

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR LADAKH STUDIES

LADAKH STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

Preparations are under way for the ninth IALS colloquium. As announced in the previous issue of *Ladakh Studies*, the continuing difficult situation in Kargil forced a shift of venue to Leh. Details regarding the conference, as far as they are available at this time, are provided elsewhere in this issue. Most importantly, however, members based outside of Ladakh should begin making their travel arrangements in good time. The colloquium will be held at the very end of August, just prior to the Ladakh Festival, and this means that there will be many other people trying to get in and out of Leh. Flights no doubt will be heavily booked. Travel operators in Leh and Delhi are optimistic that, like last year, Indian Airlines will put on a sufficient number of flights, so that there should be no insurmountable problems. Of course, there is always the weather to consider . . .

According to reports from Ladakh, winter in Leh was very mild. The Srinagar road was still open for vehicular traffic at the end of December and Srinagar itself received the first snowfall of the season only in January. In mid-October, however, early heavy snowfall in Changthang caused severe problems for many of the nomads there. As detailed in an account compiled from a number of sources, many animals were killed and nomads were forced to sell off many more due to acute fodder shortages. Local and state authorities as well as NGOs have been engaged in efforts to provide relief and secure the survival not only of livestock, but of the nomadic community's way of life. More recently, the EU has begun funding part of the relief effort.

This issue of *Ladakh Studies* includes a short article on trade routes, a personal account of an Englishman's life on a Ladakhi farm, the second instalment of Mick Khoo's survey of Ladakh on the Web, conference reports, dissertation abstracts, a book review, and as always Bray's bibliographic update. I am particularly grateful this time for the newsreports submitted by Abdul Ghani Sheikh and Louise Fournier, the conference reports sent in by Mick Khoo and Pascale Dollfus. Once again, I would like to encourage members to send contributions. Deadline for the next issue is right after the Leh Conference, September 1st.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES WANTED

Recently, John Bray sent out the announcement of the forthcoming IALS colloquium via e-mail to all members whose address we have.

If you did not receive this announcement, but have an e-mail account and would like to receive IALS communications electronically, kindly send a message to John Bray <miyoko@jblon.win-uk.net> and to Martijn van Beek <etnomvb@moes.hum.aau.dk>.

From the Honorary Secretary

The ninth IALS colloquium is now definitely going ahead in Leh from 25th to 29th August, and we thank the Ladakh committee in advance for all their hard work.

As I write, registrations and proposals for papers are flowing in. I am pleased to see that the paper presenters include both newcomers as well as IALS veterans, including one or two who have not been able to come to recent conferences. I encourage you all to register as soon as possible, and look forward to further proposals for papers from both new and well-known IALS members. Please note the guidelines for paper presenters elsewhere in this issue, and contact me if you have any queries.

It may seem a little premature to be thinking about the tenth colloquium in 2001, but I would like to take this opportunity to canvas opinion on that score. Clare Harris, who has recently moved to Oxford University, has offered to organise the 2001 colloquium there with the help and support of Michael Aris. Michael strongly recommends that we plan early, as conference facilities and accommodation tend to be booked up well in advance. Meanwhile, Gudrun Meier has been sounding out the possibilities of holding the 2001 colloquium in Herrnhut (Germany), where we held the memorable 1987 conference, and it seems that this could be a viable alternative. For some time there have also been suggestions that we should consider a venue in the US. With regard to timing, the most favoured dates seem to be late June or early July? I would welcome your views so that we can get off to an early start in planning the tenth colloquium.

Meanwhile, I look forward to seeing as many members as possible in Leh at the end of August. I retain happy memories of the 1993 colloquium in Leh, and am confident that this one will be as good or better!

Burial chamber – more information wanted

In 1993, on my way to the colloquium in Leh, I made a trek from Darche, over the Baralacha Pass, down the Yunam River, up the Lingti River to the Phirtse La, and so to Tanze and Phugtal (my return journey up the Tsarap River was described in *Ladakh Studies* pp 8-9).

Approximately two hours walk up the Lingti valley from its mouth my guide (a Zanskari from Manali) pointed out a burial chamber. It was in the general area of the Debni camp site, as marked on the relevant USA Army Map Service map, scale 1:250,000, at approximately 32° 55' North and 77° 28' East. It was in the side, and towards the bottom, of a nala which crosses the plain forming the south-west (true right) side of the Lingti valley floor; it was beside the path and high enough above the nala stream to avoid being eroded in times of flooding.

The burial chamber, or cyst, consisted of a rectangle formed by four un-hewn slabs of stone placed on end to create an interior space approximately 400 mm wide and 500 mm long – like a box made of four stones, but without a lid. One end slab had fallen flat, the opposite end slab was displaced, and the cyst appeared to be empty. My Zanskari guide was familiar with such things. He described to me how skeletons have been found in a curled-up (foetal) position inside other, similar, cysts; although this one looked too small to have contained an adult corpse.

He gave the structure a Zanskari name which may be rendered phonetically as "hoghar" ('gh' pronounced in the throat, Indian-style, like the 'kh' in khan, or the 'gh' in Afghanistan)

Does any reader have any information on these burial cysts, or other pre-historic burial chambers (but not the ones Francke wrote about)? What might "hoghar" mean? Even to know the locations of others, without any additional information, would be interesting.

Acknowledgement:

I wish to thank The Seven Pillars of Wisdom Trust, The Society for South Asian Studies and INTACH who generously contributed to a part of the cost of the fieldwork I was doing when I came across this burial site.

Neil Howard, 27 Clarendon Rd., Edgbaston, Birmingham, UK, B16 9SD. fax 0121 454 2544.

TREKKING TO LEH

Summer 1846 and 1999

In 1846 Fred Markham trekked for six months from Simla through Spiti and across the Parang Pass to Rupshu and Leh, and described the trip in his book "Shooting in the Himalayas". His descendant, Freddy Markham, repeated this trek in 1997 with Bill O'Connor who has described it in the February issue of the magazine "TGO" (=The Great Outdoors). This year TGO and KE Adventure Travel have planned a shorter repeat of this trip for their readers and others, starting in Spiti and walking over the Parang La to Karzok near Tsho Moriri. By coincidence they are due to reach Leh on 20 August, in convenient time to attend the 9th IALS Colloquium. Although the standard group is due to fly home from Leh on 22 August, this could be delayed by request. Though this route would be both more energetic and more expensive than others which colloquium participants are likely to follow, it would be much more interesting and might be more certain, given the problems of getting either bus or plane reservations Delhi-Leh.

Anyone interested should contact:- KE Adventure Travel Ltd., 32 Lake Road , Keswick, Cumbria CA12 5DQ, U.K. Tel: 017687-73966. Fax: 017687-74693. Email: keadventure@enterprise.net Web: www.keadventure.com

Bringing this to your attention does not constitute a recommendation, as neither I nor the IALS know anything about this firm.

Henry Osmaston

NEWS FROM LADAKH

SONAM WANGYAL PASSED AWAY

Abdul Ghani Sheikh reports from Leh:

On 10 November 1998, former Minister Sonam Wangyal passed away at Delhi. His body was kept for *darshan* of the people of Leh prior to the cremation according to Buddhist rites on 20 November at Agling, with full State honours. J&K Ministers Abdul Rahim Rather, Kushog Togdan, Tsetan Namgyal, and Qamar Ali Khan, Chief Executive Councillor Thupstan Chhewang, former Union Minister P. Namgyal, representatives of religious and social organisations and political parties offered wreaths and khatags. Thousands of people attended the funeral, where a contingent of police presented a guard of honour. Religious and political leaders paid tribute in the media to the late Sonam Wangyal for his contributions. (See also the obituary elsewhere in this issue; *Ladags Melong* carries a tribute to Sonam Wangyal in its latest issue, Nov/Dec 1998).

PRIME MINISTER VISITS LEH

by *Abdul Ghani Sheikh*:

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee visited Leh and Kargil on 6 and 7 December 1998 and addressed public meetings in both towns. Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh, presented a memorandum to the PM consisting of four demands:

1. construction of an alternative all-weather road through Rupshu and Spiti. There is only one pass of 18,000 ft on this route, which remains closed only for about one month a year;
2. Central funding for the proposed Nemo-Bazgo Hydel Project;
3. Opening of Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrim's route from Ladakh;
4. Grant of Scheduled Tribe status to Argons.

Responding to the demand in the public meeting at the Pologround in Leh, the PM said that he would look into the matter and take appropriate action. Referring to the first demand, he said that government would conduct a survey for the construction of the road. As to opening of Kailash-Mansarovar, he said that the matter has been taken up with the Chinese government and an answer was being awaited. India, he assured the audience, would pursue the matter further. The PM also promised that he would sort out the problems regarding the granting of ST status to the Argons.

Earlier, Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah and J&K Governor G.N. Saxena received the PM at Leh airport.

HEAVY SNOWS CAUSE HAVOC IN CHANGTHANG

While unusually warm and dry weather kept the Leh-Srinagar road open until January, more than a metre of snow fell in Changthang on October 16 and 17. *Ladags Melong* reports that two children were killed when the roof of their house collapsed under the weight of the snow, and large numbers of livestock perished in Karnak and Samad, and Sarnet area. NGO workers of ActionAid India, who happened to be visiting the region in connection with a survey carried out earlier last year, found that in the Samad area around 9% of livestock were killed, while in addition some 5% had to be sold resulting in extraordinarily low rates of meat in the city (AGS). Stuart Sessions of London-based NGO ApTibeT visited the area in November and found the situation of many nomads, both Tibetan and Ladakhi, to be extremely serious. The severe winter of 1997/98 in Changthang had already severely affected the household economies of the region, and the additional crisis due to the acute shortage of fodder was in danger of forcing many nomads to abandon their way of life in order to survive.

While the LAHDC and other local authorities sought to supply emergency relief aid, domestic and foreign NGOs rallied to raise funds for further relief. According to the latest reports, the situation continues to be grave, but aid apparently has been reaching the affected areas alleviating the situation.

STOP PRESS:

An AFP report published by WTN news on February 26 tells that the European Union is funding a “massive airlift of cattle feed” and states that some 13,500 nomads risk losing their entire livestock; 140,000 heads of sheep, goats and yak are said to be in danger. An official coordinating the relief effort in Leh said that the first 100 tons had arrived on the 25th of February. The EU is reported to have awarded USD 910,000 for the airlift, which should bring some 1,000 tonnes of feed to the affected areas.

Compiled from reports by *Stuart Sessions (ApTibeT)*, *Dalha Tsering (TEN)*, *AGS, Ladags Melong*, and AFP.

LADAKH EXEMPTED FROM INCOME TAX

Abdul Ghani Sheikh reports:

The Central Government has exempted Ladakh from income tax. Ladakhi representatives had been asking the government for such an exemption for many years. Several delegations had visited Delhi and called on Ministers over this period. CEC Thupstan Chhewang expressed his deep gratitude to the PM for the exemption.

SPITUK MONASTERY COLLAPSING

A report in The Hindustan Times of 8 February 1999 raised alarm about the impending collapse of the famous monastery of Spituk near Leh. The 900 year old monastery, seat of India’s Ambassador to Mongolia, IALS patron Kushok Bakula Rinpoche, is reportedly falling apart due to stress on the building caused by army use of explosives to clear nearby rocks and by the presence of the Leh airport.

A team of Japanese experts who recently visited the monastery found that cracks in the foundation of the building are widening by one centimetre every fortnight. Many monks are said to already have fled, but families living just below the monastery are resisting calls by the government to vacate their houses. P.P. Namgyal, the author of the report in the HT, writes that the monastery managers have sent an SOS to the Prime Minister drawing his attention to the danger that looms ahead. Apparently sensing danger, Kushok Bakula cancelled the famous annual winter festival, Gustor, at the monastery this time.

