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Notes from the Editors

Having just returned from ASIANetwork's annual conference in Nashville, we find ourselves exhilarated as well as exhausted. In addition to hearing many wonderful research and pedagogical papers, we had the pleasure of conducting our first pre-conference workshop, "Getting Yourself Published: Steps and Strategies." Along with Lucien Ellington (Editor, *Education About Asia*), David Jones (Editor, *EastWest Connections: A Review of Asian Studies and Comparative and Continental Philosophy*), and David Paine (Editor, *Japan Studies Association Journal*), we spent half a day discussing journal publishing with thirteen ASIANetwork faculty. We learned a lot, both from our co-panelists as well as from the workshop participants. Although we will not be able to offer a pre-conference publishing workshop every year, we hope to continue to incorporate opportunities for our members to discuss ideas and present challenges about publishing. In the future, please look for announcements about roundtables on publishing that will take place over meals, as well as individual appointments that can be scheduled with editors during the conference.

This issue includes four outstanding essays and a special guest edited section. Gray Kochhar-Lindgren addresses the momentous reform of higher education in Hong Kong that went into effect in the fall 2012, considering both the trajectory of the reform and what form a truly global university might take in his article "The Cultures of Betweenness in Hong Kong's Universities: Curricular Reform, Team Fulbright, and Global Capital." This piece is particularly well-timed given Dr. William Lee's plenary address, "The Role of Liberal Education in the Technologically-Oriented Business Economy: Education Reform in Lingnan University, Hong Kong" (Associate Vice-President of Lingnan University, Hong Kong) at the annual conference. One implication unexplored by Lee, and perhaps suggested by Kochhar-Lindgren, is the possibility that innovations in liberal arts education in Asia might emerge from the new experiments unfolding in places like Hong Kong. As those in Hong Kong learn from the practice of liberal arts education in the United States, what lessons might we take away for our own liberal arts institutions and the field of Asian Studies?

M. Alyson Prude introduces us to the efficacy of online teaching in her essay, "A Classroom of Bunnies, Blimps, and Werewolves: Teaching Asian Religions Online in Second Life." Rather than dwelling on the promises of new technology alone, Prude evaluates both the benefits and drawbacks of incorporating online worlds into higher education and liberal arts settings. She demonstrates how synchronous communication, virtual field-trips, animations, guest lectures, and international participation, when used wisely, can provide a lively teaching and learning environment.

We are also delighted to have the 2012 winner of Marianne McJimsey Award for the best undergraduate essay in Asian Studies. Brett Evans, a senior at Elon University, devoted much of the last three years to exploring Jainism as practiced both in the United States and in India. His essay, "Ideologies of the Shri Meenakshi Goushala: Hindu and Jain Motivations for a Madurai Cow Home," describes and analyzes the motivations behind the establishment of homes for cows in the south Indian city, Madurai. Drawing both on critical scholarship as well as primary research conducted by the author, Evans uses interviews and informal conversations to understand how the subject of homes for animals is used among

Jains and Hindus to negotiate “traditions” associated with this religious institution.

Finally, we have a provocative and productive review essay by David Jones, “Many Ways to the Way: Teaching the DaoDe Jing.” As the long-time Editor of *East-West Connections and Comparative and Continental Philosophy*, many of our readers will already be familiar with Jones’s work, especially his “Teaching/Learning Through Confucius: Navigating our Way Through the Analects” in *Education About Asia* (5.2, Fall 2000) and *Asian Texts — Asian Contexts: Encountering the Philosophies and Religions of Asia*, (State University of New York Press, 2009). Here, Jones offers a similarly thoughtful approach to another standard text of Chinese religion and philosophy.

SPECIAL SECTION:

NETWORKS AND IDENTITIES AS REVEALED BY JOURNEYS IN SOUTH ASIA AND THE HIMALAYAS

GUEST EDITORS, AARON FINE AND CHAYA CHANDRASEKHAR

The special guest edited section begins with a substantial introductory essay aimed both at summarizing the salient features of each article, as well as providing some pedagogical approaches for teachers who may wish to use the materials, either alone or as a whole, in a course. Aside from the fact that these articles take up a region that many of our members teach peripherally, this collection provides an interdisciplinary model (history, art, art history, religion) to two themes of particular importance to Asian Studies: networks and identity. The special section is comprised of four articles: Ihor Pidhainy’s “Tibet Through the Eyes of a Buryat: Gombojab Tsybikov and his Tibetan Relations,” Chaya Chandrasekhar’s “Along the Grand Trunk Road: The Photography of Raghubir Singh,” Aaron Fine’s “No One Even Has Eyes: The Decline of Hand-Painted Graphics in Mumbai,” and Janice Glowski’s “The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya: Visual Expressions of a Tibetan Teacher’s Path and Lineage in the Diaspora.”

We hope you enjoy the issue as much as we have enjoyed working towards its publication.

Erin McCarthy and Lisa Trivedi, Editors

Between: Capital, Culture, and the Transformation of Hong Kong's Universities

Gray Kochhar-Lindgren

Abstract: The public universities in Hong Kong have now begun a momentous educational reform that creates four- instead of three-year degrees and adds a strong General Education component to the curriculum. In this essay, I examine the trajectory of this reform from the point of view of an “insider-outsider” Fulbright Scholar in General Education who, based at the University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong America Center (but working with colleagues across the system), consulted on the formation of interdisciplinary courses, interactive teaching, and administrative infrastructure for the launch of the reform. I examine the change in light of the flow of global capital, the development of the “whole person” familiar to us from the discourse of the Liberal Arts, and of the demands of multinationals based in Hong Kong for a differently trained globalized workforce. The Hong Kong experiment is, I argue, an illuminating site to examine in order for us to better understand the emergence of the global university.

Keywords Hong Kong; Education; Reform; Fulbright; Global University; Capital

...Hermes or these angels pass through folded time, making millions of connections. Between has always struck me as a preposition of prime importance.

~Michel Serres

We all find ourselves, at all times and in all spaces, *between* all times and all spaces. Every form is transitory and betweenness is, from this perspective, an ontological condition. In this particular historical period of globalization, however, we also exist in new social assemblages that exhibit specifically (post)modern forms of betweenness. Ontology is history. The between *marks and undoes* every point within the regime of contemporary globalization. There is nothing stable, nothing but betweening, although events—including those events called “human” or “object”—occur at a different pace with different configurations of materials, energies, intensities, and significations. As Michel Serres has noted, the “between” occurs under the sign of Hermes and “makes millions of connections” (64). This networking of densities is the fundamental social condition for the emergence of global universities.

Hong Kong is a city-between. A dense node within the urban network of the globalizing system of capital and cultural transformation, it has decided to radically reconfigure its universities, moving in the fall of 2012 from a three-year degree to a four-year degree that includes a significant commitment to interdisciplinary, interactive, and problem-based General Education (GE) courses and programs. As a “Special Administrative Region” of the People’s Republic of China, Hong Kong stands at the intersection of multiple cultural, economic, political, and educational vectors of force and is conducting an extraordinary experiment in transforming an entire ecology of public educational institutions at one time. In the fall of 2012, the “3+3+4 Reform” officially began when the universities admitted a “double-cohort” of students from the secondary schools, one of which would follow the

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traditional three-year degree track and the other the new four-year track. Although this was the inauguration of the reform, all of the schools have been actively preparing for this shift since the city's government mandated it in 2005.

Hong Kong students score extremely well on the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) test, which ranks students in international comparisons, proving themselves to be among the top three participants in math and science, and the top four in reading. 98% of those who begin a university education in Hong Kong complete it. Several of the public universities are in the top 50 in the world in the international rankings, and others land in the top 200. These numbers are to be envied, and establish the fact that education in Hong Kong is already working very effectively along certain trajectories of learning. Why, given such a success story, change anything?

The key reason has to do with the city's need to educate students toward greater intellectual flexibility, initiative-taking, and independent problem-solving, all of which are organized around the capacity for social and technical innovation. The government and local multinational employers have determined that, in order to improve the student experience and better prepare students for the workforce in the digital knowledge economy that is central to Hong Kong's status as a global financial center, all the publicly funded universities would institute a four-year curriculum that includes a component of GE courses. The reforms are intended not only to "broaden" student engagement, but also to inculcate a more interactive style of learning and teaching into the traditional professorial- and memory-centered university culture.

As Professor Arthur K. C. Li, then Secretary for Education and Manpower, noted in a speech on November 3, 2005:

I am pleased that after years of preparation and discussion, Hong Kong has at last reached a consensus on the roadmap of the reform. Introducing the new academic structure is a mammoth task. It requires substantial manpower, land and financial resources, but we believe this is an essential investment for our future...At the university level, we should be looking for a new and coherent curriculum, not simply adding one year to the current three-year programme...For the betterment of Hong Kong, may I therefore appeal to you to help us make this vision come true. (Hong Kong Government Website)

The curricular transformation is a decisive move away from the pedagogical and examination habits of both British colonial culture as well as Confucian-Communist culture, and toward the emerging networked entrepreneurial capitalist culture for which Hong Kong is an essential hub, both for mainland China and the rest of the world.

Still in the long historical aftermath of the handover from the British to the Chinese in 1997, Hong Kong continues to very actively negotiate its identity within the "one country, two systems" experiment of governance. The educational reform is very much a part of this experiment of a city between "East and West." Without entering deeply into the intricate conversation around Hong Kong's identity, let me simply cite Leo Ou-Fan Lee's *City Between Worlds*, which strikes me as a highly accurate description of a city notable for its famous architects, world-class airport built on a reclaimed and engineered island, shopping malls that arise out of the MTR rapid transit system, soaring housing costs, and stark contrasts between the wealthy and the poor.

As Lee notes of his own writing method, which moves "in the shadow" of the urban theorists Ackbar Abbas and Rem Koolhaas, he finds himself "plowing away just to pick up some piece of empirical debris or the occasional relic—a few small cultural substances from

Hong Kong's streets and from the material world of its everyday people" (5). To construct a collage of a city-between he must become an historian of the debris that appears in everyday culture. His is a task of preserving a space for memory that attempts to forestall the oblivion of the present. The Hong Kong government, however, he observes:

employing a logic of excessive modernization, always wants to demolish old buildings and neighborhoods and build new projects, or do more reclamation or carve out new pieces of land to build new 'centers,' or embark on mega-projects such as the West Kowloon Cultural District... The embedded cultural traditions of a building, a neighborhood, or a place are ignored or considered unworthy of preservation or even renovation. (241)

Place, in this scenario, tends toward the placeless, or, more specifically, toward the almost interchangeable designs of the hypermodern spaces of franchises, airports, hotels, and global universities. But the "almost" is essential, for in this space-of-betweenness the almost keeps cultural differences actively in sight. Hong Kong and Seattle are both sites of globalizing universities, but the politics, language, history, and physical locales of each site keep difference from being completely absorbed into the repetitious norms and signifiers of globalization.

Lee's work of memory, like Hong Kong itself, runs headlong into the enormous force of finance capitalism, especially in the form of real estate *speculation* (a term that would, if we were to do it justice, take us very far afield through the history of political economy, idealist philosophy, and the effects of mirrors on perception and culture that would, as if by magic, lead us right back to land prices in Hong Kong). It is between such forces that the installation of the curricular reform is occurring in the city's universities. Which possibilities will be taken up, followed through on? Which will vanish like the smoke of so many other incomplete educational reforms that we are all so familiar with?

It is in this context that the Fulbright Commission, the Hong Kong America Center, the philanthropist Po Chung, and the eight public universities of the city developed an original form of participation for visiting Fulbright Scholars who, based in different universities, would work across the city as "Team Fulbright" to support the transition to the four-year degree, especially around creating effective GE courses. Each year for four years (2008-2012), a different cohort of Fulbright Scholars arrived in Hong Kong to assist as "insider-outsiders" with the articulation of administrative structures, the design and review of courses, and with faculty development workshops that would be useful for the implementation of the new curriculum. The organizational structure of a "Team Fulbright," however, is itself quite innovative in the world of higher education, and responds, like the curricular transformation itself, to the needs of the new networked culture of collaboration, interactive learning, and the need to build capacities for the demands of a rapidly changing transnational finance capitalism, as well as the many forms of imagined alternatives to this force.

The university, as William Sullivan and Matthew Rosin remind us, is a "cultural institution. Like all institutions, universities are distributed cognitive systems—that is, networks or webs of interaction through which humans think, deliberate, and act...The university establishes particular foci of shared attention and references that enable individuals to imagine their lives in coordination with others..." (113). As the functions of capital, politics, media, and technology change, so, too, do the concepts constellated around "scholar," "teacher," "learner," and "university." All of these concepts become distributed differently across the terrain of meaning as the intellectual landscape of the city changes, and it is into this new terrain that collaboration, via multiple and simultaneous acts of networking, becomes a

focal set of activities in which we are all practicing in order to become more adept at surviving, and hopefully prospering, within and along the edge of the vortices of globalizing modernity.

CONFIGURING GENERAL EDUCATION IN HONG KONG

The expansion of GE courses and administrative structures requires a rethinking of such terms as “discipline,” “specialization,” “rigor,” “inquiry,” and, most basically, “learning and teaching.” The curricular change of 2012 will not, in other words, be simply an “add-on” or a “plug-in” which would allow the local university to remain somehow unchanged in its essence, but, instead, will shift in important ways the very meaning of the university experience for everyone involved. Although the language of “broadening” student experience is relatively useful, it is all too often pitted against the more highly-valued terms of “depth,” “specialization,” “research,” and “expertise,” which are associated with the traditional function of majors in research intensive universities, and serve as embedded ideals of technocapitalist productivity. (See Jean-François Lyotard’s classic, and prescient, account in *The Postmodern Condition*.) There is as yet no term that has come to the fore to replace the staid quality of “General Education,” or the semantic confusions of “Liberal Education,” but we are now at a point at which we can begin to inductively build toward that shift in the rhetoric of a comprehensive experience that reconfigures traditional disciplinary learning.

As we transfigure the meaning of GE, we need to develop a vocabulary to articulate, intensify, and shift various “points of contact,” whether in the domain of ideas, classroom practice, media capabilities (including writing and data visualization), off-campus learning sites in the city itself, or in the larger world. We need to build connections across areas of study and educate those who, in addition to field expertise, can serve to synthesize, translate, and further contribute to the results of specialized research. It will also be necessary to change the incentive and reward structures for faculty members, which is one of the most deeply embedded intransigencies to be overcome in the new global university. In general, if faculty are only rewarded for long lists of traditional publications, this will reinforce the traditional nature of student learning and create resistance to curricular and pedagogical innovation. Universities must, if the experiment is to succeed, create pathways that reward sophisticated research, sophisticated teaching, and sophisticated relationship building between the formal space of the university and a variety of corporate, non-profit, and community partners.

In addition to faculty reward structure, there are a number of other innovative changes in the GE structure that will need to be considered in the Hong Kong context. For example, there have traditionally been very few formalized First Year Experiences, but now that GE moves through all four years of the undergraduate experience, the skills needed for a successful transition into the university from high school, to become prepared for more advanced work in the majors, and to participate as citizens in the networked society, will all have to be addressed as soon as students enter the university. First Year Experiences could well offer one of the best opportunities for making connections between courses, between curricular and co-curricular experiences, and for developing a reflective narrative about the coherence of an undergraduate education.

A second area of re-imagining the GE experience that many of the universities are engaged with includes interdisciplinary courses, often team-taught, that are to be organized around areas of inquiry and central social problems instead of around a disciplinary formation of knowledge. These courses will *not*, in other words, be “Introductions to X.” Since the late 19th century, and with an intensification as the sciences and capitalism converge

throughout the 20th century, universities have become accustomed to organizing themselves around “disciplines” and “majors.” GE, therefore, will inevitably encounter resistance from some sectors of departmental culture, which will at times take the form of a faculty, student, and administrative hesitation about the value of interdisciplinary courses that cross boundaries between, for example, philosophy and business, nutrition and history, economics and art, or ecology and literature.

To counter such habitual caution and defense of “turf,” GE practitioners must articulate a sound understanding of interdisciplinary teaching and learning. They must move toward forms of interactivity and student-centered engagement; take account of “big questions” that matter; and encourage student projects, including but moving beyond the traditional research paper. And, perhaps most importantly, such instructors must consistently articulate the particular form of *rigor* of the GE experience, which includes both imaginative and analytic expectations and practices.

Such teaching in GE, whether individual or team-taught, must keep in mind that none of us can be an “expert” in multiple disciplines (and perhaps not even in our own disciplines), but that we can, indeed must, be able to invent strategies of *inflecting toward* other disciplines. This will naturally occur as students develop their projects; through visiting teachers from other disciplines and by understanding how concepts and methods of learning, teaching, and research act in a transdisciplinary manner. Nonetheless, it must also be often and explicitly noted by instructors, since students are not yet acculturated to the habits of the university discourse and it is very difficult to articulate the unfamiliar discipline of the trans- and inter-disciplines. They, as well as their parents and secondary school Liberal Studies instructors, will need to be educated not only into the content of the courses, but into the form as well. Finally, as I have already noted, these characteristics of renaming values, developing interactive student-centered pedagogies, and articulating interdisciplinary practices must all find a place in long-term opportunities for faculty development and reward.

STRENGTHENING THE CURRICULAR TRANSITION

Each of the Hong Kong public universities has done an enormous amount of the highest quality work on structuring their curricular reform. In a very short period of time each, in its own style, has begun the transformative work of reinventing an entire conception of undergraduate education. This is a generational shift, which, as with similar efforts around the world, will be more or less successful in different sites and at different moments of development. Recognizing these inevitable variations, I offer the following rather commonplace recommendations in a spirit of admiring collegiality. Some of the central tasks for all of the universities in Hong Kong will be to:

- I. Continue to cultivate the use of active pedagogies with a range of disciplinary and cross-disciplinary faculty.
- II. Develop multiple learning sites and student-centered projects as forms of experiential and community-based education, and focus significant attention on the faculties of Business, Law, and Engineering, which tend, in my experience both in the US and in Hong Kong, not to be sufficiently engaged with GE at a significant level. This is a real opportunity to improve the student experience.
- III. Support the development of academic services such as Writing Centers, Quantitative Skills Centers, and Media Labs, and offer an ongoing commitment to English Language instruction throughout the four years at all of the universities, since this a fundamental skill that enables Hong Kong graduates to move throughout the global

economy. Continue to systematically offer training to teachers in the Liberal Studies Curriculum in the Secondary Schools and the Community Colleges.

- IV. Develop student and parent ambassadors, who can be educated about the advantages of GE and the Core Curriculum and spread the word to others in the community. (In short, they need to be clear that GE, when it is well done, is *extremely sophisticated* training for success in the knowledge economy of the global workforce.)
- V. Develop workshops for university administrators about how best to create cross- and interdisciplinary structures for teaching, learning, and assessment.

Hong Kong will no doubt succeed at this educational reform, for there is already a network of cultural conditions in place to provide a platform for such success. Since the political, economic, linguistic, and cultural system is already hybridized, the new curriculum can grow out of this intricate web of perception and practice in the post-colonial and postmodern urbanism of much of Hong Kong (though, as always, the development is not symmetrical and the disparities of wealth, unsustainable housing prices, and politics between Hong Kong and Beijing will all need persistent work). If Hong Kong is able to continue to successfully mediate its Confucian, Western, Capitalist, and Chinese identities, then the city will be able to educate its students in a manner that will provide them with greater skills at home and more options abroad.

Another contributor to the success of the venture is that a great many holders of PhDs from the US, Canada, the UK, and Australia are returning to Hong Kong to take up professorships, deanships, and other administrative posts. This gives the system a deeper familiarity with GE and different forms of teaching, learning, and research. A third advantage is that as one of the major centers of finance capitalism, Hong Kong has become a master of the art of multilingual urbanization and will, for the foreseeable future, continue to offer a well-organized, English-accessible place to live and work for locals and for ex-pats. (The air pollution needs to be addressed, but that is for another context.) Finally, and related to all of the above, the city possesses the capabilities, both in terms of economic assets and human ingenuity, to invest for the long run (in distinction to western universities, which are losing a significant part of their assets without any real hope of the public resumption of supportive financing). Such an investment will bolster an already rich cultural ecology of learning, including universities, businesses, arts centers, and the creative industries.

Hong Kong, because of the Basic Law, possesses a high degree of freedom of speech, press, and a limited form of democracy, including the internal governance structures of the universities. The entirety of this social infrastructure, if it remains in place, will enable the success, over time, of the educational reform efforts.

THE SPACE BETWEEN

Hong Kong is, then, at yet another crossroads of its crisscrossed history as it leads the way in a curricular transformation that many around the world are watching with great interest. This is a shift that will align in many ways with the four-year degrees in mainland China, as well as with the traditional degree programs in the U.S. As the university systems of nation-states become more tightly linked, there is a great deal that American universities can learn from the experiment now underway in Hong Kong. Although cultural differences must constantly be attended to and articulated, there are a number of overlapping capacities that will benefit students and faculty from around the world.

We will all have to continue to learn to adapt to the flows of migration, concepts, technologies, and capital; learn to develop “points of contact” between areas of expertise called

“disciplines”; find ways to actively connect the local community of the university and its urban partners to the global networks; and, finally, continue to develop languages of politics and ethics that will enable greater justice to manifest for a larger part of the world’s population, even if that justice appears only in increments as we teach and learn across multiple boundaries.

There are a great many variables at work in Hong Kong, including Beijing’s international and domestic relations with the global economy; military relations between China, the U.S., and other countries in the region; growing populations and increased need for resources; difficult environmental challenges; social networking and other communicative media; the rate of migration; and the interchanges between English, Cantonese, Putonghua, and other languages. And one of the most important variables at work is the extraordinarily rapid urbanization of the Chinese mainland, where “more than a hundred cities have passed the 1 million population mark in the last twenty years and small villages, like Shenzhen, have become huge metropolises with 6 to 10 million people” (Harvey 172). Hong Kong, at the periphery of this system of hyper-urbanization, can play a leading role in the educational imaginary that is constructed within this newly emerging network of cities.

The 2012 Reform gives the city and the universities an opportunity to reimagine the capacities of educated citizens to design a more flexible, adaptive, and just social space. With the emphasis of all the universities on cross-disciplinary and interactive courses based around active student-learning, an increased probability develops for building a capacity to address the pressing needs of the city and its citizens, the region, and, indeed, the shape of higher education around the world.

As David Harvey has argued, regarding the means by which any pervasive social change occurs:

it becomes imperative to envision alliances between a whole range of social forces configured around the different spheres. Those with a deep knowledge of how the relation to nature works need to ally with those deeply familiar with how institutional and administrative arrangements function, how science and technology can be mobilized, how daily life and social relations can most easily be re-organized, how mental conceptions can be changed, and how production and labor processes can be reconfigured. (138)

Painting and physics; economics and education; literature and business; art and urban design; history and technology; dance and new media; law and genomics; philosophy and biology. This is the world of between, in which boundaries shift incessantly.

Michel Serres’s transdiscursive writing embodies this ethic as well as anyone as he has created a “metaphysics of prepositions” (Zembylas 485). Prepositions, perhaps, are the secret to everything. Prepositions are angels; they are the wing-footed messages of Hermes. Prepositions are the signs of creative excess in the domain of declarative propositions. As Serres has so eloquently said: “The goal of instruction is the end of instruction, that is to say, invention. Invention is the only true intellectual act, the only act of intelligences...Only discovery awakens. Only invention proves that one truly thinks what one thinks, whatever that may be” (1997, 92-93). Such inventiveness is the rhetoric of the between that we all must invent, individually and as members of multiple collectives. Such a future is very much worth the immense effort that Hong Kong is now directing toward reconfiguring the very fabric of its universities as it attends to the generative spaces of interstitiality, marked as they are by that most propitious pronoun: *between*.

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A Classroom of Bunnies, Blimps, and Werewolves: Teaching Asian Religions Online in Second Life

M. Alyson Prude

Abstract: Virtual environments promise a myriad of exciting opportunities for college and university online teaching, but how much do they actually deliver? This evaluation of the use of Second Life in an Asian religions course contributes to the small but growing body of literature addressing the incorporation of online virtual worlds into higher education. It discusses benefits and drawbacks of teaching in Second Life and suggests Asian-inspired Second Life locations that can be useful in the classroom. Given instructor commitment to making use of the unique possibilities Second Life offers, including synchronous communication, virtual world fieldtrips, animations, and the potential for guest lectures and international participation, Second Life can provide a lively and interesting alternative for online Asian-content courses.

Keywords Second Life; Online education; Instructional Technology

Online education is frequently criticized for being impersonal, anonymous, and characterized by monologue as opposed to dialogue. “The Internet teacher,” Edmundson (2012) writes, “even one who responds to students via e-mail, can never have the immediacy of contact that the teacher on the scene can, with his sensitivity to unspoken moods and enthusiasms.” To address this shortcoming, increasing numbers of higher-education faculty are experimenting with synchronous options for online learning. Among the choices are 3D virtual environments which, their proponents argue, provide an increased sense of social presence, “a feeling of actually ‘being there’” (Van der Land et al. 2011: 1). Opportunities for real-time interaction between students and faculty, it is argued, lead to a higher quantity and quality of two-way communication and a greater depth of student learning. Theoretically, virtual worlds promise a myriad of exciting opportunities, but how much do they actually deliver? Because the use of virtual worlds in education is relatively new, scholars continue to call for concrete reports of student and faculty experiences using them in the classroom.¹ This paper is an evaluation of the use of the virtual world Second Life (henceforth SL) to teach a course in Asian religions. As such, it contributes to the small but growing body of literature addressing the use of online virtual worlds in college and university teaching.² It discusses benefits and drawbacks of teaching in a virtual environment and suggests Asian-inspired locations within SL that can be useful in the classroom. Based on my experience using SL to teach about Asian religions, I argue that with instructor commitment to making use of the unique opportunities SL provides, as well as institutional IT support, SL can provide a lively and interesting alternative for online Asian-content courses.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE FOR USING SECOND LIFE

During the spring semester of 2012, I taught an online upper-division Religious Studies course at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater (UWW) titled “Eastern Religious Thought.” The course surveyed the Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, Daoist, Shinto, and Sikh

traditions as well as Tantra and indigenous shamanic and oracular practices. For the nuts and bolts of the class, we used the web-based course management system, Desire2Learn (D2L), where I uploaded syllabus documents, reading and homework assignments, and links to videos and Internet sites.

Teaching online is an ideal venue for tapping into the vast array of multi-media content available on the Internet. During our unit on India, we watched a YouTube clip from the Indian TV serial *Ramāyana* and used it to discuss the Hindu concept of dharma. In our week on Sikhism, we viewed clips of a Sikh *kirtan*, or devotional service, and a short PBS Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly documentary about a Hindu-Sikh marriage. We used Buddhism to take us from South Asia to East Asia, where we examined a video of a meeting between Zen monks and their master in which the monks attempt to demonstrate their understanding of a *kōan*. During the remainder of the semester, we surveyed Confucianism, Daoism, and Shintō, as well as Tantra and the indigenous practices of oracle-possession, and Nepali, Mongolian, and Korean shamanism. Video content in particular stimulated lively conversations on our D2L discussion board.

Calvert-Minor argues that students in philosophy courses “need synchronous dialogue. Students need the presence of others to listen to their philosophical thoughts and arguments, and then have those others give immediate feedback” (Calvert-Minor 2011: 4). Similarly, in his critique of online teaching, Edmundson (2012) describes teaching as “a matter of dialogue” and a “truly memorable” class as a “one-time-only event.” Real-time lecture meetings are especially helpful for students who are audio learners and for those who have trouble comprehending the assigned reading on their own. In order to provide a real-time, live element to students’ online experience, I considered both SL and WebEx as platforms for delivering weekly synchronous lecture presentations.

After consultation with department colleagues, and despite the reservations of UWW’s College of Letters and Science’s academic IT manager, I decided to experiment with SL. SL is a free virtual world of nearly 30 million international users or “residents” who interact via video-game-like personas called avatars.³ Avatars communicate with each other via voice chat, text chat, or private instant messaging. When logged on to SL, one’s avatar can move through the virtual world by walking, running, flying, or teleporting to distant locations. An influential factor in my decision to use SL and not WebEx was the enthusiasm of a philosophy instructor who had taught in SL successfully over the summer, and who had recently convinced the college to support online instruction in SL.⁴ In addition, I was attracted to SL’s visual depth and texture, and curious to try something new.⁵

Thirty-two students pre-registered for the course, approximately two-thirds of whom were exclusively online students while one-third were traditional students who took the course due to interest in the subject matter and despite the fact that it was offered online and not in a traditional classroom. Over the course of the semester, the students and I met fourteen times for 75 minutes a session. During these meetings, I spoke into a headset so that students heard my voice, and I clicked through Power Point slides uploaded into SL. Although SL allows everyone in a given location to speak simultaneously, students did not make use of this option. I continued to encourage them to do so, but they preferred to type their questions and comments into our live chat box, a trend also noted by Calvert-Minor and Herold. Herold (2012) attributes his students’ use of text chat to the lack of microphones and speakers on campus computers, but at least half of my students had the capability of engaging in voice chat. They simply chose not to utilize it.

During class, I usually noticed questions as they appeared in the chat box and could give an immediate response. Sometimes, however, referring to my lecture notes while control-

ling my avatar's movement in order to change PowerPoint slides, and then reorienting my avatar's face towards the class required my full attention. As a result, I periodically paused my lecture to read through student comments and questions in the chat box. Nevertheless, there were frequently questions in the chat log I noticed only after class had ended. More practice would resolve this issue, but it is something for first-time users to consider. One SL instructor commented that "being a teacher [in SL] was like playing a complicated piece on a church organ, whilst baking a cake and working out a chess problem in your head" (Petrakou 2010: 1022). I, too, found teaching in SL to require an extraordinary degree of mental multi-tasking.

Students, on the other hand, seemed to have no trouble listening, reading, and typing simultaneously. Unlike in a traditional classroom where students take turns speaking and are often hesitant to answer each other's questions, in SL everyone can "talk" at the same time. Students appreciated the immediacy of SL chats. "In the context of Second Life... the chat room style discussion has a faster pace and you don't have time to prepare your statements at length, so once the ice is broken the discussion can flow more freely and quickly," our student tech assistant commented when I asked for her opinion of SL. On D2L, in contrast, "discussions take place as forum posts which create slow, short discussions... The discussion doesn't flow and the postings feel more like small, prepared pieces of writing meant mostly for the professor to see." The synchronicity of the SL classroom, while a challenge for me as instructor, provided a feeling of "flow" and speed that the tech assistant and students appreciated.

Students' text comments and questions during one 75 minute class typically generated between thirteen and seventeen pages of text chat (when copied and pasted into a Microsoft Word document, 11 point font, single spaced with double spacing between authors). A large portion of the chat content, however, consisted of acknowledgements such as "Yeah," "lol," and "I agree." When I asked yes/no or other questions requiring very short answers, students responded with an immediate stream of replies which I found useful for judging how many of them agreed/disagreed with a statement or understood/didn't understand the point we had just covered. The chat box was less useful for in-depth sustained discussion which occurred later on D2L. As one student noted, "In class [the instructor] will ask questions and start up discussions. It continues on into the discussion boards."⁶ The chief advantage of SL's chat box is that it mitigates the lack of community often experienced by online learners



Figure 1: Our virtual classroom for Eastern Religious Thought

by allowing students to interact with each other in real time. Students who logged on before class began would converse with each other about sports scores, the weather, and current events, as well as difficult homework assignments.

AVATARS AND ANONYMITY

At the beginning of the semester, when students created SL accounts, they chose or created an avatar, the form in which they appeared to the class. On the advice of my more experienced colleague, I made my avatar as realistic as possible (minus some unwelcome wrinkles and graying hair). Students, however, were free to choose any kind of avatar they liked, as long as it was not inappropriate or overly distracting to the class.⁷ Among our avatars were two dogs, a rabbit, a fox, a panda, a pink unicorn, a robot, a werewolf that let out a startling roar each time the student logged in or out, and a blimp that zoomed around the seating area after each class, performing its own ritual circumambulations.

