

SHORT REVIEWS

HIMALAYAN TRADERS: LIFE IN HIGHLAND NEPAL.

By Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf. xv, 316 pages; plates and maps.

Published by John Murray, London, 1975. Price: £ 7.50.

The northern border trade of Nepal provides an interesting subject for anthropological investigation. It not only shapes the economic institutions of many ethnic groups in Nepal, but also affects the social life of those respective groups. The importance of this trade has been stressed by investigators of the Himalayan region, and consequently receives mention in many of the works concerning that area.

Although some descriptive material has been written about this trade, the various accounts remained unsynthesized until now, leading to confusion and ambiguity on the subject. Lack of a coherent overall account was not the only problem. There also existed an insufficiency of data for large segments of the northern border trade. The inherent nature of some research had led to generalizations that, while not technically incorrect on any given point, were nonetheless skewed because of the overemphasis given to certain aspects in areas where rather intensive research had been done. The trading complex of the border regions is a complex phenomenon that is not easily explained by reference to any one group participating in it.

Taken as a whole, then, the existing literature was inadequate because it consisted of disparate accounts of uneven quality. The value of an accurate and balanced description of the border trade should therefore be obvious.

I am pleased to state that Professor Fürer-Haimendorf's *Himalayan Traders* represents a milestone in the study of the Himalayan trading complex, giving a solid foundation for any further research along these lines. Drawing from both his own wide fieldwork in the area and that of others Professor Fürer-Haimendorf provides a detailed description of the economic institutions of the various northern border groups. Among the groups discussed are the Sherpas of Khumbu, the Bhotias of the Arun and Tamur regions, the highlanders of the Dhaulagiri Zone (including those of Dolpo, Lo and the Thak khola) along with more westerly groups in the Karnali Zone. In each case, the relation of trade to other sectors of economic life is described; in addition, the connection between social patterns and economic institutions is detailed. The book is factually "dense", abounding with case histories of transactions in salt, wool, grain and other goods. Thus, this work will serve future researchers as a documentary source.

But to represent this book's main theme as a static description of the mechanics of trade would be misleading. The thread that runs throughout the book and binds it

together is the change—social and economic—wrought upon the northern border trade by abrupt shifts of the political and economic situation in the past 20 years. The drastic reduction in trade with Tibet, along with increasingly improving transportation in Nepal and the influx of Indian salt into the area have had their effect on the northern border groups, who had previously derived profit from their strategic role as middlemen between areas of complimentary scarcities. Some groups, the Sherpas being one, have responded to the crisis through economic diversification, largely in the growing tourist industry. Other groups have not had the same opportunities, and their prospects appear bleak unless their areas are opened to carefully regulated tourism. The problem is cogently presented and one might well hope that policy-makers take heed. I might add that one need only examine the case of the Kumaon Bhotias, who experienced a near total breakdown of their old society, to see what might occur if enlightened help is not given.

In passing, one might make minor criticisms; I, for one, would have found helpful a wider coverage of the trading complex, to include ethnic groups in the bordering Himalayan regions. This inclusion could serve as a reference for events that are particular to the Nepalese border trade. Inasmuch as I appreciated the historical detail relating to trade, I had hoped for even more historical depth concerning it.

Summing up, this book has consolidated and put into perspective our knowledge of the trading complex of northern Nepal, along with providing a wealth of new information. Its orientation towards detailed description may be seen as a fault by the theoretically minded anthropologist. However, Professor Haimendorf has done what was most needed; he has provided the factual base on which any theoretical analysis of the Himalayan trade must rest, in an area where to some degree even the hard facts were lacking until now. His work is to be commended and it deserves a wide audience.

D. R. TUMASONIS

INTRODUCTION A L'ICONOGRAPHIE DU TANTRISME BOUDDHIQUE,
By Marie Thérèse de Mallmann.

Bibliothèque du Centre de recherches sur l'Asie centrale et la Haute Asie, vol. I, Published by Librairie Adrien Maisonneuve. Paris, 1975. xii, 497 pages, with twenty b/w plates. Price not stated.

Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann died shortly after the publication of the volume under review. Since the appearance of her first major study, *Introduction à l'étude d'Avalokiteçvara*, which was published in Paris in 1948, her reputation was firmly established as one of the foremost western specialists of problems of Buddhist iconography. In 1963, she published an important work on Hindu iconography, *Les enseignements iconographiques de l'Agni-Purāṇa*, which was followed a year later by another Buddhist study, her *Etude iconographique sur Mañjuśrī*. Her last work set out to be "an initiation to the difficult iconography of Buddhist Tantrism" (p. ix). It is based almost entirely on the study of two Sanskrit texts, the *Sādhanamālā* and the *Niṣpannayogāvalī*, but also makes use of a few passages from the *Hevajra-Tantra*, the second and third chapters of the *Kriyāsamgraha* and diverse articles in English, French and German which include quotations of iconographical texts. It is therefore based directly and almost entirely on Sanskrit sources with which the author had long and first-hand familiarity. The plan of the volume is simple and the information has been distilled and presented with admirable lucidity. The result will therefore be useful not only to specialists but also to collectors and amateurs of art in search of means of identifying particular objects with precision. The vocabulary employed has been deliberately simplified; and Sanskrit words only figure in the text when they are truly un-translatable. Specialists will find all the necessary technical terms and references in the notes, the inventory and the introduction.

A short introduction (p. 1-3) defines the general features of the divinities, their hierarchical positions, their iconometry, the multiplicity of their faces and limbs, etc. This is followed by an inventory of the characteristics of the divinities (p. 5-40) which lists their animals, their attributes, their colours, etc. The third chapter (p. 41-82) summarises the main *maṇḍala* and is followed by a catalogue, arranged in European alphabetical order, of the divinities, which constitutes the bulk of the book (p. 83-472) of which it forms the fourth chapter. There is an excellent bibliography; an index of the most common Sanskrit names; a list of the tables to be found in the text concerning such matters as the groups of six, eight and sixteen Bodhisattva, the eight Nāga, the *Śmaśāna*, etc.; a table which explains the plates, and an index of proper names. The drawings which are the work of Mademoiselle Murielle Thiriet are clearly executed; and the volume is very well printed on good paper. It will be a standard work of reference for many years to come. It is very easy to consult because of its intelligent lay-out.

In homage to a deeply respected colleague, and because it may be of use to readers of *Kailash*, I append a list of those articles of M. -Th. de Mallmann which are not listed in the bibliography of this volume. It includes only those articles of which I have personal knowledge and is grouped in the alphabetical order of the titles.

A propos d'une coiffure et d'un collier d'Avalokiteçvara, *Oriental Art*, 1,1948/49, p. 168-175.

A propos d'une sculpture du British Museum, *Oriental Art*, N. S. 2, 1956, p. 64-65.

A propos de deux statuettes bouddhiques du Musée d'Ethnographie (de Genève), *Bulletin annuel du Musée d'Ethnographie de la ville de Genève*, No. 16, 1973, p.7-22.

A propos des Gopura de Cidambaram, *Arts Asiatiques*, t. XI, 1965, fasc. I, p. 157-163.

Un aspect de Sarasvatī dans le tñtrisme bouddhique, *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient*, t. LXIII, 1976, p. 369-374.

Bouddhisme, offprint from *Catholicisme*, fasc. 5, p. 182-189.

Citālā, déesse hindoue de la petite vérole, *Musées de France*, sept. 1949, p. 179-182

Une collection de sculptures indiennes à Châlons-sur-Marne, *Arts Asiatiques*, t. II, fasc. 2, 1955, p. 274-293.

La collection indienne du musée de Châlons-sur-Marne, *Guide commenté*, Châlons-sur-Marne, 1956, 55 pages.

Dernières transformations du Mahāyāna. offprint from *Cahiers d'Histoire mondiale*, vol. I. No. 2, Oct. 1953, p. 435-445.

Grands dieux secourables du Bouddhisme à travers les pays indīanisés, *Bulletin annuel du Musée et Institut d'Ethnographie de la ville de Genève*, No. I 1958, p. 39.

Head-dresses with figurines in Buddhist Art. *Indian Art and Letters*, XXI, 1947, p. 80-88. N. S. 83, p. 2-4.

Un manuscrit indien enluminé, *La Revue du Louvre*, 1967, fasc. 3, p. 172-174.

Miniatures indiennes (Cachemire, début XIXe siècle), *Bulletin des Musées de Genève*, 4e année, No. 32, fév. 1963, p. 5-7.

Musée Guimet: Avalokiteçvara, Fortune du Yunnan, *Musées de France*, juin 1950, p. 117-120.

Notes d'iconographie hindoue à propos de deux pièces inédites du Musée Guimet, I: Annapūrna, déesse de l'Abondance; II: Aiyānār, dieu protecteur des villages, *Artibus Asiae*, t. 19, fasc. 3-4, 1956, p. 328-334.

Notes d'iconographie hindoue, III: Lalitā Devī, *Arts Asiatiques*, IX, fasc.t. 1-2, 1962-63, p. 115-116.