We expect to bring a detailed report in the next *Ladakh Studies*.

LAHDC BOYCOTTS REPUBLIC DAY FUNCTION

Tensions between the State government of Dr Farooq Abdullah and the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) and Ladakh Buddhist Association kept mounting have continued to rise during the past months. Attempts at negotiating a ‘truce’ failed and LBA and LAHDC boycotted the Republic Day (26 January) celebrations at Leh and called a general strike for the day.

In an interview with The Kashmir Times, Chief Executive Councillor Thupstan Chhewang said the decision is a mark of protest against the apathy of the state government towards the demands of Ladakhi people in general and Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council in particular. The chairman accused the National Conference government of undermining his council. It does not recognise LAHDC as part of the government.

The Kashmir Times reports that LAHDC and the NC government have been at loggerheads since the latter tookover in October 1996. While the former has been accusing the Farooq Abdullah Government of undermining its importance and not conceding the demands, those in the Government blame the Congress(I) for instigating the people to hold the strike.

The Leh SP, Mr. Pankaj Saxena, said over 2,000 people joined the official function at Leh polo ground. He said the impact of the call by the LBA was not much, but confirmed that the LAHDC unfurled the national flag separately at its headquarters. He said shops in adjoining areas of Leh were open and traffic was plying normally.

THREATS TO REVIVE AGITATION FOR UNION TERRITORY STATUS

Threats of resumption of the agitation for Union Territory status have been emanating from Leh off and on since 1995. In September, Thupstan Chhewang, CEC of the LAHDC, went on record threatening to resume the stir, unless the Council was granted 'full autonomy'. Last summer, it had been decided that a meeting would be held between the State cabinet and the Executive councillors, but no such meeting materialized. In November, The Tribune reported that the three Ladakhi Ministers of State, Kushok Togdan and Tsering Namgyal in particular, were 'unhappy' with their treatment at the hands of the Council and District Administration, who were said to have rejected their proposals. The LAHDC is dominated by members of the Congress party, while the ministers and the State Government are members of the National Conference. It may be recalled that during the latest Lok Sabha elections in June 1998, the NC defeated the Congress candidate, P. Namgyal by a landslide majority.

Recently, in the wake of the clash between State Government and LAHDC around Republic Day, the Ladakh Buddhist Association has threatened to revive the agitation for Union Territory status. Already dissatisfied with the response of government to demands from Ladakh's Autonomous Council, the transfer of the popular new Deputy Commissioner, Basharat Ahmed Dhar – the first Kashmiri ever to hold the post – added fuel to the fire in Leh. According to The Kashmir Times, "a meeting of all political and religious parties was held in which the LAHDC strike call and protest were given support. Reliable sources revealed to KTNS that no reason has been given for his attachment. However, the order has been issued on the directions of Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, officially stipulating health reasons as the cause for action. Additional Deputy Commissioner Jammu Navin Chowdhary has been posted as new DC Leh, sources added." The strike on January 30 was reportedly supported by "all religious and political groups. All shops, business establishments, offices and banks remained closed for the day and streets wore a deserted look", the Kashmir Times reported.

A subsequent report in the Kashmir Times of 17 February said that the strike was still continuing at that time and that the union territory demand had been added to the list. The report quotes 'a source' saying that "there is total consensus on this and all people from all religions participate in the strike". A delegation of the LAHDC led by Thupstan Chhewang and including MLA Tsering Dorje Lagrook is reported to be in Delhi awaiting a meeting with the PM. The same report also mentions that

Kushok Bakula Rinpoche has also reached Delhi and has held several meetings with the Ladakhi delegation.

On 20 February The Tribune reported that the LAHDC delegation was still awaiting details from a meeting between Governor G.C. Saxena, CM Farooq Abdullah, and Home Minister L.K. Advani. "In case the demands are not fulfilled, the agitation may be launched for UT status for Ladakh", a senior member of the council was reported to have warned.

During the budget session in the J&K Assembly, CM Farooq Abdullah accused the Council of trying to politicise issues and playing government instead of concentrating on the development issues. Dr Abdullah pointed out that he had supported the demand for Scheduled Tribe status for Ladakhis in 1989, and that the LAHDC has received more money than originally planned each year. The Chief Minister complained that the LAHDC went straight to the Central Government with their complaints. "But what will they do in the Union Capital without me. I am the chief minister. Let them come here, sit with us and sort out the differences through dialogue." (KT, 28/2/99)

STOP PRESS

Excerpted from The Daily Excelsior, March 7, 1999

LAHDC suspends dharna

SRINAGAR, March 6 — The 33-day old dharna by Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) in support of its demands was suspended today following the offer of dialogue by the Jammu and Kashmir Government to the council for discussing various demands put forth by it during the last two years.

The decision to call off the dharna was taken at a public meeting held in Leh this morning. Those who addressed the public meeting included Mr Thupstan Chhewang, Chief Executive Councillor of the LAHDC and presidents of the Ladakh Buddhist Association and Anjuman-a-Imamia at Polo Ground, Leh. A large number of people attended the public meeting that continued for more than one hour. The leaders dealt with the issue of the demands put forth by the council to the state government. They also welcomed the state government's initiative for the offer of talks that are scheduled to be held in Jammu for two days from Monday.

AUTONOMY PANELS

Despite the institution of two commissions to look into the question of regional autonomy as a solution to some of the problems facing the state, it appears no concrete steps are likely to be taken in the near future. Both the Regional Autonomy Committee (RAC) chaired by Balraj Puri and the State Autonomy Committee (SAC) originally chaired by Dr Karan Singh, have so far failed to produce concrete results. In the case of the SAC, Dr Karan Singh's resignation last August had led to doubts about the eventual outcome of this commission's work. A report in The Tribune (20 February 1999) said that the report is being finalized and should be considered in the budget session of the J&K Assembly which begins on February 22. Among the members of the SAC is Ladakhi member of the Rajya Sabha Thikse Rinpoche.

Balraj Puri's Regional Autonomy Committee submitted a report and recommendations to the State Government last June, but these were never published, nor presented to the State Assembly. In July, the Chief Minister had assured members of the Assembly of his continued commitment to autonomy for the State and regions, and had said that reports would be tabled in the House "as soon as they are ready." On February 2, the Tribune reported that the Balraj Puri commission was disbanded. Mr. Puri was quoted as saying that he was particularly pained because the CM had not given him time to discuss the issue. There was speculation that the dismissal was triggered by the leaking to the press by Mr. Puri of a portion of another sensitive report, the so-called Ansari Committee report, which had investigated anti-Sikh violence in Jammu in 1989. On February 8, the

Kashmir Times wrote that only Balraj Puri's position as chairman was not extended, but the committee was reported to continue to work on a formal report. According to this report, it was the leaking of a portion of the RAC report, in which Puri proposed a five-tiered system of administration for the State, that led to his dismissal. After Puri's departure, the committee is an exclusively NC affair.

During his address to the Assembly in the early days of the budget session, CM Farooq Abdullah stated once again that reports of both panels would be tabled during the current session. Copies would be sent to the Centre, leaders of all political parties, and academicians to seek their opinion. Further input would be sought through seminars and suggestions from the public would also be solicited (*KT* 28/2/99).

DALAI LAMA: RELIGIOUS HARMONY IN LEH

During his visit to Ladakh in July, HH the Fourteenth Dalai Lama welcomed the harmonious relationship between Buddhists and Muslims in the Ladakh region. Addressing a crowd at the end of his 22-day stay, the Dalai Lama said that he was happy that the people were living in peace and harmony, which is the essence of every religion.

GUNS SILENT IN KARGIL, CLASHES IN SIACHEN

As winter reached Ladakh, the shelling of Kargil region which had continued intermittently throughout the summer and fall finally ended, the Kashmir Times reported in December. The Srinagar road, which remained open until January (!) was targeted for most of the summer, seriously hampering the flow of supplies to Ladakh and threatening the lives of villagers and travellers along the LOC.

In early January there were several clashes between Pakistani and Indian troops in the Siachen region. Military authorities in Kashmir reported that they had successfully repelled several attacks on advanced posts on the glacier

OFFICIAL POVERTY RATES DOWN IN LEH, UP IN KARGIL

According to a recent government survey, the number of families living below the official poverty line in Ladakh has decreased since 1992 from 17500 to 13277. Broken down by district, the figures show a decline from 11400 to 6256 for Leh District, while the number for Kargil has actually gone up from 6100 to 7021.

News sources: web editions of

AP: Associated Press

IE: Indian Express

HT: Hindustan Times

KT: Kashmir Times

ToI: Times of India

Recent Research on Ladakh

Ladakh: History, Culture, and Development between Himalaya and Karakoram

Edited by Martijn van Beek,
Kristoffer Brix Bertelsen &
Poul Pedersen

Aarhus University Press 1999

ISBN 87 7288 791-5

Barring unforeseen circumstances, the proceedings of the Moesgaard Colloquium held in 1998 will be available in July. In all, the volume contains 27 contributions reflecting the breadth as well as depth of contemporary scholarship on Ladakh.

The volume is expected to comprise around 400 pages.

Expected retail price is USD 36 or UKP 25 (hardback only).

We will do our best to ensure that copies of the volume are available at the upcoming colloquium in Leh.

Obituary

Sonam Wangyal (1923-1998)

Born in a poor family of farmers, Sonam Wangyal rose to become one of the key players in Ladakhi politics during the 1950s and 1960s. He was a member of the Legislative Council of Jammu & Kashmir for 10 years between 1957-1967. In 1967 and again in 1972 he was a successful contender for a seat in the State Legislative Assembly. During his first term as MLA, he was made Cabinet Minister for Planning and Cooperation in May 1969. In the years 1980-1989 he was an active member of the Ladakh Action Committee for Declaration of Ladakhis as a Scheduled Tribe. In later years his life was marred by the political and social isolation inflicted on him during the campaign for Union Territory Status which began in 1989.

Sonam Wangyal was brought into Ladakhi politics by Pt. Shridhar Kaul, popularly known as Shri Dullu, who was Inspector of Schools in Ladakh 1939-1948. An ardent convert to Buddhism, Kaul took a strong interest in the development of Ladakh in spiritual, political and economic terms. It was through Kaul's intercession that Sonam Wangyal obtained a scholarship enabling him to receive high school education in Srinagar.

Following Kushok Bakula Rinpoche's rise to political power in Leh in July 1949, Sonam Wangyal was chosen to become his Personal Assistant. Subsequently, he was put in charge of awareness-raising campaigns in the villages during the period of social reforms in Jammu & Kashmir State in the early 1950s. By all accounts, he was a very able organiser with a keen understanding of the plight and sentiments of the tillers of Ladakh. The cancellation and re-scheduling of debts became one of Wangyal's central concerns, as did the abolition of the system of forced labour (*res/begar*) then in existence in Ladakh. Sonam Wangyal was also active in the formation of the Ladakh Wool and Pashmina Syndicate in 1953, an ill-fated early attempt at organising cooperative production in Ladakh.

While his contributions to Ladakh's development earned him the appreciation of the general public, Sonam Wangyal also became the focal point of controversy in his later political career. One of a very few prominent Buddhists to publicly protest against the ostracisation of Muslims in the course of the 1989 agitation for regional autonomy, he himself was put under a social boycott which remained in effect until June 1998.

Although increasingly disabled due to his deteriorating health, Sonam Wangyal maintained a keen interest in Ladakh's public affairs and continued to lend his support to a number of social organisations, especially the Houseless People Association which he helped found. In 1997 he participated in the Seventh Colloquium of the IALS at Bonn, where he presented an account of his political career, subsequently published in the proceedings edited by Dodin and R  ther (RR0L7).