Students' choice of avatar was unrelated to the content of the course, but the variety of avatar forms impacted the group dynamic in interesting ways. I did not require students to give their avatars names that corresponded with the students' real world identities. If they wished, students could keep their "real" identities secret. While I knew, for example, that one non-human avatar was a grandmother and native Spanish-speaker, because she chose not to share this information with the other students they had no idea that she was not a U.S.-born twenty-something typical undergrad. The results of this anonymity were particularly positive for one shy student. Although he never spoke in class the previous semester, he participated freely and wittily in our SL meetings.⁸ Using the name of a Japanese pop star, he shouted, "IT'S DISCO TIME, BABY!" instead of typing "here" as other students did when they logged in for our online class.⁹

Other studies also report that interacting via avatars reduces user inhibitions and increases sharing and involvement with others.¹⁰ The "leveling of identity" that occurs within online environments due to the ability to disguise one's voice, body shape, gender, age, etc. has been discussed by numerous researchers including Steinkuehler and Williams, who argue that platforms such as SL are "particularly well suited to... bridging social capital" (Steinkuehler and Williams 2006). My experience supports the thesis that interacting via avatars can alter the relationships between teachers and students and encourage participation from students who are often less involved in the traditional classroom.¹¹ As Herold notes, "Anonymity did help students... express themselves more freely... Students were more willing to express their opinions, ask questions, or even to disagree with the lecturer than... when facing a teacher in a classroom" (Herold 2009: 14). The above-mentioned student, who arrived in our SL classroom ready to disco, contributed infrequently to D2L discussions. My impression is that when identified by name, he resumed a reticent and introverted demeanor. For students who are not shy to speak in class, the degree to which anonymity contributed to increased learning (or to freer posts on our D2L discussion board, which displays students' real names) remains an open question.

Another potential bonus of utilizing avatars is that avatar appearance can elicit unconscious associations in users' minds, affecting both cognition and user behavior. In a study performed in Second Life, researchers found that "avatar visual appearance and role labels had unconscious effects over participant's language use" such that seeing an unnamed avatar dressed as a professor prompted subjects to incorporate vocabulary related to education in their writing (Peña, et al. 2012: 13). When the research team named the avatar Professor So-and-So, the effect was compounded. Based on these findings, it is possible that presenting students with stereotypically Asian-looking avatars or avatars dressed in Asian-inspired



Figure 2: Student avatars arriving for class

clothing could positively influence the learning of Asian-related content by increasing students' use of Asian language vocabulary. Furthermore, if "avatar features unconsciously activate associations along a network of semantically related ideas," the SL environment could be constructed in such a way as to present students with other visual cues that would act to tap into their mental storehouse of relevant concepts (Peña, et al. 2012: 4).

THE ENVIRONMENT

Conferencing programs can add a synchronous element to online teaching, but they lack the three-dimensional environment that platforms such as SL provide. This is one of the most commonly cited advantages of virtual worlds. From providing "a robust location for culture" (Boellstorff 2008) to enhancing interactivity (Petrakou 2010), the environment of SL adds a spatial dimension which augments one's feeling of "being there." This "sense of space, locality, presence, and dynamic conditionality with other users" offers an "immersive experience" that video conferencing media lack (Kim et al. 2012: 3). In a comparison of SL and video conferencing programs, SL outranked conferencing programs in terms of sense of presence (both individual and social), interactivity, and self-presentation, and was rated equivalent to video conferencing for realism (Van der Land et al. 2011).

Our classroom for Eastern Religious Thought was located on UWW's Athena Island in a space designed as an outdoor courtyard with a willow tree, PowerPoint slide board, and various seating options. Before the course began, the area was modified to include a Tibetan-style Buddhist temple and *stūpa*, lending an Asian atmosphere to the setting.¹² In this regard, the visual component of the course was significantly more interesting than it would have been if students had watched my face on their computer screens. The "visual metaphor" and "visual narrative of the course content" that SL allows work to anchor students in a visual environment and can contribute to learning (Dickey 2005). When I solicited our tech assistant's feedback at the end of the term, for example, she recalled the day I demonstrated circumambulation with my avatar by having it walk in a clockwise direction around the slide board. She suggested that in the future, "We could have an animation prepared where your avatar went through all the ritual motions of that prayer." Such possibilities are obviously not available in traditional video conferencing platforms.

Animations for prostrations and ritual hand-washing also exist in other SL locations.¹³ Among the better for teaching Asian religions are realistic Buddhist temples where users can click a button labeled "prostrate" or "meditate" and watch as their avatars perform pros-

trations in front of a Buddha image or sit in lotus posture on a meditation cushion. What is exciting about this for teaching Asian religions is that students do not need to know how to do a prostration; they do not need to be able to sit in lotus posture using their real legs. Programmed animations take control of avatars, making the actions automatic. With one click of the mouse, in Tibetan-inspired SL sites, one's avatar does Tibetan-style full body prostrations; in Chinese-inspired sites, one's avatar kow-tows.

The opportunity to immerse oneself in simulated 3D environments, territory that is otherwise "historically lost, too distant, too costly, imaginary, futuristic or impossible to see by the human eye," is an exciting feature of SL (Warburton 2009: 421). Within SL, East Asian-inspired locations, especially Japanese sites, are more numerous than Inner, South, or Southeast Asian locales, and Buddhist locations far outnumber those of other Asian religious traditions.¹⁴ Sites associated with SLs "Buddha Center," where users from all over the world log in for regularly scheduled meditation sessions, are particularly noteworthy.¹⁵ These include "Sukhavati,"¹⁶ where avatars meet daily at Amitābha and Kwan Yin shrines for chanting, sometimes done to background music of *Om shanti shanti*, and "Deer Park," where I attended lectures appropriate for beginning audiences. Other well-crafted SL Buddhist environments include "Zen Retreat,"¹⁷ which hosts regular *zazen* sittings and Tibetan language classes, "Kannonji Zen Retreat,"¹⁸ and "Drolma Lhakhang."¹⁹

SL locations related to Asian religions other than Buddhism were more difficult to find. For Hinduism, "India Gardens" hosts a temple devoted to Ganesh, plays Hindu devotional music, and enables avatars to sit in meditation or ride an elephant.²⁰ The altar, fronted by a signboard instructing visitors to remove their shoes, hosts attention-grabbing animated mice helpful for spurring discussions about Hindu deities' vehicles (*vāhana*). A somewhat undeveloped but aesthetically pleasing Shintō location in SL is "Oltonfell," where avatars can wash their hands in a traditional water trough.²¹ I did not successfully locate sites for Jainism, Daoism, Confucianism, or Sikhism. Instructors can mitigate the current lack of SL locations representing these traditions through slideshows and video clips, whether shown in the online classroom or posted to D2L or other accompanying course management system.

While SL environments are useful for giving a sense of the aesthetics of a Zen temple or Hindu shrine, they are far from authentic representations of the real world. Depending on the expertise and motivations of their creators, many Asian environment simulations range from picturesque stereotypes to bizarre fantasy worlds. Numerous Buddhist sites combine elements of Japanese, Chinese, and Tibetan music, architecture, and iconography. Others are clearly unaware of what is and is not culturally appropriate in certain contexts. The "Skeptical Buddhists Sangha," for example, identifies their teleport pads with a Buddha image superimposed on a mandala.²² The teleports are located on the ground, and avatars contact them by stepping onto them. Similarly, when one teleports between locations, one arrives standing on the Buddha-mandala teleport pad. Some of these issues could be taken as opportunities rather than drawbacks, however, as instructors could take advantage of problematic SL environments by incorporating relevant analyses into the course, such as a discussion about why standing on an image of the Buddha is objectionable.²³

GUEST LECTURE

One of the most successful applications of SL in our course was a guest lecture given by a monk at Deer Park Buddhist Center in Oregon, WI. In preparation for his appearance, the tech assistant modified the college's guest avatar to resemble a Tibetan Buddhist monk by removing the avatar's hair and dressing him in maroon robes. On the evening of his talk,



Figure 3: Ganesh Temple at "India Gardens"

the (human) monk logged in to SL from his monastery room and, appearing as his monk avatar, spoke to the student avatars about Vajrayāna Buddhism and monastic life. Students were thrilled to be able to listen to and ask questions of a monk. Many described his lecture as the most exciting element of the course. For computer-savvy individuals with fast internet connections, it is not difficult to log in as an already-established avatar. After receiving one instructional email, speaking with me on the phone, and executing a practice log in, the monk had no trouble performing basic functions in SL. For him, the time needed to learn to navigate SL was less than and preferable to an hour-long drive from his monastery to UWW's campus.

Instructors teaching in SL can also search within SL for "residents," particularly those based in Asia, to invite to their virtual classroom. Of course, finding and coordinating with SL users who are appropriately knowledgeable about the subject matter, able to communicate effectively in English, and willing to log on during class time (likely very late at night or early morning in Asia) requires extensive time and effort. As well as the risks associated with hosting unfamiliar presenters in a face-to-face classroom, instructors organizing a distance lecture in SL must be prepared for technical difficulties when the invited speaker attempts to connect in the virtual world.

TECHNICAL PROBLEMS IN SECOND LIFE

The significant drawback of using SL for online teaching lies in the technical problems students and staff, especially those new to online virtual worlds, inevitably encounter. Although proponents of 3D virtual worlds view them as logical extensions of our increasingly digital lives, many students and instructors have difficulty with SL. Even gaming experts have complained of SL's endless complications, calling it "really painful to use and hard to navigate" (Terdiman 2010).²⁴

Before it can be used as a teaching platform, both instructors and students must dedicate a significant amount of time to learning SL's controls. Having never played computer games, I spent approximately ten hours familiarizing myself with the basics: learning to navigate and position my avatar and to adjust my camera and volume controls, as well as exploring locations outside the dedicated online classroom. Two weeks before the course began,

students were provided with instructions for doing the same. Nevertheless, our first class meeting was devoted entirely to helping students adjust their computer and SL settings and find their way to the classroom. Since I was hardly proficient in SL myself, the tech assistant and an experienced faculty member logged in and assisted me in orienting students. Aside from the hours I spent searching for potential fieldtrip sites, by the fourth week of the term, use of SL did not require a considerable amount of extra time on my part. This is largely due, however, to the fact that the tech assistant continued to be present for all of our class meetings to assist students who had trouble hearing or seeing the slides. In addition to responding to occasional student emails about SL, she regularly spent an hour each week uploading my PowerPoint slides and troubleshooting other technical issues.²⁵

“The high hardware requirements of the client software” compared to “the relatively cheap equipment used in most educational institutions” present a common hurdle to using SL for teaching (Herold 2012: 7). Although my university-issued computer was less than a year old, it required an updated graphics card in order to run SL successfully. On three occasions, my headset disconnected from the computer as I was lecturing, forcing me to log out and restart SL in order to continue.²⁶ Several students found their personal computers unable to handle SL’s hardware requirements, and one student had to commute an hour to campus in order to use university computers, thus negating the convenience of an online course.

Reliable and sufficiently fast internet connections were a continuing source of frustration throughout the term. Although our virtual classroom was designed to be minimally taxing on bandwidth so as not to cause unnecessary lag, students quickly discovered that the internet provided in their dorm rooms was insufficient for maintaining a connection to SL. Even the student who commuted to campus in order to use a university computer ended up logging on through the tech assistant’s personal laptop when SL stopped running on the machines in the campus lab. “I had trouble all semester with the technology,” one student complained on his/her course evaluation, and student feedback at the end of the semester indicated even more problems than I was aware of during the course. One comment read: “I am going to get a grade based on my attendance in SL and it took me all semester to figure out it was because of my internet connection and not the program. Half the time I was as I thought [*sic*] logged in and in fact my internet connection couldn’t support the program requirements so I was not actually there (I think) at least no one would answer me and the slide show didn’t change.”

The speed of my home internet connection was not fast enough to run SL either. Since I could connect to SL only from my office computer, teaching online was no more convenient for me than teaching in a classroom. Aside from technical problems, another drawback to using SL was that I could not see when students were having trouble logging on, viewing the PowerPoint slides, or communicating with the rest of the group.²⁷ Throughout the course, I posted my PowerPoint slides online, and towards the end of the semester our classes were video-recorded in-world and the recordings posted for students to view. Recording within SL requires additional time and expertise on the part of support staff, but it mitigated student frustration considerably.

EVALUATION

For SL to be a worthwhile use of time and resources, instructors must take advantage of the unique occasions for anonymity, fieldtrips, and props that the virtual world offers.²⁸ Herold (2009) lists four benefits of using SL that are relevant for introductory courses centered on Asia or religion: avatar appearance allows for anonymity, there are educa-



Figure 4: Avatar dressed as a Tibetan monk

tional locations in SL for students to explore, guest lecturers can participate remotely, and instructors can create multi-national courses made up of classrooms of students in different countries. With the exception of making one's avatar anonymous, taking advantage of these benefits requires additional effort on the part of the instructor. In addition, fieldtrips must be required and incorporated into the course in order for students to take advantage of that opportunity. Herold (2012) noticed in his study of over 4,000 undergraduates that most students only logged in and out for class and did not explore the larger SL environment. When I offered extra credit for exploring some of the locations mentioned above, only two students did so.

Kaye and Spurgin (2011) write that while the virtual world is "less than real," it is also "more than fake... [and] one's activities there may bear on one's real life." At the end of our course, I found that students had gained a basic familiarity with the Asian traditions we studied and had become more critically aware of their own beliefs and those of their classmates. The former was the result of assignments and lectures. As it turned out, and as is typical at UWW, many students waited until we had met in SL and I had gone over the material orally before they attempted the reading and homework assignments. Students wrote on their course evaluations that the synchronous element of the course made them feel "more accountable" and made it "easier to stay committed" than D2L-only online formats. Students' increased awareness of their own and others' views developed through use of the D2L discussion board and, one could argue, was facilitated by the sense of community gained from interactions in SL. Otherwise, although SL added an interesting 3D visual element to our classroom, because we made minimal use of the unique props and animations available, a video conferencing program might have served our needs equally well.²⁹ In fact, we would have encountered fewer technical difficulties and still been able to engage in synchronous dialogue.

At the end of the semester, how did students feel about the use of SL in our course? More than one student expressed dissatisfaction on his/her evaluation, but no student dropped the course due to difficulties with SL. Several traditional students voiced strong opposition

to the online nature of the course prior to the start of the semester, and their experience using SL did not alter their preference for face-to-face classes. “It’s great to be a blimp on Second Life and all, but I would rather be face to face with my professor. It’s like I’m paying more for less,” one student remarked.³⁰ Online students, on the other hand, were enthusiastic and recommended using SL again. “I loved that we used Second Life. I have been taking online classes all year and sometimes you forget that there are actually other people even in your class. It was neat to hear voices, say jokes, ask questions and have them answered immediately. It created a real sense of a classroom which I found so refreshing,” one student commented. Even traditional students appreciated the sense of community that SL provided: “I think that SL was a great way to make the online class feel more hands on. I think it would be a great tool to incorporate into all online classes. Overall this was a great class, and probably my favorite of the semester despite being online (generally I do not like online classes, SL really helped to improve [the] online [nature of the] class).” “I would have liked to have had this course in a classroom, but Second Life really made it feel more class-like,” another wrote. These comments support Warburton’s claim that embodiment as an avatar, combined with the multiple modes of communication that SL allows, can impact “the affective, empathic and motivational aspects” of the online course experience (Warburton 2009: 421). Other impressions of SL included “very fun” and “successful,” observations that reflect my own experience as an instructor.

Online students unanimously preferred SL to non-synchronous options, and I am convinced that the synchronicity SL provided worked to create a sense of community normally lacking in web-based classes. If asked to offer an online course again in the future, I would give SL another try. Now that I have developed a degree of proficiency navigating the virtual world, I would look forward to utilizing more of what it has to offer. In the meantime, I would hope to see university resources upgraded to better support SL. Given a choice between teaching this course online or in a traditional face-to-face classroom next spring, however, I chose the traditional classroom.

Special thanks to Chris Calvert-Minor and Jessica Hazlett.

NOTES

1. See Kim et al. 2012: 2. Herold’s (2012) report of his experience using SL at Hong Kong Polytechnic University is a helpful study, as is Calvert-Minor 2011.
2. Kim et al. (2012) found sixteen reports describing the use of SL in foreign language courses, eight in computer education, eleven in general education, twelve in the sciences, five in interdisciplinary education, three in economics, two in design, and eight in other disciplines.
3. When I checked at 9:45pm CST on May 27, 2012, there were over 50,000 users online. According to one resident’s blog, the average number of avatars online together over the past twelve months usually tops 40,000 (<http://dwellonit.taterunino.net/sl-statistical-charts> accessed 8/2/2012). Other sources give figures as high as 60,000.
4. UWW has currently developed a planetarium, a partial recreation of the Auschwitz II-Birkenau concentration camp, a crime scene for practicing forensic procedures, and a lab-safety training simulation.
5. Although there exist various multi-user virtual environments, SL is by far the most widely used, both in the U.S. and abroad. Warburton (2009) cites a study published in 2008 which estimates that three-quarters of British universities are using or actively developing a presence in SL.
6. D2L provided a needed forum for students to express their considered ideas, an observation echoed by Petrakou 2010.
7. SL’s generic avatars, especially female avatars, are highly sexualized. It is difficult to find conservative clothing, and ready-made female body shapes must be altered in order to appear normal. Some studies have found that sexualized avatars contribute to the sexualization of (human) women and that seeing oneself represented as a highly-sexualized avatar influences user behavior both on and offline. See Fox et al. 2013.
8. Calvert-Minor (2011) found that students reported increased participation in the SL classroom as compared to a traditional classroom.
9. Now, a year later, this student continues to visit me and inform me of news related to the pop star and to events, both contemporary and historical, concerning blimps. It seems the imaginative nature of the SL experience served to bring him out of his shell.

10. See, for example, Meadows 2008.
11. See also Dickey 2005 and Kim et al. 2012.
12. Based on the findings of Peña et al. 2012, in a future course I would request additional artifacts, including a Shintō *torii* and Hindu *lingam*, and have each artifact labeled with its corresponding term.
13. Grieve argues that SL delivers “an immersed bodily performance... in cyberspace” (2010, p. 37). Achieving a sense of immersion in the virtual environment, however, requires more advanced user skills than college and university students and instructors are likely to possess. The quality of the user-created locations varies considerably from those that are worthwhile for class fieldtrips to those that are embarrassingly inappropriate for young users. Before sending students out to explore, it is incumbent on the instructor to investigate locations ahead of time. Warden et al. 2013 note the presence of “unpredictable offensive material” due to SL’s primary function as a venue for online entertainment.
14. “Kurugawa Machi” (Kurugawa Machi 11: 112, 84, 50) represents Edo-period Japan and was created for educational as well as role-playing purposes: “As a roleplaying group we strive for authenticity as much as possible. In that spirit you will be required to wear Edo Period Japanese costume and hair-styles” (http://www.blueheronenterprises.com/greetings/ookuma_en accessed 5/31/2012). Herold (2010) used “RMB City” in his classroom (RMB City: 128, 128, 4 and 143, 32, 126). While it describes itself as “an online art community” and “a reflection of China’s urban and cultural explosion,” the day I visited “RMB City,” I encountered posters of nearly-nude female avatars advertising an upcoming dance party (<http://rmbcity.com> accessed 8/3/2012). Perhaps a more useful site for China and Chinese language is Monash University’s “Chinese Island” (Chinese Island, Monash University 2: 203, 143, 26). Note: Finding locations within SL can be confusing when one is confronted with names of regions, parcels, and sub-locations. The addresses I provide here are not the only coordinates within the sites.
15. Buddha Center: 145, 135, 21. According to its creators, “The basic tenet is that Buddhism must be unequivocally and purely taught by experienced monastics and lay people of Second Life” (<http://www.thebuddhacenter.org/about> accessed 5/31/2012). For a history of the Buddha Center in SL, see Connelly 2010.
16. Pure Land Buddhist Practice, Sukhavati: 224, 197, 25.
17. Zen Retreat, Rieul: 201, 221, 73.
18. Zen Retreat (Snowlion Mountain, Kagyu Phuntzok Gatsel Choling: 172, 149, 22) is affiliated with the Sweeping Zen website. Its creators’ aim is to provide “a small place for tech-savvy individuals to gather together and meditate” (<http://kannonjiretreat.com> accessed 6/2/2012). Its website poses the provocative question: “If... meditation is above all else a body practice, how then can having a pixelated version of ourselves sitting down on a meditation cushion that exists only on a computer monitor be of any real benefit to people?” The reply: “The short answer is community. We invite people from all over the world to come take a moment out of their day to sit with others, all in an atmosphere that helps symbolize what we’re all doing at that moment in our homes” (<http://kannonjiretreat.com> accessed 6/2/2012). For discussion of Buddhist meditation in SL, see Grieve 2013.
19. Drolma Lhakhang: 40, 70, 146.
20. India Gardens, Shree Ganesha Hindu Temple: 247, 136, 27.
21. Oltonfell: 158, 214, 53.
22. Skeptical Buddhists Sangha: 97, 76, 41.
23. Grieve (2010) suggests drawing from students’ experiences appearing as avatars to illustrate the constructed nature of personal identity and the Buddhist concept of no-self (*anātman*).
24. See also Herold 2009.
25. Prior to the start of the course, the tech assistant spent an estimated fifteen hours designing the classroom’s temple and improving my avatar’s appearance and animations. Numerous instructors have referred to the extensive institutional support necessary for utilizing SL (Herold 2009).
26. Herold (2012) reports that several instructors at his university abandoned SL because the complexity of the environment and educational activities they designed caused such severe lagging on student computers that students were reluctant to participate.
27. Petrakou (2010) discusses this problem at length.
28. When I sat in on a colleague’s summer course in SL, I found it difficult to remain focused on my computer. His slides consisted of black text on a white background, and his avatar rarely moved from its position in front of the class. In this case, the virtual world was not being used creatively to inspire or contribute to student learning.
29. Calvert-Minor describes imaginative props and animations he incorporated into his philosophy class.
30. Students paid an additional fee of \$150 to take the course because it was online.

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Ideologies of the Shri Meenakshi Goushala: Hindu and Jain Motivations for a Madurai Cow Home

Brett Evans

Abstract: This essay describes and analyzes the motivations underlying the creation and current organization of a recently constructed *goshala* (cow home) in the south Indian city of Madurai. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork carried out in 2012, I highlight the divergent visions of the *goshala*'s purpose and future that were articulated by the institution's Hindu and Jain members. Interviews and informal conversations with participants indicate that many individuals conceptualize only one "authentic" tradition of animal homes. However, within Madurai's *goshala* and likely many others like it, these stakeholders referred to distinctly different traditions. I argue that Hindu and Jain understandings of *ahimsa* (nonviolence) and the cow vary significantly, and this strongly affects individual expectations of the mission of animal homes. Utilizing Hobsbawm and Ranger's framework (1983), I note that the many "invented traditions" of animal homes may be difficult to accommodate within one institution, especially one with a religiously diverse membership. I further suggest that transparent discussions which clearly indicate an animal home's goals and mission are necessary and that the outcomes of these discussions should be effectively communicated to the wider community supporting the institution.

Keywords Jainism; Hinduism; Animals; India

INTRODUCTION

Eventually, the road narrowed into a one-way track, barely wide enough for a sedan. Several minutes later, near the hundredth-odd granite factory we'd passed on the hour-long drive, we encountered a sign for Shri Meenakshi Goushala, which displayed a colorful drawing of a baby cow suckling her mother. We were about to arrive. There were only a few cars at the entrance—a fact which did not foretell accurately the size of the event to come. I was under the mistaken impression that, since this *goshala*¹ (cow home) was new and still small, the event would not attract much interest. After all, it was only celebrating its first anniversary and sheltered a meager twenty cows. How many would care enough to attend? I soon learned that the answer was quite a few: at its peak, I estimated that around eight hundred people were present.

The size of a football field, on this January day the *goshala* included several unfinished construction projects, some temporary tent structures for the event, internal fences for the cows, and dozens of palm trees dispersed amongst the short grass. The cows were cordoned off in the rear of the facility, each tied to stakes in the ground intended to keep them from interfering with the festivities. At the behest of their parents, several children were offering the cows dried grass. Others were helping to decorate the cows' horns with bright colors, and their necks with garlands of jasmine flowers. One man had a small box full of sweets which he was attempting, often without success, to offer to each cow. The cows seemed to mostly ignore their many suitors, apparently quite accustomed to all of the attention.

Shortly after making my way to visit the cows, I was shuffled off for more introductions.

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This was a very social event—one replete with established hierarchies, some subtle and others more obvious. My being both a foreigner and a guest insured that I was not lacking in attention from those present. After many handshakes, I was introduced to a man who was clearly well-connected and respected in this community. After he went through the “common-knowledge” facts, of which every Hindu present wanted to inform me (e.g., Hindus worship cows; cow is mother; one cow contains all of the gods and goddesses; cows can’t be allowed to be slaughtered), he spent much of our time together explaining the material value of cow products. The first thing he said on the matter was “You know Japan and the tsunami, and how there is so much radiation?” Unsure of the connection between this recent tragic event and our present conversation, I responded “Yes?” He said, with a bit of excitement and complete seriousness, “Cow dung does not attract radiation.” It was soon evident that, according to this line of reasoning, cow dung positively affects radiation zones and any damage they cause. Cow urine, my new mentor said, has similar properties. In fact, he said that it is the “number one medicine for cancer patients,” and that if a patient drinks one cup of cow urine a day for 365 days, he or she will surely be cured.

Despite hearing plenty about the sanctity of the cow and the substances which are derived from her, no consensus emerged about the purpose of the cow shelter among those with whom I talked that day. Some told me that the shelter was built to protect old and sick cows, especially those unable to produce milk and therefore unwanted by previous owners. Some seemed less concerned about the condition of the cows than they were about their quantity. For these individuals, the more cows (regardless of any parameters such as type, need, health, etc.) living in the *goshala*, the greater the institution’s success. Still others were keen to explain to me the *goshala*’s role in supplying what they perceived as Madurai’s serious need for pure, unadulterated cow products. With so many motives, some of which stem from my interlocutors’ different religious backgrounds, how could they all receive equal priority? Do any motives conflict? Who decides the institution’s purpose? Clearly, I was missing something, and needed to ask more questions.

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Using the case study of the Shri Meenakshi Goushala, which was constructed in 2011 in Madurai, India, this paper describes and analyzes the motivations underlying a newly developed animal home and attempts to determine how these affect the implementation of such an institution. Because this *goshala* was still in its formative period when I conducted my fieldwork, many decisions had not yet been made. As such, this case study is of particular utility in understanding the development of and stakeholders in contemporary animal homes. The collaboration of both Hindus and Jains¹ on one shared project is also particularly instructive, because while each community has well-developed traditions of supporting animal homes, these traditions have somewhat different emphases and impetuses. Differences were evident not only between members of the two religions but within each community, as well. Importantly, these divergences were frequently ignored or denied by the participants in my study, strategies that seemed to impede the healthy functioning of the *goshala* that they lead and support. Drawing on a site visit, ten formal interviews, and a number of informal conversations, my research indicates that several traditionally Hindu motivations, which follow primarily from the sacred cow concept and Hindu *ahimsa*, provide the basis for the current operation of Madurai’s *goshala*. It also shows that those with a stake in this *goshala*, and possibly others like it, may hold distinctly different goals, which could be difficult to accommodate within one institution. To explain these differences and their origins, I conceptualize animal homes as “invented traditions,” drawing upon Hobsbawm and Ranger’s theory.

In the initial section of this paper, I explain the historical trajectory of Indian animal homes and describe their contemporary diversity and distribution. I then detail the specifics of this case study's location and community. This overview is followed by a discussion—which relies both on the scholarly literature and responses supplied by my participants—of Hindu and Jain motivations for animal homes. I conclude with an analysis of these somewhat divergent motivations and their ramifications in regard to the implementation of this and similar animal homes, arguing that different but related “invented traditions” have been the basis for decision-making by the stakeholders in Madurai's *goshala*, and that they thus might be the basis for decision-making at other similar institutions.

ANIMAL HOMES – STAKEHOLDERS AND HISTORICAL TRAJECTORIES

The exact origin of animal homes on the Indian subcontinent is unknown. However, it is widely accepted that these institutions have been in existence since at least the 3rd century BCE (Lodrick 1981, 57). During this time, the influential and powerful Indian emperor Ashoka, who famously converted to and spread Buddhism, constructed numerous pillar and rock edicts which advocated Buddhist tenets and included various prescriptions and proscriptions (Dhammika 1993). Of particular significance, the slaughter of animals was included among these prohibitions, and lengthy descriptions of medical treatment and wells for animals were also featured in these proclamations. These historical records have been interpreted as evidence for the existence of animal homes during this period (Lodrick 1981, 57).

Nevertheless, it is likely that the progenitors of contemporary *goshalas* and *panjrapoles* (animal homes) originated before this period, and it is doubtful that their creation occurred within a Buddhist context. As Lodrick notes, “The persistent Jain, and apparent lack of Buddhist, involvement with the institution in modern India, the central position of *ahimsa* in Jain philosophy, and [*ahimsa*’s] appearance in Jainism as early as the beginning of the eighth century B.C.” all point to the *panjrapole* having Jain origins (1981, 59). For the *goshala*’s origins, Lodrick points to the *Arthashastra*, a Hindu text dating to sometime between the 4th century BCE and 4th century CE that deals with matters of statecraft and law. This treatise discusses the bureaucratic position of the *Godiyaksa* (Superintendent of Cows) and describes the maintenance of useless and abandoned cattle herds (ibid). Over time, these early animal homes evolved into divergent forms, each with unique purposes and goals. According to Lodrick, Indian animal homes can be loosely classified within one of six types: the *panjrapole*, *vania goshala*, temple *goshala*, court *goshala*, Gandhian *goshala*, and the *gosadan* (see Table A below for details) (ibid, 16-27). The existence of these six types evidences the varied motivations underlying animal homes and makes clear that what is commonly understood to be one tradition is in fact many.

In 1998, it was estimated that approximately 3000 animal homes existed in India: of these, the overwhelming majority are located in North India (Burgat 2004, 244). Nearly all *panjrapoles* are in Gujarat, the state in northwestern India with the highest population of Jains, who provide the necessary funds and impetus to establish and maintain them (Long 2009, 17). *Goshalas* are also found in higher density within Gujarat and its surrounding states, but these typically Hindu institutions’ distribution encompasses a much wider Northern range than do Jain *panjrapoles* (Lodrick 1981, 33-39). Few animal homes exist in the South of India, with this case study’s *goshala* serving as one exception. The practice of constructing animal homes has, historically, been absent from South Indian cultures, with the result that those that do exist are most frequently developed by communities of North Indian merchants who have migrated to the South (ibid, 145).

Table A

TYPE OF ANIMAL HOMES	GENERAL PURPOSE	PARTY INVOLVED
<i>Panjrapole</i>	Protects animals, primarily those without economic value	Jains (primarily), Hindus (secondarily)
<i>Vania Goshala</i>	Protects cows, primarily those without economic value	Hindus (primarily), Jains (secondarily)
Temple Goshala	Provides pure cow products—milk, ghee, dung, urine—as well as the cow herself, for use in temple rituals and activities	Hindus
<i>Court Goshala</i>	Historically, provided a private stock of cow products for royalty, evidenced wealth and piety	Hindus
Gandhian Goshala	Provides milk for ashrams and educates public about agricultural uses of cows	Hindus
<i>Gosadan</i>	Provides alternative to slaughter and space for unwanted cows away from where they could cause harm in the forms of crop damage or spread of disease, while concentrating them for more efficient use of dung and carcasses	Indian Government

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The entirety of my fieldwork occurred in Madurai, a city located in Tamil Nadu, one of the southernmost states in India. A capital of many former empires and a consistent commercial center, Madurai is a present-day hub of activity with a population of just over 1 million (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner 2011). Famous for its expansive Meenakshi Temple complex, which has long attracted Hindu pilgrims and installed the city as one of India's most important spiritual centers, Madurai has a history of religious, economic, and political importance dating back approximately 2000 years (Devakunjari 1979, 1). In addition to its thriving Hindu population, the city has historically been home to a significant minority of Tamil Jains. Many well-known Jain caves and hills exist in Madurai's outskirts, where Jain ascetics would take shelter, especially during the monsoon season. However, many of these Tamil Jains were forced out of the region in the 8th century CE (Dundas 1992, 127-128). Most of the Jains who live in Madurai today have emigrated from northern states, particularly Gujarat and Rajasthan, for employment prospects and other opportunities.

Jains are not the only North Indians to create lives in Madurai, though. Over time, these individuals organized themselves into many small *samaj* (communities) based upon state of origin and sometimes religion. In 2009, sixteen *samaj* came together to form the Madurai North Indian Welfare Association (MANIWA). This organization was designed to promote North Indian cultural practices amongst those who had relocated to Madurai, collectively contribute to and organize service projects, and support each other in times of need. In 2012, there were an estimated 6500 members, of which over 1000 were Jains and the remainder were Hindu. As its first service project, MANIWA decided to create the Shri Meenakshi Goushala. If it is a success, they intend to undertake additional charitable endeavors, such as building hospitals, schools, and so forth.

The Shri Meenakshi Goushala, named after the local Hindu goddess who also lends her name to the famous nearby temple, is located on 3.2 acres of land outside of the city of Madurai in an agricultural and industrial area. Planning for the *goshala* began in 2009, shortly after the formation of MANIWA. However, it wasn't until January 15, 2011 that it was officially opened. During the first year, monthly expenses tended to be around 100,000 rupees (approximately \$2,000), with all but 2,500 rupees (approximately \$50) —the proceeds from milk sales—coming from donations. At the end of its first year, the *goshala* housed 21 cows

(15 adults, 6 youth). The service project is run through a five-member (four Hindu men and one Jain man) subcommittee within MANIWA's organization. These five members stand for election every two years, but it is expected that the positions will be held for some time, as no one intends to oppose the current leaders.

