p. 178a); i.e. to be complete there would need to be a second volume of almost exactly the same size”. The 10 items of the boxed material “are all rites from the cycle of Mahākāruṅika (Avalokiteśvara) in his eleven-faced form after

the style of the nun. The larger part is concerned with penitential fasting, etc. (smyuñ-gnas.)”

I became acquainted with all the above during my visit to the Bodleian Library in June 1994.¹

I shall deal first with the ‘anthology’, then with the texts pertaining to the *smyung gnas* ritual. Before doing so, let me point out briefly, however, the main philological and biographical interest of the *Outline of a Tibetan Dicty.*. It stems from the quite unusual alphabetical order of the words listed, in which the radical letters are arranged under each prefix instead of the opposite. This is also the order adopted in CSOMA’s Tibetan dictionary printed in 1834. Its option has been attributed by consensus to F. C. G. SCHROETER’s so-called *Serampore Dictionary* published posthumously in 1826 by Baptist missionaries John MARSHMAN (and William CAREY) at the Danish enclave on the Hugly River near Calcutta.²

If so, our *Outline* must have been contrived after CSOMAS’s two stays in Zangskar (mid-1823 - autumn 1824; summer 1825 - winter 1826/27), most probably at Kinnaur in Kinawar where he had moved for three years in the autumn of 1827. If not, the Magyar scholar from Transylvania must have either anticipated SCHROETER’s curious bias or arrived at the same model on his own.

The Anthology

Mr DRIVER’s handwritten cataloguing already mentioned, gives only short clues in English. As it is corrected here and

there by the author (also by hand), it must have been provisional and intended for internal use. No wonder then that despite its basic accuracy, it contains slight errors and inconsistencies.³

While stressing the excellent blockprint-like quality of the original hand(s), Kusho RALA was kind enough to draw attention to these minutiae and supply a more detailed table of contents in Bothi (dbu can script) which Nicole GULLU has obligingly translated into English (as appended to this paper) and cross-checked it in the *The Nyingma Edition of the sDe-dge bKa'-'gyur and bsTan-'gyur*. Her NEDKT locations can be summarized item by item (according to the transliterations of the 1981 U.S. edition) as follows:

1 : pp. 1-63. *bKa'-'gyur* (K) [in *bsTan-'gyur* (T). Vol. *Lakṣmī* 108, text (t) § 4465]. *Buddhavacana-sūcilipi / dKar-chag*. Author (A): Karma bsTan-pa'i nyin-byed.

2 : pp. 67-95. K, *Sūtra / mDo-sde*. Vol. *Ah/27*, t § 358. Title (Ti) : *Śārdūlakarṇāvadāna / sTag rna'i rtogs-pa-brjod-pa*. Translators (Tr): Ajitaśrībhadrā & Śākya 'od.

3 : pp. 96-99. K, *Sūtra / mDo-sde*. Vol. *Kha / 17*, t § 95. Ti: *Ārya-lalitavistara-nāma-mahā-yāna-sūtra / Pags-pa rgya-cher-rol-pa zhes-bya-ba theg-pa chen-po'i mdo*. Tr : Jinamitra, Da-nas'ila, Mumvarman, Ye-shes sde.

4 : pp. 103-103. K, *Tantra / rGyud*. Vol. *Tha / 31*, t § 494. Ti: *Mahāvairocanābhisambodhi-vikurvitādhiṣṭhana-vaipulya-sūtrendrarāja-nāma-dharmaparyāya / rNam-par-snang-mzad chen-po mngon-par-rdzogs- par byang-chub-*

pa rnam-par-sprul-pa byin-gyis-rlob-pa shin-tu rgyas-pa mdo-sde'i dbang-po'i rgyal-po zhes-bya-ba'i chos-kyi rnam-grangs. Tr: Śīlendrabodhi & dPal-brtsegs rakṣita.

5 : pp. 113-244. T, Vol. *Śrī* 108, t § 4466. *Śāstra-sūcilipi /dKar- chag.*

6 : pp. 245-250. T, *Sūtra / mDo-sde.* Vol. *Khi /73,* t § 3958. Ti: *Daśākuśala-karmapatha (deśanā) /Mi-dge-ba bcu'i las-kyi lam bstan-pa.* A : *Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna.* Tr : *Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna & Tshul-khrims rgyal-ba.*

7 (i)-(ix): pp. 251-279. T, *Sūtra / mDo-sde.* Vol. *Go /104.*

7 (i): p. 251. t § 4328. Ti : *Prajñāśataka-nāma-prakaraṇa / Shes-rab brgya-pa zhes-bya-ba'i rab-tu-byed-pa.* A : *Nāgārjuna.* Tr : *Sarvajñādeva & dPal-brtsegs rakṣita.*

7 (ii) : p. 251. t § 4329. Ti: *Nītiśāstra prajñādaṇḍānāma / Lugs-kyi bstan-bcos shes-rab sdong-bu zhes-bya-ba.* A: *Nāgārjuna.* Tr. *Śīlendrabodhi & Ye-shes sde.*

7 (iii): p. 253. t § 4330. Ti: *Nītiśāstra jantupoṣaṇabindu-nāma / Lugs kyi bstan-bcos skye-bo gso-ba'i thigs-pa zhes-bya-ba.* A: *Nāgārjuna.* Tr: *Śīlendrabodhi & Ye-shes sde.*

7 (iv): p. 253. t § 4331. Ti: *Gāthākoṣa-nāma / Tshigs-su bcad-pa'i mzod ces-bya-ba.* A: *Sūryagupta.* Tr. *Jñānaśānti & sPal-gyi lhun-po sde.*

7 (v): p. 254. t § 4332. Ti: *Śatagāthā / Tshigs-su bcad-pa brgya-pa.* A: *Vararuci.* Tr: *Vinayacandra & Chos-kyi shes-rab.*

7 (vi): p. 254. t § 4334. Ti: *Cānakya-nītiśāstra / Canaka'i rgyal-po'i lugs-kyi bstan-bcos*. A: Canaka. Tr: Prabhakaraśrīmitra & Rin-chen bzang-po.

7 (vii): p. 255. t § 4335. Ti: *Nītiśāstral/Lugs kyi bstan-bcos*. A: Masūrākṣa. Tr: Dharmasrībhadrā & Śākya blos-gros.

7 (viii) : p. 255. t § ? Ti: *Buddha-pratimā-lakṣaṇā-nāma / Sangs-rgyes kyī sku'i gzugs brnyan gyi ts'an nyid* [Not found in NEDKT].

7 (ix) : p. 258. t § 4346. Ti: *Vyutpatti /Bye-brag tu rtogs-par-byed- pa*. A & Tr: Many paṇḍitas & lo-tśābas.

8 : p. 261. T, Sūtra / *mDo-sde / Vol. Re /101, t § 4270*. Ti: *Viṃśatyupasarga-vṛtti-nāma/Nye-bar sgyur-ba nyi-shu-pa'i grel-pa zhes-bya-ba*. A: Candragomin. Tr: Jetakarma & Nyi-ma rgyal-mtshan.

9 : p. 268. T, Sūtra / *mDo-sde*. Vol. Se / 102, t § 4307. Ti: *Jīvasūtra /sMan 'tsho-ba'i mdo*. A: Nāgārjunagarbha.

10 (i)-(ii)- T, Sūtra / *mDo-sde*. Vol. Lbe / 99.

10 (i) : p. 274. t § 4230. Ti: *Nyāyabindu-ṭīkā/Rigs-pa'i thigs-pa'i rgya-cher-'grel-pa*. A: Vinītadeva. Tr: Jinamitra & Ye-shes sde.

10 (ii) : p. 277. t § 4233. Ti: *Nyāyabindu-piṇḍārtha /Rigs-pa'i thigs-pa'i don bsdus-pa*. A: Jinamitra. Tr: Śīlendrābodhi & Ye-shes sde.