In many ways, Sonam Wangyal's life reflects the profound transitions Ladakh went through after 1947, and there is no doubt that he will be remembered for his important contributions to the amelioration of the living conditions of the people of the region.

ANCIENT ROUTE ACROSS THE KARAKORAM: THE MUSTAGH PASS

From Skardu to Yarkand

Rohit Vohra

My short paper “An Old Route Across the Karakoram Mountains from Khapalu in Baltistan to Yarkand” appeared in the *United Services of India Journal* in 1987 and a similar version was delivered to the participants of the Third International Colloquium on Ladakh held in March 1987 at Herrnhut, German Democratic Republic (Vohra 1987 & 1990). The paper sought to provide evidence for the existence of routes across the Karakoram mountain chain which lay west of the Siachen glacier. The existence of such a possibility was known from the oral lore of the local inhabitants but during the 19th and the early 20th century it led to a scientific exploration of the region. My earlier paper dealt mainly with these explorations and documentation of evidence establishing the existence of this route. Here I will offer a more comprehensive summary of the evidence than the arguments presented in the earlier publications to bring into context new information which has become available.

Introduction¹

It is certain that an old track from Khapalu or Chorbat in Nubra to Khufelang on the Yarkand river did exist. This track either followed the Saltoro valley via the Bilaphond La or the Kondus valley via the Sia La to the Siachen glacier at the head of which it crossed the Karakoram range by a pass (possibly the Turkestan La) into the Oprang valley. Thence via a pass across the Aghil range along the tributary of the Yarkand river known as the ‘J’ stream (Wood 1922: 21-25) and then on to Khufelang.²

Evidence found by Wood along the ‘J’ stream was a saddlebag containing several copies of the Koran in which were three letters in Hindi written in 1904 and some tea. Nearby were found metal cooking pots and the stock of a native gun. Mason (1928: 40-45) later discovered a corpse in the stream Lungmo Chheh, south of Wood’s ‘J’ stream, which also joined the Yarkand river. The man had two rupees, one of which was dated to 1918, and a string of turquoises. A little away from the body he found six tins of Clifford aniline dye.

The route from Yarkand to Kashmir under discussion here runs via Kogiar and over the Mustagh pass to Skardu and would take twenty days. After descending from the Mustagh pass one could divert to Shigar, Skardu or further east to Khapalu and Chorbat in Nubra.³ This was the shortest and

1. This paper was written almost a decade ago. I hope the reader will excuse me for not taking into consideration all the literature published since then before submitting it for publication. The different spellings provided for the same place name is due to the retention of each author’s phonetic rendering of the word.

2. Wood identified a number of streams in this alphabetical manner. Stream ‘A’ flows from the Rimo, the source of the Yarkand river, and is joined later by several others, e.g. stream ‘C’ at Balti Bransa, and later still by streams ‘I’ and ‘J’. The latter marked the route up the pass.

3. It is evident that the local inhabitants who used these shortcuts over difficult passes knew of quite a few alternatives. The alternative routes were used according to the time of year and after consideration of the effects of climatic changes upon them.

perhaps also the most difficult route negotiating the several parallel ranges of the Mustagh-Karakoram mountains.

We are told that during the 19th century the route was seldom used due to glacial movement which could have been an increasing problem in recent times, but in the historic past it might have been far more easy to negotiate. Referring to the route via the Mustagh pass T.E. Gordon points out the probability that the route “from near the head of the Kufelong source of the Yarkand river into the Nubra valley... was in ancient times the main route by which the hosts of mounted invaders crossed into Little Tibet, but now it is only passable on foot. At present, the only travellers by it are the hardy inhabitants of Baltistan, to whom it makes a great saving of time and distance when communicating with their brethren who have settled in Yarkand. A colony of Baltis have long existed at Yarkand, chiefly engaged in agriculture, and journey to and from is made each year” (Gordon 1876).

In European languages the first mention of this route was made by Mir Izzet Ullah whose travels in Central Asia in the years 1812-1813 provide by far the most accurate account of the route: “In the north travelling from Yarkand to Kilian in Kogiar there is a short route to Tibet-Balti. In the south he states that from Kashmir to Yarkand, via Balti, is a journey of twenty five days, three of which are over a glacier, and it is therefore rarely travelled. There is said to be a shorter route, avoiding the icy mountains but the people of Tibet keep it a secret.” Alexander Csoma de Kőrös in his “Geographical Notice of Tibet” writes: “formerly there existed a commercial route from Cashmir to Yarkand through Beltistan, (of 30 days’ journey) but that country being in an unsettled state, the Cashmirian merchants afterwards preferred that through Le, in Ladakh, although it is very circuitous” (Csoma de Kőrös 1832:125). A summary account was given by Wood with regards to the European travellers who had either travelled in the area and reported from local knowledge about the route or who had attempted to cross the route themselves (Wood 1922: 31-37). Further evidence also became available during the exploration and contemporary use of this route e.g. through the discovery of shelters and the remains of certain unsuccessful travellers.⁴

1. Itinerary of the route from Khapalu or Skardu via Kogiar to Yarkand

The route followed either of the two following tracks:

- a) Saltoro valley via the Bilaphond La.
- b) Via the Kondus valley over the Sia La to the Siachen glacier.

Adolph Schlagintweit (H. Schlagintweit 1875:14-18) attempted the Mustagh pass in 1856 and was the first European to do so but his account has remained largely unnoticed. He was prevented from crossing the pass due to the presence of a band of Hunza Kanjutis. A short time earlier only seven

4. During the course of explorations of the region in the last century, there were three discoveries made of people having used the route across the Mustagh pass. Two have been mentioned above, i.e., that of Wood and Mason, while the third was that by the Workmans who surveyed the Siachen glacier, reaching it via the Bilaphond La, and found remains of the previous visitors. They found a possible pass on the watershed, calling it Turkestan La, which they presumed was the same pass at the head of the glacier which Younghusband called Urdok when in 1889 he ascended it when coming from Sinkiang (Younghusband 1896). Dr. T.G. Longstaff followed Vigne's route (Vigne 1842) during his explorations in 1909 and reached the head of the Saltoro glacier. Crossing it via the Bilaphond La, he discovered the upper portions of the Siachen glacier. Here he found long abandoned stone shelters which conclusively proved that previous travellers had used the route (Longstaff 1910).

of a party of twenty travellers had escaped the Kanjuti onslaught on their journey over the Mustagh pass from Yarkand.

The stages of the route from Skardu via Shigar, as recorded by Adolph Schlagintweit, were Chutron, Brahaldo, Askoli, to Shushing, followed by an eight day march – four of them along the Mustagh glacier – which brought him to the Mustagh pass (height:19,019 feet).⁵ The stages of the route across the pass in the direction of Yarkand as recorded by him from informants who had come that way were:

- Camp at Shaklok, halting place prior to crossing the Mustagh pass on the right side of the northern part of the Mustagh glacier.
- 1st. day's march: Tso Kha, a small lake on the left side of a moraine and upto Parong, at the lower end of the northern Mustagh glacier.
- 2nd day's march: Changal (possibly jungle in Hindi), a place rich in wood. From here over the snow free Skam La.
- 3rd day's march: Shigas Gambo Chu, near a high mountain stream. Over the Agir pass which is free of glacier or snow. There is a halting place on the north side of the pass.
- 4th day's march: Surukovét. This and the previous day's march are very long and difficult.
- 5th day's march: to Dova over the Dova pass. The passage is easy and at an elevation below the snowline. It seems to be the crossing point over the western Kunlun, that is further west and lower than the Piriakh pass (mentioned later).
- 6th day's march: Malikshah; Urdalik, in a broad valley.
- 7th day's march: Over a plateau on the right side of the valley to Cheroska in a depression. Then over the Kuikdo pass at an elevation of little significance to Khalastan, the first village towards the north in the Tesnab valley.
- 8th to 11th day's march: Via Kogiar (Kokiar) up to Karghalik down the Tesnab valley, then via Paskam to Yarkand.

2. The itinerary over the Mustagh pass from Yarkand to Baltistan

5. The peaks which were seen by Adolph Schlagintweit upon reaching the Mustagh pass were 21,000-22,000 all around. The highest peak close by was the western Masheribrum (approximately 25,626 feet). North-west from the Mustagh pass were two other passes, i.e., the Shingshal pass lying approximately 30 miles west and thereafter the Hunza pass.

The earliest notice of the Mustagh pass is derived from the 16th century geographical knowledge of the region from the work *Tarikh-i-Rishidi* of Mirza Haidar.⁶ The English translation was edited by N. Elias and translated by E.D. Ross in 1895. However R.B. Shaw had already dealt with the relevant geographical sections in 1876, providing evidence on the route across the Mustagh pass (Shaw 1876). Mirza Haidar Dughlat writes: "Kashmir is in the direction of the winter sunset from Yarkand, and the same mountains lie between. That which lies between Yarkand and Kashmir is a province of Tibet, called Balti. And here in the same way that Pamir is wider than Alai, so in Balti the width of the mountains is, perhaps, twenty days' journey. As the (chief) acclivity in the ascent from Yarkand is the acclivity of Sanju (so), the (chief) declivity in descending towards Kashmir is that of Iskardo. From this acclivity to that is about twenty days' journey" (Shaw 1876:279). Mirza Haidar adds, as pointed out by Shaw, that the route via Sanju (= Kunlun mountains) traverses towards Baltistan via Kogiar (Kugiar) and then over the Mustagh pass, a distance of twenty days (Shaw 1876:292-294). Mir Izzat Ullah, writing in 1812, mentions Khafalung. Six hours' march from Aktak was the station with wood and water called Shah-i-ab and from there over the mountains one could proceed to Kogiar, a dependency of Yarkand, from the vicinity of which place there is a short route to Tibet Balti. In former times Kalmaks and Khirghiz penetrated into Baltistan via this route.

6. The work consists of two parts written in 1541-1542 and 1544-1547. There is an autobiographical narrative written earlier and the first part, which was written later, is an historical survey. The author, a Turk, who belonged to the royal family of Kashgar and was a relative of Babur, wrote the work in Persian. The author was the commander of the army of Sa'id Khan (approximately 1490 - 1533) who became the ruler of Kashgar after deposing Abu Bakr. Sa'id Khan, a protégé of Babur, occupied Kashgar and Yarkand in 1514, following which he frequently invaded the area of Ladakh possibly in pursuit of Abu Bakr who had fled to Ladakh (Haider 1895:327-328,403). Ever since the time of Abu Bakr the regions of Bolor, Tibet (probably meaning Ladakh) and Kashmir are claimed to have been brought under their control. However this cannot have implied more than plundering expeditions (Haider 1895:320).

Hermann Schlagintweit reports, from the notes of his brother Adolph⁷, that the route via Kugiar was held secret by the Turkestanis and most travellers, explorers and foreigners were despatched via Sanju pass. In the Kunlun range the first pass in the west is Yangi Davan or the Kogiar pass (Hayward (1868) spells it Kugiar; 16,500 feet) leading to the valley of the Tesnab river and via Topo Davan or Tüpa Davan (To Dova according to the itinerary given to Adolph Schlagintweit by his informants when he climbed up to the Mustagh pass from Shigar) to the Mustagh pass.

7. Adolph Schlagintweit died on the 26th of August 1857. His notes and other papers were partly obtained by Colonel Irby (head of the 51 British Regiment) from Murad, a Jew from Bokhara, who had settled in Leh and had been a co-traveller of Adolph. However the exact date and the itinerary before his death were obtained from another co-traveller Abdullah from Amritsar. Some of these details were published by Leitner in his journal "Public Opinion and Punjab Times", 1-15 July, 1870.