- Notes d'iconographie tantrique V: A propos de quelques *mūdra*, *Arts Asiatiques*, to XXXII, 1976, p. 173-188.
- Notes sur les bronzes du Yunnan représentant Avalokiteçvara. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 14, 1951, p. 567-601.
- Notules d'iconographie, A propos d'un article de K. Ch. Panigrahi: Bhauma Art and Architecture of Orissa, *Arts Asiatiques*, t. V, 1958, fasc. 4, p. 299-302.
- Peintures indiennes (Calcutta, style de Kālighāt), *Les Musées de Genève*, 16e année, No. 1, janv. 1959, p. 3.
- Sītalā-la-Froide, déesse indienne de la petite vérole, *Artibus Asiae*, t. XIII, 1950, p. 207-227.
- Sur un manuscrit du Kaśmīr, *Arts Asiatiques*, t. XV, p. 29-46.
- Trois manuscrits enluminés appartenant au Musée d'Ethnographie de Genève, *Bulletin des Musées de la ville de Genève*, No. 8, 1965, p. 53-70.

A. W. M.

THE DREAM OF LHASA. THE LIFE OF NIKOLAY PRZHEVALSKY.

By Donald Rayfield, *xii+221 pages with 2 maps, 14 b/w ill.* Published by Paul Elek, London, 1976.

While there are many Russian "lives" of Przhevalsky, Mr Rayfield is his first English biographer. Przhevalsky is, of course, well known to English readers through Delmar Morgan's *Mongolia, the Tangut Country and the solitudes of Northern Tibet* which was published in London as far back as 1876. Moreover, many who have not read that book will have seen the horse which bears his Polish name, *Equus przewalskii*, in some major zoo. But the man himself was a complex character on any count and was involved in great events which, to some extent, he provoked; so Mr. Rayfield has done well to give us this well-researched and tightly-written biography. Przhevalsky was undoubtedly one of the great nineteenth century explorers. His contributions to science were truly heroic even if today, when Anthropology has to some degree influenced public opinion, we tend to consider the methods he employed with fanatical singlemindedness in making these contributions, as distinctly unsympathetic. Mr. Rayfield sees his subject as "a man of ruthless determination and of shy tenderness, an apostle of European superiority who loathed European society, an explorer of China who despised the Chinese, a big-game hunter on an epic scale who mourned the death of his dogs, major-general who disliked the army, a materialist and Byronic Romantic, he had the paradoxical temperament and university of genius" (p. xi). Today this portrait seems just; the personage in his lifetime inspired awe, disgust, hero-worship and pity; and Mr Rayfield has done a good job in clearing away the

mists of myth which surround his fantastic and somehow frantic journeys. These journeys are re-told with talent in this book, which includes adequate, if somewhat small, maps, some interesting old photographs, a good bibliography and indexes. Quite apart from its assessment of Przhevsky's contributions to the natural history and geography of Central Asia, the book is a serious contribution to the history of The Great Game, which was played at the time between Russia and Britain for the control of Tibet and parts of Central Asia. Many who today read or re-read Kipling's *Kim*, in an age when Flashman is more to our taste, find it a rum sort of book. But, just as Kipling has fascinated generations of readers, so too has Przhevsky fascinated many men as different as Anton Chekhov and Vladimir Nabokov: and when one reads this book one understands why. To everything he did, Przhevsky brought a passionate intensity—whether it was killing and collecting birds and animals, collecting plants, stopping his collaborators from getting married, teaching, writing, quarreling with his superiors, driving himself and his companions constantly onwards on his largely self-imposed tasks. With his phenomenal memory and his card-playing to acquire funds for his projects (p. 39), he reminds us of the young Paul Pelliot: but there, pride apart, the resemblance ends, for the Frenchman was philologist of genius with interests even wider, yet more balanced, than those of the great Russian. It is curiously appropriate that one of Przhevsky's last recorded acts was to struggle out of his *ger* and shoot dead a black vulture. He "stretched out the bird's wings, studied them and went back to the *ger*" (p. 200).

This reviewer would hope that Mr Rayfield will go on to give us a biography of Pyotr Kozlov, another great explorer of Central Asia.

A. W. M.

TIBETAN RELIGIOUS DANCES. By René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz. Tibetan text and annotated translation of the *'chams yig*. Edited by Ch. von Furer-Haimendorf, with an appendix by Walter Graf. *viii+319 pages*. Published by Mouton, The Hague-Paris, 1975. Price not stated.