A comparison with Kusho RALA's appended Tibetan catalogue of 'The Anthology' reveals several inconsistencies as

to locations, titles, authors and translators.⁴ These should be explained by the peculiarities of the sources of CSOMA and his 'lamas' [Narthang ed.?] when set against the *NEDKT* and could eventually permit their identification.

Comparison with Csoma's report and publications

The astonishing size, quality of paper and binding of the notebook used is explained by CSOMA in clear terms: "... a volume of 277 pages, in folio, on kashmirian common paper, bound in leather at Kashmir, which Mr. Moorcroft had the kindness to give me on my return to Tibet". (DUKA 50-51.) He also mentioned that the writing in 32 lines ran only on one side of the pages. Some of the indications in his letter of 25 May 1825 to C. P. KENNEDY (paras 15,16, 17, 18, 25 and part of 12) fit quite closely the table set down by Kusho RALA, others seem to correspond to it in more general ways. He calls the samples of the canonical literature thus provided specimens or pattern-pieces "for the style and contents of the 'Kahgyur' [and] ... the 'Stangyur'", without justifying his choices. They were "copied by the Lama [i.e. Sangs rgyas phun tshog, his tutor and the duly acknowledged co-author of his Tibetan dictionary] and by another good writer", the former having done items 2 and 3 for sure, the latter probably item 1 (the catalogue / index of the *bKa'* 'gyur). (DUKA 41-65.)

CSOMA KÓRÖSI's collected works published to date prove his lasting interest in at least some of the samples on which he did further work. To these we now turn.

Under the subtitle II. *Specimens of the Tibetan language, from the Kah-gyur and other classical works*, the Appendix of the 1834 *A Grammar of the Tibetan Language*, in

English takes out extracts as does 'the *Anthology*', with the difference that all of them are short, some very short, and the Bothi texts are followed by translations into English. There are altogether 20 such extracts: 11 from the *bKa'* 'gyur, 4 from the *bsTan* 'gyur, 2 from individual works, while the sources of the last 3 are left unspecified, they are listed as *Remarkable Sayings*.

The borrowings from the *bKa'* 'gyur bear on the *Attributes of a virtuous woman* (*mDo, Kha*, 106-7; CSOMA 158-160, DUKA 189-192), and also contain *Verses against wearing the veil* (*mDo, Kha*, 120-1; CSOMA 160-164), passages from Ratnavali's *Letter to Shakya* (*Dulvá*, vol. 5, 30, etc.; CSOMA 164-165, DUKA 192-193), a śloka on the doctrine of Buddha (no ref.; CSOMA 165), two maxims (*Go*, 174; *La*, 27; CSOMA 165), the justification of the name "Konchok = dkon mchog = God = The Chief of Rarity" (Index, etc.; CSOMA 165), as well as identifications of the Supreme Being (*Kha*, 190; CSOMA 166) and the True Protector (*Kha*, Uttara Tantra; CSOMA 166). The excerpts ending this series tell *How the doctrine of the Shakya should be received by the learned, and the priests* (*Kha*, 230 + *bsTan* 'gyur *Tsha*, 26, etc.; CSOMA 168) and highlight *Shakya of the Scythian race* (*Cha*, 288, 291 in the *Lañkāvatāra Sūtra*; CSOMA 168).

Two of the four quotations from the *bsTan* 'gyur praise the good Refuge (*Ka*, 89; *Ka*, 47-48; CSOMA 167) and two others go back to the Mahābhārata. Of the latter the first spells out *The address of Arjuna to Vishnu* (*Ka*, 25, 51, 52; CSOMA 168) and the second provides two lines on *The Nature of the soul* (*Ka*, 35; CSOMA 168).

Among the collected *Tibetan Studies*, the Siculo-Hungarian scholar's first contribution to Tibetan philology focused precisely on item 3 in our table covering 'the Anthology'. It appeared in 1832 "with remarks by H. H. WILSON, Secy." under the unassuming title "Translation of a Tibetan Fragment" [*JASB* I, 269-276] and described the historical excitement about the extract taken from the *bKa'* 'gyur, *rGyud* [tantra] vol. *Ta* [9] 337-339, reproduced Fourmont's, Müller's and Georgi's corresponding partial Latin translations and provided his own together with *The Tibetan text in Roman Character*, and a supplement in Tibetan script to Georgi's. The short 1833 "Note on the Origin of the Kála-Chakra and Adi-Buddha Systems" [*JASB* II, 57-59], i.e., on "the peculiar religious system ... derived from Shambhala" and the name of Adi-Buddha, most probably stemmed from item 5. The 1834 "Extracts from Tibetan Works" [*JASB* III, 57-61] illustrating the *Tibetan beau-ideal of a wife* corroborated by Ratnawali's *Letter to Shákya* may be traced back to our *Lalitavistara* item 3 (*bKa'* 'gyur, *mDo*, vol. *Kha*).

At this juncture we should mark Csoma's special interest in the *Lalitavistara* and in the lineage and life of Śákyamuni. In fact, after having told the story in 1833 of the mythical "Origin of the Shakya Race translated from the La, or the 26th volume of the mDo class in the bKa' 'gyur, commencing on the 161st leaf [*JASB* II, 5-8], he devoted a separate study to the 12 deeds / acts and on the death of Siddhārtha based on the *Lalitavistara* and on the *Dulva* respectively [1839 "Notices on the Life of Shakya, extracted from the Tibetan Authorities", *AR* XX / II, 285-317]. He took up all these issues again in the abstracts of the full *bKa'* 'gyur which he published in two

instalments [1836 “Analysis of the Dulva, a Portion of the Tibetan Work entitled the Kah-Gyur” (*AR XX / I*, 41-93) and 1839 “Analysis of the Sher-chin-p’hal-ch’hen-dkon-séks-dó-dé-nyáng-dás- and Gyut; being the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 7th divisions of the Tibetan Work, entitled the Kah-Gyur” (*AR XX / II*, 393-552)]. It was only natural that use be made by him of the material included in our items 1 and 2.

Csoma’s 1839 “Abstract of the Contents of the Bstan-Hgyur” [*AR XX / II*, 553-585] was much more summarized than his synopsis of the *bKa’ gyur* and he does not seem to have processed into print the parts of his ‘*Anthology*’ borrowed from the *bsTan gyur*. This conclusion should be qualified, however, by drawing attention to the Sanskrit-Tibetan vocabulary known as *Mahāvvyutpatti* included in our item 7, which the Transylvanian scholar copied in turn, adding English equivalents so as to have it ready for publication by the end of 1832. Unfortunately, that work could be published only much later in Calcutta.⁵

Another posthumous publication (1855-56), “A brief Notice of the Subhāṣita Ratna Nidhi of Śākya Paṇḍita, with extracts and translations” (*JASB*, XXIV, 141-165; XXV, 257-294) reflects the same interest as ‘*the Anthology*’ in the classification of human types from the Buddhist moral point of view, but its source is more recent than those of this selection.