My initial contact with MANIWA and the Shri Meenakshi Goushala project took place in early January 2012, when I attended the one-year anniversary of the cow home's creation. I subsequently arranged to interview a range of related individuals—both those who were directly involved as leaders, as well as those who were not formally involved but still associated with the institution. Participants were identified and selected using the process of chain-referral, whereby initial participants recommend later ones based upon criteria provided by me (Bernard 2011, 147). These criteria were primarily membership in MANIWA and knowledge of the *goshala* project, but it was also necessary to insist upon the inclusion of females, as many participants (both male and female) assumed that females would not be able to provide the information I needed due to their absence from project leadership. Among the ten participants I formally interviewed, six were male (evenly split between Hindus and Jains; two served on the *goshala* committee) and four were female (also evenly split between religious affiliation; none were on the *goshala* committee). These formal interviews were semi-structured, following an open-ended question guide, but allowing for conversation to proceed in a reasonably organic fashion.

HINDU MOTIVATIONS

What happens [is], these [cows] fulfill all your wishes if you properly treat [them]. That is the belief. If you worship the cow, if you take the cow, you will get so many things out of it. First, it will give milk. Out of milk, you will get a lot of milk products—cheese, butter, ghee, so many things. If you take the urine, the cow urine, it is used for a lot of medicines. It has got a lot of power. No other animal has got this power in their urine. Cau mutra. Cow urine. It has got highest medical value in Ayurvedic science.

– Hindu Participant (Interview, 2012, Madurai)

While I encountered diverse motivations both within and between Hindu and Jain populations, some motivations seemed to be inextricably tied to religious community and background. To understand Hindu motivations for building a *goshala* like the one in this case study, one must first understand the history and contemporary use of the Indian sacred cow concept. The zebu cow—the humped species which today is regarded as most auspicious in India—is thought to have first been domesticated around 8000 BCE, which indicates a long and close relationship between this animal and humans (Lodrick 2005, 63). By the Vedic period in India (c. 16th century BCE), the cow had achieved a status above that of other animals—an inference supported by the fact that cattle were mentioned in Vedic literature more than any other animal (Korom 2000, 186-187). However, this esteem did not mean that personal or state prohibitions on the harm and consumption of cows existed at this time (Brown 1957, 35).

It was not until later, at the end of the Upanishadic period, that the cow was established in high-caste circles as sacred and granted a formal, protected status within elite religious and legal texts. Despite its status in some texts, others, like the *Manusmṛti* (c. 7th century BCE – 4th century CE) and *Arthashastra*, still evidenced great ambivalence concerning the sacred cow and *ahimsa* and included both passages condemning and allowing the slaugh-

ter of cows (Lodrick 2005, 70). Only during the Puranic era (6th-16th centuries CE) did the cow, who was given prominent positions in the popular vernacular myths of the time, become more widely accepted as divine (ibid, 71). Moreover, Frank Korom and others argue that “it was not until Mahatma Gandhi utilized the cow...for his nonviolent struggle during the freedom movement that her position and status as a sacred symbol was firmly implanted in Indian soil” (Korom 2000, 188).

Today, though the cow is still not unilaterally considered sacred or protected by Hindus,³ many beliefs about cattle comprise the common religious fabric. In particular, the beliefs that many deities inhabit the cow and that the cow is a mother goddess are ingrained in much of Hindu thought (Korom 2000, 192) and were espoused by each of my Hindu participants. From these understandings, it is easy enough to comprehend the subsequent belief that substances derived from the divine cow are also holy. Cow milk, curd, ghee, urine, and dung—called *pancagavya* (five products of the cow)—are considered by Hindus, and sometimes members of other Indian religions, to be of the utmost purity and usefulness (Simoons 1974, 21). These substances are used in religious ritual in the forms of offerings to (sweets made with ghee) and bathing solutions for images (*murti*) of deities. Anyone hoping to benefit from these offerings must be sure of the pure and unadulterated nature of the substances—something which participants consistently suggested is increasingly difficult to do in modern times. In temple uses, this purity is even more essential. For this reason, *goshalas* have been used to produce authentic and trustworthy cow products. In particular, the temple *goshala* (see Table A above) has been almost solely devoted to this purpose (Lodrick 1981, 23).

The *pancagavya* are also utilized in personal life as a staple food source, to remove impurities from one’s body or living space, and to cure both minor and major ailments. In addition to this paper’s earlier discussion of cow dung and its assumed potential to neutralize the tragedy of exposure to radiation after the tsunami in Japan, participants reported that imbibing cow urine would cure skin problems, combat cancer, and insure general good health. Simoons, in his important article on the products of the cow, provides further examples of cow dung being used to clean kitchen utensils and wash away the perceived impurity of menstruating women (1974, 27). Considering the potency believed by Hindus and others to exist in cow products, it is obvious that supplying these substances to those who want and need them would be a key priority for many.

The material benefits mentioned in the previous paragraphs are crucial to understanding Hindu motivations to build *goshalas*, and yet the concept of *ahimsa* is at least equally as relevant. Hindu participants generally did not mention *ahimsa*—literally the negation (the prefix a- meaning not or non in Sanskrit) of *himsa*, which has been alternately translated as harming, injury, or violence—by name unless prompted by me (Jain and Kripal 2009, 203). However, the purpose behind building the *goshala*, as described by its Hindu leaders, related very much to *ahimsa*. Unlike Jain understandings of the concept, within Hinduism, *ahimsa* has traditionally been an ethic popular only among ascetics, not lay people, and it also has typically been restricted to humans and larger animals, particularly the cow (Shinn 2000, 219). That said, Hindu vegetarianism and the existence of many *goshalas* show the concept, which was reinvigorated by Gandhi (Burgat 2004, 229), to be alive and functioning among the tradition’s laity.

The *goshala*’s leaders were unanimous in stating that the institution’s only goal was to protect old and sick cows. In response to a question about future plans for milk cows, one Hindu leader vehemently denied that this was being considered. “We are not selling milk; we are only serving the cows. That is it.” He went as far as to suggest, incorrectly, that not a

single *goshala* in all of India had milking operations.⁴ Despite this disavowal, when asked what type of cow would live at the *goshala* many non-leader Hindu participants confidently described ones which were healthy and producing milk. In further contrast to the leaders' claims and intentions, no cows living in the *goshala* at the time of this study were classified as old or sick. This contradictory situation was explained by two of the leaders as the result of meritorious, but unsolicited, gifts from Hindus donors who wanted to increase the population of cows in the *goshala*.

JAIN MOTIVATIONS

They say: don't hurt anybody, especially not your mother. Cow is like your mother. She has given you milk. She has grown old. Now that she is old, you want to kill her? Is this fair? No. So, this *panjrapole* is a place where all these dry cows and bulls are kept, given food and water. Veterinary doctors are there. They take care of the animals, treat them also. Till their last breath, they will take care.

- Jain Participant (Interview, 2012, Madurai)

While Hindus mostly appeared to be driven by the sacred cow concept first and *ahimsa* second, the Jains with whom I spoke were consistent about their primary motivations being *ahimsa* and compassion for life. Upon being asked why, as a Jain, he or she supported the *goshala* in Madurai, each Jain participant in my fieldwork immediately discussed *ahimsa* and *jiv-daya* (compassion for life). To be sure, other motivations were often mentioned later, and I will discuss these below. However, the primacy of the two concepts above clearly indicates their higher level of importance.

Since Jainism's inception, *ahimsa* has been a, if not the, defining feature of the tradition. As early as the 8th or 9th centuries BCE, Parsvanatha—the second most recent *tirthankara*, believed by scholars to possibly be the earliest historical leader of the religion—included *ahimsa* as the first of his four moral requirements (Long 2009, 30). Jains believe *himsa* causes negative *karma* to physically accumulate on one's soul, resulting in continued and lower rebirths (Jaini 1998, 112). For members of a religion whose ostensible goal is to cease participation in the cycle of rebirth (*samsara*) through achieving liberation (*moksha*), *ahimsa* is an essential method of preventing the influx of worldly *karma* particles which are detrimental to success in this endeavor. Some scholars have argued that within traditionally ascetic-oriented Jainism, "*ahimsa* is concerned not with ethics as socially construed, but with purity as physically construed and, thus, with the cessation of all action (*karma*)" (Jain and Kripal 2009, 203). Yet it is unwise to consider any community, Jains included, as a static and internally uniform body. "Official doctrine," derived from textual and monastic sources, can differ in key ways from that espoused by the laity.⁵ Importantly, the lay Jains with whom I conducted interviews would often invoke *ahimsa* as the motivating factor behind social worldly actions, such as those which support and create animal homes.

When discussing *ahimsa's* relationship to the Madurai *goshala*, one Jain participant explained, "They tell you to try to even reduce violence at the microorganism level... So, especially when it is a cow, when it is supposed to have all five-senses—an organism of a higher evolution—[Jains] would try to protect it. Not only protect the life, but make life easier for it—the cow or any other animals—because the basic principle of Jainism is nonviolence." In her view, which was reflected by all of the other Jain participants, *ahimsa* extends itself to encompass more than just avoidance of harm caused by the individual, but also to prevention of harm caused by others. In addition to referencing *ahimsa*, this par-

participant noted Jainism's belief in a hierarchy of life which ascends from one-sensed (touch) to five-sensed beings (i.e., those who possess touch, taste, smell, sight, and hearing). While Jains attempt seriously to avoid harming insects (two- to four-sensed beings) and even bacteria (one-sensed), they are clear that harming a five-sensed life form is the worst offense. Referencing the *Bhagavati Sutra*, Kristi Wiley notes that this is because, while Jain thought holds that all life suffers equally, five-sensed life are able to know both "what they are suffering from and how much is their suffering" (2006, 251). The cow, as a five-sensed being, is therefore especially worthy of Jain support.

The Jain concept of *jiv-daya*—*jiv* meaning life and *daya* compassion—intersects with or at the very least runs parallel to *ahimsa*. *Jiv-daya* is both a value and a cause for Jains. It is the desire to alleviate the suffering of others, and it is also an established form of charity. In every Jain temple and at many pilgrimage sites, there are a variety of donation boxes, each designated for a specific purpose. One of these is always marked "*jiv-daya*." Describing what these funds were allocated for, participants informed me that animal cow homes were usually the recipients, but additional uses included providing seeds for birds, water tanks along roads for herd animals and stray dogs, and other similar initiatives. This popular ethical priority was described not in terms of religious proscriptions, but instead was said to stem from general Jain beliefs on about suffering, nonviolence, and the interconnectedness of all life. As for spiritual benefits of these actions, participants were generally hesitant to claim with authority the nature of *karma*. Most agreed that doing good actions results in good outcomes, such as positive *karma* (*punya* or merit). However, most were also clear that this was not the reason they continued with these social actions. One participant commented, "Whether it helps *karma* or not, it is very difficult to say. And, I mean, I would rather not do it for that. I would do it just because I would not like to be hurt, so I would not like to hurt anyone, too."

To my research participants, these two prominent features of Jainism—*ahimsa* and *jiv-daya*—were *the* reasons behind their support of animal homes. However, other purposes were present also. While looking after sick and old cows was their first priority, several individuals expressed their support for establishing milking operations to provide pure cow products for household use. Interestingly, despite most Jain participants stating lack of belief in the sacred cow concept, several thought manufacturing medicines derived from cow urine would be worthwhile. Perhaps belief in the efficacy of cow urine as medicine, which has been most frequently promulgated by Hindus, has taken hold of the Indian consciousness to such a degree that it is now partially independent of, and yet still related to, the sacred cow concept. This is important because the prevalence of the belief among Jains in the unique powers of cow products provides support for typically Hindu conceptions of animal homes that include commercial or "productive" elements.

WHOSE TRADITIONS AND HOW MANY TRADITIONS?

While traditions of building animal homes in India have existed for over 2000 years, the reasons behind such institutions have not remained unchanged but rather have been host to shifting motivations. Today, there are many different outcomes desired by supporters of these institutions. Some participants are protection-oriented, hoping to provide needed care for either animals in general or cows specifically. Others describe their motivations in relation to the economic and ritual benefits that might potentially be derived from the cow. These differences are most pronounced when comparing Hindu and Jain participants, but are also quite noticeable within each religious community. Since the general tradition of animal homes has varied and evolving understandings of its purpose, the question of which

motivations will take priority is important for those involved to consider.

In many ways, it is helpful to conceptualize contemporary animal homes as a collection of “invented traditions,” or “set[s] of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992, 1). Each participant in this study had a definite and exclusive idea of what an animal home should be, and several were so committed to their model that they refused to admit the existence of any examples which deviated from it. Furthermore, these idealized models were believed to be replicating the historic and therefore “authentic” or “true” form of the animal home, although the varying responses of the participants suggest that this is an imagined reality. The ability to consider animal homes as changing and individual institutions was often absent.

This inflexibility may well lead to serious conflict between stakeholders in *goshalas* and *panjrapoles*, particularly those with diverse membership, such as those which include both Hindu and Jain communities. In fact, I suggest that the case study in this paper evidences the beginnings of such a conflict. As can be seen in the case of the Shri Meenakshi Goushala, the leadership’s assumption that their motivations are the same as the community which appointed them does not seem to always hold true. Their goal of only providing protection and service to “useless” cows is not reflected in the current iteration of the *goshala*, as after one year it housed only healthy and “useful” cows. In addition, their insistence that the *goshala* is not intended for production of cow products is at odds with many of the Jain participants’ conceptions of the purpose of the animal home. This shows an obvious disconnect between involved parties.

The many goals and desires expressed by the participants in this case study may or may not all be able to be accommodated in one institution. However, the failure to acknowledge that there are differences is concerning. Without discussion of priorities, followed by attempts to publicize the results of these discussions, confusion and contradicting actions could continue. In the case of this *goshala*, more than one tradition was “invented,” and this reality demonstrates the challenge of opposing motivations and intentions existing within what is commonly thought to be only one authentic and static tradition.

NOTES

1. *Goshala*, the most commonly accepted spelling, is used throughout this paper except when transliterating the name of the Shri Meenakshi Goushala.
2. Jainism is an Indian religion which traditionally has revolved around ascetic leaders and figures and focused on reducing karmic intake through renunciation and nonviolence. Over its history, both lay and monastic Jains have consistently maintained modified lacto-vegetarian diets and taken other serious steps to prevent harm to life. The religion has coexisted with Hinduism on the Indian subcontinent for well over 2500 years. To give a better sense of the majority-minority relationship which has always existed between the two religious communities it may be helpful to know their current respective population sizes. According to the 2001 Indian census of India’s then 1.028 billion citizens, 80.5 % of the population identified as Hindus while .4 % identified as Jain (The Registrar General & Census Commissioner, 2001).
3. Lodrick (2005, 73) notes that “beef-eating is common among low caste Hindus, [and] adherence to the sacred-cow philosophy is associated primarily with the upper castes (vegetarian practices are often adopted by the lower castes in an effort to raise their caste status).”
4. In its first year, at least, even the *goshala* in this case study was selling milk, albeit in relatively miniscule quantities.
5. See Norman’s 1991 article “The Role of the Layman According to Jain Canon.”

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Review Essay: Many Ways to the Way: *Teaching the Daode Jing*¹

Teaching the Daode Jing. Ed. Gary D. DeAngelis and Warren G. Frisina. New York: Oxford University Press. 2008. 206 pp. ISBN 978-0-533270-4

Keywords Philosophy; Religious Studies; Asian Studies

Teaching the Daode Jing is edited by Gary D. DeAngelis and Warren G. Frisina and is part of the *Teaching of Religious Studies* Series presented by the American Academy of Religion and Oxford University Press. The series editor is Susan Henking. Of additional interest to *ASIANetwork* readers is that the series has other titles in religion and philosophy such as *Teaching Confucianism* (Jeffrey L. Richey, editor), *Teaching Islam* (Brannon M. Wheeler, editor), *Teaching African American Religions* (Carolyn M. Jones and Theodore Louis Trost, editors), *Teaching Religion and Healing* (Linda L. Barnes and Inés Talamantez, editors), *Teaching Ritual* (Catherine Bell, editor), and *Teaching New Religious Movements* (David G. Bomley, editor). The series also includes some edited volumes on individual figures such as Levi-Strauss, Freud, and Durkheim.

Given the other titles in the series, readers may be surprised to discover an entire book devoted to just a single text. Such an allocation seems to indicate that there is something more special about this text than, say, the *Lunyu* (*Analects*) of Confucius. The sense in which the *Daode Jing*, or *Laozi* (the name of its purported author), is a special text comes out very clearly in a number of the essays about why this volume is devoted exclusively to this one Daoist text and not to the range of other Daoist texts (such as the *Zhuangzi* and *Liezi*). In part, the reason for this is that many of the authors wish to make a distinction between Daoism and Laoism. For a variety of reasons, this is a helpful distinction, since the project of *Zhuangzi* (the other favorite choice of those who teach Daoist texts) is sometimes considered by scholars to have a much different agenda from *Laozi*'s. The *Daode Jing* is written in large part to the ruler while the *Zhuangzi* is directed more to the natural world, but still has advice for the ruler as well.

There are certainly good reasons to coin the term Laoism *vis-à-vis* Daoism as some of the authors in the book do, but such a move may not be particularly important to non-specialists teaching Chinese religion or philosophy and may, in fact, even fog the landscape for introducing Chinese religion (or philosophy) to undergraduates. Such a distinction may be even less helpful for those wishing to give students some general sense of Chinese culture, social organization, and an appreciation for Chinese religious sensibilities. None of these possibilities should deter readers, though, since all of the book's authors approach this very special text with justified enthusiasm, passion, and respect. Moreover, the neologism of Laoism is not without its academic purpose, and its repeated use will one day make it accepted practice, a good idea for many reasons.

Laozi (also known as Lao Tan or Old Tan) is the legendary author of the *Daode Jing*. His name, meaning "Old Master," is a result of his rather mythic birth. Legend has it that *Laozi*'s mother's pregnancy lasted some 62 years, with *Laozi* being born an already white-haired

man. Such a birth supports his possession of innate natural wisdom. Sadly for the rest of us, this wisdom can only be attained through cultivated and practiced innocence. This sense of the type of wisdom expressed in the *Daode Jing* comes out in a number of essays which college and university non-specialists with purely pedagogical concerns may find especially helpful, depending on their specific interests. “Imagine *Teaching the Daode Jing!*” features helpful suggestions from such noted scholars as Judith Berling, Geoffrey Foy, and John Thompson. Readers are offered a series of more “nuts and bolts” classroom scenarios in “Letting the *Daode Jing* Teach,” “Gender and the *Daode Jing*,” and “The *Dao De Jing*: An Exercise in How Interpretations Change.” Although all these sections of the essay are worthwhile, Judith Berling’s is the most rewarding.

This collection includes some established scholars such as Livia Kohn, Harold Roth, Robert G. Henricks, David L. Hall, Norman J. Girardot, and Michael LaFargue. As one might expect, the book traverses the terrain from the scholarly to the practical with some mixing of what might be viewed as both extremes of this range. The book cannot be faulted on this score since the dichotomy between the scholarly and practical has often caused deleterious consequences in education, especially in higher education. This divide is not as wide as is often suggested, but in order to shorten it even more some interfusion between the two is helpful, and this combination is sometimes absent in *Teaching the Daode Jing*. In fairness, organizing chapters and guiding authors *vis-à-vis* other authors and still letting them have their own voices is understandably a difficult task. But if there is a criticism to be found, and this would be a slight one, it would be that this book tries to do too much in its attempt to include both ends of the scholarly/practical spectrum. In his “Third-Person and First-Person Approaches to the *Laozi*,” Harold Roth strikes a compromise between attention to what he calls “third person learning” versus “first person learning.” The former represents the dominant approach in education, where we “observe, analyze, record, and discuss ... subjects at a distance ... as if ... our own subjectivity that is viewing them doesn’t exist” (15). This approach is contrasted with “first person learning,” where students are provided opportunities to experience practices such as meditation and adherence to rituals within their own secular contexts. Roth’s complement to “third person learning” is to bring students into a more experiential mode of learning about the *Daode Jing* through a series of breathing exercises based on textual references. This approach is what he calls “reconstructive meditation,” and it represents a “critical first-person” way of understanding some of the passages in the *Daode Jing*. A possible problem is that there are only a small number of passages directly germane to breathing and meditating. Nevertheless, these passages may serve as gateways for deeper understandings of the text, making the practice of “first person learning” possible in reaching the contemplative educational practice Roth encourages. Surely, this is a worthy goal. This essay is one of the best in the volume for bridging the gap between the scholarly and practical.

In her “The Reception of *Laozi*,” Livia Kohn argues that Daoism is primarily a religion, and as such the philosophical dimensions of the *Laozi* are of lower priority than the religious ones. This is the case, according to Kohn, even though the ideas that emerge in the text have some role in our understanding of what constitutes Daoism as a religion. For those who approach all texts, religious or otherwise, with a certain philosophical acuity and interest, this approach may appear a bit narrow. But Kohn convincingly argues her point that the *Daode Jing* had for centuries been used for both meditation and liturgy, ordinations of priests, and advancement of lay followers (137). Whereas what Kohn writes is true, many will still wish to continue reading the text in a more widely construed formulation of what constitutes philosophy; the inherent philosophical richness of the text’s insights into

the natural world and human beings' place within that world are most profound. Of course, all of this philosophical richness has religious dimensions as well, and many philosophers might find themselves in agreement with Kohn. In the origins of Western philosophy, especially stemming from Socrates and Plato, the discipline saw living in the world as primary even when metaphysical speculation was engaged. Even Plato's metaphysical speculations were ultimately anchored and connected to living in the *polis*. Some comparative thinkers often overlook this aspect of Plato in their attempts to set up straw man arguments that advance Asian thinking over the Western variety. It is unlikely Kohn would disagree, since from her perspective, as is the case of most other authors in this collection, it is clear "There is no single *Daode Jing* ... [and] we should realize that it is exactly this multifaceted richness of the text ... that attracts us ..." (142). Her introductory remarks about the textual history of the *Laozi* are an excellent synopsis and will be very useful to readers in situating the text and understanding its evolution and that it "was a text in flux, consisting of miscellaneous sayings in various stages of coherent collation that were changed, rearranged, and reinterpreted many times" (133). Kohn's discussion on the "historical reality surrounding the text's creation" (from 133 onwards) will also be most useful in helping deliver an understanding of the text to students.

Another interesting and strong chapter in the book is Russell Kirkland's ambitious "Hermeneutics and Pedagogy." Kirkland insists on keeping the *Daode Jing* in its historical and cultural context by reminding students that the text was not written for them, but for another people. His pedagogical strategy is "to induce productive shock ... by teaching them these facts and urging them not to colonize the *Daode Jing*." Situating the text in this way, where hermeneutics and pedagogy can come together, is an indisputably effective and fruitful approach. Still, not every university or college professor will have the requisite training to deliver the text in this manner. Clearly, historical context is a significant aspect in understanding any text (as Kohn has also demonstrated), and a measure of preventing colonization, but one would never wish to merely study texts, such as the *Daode Jing*, as historical responses or curiosities originating from some ancient and exotic culture. Kirkland is, of course, aware of this: "In teaching the *Daode Jing*, I challenge students to question cherished beliefs—Confucian, modernist, and post modernist alike" (158). Students will always bring their beliefs, cultural presuppositions, and senses of self forward when they engage any text, especially if there is a fundamental difference between what the texts say and their own religious and cultural moorings. These preconceived notions can be put to good service in the classroom, and ideas lifted from their historical contexts for present day creative philosophizing. Such an approach might even contribute to developing a new and deeper religious understanding. As Kirkland suggests, weeding out "... invalid approaches to the *Daode Jing* and ... work[ing] within the remaining possibilities" (159) will not necessarily be an easy task.

A very helpful chapter for those teaching the *Daode Jing* can be found in the "The *Dao* and the Field" by Robert G. Henricks. Before moving on to his analogy of *Dao* as a field of wild flowers, Henricks briefly explores some of the important images and metaphors *Laozi* uses to depict *dao*. He focuses on the three different but intimately related images or metaphors of *dao*: *dao* as mother, *dao* as womblike or vagina-like, and the maternal nature of *dao* (33-34). With this focus, he provides some relevant passages and references for readers. Henricks picks up his analogy of *dao* through the "model of a *field of wildflowers passing through the seasons*" [his italics] because we can grasp "the nature of *Dao* in its totality [because] we can see it, as it were, prior to, during, and after creation" (35). Winter in the field would reveal a "still, silent void, with nothing for the senses to grasp," and in mid-June

“the most marvelous of transformations” would occur with “ten thousand different forms of life” (35). Henricks goes into some detail about this image of *dao* by explaining that in winter there is no indication of the fecundity of the field’s soil even if we were to dig down into it; all we would find is its stillness, silence, and emptiness in the “one, undifferentiated, homogeneous earth” (36). The cycles present in the field continue and the flowers will be replaced by other flowers. This process goes on indefinitely. Flowers seem to “know” about this ongoing process in which they are involved. Along with *Laozi*, Henricks cautions his readers that this analogy may break down, for “this is precisely what most people do not do. In contrast to flowers in the field, people can and do go against the natural way of things [by turning] their backs on the mother and becom[ing] uprooted” (37). Although this analogy will be a most helpful one to employ in the classroom, the question will still remain: how is one to keep on the way and not “delight in bypaths”? Some suggestions are indeed provided in the essay, but it is the question of death that provides the biggest challenge to the analogy of the field. In explaining “death as just a stage in the [on-going process of life and material change]” (43), Henricks realizes the analogy’s lack of satisfactoriness as far as giving the possibility of some physical immortality. He offers, instead, the interpretation of *dao* as a “storehouse of matter and vitality ... [where we] ... as matter and energy ... are constantly recycled, reemerging in new forms of life, forms other than human...” (43).

Another, somewhat less convincing, suggestion arising from the death in the field of wildflowers analogy is that immortality can be addressed by some kind of theory of the transmigration of souls. Henricks admits that the transmigration theory was not used by Daoists, but rather to convert Daoists to Buddhism; this is, however, another matter. In any event, this seems to be the least convincing part of the analogy’s application, and it is here that a philosophical explanation, and not a religious one, might serve us better. Surely immortality was a topic of interest for Daoist practitioners, but what is meant by immortality in the tradition is a complex matter. The idea expressed at the chapter’s end that “death is final, and that the best one can hope for is a long life of health, natural growth, and a natural end” hints at a resolution (44).

Norman J. Girardot and Michael LaFargue both offer some enjoyable reads in their contributions. Girardot, in his thoughtful and entertaining “My Way: *Teaching the Daode Jing*,” takes up the popular cultural expressions of *dao* and their tendencies to be “*Dao-Lite*” (107). This somewhat autobiographical account of teaching Daoism over the years includes interesting, insightful, and amusing anecdotes about politics, the counterculture, and economics (108). For those new to teaching the *Daode Jing* it is inevitable that this “New Age Daoism,” which is criticized by Girardot, will arise in students’ minds and require correction. Girardot’s essay, as well as Berling’s, Foy’s, and Thompson’s, will help in this regard. Michael LaFargue’s “Hermeneutics and Pedagogy: Gimme That Old-Time Historicism” is given the notable position of having the last word, and with reason. The gulf between contemporary America and ancient China is taken up with the question of audience, that is, what the *Daode Jing* meant to its intended original audience and what it can mean to contemporary readers.

Following the lead of work done in biblical hermeneutics, LaFargue argues that understanding a text in its otherness is an appropriate place from which to begin an encounter with the *Daode Jing*. In this way readers empower themselves to challenge the message that texts such as the *Daode Jing* have to offer. In the essay’s section titled “Method in Reading,” strategies are offered that teach students how to become competent readers. These strategies include assigning topical glossary essays that accompany his own translation of the *Daode Jing* and the proverb-like aphorisms found in the text that include hints on how to detect

the hidden textual polemics. For example, what does *ren* (often translated as benevolence) really mean (is it a “code word for Confucianism” as LaFargue suggests?) when it is being used in the *Daode Jing*? Another suggested strategy to teach students to become more competent readers is to help them develop a contextual understanding of aphorisms that avoid literal interpretations (175-176) that occlude understanding. Readers will find this section very helpful. Along with other authors in this volume, LaFargue points out the political dimensions of the *Daode Jing* and how the text is about rulership, which is likened to a branch; the *Daode Jing* proposes that rulers should demonstrate deference to the branch’s root, that is, to *dao*. Other sections of this essay include “Mysticism, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Cosmology” and “Meditation.” The last section concludes with a discussion on self-cultivation and the cultivated self’s relation to society. It is here LaFargue rescues Laoists (or Daoists) from the misinterpretation that they are opposed to society and fail at being good members within the societal context. In fact, according to LaFargue, the “Laoists were interested in making society a better place for the masses of the people outside ruling circles” by infusing “social leadership with Laoist values, both by elevating good Laoists to influential middle-level administrative positions, and by acting as counselors to higher level princes and kings” (189).

Some of these themes are also found in Eva Wong’s “The *Daode Jing* in Practice” and Gary D. DeAngelis’ “Mysticism in the *Daode Jing*.” In the latter essay, DeAngelis offers a fairly standard definition of mysticism as a direct experience of union or oneness that is perceived as being ultimately real. This reality is often seen as “transcendent, the sacred, the holy, the divine” (64). This idea of transcendence is taken issue with in David L. Hall’s “The *Daode Jing* and Comparative Philosophy” (49), in which Hall argues against this vertical dimension of interpreting (or translating) the *Daode Jing* by asserting that it has been responsible for wrong thinking about *dao* (and Daoism) in metaphysical terms, which for a philosopher may mean something different from the way religious thinkers use the term. Hall counter-poses the move to the transcendent by discussing the *wu* forms of Daoism: *wuwei* (nonassertive action), *wuzhi* (knowing without principles), and *wuyu* (objectless desire). For DeAngelis, seeing and teaching the *Daode Jing* as a mystical text provides him the opportunity to discuss and address more epistemological issues with his students, but it is not exactly clear why this text would represent a better way of raising these same issues as compared to other mystical texts. Nevertheless, the *Laozi* can certainly accomplish what DeAngelis is suggesting. Moreover, DeAngelis’ essay will be of good use to readers because of its focus on teaching the *Daode Jing*.

Another essay beneficial to readers for similar reasons will be Eva Wong’s “The *Daode Jing* in Practice,” which offers a more practical way of reaching the experience DeAngelis and others write about. Wong reminds readers that the texts of Daoism are not merely intellectual exercises or inquiries into the nature of things, but are guidelines for practice (78). Engaging in practice and accepting Daoism as a practice is “to learn to accept the natural course of things,” writes Wong, reminding readers that the value of a text lies in its use (88).

All of the authors of *Teaching the Daode Jing* use this timeless text in their own ways and, in the spirit of the text, provide a number of means to walk the way. The book’s fine introduction by Hans-Georg Moeller skillfully pulls together the book’s diverse voices into a coherent singularity. One conclusion to be derived from this collection of essays is that all of its authors, despite their different approaches, share a real passion for this magnificent text. Teaching faculty at all levels, whether seasoned sinologists or newcomers to the *Daode Jing*, will benefit by being shown the many paths of *dao* through *Teaching the Daode Jing*. The book’s target audience will especially benefit from this volume. *Teaching the Daode Jing* is a

useful resource book replete with insights throughout for understanding and teaching the Old Master's text.

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NOTES

1. A far briefer version of this review appeared in *Education About Asia Online*, Volume 17, Number 1 Spring 2012.

Introduction to Special Section

INTRODUCTION

NETWORKS AND IDENTITIES AS REVEALED BY JOURNEYS IN SOUTH ASIA AND THE HIMALAYAS

Aaron Fine, Truman State University, with contributions from the authors in this guest-edited section: Chaya Chandrasekhar, Janice Glowski, and Ihor Pidhainy.

This guest-edited section of *ASIANetwork Exchange* focuses on cultural networks in South Asia and the Himalayas during various periods from the late 19th century to the present. The issue is multi-disciplinary in outlook, including history, art history, the visual arts, and religion. Titled *Networks and Identities as Revealed by Journeys in South Asia and the Himalayas*, the section also broadly addresses themes of global migration, diaspora, exile, and colonization. Each of the four articles features a traveler whose cultural identity is every bit at stake as he explores and creates new cultural connections through his travel. This introduction provides a brief commentary on the articles, intending to help readers discover the various kinds of networks, and their effects, that may be found between individuals and the identities formed at their intersection. Additionally, the introduction serves as a reflection on how educators might bring the topics addressed in the articles into the undergraduate liberal arts classroom.