René von Nebesky-Wojkowitz, whose major work *Oracles and Demons of Tibet* has recently been reprinted, needs no introduction either to Tibetologists or to the general reader. Many will have read in the original German or in translation his *Wo Berge Götter sind*. "Nebesky" did a great deal of hard work in his short life-span of 36 years; and his contributions to our knowledge of Tibetan ritual and iconography were important. The posthumous publication under review is the second volume in a series entitled 'Religion and Society' published under the general editorship of Leo Laeyendecker of Leiden and Jacques Waardenburg of Utrecht. The general reader may find parts of it rather heavy going; but Tibetologists, and those seriously

interested in the religion, music and dances of pre-Chinese Tibet and its borderlands will be grateful to all those who, in spite of difficulties, ensured its publication. Like all Nebesky's writings, it contains much solid information, clearly set out and carefully documented.

A preface by Haimendorf explaining the history of the book's publication is followed by a brief general introduction, written at the time when the Dalai Lama was still in Lhasa. The first chapter deals with the dances of the Bon-po, the Rnying-ma-pa, the Rdzogs-chen-pa, the Sa-skyapa, the Bka'-rgyud-pa and the Dge-lugs-pa sects. Then comes a short analysis of various 'chams. We are then introduced to "the 'chams yig"; Ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho, the fifth Dalai Lama, began to compose it in 1647 A. D. and it was written for the monastery called Rnam par gyal ba'i phen bde legs bshad gling in the precincts of the Potala. However, it is based primarily on Rnying-ma-pa and Sa-skyapa tradition. Iconographic details, the participants in the dance and its phases are enumerated. The Tibetan text in romanization of this 'chams yig and a complete English translation are followed by some remarks on the rhythm of the dances. The book ends with an Appendix by Dr. Walter Graf on the performance of Tibetan music and its notation, which includes photographic reproductions of chant notation. Useful indexes complete the volume which is illustrated by five photographs taken by Dr. P. H. Pott at 'Gye-mun monastery in Lahul.

Nebesky, whom I had the pleasure to know in Kalimpong shortly before his death, spoke Tibetan very fluently. With his wide reading and his ethnological training he was admirably equipped to write on the 'chams. While thankful for what we have been given in this book, I feel sure that if Nebesky had lived longer he would not only have put some finishing touches to it but would also have deepened the analyses it contains. As it is, nobody competent seems to have made an attempt to bring the bibliography up to date and there are some strange gaps. There is, for instance, no mention of J. Bacot, *Zugijima*, Société Asiatique, Paris, 1957, 2 vols. And if a work by Prof. R. A. Stein published in 1962 is quoted on p. 5, not 30, why is there no mention of his thesis *Recherches sur l'épopée et le barde au Tibet*, published by the Presses Universitaires at Paris in 1959? The table of contents states (p. vii) that the Tibetan text of the 'chams yig is to be found on p. 244; but in my copy it starts on p. 110.

BUDDHISM IN MODERN PERSPECTIVE. Edited by Charles S. Prebish. xv + 330 pages. Published by The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park and London. Price: US. \$ 7.95

For students starting to study Buddhism, this is the most useful book I have seen. The contributors to the volume are Stefan Anacker, Stephen V. Beyer, Francis H. Cook, Roger J. Corless, Douglas D. Daye, Mark A. Ehman and Lewis L. Lancaster. Like the editor Charles Prebish, who is also a contributor, they are all former students of the late Richard Robinson whose influence and example made Madison, Wisconsin, the only university in the western world which, to my knowledge, offers Ph. D. in Buddhist studies. The material, perhaps one should say the subject matter, is divided into forty-five short "lectures". These are grouped into two parts, the first concerning Indian Buddhism (pp. 3-158), the second Buddhism outside India (pp. 161-254). To each "lecture" is appended a brief list of publications (including some written in French and German) for "suggested reading". The book ends with an Appendix by R. J. Corless and C. S. Prebish consisting of "A Partial Listing of Representative Groups in the United States" (pp. 255-58); a useful glossary of Sanscrit, Pali, Chinese, Tibetan and Japanese terms and proper names (pp 259-310); a bibliography grouping together the "suggested readings" and an Index. The pupils of Robinson have done a truly remarkable job. The limitations imposed by the *genre* are difficult to face up to; and to maintain a uniform treatment when several different authors collaborate is no easy task. An immense amount of ground has been covered in astonishingly few words and some of the "lectures", particularly those by Douglas D. Daye, are *tours de force*. I was glad to see the space given both to Meditation and to the Buddhist Councils. More advanced scholars too will find this volume very handy.

A. W. M.