The *Smyung gnas* texts

The 10 MSS boxed with the Tibetan segment of the ‘Malan Library’ in the *Oriental Department of the Bodleian Library*, vary markedly in length (1-44 pages), contain many

contractions of the type listed by CSOMA in his *A Grammar of the Tibetan Language in English* (§ 44 pp. 21-8) and provide Avalokiteśvara's (*Chenrezig I spyan ras gzigs*) *Sā dhanā* (*sgrub tab* -visualize deity + method) together with additional prayers and dedications. In them, the spoken part is written in large, bold letters, while the explanations and instructions are put in smaller script (both *dbu med*). Kusho RALA and Nicole GULLU have supplied the following table on them:

1. *Smyung gnas* practice of 11-faced Avalokiteśvara, followed by invocation prayers according to dGe long ma dPal mo
by dGelong Ye shes Yon tan - [44 pages]
2. Request for Lama's blessing
by dGe long Ye shes Yon tan - [1 page]
3. List of the *smyung gnas* rituals
by dGe long Ye shes Yon tan - [1 page]
4. Self-generation and Great Initiation of Avalokiteśvara
by dGe 'dun rGya mtsho - [8 pages]
5. Prayer for the Buddha's teachings to flourish
by Bio bzang rGyal mtshan - [4 pages]
6. Verses recited during puja (offering) ceremonies - [6 pages]
7. The consecutive (or 'small') initiation of Avalokiteśvara according to dGe long ma dPal mo - [11 pages]
8. Maṇḍala offering - [1 page]

9. Homage to Avalokiteśvara - [3 pages]

10. Verses recited while doing prostrations - [3 pages]

This presentation differs from that given by J. E. S. DRIVER in considering as one the items catalogued 7 and 8 by the Oxford scholar and by including, as standing for item 10, a title missing in his draft.

The ritual goes back to the 10th century Kashmiri princess turned Buddhist nun, Bhikṣuṇī Lakṣmī (*dGe long dPal mo*) who was cured of her leprosy by a vision of the 11 Faced One (*bcu gcig zhal*) in his thousand-armed aspect. Open to laymen and women alike and practiced by all the lamaistic orders, it is one of the most widespread communal liturgies for cleansing sin (*sdig pa*) and defilements (*grib*) and improving prospects for a better rebirth. It is often carried out during the first half of the fourth Tibetan month, although it may also be done at other times during the year.⁶

With regard to the origin of our MSS, I am tempted to presume that they come from Zangskar where the 13th-14th century family temple of Sangs rgyas phun tshog at Karsha is dedicated to the 11-headed Avalokiteśvara, of whom it shelters a big stucco statue. The monastery of the village is still today the venue of an annual *smyung gnas* ritual, with 300 to 500 participants which “brings together more butter, beer, and barley than any other single lay rite or celebration in Zangskar”.⁷

KŐRÖSI probably obtained these texts during one of his two stays in Zangskar. The significance of his acquisitions there was emphasised by Captain KENNEDY in a letter dated 17

January 1827, when he “wrote to Dr. Wilson, stating that he was shown by Csoma ‘an immense mass of manuscripts and many printed volumes...’” [DUKA 73]. It is also important to stress here that the professionally catalogued item 22 of the *Csoma Collection* in *The Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences* is *The theophany of Avalokiteśvara according to the vision of the nun Bhikṣuṇī (Dge-slon-ma Dpal-mo’i lugs-kyi Thugs-rje chen-po’i sgrub-thabs)* composed by the second Dalai Lama, also the author of the fourth text on our list. It seems to be the main text among the documents of the cycle and at the title bears the pencilled note “Penitence (for nuns)”, which is incorrect but perhaps revealing of an environment and simplistic interpretations of observed patterns.

Curiously enough against this background, there is a nunnery next to the old Avalokiteśvara temple at Karsha but it was founded only recently by Sonam Wangchug, the Karsha lonpo, amchi, ompo and Gelugpa lama since the death of his wife, who claims to be a descendant of Sangs rgyas phun tshog. We may also recall here again the feminist sympathies noticed above in CSOMA’s ‘Anthology’. S. C. MALAN must have stuck to the Zangskari components of the lot because of his love for calligraphy, his well-known interest in rituals, the penitential fasting aspect easily understood by Christians and the association with the most heroic period in CSOMA’s Tibetan research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks are due to all those who have kindly made the MSS processed in this paper accessible to me: at Oxford,

England, the late Professor Michael ARIS, the late Mr. David BARRETT and Ms. D. NICHOLSON (both with the *Bodleian* Library); in Budapest, Hungary, Mrs. Judit BALÁZS (at the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences). I am particularly grateful to Kusho RALA and Mrs. Nicole GULLU for having kindly analysed and summarised in writing all this fairly vast material, and checked the references of 'Anthology' in the *NEDKT*. I also wish to express my gratitude to Mrs. Pamela SMARIDGE for her professional editing. Of course, all the errors, which may still remain, are mine.

ABBREVIATIONS, REFERENCES & NOTES

AR Asiatick Researches

CSOMA - Terjék, J. (ed.) 1986. *Collected Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös's: Grammar of the Tibetan Language by Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.

DUKA - Duka, Theodore 1972 (1885). *Life and Works of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. New Delhi: Mañjuśrī (London: Trübner).

JASB = Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal

NEDKT = The Head Lama of the Tibetan Nyingma Meditation Center / Dharma Mudranalaya / Tarthang Tulku (Sponsor / Publisher / Director). 1981 *The Nyingma Edition of the sDe-dge bKa'-'gyur and bsTan-'gyur*. Oakland, Cal : Dharma Publishing.

1. It happened in the frame of the centenary commemoration of S. C. MALAN's death at Broadwindsor / Beaminster / Dorset scheduled for 31 July 1994. Upon the recommendation of the late Professor Michael ARIS, approved by Mr. Adrian ROBERTS, the Keeper of Oriental Books in the Library, a meeting was arranged with the late Mr. David BARRETT in charge of the card catalogue.

who was kind enough to show me the small collection and supply a photocopy of both Mr. DRIVER'S quoted description and Professor ARIS's "A Note on the Resources for Tibetan Studies at Oxford". [*Bodleian Library Record*, X. 6. 1995. 368-75.] The latter refers to the second item on our list (*MS. Ind. hist. Tib. 2*) in very flattering terms but does not extend to the other two. To quote him in full:

"... it was in the old region of Western Tibet, and British-administered Ladakh in particular, that the modern discipline of Tibetology was really born. The founding figure is reckoned to have been the Hungarian scholar Kőrösi Csoma Sándor (1784-1842) who set off in 1819 on a romantic quest for the origins of the Magyar people. He ended up spending about eight years in the monasteries of Zangskar and neighbouring regions, during which period he prepared his *Essay towards a dictionary, Tibetan and English*, published in Calcutta in 1834 (Tib. d. 23). Perhaps the most poignant of the Bodleian's treasures is a manuscript containing a first draft of half of the Tibetan entries in his famous dictionary. The hand is very likely that of his collaborator, the 'Brug-pa lama Sangs-rgyas Phun-tshogs, who presumably gave this draft its Tibetan title of *Bod-skad-kyi ming-mzod* (*MS. Ind. Inst. Tib. 2*)".

The outline of *'the Anthology'* reminded me immediately of CSOMA KŐRÖSI's formal letter to Captain C. P. KENNEDY, dated 25 May 1825, with its account of the contributions obtained from lama helpers. I confirmed this very close correspondence in writing backed by supporting enclosures to Mr. BARRETT whose Library used it for identifying (in a new, typed description) the Siculo-Hungarian researcher as the instigator and first beneficial owner of the book involved. Later, I ordered and obtained a microfilm [Reel No. 0/86 - 60 FT.] from the Photographic Services of the Library (Ms. D. NICHOLSON), which enabled me to process the material at leisure.