ARTICLES IN THIS SECTION

In “Tibet through the Eyes of a Buryat: Gombojab Tsybikov and his Tibetan Relations,” Ihor Pidhainy offers an historical examination of the travel writings of Gombojab Tsybikov (1873-1930), an ethnic Buryat from Russia. Tsybikov lived and studied in Tibet from 1899-1902 as part of a scholarly expedition sponsored by the Russian Geographical Society. The information that Tsybikov gathered about Tibet, and the photographs he made there, served to introduce Tibet to the world. Pidhainy’s study explores the circumstances of Tsybikov’s expedition and positions it within the broader context of religion, nation, international politics, and modernity. By examining the travel writings of Tsybikov, Pidhainy expands our understanding of cross-cultural interactions in the early 20th century. He argues that as a man between Asia and Europe, Tsybikov was an ideal candidate for the task of documenting Tibet, and, as a subject, is ideal for the study of transformation and complexity of identity in the modern world.

While there is a good body of scholarship on Sino-Tibetan connections, examinations of Buryat perspectives of Tibetan Buddhism remain limited. The article, which includes translations from Russian texts by the author, sheds light on an important individual little known to English-language readers. Additionally, Pidhainy’s study provides insights into the use of the photographic travel narrative in colonial and post-colonial contexts. This topic overlaps with Chaya Chandrasekhar’s article, which discusses an example of travel photography in post-Independence India.

Chandrasekhar’s “Along the Grand Trunk Road: The Photography of Raghubir Singh” provides an art historical perspective on Singh’s photographs of the Grand Trunk Road,

a major highway that extends across north India and Pakistan. For millennia, this thoroughfare has served as the gateway to the subcontinent and is thereby characterized by tremendous diversity and tolerance of differences. Between 1988 and 1991, Raghubir Singh (1942-1999), one of India's eminent documentary photographers, traveled and photographed the Indian section of the Road. Chandrasekhar examines how Singh carefully selects and arranges the photographs of the Grand Trunk Road in his publication in order to highlight the heterogeneity and acceptance of differences that mark the highway. By composing and organizing his photographs in a specific way, Chandrasekhar argues, Singh provided a critical visual commentary on the divisive politics in India at the time. The 1980s and early nineties in India witnessed the rise of Hindu nationalism, when many of its political arms attempted to erase the subcontinent's heterogeneous past in order to present India as a monolithic Hindu nation. Chandrasekhar's visual analysis of Singh's photographs demonstrates how photographers, along with painters, sculptors, and other artists of post-independence India contribute to the construction of national identity.

Photography has only recently become acceptable as a form of contemporary Indian art worthy of critical attention. As such, Chandrasekhar's study expands boundaries both in terms of its theme and the sources it employs. Aaron Fine's essay similarly examines a body of material that has traditionally escaped the attention of academic art and art history. The themes of identity and partisan politics continue in Fine's article.

In "No One Even Has Eyes," Fine employs creative non-fiction and his own coloring book-plate illustrations to explore the rapidly expanding digitalization of Indian visual space. In recounting his journey to Mumbai, India, he considers the expansion of political networks and the destruction of creative ones, even as this change lays bare his own (1971 – present) status as outsider, post-colonizer, and practitioner of pre-digital visual art. This investigation underscores how technological change, while advancing cultural connectivity, could simultaneously result in the loss of individual creative identity. Fine's study addresses significant lacunae by bringing to the foreground an art form that has dominated the political visual landscape of India since independence, but which scholarship has tended to disregard as mass-produced propaganda. Examining the digitalization of political posters, Fine's work calls attention to the drastic shifts taking place for the art form and its marginalized artists. Like Fine's work, Janice Glowski's article also explores dramatic change expressed through art, discussing the relationship between dislocation and cultural networks, and thus rounding out this guest-edited section.

Glowski's "The Great Stūpa of Dharmakaya: Visual Expressions of a Tibetan Teacher's Path and Lineage in the Diaspora" combines art historical analysis and religious studies approaches to analyze The Great Stūpa of Dharmakaya in Red Feather Lakes, Colorado. This monument, dedicated to the Tibetan teacher Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche (1940-1987), reveals formal and iconographic elements that express the teacher's Buddhist lineage and practice path. The essay examines issues of religious continuity within the context of displacement, as well as the Tibetan diaspora in the United States. In the diaspora's ever-expanding networks, writes Glowski, the monument's visual elements communicate connections with tradition and provide a ground for emerging religio-cultural spaces.

Glowski's essay demonstrates the relevance of applying established art historical methods of investigation to new contexts, like the Tibetan diaspora. Within the purview of Asian art history, architectural iconographic investigations are typically reserved for the study of traditional temples and other monuments. Glowski applies this art historical method to analyze a Buddhist *stūpa* in Colorado's Rocky Mountains. Moreover, Tibetan diasporic studies in general have tended to remain within the disciplines of religion and sociology.

Glowski opens up the field to include art historical investigation.

All of the articles in this guest-edited section explore the social and physical networks that form identities in the Himalayan and South Asian regions, and how they connect to the wider world. Numerous potential connections can be made between them. By reading across the essays, students may find that Tsybikov's narrative of a journey into Tibet has some bearing on the challenges faced by Trungpa Rinpoche during his exodus from the same country fifty-eight years later. The articles also shed light on the oft-joined traditions of the photo essay and the written travel narrative. Pidhainy's contribution examines how Tsybikov employed these documentary forms for scholarly purposes. Chandrasekhar's work also picks up this thread, making note that Singh's documentation of the Grand Trunk Road is a type of re-appropriation of imperial photographic routes, even as it presents an alternative view of India guided by a more creative, rather than documentary, methodology. In the case of Fine's essay, the reader will not find a *study* of a travel narrative, but rather a personal travel account. Fine's images similarly derive from photography but have had the color removed from them. These whitewashed images may evoke the absence of aesthetic richness that is an increasing hallmark of a modernizing Mumbai. The reader is invited to imaginatively fill these colors back in and to share and compare their results with other scholars.

As this section's title suggests, the four articles are especially concerned with the concept of networks—structures that bind individuals together. The authors each place emphasis on various forms of social infrastructure that enable networks, while also attending to the concrete role that infrastructure plays. Thus, the Tibetan diaspora establishes new networks of cultural understanding at the same time that it spreads Buddhist practice into the United States. The Grand Trunk Road creates a vital artery for the commerce of both goods and ideas in pluralist India. Any discussion of networks enables critical examination of the erosion, or the severing, of previous kinds of connections between individuals. The sudden popularity of digitally produced billboards in Mumbai, along with the establishment of Internet connectivity even in remote villages, erases the market for hand-painted billboards, causing the evaporation of a whole range of creative traditions seemingly overnight. Perhaps more dramatically, new barriers emerge that undermine networks, as new borders get drawn across previously traversable spaces like the Grand Trunk Road, or as a mountain nation seals itself off from influences newly defined as “outside.”

REFLECTIONS ON PEDAGOGY

The articles in this guest-edited section each engage areas of inquiry that have previously tended to draw little scholarly attention. Therefore, this special section offers new content for consideration by specialists in the respective fields of study. Simultaneously, the essays present material that could potentially be used by teachers and students in the liberal arts undergraduate classroom. Some educators might limit their inquiry to an essay's topic, integrating the subject directly into a syllabus. Others may explore some of the broader, overarching themes that the articles share, like modernization, colonization, and globalization. Still others may wish to explore with their students the implied challenges to disciplinary categories, as well as the opportunities for practicing critical thinking that the articles present.

Pidhainy's article may lend itself to discussions in the classroom that pertain to identity and its representation, politics of the day, religion, and questions pertaining to the interplay between technology, modernity, and a shrinking world. Gombozhav Tsybikov was a complex figure. He was a Buryat and a Buddhist, who participated in the mapping of Tibetan

Buddhist culture in the Russian language for the Russian Imperial Geographical Society. Pidhainy's article, used in conjunction with Anya Bernstein's article,¹ would give students two fairly different approaches to the question of Buryat identity and the role that Buryats played in the Russian empire. The idea and application of "Orientalism" can further be explored in conjunction with one or more articles from *Kritika* (Fall, 2010).²

Pidhainy's article could also serve as a gateway into a discussion of Central Asian politics, in particular the contest between Russia and Great Britain over the region. It can be used alongside Peter Hopkirk's *Trespassers on the Roof of the World*³ or *The Great Game*.⁴ These highly readable and accessible studies of the Central Asian contest may be used to encourage students to consider Tsybikov through the prism of these popular works. Students can reflect on whether or not Tsybikov was part of an imperial agenda, working on behalf of the Russian government to expand its place and bring (eventually) another nation under heel.

Teachers and students of Tibetan history, religion, and culture could use the article to explore the role of the scholar in the examination of "foreign," "minority," or "indigenous" cultures. Or, they could study the means by which technology was central to bringing Tibetan Buddhism to the world. Tsybikov was an important and early scholar of Tibet. His work was thorough in its evaluation of religious institutions and customs of the people, and his writings deserve more attention. Although Tsybikov's own full study of Tibet took almost twenty years to appear, his shorter works and photographs spread quickly throughout the world by means of popular journals. The most famous of these journals was *National Geographic*, which was itself transformed by the inclusion of Tsybikov's photographs into a magazine that came to be identified by its photographic essays. The photographs themselves are accessible online (at the University of Wisconsin), and thus available for developing assignments and class projects. Instructors could also use the articles from *National Geographic* concerning Tibet (see Pidhainy's bibliography for reference to Joseph Rock's later articles) to have students explore the changing and deepening views of the "Roof of the World" and Tibetans in popular American culture.

Chandrasekhar's article on the work of the photographer Raghubir Singh allows teachers to bring into the visual studies classroom an area of Indian art that has received little attention.⁵ Chandrasekhar's art historical method of analysis takes Singh's broader creative process into account, and particularly emphasizes the role that selection and presentation play in photographic practices. The article, therefore, could be used in the classroom to allow students to reflect on how photography as a medium might differ from other art practices, like painting or drawing, for example. Chandrasekhar's article could be read in conjunction with Terry Barrett's highly accessible discussion about photography and other mediums in his book *Interpreting Art*.⁶ Barrett summarizes how photography differs from other art mediums in terms of instantaneity, credibility, and selectivity. Photographs differ from paintings, for example, because in most cases they are made in a short instant of time. This allows the photographer to click the shutter and produce several images with relative rapidity, while a painter requires far more time to produce her art. Painters look at their work, add paint to their canvases where needed, paint over sections, and carefully construct their pictures. Photographers, on the other hand, as Barrett notes, capture instants, and at the moment of exposure, when most cameras block the view, may in some ways not actually see what they photograph. Barrett notes that people also afford credibility to photographs in different ways than they do for a painting or drawing. While a painter or illustrator may entirely imagine a picture and depict a scene that never existed, a photographer has to have the object that is being photographed in front of the camera to make the image. Regard-

less of how the photograph may be manipulated or altered, the object has to have existed. Additionally, selectivity sets photographs apart from other mediums of art. Painting is an additive process, in which a painter applies pigments to a blank surface to create a picture. By contrast, photography is subtractive. A photographer makes choices regarding what to eliminate from all that is visible through the viewfinder to make an image. Furthermore, a photographer's creative process involves not only making photographs, but also the selection for reception: How many photographs of a particular subject did the photographer make? Why was the one chosen for viewing? How is it presented? Does its presentation impact interpretation?

Chandrasekhar's examination of Singh's photographs shows that he worked within the accepted mode of documentary street photography. His photographs, like those of Tsybikov, appeared in illustrated magazines such as the *National Geographic* and *The New Yorker*. However, with the selections that Singh made for inclusion in the publication *The Grand Trunk Road* and his careful arrangement of the photographs within the book, Chandrasekhar shows us how Singh developed a visual narrative, which works as a critique of the political realities of India during the time of his travels. Instructors, therefore, could use both Pidhainy and Chandrasekhar's essays to discuss how photography has served as an instrument of imperial expansion, colonization, and re-appropriation of national identity. Many of these topics could also be addressed through Aaron Fine's contribution to this guest-edited section.

Fine's essay is first of all a creative work, distinct from the other articles in this volume in form and methodological basis. For some students, this example of creative nonfiction will be novel and may call for some contextualization; this is a genre in which a true story is told with all the techniques of craft employed by a novelist. The illustrations tend to underscore this novelty. For the scholar of South Asian studies, the rewards of working with such material is essentially empathetic—allowing audiences to experience another life and culture in an especially forceful way. The chief drawback for the educator is the bias and creative license that are inherent in the arts.

Fine's strong, directed approach is reflected in the way that the first person point of view is used throughout the narrative. By touching upon the narrator's uncertainty, dependency, and possible unreliability, the story provides a kind of corrective to the assumption that audiences are ever wholly objective. Throughout the tale that unfolds, subjects refuse to cooperate by providing boilerplate answers of dubious merit, or by sending their sons to be interviewed in their place. Along the way, the narrator expresses doubt about the possibility of any certainty over the matters he explores. In emphasizing the first-person point of view and its perils, the project offers a glimpse at what can happen when the author situates himself or herself within the history they study.

An aspect of Fine's essay that coincides with the other works in this volume is the way that it suggests territories of expansion for South Asian studies. Fledgling art historians often think of their field as the study of the set of great artworks that make up the canon. The content of Fine's essay dwells upon a network of issues that connect to the production of political party signs in Mumbai. The narrator presumes to travel to India to study the hand-painted banners and murals he's seen on previous visits. His expectation is to learn more about the world's largest democratic system, and to consider the ways that literacy and illiteracy might interact with more graphic forms of visual communication. But instead he encounters a landscape transformed by the proliferation of digitally produced banners. The study of visual culture, both as a trend outside of art history and a growing practice within it, proposes that non-canonical aspects of the visual environment are as significant, or

potentially more significant, in terms of what they reveal about a culture. Scholars unfamiliar with, or unprepared for, the writings of John Berger or Walter Benjamin, for example, may find this exploration within their area of study especially refreshing and pertinent.⁷ The articles on the scholarly website Tasveer Ghar (<http://www.tasveerghar.net/>) are particularly useful for those whose interest is piqued.⁸

Put simply, Fine's essay addresses the complications of modernization and globalization. The centralized activities of political operatives replace the craftsman's labor. The promise of digital connections is compromised by the loss of a rich visual tradition and numerous jobs. The rush to modernize creates a visual culture of figurative and literal garbage. This last element raises the question of how the city's inhabitants might best relate to their environment, and whether switching from a cyclical use of resources to one that generates landfill is truly a step forward for the urban system. Finally, it becomes an open question whether the visual environment in Mumbai has ever been a matter of individual creative expression, rather than an expression of power by political parties and institutions who coerce acceptance from the general population. Issues brought to the fore by Fine's article, such as the environment, resources, and waste, have global relevance and could be brought into discussions beyond the art history or visual arts classroom. Janice Glowski's article provides another example of globalization, in this case as it pertains to the Tibetan diaspora.

Glowski's study of the Great Stūpa of Dharmakaya in Colorado addresses the dispersion of Tibetan Buddhist art and architecture, which resulted from the Chinese invasion of Tibet in the late 1950s. This diffusion transformed many aspects of the western world's visual environments. Today, Tibetan Buddhist imagery is commonly found in curio shops, on tee shirts, and in advertisements; and Tibetan Buddhist architectural forms, like *stūpas*, increasingly populate American landscapes. The rise in students' exposure to Tibetan Buddhist thought and visual forms, therefore, has heightened the need to bring Tibetan studies more centrally into the undergraduate art history and religion classrooms. This endeavor, however, can create challenges, as Tibet inherited India's most fully developed Buddhist intellectual and artistic traditions (8th – 12th centuries) primarily from eastern India and the Kashmir region. Buddhist scholar Donald Lopez summarizes this historical situation in the following words:

Tibet received and made accurate translations of the sutras that were so important in China, Korea, and Japan. But it also received and made accurate translations of the treatises on Buddhist logic and philosophy, including the major works of the Madhyamaka and Yogacāra schools as well as the late Yogacāra and Madhyamaka synthesis, largely unknown in East Asia. It received and made accurate translations of the extensive literature on the Buddha nature, the *tathāgatagarbha*, as well as important commentaries on the *Perfection of Wisdom* sutras, setting forth in great detail the structure of the bodhisattva's path to Buddhahood, commentaries that have little influence in China. And Tibet received the transmission of the tantras, far more than were translated into Chinese, as well as the teachings of the great adepts of medieval India, the *mahāsiddhas*.⁹

The art and visual culture that intertwined with these textual traditions was equally rich. Further complicating the situation, the received Indian Buddhist traditions changed and adapted to their new social, religious, and political environments in Tibet, creating some of the most complex visual imagery and socio-religious systems in the Buddhist world.

Tibetan Buddhism's resulting esoteric methodologies and iconographies are not easily incorporated into Buddhist religion or art survey courses. The philosophical and artistic

background necessary to grasp the tradition and decipher its art could easily overwhelm an undergraduate course. Conversely, introducing Tibetan Buddhism through broad generalities risks promoting misunderstanding rather than clarity. The tradition's vibrant paintings, for example, often depict dynamic, wrathful meditation figures that are easily exoticized or otherwise misinterpreted when viewed through the lens of Abrahamic sensibilities. In this complex milieu, Glowski's article provides pedagogical support for teaching Tibetan Buddhism in the undergraduate classroom. Her study proposes that the concepts of lineage and the practitioner's progressive path of meditation are two of Tibetan Buddhism's essential and distinguishing characteristics, and, therefore, are worthy of pedagogical emphasis. She offers a contextual, iconographic case study of an early Tibetan diasporic *stūpa* that provides a self-contained, instructive tool for teaching these principals. *The Great Stūpa* maintains symbolic, aesthetic, and functional connections to Tibetan Buddhist art and practice, as they existed in Tibet prior to the Chinese invasion. Further, since the monument is located at the Shambhala Mountain Center, a public retreat center in the Colorado Rockies, it is also more accessible for study than architecture in Tibet itself.

Glowski's article also brings Shambhala to the academic fore. This international community of meditation practitioners, founded by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, is most fully formed in the United States, Canada, and Europe. The community's meditation instruction and teachings include both traditional Tibetan Buddhist modalities and newer methods that relate to principles of warriorship (interpreted as fearless and gentle social engagement) and the creation of an enlightened society. Shambhala's simultaneous continuity with Tibetan Buddhism's past as well as a contemporary vision that addresses new and emerging social and cultural spaces parallels the teacher's life—a young monk who came of age in traditional Buddhist Tibet and yet immersed himself in western culture. Trungpa Rinpoche attended Oxford University in England, left his monastic life, married a young English woman, and was one of the first Tibetans to teach the *buddhadharma* and publish *Dharma* texts in the English language. Incorporation of this biography and its impacts could inform classroom discussions that address historical and contemporary religio-cultural shifts resulting from colonization and dislocation. Glowski's tandem use of visual forms and religious biography to analyze sacred architecture and its implications also provides educators with an example of how interdisciplinary analyses can be used to approach diasporic studies.

IN CONCLUSION

Used collectively in the classroom, the articles in this multi-disciplinary issue reveal cultural networks and identities as they are challenged, dismantled, and created. They provide new sources for the study of these subjects, both by identifying new materials and integrating materials that have been marginalized in disciplinary or pedagogical practice. The essays, when taken as a whole, may also enable classroom discussion around the attributes and limitations of each of the liberal arts disciplines represented. Teachers, thus, can enable a broader discussion of the liberal arts as a form of education. Both individually and when compared, the essays frustrate disciplinary over-simplification. Each essay features an individual whose identity is slippery in terms of its constituent elements, as well as in his/her motives for and consequences of his/her actions. This guest-edited section aims to present the subtle and challenging nuances of identity and networks in a manner that is accessible, while maintaining the rigor of critical thought to which the liberal arts is dedicated.

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NOTES

1. Bernstein, Anya. 2009. "Pilgrims, Fieldworkers, and Secret Agents: Buryat Buddhologists and the History of an Eurasian Imaginary" in *Inner Asia*, 11(1): 23-45.
2. See Khalid, Adeeb. 2000. "Russian History and the Debate over Orientalism" in *Kritika*. 1(4): 691-699; Knight, Nathaniel. 2000. "On Russian Orientalism: A Response to Adeeb Khalid" in *Kritika*. 1(4): 701-715; and Todorova, Maria. 2000. "Does Russian Orientalism Have a Russian Soul? A Contribution to the Debate between Nathaniel Knight and Adeeb Khalid" in *Kritika*. 1(4): 717-727.
3. Hopkirk, Peter. 1982. *Trepassers on the Roof of the World: The Race for Lhasa*. New York: L. Murray.
4. Hopkirk, Peter. 1992. *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*. New York: Kondasha. Kawaguchi, Ekai. 1909. *Three Years in Tibet*. Madras: Theosophical Office.
5. Sunil Gupta, photographer and curator of *Click*, a 2008 exhibition of contemporary Indian photography, notes the general lack of attention paid to the medium until about a decade ago. See Sunil Gupta, "Click: Reframing Indian Photography as Art" in Sunil Gupta, Radhika Singh, *Click: Contemporary Photography in India* (New Delhi, India: Vadehra Art Gallery, 2008) p. 1. Studies that paid attention to photography in India typically focused on the photographers of the colonial period and their work. As a result, art historical analyses of post-independence Indian photography, as art historian Rebecca Brown notes, are limited. Brown explains how several artists now known for their painting and printmaking also practiced inventive photography throughout their artistic careers. However, these artists rarely exhibited their photographs, and most of their collections remain undocumented. See Rebecca M. Brown, *Art for a Modern India, 1947-1980* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009) n. 7, p. 169. Within such an environment, artists like Raghubir Singh pursued documentary practices as an avenue for making and publishing their creative photographic work.
6. Terry Barrett, *Interpreting Art: Reflecting, Wondering, and Responding* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003) pp. 139-161.
7. Two seminal works in the study of visual culture that address the cultural nature of vision as well as objects that are seen are Walter Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" in Hannah Arendt ed., *Illuminations, Essays and Reflections* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968) and John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin, 1972).
8. <http://www.tasveerghar.net/> *Tasveer Ghar: Digital Archive of South Asian Popular Visual Culture*. University of Michigan, Heidelberg University, and Duke University, n.d. Web. 24 Mar. 2013.
9. For a brief introduction to Tibetan Buddhism's historical place among Buddhist traditions in Asia see Donald S. Lopez, Jr., "Introduction: The Buddhism of Milarepa" in *The Life of Milarepa* by Tsangnyön Heruka, Andrew Quintman, trans. (New York: Penguin Group, 2010) pp. ix-xviii.

Tibet through the Eyes of a Buryat: Gombojab Tsybikov and his Tibetan relations

Ihor Pidhainy

Abstract: Gombojab Tsybikov (1873-1930), an ethnic Buryat from Russia, was a young scholar of oriental studies when he embarked on a scholarly expedition to Tibet. Under the sponsorship of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, Tsybikov spent over a year in Lhasa (1900-1902), gathering materials and taking photographs of the city and its environs, eventually introducing Tibet both academically and visually to the outside world. This paper examines the context of Tsybikov's trip within the larger issues of scholarship, international politics, and modernization. In addition, it argues that Tsybikov was an example of a man caught between identities – an ethnic Buryat raised as a Buddhist, and a Russian citizen educated and patronized by that nation. He was, in a sense, the epitome of modern man.

Keywords Tsybikov; Tibet; travel; Buryat; Russia; Buddhism; identity

Gombojab Tsybikov's (1873-1930) life and writings deal with the complex weavings of identity encountered in the modern period.¹ His faith and nationality positioned him as an "Asian", while his education and employment within the Russian imperial framework marked him as "European." His historical significance lies in his scholarly account of his trip to Tibet. This paper examines Tsybikov's relationship to Tibet, particularly in the period between 1899 and 1906, and considers how his position as an actor within the contexts of empire, nation, and religious community made him an example of the new modern man.²

THE BURYATS

The Buryats were a Mongolian people whose interactions with Russians date back to the 17th century (Forsyth 1992, 84-86). Russians encountered Eastern Buryats in the 1650s, having reached the further extensions of the Qing (Manchu) outward expansion. Divided into Eastern and Western branches, the Buryats first encountered Russians when her imperial interests initiated their march eastward. Some thirty years of low-level warfare (1620s-1650s) preceded the incorporation of the Buryats into the Russian empire (Forsyth 1992, 89). The Treaty of Kiakhta (1727), between Russia and the Qing dynasty, fixed international borders and led to a mixing of Buryats with Mongols in both regions (Forsyth 1992, 99).

Buryats began to convert to Buddhism in the 17th century. By the 18th century, Eastern Buryats were more inclined to lamaist Buddhism, while Shamanism still played a major role among Western Buryats. In the 19th century, Buryats maintained an identity between that of the Mongols and of the Russians. While culturally they hewed closer to the Mongols, politically they were citizens of the Russian empire; some Buryats were even Cossacks under Russian rule (Rupen 1964, 10-11; Forsyth 1992, 169). Under the Russians, Buryat religious affiliations ranged from shamanism and Buddhism to Orthodox Christianity. Tibetan religious leaders were also admired keenly.

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In the 19th century, Buryats faced uneven prospects within the Russian Empire, including attempts at Russification during the reigns of the latter three tsars.³ Few Buryats attended public schools, and even fewer teachers were Buryats themselves. Instruction in the schools was in Russian, while Orthodox Christianity played an important part in the curriculum. Support for teaching the Buryat language was lacking, and largely absent altogether in non-public schools.⁴ The Russian government also supported an increasingly aggressive policy towards spreading Orthodox Christianity among the Buryats (in keeping with national policy). The Russian Empire, for example, attempted to limit the use of written Buryat and Mongolian to Buddhist educational facilities (datsan). The distribution of texts printed in these languages was also suppressed, particularly in the Western Buryat territory (Montgomery 2005, 108). Finally, the Russian government enacted land and administrative laws between 1897-1907 that were aimed at curtailing the power of Buryats, and in particular their elite administrators (Yaroshevski 1997, 70-73). Thus, the Russian state challenged Buryat identity throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries in a variety of ways.

TSYBIKOV'S LIFE

Tsybikov was born on the Aga steppe in 1873.⁵ His father, Tsebek Montuev, taught him Mongolian at home, and then, when an opportunity arose, enrolled him in a public school. Afterward, Tsybikov went to a modern gymnasium (high school) in Chita, where he became the first Buryat to graduate in 1893. All classes at the school were taught in Russian, and Tsybikov received his education completely in this language. He went on to study oriental languages at the University of Saint Petersburg. He was patronized by a fellow Buryat, Piotr Badmaev, who himself had become the most famous and well-connected Buryat in St. Petersburg.⁶ Badmaev, who had come to St. Petersburg a generation earlier and studied at the same faculty, had become wealthy through the Tibetan medicine practice undertaken by him and his brothers. Badmaev had converted to Orthodox Christianity, with the Crown Prince, later Tsar Alexander III, as his Godfather. Badmaev had famously penned a memorandum encouraging the "White Tsar" to further Russian interests and control over China and Central Asia (LaRuelle 2008). Badmaev's support of his fellow Buryats thus had national implications. Tsybikov's refusal to convert to Christianity cost him Badmaev's support. Nevertheless, after finishing his degree, the Russian Geographical Society had few qualms about giving Tsybikov support for his scholarly journey to Tibet, where he would engage with the religion and customs of the Tibetans.

Tsybikov travelled to Tibet in 1899 and remained there until 1902. He wrote two works about this journey: a report for the Russian Geographical Society, which was published in 1903, "On Central Tibet," and subsequently translated into English and published in the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institute,⁷ and the monograph, *A Buddhist Pilgrim to the Holy Places of Tibet: from Diaries kept from 1899 to 1902*.⁸ This latter work was not published until 1919, and due to the circumstances of the day, was overlooked almost as soon as it was available. It was not until the 1950s that interest in Tsybikov's work resurfaced in the Soviet Union, and not until the 1970s that it drew attention in Europe and America.⁹

After returning from Tibet, Tsybikov was appointed at the recently opened Vladivostok Oriental Institute, teaching Tibetan and Mongolian. In 1917, he returned to Transbaikalia, and began teaching Buryat in Chita and Aga until 1922. In the 1920s he became involved in local politics, serving as the Learned Secretary to the Buryat Academic Committee from 1924-1928. Tsybikov continued to write throughout his life. Besides the important work under discussion in this article, he also wrote scholarly, pedagogical, and personal works.

Many of these writings have been gathered into a two-volume collection of articles and travelogues.¹⁰ Tsybikov worked at Irkutsk University from 1928-1930 until his death.

TSYBIKOV, THE GREAT GAME, AND ORIENTAL STUDIES

Tsybikov's travel and scholarship fit within two grand historical narratives: the role of the individual in the pursuit of exploration and mapping of the world, and the agenda of states and empires in claiming control over distant lands.¹¹ As a political agenda, Tsybikov's project contributed to the Great Game, the competition between Britain and Russia over control for Central Asia in the decades before and after the turn of the 20th century.¹² This mostly diplomatic struggle, which relied upon specialized knowledge of the region that came from figures like Tsybikov, saw its culmination in the years that he was in Tibet and immediately afterward.

One interesting feature of the Great Game is the role of intermediaries like Tsybikov in espionage. For the Russians, the participants were often central Asian Buddhists, among whom Buryats were possible candidates; for the British, the chief agents were Indians. From the British perspective, the most famous Buryat spy was Agvan Dorzhiev (1854-1938). While he did play a role of intermediary between Russia and the Dalai Lama, it seems unlikely that Dorzhiev was actually spying as many British accounts maintain.¹³ Great Britain, on the other hand, did have in place a full-fledged, though somewhat public, spy force, which employed local Indian pundits and notables in surveying and mapping the frontiers of India and the routes into Central Asia, including Tibet. The use of "native" spies dates back to the 1860s, with local British government figures such as Thomas George Montgomerie (1830-1878) writing:

... when I was in Ladakh, I noticed that natives of India passed freely backwards and forwards between Ladakh and Yarkand, in Chinese Turkestan, and it consequently occurred to me that it might be possible to make the exploration by that means. (Meyer & Brysac, 209)

The group of Indians that the British discovered, the Rawats, were familiar with Tibet's language and its routes, and therefore had a fairly free hand in traveling back and forth. Rawat families were thus employed by the British for a number of generations. Meyer and Brysac describe their *modus operandi*:

Disguised as Buddhist pilgrims, they marked the distance with special prayer beads, resembling those carried by Hindus and Buddhists except that they were eight beads short of the pilgrim's normal rosary of 108 beads. The small beads were made of imitation coral, and every tenth bead, made from the seeds of the udras plant, was larger. Every one hundredth pace, the pundit slipped a bead; every large bead represented a thousand paces, or approximately half a mile. As they marched, the pundits chanted Om mani padme hum—"Oh Jewel in the Lotus"—while they turned their prayer wheels, which held, instead of prayers, specially coded notes. (1999, 211)

By employing native groups in this way, the British mapped both the southern Tibetan trade route and Lhasa, as well as surveyed the army by 1866.

Another famous Indian spy working on behalf of the British was Sarat Chandra Das (1849-1917), a Bengali scholar who not only functioned as a real life participant in mapping Tibet, but also in cultivating high Tibetan contacts. He served as the model for Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, also known as "the Babu" and R17, in Rudyard Kipling's novel, *Kim*. Das' role has been well-documented and resulted in a fairly bloody retribution on the part

of the Tibetan government against his Tibetan contacts, including the execution of the Sen-gchen lama of Shigatse.¹⁴ Thus Tsybikov, being a Buryat and a Buddhist, could be seen as a Russian equivalent to the pundits of India working on the British side of the Great Game.¹⁵

In addition to his potential political affiliations, Tsybikov also fits within a larger context of exploration and scholarship. As an ethnographer, his work mapped Tibet and its culture by focusing on its people and their social practices. At the time that Tsybikov conducted his research, Tibet was seen as the last great, unexplored kingdom. Europeans had been fascinated with Tibet since the 14th century. In the 18th century, a number of Englishmen entered Tibet, including Thomas Manning who reached Lhasa in 1811 (Woodcock 1971). Russians had been attempting to enter Tibet for some thirty years before Tsybikov travelled there; others, including both Europeans and Japanese, made attempts throughout the 19th century (Kawaguchi 1909, 397ff). Given this context, it is easy to see why Tsybikov's success in reaching Tibet was such a boon to the Russian organization that had sponsored him.