From Kogiar via Aktagh one can cross the Karakoram into Nubra. However in May 1874, Forsyth used the route via Kogiar but then did not proceed over the difficult glacial terrain to the Mustagh pass but descended to Ladakh over the Karakoram pass via Dera Sassar into Nubra (Schlagintweit 1875:58, 116). Beyond To Dova (or Topo Davan) over the Aghil range (perhaps Agir pass of Adolph Schlagintweit's itinerary) one would enter the Oprang valley which was attempted by Dr. De Filippi from Bazar-dara⁸, a place on the right bank of the Yarkand river, but the river could not be crossed and the survey of the Aghil pass had to be abandoned. This route led from Baltistan via the Kondus valley and the Sia La to the Siachen glacier, perhaps over the Turkestan La into the Oprang valley, thence across the Aghil range into a tributary, the 'J' stream, of the Yarkand river.

An alternative point of departure was via Balti Polo. Shaw was informed of this route while approaching the Karakoram pass. Balti Polo lies some two miles above Daulat-Beg Uldi where a large stream is encountered flowing from the west. Following this stream is another way of reaching Baltistan over a difficult glacial pass. After a two day march from Balti Polo the foot of the glacier is reached from where the horses have to be turned back and porters come from Baltistan to fetch the loads. The high glacial pass traversed lies to the east of the Mustagh pass and one descends to the Saltoro glacier and thence to Khapalu in Baltistan. From Balti Polo to Khapalu it takes approximately ten days (Shaw 1876:294-295, fn.). This however is not a different route but the stream which Shaw mentions coming from the west is actually stream 'B' on Wood's map and joins stream 'A', flowing from the source of the Yarkand river (i.e., the Rimo glacier, the source of the Shyok and the Yarkand rivers). This stream can be reached from Daulat-beg öldi from where the Polo stream is joined at Balti bransa by another stream 'C'. This latter is in turn joined by streams 'I' and 'J' and continuing along these and across a pass one would reach Khufelang and thence Yarkand. Along the stream 'C' one would follow the Rimo glacier to Tarim-shahr affluent of the Siachen over the Sia La or the Bilaphond La (Wood 1922:7-11). However Wood was of the impression that the streams 'I' and 'J' which joined the streams 'A' and 'C', descending from the Rimo glacier to form the Yarkand river, led to the Oprang⁹ valley and thence over the Old Mustagh pass (Wood 1922:16-22).

Kogiar

Apparently, Kogiar was the main point of departure in the north when traversing the Mustagh pass from Yarkand.

8. From Bazar-dara Karghalik is accessible via four passes, i.e., Kukalung-dawan, Takhta-koram-dawan, Ishak-art-dawan and Ak-koram-dawan (Wood 1922:16). See also de Filippi (1912).

9. Is Oprang in its later course Shaksgam river, as Mason calls it, just as Raksam is the name shown on the maps of Wood for the early course of the Yarkand river.

Evidence from the Buddhist period

Evidence of a Buddhist cave from near Kogiar was reported by De Terra. Kogiar (Kök-jar) is a small village two days' march south of Karghalik. De Terra started from Kogiar on 4th april 1928. At the Chinese customs of Otun-su he left the valley of Kogiar on a trail which branches off from the caravan route leading to Ak-korum Davan (see f.n.9; also Wood 1922:16) at a little hamlet called P'sar (Pussa on English maps; Pasha in Wood 1922:26). Half a mile from P'sar one enters a valley which runs almost parallel to the neighbouring Yaghaile valley, through which one of the main trade routes leads to Kashmir. De Terra followed the course of the Köllkash valley for about four hours, riding over an area permitting agriculture on a modest scale. De Terra camped at a place called 'Bash tekan (= five rivers) and the following morning marched again down the valley for three and a half miles before reaching its end. The place was marked by a few huts and some fields and was called Sekis-jar (= eight valleys). Here the valley splits up into two smaller ravines. De Terra followed the one running eastwards. The route ascended quite steeply and after an hour's walk from Sekis-jar he reached the cave. The cave, which was thirty three feet in length and six feet at its broadest point, contained many carvings and inscriptions and the walls' surface was covered with brownish patina which turned out to be an oily crust. From the drawings we get two very distinct impressions:

De Terra says there is an ornamental motive (De Terra 1931: Fig. 1q) running at a certain height all along the eastern wall (i.e., 33 feet along the wall). This motive is Buddhist in nature and one example of it can be seen engraved within a copper Yantra (Pal 1991:59). This motif accompanied by a swastika turned clockwise provides us an inkling as to the religious conviction of the authors of the carvings. There are carvings of animals and humans as well as other symbols which are difficult to interpret on the basis of the reproduction of the drawings. The cave was filled with loess, which De Terra feels must have caused the inhabitants to abandon the cave.

During his survey of the Karakoram-Kuenlun mountain chain in 1856-1857, Adolph Schlagintweit ascended the Mustagh pass. He noted down the itinerary of the route on the other side of the pass, as recorded from informants who had recently come from Yarkand. As the last stage of the march on the 8th day he provides the name of the place Kogiar (<Kougjar via Karghalik to Yarkand, Schlagintweit 1875:16-17; De Terra: Kokjar; Chavannes: Khoukhe-yar). Chavannes translates from the Ts'ien han Chou, Wei chou and T'ang chou where the two kingdoms Si-ye and Tseu-ho are mentioned, the former being identical with Yul-arik and the latter with Khoukhe-yar (Kougjar). Notice about them from the beginning of the Christian era shows that these were prosperous places. From Han times onwards and from the T'ang chou we know that Tseu-ho or Khoukhe-yar (Kougjar) was the centre of the kingdom of T'chou-kin-po (Karghalik). In the T'ang chou we learn that from the Han times (Chavannes 1907) Kougjar had annexed all the neighbouring territories like Yul-arik, Sarikol-Tach-Kourgan and Karghalik. The Wei chou texts tell us that Kougjar (Tseu-ho) "est à l'ouest de Yu-t'ien (Khotan). Les habitants demeurent dans les montagnes; ils ont du blé et beaucoup d'arbres et de fruits. Ils adorent tous le Buddha; leur langue est analogue à celui de Yu-t'ien (Khotan); ils sont soumis aux Ye-ta (Hepthalites)" (Chavannes 1903:397-398).

According to the above reports and if we take into consideration the information available from the Prophecy of the Li country (*Li yul lung-bstan-pa*) the cave lay, in ancient times, along a well used route. We know of the lively contacts between the Skardu and Khotani dynasties which had Sanskritic names and titles, from 670 A.D. to 786 A.D. (Thomas 1935-1963; Emmerick 1967; Hill 1988:179-190).

Conclusion

During the first millennium A.D. the regions south of Karakoram and north of Kashmir were the repository of flourishing Indo-Buddhist culture. In contemporary terminology these are the Northern

Areas of Pakistan and are correctly encompassed under the term Gilgit-Baltistan. The seat of the ruling houses, which had pompous titles, centred possibly around Shigar-Skardu as well as Gilgit (Chakravarti 1953/54; Stein 1944; Shastri 1975). The rulers maintained intimate relations with the equally powerful rulers of Khotan and other neighbouring contemporary states along the Silk Route in Chinese Turkestan (Thomas 1931;1944;1951;1955). Their relations with Kashmir are equally documented (Rajatrangini, Taranga V:152-155; Taranga VII:119 ff; Vohra 1983:55-58) and indirectly available from the T'ang Annals (Chavannes 1903) as well as the Royal Tibetan Annals (DTH). Since 1979 scientific documentation of the material has brought to light an enormous quantity of data on the flourishing Hindu-Buddhist cultural milieu (Jettmar 1989). A preliminary chronological ordering of the rulers and the historical scenario was attempted in 1985 from the then available material (Vohra 1988). Certain bronze murtis published under Kashmiri art objects (Pal 1975) have now been established as Gilgit Bronze murtis (Paul 1986) revealing the highly developed aesthetic sense as well as stylistic skill of the craftsmen. These could only have been executed at the behest of powerful ruling elites giving patronage to such endeavours. One of the most direct communications between these realms of Skardu and Khotan would have been the route across the Mustagh pass.

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MATHO NAG RANG

Pascale Dollfus is looking for photographs of the Matho Nagrang (karpo and marpo). If you have such photographs or information as to where they might be found, kindly contact her at:

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THE FARM PROJECT: LEARNING FROM THE VILLAGERS

Robert Cook.

The eldest daughter of the family with which I was to spend a month working “as a family member”, had conscientiously put me on the right bus in Leh and instructed me carefully as to where I was to go. As it bounced agonisingly slowly up the long track to Stagmo village, 7km from the Indus valley, I stared out of the window at the endless desert and apprehensively wondered what the family would be like, and what the coming month would bring. Suddenly a vociferous dispute erupted. Two men were held back by their colleagues as they roared abuse, gesticulated with clenched fists, and strained to get at each other. The more they were held back the more they roared. It was an interesting introduction to a people I had always associated with placid civility. Eventually the more aggressive of the two was forcibly sat down in the seat beside me. After a moment he looked across and said; “You go Stagmo?” “Yes,” I replied; “I’m staying at House of Jawoo – one month”. His eyes lit up and he extended his hand “Ah! You coming my house. Jawoo: My house!” This strangely did little more to assuage my apprehensions than if I had rolled up to find the house in ruins.

Funnily enough when we did arrive I found that the house actually was in ruins. It was being rebuilt, and the family occupied a parachute tent but they very graciously had saved me their best wooden bed. Effusively thankful though I was, the fact that it was in glorious isolation in a field of lucerne made me wonder. Life was obviously not going to be “normal” for a while. In this, I was not disappointed. The month ahead was a revelation, not only in coming to understand what it is really like to live like a Ladakhi, but also in coming to see what a gulf exists between the attitudes and perceptions of we indulged westerners and that of these hardy survivors.

The Farm Project was devised by The International Society for Ecology and Culture in collaboration with The Women’s Alliance to allow westerners to visit Ladakh and at the same time do something worthwhile rather than be just another money-toting tourist. Volunteers are placed with specially selected families for a period of at least one month with the view that they will be of some physical help with the farm and at the same time be able to present a different picture of the west to the locals. Thus a child returning home from school and teaching a volunteer how to milk a cow derives some respect for his own culture. The tables are turned from the usual development situation: The westerner is being taught by the Ladakhi. This occurs time and again on the farm. A westerner who appears to want to give up his soft and easy life in order to live like a Ladakhi is certainly a curiosity if not a source of total bewilderment, but he is also a means by which Ladakhis can come to more greatly value their own traditional way of life.

At the same time the volunteer can verbally communicate, if that is possible, a truer picture of the west “warts and all”. Thus the other side of the economic development coin: crime; loneliness; poverty; pollution; stress, and unemployment can be revealed to villagers and make them more aware of the dangers of the economic developments that are occurring. That is the theory anyway. They are still likely to look at you and say “Yes, but you can come here, and we can’t even afford to think about going to your country.” In such a situation I came to feel that cautionary tales about economic development are likely to have limited effect! Anyway, now that several houses have televisions and most have radios, the image of the “western” high life is already established. Indeed, in my family, their youngest daughter, Lamo, was attending school in Chandigarh and a so was brimming with Hindi and western songs. She was invaluable as an interpreter and wore jeans whenever she could. She seemed thoroughly worldly wise, so I was all the more surprised when she asked me how many cows my family in London kept!