2. *A dictionary of the bhotanta or boutan language printed from a manuscript copy made by the late rev. Frederic Christian Gotthelf Schroeter; edited by John Marshman. To which is prefixed a grammar of the bhotanta language. By Frederic Christian Gotthelf Schroeter. Edited by W. Carey.* Reviewing this publication, Heinrich Julius Klaproth praised the order in which its words had been arranged, considering the option more convenient and easy for European users than the one generally adopted by the Tibetans in such works. Cf. 1828. "Observations sur le Dictionnaire Tibétain imprimé à Sérampore." *Nouveau Journal Asiatique* 2. I: 401-423. Quoted by Father Felix [of Antwerp, a Jesuit sometime apostolic administrator at Bettia] 1912. "Remarks on the Tibetan Manuscript Vocabularies in Bishop's College, Calcutta." *JASB* VIII. 10: 379-397.
3. For example, it specifies pp. 113-243 rather than 113-244, 244-250 instead of 245-250. As to the original Tibetan subtitles, it transliterates them without always giving the Sanskrit equivalents in full, even when these are stated in the original texts, and instead of providing their translations into English, it is satisfied with giving short clues. In the references for the extracts from *bsTan 'gyur*, *mDo*, two leaf (f.) indications and two Sanskrit transcriptions are somewhat erroneous and one title is missing (p. 265 from f. 203: *Nītiśāstra*).
4. Variances in references: items 2?, 4?, 6, 7 (x), 10 (i); divergent titles: items 6, 7 (iii), 7 (iv), 7 (ix); different authors / translators: items 6, 7 (iv), 7 (v), 10 (i). Item (viii) has not been found in the *NEDKT*.
5. It was done in three steps. The first and second parts, edited by E. Denison ROSS, were printed in 1910 and 1916, respectively, and the third part, edited by Durga Charan CHATTERJEE, followed the other two in 1944. The Introduction and Preface to the latter help to appreciate the job and shed valuable light on the delay. (*Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Vocabulary ... by Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. 1984 Ed. J. Terjék. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.)

6. In her 1978 book *Sherpas through their rituals*, Cambridge University Press, focusing on three religious rituals and a recurrent formal secular event, Sherry B. ORTNER gave the *smyung gnas* practiced by the Sherpas first place in Nepal. She considered it particularly useful for 'entering' into the workings of the rather atomized society she wanted to study. She viewed the exercise as an offering of the cultural performance of predominantly elderly people bearing on psychological states, the "most dramatic and meritorious observance of deepening religious commitment... [which]... liberates people from the disturbing emotional investment in their children". [p. 59.]

However, her target population with few monks getting little support from the laity, did not seem to match the traditional Tibetan and Ladakhi patterns that emerged in the 8th seminar of IATS. There, several participants described their *smyung gnas* experiences in less neofunctional anthropological terms of problem-solving through meaning creation. Instead of evoking the emotion of an idealized family relationship in paradoxical symbolical polarization with society, the Tibetans stressed the *sādhana* ('means of achievement') aspect, while the Westerners emphasized the hallucinatory effect of deprivation of food, water, speech and light amidst recitations and prostrations. In the publication section of the venue, the 1995 manual *Nyung Nä - The Means of Achievement of the Eleven-Faced Great Compassionate One, Avalokiteshvara*, Boston: Wisdom P., offered a long version of the celebration based on the teachings of the Seventh Dalai Lama, as compiled, translated and completed by additional prayers, scenic instructions, drawings, photographs and notes by Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche and George CHURINOFF. This could be compared immediately with related literature like Kanta Brahma, Nahini 1993 *Philosophy of Hindu Sadhana*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, or Sharpa Tulku and Richard GUARD (comp. and tr.) 1990 *Meditation on Vajrabhairava - The procedures for doing the serviceable retreat of the Glorious Solitary Hero Vajrabhairava and the Sadhana 'Victory over Evil' by Kyabja Phabongkha*

Dechen Nyingpo. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

Among Buddhists of Tibetan orientation in Europe, *smyung gnas* is as popular as it is in the United States. For example, it is included in the regular programme of the Centre d'Études Tibétaines Karma Migyur Ling at Izeron, France, whereas at the Centre des Hautes Etudes Tibétaines, Rabten Choeling, Mont Pèlerin, Switzerland, the three-day Mahāyāna retreat used to be a feature of the monastic observances so much so that the words recited during its enactment are still available in both Tibetan transliteration and English translation. [Compilation by the nuns of Dorje Palmo Monastery, Saka Dawa, and the monks of Nalanda Monastery with the help of nun Yeshe Dechen, the Ven. Martin WILLSON et al. 1983-84. *Nyung Nä - The Sadhana according to Gelongma Palmo of the Great Compassionate One in Eleven Headed Form, including the Ritual Fast and Vow of Silence*. CH - 1801 Le Mont Pèlerin.]

It may also be useful to draw attention here to two additional publications. The *Sadhanamala* I-II, edited in 1968 by Benvytosh BHATTACHARYA with the Oriental Institute, Baroda, includes 312 Sādhanā texts based on a compilation dated 1165 AD and kept at Cambridge, of which 6-43 are devoted to Avalokiteśvara in his various manifestations. Lokesh CHANDRA's 1988 *The Thousand armed Avalokiteśvara* traces this "saviour from difficulty" back to a combination of earlier Hindu representations.

7. GUTSCHOW, Kim 1999. "The Smyung gnas Fast in Zangskar: How Liminality Depends on Structure". Pp. 154 ff. in *Recent Research on Ladakh 8*, eds. Martijn van BEEK, Kristoffer Brix BERTELSEN & Poul PEDERSEN. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press. It describes in detail the retreat in its regional context and provides a bibliography.

Appendices

A. *The Milinda Pañha analogy*

In addition to informing the British authorities of his collection of extracts from the Buddhist canonical literature of Tibet in his letter quoted above, CSOMA also mentioned accounts written at his request on Tibetan grammar, the five sciences, the history of medicine and the contents of its eight branches, astronomy, the whole religious system of the Buddhists, as well as learning in general, and logic in particular. A century later, reporting the discovery of copies of one of these texts in Zangskar and also in the British Museum, Hermann FRANCKE struck a parallel between this query and the so-called *The Debate of King Milinda / Milinda's Questions / Milinda Pañha*. He ended his first, 1826 article on the subject with the exclamation: "How nice would it be when one will study not only in the old Buddhist literature the book 'The Questions of King Milinda' but also in the newer Lamaistic literature 'The Questions of Kóros'!" (Wie schön wird es sein, wenn man nicht nur in der alten buddhistischen Literatur ein Buch 'Die Fragen des Königs Milinda', sondern auch in der neueren lamaistischen Literatur 'Die Fragen de Kóros' studieren wird!") He further improved on the comparison by introducing his second contribution in this particular area two years later with the title "Alexander's Questions" (in English translation). [See: "Neues über Csoma de Kóros", *Ungarische Jahrbücher* VI, 320-22; "Die Fragen des Alexander", *Ungarische Jahrbücher* VIII, 375-77].

Csoma's Christian name Sándor - Skander / Iskander = Alexander is readily associated with Alexander the Great (356-323 BC), one of whose successors in the Indo-Greek

sphere was the Bactrian King Menandros / Menander / Milinda, who ruled presumably 155-130 or 150-110 BC over the Kabul and Swat valleys, and for a period over the Indus valley. [E.g., THAPAR, Romila 1966. *A History of India I*, London: Penguin, pp. 94-95; BASHAM, A. L. 1989 (1967). *The Wonder that was India*. Calcutta: Rupa. p. 60.] During his travels in the East, the Hungarian explorer used the Bhig / Beg title, meaning lord or prince, according to FRANCKE. This is how the *dris lans* involved became known as the 'Alexander books'. However farfetched the juxtaposition, especially allowing for the frequency of the *genre* in Tibetan literature, it deserves consideration even with respect to '*the Anthology*' in focus. For both Csoma's collection of canonical samples and *The Milinda Pañha* are apologetic compendia of Buddhist learning or virtual instruments of Buddhist teaching. They belong, however, to schools of thought far apart in time and space, and vary greatly in purpose, scope and style.

"It seems most likely that the Mil. was composed some time after Menander's death [the 1st c. BC]; perhaps being based on an oral tradition of actual conversations that did take place between Menander and a monk or several monks." [Bhikku PESALA 1991. *The Debate of King Milinda - an Abridgement of the Milinda Pañha*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, p. XIV.] Although its earliest text extant is in Pali, this may be a translation from Sanskrit. It contains 237 questions on the philosophy, psychology and ethics of Buddhism, apparently somewhat less than certain earlier versions, which used to fall into six divisions made up of 22 chapters. The author is not known. The form reminds us of Platon's dialogues, the learned monk Nagasena acting like Socrates and bringing about King Milinda to Buddhism by his

persuasive arguments and apt similes ('illustrations'), many of which are chosen from the area of monarchic administration. This can also be viewed as "a literary device ... to add interest to what is primarily an exposition of Buddhist doctrine and a refutation of wrong views which have been promulgated throughout the ages by various opponents of Buddhism". [Pesala, p. X.]