Tsybikov's journey was complicated by his own complex identity, formed in part by historical circumstances beyond his control. He was a Buryat, but he was also working in Russian academic institutions and supported by a Russian organization in a period in which Russian attitudes and relations to Asia were quite complex, as has been noted.¹⁶ This, in part, was the result of Russia being a large multi-ethnic empire itself. The empire both contained many non-Russians and also partially derived from the history of Muscovy and its centuries-long submission to the Golden Horde. The turn to the West is to be seen from Peter the Great to the Westernizers of the 19th century. However, between the Slavophile movement and the Crimean War (1853-1856), some ethnic Russians became estranged from Western European states, which led to their rejection of a purely Western identity (Tolz 2011, 8). It is little wonder that prominent Russians would identify themselves as Mongols (or Asians), situating themselves somewhere between Europe and Asia.¹⁷

Tsybikov's identity was also complicated by his participation in Russian oriental scholarship.¹⁸ The field of study into which Tsybikov entered was an increasingly welcoming environment for non-Russian minorities, particularly for those Buryats involved in Buddhist studies (Tolz 2011, 119-124). Russian scholars of the orient, particularly Baron Victor Romanovich Rozen (1864-1908), Nikodim Kondakov (1844-1925), and Aleksandr Veselovskii (1838-1906), offered a view of Russia as equally Eastern as it was Western, and argued for the existence of a multi-ethnic, pan-Russian community (Tolz 2011, 34). These scholars "*denied altogether essential differences*" between the traditions of Europe and the 'East' (Tolz 2011, 57); they were anti-orientalists in an era associated with orientalism. Their successors, such as Fedor Shcherbatskoi (1866-1942) and Sergei Federovich Oldenburg (1863-1934), further argued for "a living approach" to the study of Buddhism, which meant incorporating the study of contemporary Buddhist communities and their practitioners' insights into that of the textual tradition, which otherwise dominated the European study of Buddhism in all fields (Tolz 2011, 103). The Buryats came to occupy a privileged position in this new area of research, as many were practicing Buddhists themselves and, much like the Hindu pundits in India, could gain access to the knowledge of Buddhism that might have been impossible for outsiders (including the Tibetan tradition). In addition to Tsybikov, Banzar Baradiin (1878-1937) and Tsyben Zhamtsarano (1880-1937) also emerged as prominent scholars among Buryats trained at Saint Petersburg University (Tolz 2011, 115). Because of their own position within the traditions of Buddhism, Russian scholars showed themselves to be far in advance of their counterparts in Western Europe, who made use of native informants similarly, but seldom allowed or assisted their entry into the scholarly world of which they were a part. Tsybikov thus was involved in a world that was idealistic and promising, and offered

plenty of opportunity in his field of study.¹⁹

As a Buryat, Tsybikov had certain advantages in traveling to Tibet. The Mongols first encountered the Tibetans in the 13th century, and from the 17th century, the Manchus also had ready access to that country. Thus, the Buryats were regular visitors to Tibet. Tsybikov notes this in his essay on his trip, as does the Japanese monk Kawaguchi, who wrote:

The Muscovites seems to conduct their Tibetan policy with consummate dexterity... there was a Mongolian tribe called the Buriats which... passed... under the control of Russia. The astute Muscovites have taken great pains to insinuate themselves into the grateful regard of this tribe... they never attempted to converted Mongolians into believers of the Greek Church... and actually rendered help in promoting interests of the Lamaist faith... this policy of Russia originated from the deep-laid plan of captivating the hearts of the priests... (Kawaguchi, 1909, 495)

Despite the Russians' insistence on their position as Asian, however, the Buryats were treated as Europeans when Tibet closed its doors to the outside world in the late 18th century.²⁰ It was not until the last quarter of the 19th century that Buryats came to Tibet again, this time posing as Khalka Mongols, and gained entrance. Indeed, even before Tsybikov's visit, there had already been a stream of Buryats visiting Tibet beginning in the early 1890s. This stream of Buryats continued beyond the period of Tsybikov's stay.²¹ For other nationals interested in Tibet, entrance proved much more difficult for some time to come. It was only after many fruitless attempts²² at the turn of the century that explorers such as Kawaguchi and Sven Hedlin (Sweden), reached the city of Lhasa. Thus, Tsybikov was privileged in travelling and exploring Tibet because of his nationality.

TSYBIKOV'S "ON CENTRAL TIBET"

The first document to be addressed here is Tsybikov's "On Central Tibet." In it Tsybikov presents on the one hand a picture of life in Tibet, while on the other he returns again and again to how the Buryats (and himself) are treated in Tibet. The author addressed a general meeting of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society on May 7 (20), 1903.²³ His report offered an overview of his trip and research on Tibet, covering topics such as habits and customs, politics, religion, architecture, economics, and the military. A typical entry is as follows:

On July 19, 1900, a caravan of pilgrims, among whose number I rode, after a 22 day trip through the uninhabited Northern Tibetan plateau made camp on the River Sangchu, at the north foot of the Bumtse Pass. This caravan was formed in the Amdo monastery of Kumbum and left there on the 24th of April. It consisted of approximately seventy men, mostly made up of Amdo and Mongol lamas, who were placed in seventeen hunting tents. Two hundred horses pulled the carts of people and luggage, acquired in Amdo. (Tsybikov, 1991. 2:8)

Here we can see that Tsybikov was able to travel openly as a Buryat among other pilgrims, a privilege not available to Western explorers and scholars. However, he was subject to a fee for entry into Tibet, like all Buryats, and unlike their Buddhist cousins from outside of the Russian Empire. As he noted, the Tibetan border guards "were able to force five taels of silver out of us, which momentarily freed us from the category of the suspect, and opened the door to Lhasa" (*Ibid.*, 9). Because of their status within the Russian empire, the Buryats were viewed as suspicious persons by the Tibetans.²⁴ The five taels of silver removed a Buryat from this list, but it must have infuriated Tsybikov, who often reserves a place in his

writings for noting various forms of corruption and petty cheating.

Tsybikov's text reveals his own struggle to represent the place of the Buryats in Tibet. He accurately portrays their status within what was an ethnically diverse, complex region, comprised of people from many nations. There were monks or living gods from Mongolia, artisans from Nepal or Kashmir, and merchants from China. Indeed, the Chinese merchants had intermarried Tibetan women, and their children formed a new category in Tibet.²⁵ The position of the Buryats was characterized in part by some 47 Buryat lamas, who themselves comprised a small contingent of the population.

Before continuing to characterize the place of the Buryats, Tsybikov describes the life of the Tibetans. His discussion highlights aspects that might have been odd, viewed as strange, or downright revolting to Europeans:

Tibetans love to eat meat raw apparently, and in preparing meat it is served raw or undercooked (*Ibid.*, 13).

In family life the Tibetans range between polyandry and polygamy (*Ibid.*, 13).

There is little flowering of industry, human labour is there counted very cheap. For example, for master goods the best weaver for local cloth receives 15 kopeks per day; male or female unskilled workers 4-6 kopeks per day... while a day servant almost never receives a salary, she lives for grain and some help with clothing (*Ibid.*, 14).

Each of these comments leaves the impression of a state that could use a healthy dose of civilization. This argument strikes one as a prelude to an invitation of Russian civilization. And as Tsybikov notes, "the main feature of the character of central Tibet is downtroddeness and toadyism whose cause without a doubt is the economic and administrative-legal conditions of the country" (*Ibid.*, 13). This again leaves one with the impression that Tibet is in need of saving.

When he returns to the topic of Tibet's nefarious inner politics, despite his own Buddhist status and in light of his otherwise positive opinion of the Dalai Lama, Tsybikov does not hesitate to describe it vividly:

Six to seven years ago [the Dalai Lama] got into a battle with his regent, the most prominent of the Tibetan Khutukhtu – the Demo, and came out the victor of this, thanks to which, without a doubt, he avoided the fate of his four predecessors, who each died at early ages as a result of violence. The reason for this being that the regents and representatives of other parties attempted to stay in power longer. The present Dalai Lama blamed the Demo Khutukhtu in the compilation of incantations against his life, confiscated his enormous belongings, and personally put him under strict house arrest in a separate room, where the Demo Khutukhtu was strangled to death on a fine Autumn day in 1900 (*Ibid.*, 22).

The Demo Khutukhtu, an eminent rebirth ranking just behind the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama, was the head of the Tengeling College, and during the 18th and 19th century often served as the regent for the Dalai Lama. It is said that the 13th Dalai Lama escaped a black-magic paper spell by the former regent. This regent, as Tsybikov noted, was subsequently murdered so as to remove him from the political scene. Tsybikov thus exposes a very dark side of political machinations in Tibet, and displays a distinctly political side to the Dalai Lama.

Tsybikov links the political conflicts of the Dalai Lama's inner circle to the aristocracy's domination of life in Tibet:

In general, the hereditary aristocracy rules over matters of Tibet, whether it is the son who follows in the rights [and privileges] of the father, or the reborn one who follows in the rights [and privileges] of his predecessor... the central government of Tibet in all its deliberative character ought to be called aristocratic oligarchy. (*Ibid.*, 23)

Thus the problems faced by Tibet are social, economic, religious, and especially political. Tsybikov's ability to expose and evaluate the political nature of life among Tibet's elites certainly places the society in a critical, realistic light.

From here, Tsybikov returns to the question of the Buryat community and its relationship to both Tibet and Russia. He addresses both their special status, as well as his own:

Buryats of Russian citizenry have from ancient times traveled secretly to Tibet, fearful of the constraints from the side of the Russian administration, and in Tibet entered under the name of Khalkha Mongols from fear of not being allowed in. About 15 years ago the Khalkhas and Buryats belonging to one community in Braibun, for some unknown reason had a falling out and the Khalkhas called the Buryats 'oros', that is Russians. The proceedings went to higher body of officials, where thanks to the skilful management of the matter by the Buryat lamas, it was decided that Buryats although owing allegiance to the Russian Tsar, profess to the Yellow Hat [Geluptka] Religion... (*Ibid.*, 25)

Tsybikov's evaluation of the Buryat community's position vis-à-vis their neighbours cannot help but bring to mind his own precarious position.

For Tsybikov, Buryats inhabited a dual space: they resided within the Russian empire territorially, while also sharing a common faith with the Tibetans. Tsybikov then addresses the five *lan* fine imposed on Buryats. The court in Tibet had overturned those fines, and proposed in their place a five *lan* fine on any of the Khalkhas who called Buryats "oros" (i.e. Russians or foreigners). The ruling appears to have been most agreeable to Tsybikov, given the prominence of the item in his report. Tsybikov concludes his report with a call for continued Russian interest in Tibet, as it would be a benefit to the 500,000 Buryat and Khalkhas citizens within the Russian empire. Tsybikov rejected any Russian economic motivations for such interest and did not address military or geo-political considerations.²⁶

TRANSFORMING THE NATURE OF SEEING TIBET/ MAKING CLAIMS TO THE WORLD

Tsybikov's photographs of Tibet have also had an important influence. Within the context of the scholarly world, the photographs clarified Tibetan culture and society for viewers who had no direct experience of this distant place and people. When these photographs were printed in popular journals, they revolutionized how the world came to be depicted. They also played a part in the Great Game, perhaps having real military consequences. Tsybikov and Ovshe Norzunov, a Kalmyk Buddhist protégé of Dorzhiev, were the first to photograph Tibet (Snelling 1993, 61-71; Andreev 2006, 349), but it was not easy.

Technology had changed drastically during the 19th century. The development of the camera and its accoutrements allowed the accurate capturing of images. As a result of its geography and border policy in regards to foreign travelers, Tibet was one of the few places that had yet to be photographed. Throughout the 19th century, several explorers had

attempted but been unsuccessful in photographing Tibet (Andreev 2006a). Indeed, explorers such as Przhevalskii, Roborovskii, and Kozol among the Russians, and Sarat Chandra Das on behalf of the English, all had brought cameras with them on their attempted visits to Tibet before Tsybikov and Norzunov succeeded in capturing it on film.²⁷

Tsybikov's role in reshaping the modern popular journal was serendipitous, as the driving force appears to have been the Russian Imperial Geographical Society. It is unclear whether the society played any role in the earlier publications in France and England, but in the United States the case is certain.²⁸ The Society sent out 50 packages of photographs from Tsybikov and Norzunov's expeditions to various journal editors in the United States. In August 1903, the New York-based journal, *The Century Illustrated*, published a group of these photos. Later in the same year, the Smithsonian published Tsybikov's article, along with several of his photographs. Finally, *National Geographic* published an eleven-page photo-essay of Tibet in its January 1905 issue.²⁹

The young editor of *National Geographic*, Gilbert Grosvenor (1875-1966), in December of 1904, was in somewhat of a quandary with his upcoming edition. He was short some eleven pages for the January 1905 issue. Having no manuscripts at hand, he opened a large envelope from the Russian Geographical Society and beheld the fantastic photographs of Lhasa and its surroundings.³⁰ Grosvenor decided to run the first of the photo essays that would later make the journal famous.³¹ Grosvenor seems to have made a wise decision; the journal became a wild success, and journalistic methods of representing the world were transformed. *National Geographic* was one of hundreds of journals at the time faced with questions about its future. Subscriptions and sales were limited, so many journals either flopped or were propped up by patrons. Grosvenor's father-in-law, the renowned inventor Alexander Bell, had helped to pay the bills, but now decreasing costs in photographic reproductions also played a big role.³² Within two decades of the publication of these photographs, the *National Geographic Society* had sponsored two of its own trips - to Southwest China and to Yunnan, both led by Joseph Rock (1923-1924, 1927-1930). A variety of photographs, some in black and white but many in color, were reproduced in the pages of *National Geographic*, along with at least 10 articles, between 1922 and 1935 (Bryan 2001, 194). Tibet had by this time become famous enough that James Hilton, an English writer, wrote a send-up of it in his novel *Lost Horizons* (Hawkins 2010, 184-190).

The Great Game might also have played a role in the publication of these photos. The grand push by the Russian Geographical Society might be explained by the society's close relation to the Russian state and its response to Younghusband's (1881-1960) expedition the previous summer.³³ It was perhaps not fortuitous that *National Geographic* was chosen to be the first to publish the photos in the United States. Grosvenor was a very well-connected man about his town, Washington D.C. Grosvenor's cousin, William Howard Taft, was the newly appointed Minister of War (1904-1908), and thus one of the main overseers of American foreign policy. Whether this had a role in the Russian Geographical Society's choice to send the photos to *National Geographic* is unclear, but taking into account the international competition, the foreign expedition, the spies and religious figures - it is not too much of a stretch to imagine that they may have done so. The gain would have been a claim that Tibet was first entered by Russian citizens, and done so in a peaceful manner. This stood in contrast to the British military's bullying of the peaceful kingdom of Tibet.

TSYBIKOV'S A BUDDHIST PILGRIM IN HOLY TIBET - CHAPTER 17

Tsybikov's most famous work is *A Buddhist Pilgrim in Tibet*.³⁴ This book took almost twenty years to put into print because of various political, military, and economic events. It

consists of seventeen chapters, using Tsybikov's travel diary as a frame. Chapter 17 covers his return trip home from Lhasa, allowing the reader insight into the author. This chapter starts on September 10, 1901, and concludes on May 2, 1902, when Tsybikov, now 29 years of age, had returned to Russian territory. The concluding chapter of the book includes many of his own reflections about his trip, and displays a more mature man than had begun the trip.

Preparations for Tsybikov's homeward departure took some time as this involved hiring guides; coming to terms with others who wanted to come along; buying horses, oxen, and camels for the cross-country travel; and finally packing and ensuring that the books and materials for travel were sufficient. Tsybikov was in charge of all of this and found himself needing to assert his authority. This included dealing with rip-offs, thefts, banditry, corrupt officials, and other hazards of travel. Tsybikov comes across as someone learning how to lead, occasionally successful but other times not.

The difficulties encountered were many. Thievery was quite common – a number of his guides pilfered objects and/or horses. Horses disappeared at random (four on September 27; one on October 3; one on October 5; three on October 7; two on October 9), and there were all sorts of bandits. Tsybikov dealt with these issues in different ways. Once he chased down one of the guides who stole a horse, but because the guide's mother pleaded for him, Tsybikov settled on taking back a rather plain workhorse, who in the end proved to be useless, dying along the way. On a second occasion of horse thievery, Tsybikov went to a Tibetan aristocrat to deal with the problem (on November 16):

I exposed to him all the matters concerning his subjects, and demanded protection for my interests. I also showed him the passport that the Russian Consul of Urga has issued to me, but the Prince did not know how to read Mongolian and looked at the document with an air of importance, holding it upside down. He then returned it to me and told me that his subjects had acted badly and that he would force them to give me back the money which I had turned over to them, adding immediately that one of my debtors had gone off to the mountains with his herds and it would be difficult to find him... [nor did he have any official funds of his own at present...]

The prince was unable to gather any restitution for Tsybikov. A number of things stand out in this passage. First, Tsybikov attempted to make use of the authorities to bring in local "bandits" and did so by offering up the backing of the foreign government. This tactic is clumsy coming from the young man. The prince deftly deals with it by first showing respect to the authority of the foreign document, but at the same time not allowing it to influence him in any real way. Further, the prince also agrees to everything that Tsybikov demands, but then lays out a number of reasons why nothing will be achieved, including repayment.

Another method Tsybikov attempted to use to deal with this problem was asking a fellow Buryat, whom he met along the route, to present his complaint to the High Commissioner of Sining. The High Commissioner was more intrigued with the Buryat friend, and had the friend thrown in jail (Feb. 4). Tsybikov filed a complaint with the High Commissioner, but was rejected: none of his influential contacts were able to assist in this matter. Tsybikov then decided to take it up with the consul in Urga. The matter is not mentioned again in the text, so we can assume that nothing further came of it.

Tsybikov often played up his status of being a Russian subject for his own purposes. On the next day, Tsybikov writes, another prince recalled the various Russian expeditions he had encountered, among which Przhevalskii (1839-1888) was praised. Przhevalskii, the most famous of all 19th-century Russian explorers, a Russian military man renowned as

much for his zoological and botanical finds as his desire to see Central Asia brought into the Russian empire, was perhaps the opposite of Tsybikov: deeply distrustful of urbanites, disdainful of pagan beliefs (among which he counted Buddhism) and with a deep-seated belief in his own and Russia's superiority.³⁵ And yet he was also the consummate explorer who had dreamed of reaching Lhasa, and had been in Tibet. Tsybikov, thus, felt very comfortable being associated with the larger-than-life figure of Przhevalskii. Not much later, Tsybikov went hunting and bragged about his *berdanka* rifle, a famed Russian gun that hunters swore by until deep into the century in Russia. Both points, association with Russian explorers and Russian material goods were important to Tsybikov's identity as an outsider in Tibet.³⁶

At the end of his book, Tsybikov provides us with insight into his feelings about his travels. On establishing a date for departure, he confesses that he is overjoyed, as it has been two years since he has seen his parents or friends. For the first time, the reader has a glimpse at the personal costs associated with exploration and the work of the scholar in this distant land. At the same time, he acknowledges that he still has much to learn about Tibet, and is eager to continue with his studies. Tsybikov concludes the book with his arrival on April 5 at the Russian consul, where he is cheerfully greeted and assisted with sending his baggage on to Saint Petersburg (April 14), where he completes his work. The journey and the diary which recorded it follow a young man in his late twenties, while the author was in his mid-to late 30s. The incidents discussed above indicate that its author was aware of a certain prejudice in regard to his citizenship (Russian), and also himself felt a distinction between Buryats and Russians. However, despite his feeling of fellowship with the Buryats, he was not above bringing to bear the weight of the Russian government where he could.

DALAI LAMA IN URGA (ULAN BATOR)

The Great Game was one of shadows and feints, and for the most part did not get played out beyond the halls and palaces of government. However, occasionally there were flare-ups (Snelling 1993, 102-114). The most famous in Tibet was the 1904 invasion by a small British force, led by a young hothead, Francis Younghusband, egged on by the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon (1859-1920), and yet restrained by the politicians at Whitehall. The invasion resulted from the British misreading of Russian and Chinese activities and interests in Tibet. Younghusband and his modern forces decimated Tibetan opposition, but the feeling was that the victories were rather ignominious. Younghusband, having attacked a nation without just cause, and massacred its ill-equipped army, then proceeded to enter the capital to negotiate with second-tier functionaries: The Dalai Lama and his entourage had already fled from the British to maintain exile in Mongolia. The treaty that the English obtained from this was viewed almost immediately as worthless, with the home-based politicians downplaying these results.³⁷

For the Tibetans, too, there was deep dissatisfaction with the invasion. The government was unable to maintain borders and found its head of state in an odd exile in Urga that lasted some two years. While there, the Dalai Lama performed rituals for masses of people and met Buddhist scholars; he also maintained correspondence with the Tsar (Snelling 1993, 122-126; Markov 1976). Yet, the upshot was that he did not gain the support of the Tsar in any meaningful way, and his stay in Mongolia was concluded when the local religious potentate began to display discomfort with the religious leader's continued presence and popularity.

While the Dalai Lama was in Mongolia, many influential persons came to visit, including the most important explorers and Buddhist scholars of the day: Fyodor Stcherbatsky (1866-1942), Bazar Baradin (1878-1937), and Pyotr Kozlov (1863-1935). Tsybikov, too,

came to see the Dalai Lama. He had traveled a great distance by relay horse with his wife, Lkhama Norboevna (1881-1960). On seeing Tsybikov, the Dalai Lama asked "Who are you? Where have I seen you before?" To which Tsybikov replied, "I am a Russian professor. I myself am a Buddhist and I saw you when you deigned to touch me with your rosary in your palace on the hill in Lhasa."³⁸ The conversation affected Tsybikov to a great degree and also began his dialogue with Stcherbatsky. When the journalist Markov visited Tsybikov's widow thirty years later, she too recollected its effect upon him.

CONCLUSION

Shortly after his return, Tsybikov was appointed to an academic position at the Vladivostok Oriental Institute, where he taught Tibetan and Mongolian until 1922. He spent his last few years in Aga, and died in the Aga Hospital in 1930. He was an important figure both in academic and, to a lesser degree, political circles. His death coincided with the end of the Buryat renaissance. Soon, Stalin and the Communist Party would destroy the lives and works of most of Tsybikov's colleagues, and drastically alter the life of the Buryats with policies aimed at Russification and collectivization.

Tibet was the most important chapter in Tsybikov's scholarly career. His journey, which was one that only a young man could take, allowed him to catalogue and show Tibet to the world. His work, both written and photographed, still informs our understanding of Tibet and its culture, even if the intellectual paradigms today are different from Tsybikov's.

Finally, the question of identity and place in the world arises. Tsybikov, at heart, was a man of the steppes – and yet his education, experiences, and status suggest that this inner self was not exclusively Buryat. Despite his earlier rejection of the Orthodox church, he wrote as an objective observer of Tibet, its Buddhism and customs. Instead of introspection and an autobiographical exploration of his own self, what emerges is a picture of a scholar who kept a diary of how the world perceived him, and how he perceived it. Instead of interest in Tsybikov's relationship to them, we have some 200 photographs of Tibetans.

Tsybikov, thus, was a man who identified as a Buryat, but who lived in a world complicated by emerging nationalist identities that did not necessarily replace other forms of subjectivity. He explored the past through the tools of modernity and by means of modern world institutions. In turn, he contributed greatly to our understanding of a world of the past, which was soon to be forgotten.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank the various persons involved in helping me put together this paper. Janice Glowski provided insightful comments on the panel and in discussions that followed. Aaron Fine enlivened our panel and led us into the adventure of this issue. Chaya Chandrasekhar saw our panel through and was relentless in her improving this issue and my paper. Lisa Trivedi and Erin McCarthy encouraged us with this issue, provided us support and helped guide us through to the final publication. I would also like to thank an anonymous reviewer for your insightful and extremely apt comments and suggestions.
2. On Tsybikov's scholarship, see Okladnikov and Zoriktuev.
3. This paragraph draws on Montgomery, 74-140. Also see Dittmar Schorkowitz's study on Russian and Soviet integration of the Buryat and Kalmuk nationalities into the state.
4. Montgomery gives as an example the refusal of a petition from a delegation of Buryat teachers by the Minister of Education, Dmitrii Tolstoy (1823-1889), to open private schools with Buryat instruction along with written Mongolian, Buryat, and Russian. Tolstoy refused it out of hand, 107.
5. I draw on Snelling, Tsybikov, Okladnikov, 6-44.
6. Badmaev's patronage was connected with his service to the state government, to whom he had proposed using Buryats as spies for activities in Tibet. Andreyev (2003) cites the memorandum that Badmaev sent to the Tsar on Feb 13, 1893, 19-20. See McDonald for a brief English language biography of Badmaev.
7. See Tsybikov, v. 2, 8-26. Original title: "O Tsentral'nom Tibete." All translations are my own. For the translation made for the Smithsonian Institution, "Lhasa and Central Tibet," see <http://collections.lib.uwm.edu/cdm/ref/collection/tibet/id/66>

8. The Russian text, *Buddist palomnik u sviatyn' Tibeta: po dnevnikam, vedennym v 1899-1902 godakh*, is available in a recent reissue (2011) and also in Tsybikov's selected works (1991). All translations from this work are my own, based on the 1991 edition. An English translation was done by Roger Shaw for "Human Relations Area File" and is available on microfiche.
9. Sergei Markov, a Soviet journalist, interviewed Tsybikov's widow in 1955. The interview was published in 1976.
10. The articles include "The Buryat Cossack Host of Transbaikalya," "Shamanism among the Buryats," and "About the National Buryat Festivals." The travelogues are diary accounts of trips he made to Mongolia (1888, 1927) and China (1909). He further wrote pedagogical works on Tibetan and Mongolian languages (Andreyev, 2003, 115). In particular, *Aid to the Practical Study of the Mongolian Language* came out in several editions following the 1905 Revolution and marked Tsybikov's own nationalist (Buryat) upsurge (Montgomery, 122). In addition, there are unpublished works such as his lectures on Mongolia (Tolmacheva).
11. On Edward Said and *orientalism's* importance in Russian studies, see Schimmelpenninck and articles by Halid, Knight, and Todorova in *Kritika* (Fall 2000). On Said's being influenced by Russian scholars of the early 20th century (via Arab Marxists) see Tolz, 100-101.
12. Kuleshov argued that both the Tsar and the foreign ministry had virtually no interest, 6-8. The army itself kept very little on Tibet in its files: in its 87 volume survey of Asia, Tibet did not warrant a single article before 1905, Schimmelpenninck (2000), 47.
13. Snelling provides a thorough biography of this figure.
14. For a brief account see Meyer and Brisac, 202-221. For fuller exposition see Waller.
15. Hopkirk (1992) doubts that Tsybikov was involved in espionage, 506. Also see *Rossiia i Tibet: Sbornik Russkikh Arkhivnykh Dokumentov, 1900-1914*, a collection of documents that deal with Russia and Tibet. Tsybikov is mentioned once in the introduction, but otherwise goes ignored. Meyer and Brysac do identify Tsybikov as a "Russian agent," 273. Tolz also sees Tsybikov as "gather[ing] important information for the Tsarist government during his trip to Tibet..." 124, fn. 66.
16. Tsybikov, on a visit to Beijing in 1909, recorded in his diary of the journey, on August 28, that he was "a true man of the steppe." This was in response to Russian chauvinism displayed by the consul there, Tsybikov, 119. Tsybikov's library collection also included translations into Buryat, such as Tolstoy's stories and Krylov's fables (S. Markov, 96).
17. Schimmelpenninck (2010): Andrei Bely: "Russia is a Mongol country. We all have Mongolian blood in our veins..." 199; Nikolai Berdiaev, "The Russian soul undeniably has an 'Asian Stratification.'" 224; Herzen: "[I am] a barbarian...[both] by birth and by conviction." 29.
18. This paragraph draws on Vera Tolz's recent work on Russian oriental scholarship and the "orientalists," in her coinage, to remove some of stigma resulting from Said's work, 3.
19. The favourable position of Buddhism in Russia and the Soviet Union, and the flourishing of Buryat scholars within them, came to an abrupt end in the 1930s, when purges under Stalin wiped out the field (Tolz, 18).
20. Andreyev suggests that the Gurka invasion of 1791-1792 was the formal cut-off point, 350. Dawa Norbu suggests an earlier date. Cited in Andreyev (2001), 350.
21. For brief biographies of prominent Buryats and Kalmyks see *Ibid.*, 352-354.
22. Kawaguchi estimates some 40-50 unsuccessful attempts in the 19th century, 403.
23. All dates given by Tsybikov are according to the Julian Calendar, which was 13 days behind the Gregorian at this time.
24. Proscriptions were also in place against South Asians. Britain's use of the Bengali scholar, Sarat Chandra Das (1849-1917), as a spy during his years in Tibet (1881-1883) resulted in a similar ban. See Snelling, 36, for summary of the fallout.
25. Tsybikov had earlier noted that Chinese merchants mostly dealt with women in their selling of goods, so that there was opportunity to mingle with the locals; however, most Chinese lived in garrison camps for their own safety, which underlined the issue of tension between the locals and the Chinese. Tsybikov, 1991, 2:11. This passage is not included in the Smithsonian translation.
26. Sergeev, however, understood the claim of the 500,000 Buryats and Khalkhas in Tsybikov's speech as verification for British apprehension to Russian intentions in Tibet, 254.
27. Das had been provided with a camera for his trip to Sikkim in 1879, but it appears that the British Government was worried about him drawing any attention to his activities in Tibet proper and so did not provide him with one later. See Das, 28, on correspondence with Sir Alfred Croft, Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, on the camera.
28. Norzunov first published Tibet photographs in France in October 1901. Snelling, 58-60. Tsybikov's first photographs appeared in 1903.
29. The photo-essay is introduced by a short paragraph, directing readers to the previously discussed Smithsonian article (Views of Lhasa).
30. For the notes sent along with the photographs to National Geographic, see <http://collections.lib.uwm.edu/cdm/ref/collection/tibet/id/94>.
31. Grosvenor recounted this story in National Geographic, (1957), 42-43. Also see Bryan, 93. Summary at http://primalbranding.blogspot.com/primal_branding/2006/02/national_geogra.html.
32. The halftone method of reproducing photographs had reduced costs by 80%, and the decision to print more photographs was not as burdensome as it had been a generation earlier. Full-page steel engraving cost \$100 whereas halftones cost \$20. Bryan, 83.

33. Andreyev has written on the Russian Geographical Society's close cooperation with the General Staff to send a Buryat agent to Tibet in 1869 and then again in 1873, 350. For a succinct account of Younghusband's expedition, see Van Schaik, *Tibet: A History*, 169-179. Also see Hopkirk (1982).
34. This was first published in 1919. The text was reprinted in 1970 in England, and in 1981 and 1991 in the Soviet Union. It has been translated into English (Shaw) Polish (Melech) French (Kreise) and Chinese (Wang).
35. Nikolai Przhevalskii was the most famous Russian explorer of the 19th century, known throughout Europe for his exploits and discoveries. He was the first European to describe the last of the wild horses, which were named after him. He also served as tutor to Nicholas II, when he was still Crown Prince. For Przhevalskii's biography see Meyer and Brysac, 223-240, Hopkirk 1982, 58-63, and Rayfield. Several of his travel accounts have been translated into English. See Prejevalsky.
36. The *berdanka* was standard army issue rifles in Russia from 1868-1891. See Tarsaidze.
37. Sergeev concurs that the mission was a "fiasco." It received at best public curiosity in England, at worst criticism of the government of the day. Its purported reason of stemming Russian weapons into Tibet turned out to be wildly overblown and it managed to discomfort allies (in the United States) while raising the hackles of the Russian public: 266-269. On the British politicians washing their hands of the affair, Sergeev, 273-274.
38. Markov, 102. Cited and translated in Snelling, 124.

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Along the Grand Trunk Road: The Photography of Raghubir Singh

Chaya Chandrasekhar

Abstract: For more than two millennia, the historic Grand Trunk Road, the busy thoroughfare that extends some 1500 miles through north India and Pakistan, served as the main artery of South Asia. It was also the gateway through which waves of immigrants, travelers, and invaders entered the subcontinent. As a result, a great deal of diversity and tolerance marks the road. Between 1988 and 1991, Raghubir Singh (1942-1999), one of India's renowned documentary photographers, traveled and photographed the Indian stretch of the Road. Ninety-six photographs from his journeys appear in the publication, *The Grand Trunk Road: A Passage Through India* (1995). Singh used the pictorial style of street photography that he is known for to capture everyday life along the path. Further, he emphasized the tremendous diversity he witnessed along the road through the selections he made for inclusion in the book and the specific manner in which he arranged many of them. By underscoring the heterogeneity, Singh provided a critical visual commentary on the political climate in India during the 1980s and early nineties. This period coincided with the rise of Hindu nationalism, which aimed to erase the subcontinent's diverse past and promote instead the idea of a homogenous/Hindu India. By documenting the road in his uniquely pictorial style and arranging the photographs in his book to draw attention to differences and tolerance witnessed along the path, Singh demonstrated that India was not monolithic, as the politics of the time claimed, but a rich interwoven fabric of many varied strands.