To begin with I was treated as an honoured guest but before long Ama-le was bellowing at me to get out of bed in the morning with as much easy familiarity as she bellowed at anybody. Ladakhis can certainly shout. They learn from an early age to call from one side of the valley to the other. No

need for telephones here. What surprised me more however was their abrasive sounding tones when they spoke to each other. This wasn't always the case, but I do recall meeting a local as we walked to the high pasture. I actually thought Lamo was arguing with him until I heard words like "khasa" and "zhuks-le" and realised she was suggesting he stop with us awhile. But that I found was nothing compared to the way they talked to their animals! In my naivety, I had vaguely pictured these supposed embodiments of Buddhist tolerance smiling indulgently at their equally benign cattle as they communicated by some form of empathy. Unfortunately I never heard more than an irascible "Gna!" directed at any of them. Other volunteers reported being even more shocked when father returned from a hard day at work to give the dog a celebratory kick. What about the Buddhist doctrine of respect for all living things of which we had heard so much? Should we perhaps blame the effects of the insidious global economy? We mostly concluded that, regrettably, we had arrived in a state of misty-eyed idealism. Perhaps we were learning more than our Ladakhi hosts.

Maybe their attitudes are more akin to those of any traditional subsistence society, especially in such a harsh environment, and there is just no room for our sentimentalised view of life. Certainly my romantic images of being in a remote and unforgiving environment were helped enormously when we had to fetch the animals down from the pastures because they were being attacked by wolves. I could not resist thinking that this would be a good one for the folks back home as I took a photograph of the thoroughly consumed remains of one of the village donkeys. (It's at moments like this that one is apt to question one's own motivations. Was I really primarily driven to understand Ladakhi life or did I just want to brag like any tourist about being in a more remote place than my friends?!)

Even in the "quiet" month of July the agricultural work seemed hard and long. Apart from weeding, irrigating and milking, my abiding memory is of leading a cow round a field for interminable hours while I ensured it ate the grass and not the barley. The tedium of the work was the most difficult thing. Our minds are so over-stimulated in the west that we are constantly bored. It needs a deep alteration in attitude to limit one's horizons to what appear to be such mundane achievements. I think I was beginning to get there by the end of the month. It was akin to meditation I think. Similarly, to our over-stimulated western taste buds Ladakhi food is boringly bland. By the time of my first trip to Leh after ten days I craved chocolate cake to a degree bordering on mania. But again, by the end of the month I really was quite happy not to be indulging in the secretly ferreted-away "sweeteners" from my bags – which I had run out of anyway! Perhaps Ladakhis feed proper hunger while we just feed as a form of entertainment. Ladakhis feed thei stomachs while we feed our mouths. I think the former is the deeper and thus more satisfying experience however. The latter seems as transitory and ephemeral as the rest of our lives in comparison with the levels of contentment found in Ladakhi village life. It seemed to me that if simpler life styles are part of the answer to our environmental problems then it is not going to be so easy for westerners to drop the deep-seated desires to which we have become addicted.

Once a fortnight all the volunteers would meet together in Leh and discuss their experiences and the global problems associated with development. After living in a world where you are always outside the conversation it was a wonderful opportunity to converse about everything; our experiences, the global economy, the lessons Ladakh has for the west, the benefits we had gained, how our own countries might develop in the future, and so on for many stimulating hours. This proved for many to be a most valuable consolidating exercise. As a college lecturer I wished that my students were half as committed and intelligent as the youngsters I mixed with there! I think we all felt that the whole experience had been immensely useful. It seemed a particularly valuable education for those who had just finished school, and so I'm sure that we derived more from the exercise than any Ladakhis did. But maybe a westerner placed deep into the heart of a Ladakhi village community can never be more than an advert and an encouragement for rapid economic development, however hard he or she may try to promote an alternative view of things.

Robert Cook offers watercolours, e.g. this one of Stagmo, for sale. He can be contacted at RCOOK@cen.ac.uk

VIRTUAL LADAKH 2

Michael J. Khoo

Since the last issue of Ladakh Studies, I have been busy surfing the Net, looking for more examples of websites which might be of interest to IALSmembers. This has proved somewhat harder than I had thought, despite several excellent suggestions forwarded to me by our editor. The majority of sites which I have come across are still put together either by trekking agencies, or by tourists. I have therefore expanded my remit somewhat, to try and include sites of a more general Himalayan interest.

[1] My first site is not Ladakh related at all, but a search engine. Do you ever wonder which search engine you should be using, and which ones are best? This dilemma has been partly resolved by the creation of so-called 'meta-engines, of which my favourite is Dogpile.com. Dogpile will search the following search engines, and return all their results to you: The Web: Yahoo!, Thunderstone, Lycos' A2Z, GoTo.com, Mining Co., Excite Guide, PlanetSearch, What U Seek, Magellan, Lycos, WebCrawler, InfoSeek, Excite & AltaVista, Usenet: Reference, Dejanews, AltaVista and Dejanews. It also has a separate button for searching Usenet for bulletin board postings which contain your search term. One big advantage of Dogpile is that it will return up to thirty URLs per page, as opposed to the ten which you normally get with a search engine, which makes saving your results as text files much more convenient.
<http://www.dogpile.com/>

[2] A major new site is that constructed to accompany the First International Congress on Tibetan Medicine, held November 7-9, 1998, in Washington D.C. This included a talk by Amchi Tswewang Smanla, whose website was described in LS 9. The site includes details of the conference, as well as a number of pages dealing with the history of Tibetan medicine, text related to the accompanying exhibition, and links to other sites discussing Tibetan medicine. A useful introduction, and with the links, a good way to find out further information.
<http://www.tibetmedicine.org/>

[3] As has been noted, many of the web sites on Ladakh by tourists feature photographs of Ladakh. Although seductive, many of these images seem content to reiterate the spectacular visual metaphors pioneered (very successfully) back in the early 1980s by Olivier Föllmi. To see the Himalayas from another point of view, it is refreshing, therefore, to find the works of Nicholas Roerich, a Russian mystic and spiritualist who travelled in the Himalayas, reproduced online. The site is managed by the Nicholas Roerich Museum of New York:
<http://www.roerich.ee/nrm/index.html>
A fuller catalogue of paintings can be found at:
<http://www.roerich.ee/nrm/collection.html>

[4] One of the current objects of fascination and deconstruction in certain branches of the academy is the personage of Tuesday Lobsang Rampa (see e.g. Donald Lopez' recent *Prisoners of Shangri-la*, chapter three). From the 1950s onwards, Rampa published a series of books purporting to be the autobiography of a Tibetan Lama, who could detect personal auras, travel the astral plane, etc., etc. Upon investigation, Rampa turned out to (also?) be Cyril Hoskin, the son of a plumber. These revelations did not deter large numbers of people – Rampa-Hoskin's books are by far the largest selling books on Tibet – from believing Rampa-Hoskin's story, and for many people, his books still speak the 'truth' about Tibet. One of Rampa-Hoskin's followers maintains an affectionate tribute to

Rampa-Hoskin, complete with short bio, photographs of him playing with his cat, as well as dressed in some form of robes, and reproductions of the covers of all of Rampa-Hoskin's books.

<http://users.uniserve.com/~dharris/Rampa/rampa.htm>

[5] News. In addition to the list of newspapers and periodicals given in the last issue of LS, the Kashmir Times is now also online (although when I looked there last, their search engine-potentially very useful-was not functioning).

<http://www.kashmirtimes.com/>

[6] More news. The Canada Tibet Committee maintains an efficient news clipping service, called the World Tibet Network (WTN) News. E-mail a subscription to them, and you will receive a number (usually between 1 and 6) stories per day. The stories are a healthy mixture of news from Tibet, China, and Dharamsala, as well as a more eclectic selection of reviews of books, films and music related to Tibet, and any other items which happen to catch the editor's eye. CTC have recently reorganised their archives, and have placed the past five years of clippings on line, sorted by date, and searchable. It's an interesting resource; a search for 'Ladakh' turned up 60 articles, while a search for 'medicine' turned up 242; a search for 'film' produced 675 articles. For e-mail details, and other info:

<http://www.tibet.ca>

[7] Typical Ladakhi driving. One of the much trumpeted features of the newer and faster computers is what is referred to as their 'multi-media' capability. This is generally a reference to the ability to run postage stamp sized video clips, or to reproduce scratchy audio samples. One thoroughly worthwhile use of this technology appears on a site devoted to 'Jeeps in India.' Not only are there splendid photos of jeeps in Leh bazaar, but also a couple of video clips. The first seems to be also in the bazaar. The second, more entertaining one, is shot at a place which is a mystery to me. So, I therefore announce a competition: The first person to CORRECTLY IDENTIFY the location of the desert shot will win a free round of tea in Tashi's, paid for by me, the next time I am in Leh.

<http://www.film.queensu.ca/CJ3B/World/India.html>

By the way, the producer of these clips, Derek Redmond, also appears to have worked on the video of 'Ancient Futures' – see his home page at: <http://www.film.queensu.ca/Derek.html>

Well, that's it for the moment. Happy surfing, net heads! And send me your suggestions (all gratefully acknowledged, etc., etc.).

EUROPEAN BULLETIN OF HIMALAYAN RESEARCH

The editors of EBHR write:

The EBHR was created during a Franco-German conference held in Arc-et-Senans in May 1990. The first issue appeared in 1991 and until 1995 the Bulletin was the responsibility of a group of scholars attached to the Südasiens-Institut of Heidelberg which published numbers 1 - 9. A French group from the CNRS in Meudon then took over and published issues 10 - 16. It is now our pleasure to announce that the production of the Bulletin will be handed over to our British colleagues, starting with the next issue (n17) for a period of three years. The editorial board will include Michael Hutt, David Gellner and Ben Campbell, while the German and French editors will continue to be involved. This revolving editorship constitutes an effective European network and warrants the periodical renovation of the Bulletin. Editorial correspondence should be addressed to:

Dr Michael Hutt
SOAS, University of London
Thornough Street
Russell Square
London WC1H 0XG
U.K.

For subscription information, see below.

CONFERENCE REPORT

Representation of the Self and Representation of the Other in the Himalayas : Space, History, Culture. Meudon, CNRS, 25-26 September 1998

The first workshop of the European Bulletin of Himalayan Research, organised by Pascale Dollfus and Marie Lecomte-Tilouine, was held in CNRS, Meudon, France on 25-26th September 1998. The need was felt to organise a regular - annual or bi-annual- thematic workshop to gather the different scholars participating in the EBHR. Indeed such a structure was lacking in Europe despite the vitality of Himalayan studies. The next workshop will take place in SOAS, London, on the theme of Life Histories.

The first workshop gathered more than 50 scholars from different European countries. Eleven contributions were presented, analysing Himalayan identities through diverse fields : tribal revendications, formation of ethnic consciousness in caste groups, ideology perceptible within folk-tales and literature, rituals and historical materials. Each communication was followed by a discussion from another specialist of the domain. A synthesis and general discussion due to Steve Brown ended the workshop.

The proceedings of the workshop will appear as a book with the following preliminary table of contents:

Pascale Dollfus & Marie Lecomte-Tilouine : Introduction

William Douglas : Washing your Neighbour's God
Discussion Veronique Bouillier

Michael Hutt : Reading 'Sumnima'
Discussion Martin Gaenszle

Ben Campbell : Identity and Power in a Conflictual Environment (Tamang)
Discussion Andras Höfer

David Gellner: From Cultural Hierarchies to a Hierarchy of Multiculturalisms: The Case of the
Newars of the Kathmandu valley, Nepal
Discussion Gerard Toffin

Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka: Ethnic Markers in Local and National Comparison
Discussion Marie Lecomte-Tilouine

Gil Daryn: Ethnicity without and Ethnic Group
Discussion Philippe Ramirez

Eberhard Berg : Dumji and Zhindak : Local Festival Performance and Patronage as a crucial source
of Sherpa identity
Discussion Nicolas Sihle

Karl-Heinz Krämer : The Janajati and the Nepali state : Aspects of Identity and Integration
Discussion, Anne de Sales

Joanne Moller : Insiders and Outsiders : Community and Identity in Kumaon, North India
Discussion Antje Linkenbach-Fuchs

Martijn van Beek : The Art of Representation: Domesticating Ladakhi Identity
Discussion : Pascale Dollfus

Martin Sökefeld : Selves and Others: Representing Multiplicities of Difference in Gilgit, Northern
Areas of Pakistan
Discussion Marc Gaborieau

Steve Brown : Synthesis and questions

EUROPEAN BULLETIN OF HIMALAYAN RESEARCH
No. 15-16, 1998-99

Special Double Issue on Photography, Dedicated to Corneille Jest

Introduction, by Marie Lecomte-Tilouine

A Letter to the Editors, by Niels Gutschow

A PHOTOGRAPHIC OFFERING TO CORNEILLE JEST:

Nineteen short essays by various authors.