I read it rather as the legend of a conversion overcharged with scholarly subtleties: at the beginning of the story, Menander is aware of and curious about Buddhism but dubious about its use. Nevertheless he agrees to debate on it as a scholar, not as a king, and the ensuing conversations entice him to embrace its teachings so much so that he starts longing for a monk's life; at the end of the confrontation, interrupted by a period of mutual reflection, he joins Nagasena as a dedicated follower, lives out the remainder of his life in homelessness and attains Arahantship.

CSOMA KÓRÖSI's area of contractual research agreed with W. MOORCROFT in 1823 covered Tibet: the country *lato sensu*, its language, society and culture, including religion and learning, on which he tried to throw a sympathetic light. The liberal bias of this sympathy is clearly attested by his comments on two of the extracts selected from the *bKa'* 'gyur's sutra section (*mDo*, vols. *A* and *Kha*) on basic Buddhist opposition to what may be called today interconnected social and sexual segregation (manifest through caste inbreeding and the veiled faces of women). His choice of testimonies seems to reflect as much the sponsor William MOORCROFT's moral influence and practical interests, as his own convictions and curiosity for which he had illegally left the Austrian Empire once and for all.

B. *The Paradox of the Tibetan Segment of the ‘Malan Library’ at Oxford*

The Oxford MSS under discussion come as an astonishment to all who believed, in the wake of L. LIGETI’s announcement in 1933 in French in response to A. H. FRANCKE, that CSOMA KŐRÖSI’s personal collection of Bothi texts was held in full in the library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest. [“Ouvrages tibétains rédigés à l’usage de Csoma”. *T’oung Pao* XXX, 26-36.] The surprise fades away if we appreciate that the legatee of both bequests concerned was the same person, Solomon Caesar MALAN (1812-1894) who might have heeded the advice not to ‘put all your eggs into the same basket’, as the saying goes.

Born in Geneva into a Puritan (at that time Calvinist) family strongly involved in historical dissent to mainstream Christianity through Cathare Martyrdom in Provence-Languedoc, Waldesian heresy in the Alpine region of Piemonte and Huguenot persecution in France, this ‘biblical scholar’ and ‘most accomplished Oriental linguist in England’ befriended KŐRÖSI at Bishop’s College on the Hugly River near Calcutta, the Anglican school for Oriental missionaries, where he was Senior Professor of Classics and acting secretary for less than two years during 1838-1840. During his rather short stay in India, he took lessons in Tibetan from the great Siculo-Hungarian authority of those times, at the end of which his mentor passed on to him practically all his possession of Bothi MSS and blockprints (more than 40 items).

Instead of making an Academic carrier on his return to England, his new home country through marriage, he ended up

at the well-provisioned vicarage of Broadwindsor near Beaminster at Dorset. He spent 40 years there in pastoral and educational work diversified into historical research, linguistics and calligraphy, relaxed through cabinet making, drawing and music and put in harmony with nature by gardening, angling and bird watching. He also collected Oriental books, birds' eggs, sea shells and fossils. On his retirement at Bournemouth, where he also died, he donated almost all his choice library of 4,017 titles to the Indian Institute, Oxford, whose assets have been taken over by The Bodleian Library without a comprehensive catalogue ever having been set up for S. C. MALAN's gifts. The Patristic component, however, was destined to The Keble Library and CSOMA's legacy was given to Hungary through the instigator of this transfer, the paramount biographer Surgeon-Major Theodore DUKA (1825-1908), another Hungarian political refugee having proved his worth in India under British auspices. [On this transfer see: DUKA, Theodore 1884. "Some Remarks on the Life and Labours of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös, delivered on the occasion when his Tibetan Books and MSS. were exhibited before the Royal Asiatic Society on the 16th June", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, NS XVI, pp. 486-94. NAGY, Louis J. 1942 "Tibetan Books and Manuscripts of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences". *Analecta Orientalia Memoriae Alexandri Csoma de Kőrös Dicata* I, Budapest: Sumptibus Academiae Litteratum Hungaricae et Societatis A Csoma de Kőrös Nominatae. Pp. 29-56. Terjek, József 1976. *Collection of Tibetan MSS and Xylographs of Alexander Csoma de Kőrös*. Budapest: MTAK.]

MALAN had visited Hungary on his way to Caucasia in 1872 where, after a first trip in 1849-1850, he chose to return through the Austrian Empire, plying down the Danube to Odessa, testing the Black Sea and travelling back up the Caspian and the Volga and by rail as far as St. Petersburg. [The avowed purpose of this circuit was to meet Gabriel, Bishop of Imereh in the presence of whom he made a sermon in Georgian.] He seems to have liked the country and its inhabitants, learned their language to some extent, found it worthwhile to translate the prayer *Our Father* from Hungarian into English [1881. *Seven Chapters, S. Matthew i-vi.; S. Luke xi., of the revision of 1881 revised*. London: Hatchards], and in the fantastic handmade prayerbook of his sampling more than 80 languages / dialects in the appropriate scripts, he started the eight day of the month with a Hungarian prayer followed by a Hungarian version of Psalm 37 from the Bible. [*Oriental Library / The Bodleian Library* MS. Or. Polygl. f. 1. - *Sacra Privata* - Rev S. C. MALAN - MDCCCLIII: *Psalms and Prayers for every day of the month.*]

Among his remembrances from CSOMA KŐRÖSI, he must have clung to the last to the documents which he cherished most. This is how Oxford must have obtained as precious relics the Tibetan 'Anthology', the first smattering of a dictionary and the *smyung gnas* literature. In this treasure the latter seems to be the most intriguing to me. [Basic literature on or relating to S. C. MALAN: MACDONNEL, Arthur A. 1895. "Dr. S. C. Malan". *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, pp. 453-7.- MALAN, Rev. A. N. 1897. *Solomon Caesar Malan, D.D. Memorials of his Life and Writings*. London:

John Murray. *Dictionary of National Biography* Supplement III. 1901. "Malan", London: Smith, Elder and Co. pp. 133-34. MALAN de MERINDOL, Henry Victor 1865. *The Malan de Merindol*. London: 'Printed for Private Circulation'. Die Universiteit van Stellenbosch 1970. *Solomon Caesar Malan. Aquarelles / Akwarelle.*]

C. Contents of 'the Anthology' (Malan MS No. 37) by Kusho Rala Draft translation by Nicole Gullu, July 1998 (with credit to Sanskrit transcriptions by J. E. S. Driver and others).

Item 1 : pp. 1-63

Extracts from *the catalogue of the bKa' 'gyur*.

Item 2 : pp. 67-95

bKa' 'gyur, (sutra section), vol. A.

Extracts from the Story of young Takna (Tiger Nose, son of King Treshang).

[This is a story told by the Buddha to a Kosala prince.]

* The story of the young Takna [a young man of the Shudra caste who wanted to marry a Brahmin girl]

* The four duties of a Brahmin

* How the 4 castes arose in early India

* The glorious reign of King Treshang, leader of the Shudra caste and a follower of Buddhism.

Item 3: pp. 96-99

From the *Lalitavistara Sutra, mDo, vol. Kha, ff. 100-301*

Summary of episodes from young Siddhartha's life

* How young Siddhartha, son of King Setsang of the Shakyas, fared in a contest of skills

* How young Siddharta chose his wife from among eighty-four thousand girls of the Shakya race.