Keywords South Asia; India; Raghubir Singh; Grand Trunk; photography; street photography; pictorial style

The historic Grand Trunk Road cuts a swathe through north India, running from Bengal in the east to the Punjab in the west. On the other side of the border, it continues through Pakistan, reaching beyond Peshawar in the North-West Frontier Province. For over two millennia, this busy thoroughfare that extends some 1500 miles has served as the main artery of South Asia. So vital is the Grand Trunk Road to the subcontinent's long history that Raghubir Singh (1942-1999), one of India's eminent documentary photographers, traveled and photographed the Indian stretch of the route between 1988 and 1991. Ninety-six photographs from his journeys appear in his book, *The Grand Trunk Road: A Passage Through India*, which was published in 1995.¹ Singh is known for his style of pictorial street photography, which he has described as "the old *Life* magazine kind of photography."² A self-taught artist, he used the gaze of an observant traveler to develop lyrical photo essays of everyday life in India's cities and towns, and on its highways.³ Singh's photographs of the Grand Trunk Road, or GT, show ordinary, albeit aesthetically charged, moments along the path: busy pavement shops; pedestrians and commuters in various towns and cities; overturned trucks and stalled traffic on the road; political rallies; and visitors to the Taj Mahal, the Golden Temple, and other sites along the route. Singh's colorful and picturesque style lends itself well to presenting the hypnotic culture along South Asia's main thoroughfare.

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However, it is his precise selection and arrangement of photographs for *The Grand Trunk Road*, in addition to the photographs themselves, which provide a critical visual commentary, and speak to the broader political issues of his time.

Singh chose and organized the images in *The Grand Trunk Road: A Passage Through India* to highlight the diversity that he witnessed along this crucial path. Pluralism and the acceptance of differences have long remained hallmarks of South Asian history and pervade the Grand Trunk Road, which has for over two thousand years served as the primary thoroughfare for travelers entering and exiting the subcontinent. By underscoring this heterogeneity through his creative choices, Singh critiques the political climate in India during the late 1980s and early 90s. At this time, Hindu-Muslim tensions intensified and violent communal strife erupted. Many of these sectarian conflicts found their origins in the politics of partition, the dividing of British India along religious lines into what was seen as Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India. Armed gates at the India-Pakistan border, raised after partition, continue to underscore the political impasse. Singh chose to photograph the Grand Trunk Road, which, despite the strained politics, continues to connect the two nations. By documenting the road in his uniquely pictorial style and arranging the photographs in his book to draw attention to the diversity, general tolerance, and accommodation witnessed along it, Singh lays bare a cultural actuality markedly different from the divisive political climate in India at the time.

The slogan “unity in diversity” that is frequently used to describe pluralism in twentieth-century India also points to the long tradition of tolerance that has generally characterized the subcontinent. This is not to suggest an over-simplified, utopic history of India, without periods of violent conflict and severe persecution. Rather, the slogan highlights the ability of the subcontinent’s population to coexist, more or less amicably, even with tremendous cultural, political, and economic disparities. Indeed, several scholars have convincingly argued that despite fundamental dissimilarities among communities, as well as deep-rooted dislikes and resentments that people might harbor for each other, a surprising degree of diversity and acceptance has persisted throughout much of the subcontinent’s long and turbulent history. For example, Amartya Sen in his *Argumentative Indian* establishes that the subcontinent boasts a longstanding tradition of broad thinking, reasoned dialogue, and the accommodation of dissenting views.⁴ Ashis Nandy describes India as exemplary of “radical diversities,” or the ability of people to live with cultural differences that oppose their own fundamental beliefs. Nandy notes that diversity in India does not mean that different communities entirely shed the distrust they might have, or the dislike they might feel, for each other. Nevertheless, fully aware of the prejudices on both sides, they accept each other as part of the Indian whole.⁵ Shashi Tharoor is another proponent of the view that Indian identity is constructed in diversity:

Indian mind has been shaped by remarkably diverse forces: ancient Hindu tradition, myth, and scripture; the impact of Islam and Christianity; and two centuries of British colonial rule. The result is unique, not just because of the variety of contemporary influences available in India, but because of the diversity of its heritage... Pluralism is a reality that emerges from the very nature of the country; it is a choice made inevitable by India’s geography and reaffirmed by its history.⁶

India’s diversity is especially pervasive and visible along the Grand Trunk Road, as the highway marks an ancient path that linked the kingdoms and people of the subcontinent to each other, as well as to the outside world. As far back as the fourth century BCE, when the Mauryas established the first Indian empire (c. 323-185 BCE), the Royal Road, the ances-

tor of the Grand Trunk Road, connected the capital city, Pataliputra, with points west and east. Megasthenes (c. 350-290 BCE), the Seleucid ambassador to the court of the emperor Chandragupta Maurya (r. c. 323-297 BCE), wrote an early account of India that provided a description of the road.⁷ He underscored the multi-cultural makeup of the trail and its relative accommodation for differences when he noted that international trade flourished along the route, and that foreign merchants were afforded special care and attention.⁸ Following waves of Islamic invaders,⁹ who gradually established their new religion in the subcontinent, Zahir ud-din Babur (1483-1530) arrived along the route in 1526 and laid the foundations of the mighty Mughal Empire, the most prominent and influential of Islamic dynasties in South Asia.¹⁰ The road today is officially named Sher Shah Suri Marg, after the sixteenth-century Pashtun Afghan who briefly displaced the Mughals to take control of Delhi. Sher Shah Suri (1540-1555) refurbished the old road¹¹ and further established safe and comfortable *serais*, which accommodated the needs of diverse travelers.¹²

The thoroughfare also formed a capillary of the great Silk Road, the network of routes that facilitated commercial and cultural exchanges across Eurasia.¹³ Scholars have long recognized the religious diversity and cultural exchange that flourished along the Silk Road.¹⁴ This network saw the transmission of a number of religious traditions, including Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Christianity, and Islam. Buddhism, originating in India, was the most influential export from the subcontinent to also use this route. Not surprisingly then, the pluralism witnessed along the Silk Road permeated its Indian branch.

Under East India Company rule in 1839, the British paved the ancient path and called it the Grand Trunk Road.¹⁵ Allowing the movement of troops from one garrison town to another as it connected the vast stretch of the empire from Calcutta to Kabul, the road was the lifeline of British India. Together with the railway, it permitted the transportation of goods and lucrative trade, which fed the imperial economy.¹⁶ Rudyard Kipling in his 1901 novel, *Kim*, describes the route as:

... the Big Road...the Great Road which is the backbone of all of Hind... All castes and kinds of men move here... It runs straight...for fifteen hundred miles—such a river of life as nowhere exists in the world.¹⁷

Like so many observers before him, Kipling marveled at the constant flow of humanity on the road and recognized the heterogeneous makeup of the multitudes. For more than two thousand years visitors, immigrants, and invaders, whether their motivations were peaceful or aggressive, made their way into India through the northern arterial path. Raghubir Singh's photographs capture the continuing propensity of these diverse populations to coexist, accommodating, though sometimes grudgingly, each others' fundamental differences.

In the introductory essay to *The Grand Trunk Road*, Singh recalls how he covered the path in a manner similar to nineteenth-century European surveyors:

I travelled slowly...doing a distance of sixty to eighty miles a day, which approximated the distances travelled...by the nineteenth-century photographers like Samuel Bourne, Colin Murray, and Felice Beato.¹⁸

The colonial photographers, directed by the "picturesque" tradition of British landscape painting, focused on panoramic views of monuments along the path, which proclaimed the subcontinent's majestic past.¹⁹ For instance, colonial representations of the Taj Mahal, though grand and monumental, noticeably lack people at the site. If people do appear in the frame, they are inconspicuous against a backdrop of the imposing structure. As Ariela

Freedman observes, the colonial photographers saw, without a problem, “a densely populated, vibrant country as a series of beautiful but elegiac monuments to the past. It takes a great deal of effort to photograph an empty Taj Mahal.”²⁰ Such an effort was worthwhile for the colonial photographers because the buildings, rather than the people who populated them, made up their vision of the subcontinent.

By contrast, Singh privileges the individual and the ordinary over the historically monumental. In the introduction to *The Grand Trunk Road*, he asserts:

I have looked at *the Grand Trunk Road* with a democratic eye, the eye that cuts monument and majesty down to size, and places equal importance on the truck driver...the groundsman at the Taj with his broom, the Sikh farmer, the housewife in her shack...and so many others who make *the Grand Trunk Road* a living panorama of north India's people.²¹

Freedman compares one of Singh's photographs of the Taj Mahal with those made by nineteenth-century European surveyors.²² Singh's image reveals a close up of five visitors at the site. Four of the five people make eye contact with the camera as they walk toward the proper left of the composition. A young woman, closest to the viewer and facing in the opposite direction, draws the eye back into the picture. Rather than a panoramic view of the monument, the Taj's distinctive white marble architecture tightly frames the figures. The photograph is more a portrait of the individuals than a landscape featuring the historic building. Freedman concludes, “By displacing this iconic monument to desire, which has also stood for the western desire for India, Singh emphasizes the Indian subject rather than India as object.”²³ Singh's emphasis of the individual over the monumental allowed him to capture everyday life along the Grand Trunk Road. By making this choice, Singh is able to demonstrate in his *The Grand Trunk Road* book that the masses coexist despite their vast cultural, political, and ideological differences.

Another photograph from *The Grand Trunk Road* similarly differs from typical colonial representations of important sites and monuments in India (Figure 1). In this image, Singh brings into focus the hustle and bustle of the street outside the Jama Masjid, Delhi. In the center of the composition is a Muslim woman dressed in a black *burqa*, which covers her

Figure 1: Raghubir Singh, Jama Masjid and Bazaar Crowd, Delhi

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face and body. A cycle rickshaw driver on his bike appears in the proper right foreground, while the close up of a young man's face, looking directly into the lens, occupies the left. Pedestrians, including a man in the white *tāqīyah* prayer cap that Muslims wear, busily move about in the middle ground. Sections of the distinctive red sandstone and white marble walls, arches, domes, and minarets of the mosque appear in the background. As in the photograph of the visitors at the Taj Mahal, in this example Singh brings into focus the people on the Grand Trunk Road, rather than the ancient monuments emptied of buoyant life.

Singh's approach of focusing on the ordinary and the individual rather than the monumental on the Grand Trunk Road may have been inspired by the Bengali writer, artist, and filmmaker Satyajit Ray (1921-1992). Singh was born into a wealthy Rajput household in Jaipur, Rajasthan. In 1961, he moved to Kolkata (formerly Calcutta) where he began his photographic career and came into contact with Ray. Singh recounts Ray's influence on him: "In Calcutta, through my contact with Satyajit Ray and his work—deeply rooted in the pictorial, rising out of the communal spirit of India... I received an uplifting education."²⁴ Singh's method of focusing on the individual echoes Ray's own preoccupation with commemorating the local and the microcosm throughout his filmic work.

The majority of Ray's films are in the local Bengali language and set in Bengal. When asked in an interview why Ray made films, he replied, "Apart from the actual creative work, filmmaking is exciting because it brings me closer to my country and my people."²⁵ Similarly, Singh's photographic oeuvre is a keenly observed visual and emotional response to India.²⁶ Singh asserts, "The breath I take is deeply Indian because all my working life I have photographed my country. In doing so, I have been carried by the flow of the inner river of India's life and culture."²⁷

Ray and Singh were profoundly connected to India, and their broad and absorptive outlooks were undoubtedly shaped by South Asia's long ethos of diversity and general acceptance. In an insightful essay, Amartya Sen demonstrates how Ray's writing and films highlighted the differences between various local cultures and the importance of intercultural connections and communications:

In emphasizing the need to honor the individuality of each culture, Ray saw no reason for closing the doors to the outside world. Indeed, opening doors was an important priority of Ray's work... Ray appreciated the importance of heterogeneity within local communities.²⁸

Singh similarly acknowledged that in photographing India he witnessed the rich diversity of people, artistic traditions, ways of life, and influences from both the west and the east, which have enriched and deepened the Indian spirit:

In India, I am on court, the tennis player's court, where the ball has to be hit to the edge of the camera frame, so that it raises dust, but yet it is inside. Within the tension of those frame lines, there is the buoyant spirit of Kotah painting; and there is the Zen of sight and sense... I have looked at the densely Indian characters of R.K. Narayan, I have looked at the acute analysis of today's India in the prose of V.S. Naipaul... I have looked at the pictorialism and bazaar energy of Salman Rushdie's fiction... I have looked at the Thames-side pictorialism pitched by Anish Kapoor, the Indian-born sculptor... I put within my frame the ancient sites, the crossings, the confluences of rivers... the big and small roads, the big and small cities...²⁹

For people like Ray and Singh, who deeply advocated and celebrated diversity, the politi-

cal shift that occurred in India during the 1980s and early 90s, which threatened to undo the long history of general tolerance and acceptance in the subcontinent, would have been deeply troubling. This period witnessed the resurgence of the Hindutva, or Hindu nationalism, and the rapid rise of its political arm, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Hindutva ideology aims to present India as a purely Hindu nation. Its agenda espouses religious binaries to claim Hinduism's superiority over other traditions. This narrow view alienates religious minorities and threatens India's history of by and large accommodating sectarian differences, impeding twentieth-century aims to forge and maintain a pluralistic democracy. The BJP led the nation as part of a coalition government in 1998, but lost support in 2004 in large measure due to its overly zealous religious conservatism.³⁰ Singh said little publicly about his political views and opinions on the Hindutva. However, the photographs he selects for inclusion in *The Grand Trunk Road*, and their deliberate arrangement to create specific visual narratives within the book, betray his desire to underplay the partisan politics of his time and present instead an India that is not the purview of Hindus or Hinduism alone, but a domain that belongs equally to Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and numerous other religious and secular factions. For example, in *The Grand Trunk Road*, on the page across

Figure 2: Raghubir Singh, A Scooter-Taxi, New Delhi

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from the image of the Jama Masjid (Figure 1), is a tightly framed photograph of an interior of an autorickshaw in New Delhi (Figure 2). The viewer gets a glimpse of only the auto driver's arm resting on the vehicle's meter-reader. The focus of the picture is a colorful print of Hindu gods and goddesses, which conveys the driver's religious affiliation. The two photographs—the grand Muslim mosque with its patrons and the Hindu autorickshaw driver's divine protectors—displayed side by side, highlight the heterogeneous reality along the route. Through creative, visual means, Singh exposes the fallacy of a monolithic Hindu India.

Elsewhere in the publication, Singh conveys a similar message with a pair of photographs from the ancient city of Varanasi (formerly Benares), along the Grand Trunk Road as it cuts

across the state of Uttar Pradesh (Figures 3 and 4).

Instead of introducing the city through the temple edifices and iconic stepped *ghats* on the banks of the Ganges River, where throngs of Hindu pilgrims gather to bathe in the sacred waters, as so many photographers, and Singh himself in his other publications, have done previously, Singh includes the city's crowded streets and images of the commonly seen, but less published, India. One photograph from the pair reveals an aged Hindu ascetic passenger on a bicycle rickshaw stalled in traffic (Figure 3). Singh juxtaposes this photograph with another, arranged symmetrically on the opposite page, which features a Muslim family riding a bicycle rickshaw on a similarly bustling street (Figure 4). A woman covered in a black *burqa* confirms the family's religious identity. A man sits beside her on the seat and a child squats uncomfortably in between her legs on the rickshaw's footrest. The two photographs portray iconic elements within the Hindu and Islamic traditions—the wandering ascetic and a woman entirely covered by a black *burqa*, respectively. However, Singh does not depict these individuals as devout and dutiful followers of disparate religions. Instead,



Figure 3: Raghbir Singh, Rickshaw Traffic, Benares

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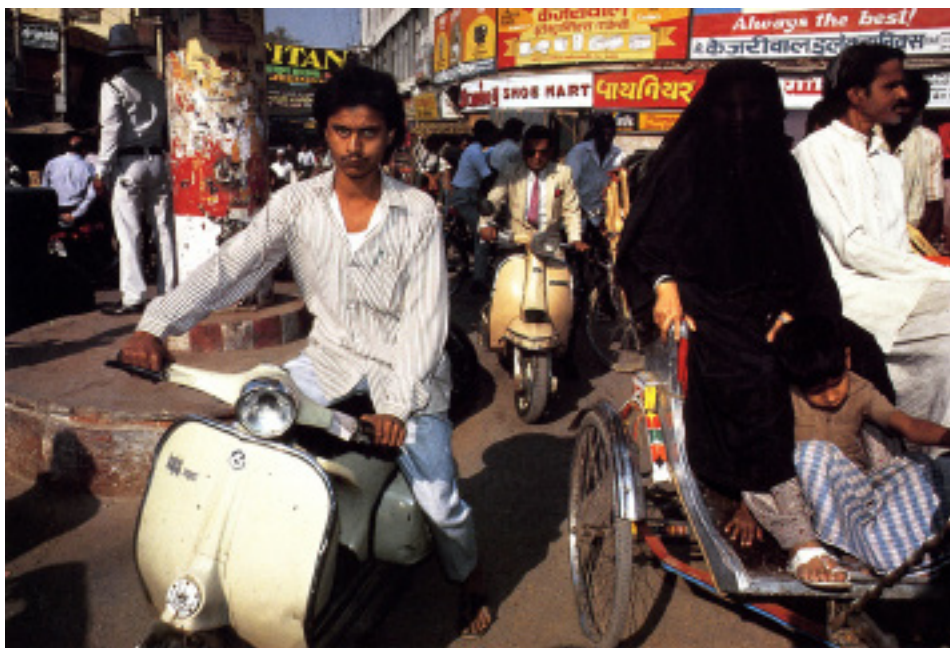


Figure 4: Raghbir Singh, Scoot-erist and Rickshaw Passengers, Benares

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they both are shown in nearly identical situations, navigating traffic on rickshaws in the all-too-familiar, overcrowded streets. When placed side by side, the photographs of the Hindu ascetic and of the Muslim family make a statement that Varanasi, despite its overwhelming association as a sacred Hindu city, is equally home to India's Muslim communities. Importantly, some of Singh's most well-known images feature Varanasi's impressive *ghats*.³¹ Freedman observes that the steps, where religion and everyday life merged seamlessly, were among Singh's favorite places to photograph.³² However, Singh deliberately downplays the *ghats* in his *The Grand Trunk Road* book, since featuring the steps and imposing temples would have privileged the Hindu affiliation of Varanasi over the other religious traditions that coexist there. The busy streets of the city, on the other hand, show territory where both Hindus and Muslims stake equal claim.

Holi Festival Day, another photograph in *The Grand Trunk Road* series, further under-

Figure 5: Raghubir Singh, *Holi Festival Day, Red Fort, Agra*
© 2013 Succession Raghubir Singh



scores India's largely tolerant past, which continues into the present day (Figure 5). In the background, the imposing ramparts that enclosed the Mughal emperor Akbar's (1542-1605) imperial city at Agra stand as testament to India's rich Islamic heritage. In the foreground, three vendors idly await customers who are seen exiting the monument's arched gateway. One of the vendors wears a shirt and pair of pants stained bright magenta, while another, seated on a low wall and peering into the camera, has his face smeared black. A visitor exiting the gateway similarly wears a white shirt stained pink. These men's appearance indicates that they have partaken in Holi, the Hindu festival of color. Holi marks the yearly onset of spring, with revelers tossing color at each other to celebrate. The inclusion of this photograph, which shows Hindus celebrating amidst a landscape of Mughal monuments, shows Singh's creative challenge to the polarizing and combative Hindutva political climate that was rapidly rising in India at the time.

Hindu nationalists demonized Mughal emperors as iconoclastic Muslim outsiders who had indiscriminately desecrated and destroyed Hindu lands. The Hindutva's anti-Muslim campaign centered on reclaiming north Indian temple sites previously conquered by Islamic rulers. The watershed moment was the destruction of the Babri Masjid, a sixteenth-century mosque in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, built by Babur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty, after the supposed destruction of a temple that marked the birthplace of the Hindu god Rama (Ramjanmabhumi).³³ In 1984, the BJP entered mainstream Indian politics and endorsed the Ayodhya Ramjanmabhumi campaign, which called for reclaiming the Babri Masjid site for a temple dedicated to Rama. Special bricks commissioned by supporters from across the country and from abroad were to be used in the temple's construction. In 1990, the BJP launched the Rath Yatra (temple chariot procession), during which the BJP leader L.K. Advani galvanized crowds over loudspeaker as the parade moved from town to town across north India. Muslim communities along the way were threatened, and pockets of violence erupted. When the procession ultimately reached Ayodhya in 1992, angry mobs swarmed and demolished the mosque, prompting deadly and widespread religious riots across India.³⁴ Singh's *Holi Festival Day* conveys the disconnect between the Hindutva's anti-Muslim agenda and ongoing life in India. Politically motivated religious radicalism, Singh shows, ultimately does little to undermine the extensive history of assimilation and solidar-

ity in India.

The origins of much of the communal politics that escalated in the eighties and early nineties, when Singh photographed the GT, may be traced to the 1947 partition of British India into Pakistan and Hindustan (India). The line on the map cut through the Punjab, splitting the Sikh homeland;³⁵ the resulting discontent experienced due to partition exacerbated Hindu nationalist sentiments.³⁶ Drawing attention to this history, Singh's *The Grand*



Figure 6: Raghubir Singh, Indian Border Security Force Soldiers at the India-Pakistan (Atari-Wagah) Border, Punjab

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Trunk Road comes to an arresting halt with a photograph of the border post at Atari in the Punjab, where a white line on the ground and boundary gates divide India from Pakistan (Figure 6). Indian Border Security Forces maintain vigilant watch on the Atari side. On the other side of the line lies Wagha, with Pakistani Rangers on patrol. National flags announce the border limits of each country.³⁷ To date, every evening at sundown, Indian and Pakistani security forces at Atari-Wagha ceremoniously beat retreat to call truce for the night. Crowds of spectators occupy bleachers on either side of the gates to witness their respective national soldiers perform the ritual. Stephen Alter in his travelogue, *Amritsar to Lahore*, describes the pageantry:

The ceremony began with one of the soldiers presenting arms and marching with vigorous strides to the gate and back. Orders were shouted in belligerent voices, the words virtually unintelligible. A second soldier repeated the same maneuver... Across the border we could hear similar commands being shouted and the clatter of hobnailed boots. This posturing continued for at least ten minutes until the gate at the border was finally thrown open. The two separate audiences rose to their feet and peered across at each other like the supporters of opposing football teams... Two commanders came out of the gate and shook hands... Two buglers played... and the flags were lowered in unison.³⁸

One might reasonably expect a photographer at the border to capture some of the bristling patriotism that Alter vividly describes, such as the border security forces in full uniform marching to and fro. At the least, since many of Singh's *The Grand Trunk Road* photographs focus on ordinary people, one might anticipate images of enthusiastic crowds

as they watch the retreat from the stands. However, Singh chooses to record this location by altogether sidestepping the nationalistic exhibitionism and the ordinary citizenry serving as spectators. Instead, he selected a photograph that shows the ceremony's humdrum aftermath.

As if to underscore the futility of borders and divisive demarcations, the image shows members of the Indian Border Security Forces nonchalantly moving about as they close the day. One man folds the Indian flag that would have been lowered during the ceremony. A bugler, who would have only moments ago fervently sounded the instrument as the soldiers strutted back and forth during the retreat, walks casually beside the man with the flag. He faces away from the camera, possibly to converse with his companion. The flag and the bugle in the men's hands are barely visible. Three other soldiers finishing up their daily routines appear by the gates and the flag post. Aside from the crescent-moon-and-star insignia on a wall, a barely visible Pakistani Ranger with his back to the viewer, and a lighted sign that announces the National Bank of Pakistan in the background, little else in the photograph suggests that the area across the white line is a separate country. Singh, it seems, saw little point in the separation and the guarded protectionism on either side of the border. Instead, the image recalls his photographs wherein Hindu, Muslim, and others equally occupy the camera frame.

Singh was denied permission to cross the border into Pakistan and continue his photographic journey along the Grand Trunk Road. He concludes the publication with a "Note From the Photographer," in which he writes:

...The powers that be in Pakistan refused me permission to photograph there, in spite of my offer to allow myself to be conducted, to photograph only the culture and common people along the route, to focus on historic sights, and to show text and pictures to Pakistani representatives.³⁹

The note makes clear that there was no will for rational negotiation on the part of the Pakistani government. Singh's words indicate his frustration with the authorities. Similarly, by focusing on the post-retreat banalities rather than any aspect (monumental or ordinary) of the pomp and pride of ceremony, Singh's photograph of Atari-Wagha echoes his disapproval of the unyielding implementation of restrictive religio-political border bureaucracies. The photograph invites reflection on a provocative question raised by Alter: What meaning could Atari-Wagha's choreographed displays have when combat soldiers dangerously face off over the border dispute, and wage actual war at Kargil and other sites across the Line of Control in the Kashmir region to the north?⁴⁰

The Kashmir border dispute, the crystallization of divisive politics in South Asia, dates back to the time of partition.⁴¹ In 1949, only two years after gaining independence, the fledgling nations of India and Pakistan waged war over the territory, which resulted in the Indian-controlled Jammu and Kashmir region and the smaller Azad Kashmir area under Pakistani control. Two additional India-Pakistan wars in 1965 and 1971 saw the redrawing and altering of the Line of Control. The Kashmir border dispute reignited in the 1980s, at the same time that Singh undertook his journey along the Grand Trunk Road. This conflict marked a shift from the earlier uprisings. Disenfranchised Indian Kashmiri Muslims, in part threatened by the conservative, pro-Hindu swing in politics, led an insurgency against the Indian government, demanding a separate state. This allowed the BJP and other Hindu-tva factions to fan the flames of growing Hindu-Muslim tensions.⁴²

Against a backdrop of divisive politics that first led to the severing of the subcontinent, followed by decades of bloodshed and hostility in post-independence times, Singh's

photographs show a world beyond borders and divides. Singh's carefully constructed visual narrative in *The Grand Trunk Road* underscores the irony of metal gates and a white line on the ground blocking a path which, for millennia, had allowed a constant flow of traffic and helped build and shape the capacious and absorptive cultural ethos of the subcontinent. For over two thousand years the thoroughfare connected India to the outside world. It allowed the transit of differing ideas and rich exchanges, which fostered in South Asia a culture of acceptance and tolerance. Singh brings India's open and accommodating history into focus in order to contrast the intolerant and small-minded politics of the day, which aimed to homogenize and erase the subcontinent's long history of diversity. His photographs, and the manner in which he arranges them in *The Grand Trunk Road* book, reiterate that India is not the domain of a single group, but a complex, rich interwoven fabric of differing strands. Such pluralism in India extends beyond religion alone. In Singh's photographs one sees not only religious contrasts, but also contrasts of a variety of other aspects of Indian life. Cycle rickshaws juxtapose with motorized vehicles, men and women in traditional dress stand and walk next to those in western clothes, life in the cities is contrasted with life in rural India.

One might question whether or not Singh's outlook of the Grand Trunk Road reflects nostalgia for a fading past, when no gates prevented entry and few inflexible bureaucracies hindered movement along arterial paths. On the contrary, Singh's photographs convincingly show that diversity is not a thing of the past in India. A heterogeneous matrix visibly persists along the Grand Trunk Road. Singh's concluding words in the publication's introduction reflect this view. "At the end of my own journey through life, I would like my ashes to be scattered where the Grand Trunk Road crosses the Ganges. There all castes and all kinds of men and women walk."⁴³

NOTES

1. Raghubir Singh, *The Grand Trunk Road: A Passage Through India* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 1995).
2. Singh quoted in "Conversation: V.S. Naipaul and Raghubir Singh" in Raghubir Singh, *Bombay: Gateway of India* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 1994) p. 5. Singh was a prolific photographer, who published several photo essays during the span of his photographic career. These include *Calcutta: The Home and Street* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1988), *The Ganges* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1992), *Tamil Nadu* (New York: Distributed Art Publishers, 1996) and his last book, published posthumously, *A Way into India* (London: Phaidon, 2002).
3. Sabeena Gadihoke describes Singh's work as that of a *flâneur* photographer, a casual wanderer and connoisseur of the street, who adeptly seeks out and captures aesthetically-filled moments of ordinary life. See Sabeena Gadihoke, "Journeys into Inner and Outer Worlds: Photography's Encounter with Public Space in India" in *Where Three Dreams Cross: 150 Years of Photography from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh* (Göttingen, Germany: Steidl, 2010) p. 36.
4. Amartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian Culture, History and Identity* (London and New York: Penguin Books, 2005). Throughout the book Sen acknowledges the turmoil and tumult of India's past, but convincingly demonstrates that India also has had a long tradition of accepting different groups and allowing them the right to follow their own beliefs, which were frequently dramatically different from, and even opposed to, those of others around them. Singh uses the Sanskrit word *svikriti*, acceptance, to describe this pluralist toleration. For more on this, see Sen, *The Argumentative Indian* pp. 34-44.
5. In a talk on Asian cosmopolitanism, Nandy explains, "All communities [in India] are internalized...your self-definition included the other communities...one learns to host the otherness of the other...not the sameness of the other." Quoted from Ashis Nandy, "Ashis Nandy on Cosmopolitanism." Filmed September 8, 2011, posted by Asia Society, <http://asiasociety.org/countries/traditions/ashis-nandy-asian-cosmopolitanism>. Also see Ashis Nandy, "The Political Culture of the Indian State" *Daedalus* 118 (1989): 1-26.
6. Shashi Tharoor, *India: From Midnight to the Millennium and Beyond* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1997) p. 10. In an article Tharoor wrote for *The Guardian* in 2007 to mark sixty years of Indian independence, he draws on the idea of the American melting pot and compares India to a *thali*, a meal made up of different dishes served in individual bowls placed within a single platter. Each does not necessarily mix, but contributes to making a satisfying plate. See Shashi Tharoor, "Indian identity forged in diversity. Every one of us is in a minority," *The Guardian*, August 14, 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2007/aug/15/comment.india>.

7. Strabo, *Geography*. (Tr. H.L. Jones), Vol. VII. London, 1930, p. 17, cited in Abdul Khair Muhammad Farooque, *Roads and Communications in Mughal India* (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, 1977) p. 4.
8. K.M. Sarkar, *The Grand Trunk Road in the Punjab: 1849-1886* (1927, New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 1986) p. 2.
9. From as early as the eighth century, when a part of the subcontinent first converted to Islam, non-Muslims were categorized as *dhimmi*, or protected people. They were allowed to practice their religion and have autonomy over their jurisprudence, but they had to pay the *jizya*, or poll tax, levied on non-Muslims. For a general discussion of religion in Islamic India, including the *dhimmi* and *jizya*, see Annemarie Schimmel, *The Empire of the Great Mughals: History, Art and Culture* (London: Reaktion Books, 2004) pp. 107-141. During his reign, the Mughal emperor Akbar (1542-1605), whose openness to religious differences and celebration of diversity is legendary, revoked the *jizya* and allowed Hindus the opportunity to hold high administrative posts. Amartya Sen addresses Akbar's broad, pluralistic views at various points throughout his book, *The Argumentative Indian*. For a more extended discussion see pp. 17-19. Aurangzeb Alamgir (1608-1707), a later Mughal emperor, set out to transform India into a purely Islamic nation. He staunchly enforced *shari'ah* law and the *jizya* was reintroduced in 1679. See Schimmel, based on the *Fatwa-yi Alamgiri*, a set of laws instituted during the time of the Aurangzeb, p. 110. Aurangzeb's heavy-handed policies and attempts at homogenizing the country were unsuccessful perhaps at least in part because it was antithetical to the general acceptance of differences and tolerance that prevailed in India.
10. Annemarie Schimmel notes that in January 1505, Babur entered the subcontinent through Kohat and Bannu, in what is today northwest Pakistan. See Schimmel, p. 23. *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* indicates that the Grand Trunk Road and nearby Kohat and Bannu formed a network of roadways in the North West Frontier Province. See *The Imperial Gazetteer of India: Vol. XIX Nayakanhatti to Parbhani* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908) p. 186.
11. Based on the *Tarikh-i-Khan Jahani*, cited in Farooque, p. 11, notes 28 and 29.
12. Basheer Ahmad Khan Matta writes that *serais* during Suri's time provided separate lodgings for Hindus and Muslims and housed mosques with an *imam* and a *muezzin*. Basheer Ahmad Khan Matta *Sher Shah Suri: A Fresh Perspective* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) pp. 210-213.
13. For a discussion of the section of the Grand Trunk Road in present day Pakistan that formed a part of the Silk Road, see Saifur Rahman Dar, "Caravanserais Along the Grand Trunk Road in Pakistan: A Central Asian Legacy" in Vadime Elisseeff, *The Silk Roads: Highways of Culture and Commerce* (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2000) pp. 12-46.
14. Valerie Hansen, *The Silk Road: A New History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) p. 5.
15. Sarkar, p. 3.
16. For more on roadways and railways during British rule in India, see Sarkar, *The Grand Trunk Road in the Punjab: 1849-1886*.
17. Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (1901, New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 1999) p. 59.
18. Singh, *The Grand Trunk Road*, p. 4.
19. For more on this, see Clark Worswick and Ainslee Embree, *The Last Empire: Photography in British India, 1855-1914* (New York: Aperture Foundation, 2001) p. 2.
20. Ariela Freedman, "On the Ganges Side of Modernism: Raghubir Singh, Amitav Ghosh, and the Postcolonial Modern" in Laura Doyle and Laura Winkiel eds., *Geomodernisms: Race, Modernism, Modernity* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2005) p. 119.
21. Singh, *The Grand Trunk Road*, p. 7.
22. Singh, *The Grand Trunk Road*, p. 72.
23. Freedman, p. 119.
24. Raghubir Singh, "River of Colour: An Indian View" introduction to *The River of Colour: The India of Raghubir Singh* (London: Phaidon, 1998) p. 13.
25. Quoted in Bert Cardullo ed., *Satyajit Ray: Interviews* (Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2007) p. viii.
26. For more on Singh's work and relationship to India, see Singh, *Bombay*, p. 5.
27. Singh, *River of Colour*, p. 10.
28. Amartya Sen, "Satyajit Ray and the Art of Universalism: Our Culture, Their Culture" *The New Republic* (April 1, 1996): 32. Reprinted with permission of the author and accessible at <http://satyajitray.ucsc.edu/articles/sen.html>
29. See Singh, *River of Colour*, p. 13.
30. For a concise discussion of the rise and fall of the BJP and its political allies and ideologies, see Amartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian*, pp. 45-72.
31. See, for example, *Swimmers and diver, Scindia Ghat, Benares, 1985* in Raghubir Singh, *The Ganges* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992) plate 53.
32. Freedman, p. 121.
33. A large body of scholarship exists on the Ayodhya incident and the politics that surround it. For an excellent introduction, see Richard Davis, "The Rise and Fall of a Sacred Place: Ayodhya Over Three Decades" in Marc Howard Ross ed., *Culture and Belonging in Divided Societies: Contestation and Symbolic Landscape* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) pp. 25-44. Also see Ashis Nandy, *Creating a Nationality: The Ramjanmabhumi and Fear of Self* (Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

34. Hindu-Muslim hostilities, warfare, and persecutions also occurred in pre-colonial times. Nevertheless, the blatant religio-political agenda of the Hindutva, and its political factions like the BJP, to many seemed to be in direct conflict with twentieth-century India's aim towards maintaining a pluralistic, secular democracy—however imperfectly realized. See Gabriel Palmer-Fernandez ed., *The Encyclopedia of Religion and War* (New York, London: 2004) p. 174. For an excellent study of Hindu-Muslim conflicts and civic life in India, see Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Yale University Press, 2002).
35. For a review, see Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007). For a recent account of partition and the Punjab, see Neeti Nair, *Changing Homelands: Hindu Politics and the Partition of India* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2011).
36. Davis, p. 39.
37. For a description of the Atari-Wagha post and discussion of the travails of crossing the India-Pakistan border, see Stephen Alter, *Amritsar to Lahore: A Journey Across the India-Pakistan Border* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) pp. 52-73, 154-170.
38. Alter, p. 53.
39. Singh, *The Grand Trunk Road*, p. 127.
40. Alter, p. 53.
41. I have drawn the brief outline from Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unending War* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus, 2003).
42. For more on this, see Sugata Bose, "Hindu Nationalism and the Crisis of the Indian State: A Theoretical Perspective" in Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal eds., *Nationalism, Democracy, and Development: State and Politics in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997); Paul Wallace and Ramashray Roy eds., *India's 1999 Election and 20th Century Politics* (New Delhi: Sage Publication, 2003); and T.V. Paul ed., *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
43. Singh, *The Grand Trunk Road*, p. 7.