ARTICLES

A Journey Towards Palpa: Joëlle Smadja

The Use of Diachronic Sets of Photographs in Geomorphology: Monique Fort

Othophoto Time Series for Environmental Studies in the Kathmandu Valley: Robert Koska & Viktor Kaufmann

Photographic Consumption in Kathmandu, c. 1863-1960: Pratyoush Onta

Some Notes on the Introduction of Photography in Nepal: Krishna Rimal

The Sanny_s_ Monasteries of Patan: Véronique Bouillier

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The Collection at the CERT, Paris, by Katia Buffetrille & Marie Lecomte-Tilouine

Photographic Archives in Paris and London, by Pascale Dollfus

Dissertation Abstract

Conference Report

Subscriptions for issues 16-21 (1999-2001):

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For subscription details contact SOAS publications office, Thornhaugh St., Russel Square, London WC1H 0XG. Fax: +44 171 436 3844. Email: ao1@soas.ac.uk

CONFERENCE REPORT

Eighth Seminar of the International Association For Tibetan Studies Bloomington, Indiana, 25-31 July 1998

July 1998 saw the the convention of the 8th Seminar of the International Association For Tibetan Studies, under the auspices of President Samten Karmay, Secretary General Per Kvaerne, and Covenor Elliot Sperling. It was held over the course of a warm and humid summer week on the Bloomington campus of the University of Indiana. The conference was a thoroughly stimulating, if somewhat mentally exhausting, event; it drew approximately 170 participants, whose endeavours were spread over six days and four parallel sessions. Multiple sessions were organised in the areas of literature, history, anthropology, philosophy, religion, art, and development and current issues, as well as language, comparative gender roles, legal and political documents, medicine and astrology, and music and material culture. In the evenings, there were opportunities to round off a full day of Tibetological activity by attending various presentations, slide shows, films, and demonstrations of web sites and software, and browsing the wide range of publications on sale, before finally heading off to one of several pleasant bars located in downtown Bloomington. Just to prove that it was not all work, a most pleasant afternoon was organised in midweek, when the participants packed into buses and visited a local park with hiking trails, and a prodigious barbecue, where we were able to observe several of the natives indulging in their traditional folk culture of wild fiddle and guitar playing.

The presentations in Bloomington were far too numerous to list here (although as I have copies of the abstracts, interested parties could perhaps e-mail me regarding arrangements for copying and posting these). However, presentations which might be of direct interest to IALS members include the following.

Ladakh and Zangskar related papers were presented by the following members:

- Kim Gutschow gave a well illustrated talk on the annual summer pilgrimage and festival to Sani, Zangskar, describing how “the pilgrimage is a journey through the fields for the pilgrims as well as for the children who bring down special flowers from the high pastures to bless the sacred statue of Naropa which is at the centre of the pilgrims circumambulation. The pilgrims circumambulate and receive blessings from the sacred relics of the Naropa statue as well as the Kanishka chorten, and more recently attend a performance of sacred dances (*'chams*).”
- Reinhard Herdick continued with his investigations into the spatial and cosmological ordering principles inherent in Buddhist architectonics. He offered a presentation which examined the spatial patterning of paths followed during daily rituals held at two stupas in the Kahmandu valley. Identical in structure, the eastern stupa has a morning ritual, while the western one has an evening ritual. In both rituals, the path begins on the periphery of the stupa and then follows a path carefully described in oral tradition almost all the way to the centre.
- Mick Khoo presented a paper on the system of 28 Tibetan constellations known as the *rgyu.skar*. The talk reconciled the various contradictory lists of such constellations extant in the western literature, and presented positive identifications, in the form of star charts, of each of the constellations. It also described the astronomical principals underlying different Tibetan terminologies used to describe the constellations, and examined how such constellations are identified in the annual Tibetan almanac, or *lo.tho*.

- Isabelle Riaboff discussed 'Taxes and corvees in Zanskar: Manorial and Monastic Estates,' which examined land tenure patterns in Zanskar (principally Zangla and Karsha, and the relations between these and various institutions in the local economy, such as estates. She discussed the different structurings of the estates of the King of Zangla, and Karsha Monastery, and the way these have been affected by Indian land reform legislation, pointing out that other Zangskari obligatory and tributary formations also factor into these to create unique local formations.

Other presentations on subjects of Western Himalayan interest included those of:

- Géza Bethlenfalvy, who presented the results of his researches into the lineages associated with *rdzong khul* monastery, located in a cave in Zangskar (this monastery is also described by John Crook in *Himalayan Buddhist Villages (455-458)* and *Yogins of Ladakh*). Bethlenfalvy's researches include the translation of a biography of *kun.dga' chos.legs*, who met and talked with Alexander Csoma de Kőrös.
- P. Marczell, who discussed several manuscripts in the Malan Bequest, Bodleian Museum, which appear to be manuscripts compiled by monks at the request of de Koros. The materials include an anthology of canonical literature compiled from the *bka' 'gyur* and *bstan 'gyur*, as well as a partial first draft of Csoma de Koross dictionary.
- Ulrich Pagel presented on "Three Bodhisattvapitaka Manuscripts from Tabo." As the Tabo library manuscripts have been dated to approximately the 11th century, they represent the oldest *bka' 'gyur* manuscripts existing outside of Central Asia.
- Lobsang Shastri, LTWA, gave a talk on 'Relations between successive Dalai Lamas and the Rulers of *mnga' ris skor gsum*, which presented historiographical evidence (letters, biographies, etc.) related to this relationship, from the first through seventh Dalai Lamas. Apparently, from the eighth Dalai Lama onwards, this relationship ceased.
- David Templeman presented an impressive paper which discussed possible links between early Iranian and early Tibetan beliefs in the years before the advent of Buddhism, that is from several centuries B.C. to the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. The talk covered such areas as funerary practices, dynastic cults, and 'folk religion'. At the same time, David suggested a revision of the current analysis that duality in Tibetan thinking has a similar pedigree.
- Laxman Thakar gave a talk on the petroglyphs which are to be found near Lari and Tabo. The petroglyphs display forms familiar to those of us who have noticed them at various places in Ladakh and Zangskar. The authors analysis of the various types of petroglyphs he recorded, particularly scenes of hunting, animals, trees, fighting, dancing, reversed swastikas, sun wheels, etc., lead him to believe that these designs are essentially of Bon-po origin, dating back to perhaps the first half of the first millennium.
- Roberto Vitali discussed the rare cases of Tibetan masters who went to Western Tibet during the thirteenth century and soon after, particularly *dbyil.ston dpon.gsas khyung.rgod.tsal* (other parts of whose life as a *ger.ston* and *'dus.log* have been described by Anne-Marie Blondeau, and Françoise Pommaret), as well as other travellers. Although the topic has been the subject of works by Tucci and others, Roberto presented fascinating biographical material which not only helped to date the journeys, but also threw light on the nature of Tibetan travel writing and its relation with cosmological literature.

IATS 9 Announced

The next, ninth, Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies is scheduled to be held at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands from 24-30 June 2000.

Information regarding that conference can be found at the website of the International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS): <http://iias.leidenuniv.nl/iias/agenda/iats/>

It is also possible to send e-mail to: iats@rullet.leidenuniv.nl.

While electronic communications are preferred, regular mail may be sent to:

Henk Blezer
Convenor of the Ninth Seminar of the IATS
IIAS
PO Box 9515
2300 RA Leiden
The Netherlands

CONFERENCE REPORT

26th Conference on South Asia, Madison, WI, 16-18 October 1998

The annual gathering of South Asia scholars in Madison attracted a larger than usual contingent of IALS members. Traditionally, the South Asia meetings are well-attended by Himalayan scholars and it is here that the Nepal Studies Association – which despite the name covers the whole range – has its annual membership meeting. Himalayan Research Bulletin editor Barbara Brower had once again compiled a list of all Himalayan panels and papers at the meeting, helping Himalayanists to find each other more easily among the crowds. On the second night of the conference, the NSA hosted an informal get-together for Himalayan scholars, which was deemed an all-round success, despite the requirement to drink for at least USD 15 per hour (thankfully, this was not a per capita demand!).

Three of the four Ladakh related papers – by MvB, Kim Gutschow, Mick Khoo and David Pinault – were read as part of a panel, “Identifying Ladakh”, organized jointly by Martijn van Beek and Kim Gutschow. Ravina Aggarwal read her paper in the context of a panel “Translating cultures, translating selves: Critical issues in representing the South Asian experience.”

As usual abstracts from all Himalayan papers presented at the conference will be published in a forthcoming issue of *Himalayan Research Bulletin*.

Abstracts from Madison 1998

Ravina Aggarwal (Smith College) – New Winds in Ladakh: Questions on Region, Representation and Postcoloniality

I will read a short story by the Ladakhi writer, Abdul Ghani Sheikh, called "The Wind" which I have translated from Urdu in collaboration with the author. The story unfolds with the escape of a Muslim family from their village after communal riots break out in the district. Translating this narrative raised crucial questions concerning "regional" literatures, pedagogy, anthropological representation and linguistic identity. These debates are central to scholars in Ladakh as they strive to define what legitimately constitutes Ladakhi literature and what social role it must serve in a postcolonial land where religious, linguistic and territorial borders are forever being circumscribed and challenged.

Martijn van Beek (Aarhus University) – A Uniquely Marginal Place: Relocating Ladakh

Ladakh is a marginal, derivative place. Official texts, travel guides and some ethnographic texts represent Ladakh as an essentially Buddhist place located on the fringe of Tibetan civilization, not quite authentic or pure. Muslims are either ignored or treated as an alien influence. Its marginality is also attributed to its location on the borders of the nation-state, beyond the Himalayas. Its backwardness is stressed in developmentalist discourse. These visions of Ladakh can be traced partly to colonial imaginings, but still dominate official and popular perceptions. Ladakh is attributed a lack of 'substance', and diagnosed as lacking, insufficient, inauthentic, backward.

The paper briefly traces the marginalization of Ladakh historically -- identifying continuities between colonial and postcolonial imaginings of the region. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in Ladakh (1985-1998), I examine the ways in which local actors—both individuals and organisations—strategically adopt and foster the discourse of marginality to create a new centrality

for Ladakh as a uniquely marginal place. These discussions and initiatives, e.g. in education, arts, and 'development', seek to redefine Ladakh's 'identity'. Giving space to local discourse about Ladakhi society and culture, the paper seeks to move beyond the mere deconstruction of received imaginings of Ladakhi 'identity' and to re-embed analysis in local social practice.

Kim Gutschow (Harvard University) – The Politics of Hill Council in a Marginal Place

How does a movement like Hill Council, claiming relative autonomy within India and from Kashmir, emerge out of the particular social and political trajectory of the last fifty years in this contested terrain? I examine the 1995 movement for Hill Council Status in Zangskar in relation to the difficulties of development in the Zangskar region over the last half a century since Indian Partition. How are the different notions of belonging to India, Kashmir, Ladakh, and Kargil expressed in the movement for Hill Council? Moreover, I shall consider differing identifications hindered or furthered by the local development process as they were used by local leaders to mobilize certain political or socio-economic agendas. The gradual climax and then disbandment of the Hill Council movement in 1995 will be examined in both historical and analytical terms in order to reveal the fundamentally contested nature of regional identities in this part of Northwest India.