Item 4: pp. 100-103

From the *bKa' 'gyur, rGyud (tantra) section, vol. Ta. from f. 301 seqq.* Extracts from [appr.]: The Completely Enlightened Mahavairocana who bestows blessings [= Tantra about the manifest enlightenment of Vairocana, and about the empowerment materialized. See Wayman, Alex and Tajima, R. 1992. *The Enlightenment of Vairocana: Study of the Vairocanābhisambodhitāntra and Mahāvairocana-Sūtra*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. p. 1.], e.g.,

* Ignorant people who lack faith, are full of doubt and scepticism, and are satisfied with merely listening to teachings without changing their behaviour- these people are dangerous for others and bring ruin upon themselves

* In the first branch, from f. 337 recto, line 7 to f. 339, recto, line 6, various meanings of the text are explained (?), followed by the name and mantra of each Buddha.

Item 5: pp. 113-244

From the [catalogue of the] *bsTan 'gyur*

There is no reference to a volume. However, it essentially provides an index to each volume, listing the authors and their works which are to be found therein. The authors of each section are not all listed. The final translation was carried out by the Indian abbot Buddhakaiawama and the Tibetan translator Gelong Chokyi Sherab. Extracts from the catalogue of the printed edition of the *bsTan 'gyur*

* The time, cost, expense, and place of carving the printing

blocks and printing are noted

* Commentary on the Root Tantra of the Glorious Kalachakra: the Stainless Light, including the text and various rituals (author Kulika Pundarika).

Item 6 : pp. 245-250

From the *bsTan 'gyur, mDo (sutra) section, vol. Gi, ff. 95 to 99*

* Explanation of each of the ten non-virtues and how the full karmic path arises

* The path of the ten virtues.

Item 7: pp. 251-279

From the *bsTan 'gyur, mDo (sutra) section vol. Go: p. 251*

* f. 161 : Precious Garland of Advice for the King [modern transl. Jeffrey Hopkins] by Nagarjuna

* f. 165 : Understanding the core of wisdom; good / bad friends by Nagarjuna p. 253

* f. 176 : The way to take care of human beings, in 2 stanzas (of 4 verses each) by Nagarjuna

* f 180 : Good & bad deeds; good behaviour, in 20 stanzas (of 4 verses) by Nyima Be (?) p. 254

* f. 186 : A Hundred Stanzas (prob.: a poem of 100 śloka by Acarya Vararuchi) - extract of 20 stanzas [See Chandra Das]

* f. 192 : Treatise on customs of Janaka p. 255

* f. 203 : A work on ethics

* f. 5: Description of Buddha's body and Buddha's instructions to Shariputra on measurements of statues (of him to be made after his death) p. 258

* ff. 223-377 : Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionary of names compiled by many translator-pandits.

From the *bsTan 'gyur, mDo (sutra) section, vol. Le:* p. 261

* ff. 35-9 : Treatise on 20 Sanskrit prefixes as taught by Pandit Trachen Zeha Kami. From the *bsTan 'gyur, mDo (sutra) section, vol. Se:* p. 268

* pp. 10-14 : 'Looking for Medicine' (1st section) Text to medical doctors by Master Arya Lhundrup Nyima

From the Tangyur, mDo (sutra) section, vol. She: p. 274

* ff. 1-5 : Commentaries on the Drop of Logic (Great Commentary of 1 000 Stanzas and a short commentary of 30 stanzas by Dulwa p. 277