No One Even Has Eyes: The Decline of Hand-Painted Graphics in Mumbai

Aaron Fine

Abstract: In this work of creative non-fiction, accompanied by coloring book plates of his own design, the author explores recent changes in Indian visual culture. An investigation of hand-painted political graphics in Mumbai revealed very little painting and a great deal about the rapidly advancing digitalization of visual space in India. As idiosyncratic and individual creative efforts are replaced by mass-produced digital printing, in what ways are India's political networks enhanced; in what ways are India's creative networks destroyed? Translators, police officers, political activists, and artists are presented through the eyes of an outsider whose own expectations about creative expression and political participation are challenged. The conclusion considers how once recycled visual culture artifacts are now junk destined for the landfill, and urges readers to color-in the whitewashed spaces of the city.

Keywords India; political graphics; waste stream; digital technology

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Someone has painted over the city. Men in uniform coveralls and orange trucks embellished with "Clean Up Mumbai!" are now sweeping the streets clean of rubbish. What will the ragpickers do when the new trash service has succeeded in cleaning the city?

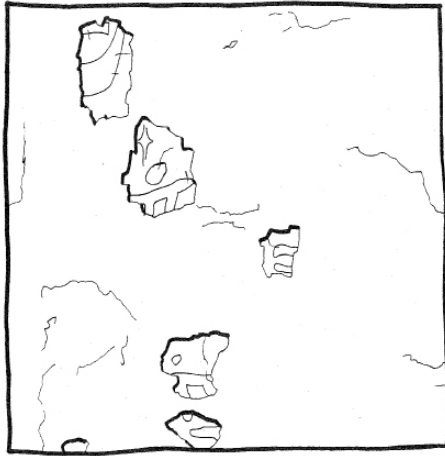
There used to be signs here, painted on these walls, claiming this or that piece of the city as the turf of some political party. Today the paintings are mostly gone. They have been whitewashed, or rather they have been painted over in various hues of thick cheap opaque paint. In places, this paint chips and flakes away. Other spots are scratched, gouged, or simply worn down by sun, time, and monsoon. The result is a beautiful palimpsest - a sense of history's textures.

Where did the sign painters go?

In the summer of 2009, I traveled to Mumbai to study the hand-painted political graphics of India. I had many promising questions to pursue: questions about literacy, political participation, and freedom of expression; questions about property rights, political thuggery, and vandalism. I wanted to ask: How important are these forms of visual communication in a country where many are illiterate and many different writing systems are used? Who is empowered to create these acts of political expression? How do the private property rights of the people



Color in the Trash Truck



Color in the Palimpsest

and canvas banners of old were repainted, reused and repurposed many times over, the new, digital prints go straight to the landfill after performing their one-time-only purpose. This essay is a reconstruction of what I learned that summer in Mumbai, about political graphics and sign painting in general.

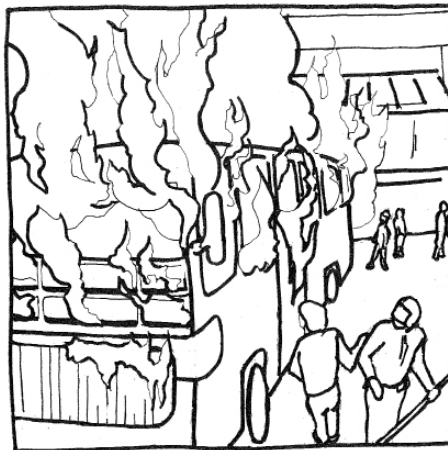
For the most part I met a wall of incomprehension or obstruction when I set about asking my questions. Some of this obstruction arose from those who wished to control political expression, and some came from those who sought to protect me from any trouble I might stir up. This work raised many doubts for me about the usefulness of notions of truth when describing complex social decisions about who does and doesn't get to make use of the visual landscape of the city.

Sitting on the low concrete wall that circles Shivaji Park, I alternate between watching men enter the gym to lift weights and gazing up at the stylish mid-century apartment buildings that line the opposite side of the street. Far across the open space where boys are playing cricket, and where on occasion huge political rallies are held, rises the equestrian statue of Shivaji. The park is named after this 17th century ruler of the people of Maharashtra, who battled the Mughal emperors and whose name is invoked by today's Hindu nationalists in their efforts to stoke anti-Muslim sentiment.

I've selected a shady spot where I can keep my temperature steady, and from where I've been able to watch the two police officers, lounging at their post on the corner. They are there watching over a more recent statue, and they have erected an awning to protect themselves from the sun. This statue is a bust of Meenatai Thackery, the wife of the founder of the Shiv Sena political party. "Shiv Sena" means "Army of Shivaji," and many describe them as a goon squad of extortionists, thugs, and arsonists. This quiet, prosperous neighborhood is ground zero for many political tensions in the region. A year or two before, someone smeared mud on that bust of Meenatai and the city was shut down by the ensuing riots,

behind the wall converge with the public right to expression in the space outside the wall? When it gets down to it, does that mural on the wall represent the views of those who live behind it, or the public in that neighborhood, or some other entity?

But when I got to Mumbai almost all of the painting that I had seen on previous visits was gone. In its place were blank walls and a new plague of cheaply produced, poorly designed digital banners. These are printed by the thousands on a synthetic fabric of no use to anyone beyond this momentary function as a banner. While the walls



Color in the Burning Bus

including burning busses. Thus, today this icon has a 24-hour armed guard, courtesy of the city police. And they are not letting me take my picture of the bust. I am hoping that when my translator, Nikhil, arrives he can convince them to let me take pictures. But he is late.

Finally, almost an hour late, Nikhil does arrive. Walking up with a youthful slouch, he apologizes, blaming Mumbai's trains for the delay. We begin talking about my project, and it takes a while to reach an understanding about what I intend to find out. When it finally dawns on him he says, "No, don't ask those questions." It occurs to me that I am being a bit naïve about local politics and just how sensitive these questions are in a city where intimidation is a commonplace political tool. Nikhil is convinced that my questions will not get any honest answers. On the contrary, they will put him in danger. No shopkeeper will want to be asked, "Who put the painting of the tiger on your wall?" or "Did you ask for that painting to be put there?" or "Whose idea was it?" "Who paid the sign painter?" or "Did you put it there to show your support of the Shiv Sena?" Asking such questions would amount to saying "What group of thugs do you pay off for protection in the event of social unrest?"

As a compromise, Nikhil does agree to talk to the police for me. We walk over and greet them. He explains who I am, that I am here to study the city's signage, my interest in other political displays such as the statue of Meenatai Thackery, and my desire to photograph it for my research. They listen, frown, and shake their heads, gesturing for us to leave. Nikhil suggests that we just drive by and take a picture before they can stop us. He seems to be warming up to our project – to the notion of shining a light on that which is hidden. But this time, I shake my head. "No thanks," I say. "It's not that important." I know the photos I want are available on the internet. Nikhil and I see the irony in this situation – why would the police prohibit photographs of an artifact whose image is widely available? But the police do not seem to be in the business of appreciating irony.

So now what?

We stand beneath art deco balconies on a street unusually free of improvised shelters for the homeless. We bat around some ideas and finally Nikhil says he knows some folks in politics. These people might help me talk to someone within one of the parties. His friends live in Daravi, Asia's largest slum. He makes a couple of phone calls, and then he says, "Let's go."

I can understand why the ragpickers are not too concerned about that new trash service honing in on their livelihood. There is, after all, a lot of trash to go around. And I also imagine that the new, disposable, western-style materialism creates a lot of trash the ragpickers simply can't use. On the other hand, when garbage cans were introduced to turn-of-the-century Paris, their inventor was accused of heartlessness for depriving the poor of an important livelihood. My own impression is no one really knows what sorts of dislocations these efforts to modernize will bring about, and no one seems to care.

Daravi is a 100-year-old slum, built by squatters on swamp land and gradually filled in. Today it is a concrete maze, the occupants having obtained the legal right to stay decades ago. And it is also a vast vote bank, crucial to election-year outcomes. Much of the industry inside Daravi is based on recycling. But much of what is not recyclable is piled onto an endless stream of trucks and hauled out of the slum. It doesn't get very far. I've watched it being hauled across the highway and dumped into more swampy areas adjacent to Daravi. I've watched these wetlands being transformed into a vast landfill – soon to be new real estate. And real estate, in a city where half the population is homeless, is worth an awful lot of money.

When I look around at the material culture of India I am “taken” by its improvised nature. This “taken-ness” is more about my own experiences of being surrounded by the standardized products of mass production than it is about Indian culture. It is easy to slip here into dichotomies wherein the colonized is described as “clever” and “resourceful” but perhaps also “quixotic,” or even “sloppy.” Nevertheless, I am fascinated by every bathroom I walk into and am under the impression that each and every one was made on the spot by a creative plumber with limited resources. Bathrooms are, of course, only one example of the myriad urban environments cobbled together and modified by individual workers. Everywhere I turn in Mumbai, I see a material culture that is profounding different from the one in which I grew up. In Kansas City (or any other U.S. City), one is surrounded by very few hand-made objects. In contrast, many of the objects in a city like Mumbai exhibit some evidence of the hand of the person who created or installed them. And even though the signs and fixtures may operate in the same manner, there is a vast difference in the material culture of these two environments. Mumbai is evidence that if human labor is cheap enough, the industrial revolution can be set on pause indefinitely. There is no need to automate or mechanize processes in order to save money on labor when labor itself is so astonishingly cheap.

If all of this is true of material culture, then it is of course true of hand-painted graphics as well. My training as an artist enhances my response to improvised material culture like hand-painted signs. My natural response is to adore the evidence of the artist’s hand in what locals regard as completely innocuous or perhaps even ugly, mundane signage. But I also know that painting these signs is (or was) someone’s livelihood. These artists combined hand skills with knowledge of visual culture and an entrepreneurial knack for working fast. In *India: A Million Mutinies Now*, V.S. Naipaul writes, “The shops, even when small, even when dingy, had big, bright signboards, many-coloured, inventive, accomplished, the work of men with feeling for both Roman and Sanskrit ... letters.” We can turn on an old black and white movie from Hollywood such as the *Maltese Falcon*, and watch the sign painters changing the text on an office window, and recall a time when such craftspeople left their mark in our cities as well.

My attempted interviews in Daravi were fruitless. Or the fruit they bore were too predictable to be of interest. The party operatives were creepily self-important and gave the answers one knew they would give. Bal Thackeray, the leader and founder of the Shiv Sena party, is a general. The party is an army. Orders are given and carried out. So, for these soldiers, my questions like “why” they once hired sign painters and “whether or not” going digital is cheaper are neither here nor there. For them the bottom line is to do what they are told, to show their solidarity, their loyalty, and to exhibit the force of that unity in all that they do.

More interesting things happened after Nikhil and I left.

Standing in the rain, in the dark, in a concrete maze, I intuit that it is time for me to reintroduce the topic of payment. Yes, Nikhil has finally admitted, after the



Color in the Political Mural

fact, that we need to pay for the privilege of speaking with the politico. I don't know for sure where the money will go. In theory, it goes to the "good causes" in which the party is involved. More likely, however, is that various hands take all of it – with the main man getting the bulk. Perhaps even my interpreter gets some? But he seems so pained by all this, not to mention that the company who provided his services strictly forbids any transaction like the one we are engaged in. I tell him it's ok, but he protests.

"No, exactly this kind of thing is very bad." His face looks oddly tight now. I realize that it kills him for me to see him, his culture, and his country, in this light. "This corruption, it's..." He mumbles a bit. "Let me tell you how it goes. You could see how that office was jammed between two buildings. That must have been an alley once. They (the people who work for the Shiv Sena) just built there and someday he will move his mother in there and no one will say anything." The office he is describing is a concrete room with a couple of bare fluorescent tubes on the ceiling, a desk at the back end, and two benches along the sides in front. Maybe 6 feet by 9 – about the size of a home in Daravi for 4 to 8 people.

Nikhil continues to tell stories to pass the time, and comments again on our predicament. "A while back, the Shiv Sena found a spot against a building where they hitched a cow. The cow is sacred and no one messes with it. Soon they say the cow needs shelter so they build a roof over it. Then it's a room and then one day the cow is gone and they have a new apartment attached to the side of the building." Nikhil flashes a smile. Story complete.

My interpreter's tale confirms my own thoughts about the interview and about my foolish questions regarding who painted the signs and who gives permission for painting them – who decides and who asks. Instead, I have realized, there is no asking and no permitting. None of the political visual culture I have studied in India – the flags, banners, murals, statues and so on – are the kinds of grass roots political expression my questions presuppose. They are instead markers of who has power in the visual landscape.

I decide to give a low guess as to how much money I should offer the neighborhood party boss: 100 rupees (about 2 dollars). He gives me an exasperated look that says, "Why are you making this worse than it already is?" So I say, "Right, I thought that might be too little. How about 500 rupees?" Rain falls on the folded paper notes as I pull out my money and hand it to Nikhil. One of the sophisticated teenagers hanging around runs over. He takes the money, puts the cash in his pocket, and disappears into the rain. Perhaps five minutes pass. I worry that my wife is concerned about me. Then someone gives us the word – we may now leave. My helpers (Nikhil, Nikhil's friends, and other young men who simply showed up) ascertain my remaining wealth, give the bulk of it to a cab driver, and bundle me off to my home on the other side of the tracks.

Imagine me in Mumbai on a sunny morning in July. I walk up and down a residential street in a middle class locale looking for the home of a former Bollywood billboard painter. I am not lost but I am also not finding my destination. There are no house numbers, no street signs, and no way to find your way around if you are not from this neighborhood. I am about to give up and walk home when I hear him call my name, lengthening the "A" sound into "Ah-aron!" I am surprised when he comes near; he is younger than I expected. He greets me like a westerner, shaking my hand.

"Oh yes, my father could not be here. I am Sushant. I am in the family business as well. I will answer your questions." Accepting this substitution, as apparently I must, I follow him into a nearby building and up 2 or 3 flights of stairs. The flat is reasonably spacious and very clean, more aesthetically pleasing than most Indian apartments. A large circular window looks out onto the street.

Against one wall leans a large canvas, a half-finished copy of a painting by Rousseau – a commissioned project for a client. The young man talks about his work on this and other jobs with clear enjoyment. He speaks to me in the familiar way painters do with one another about the desire to paint. I have learned about his family through an article in the *Hindustan Times*, a national newspaper. The article described a family who, having painted Bollywood billboards for 40 years, now makes money by painting portraits of Europeans in the Bollywood manner. I need to discern whether Sushant knows about the painting of political imagery and whether, perhaps, his family did that as well.

“Yes, we did both,” Sushant responds. “Mostly movie billboards, but also politicians. They were the same.” He offers me tea and biscuits and shows me the family photo album with discolored photographs of some of the work they have done over the years. “We employed about 30 people, would sometimes work on hundreds of canvas banners for the same movie. The tallest could be 3 or 4 stories high. My father started in ’69, opened his own business in ’79. He trained under Shoiab Diwaker and we did jobs for Rajshri Productions and Yashraj films, and also Sharuk Khan movies.” These are names even I have heard of – some of the biggest production companies in Bollywood.

I ask about the digital banners and their impact on the industry. “It started to happen in ’99 or 2000. But then by 2003, it was all over. We couldn’t believe. It was really difficult. The whole industry just went away.” I ask if he figures this is because digital banners are cheaper to produce. “Of course, even at low wages, paying for all those work hours when you could just print them out instead at 10 rupees per square foot.”

I agree with him, though I know that printing isn’t the newcomer technology. In fact, I later read a *Times of India* (another major daily newspaper) article about workers in Kerala, India being paid to paint murals of communist icons. Admittedly, the economic system in Kerala is vastly different than the Darwinian free-for-all of Mumbai. Kerala has often had a communist-led government, and thus might be expected to commission sign-painting as a jobs-creating effort. But even if digital technology doesn’t turn out to be cheaper than hand painting, it offers benefits besides economy. It democratizes design – or fools us into thinking anyone can design – and it makes the whole process of working collaboratively with images much more fluid. Also, it is a sign of being up to date.

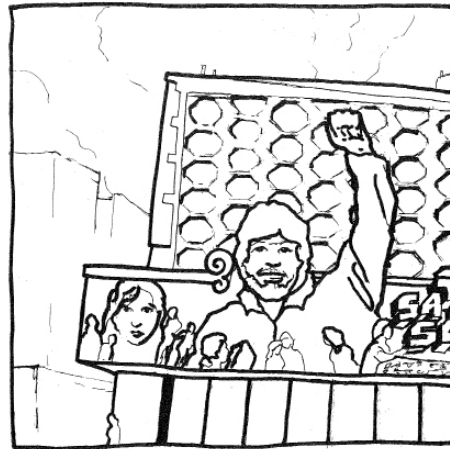
“So what did you do?”

“Most people just disappeared. They are doing something else now. We’ve [Sushant’s family] been lucky. We’ve found ways to make a living, like in that article.” He tells me about going to London, where they made a painting for an Asian culture festival. He shows me the photo of his father and others, standing by the lions in Trafalgar Square on a cold day with their colossal painting behind them, rigged up as a backdrop for a dance stage.

“And all these canvasses, the billboards, where are they now?”

“Gone. We would repaint over them quite a bit, though eventually they got so you couldn’t use them. Other people used them afterwards – as tarps.”

“So all those millions of paintings – are in the garbage or being used as tarps now?”



Color in the Bollywood Billboard

“Sure, they can be roofing in a shantytown. Or a covering for a truckload of goods.”

“That art would be worth so much now.”

“I know. And people make fakes – and make them look like they are old. There was an exhibit of this art at Osian Auction House and Gallery, and in 2007 at the Jehangir Gallery. We were never contacted, nor were the other families we know from the business. But we were curious so we went to see. And we could tell that all these paintings were made new, for that show.”

“So the work is gone. And most records of it. And most of the remains are fakes,” I said. He nodded, showing me his disgust with a shake of the head.

“Yes. People don’t care, though, about these things. Nobody even has a notion of what could be wrong.”

“And the new banners, the digital printouts?”

He waves the back of his hand at the window, dismissing the signs, the streets, the people on the other side of the glass. “No one even has eyes.”

My research project originally rested on a few naïve suppositions. One was that the hand-painted graphics of the city had any correlation with the graffiti of the west. It turns out that these were the products of industry and power, not vandalism or the voices of the powerless. And their replacement by digital printing, while representing a fundamental shift in the makeup of the visual landscape and altering the relationship of visual culture to the waste stream, may not have involved any loss in political participation. This story is intentionally presented with the limitations of my own perspective in place. Other researchers have immersed themselves more fully, given these subjects more time, and deserve recognition for their hard-won insights. The excellent website, Tasveer Ghar (<http://www.tasveerghar.net/>), and its essay on K. Madhavan, “The Norman Rockwell of South India,” by Stephen Inglis, have guided and inspired me.

Virtually the only person I met in Mumbai who really understood my project was Sujata Anandan, the Political Editor for the Mumbai edition of the *Hindustan Times*. I learned a lot from her about the development of the Shiv Sena and even about visual political culture. For whatever reason, the industrialization of printing 100 or more years ago did not drive out handcrafted graphics from India. Sujata understood that, with several exceptions, the digital has finally accomplished this. Digital media has penetrated to the smallest hamlets in Maharashtra. Top-down political communication is thus facilitated in a way that is much more fluid, immediate, speedy, and temporary than before.

So the trend is this: the institutional, commercial, and political Bollywood-style street graphics of the late 20th century have given way to a more flexible, rapid, and disposable medium. This form of expression appears to be just as undemocratic as did those older paintings. That is to say, neither the old way of painting signs nor the new way of producing them digitally is the kind of political expression that a western observer like myself might associate with graffiti or independent political protest.

The trend towards the institutionalized and commercialized creation of signage in Mumbai coincides with an effort to westernize trash services in the city – substituting a cheap disposable material culture for a more durable and reusable one. Part of that clean-up effort appears to be the growing tendency to quickly paint over any writing on walls in public spaces – substituting uniformity for the hodge podge of visual expression that once was there. The wall, being the space where private property rubs up against the public visual environment, is being reclaimed by those who own it. Meanwhile, the visual environment is filled with digital garbage.

Most of the people I spoke with in Mumbai were unconcerned with, or even unaware of, the sudden proliferation of actual trash in their visual culture. Perhaps as a global culture we can all nourish the capacity to weigh the relative visual richness or impoverishment of the materials and processes we use for visual communication. The coloring book plates that accompany this essay are of my own making. They invite you to remember and reinscribe the evidence of the human hand onto the whitewashed spaces of the city.

The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya: Visual Expressions of a Tibetan Teacher's Path and Lineage in the Diaspora

Janice M. Glowski

Abstract: With the Tibetan diaspora in the late 1950s, Tibetan Buddhism spread to nearly every continent on the globe and has begun transforming western landscapes through the construction of *stūpas*, Buddhism's principal architectural form. *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing*, located at Shambhala Mountain Center in Red Feather Lakes, Colorado and dedicated to the meditation master Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, is an especially rich example of Tibetan Buddhist visual culture in the diaspora. An iconographic analysis of the monument's exterior and interior architectural elements, sculptures and paintings, when viewed within their historical context, reveals an intimate biography of Trungpa Rinpoche's life. Specifically, the visual narrative conveys two main Tibetan Buddhist themes: the teacher's progressive path of meditation and his lineage affiliations within Vajrayāna Buddhism. In this way, the *stūpa* acts as a visual *namtar* (rNam-thar), a traditional Tibetan biography that emphasizes a teacher's personal journey to liberation and the masters who guided the way. Although located far from the Himalayas and its Tibetan heritage, *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya's* affinity to traditional Tibetan Buddhist architectural and religious modalities provides a window into Tibet Buddhism's history prior to 1959. At the same time, the monument serves as coherent, visual documentation of Tibetan art during the diaspora's early period and will, no doubt, become an increasingly important part of the tradition's historical record.

Keywords Tibet; Diaspora; Buddhism; *Stūpa*; Shambhala; Chögyam Trungpa

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The Practicing Lineage [Kagyü] places a lot of importance on the necessity to practice, to sit or meditate. Without practicing, without understanding the meaning of practice, no *real* communication or development takes place in your understanding of Buddhism, or the *buddhadharma*. . . [I]t is equally important to have a great deal of devotion for your teacher, who actually embodies the symbolism or concept of practice.¹

—Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche

With the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959 and the subsequent exodus of Tibetans to foreign lands, the world beyond the Tibetan plateau witnessed the rapid spread of Tibetan Buddhism and a flourishing of Tibetan Buddhist art. Tibetan monasteries, meditation centers, and even magazines dedicated to mindfulness practices represent only a few of the modalities that increasingly heighten Western awareness of Tibetan Buddhism. The *stūpa*, Buddhism's most ubiquitous and principal architectural form, has also made its way into Western landscapes. It is often rural communities, such as Bendingo, Australia; Eskdalemuir, Scotland; and Barnet, Vermont, that host these reliquary monuments. The



United States alone is home to more than thirty Tibetan Buddhist *stūpas*, and the numbers continue to grow.

The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing (hereafter, *The Great Stupa*), a 108-foot tall monument nestled in the mountains of Red Feather Lakes, Colorado, is an especially rich example of visual culture in the Tibetan diaspora, and serves as this study's architectural focus (Figure 1).² *The Great Stupa* was built as a reliquary for the charismatic Tibetan meditation master, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche (1940-1987), who fled the Kham region of Eastern Tibet in 1959 and subsequently taught in India, Europe, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada (Figure 2).

He went on to establish Vajradhatu (today called Shambhala), a large, international community of meditation centers and retreat locations.³ Shambhala Mountain Center, one of the community's largest retreat centers, manages and maintains *The Great Stupa* on its 600-acre remote expanse of land.⁴

The Great Stupa, like other early diasporic *stūpas* built within the first decades following the Tibetan exodus, maintains aesthetic, symbolic, and functional continuities with most Buddhist *stūpas* as they existed in Tibet just prior to 1959. For example, the monument's overall form, including a large, square, multi-tiered base, the inverted bell-shaped dome, and the thirteen-disc spire surmounted by a sun and moon disc that rises from the dome, are iconic and widespread throughout Tibet.⁵ Further, *The Great Stupa's* overall form, like that of other *stūpas*, symbolizes the body of a Buddha seated in meditation posture.⁶ Rich with "standard" iconography and symbolism, this Rocky Mountain monument could be transcribed into Adrian Snodgrass's classic 1985 monograph, *The Symbolism of the Stūpa*, as an exemplar of Tibetan-style *stūpa* architecture.

The Great Stupa further maintains ritual and practice continuities with traditional Tibetan *stūpa* architecture. First, the monument contains the relics of a recognized teacher. In this case, Chögyam Trungpa's skull-relic is encased inside a large Buddha image located in the monument's interior first level. Second, like other Tibetan *stūpas*, the relic was ritually installed and consecrated by qualified Tibetan lamas. In August 2001, Tibetan meditation masters and other monastics donned regalia and conducted traditional rituals and ceremonies over several days to empower the structure (Figure 3). Shambhala's current lineage holder, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, installed the relic while throngs of Shambhala practitioners, honored Tibetan visitors, and curious others watched the delegates engage in

Figure 1. *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing*. Photograph by Janice M. Glowski, 2006.



Figure 2. Chögyam Trungpa. Photographer unknown.

visual and musical pageantry commonly seen in Tibet.⁷ Finally, in a manner similar to that of traditional Tibetan Buddhist communities, Shambhala (and other Buddhist) practitioners have made the structure a locus of practice. Circumambulation (the clockwise move-

Figure 3. Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, the current main lineage holder of Shambhala, at the third and final *stūpa* consecration ceremony. Photograph by Janice M. Glowski, 2006.



ment around a sacred object), *śamatha* (calm-abiding meditation), and other Buddhist practices engaged in throughout Tibet are ongoing at the site.

Although *The Great Stupa* shares visual and functional features with other Tibetan *stūpas*, like all sacred architecture it is a product of its time and place.⁸ For example, *The Great Stupa*'s architectural form was constructed with a high capacity concrete intended to

Figure 4. The four gateways and entrances to *The Great Stupa*. Photographs by Janice M. Glowski, 2006.



last for generations. This material was developed through collaborative research between Trungpa Rinpoche's western students in consultation with academic specialists, government agencies, and the concrete industry.⁹ Using concrete diverges from the traditional brick and stone construction of Tibetan *stūpas*. Further, the skull-relic rests inside a specially

designed, cylindrical aluminum reliquary that is lightweight, corrosion-resistant, and sealed to keep moisture away from the relics.¹⁰ Although a new material in Tibetan Buddhist construction, aluminum furthers traditional Buddhist aspirations that a *stūpa* and its relics be preserved in perpetuity for the benefit of beings. Additionally, the monument's unique features include four large gateways at the cardinal directions, which mark entrances to *The Great Stupa's* interior first level (Figure 4).

Beginning on the east side and moving in a clockwise direction, the gateways are painted blue, yellow, red, and green, symbolizing the wisdom qualities of awakened mind.¹¹ The use of gateways to mark the cardinal directions and entrances to a *stūpa* or *stūpa* complex dates to at least the third century BCE, as evidenced by the extant remains of the large *stūpa* at Bharhut, India.¹² However, formal gateways, particularly ones that adjoin the monument, are less commonly seen on Tibetan *stūpas*. These examples illustrate just a few of the ways that *The Great Stupa's* rich display of architectural forms and community uses map the monument's Tibetan roots. The modified structural elements, like the gateways and innovative building materials, blend seamlessly with the traditional forms. The result is a visually coherent structure that can easily be categorized as a Tibetan Buddhist-style *stūpa*.

The Great Stupa's visual unity foreshadows the structure's iconographic and symbolic coherency. Its exterior symbolism readily integrates with the interior spaces, as will be apparent upon closer inspection of the monument's sculptures and paintings. Further, when the "outer" and "inner" iconographies are examined within their historical context, *The Great Stupa's* imagery moves beyond the generalized symbolism described in written guidelines,¹³ and a more intimate picture is revealed. Upon closer analysis, *The Great Stupa* becomes a document that traces Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche's personal narrative from his earliest years as a monk in a Tibetan monastery to the time of his death in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.¹⁴ In other words, the structure is a visual biography—a story that communicates through platforms, spires, sun discs, over-life-size Buddha sculptures, *maṇḍalas*, and vividly painted walls. Each visual element, thoughtfully selected and meticulously rendered, speaks the teacher's unfolding life story. In addition, the monument's art and architecture create a physical environment that, like a thoughtfully written biography, allows the viewer to engage in the teacher's life story.