Michael J. Khoo (University of Colorado at Boulder) – Searching for Ladakh: the GIGO Principle and Gossip from the Electronic Bazaar

"Searching For Ladakh" offers an analysis of the dominant themes in representations of Ladakh on the Internet, showing their implication in 'traditional' Western imaginings of the Himalayan region and its people. The Internet is commonly said to enhance our knowledge about the world, to promote communication and cross-cultural understanding. While information presented on a computer screen suggests unmediated, 'real-time' authenticity and accuracy - a virtual and multi-indexed continuation of the Enlightenment Encyclopaedist project, the world at one's finger tips - the old computing adage of "Garbage In, Garbage Out" (the GIGO Principle), reminds us that computers are tools, not oracles. A search of "Ladakh" on the World Wide Web reveals thousands of sites, mostly travel agents, on-line travel guides, home pages of tourists, but also sites of ecological, Buddhist, and other NGOs. The dominant metaphors of these sites - Ladakh as a remote, mysterious, and blissful place, its population wise, happy Buddhists (not Muslims) - reinforce, rather than challenge, Western stereotypes about the Himalayas and its populations, and silence the people who they purport to represent.

David Pinault (Santa Clara University) – Doctrine, Ritual, and the Process of Communal Self-Definition: Iranian Fatwas and Controversies Surrounding Shia Self-Mortification Practices in Leh Township, Ladakh.

Since the 1980s and the rise of Muslim-Buddhist tensions in Leh Township, Ladakh, the annual Muharram procession sponsored by the town's Shia community has acquired new significance. In order to show Muslim solidarity, local Sunnis now join Shias in the procession; but many Shia participants, mindful of old sectarian conflicts, insist on performing matam (gestures of lamentation for the Karbala Martyrs, ranging from chest-beating to self-flagellation with daggers and chains), an action frowned on by local Sunnis, as a way of differentiating themselves from their co-religionists. In recent years the Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust, based in the Ladakhi town of Kargil, has attempted to educate local Shias concerning the 1994 decree by Seyyed Ali Khamenei banning the public performance of "bloody" matam. In this paper I review four seasons of fieldwork in Ladakh (1995-1998) and describe my interviews with Shia religious authorities in

Kargil, describing the stages in the dissemination of Iranian religious propaganda in Ladakh, from the Iranian seminaries of Qom to Kargil, Leh, and the villages surrounding Leh Township. I describe Ladakhi reactions to these attempts to influence the shape of religious practice, and I note how the persistence of "bloody" matam comprises an assertion of local identity in the ongoing dialectic of Muslim-Buddhist and Sunni-Shia relations.

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MEMBER DIRECTORY

Annual subscription fee: Himalayan nationals, USD 20; other individuals, USD 25; Institutions and Libraries USD 55.

For editorial matters, subscription and membership information, contact:

Himalayan Research Bulletin, Geography Dept, Portland State University, Box 751, Portland OR 97207-0751. Email: hrb@geog.pdx.edu

NINTH COLLOQUIUM INFORMATION

Leh, 25-28 August 1999

GUIDELINES FOR PAPER PRESENTERS

We welcome original contributions on any aspect of Ladakh Studies. In past conferences, the main emphasis has been on the humanities – particularly anthropology, history, literature and contemporary development issues. We expect this to continue to be the case but we will accept papers on agriculture, pastoralism, climate, health, food, water supplies, natural resources, conservation, and environmental issues – provided that they are comprehensible to non-specialists.

We also welcome papers on neighbouring areas in the Himalayan/Karakorum region. Ideally, these should include a comparative element, or identify some connection linking these regions with Ladakh.

Participants should not present papers that have been published elsewhere, or read at other Himalayan studies conferences. All papers should present the results of original research, rather than merely restating material and data which are already available elsewhere in secondary literature. We welcome discussion of contemporary issues provided that this is based on scholarly research.

Papers should be presented in either English or Ladakhi. We may be able to offer help in translating from French, German and some other languages.

Paper presenters should remember that they are addressing a varied audience, many of whom will be unfamiliar with the technicalities of other disciplines. The audience will value a clear speaking style and it is usually easier to achieve this by speaking from notes, rather than reading word by word from prepared texts. Presentations will be limited to 20 minutes, with ten minutes for questions and discussions.

The proceedings of the previous eight Ladakh conferences have all been published (the Aarhus volume should be ready in June), and we hope to find a publisher for the ninth volume – most likely in India. The guidelines for written papers submitted for publication will be similar to those for the Aarhus volume, with a maximum length of 7,500 words. Further details are available on request.

John Bray
Hon Sec IALS

To pre-register, please send in the form provided elsewhere in this newsletter.

TRAVEL TO LEH

As the Ninth Colloquium will take place during peak season in Leh, participants are advised to make their travel arrangements in good time. In view of the perennial problem of flights to Leh, you may also want to bear in mind the need to allow for sufficient time to get back to Delhi prior to your international flight.

The following information is to assist members but does not constitute an official endorsement of any particular establishment, agent, or organisation.

GENERAL

Travelling to Leh, as most members will know, can be arduous, frustrating, and dangerous to one's health. Rule one is to drink a lot of liquids. Especially when traveling to Leh by bus from Manali one can expect to get moderate to severe symptoms of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS). There is no cure for AMS except to descend to lower altitudes, which is not always possible. AMS should not be underestimated: almost every year there are deaths due to complications arising from AMS. The bus ride from Srinagar is much less severe, since it stays at lower altitudes and includes an overnight stay at Kargil. Flying may be the least dangerous in terms of AMS, as one avoids the day on the high plateau. Acclimatisation, in all cases, takes several days.

By Air

Indian Airlines <<http://www.nic.in/indian-airlines>> is expected to be operating at least one flight per day from Delhi to Leh. Currently the one-way fare in tourist class ('Y') for foreign nationals is USD 105. Early booking is extremely important, for both directions. Remember also to arrive for your flight well ahead of departure time, as check-in is usually extremely slow and chaotic. And remember that if your flight is cancelled due to the weather or 'technical problem', you can be stuck for days waiting to get a seat. Taxis from the airport to Leh now officially charge INR 160; to Chanspa INR 200.

By Bus

Assuming that roads are open, there should be daily services from Manali and Srinagar. Bookings from Manali tend to be heavy, so be prepared to wait for a few days. In the past your editor has had good experiences with traveling to Kyelang and catching a bus from there, usually the next day. This cuts the journey a bit, allows one to enjoy Lahaul, and saves the aggravation of trying to book a bus in Manali. In any case, it is a good idea to carry food and water for the trip, and have pain killers handy. Most of the trip after Kyelang, across the edge of the Rupshu plateau, is above 4200 meters, and ends with the crossing of the Taglangla at 5400 metres. You are very likely to suffer at least moderate AMS symptoms.

From Srinagar, too, there should be daily buses with an overnight stop at Kargil. However, the viability and safety of this route will depend on the situation along the ceasefire line, which passes within view of the road at several places. As you may know, Pakistani troops were targeting traffic on the road last year, killing a few people and forcing traffic to move at night and without light along one stretch of the road. It is impossible to predict how the situation will be in 1999.

By Taxi

This is an expensive option, of course, as rates last year hovered above IRS 9000. Extra nights on the road require additional payments. If one does the journey in two days, the rate is INR12385, in three days INR13685.

By Foot

HAO reminds us:

“It is possible to walk into Ladakh from lowland India by various high passes through the main Himalaya, and this is certainly the most interesting method, and perhaps the least hassle and most reliable, the most popular routes being over the Shingo La or Baralacha La north of Manali. Except for the experienced a guide is advisable, and except for masochists a pony as well to carry some of the baggage. These are fairly easily obtainable at Kyelang, north of Manali. About ten days should be allowed.”

Travel Agents

Over the past few years, there have been several reports in the Indian press (and *Ladags Melong*) of corrupt practices in the allocation of confirmed seats to Leh. Some travel agents were reported to be demanding cash bribes (reportedly around IRS 1000) for confirmed seats. Sometimes, though not always, this actually would get one a seat. Apart from the fact that the practice is illegal, it is generally unnecessary provided that one books on time, especially if one uses a reliable local agent. Several Ladakhi travel agents have offices in Delhi.

Travel arrangements for Ladakhi participants in the 8th Colloquium held in Denmark in 1997 were handled very efficiently by Adventure Tours of Leh. Since they have offices in Delhi and Leh, and have been of great service in the past, we mention their details here. Adventure Tours and its director Mr. S.B. Gurong, have offered to handle the travel needs of members, from flights to and from Leh, to local transport and accommodation in Delhi and Leh. Members should contact Adventure Tours directly at their Delhi office, if they wish to avail of their services.

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Ph: +91 11 616 3909, 616 8214

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Leh Office:

Fort Road
Leh-Ladakh 194101
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Given the low margin on flight tickets and the high cost of communications from India, Adventure Tours would prefer to use email in corresponding with you. They are happy to help you work out individual itineraries and arrangements.

ACCOMMODATION

Currently, official rates for hotels in Leh are as follows:

A-class Hotels (e.g. K-Sar, Lha Ri Mo) are around USD 50 for a double incl. all meals. As this is still high season, it may be difficult to get a room without full board in such hotels.

B class Hotels in Leh on Bed and Breakfast basis are around USD20 for a single, USD 25 for a double room.

Of course there are large numbers of Guesthouses in and around Leh. Some of the more popular are:

Along Fort Road:

Yasmin Guest House (owned and operated by Abdul Ghani Sheikh and family)
(fax: +91 1982 52631)

In Zangsti area:

Along road to Sankar:
Himalaya G.H. (Dr. Mohd Deen)

Along Chanspa Road:

N.B. Many guesthouses do not accept reservations in peak season, as arrivals tend to be too unreliable. Rates of rooms tend to be negotiable, but one must count on at least 250-300 for a double room even in the simpler guesthouses at this time of year. For those who have not been to Leh for a while it is worth bearing in mind that the Rupee has devalued dramatically. The current rate is about Rs 50 for a dollar.

FESTIVALS

Unfortunately, there are no monastic festivals near the time of the colloquium. Takthak Gustor takes place on July 23 and 24, nine days after Phyang Tsedup. The next monastic festival after the conference is Thikse Gustor, which is scheduled for 27 and 28 October. (Source: J&K tourism brochure)

On the other hand, immediately after the colloquium, on September 1, the weeklong Ladakh Festival will begin. In the recent past this series of events aimed at tourists has developed in a positive way through the decentralisation of events which are now organised by local village and neighbourhood associations. More grandiose performances are also still taking place, usually at the pologround.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

Kim Irmgard Gutschow, *An Economy of Merit: Women and Buddhist Monasticism in Zangskar, Northwest India*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Department of Anthropology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 1998. Pp. 470, tables, maps, figures, plates.

This dissertation presents an ethnography of a local moral world created by the intersection of a nunnery, a monastery, and a village within the Zangskar region of Himalayan Kashmir. These three entities are related within an economy of merit constituted by institutional practices as well as the lived flow of individual experiences which emerge out of wider socio-economic, cultural, and historical processes. The thesis describes who becomes a nun, with what motivations, from what familial and social contexts, and by what kinds of ritual processes.