* f. 115 : The Concise Meaning of the Drop of Logic by Jinamitra

INDEX

Personal names

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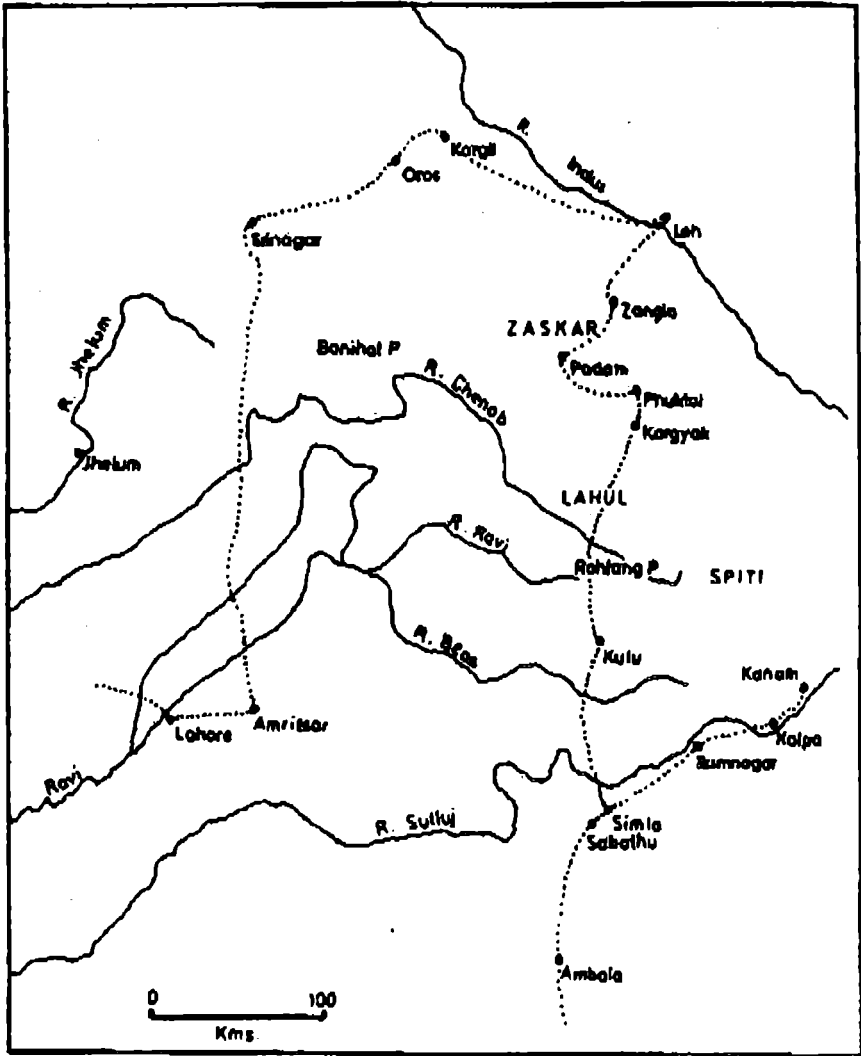
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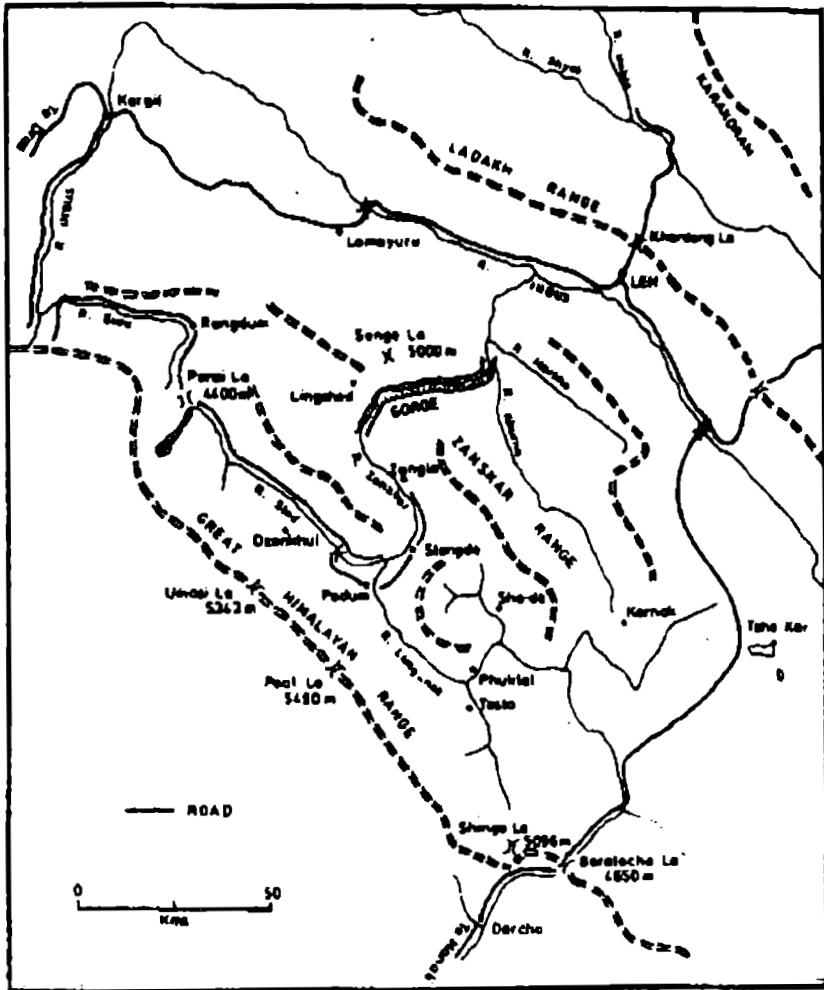
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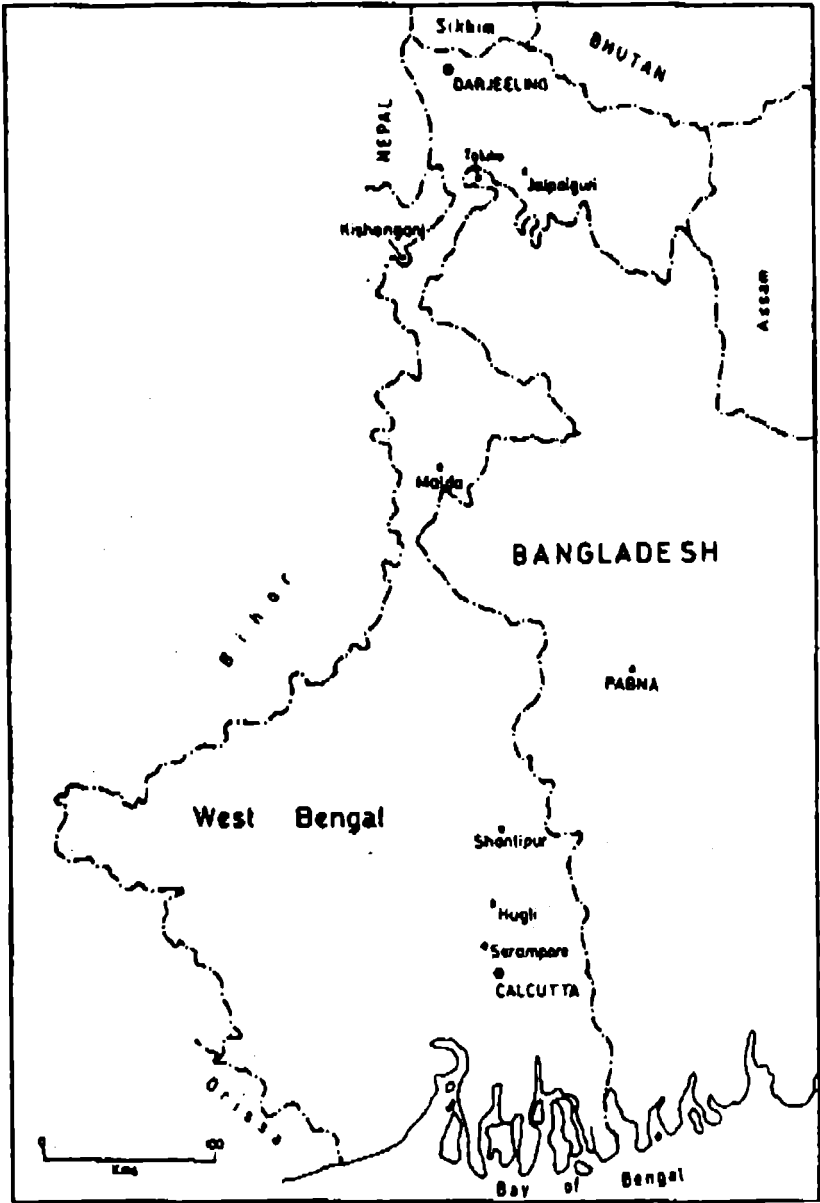
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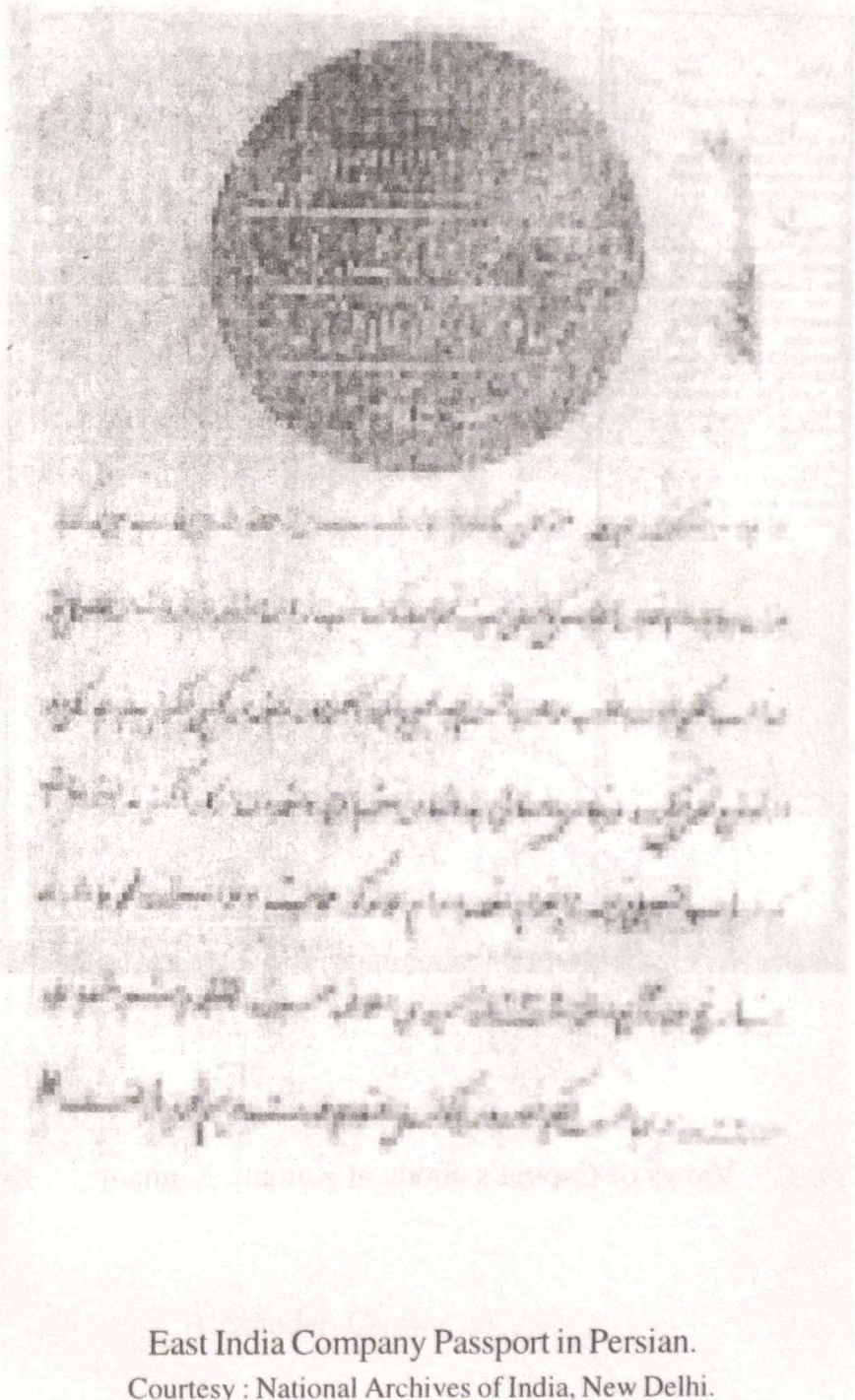
Csoma's Route from Lahore to Sabathu to Kanam
(1822-1827)



Map of Ladakh.



Present-day Map of Bengal.



East India Company Passport in Persian.
Courtesy : National Archives of India, New Delhi.

LAYA

GRAN

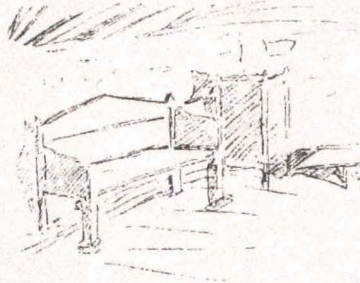
"Sahib who lived here?"

he left Kanam. But I used to speak of him, in the monastery dressed and regarded by them as a

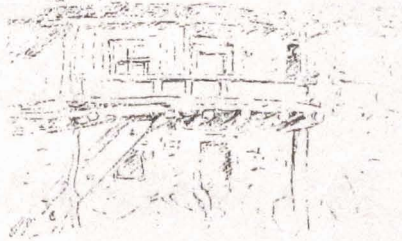
Yangpur?"
 "Ganderbek," the old man said. In the evening the Ganderbek can be seen by the name by which he is known in western Asia, especially in the East. Now I find in the Introduction, written in the following words: "The Beg, of Transsylvania, introduce." Alexander, Iskender Bek was in Asia.

"Happy himself?"
 "Member from my childhood, and that he was

that
 there was
 beams supported the



199. CSOMA'S CELL.



200. CSOMA'S HOUSE IN KARANG.

Sketches by the Author.

Views of Csoma's abode at Kanam, Kinnaur



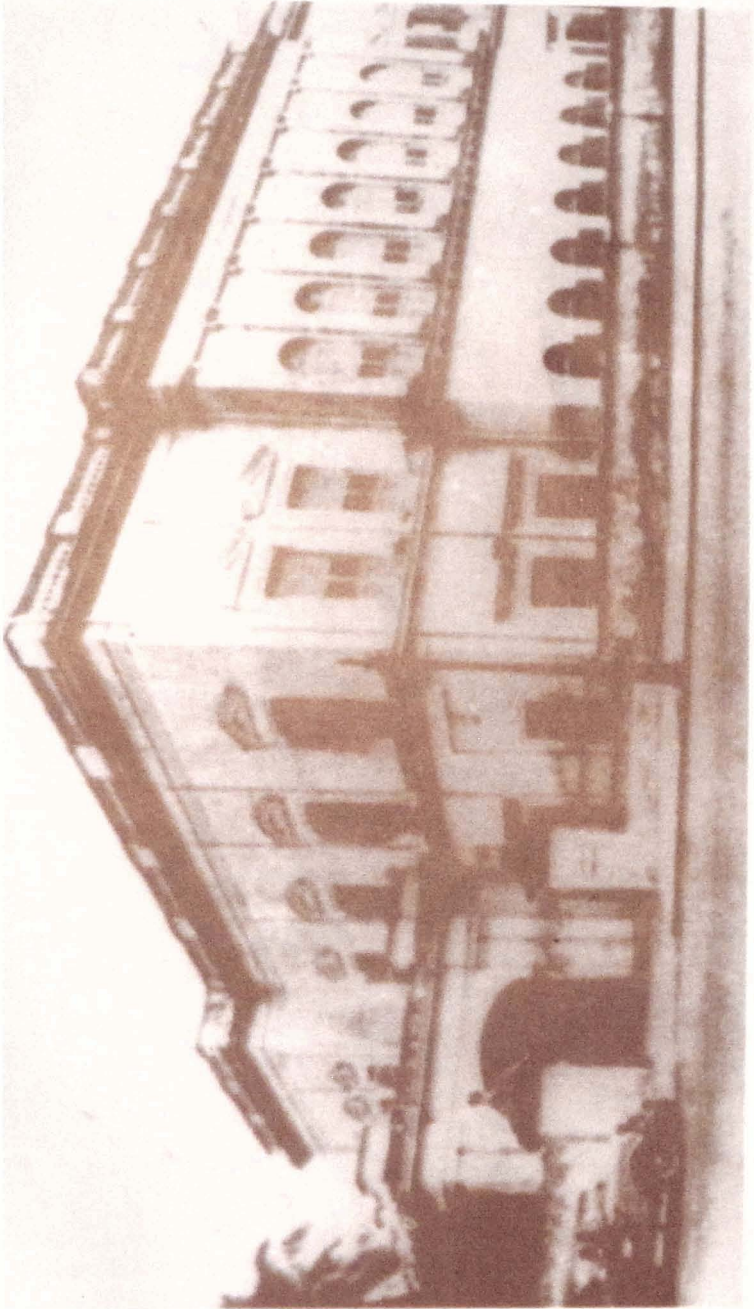
Alexander Csoma de Kőrös



View of the Royal Castle at Zangla, Zanskar



View of Phuktal



Old Building of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata.



View of Csoma's tomb at Darjeeling, W. B.



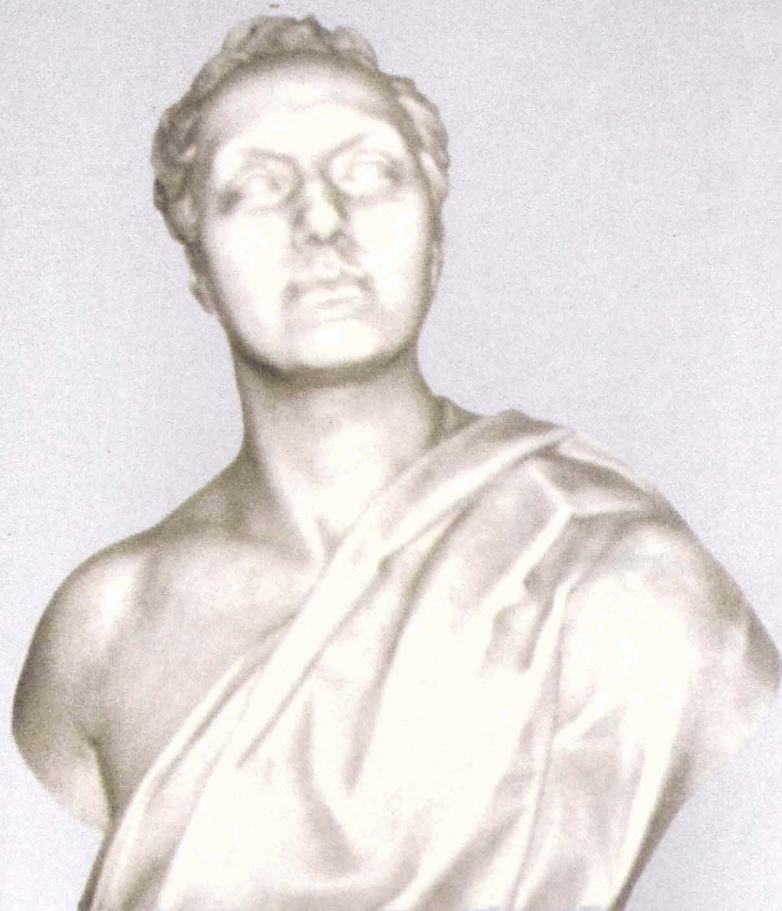
The obelisk of G W A Lloyd at Darjeeling, W. B.



Brian Houghton Hodgson.



Horace Hayman Wilson



James Prinsep