The dissertation privileges a view from a nunnery rather than the one from the monastery which has dominated Buddhist studies thus far. The perspective from the standpoint of those women who renounce the world may illuminate the contested nature of making merit. It appears that nuns make merit rather differently than monks do. While both male and female monastics who practice Tibetan Buddhism are expected to devote themselves to selfless compassion and asceticisms, most nuns compromise their ritual devotions with obligations to farm, field, and family. The contradictions between the household and monastic realms have shaped the historical development of the nun's and monk's orders in profoundly different ways. Nuns can no more renounce their roles as dutiful daughters than they can elude the female bodies defined as inferior and impure. A nun's celibacy is always constrained by local customs and classical doctrine which denies women the possibility of secular renunciations permitted to monks.

The first two chapters situate the local life world of the nunnery and its inhabitants within an economy of scarcity and solidarity in the Indo-Tibetan borderlands. The third and fourth chapters chart a history of patronage and kingship which left the monasteries well endowed and nunneries relatively impoverished within Zangskar's economy of merit. The fifth and sixth chapters sketch the dynamics of subsistence at the nunnery and delineate who becomes a nun as well as how and why, drawing on theories of exchange and an experience near ethnography. The seventh chapter examines the three ritual stages a nun must pass through: tonsure, ordination, and joining a monastic assembly. The eighth and ninth chapters delineate the historical denigration of women in Buddhist doctrine and popular culture which have established the male Sangha as the highest field of merit.

BOOK REVIEW

***High Peaks, Pure Earth. Collected Writings on Tibetan History and Culture*, by Hugh Richardson. Edited by Michael Aris. London: Serindia, 1998. 777 pp, photographs. UKP 25. ISBN 0-906026-46-6.**

Hugh Richardson (born in 1905) was the last British and first Indian government representative in Lhasa. Between 1936 and 1950 he spent a total of eight years in Tibet and, alongside his official work, began to study Tibetan history. After his retirement from government service in 1950, he continued his researches. His major works include *Tibet and its History* (1962); *A Cultural History of Tibet* (with David Snellgrove, 1968); and, most recently, *Ceremonies of the Lhasa Year* (1993). This book assembles 65 shorter articles – which previously had been scattered in a wide variety of different publications – and one book-length official report.

The collection has five sections. Part One consists of 27 articles on Tibet's early history under the heading 'Royal Period and Later Legends'. Part Two has nine articles on 'Historical Sites and Inscriptions'. This draws on material collected while Richardson was in Tibet, and many of the monuments he describes were damaged during and after the Cultural Revolution. Part Three has 14 articles on 'Later History and External Contacts', ranging from notes on the history of the Karmapa to an account of the Armenian community in Lhasa. Part Four is the 138-page *Tibetan Précis*, a confidential government report first published in 1945. This is a tightly-written summary, based on official records, of British relations with Tibet. The book concludes with a set of 14 papers entitled 'Testimonies and Recollections', which are a series of personal reminiscences written in a less academic style.

Some of the most interesting references to Ladakh come in the *Tibetan Précis*. An appendix discusses 'Relations between Kashmir and Tibet'. Long-standing problems included a dispute over the boundary in the Dokpo Karpo area (near the Panggong Lake); and friction over the status of Tibetan subjects who had settled in Kashmir territory. The Tibetan authorities pressed for the unconditional return of these subjects so that they could fulfil their labour and tax obligations in western Tibet. When the Kashmir government refused to oblige, the Tibetans made armed raids into Rupshu with a view to forcing their subjects to return.

The book leaves a strong impression of deep scholarship combined with an accessible literary style and great human warmth. In the final section, Richardson expresses his distress at the damage inflicted on Tibet's historical and cultural legacy since 1950. His close personal involvement with the country lends special authority to his testimony.

Richardson continues to write on the Himalayas from his home in St Andrews (Scotland). This book is a monument to his long involvement with Tibet. Happily, it is not his last word.

***Transformation of Social and Economic Relationships in Northern Pakistan*, by Irmtraud Stellrecht and Hans-Georg Bohle (eds.). Culture Area Karakoram Scientific Studies vol. 5. Pp. x, 429, 2 folding maps, 6 graphs and diagrams, numerous tables, 15 b/w photographs. Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, Köln, 1998. ISBN 3-89645-155-3. DEM 68.**

This fifth volume from the series of publications arising from the Pakistan-German Research Project on the Karakoram region is divided into two parts. The first offers “An anthropological perspective” and comprises two longer essays. The first, by Irmtraud Stellrecht, discusses trade and political relationships between the various minor kingdoms, political centres in Punjab and later J&K State. The 85-page essay draws on historical written sources, including records from the India Office Library & Records in London and the National Archives of India, field research in India and Pakistan in 1993, and a host of secondary and primary published sources. Among other things, she discusses trade routes, the character of local states and societies, intra-regional conflict, Kashmiri expansion, and the impact of the British. Although primarily focused on Chitral, Gilgit and Hunza, the discussions of Kashmir’s politics and economy in the 19th century are illuminating and of considerable interest for Ladakh scholars. Particularly valuable is the way in which the material, much of which is inevitably familiar to some degree, is sought to be discussed from the perspective of the populations of the mountain regions.

The second essay in the first section is Martin Sökefeld’s 125-page essay “The People Who Really Belong to Gilgit”. Sökefeld’s dissertation, “Ein Labyrinth von Identitäten in Nordpakistan” was previously published in the series (and reviewed in *LS* 10), and this essay offers a good sense of his theoretical work for those unable to read German. A thorough and detailed ethnography of local perceptions in Gilgit regarding ‘proper’ belonging and its crystallization around disputes over land, he offers a sensitive and insightful critique of theories of ethnicity and ethnic groups which have been such a dominant feature in anthropological work in this region.

The second part of the volume is entitled “A Cultural Geographic Perspective” and comprises one short introductory essay and two long contributions all of which focus on agrarian change and development in Northern Pakistan, and deploy the concept of ‘social vulnerability’. In his introduction, Hans-Georg Bohle offers a useful discussion of concepts of social vulnerability, livelihood security, and sustainability in mountain areas. Christoph Dittrich then proceeds with a 120-page discussion of food security, with a special focus on the Northern Areas, considering both social and economic factors. The second essay, by Benno Pilardeaux, discusses “innovation, development and the dynamics of global change” in Puniyal. After a brief but useful introduction to the pre-1947 history of agrarian change in Puniyal, he turns to a detailed analysis of development planning, followed by a series of case studies into the success and failures of specific interventions, either technological or in credit supply.

Many of the processes described in the essays in the second part are similar to developments in Ladakh and for this reason these essays offer important material for comparative analysis. As a whole, this volume should be of interest to Ladakh scholars with an interest in regional development, political history, and social relations in the wider Western Himalaya - Karakoram area.

NEW BOOK

**Dragon in the Land of Snows
A History of Modern Tibet Since 1947**

by

Tsering Shakya

The *Dragon in the Land of Snows*, according to the cover, is "the definitive history of modern Tibet. It shatters the popular perception of Tibet as an isolated Shangri-La, unaffected by larger international developments. [...] Drawing on a wealth of archival and oral sources, Tsering Shakya tells, for the first time, the full story of the Dalai Lama's escape from Tibet in 1959. He provides the first complete account of the CIA's involvement in Tibet; of how the British government misled the United Nations; of the internal power struggles during the Cultural Revolution; of the previously secret uprising against the Chinese; and of negotiations between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government."

"This account of the history of Tibet is distinguished not only by its Tibetan authorship, but also by its meticulous research, careful objectivity and lack of rancour." Michael Hutt, SOAS.

Pimlico, London. ISBN: 0-7126-6533-1.
1999. 574 pp, maps, photos, index. Pb, UKP14.00

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF LADAKH SUPPLEMENT NO. 8

This is the latest in a series of supplements published in *Ladakh Studies* which lists additions to my *Bibliography of Ladakh* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1988). A new edition of the bibliography is currently in preparation, and this will be published by White Orchid Press, Bangkok. Please send new references to John Bray (Central Lodge, 55 B Central Hill, Upper Norwood, LONDON SE19 1BS. E-mail: miyoko@jblon.win-uk.net).

- Ball, Keith. 1998. "Sandstorms, Smoke and Chest Disease in Ladakh". *Ladakh Studies* 10, pp. 14-15. ■ Sandstorms contribute to a high incidence of silicosis in Ladakh, and smoky kitchens are another source of chest disease.
- van Beek, Martijn. 1998 (a). "Worlds Apart: Autobiographies of Two Ladakhi Caravaneers Compared". *Focaal* 32, pp. 51-69. ■ Compares Ghalum Rassul Galwan's *Servant of Sahibs* (1923) and Abdul Wahid Radhu's *Caravane tibétaine* (1981), and their accounts of the caravan trade between Ladakh and Tibet.
- van Beek, Martijn. 1998 (b). "True Patriots: Justifying Autonomy for Ladakh". *Himalayan Research Bulletin* 18, No. 1, pp. 35-45. ■ An analysis of the political developments which led up to the creation of the Ladakh Hill Development Council in 1995.
- van Beek, Martijn. 1998 (c). "Lessons from Ladakh". *Himal* 11, No. 9, pp. 42-47. ■ An analysis of political developments since the creation of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council.
- Berry, Steve. 1998. "A Walk on the Cold Side" *Ladakh Studies* 10, pp. 16-20. ■ Accounts of journeys along the frozen Zangskar river in winter.
- Bertelsen, Kristoffer Brix. 1997. "Anthropology and the Postdevelopment Encounter". *Folk* 39, pp. 27-44. Copenhagen: Danish Ethnographic Society. ■ Discusses theories of development and globalisation with reference to Ladakh's history since the 1930s.
- Bestagini, Antonella. 1998. "The Last Shangri-La". *Geographical* 70, No. 8, pp. 24-30. London: Royal Geographical Society. With photographs by Dariusz Klemens. ■ Brief travel article.
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- Butt, G.M. and Navchoo, Irshad. 1989. "Medicinal System of Ladakh". *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 26, No. 2, pp. 137-146. ■ Describes the *amchi* system of medicine in Ladakh; compares it with the Ayurvedic system; describes main plants used for medical purposes.
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- Digby, Simon. 1998. "Travels in Ladakh 1820-21: the Account of Moorcroft's Persian *Munshi*, Hajji Sayyid 'Ali of His Travels". *Asian Affairs* 19, No. 3, pp. 299-311. London. ■ Analyses an unpublished Persian manuscript which is now in a private library. Sheds new light on Moorcroft's journey to Ladakh. Discusses Najaf 'Ali's view of Ladakhi society and the historic role of the Kashmiri community in Leh.
- Grist, Nicola 1998. Local Politics in the Suru Valley of Northern India. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Goldsmiths College, University of London, London. 299 pp. ■ Addresses the politics of the yokma-pa, a Shia faction in the Suru valley. Recently the yokma-pa have undergone a major political shift from the 1960s, when they were primarily concerned with a religious agenda. Now they have taken on the role of a political interest group.
- Gutschow, Kim Irmgard. 1998. An Economy of Merit: Women and Buddhist Monasticism in Zangskar, Northwest India. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. 470 pp., tables, maps, figures, plates. ■ An ethnography of a local moral world created by the intersection of a nunnery, a monastery, and a village in Zangskar. Privileges the perspective from the nunnery.
- Kaul, HH. *Rediscovery of Ladakh*. Delhi: Indus Publishers. 264 pp. ■
- Khoo, Mick. 1998. "Gossip from the Bazaar". *Himalayan Research Bulletin* 18, No. 1, pp.95-97 ■ Discusses the aborted plans to make the film of *Seven Years in Tibet* in Ladakh, and the current state of tourism as seen from Leh Bazaar.
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- Reifenberg, Gabriele. 1998. *Ladakhi Kitchen*. Leh: Melong Publications. 91 pp. ■ Illustrated cook-book of traditional Ladakhi recipes.
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