All biographies are selective. No written narrative completely captures an individual's life. Instead, biographies highlight historical events or circumstances that the biographer deems most significant. In this case, the 20th century meditation master Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche was the final authority on the monument's iconography and construction, and he appointed Benchen Tenge Rinpoche to serve as the principal, hands-on guide.¹⁵ One could say that these teachers served as biographers and, upon Trungpa Rinpoche's death, they, like authors of written biographies, reflected upon the master's life journey and identified aspects of it that were significant to communicate. In particular, they sought narrative details that would be of benefit to future practitioners. When one reads the visual biography of Trungpa Rinpoche's life, as told through the structure's iconographic program, a demonstrably traditional Tibetan Buddhist message becomes apparent. This Tibetan narrative conveys two overarching themes. First, the monument recounts the teacher's journey on the Tibetan Buddhist progressive path of meditation. This aspect of the story's symbolic communication begins at the *stūpa's* base and continues progressively up the monument, including the interior iconographies, to the top of the spire. The second major theme communicated through *The Great Stupa's* forms and iconographies is Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche's lineage affiliations, conveyed mostly by the *stūpa's* interior iconography, located on the monument's three interior levels. Perhaps nothing more incisively character-

izes Tibetan Buddhism than lineage, which can be described as the historically unfolding relationships between teachers and students. Through this relationship, meditation practices and scholarly training are transmitted from teacher to student. Ideally, in Tibetan Buddhism, this process establishes an unbroken thread of teaching, learning, and practical training in meditation that can continue into future generations. During a lunar New Year address to his students in 1978, Trungpa Rinpoche acknowledged the direct relationship between awakening, meditation practice, and lineage when he spoke about the bond he had formed with his students. He stated, "...I possess *buddha-nature* because [of] my personal training, my personal discipline, and, of course, my lineage. And for you, from your American point of view, you have managed to cut through the spiritual materialism and [been] able to ... study with me."¹⁶ In other words, Trungpa Rinpoche described that he was able to realize his inherent *buddha-nature* because of his meditation training and the instructions he received from his teachers. Likewise, Trungpa Rinpoche's American students were also able to overcome obstacles and authentically engage with the lineage tradition.¹⁷ Although other Buddhist traditions, such as the Zen tradition of Japan, also convey the importance of the progressive path of meditation and lineage, these concepts are the hallmark of Tibetan Buddhism.¹⁸

In this essay I suggest that *The Great Stupa's* emphasis on Trungpa Rinpoche's path of meditation and lineage affiliations, as communicated through visual biography, echoes the Tibetan Buddhist oral and written biographical tradition called *namtar* (Wylie: *rNam-thar*) or "complete liberation."¹⁹ The term points to a *namtar's* emphasis on important life events related to an individual's progressive path toward awakening or enlightenment, including auspicious meetings with teachers, meditation transmissions, and life teachings. *Namtars* can be inspirational by showing that the great masters also encountered (and overcame) obstacles. *Namtars* also encourage practitioners to stay the course of meditation practice and remind them of the traditional sources of inspiration and refuge: the teachers, the teachings, and the community of practitioners,²⁰ rather than conventional, *samsaric* motivations. In the words of Tsultrim Allione, a renowned Tibetan Buddhist lama of American descent who also studied with Trungpa Rinpoche, "The *namtar* are specifically geared to provide records for those on a spiritual quest, in much the same way that someone about to climb a high mountain should seek out the chronicles of those who had made the climb before."²¹ For this reason, *namtars* play a prominent role in Tibetan Buddhist lineages.

The Kagyü lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, Trungpa Rinpoche's primary lineage affiliation, has produced some of the most beloved and colorful *namtars*. The story of Jetsün Milarepa (1040-1123/4), a great *yogi* who overcame tremendous obstacles of anger, hatred, and the effects of past harmful actions through an arduous path of practice and the tutelage of his strict and uncompromising teacher, Marpa Lotsawa (1012-1097), figures prominently among the Kagyü *namtars*.²² Milarepa became renowned for his unwavering commitment to practice as a hermit in the Tibetan mountains, surviving for long periods of time on nothing but nettle soup, becoming a Kagyü lineage holder, and singing spontaneous songs of realization or experience (*dohās*) as a mode of teaching his students. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's (c. 1910 – 1928) autobiography, *Brilliant Moon*, constitutes a contemporary *namtar* written in the first, rather than third, person.²³ In the text, Khyentse Rinpoche, a respected teacher that served as the head of the Nyingma lineage for a time, first describes the place and circumstances of his birth, followed by the auspicious life events that allowed him to train as a *yogin*. The majority of the autobiographical portion of the book describes his encounters with great teachers who gave him instruction and transmissions of meditation practices, his twelve years of solitary retreat, the numerous *dohās* that he composed

along the way, and the important circumstances in which he taught. In sum, the book conveys the teacher's unfolding path of meditation over his lifetime, the lineage of teachers who guided and inspired him, and his subsequent role as a teacher. As seen in these examples, although *namtars* provide a general roadmap for Tibetan Buddhist practitioners, they are distinctive, with each story providing details of the individual's unique *karmic* unfolding and personal circumstances. As a visual *namtar* of Chögyam Trungpa's path of practice and lineage affiliations, *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya* conveys the general, unfolding path of meditation as it is conceived in Tibetan Buddhism, and also includes specific practices and teachings that were central to Trungpa Rinpoche's progressive path, lineage affiliations, and later work as a teacher.

The visual *namtar* told at the *The Great Stupa* communicates Trungpa Rinpoche's



Figure 5. Diagram of *The Great Stupa*, showing the monument's exterior symbolism. Prepared by Greg Smith.

training in the three-*yāna* path of practice and study. The monument's exterior primarily symbolizes the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna aspects of his meditation and study, while much of the interior spaces express the Vajrayāna or esoteric aspects of his training. To clarify briefly, Tibetan Buddhism follows a three-*yāna*, or three-vehicle, system. The *yānas* in this system include the Hinayāna, Mahāyāna, and Vajrayāna methods for practice and study. These constitute training that is progressive, or unfolding in nature, rather than three separate "schools" of Buddhism, as the three-*yāna* system is sometimes described. Hinayāna (Foundation vehicle) practice and study emphasizes important preliminary mind training and exploration of an individual's personal situation.²⁴ Its main practices, including *śamatha*, help stabilize the practitioner's mind, bring familiarity with how the mind works, culti-

vate physical and mental pliancy, and foster the capacity for one-pointed focus.²⁵ Tibetan Buddhists maintain that, on the path of meditation, individuals should attend to their own minds and circumstances before extending outward to others.

A more expanded view characterizes the Mahāyāna (Great vehicle). Here, the motivation for practice and study moves beyond individual concerns and emphasizes practicing for the benefit of other sentient beings. Mahāyāna practices, including *tonglen* (*gtong len*), or sending and receiving, are meant to cultivate one's innate compassion and ability to act skillfully in the world for others.²⁶ The Vajrayāna, though sometimes referred to as a distinct school in Tibetan Buddhism, is more accurately viewed as a subset of the Mahāyāna tradition. Having essentially the same overarching motivation as the Mahāyāna, this third *yāna* introduces practitioners to advanced meditation practices that often involve visualizations and are intended to help students move quickly along the path of practice. The close *samaya*, or vow-bound, relationship between an advanced teacher and student characterizes the Vajrayāna.

Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche trained in Tibetan Buddhism's three-*yāna* system, a process that began at an early age just after his identification as a rebirth of the tenth Trungpa *tülku* (title given to the rebirth of great masters). According to Trungpa Rinpoche's autobiography and oral tradition, the head of the Karma Kagyü lineage, the Gyalwang Karmapa, discovered the Trungpa *tülku* rebirth through visions. One vision located the new *tülku* in the Nangchen Kingdom of Kham. The second vision provided more specifics: "The door of the family's dwelling faces south; they own a big red dog. The father's name is Yeshe-dargye and the mother's Chung and Tzo; the son who is nearly a year old is the Trungpa Tülku."²⁷ Trungpa Rinpoche was quickly taken to Dütsi Tel, the monastic seat of the Trungpa *tülkus* from among the Surmang monasteries. After more testing and an installation ceremony, Chögyam Trungpa became officially recognized as the eleventh rebirth in the Trungpa line, which is traced to the 15th century meditation master, Trungmase Lodrö Rinchen.²⁸ Like most *tülkus* in Tibet, once the child was recognized and enthroned as the supreme abbot of Surmang, he began his meditation training.

The visual *namtar* of Trungpa Rinpoche's life on *The Great Stupa* begins at the base and moves upwards until it reaches the first golden disc on the 13-disc spire (Figure 5). The outer portion of the monument conveys key aspects of the Tibetan Buddhist path's Hīnayāna stage. The monument's base contains three tiered levels identified as the three jewels of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha. Marking formal entrance into Hīnayāna practices, these steps signify the Refuge Vow taken by any practitioner upon choosing to become a Buddhist. Trungpa Rinpoche's autobiography confirms that at the time of his enthronement, he took the Refuge Vow. The Gyalwang Karmapa served as preceptor for the ceremony. Trungpa Rinpoche's hair was cut and the following vow was recited: "From today I take refuge in the Buddha. From today I take refuge in the Dharma. From today I take refuge in the Sangha."²⁹ With this, the child officially entered the Buddhist community, the Hīnayāna path of practice, and the Kagyü lineage.³⁰

Four tiered steps located above the *stūpa*'s base signify the four immeasurables, a set of aspirations for self and other that are introduced during the Hīnayāna and read and contemplated by practitioners. The four immeasurables are loving-kindness (*maitri*), compassion (*karuṇā*), joy (*mudita*), and equanimity (*upekṣā*), and are expressed through the following aspirations: *May all beings be happy and have the causes of happiness, May they be free from suffering and the root of suffering, May they not be separated from the great happiness that is devoid of suffering, May they come to rest in the great equanimity that is free from passion, aggression, and aversion (prejudice)*. These well-known, foundational Buddhist

trainings appear in the early Pali Canon and later Sanskrit texts.³¹ The four immeasurables are so central to Tibetan Buddhist practice that Khenpo Gangshar Wangpo, one of Trungpa Rinpoche's main tutors, invoked them during the Kham revolts. At a time when the Chinese were destroying monasteries, teachers were fleeing the country, and Kham rebels were engaged on the battlefields, Khenpo Gangshar instructed the monks to move beyond traditional ritual formalities and sectarian divisions and support the laity by offering the Refuge Vow and the four immeasurables, as a way to bring foundational mindfulness and awareness to the revolts. The intention was to bring awareness to all actions and to emphasize contemplation involving "human rights and non-violence" during these especially "anxious times."³²

The bell-shaped dome, or *bumpa*, provides further Tibetan symbolism along the path of practice. The dome symbolizes the seven elements of enlightenment (*sapta bodhyaṅgā*) and the platform located below the spire (*harmikā*) symbolizes the eight-fold path (*āryāṣṭāṅgamārga*). The seven elements of enlightenment are translated as mindfulness, awareness, diligence, joy, mental flexibility, meditation, and equanimity.³³ Historically, texts discuss these as either the conditions that allow one to become enlightened or the factors that are concurrent with enlightenment. The eightfold path is the fourth "Truth" of Śākyamuni Buddha's first teachings, called the Four Noble Truths (*catvāri āryasatyāni*) that took place at Sarnath following the Buddha's enlightenment under the *bodhi* tree at Bodhgaya in eastern India.³⁴ Like the four immeasurables, the Four Noble Truths are foundational instructions given to students when they enter the Hīnayāna path of Tibetan Buddhist practice. As with all *tülku*, the seven elements of enlightenment and the eight-fold path were preliminary, foundational instructions in Trungpa Rinpoche's Hīnayāna studies. These also were some of the first instructions Trungpa Rinpoche imparted to his Western students when he taught in the United States.³⁵

The tiered discs (*bhūmis*) that surmount the *bumpa* and *harmikā* make direct reference to the Mahāyāna path of practice. The thirteen *bhūmis* symbolize the path and attainments of the *bodhisattvas*, awakened beings that meditate and engage for the benefit of others. These discs, which emerge from the Hīnayāna levels of the *stūpa*, express the practitioner's shift into Mahāyāna. Taking the *bodhisattva* vow formally marks the transition from the Hīnayāna to the Mahāyāna view of practice. The vow signifies the practitioner's commitment to be reborn until all sentient beings no longer suffer.

Despite the infiltration of Chinese spies into the monasteries and the eventual, complete Chinese occupation of Tibet, Trungpa Rinpoche was able to maintain his three-*yāna* training in the monastery. Describing his work in a seminary during this time, Trungpa Rinpoche writes, "...I was able to go on working ... with about thirty other students under Khenpo Gangshar, and had more or less completed my studies in *Hīnayāna* (basic teaching) and *Mahāyāna* (wider teaching)..."³⁶ He briefly describes the circumstances surrounding his taking of the *bodhisattva* vow:

Since I was now eleven years old I had to spend my time on more advanced work. I was called back to Dūdtsi-til to take the Bodhisattva vow although I had already taken it informally at the time of the wangkur [empowerment rite]: the vow is as follows: 'In the presence of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and of my teacher Rolpa-dorje, I vow to proceed towards Enlightenment. I accept all creatures as my father and mother with infinite compassion. Henceforth for their benefit I will practice the transcendental virtues (*paramitas*) of liberality, discipline, patience, diligence, meditative concentration, wisdom (*prajñā*) and skillful means (*upaya*), spiritual

Figure 6. The moon, sun, and jewel surmounting *The Great Stupa's* spire. Photograph by Janice M. Glowski, 2006.

power, aspiration, gnosis (*jnana*). Let my master accept me as a future Buddha, but as remaining a Bodhisattva without entering Nirvana so long as a single blade of grass remains unenlightened.¹³⁷

Tibetan Buddhist practitioners who are empowered to teach typically also take the *bodhisattva* vow, becoming vow-bound, to ensure that they will only use the teachings for the benefit of beings, rather than for selfish or otherwise harmful purposes. Taking the vow at Dütsi Tel, the formal seat of the Trungpa Tülkus, underscored Trungpa Rinpoche's connection to the Kagyü lineage and his responsibilities within the Trungpa lineage.

The upper three golden discs on the *stūpa's* spire symbolize attainments of the *bodhisattva* and are sometimes associated with Vajrayāna practice. *Stūpas* that represent only the Hīnayāna-Mahāyāna path of practice tend to include just the first ten *bhūmis*. Trungpa Rinpoche trained in the three-*yāna* system; thus, it is logical that *The Great Stupa* includes the additional three discs. A golden parasol, moon, sun, and, finally, a jewel surmount the spire of gold discs (Figure 6). The parasol indicates unconditioned compassion, while the sun and moon represent the inseparable union of wisdom and compassion, respectively. The jewel symbolizes complete enlightenment. Thus, when read from bottom to top, the monument's exterior forms communicate the three-*yāna* path to enlightenment. Like Trungpa Rinpoche's meditation path, the Hīnayāna serves as the foundational component, with an expansion into the Mahāyāna path of the *bodhisattva*. The *stūpa's* visual biography clarifies the value Tibetans place on the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna trainings. Tibetans widely accept that enlightenment can be attained through the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna aspects of



Figure 7. East (main) entrance to *The Great Stupa*. Photograph by Janice M. Glowski, 2006.



the path, although it is believed to be a slow process that can take innumerable lifetimes. Tibetan Buddhism incorporates Vajrayāna practices as skillful means that allow the practitioner to take a more expedient course of action, ideally allowing awakening to occur in one lifetime.

The Great Stupa's visual *namtar* communicates the Vajrayāna aspects of Trungpa Rinpoche's life primarily through the sculptures and paintings located on the monument's interior upper levels. This "inner" symbolism reveals some important esoteric teachings and transmissions in the teacher's life. These areas of the *stūpa* are accessible to Vajrayāna practitioners. Preparation for Vajrayāna practices and teachings can take many years, as indicated by the *stūpa's* outer symbolism, and not



all Tibetan Buddhist practitioners choose to enter into the practices of this *yāna*. To access the *stūpa*'s Vajrayāna shrines, one first enters the main entrance on the monument's east side (Figure 7). Large glass doors with copper trim open into a spacious, publically accessible first floor, which houses meditation cushions and a small table for offerings of

Figure 8. Śākyamuni Buddha making a teaching gesture (*dharmacakramudrā*). Photograph by Greg Smith.

water, candles, and incense. As a public space, practitioners can meditate, sit quietly, walk around the room, or listen to a recording that discusses *The Great Stupa*. An over-life-size, golden image of Śākyamuni Buddha, dressed in monastic robes and making a teaching gesture (*dharmacakramudrā*), serves as the monument's main public image and houses Trungpa Rinpoche's skull-relic and other sacred texts, including the Tibetan translations of Śākyamuni's teachings called the *Kanjur* (Figure 8).³⁸ The walls bear minimal decoration, save for regularly placed decorative pilasters, two of which frame the main shrine image. Behind the Śākyamuni sculpture, a closed door marks the entrance to a staircase that leads to the interior Vajrayāna levels.

Vajrayāna practices were central to Trungpa Rinpoche's training. According to his autobiography, despite the upheavals in Tibet and growing pressures by the Chinese, Trungpa Rinpoche was able to complete the rigorous *ngöndro* (*sngon 'gro*), or preparatory training, typically undertaken before Tibetan Buddhists enter into the Vajrayāna. He describes his *ngöndro* as including 100,000 full-body prostrations, 100,000 recitations of the Triple Refuge, 100,000 *mantra* recitations (likely the Vajrasattva *mantra*), 100,000 *maṇḍala* offerings, and 100,000 *guru yoga* recitations.³⁹ As with the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna stages on the path, a vow formally marks one's entry into the Vajrayāna. The *samāya*, or Vajrayāna, vow indicates a complete and unbreakable commitment between a *guru* and the disciple, until enlightenment occurs. By becoming vow-bound with a



Figure 9. Four-Armed Mahākāla (Great Black One) located in *The Great Stupa*'s stairwell. Photograph by Greg Smith.

teacher, one also enters into an intimate relationship with the lineage and stream of teachings and practices that emerge from him or her. In addition to becoming a Vajrayāna practitioner of the Kagyü lineage, Trungpa Rinpoche eventually was empowered by the Gyalwang Karmapa as a Vajrāchārya, “a spiritual master of the highest level,” further confirming his authorization to lead students along the path and through the Vajrayāna.⁴⁰ Trungpa Rinpoche’s relationship to the Vajrayāna, therefore, included both his personal path of practice and role as a propagator of the Kagyü lineage. The door behind the Śākyamuni Buddha image is one of the structure’s functional elements. It allows those with permission to enter the monument’s interior Vajrayāna spaces. Within the broader context of a visual *namtar*, however, it can be read as both Trungpa Rinpoche’s personal entrance into the Vajrayāna, and the practice opportunities he provided for his students during his lifetime.

The steep, turning staircase that leads to the interior second level passes by a six-foot tall image of Four-Armed Mahākāla (Great Black One) (Figure 9). Four-Armed Mahākāla, a primary protector of the Surmang Trungpa *tülku*s, held significant import for Trungpa Rinpoche, as indicated by his flight from Tibet at the age of nineteen on April 23, 1959.⁴¹ Leading a large party of approximately one hundred and seventy people, many of them women and children, he carried only his most precious items.⁴² Among these was a gilt, copper alloy Four-Armed Mahākāla sculpture that he identified as a protector of Surmang Monastery.⁴³ This small sculpture was used as a model for the Four-Armed Mahākāla image located in the stairwell between the *stūpa*’s first and second levels. A nephew of Trungpa Rinpoche, Karma Senge Rinpoche of Kyere Monastery, part of the Surmang monasteries, further expressed Trungpa’s connection with this protector. In a 2005 interview, he told of Trungpa Rinpoche’s retreat at Kyere in 1959 and his encounter with Four-Armed Mahākāla shortly before he fled Tibet. When his retreat ended and he began preparations to return to Dütsi Tel, Trungpa Rinpoche had a premonition that his monastery would soon fall under Chinese control. He decided to delay his departure in response to a divination that warned of dangers, despite his monks’ urgent requests for his return and their confident messages that there were “no Chinese at Dütsi Tel.” According to Karma Senge, Trungpa Rinpoche soon thereafter “had a vision of Four-Armed Mahakala [at] a high pass called Yul La that you have to cross to get from Kyere to Dütsi Tel. Trungpa Rinpoche saw Four-

Figure 10. Cakrasaṃvara and Vajrayoginī. Detail of the main sculptures on the interior second level. Photograph by Greg Smith.



Armed Mahakala standing on the pass looking in the direction of Kyere, and Four-Armed Mahakala said, ‘Don’t go to Dütsi Tel.’⁴⁴ Shortly thereafter, the Chinese overtook Surmang and seven Chinese officials entered the monastery asking for Trungpa Rinpoche. His monks felt the circumstances matched the prophecy, so they sent word for their abbot to remain at Kyere.

This example demonstrates a practical form of protection that vow-bound beings like Four-Armed Mahākāla offer to the Tibetan Buddhist lineage holders and Vajrayāna practitioners. Trungpa Rinpoche also taught a more inner understanding of the term “protection” when teaching his Western students:

‘Protection’ does not mean securing your safety, but it signifies a reference point, a guideline which reminds you, keeps you in your place, in the open. For instance, there is a mahakala protective divinity called Six-Armed Mahakala who is black in color and stands on Ganesha, the elephant-headed god who here symbolizes subconscious thoughts. The subconscious gossip is an aspect of slothfulness that automatically distracts you from being aware and invites you back to being fascinated by your thoughts and emotions. It especially plays upon the survey nature of your thoughts—intellectual, domestic, emotional thoughts, whatever they may be. The mahakala brings you back to openness. The intent of the symbolism is that the mahakala overpower subconscious gossip by standing on it. The mahakala represents the leap into penetrating awareness.⁴⁵

The Four-Armed Mahākāla sculpture’s presence in the *stūpa*, then, does more than recall important moments in Trungpa Rinpoche’s life story and the *tülku*’s connection within the Kagyü lineage. As part of *The Great Stupa*’s visual narrative, it allows Trungpa Rinpoche’s



students to share in and appreciate aspects of their teacher’s life and his lineage that they also hold. Further, as practitioners entering the monument’s Vajrayāna areas, the Four-Armed Mahākāla sculpture reminds them to awaken into unbiased awareness when they enter the monument’s esoteric spaces.

The Vajrayāna interior spaces, located on the interior second and third levels, are shrine rooms dedicated primarily to Cakrasaṃvara and Vajrasattva, respectively. The *stūpa*’s artists⁴⁶ iconographically rendered a three-dimensional Cakrasaṃvara Maṇḍala (meditation diagram) on the interior second level. Although smaller than the main hall on the first

level, the second level provides Vajrayāna practitioners with enough space to walk about, meditate, study, and engage in group practice. The twelve-foot sculptures of Cakrasaṃvara and Vajrayoginī occupy the room’s central space (Figure 10). These precisely sculpted meditational figures, or *yidam* (*yi dam*), stand in close embrace, symbolizing the inseparable

Figure 11. Offering goddess of the Cakrasaṃvara Maṇḍala. Painting detail located in *The Great Stupa*’s interior, second level shrine room. Photograph by Greg Smith.

Figure 12. Detail of the Vajrasattva and Vajrāṭopā sculpture on the interior third level. Photograph by Greg Smith.



union of the masculine and feminine principles: *upāya* (skillful means) and *prajñā* (best knowledge or knowing), or *karunā* (compassion) and *śūnyatā* (wisdom or emptiness). The experience of their inseparable nature is sometimes translated as luminosity-emptiness. Detailed paintings of offering goddesses and other key *maṇḍala* elements visualized during the practice of the Cakrasaṃvara Sādhana cover the room's walls and ceiling (Figure 11). Cakrasaṃvara symbolism at the *stūpa* also extends beyond the second interior level. The four large, colored gateways on *The Great Stupa's* exterior signify entrances into a Cakrasaṃvara palace.⁴⁷ The symbolic overlay of *maṇḍalas* and *stūpa* architecture can be traced to Buddhist art's early history.⁴⁸ In the case of *The Great Stupa*, the gateways' dramatic

presence accentuates the *maṇḍala* symbolism and visually underscores the importance of the Cakrasaṃvara Sādhana in Trungpa Rinpoche's life and lineage.

Several other sources indicate that the Cakrasaṃvara Sādhana was an important practice in Trungpa Rinpoche's life. According to Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, a meditation master who guided Trungpa Rinpoche's students after his death, Trungpa Rinpoche achieved "awakening" on his progressive path through the meditation practice of Cakrasaṃvara.⁴⁹

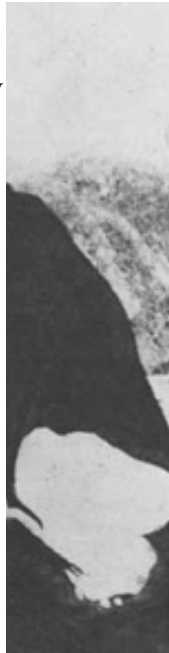
Figure 13. Padmasambhāva (second from the right) and the eight great Indian *vidyādhara*s. Detail of paintings on the ceiling beam in the interior third level shrine. Photograph by Greg Smith.



Indeed, Khyentse Rinpoche was responsible for specifying that *The Great Stupa* include the unique gateways.⁵⁰ The Cakrasaṃvara Sādhana was also widely taught and practiced at Surmang and was, and still is, a central Vajrayāna practice within the Kagyü lineage, in general. In a talk given by Trungpa Rinpoche and transcribed for *The Mishap Lineage*:

Transforming Confusion into Wisdom, he describes the importance and extensive use of the Cakrasaṃvara practice at his monastery in Tibet. "...[W]e also have the Surmang version of the complete mandala performance of the Chakrasaṃvara Sadhana, which was translated into a form of dance. That was the discovery of the teacher of the First Trungpa, Trung Ma-se."⁵¹ He continues the dance's main characteristics and symbolism in detail, his affinity for the dance practice, and his accomplishment of memorizing the entire dance. His aspirations to teach the dance, however, were never realized due to the Chinese invasion.⁵² According to Fabrice Midal, one of Trungpa Rinpoche's students, Trungpa Rinpoche's brief life he only transmitted a few of the countless esoteric practice transmissions he received in Tibet to his Western students. The Cakrasaṃvara Sādhana was one of them. He conferred the first Cakrasaṃvara initiation for the first time in Spring 1986 despite his failing health,⁵³ indicating the importance of this practice to his own path, his connection to the Kagyü lineage, and his Vajrāchārya commitment to his students.

The iconography in the *stūpa*'s interior third level furthers the message of progressive path and lineage in Trungpa Rinpoche's life. Measuring nineteen feet in diameter and sixteen feet high,⁵⁴ the monument's interior third level provides a more intimate space for practice and contains fewer iconographic elements than the second interior shrine room. An over-life-size sculpture of white Vajrasattva and Vajrātopā, seated in close embrace, serve as the main image (Figure 12). In describing this *yidam*'s symbolism, *The Great Stupa*'s commemorative volume uses a quotation from *The Words of My Perfect Teacher* by Patrul Rinpoche (1808–1887). In the text, the famous Nyingma teacher states that Vajrasattva and Vajrātopā represent primordial purity, which is inseparable from the nature of one's root teacher.⁵⁵ The sculpture, therefore, constitutes a preeminent reminder of lineage. That the commemorative text uses a quotation from a nine-



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Figure 14. Jamgön Kongtrül of Shechen, Trungpa Rinpoche's root teacher. Photograph by Chögyam Trungpa. Used by permission of Diana J. Mukpo.



Figure 15. Chögyam Trungpa teaching in the presence of his guru, Jamgön Kongtrül of Shechen. Photograph by Blair Hansen.

teenth century Nyingma teacher to describe the image's lineage symbolism strengthens this connection. Further, Trungpa Rinpoche's students sometimes describe this interior space as a Mahā Ati shrine room and their teacher as a Mahā Ati master.⁵⁶ The Atiyogā or Dzogchen (*rdzogs-chen*) practices are not exclusive to, but are often associated with, the Nyingma lineage.

Finally, Padmasambhāva and eight great Indian *vidyādhara*s are depicted in paintings on the ceiling beams (Figure 13). Today, many Tibetans refer to Padmasambhāva as the "second Buddha." They acknowledge him, in part, for his skillful actions during the first propagation of Buddhism into Tibet, and view him as the first lineage holder of what is later identified as the Nyingma (ancient) lineage. The eight *vidyādhara*s, like Padmasambhava, are early teachers that figure centrally in the Nyingma tradition as holders of the Eight Great Sādhana teachings and are widely respected by the broader Tibetan Buddhist community. These iconographies point to an important non-sectarian aspect of Trungpa Rinpoche's life. Trungpa Rinpoche's connection to the Karma Kagyü lineage has been firmly established. His affiliation with the Nyingma lineage, as suggested by *The Great Stupa's* interior third level, stems in part from his root *guru* (*tsawé lama, rtsa ba'i bla ma*), Jamgön Kongtrül of Shechen (c. 1901-1960). A prominent teacher from Shechen monastery, one of the six primary Nyingma monasteries, Jamgön Kongtrül had close associations with both Kagyü and Nyingma lineages (Figure 14). This dual lineage affiliation resulted from events that took place in the 19th century.

At a time when powerful monastic leaders refused to transmit teachings outside their lineage, thereby placing many teachings and practices at risk of being lost, three renowned masters—Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Tayé (Jamgön Kongtrül the Great) of the Kagyü lin-

Figure 16. Kālacakra (Wheel of Time) Maṇḍala. Ceiling of the first level interior shrine room. Photograph by Greg Smith.



eage (1813–1899), Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo of the Sakya lineage (1820–1892), and Chogyur Dechen Lingpa of the Nyingma lineage (1829–1870)—initiated a *ri-me* or “non-sectarian movement.” Their efforts in gathering texts and practice transmissions resulted in large, eclectic anthologies, such as the *Rinchen Terdzö*. Because of their actions, one of Jamgön Kongtrül the Great’s second incarnations, Jamgön Kongtrül of Shechen (Trungpa Rinpoche’s teacher) trained in a *ri-me*-inspired environment. Jamgön Kongtrül of Shechen similarly conferred the full *Rinchen Terdzö* transmission to Trungpa Rinpoche at Shechen Monastery.⁵⁷ In addition to his root teacher, Trungpa Rinpoche also studied with other important Nyingma teachers throughout his life, and stressed the significance of the *ri-me* movement to his students. It should be noted that the *ri-me* movement did not develop into an additional sectarian stream. Rather, it cultivated an attitude of tolerance and appreciation among the lineages and preserved many of the transmissions that were nearly lost. When describing the *ri-me* movement, Ringu Tulku states, “Each [lineage] is full of strong points and supported by valid reasoning. If you are well grounded in the presentations of your own tradition, then it is unnecessary to be sectarian.”⁵⁸ Trungpa Rinpoche remained rooted in



Figure 17. Detail of Kālacakra and Vishvamata at the center of the Kālacakra Maṇḍala. Photograph by Janice M. Glowski, 2006.

the Kagyü lineage, while simultaneously training in and transmitting Nyingma teachings and practices (Figure 15). Indeed, his training took place in *ri-me* milieus. It is not surprising, then, that *ri-me* attitudes

permeate *The Great Stupa*’s practice environments. Vajrayāna students of any lineage affiliation are permitted to enter and practice in the monument’s restricted upper shrine rooms. This non-sectarian setting also extends to the monument’s first level, where the iconography points to a distinctive aspect of Trungpa Rinpoche’s life.

The Great Stupa’s visual narrative returns the viewer to the interior first level, where the ceiling painting and main sculpture communicate a traditional Tibetan Buddhist story about an enlightened kingdom called Shambhala. The story symbolizes a unique aspect of Trungpa Rinpoche’s life teachings—the establishment of enlightened society through meditation and social engagement. The story’s symbolic importance in Trungpa Rinpoche’s life is clear, particularly given its iconographic prominence in the reliquary monument.

The immense sculpture-reliquary of Śākyamuni, which simultaneously functions as the main shrine image, commands the space. The towering golden figure draws the eye upward to the ceiling, which is covered by a depiction of the Kālacakra (Wheel of Time) Maṇḍala (Figure 16). Replete with lively figures, animals, wish-fulfilling vases, and other Buddhist symbols, the painting's plethora of color is accentuated by the simplicity of the adjoining white walls. The *maṇḍala*'s main figures, Kālacakra and Viśvamāta, stand in the center of an eight-petalled lotus that floats on a deep blue background (Figure 17). Their presence helps identify the painting as the Kālacakra Maṇḍala. Kālacakra and Viśvamāta hold each other in close embrace, mirroring each other's stance. The *yidam*'s complex iconography includes Kālacakra's twenty-four armed, four-faced, four-colored body (blue, yellow, red and white) and Viśvāmāta's eight-armed yellow form.⁵⁹ This elaborate painting spreads canopy-like above the Śākyamuni sculpture.

When considered together, the Kālacakra Maṇḍala painting and the Śākyamuni sculpture iconographically reference a popular Tibetan Buddhist story of enlightened rulership and the Kingdom of Shambhala.⁶⁰ In a well-known Tibetan legend, King Dawa Sangpo, a great monarch and first ruler of the legendary Kingdom of Shambhala, requested teachings from the Buddha that would allow the king to advance spiritually without becoming a monk and foregoing his responsibilities as a monarch. The Buddha responded to Dawa Sangpo's request by imparting the Kālacakra Tantra to him, which he diligently practiced, thereby ultimately attaining realization. The citizens of Shambhala, benefitting from enlightened rulership, enjoyed great peace and prosperity. Dawa Sangpo's story describes a practitioner fully engaged in meditation training, while simultaneously remaining in society rather than entering a monastic path. This model matches the paradigm expressed in Trungpa Rinpoche's twentieth century Shambhala instructions that are among the most important practices and lineage threads in his *namtar*.⁶¹

The history of Trungpa Rinpoche's Shambhala-related teachings begins with his role as a *tertön* (*gter ston*) or treasure revealer. Trungpa Rinpoche is said to have received numerous *terma* (*gter ma*) or hidden treasures related to Shambhala throughout his lifetime, including introductory and advanced teachings and practices on the cultivation of enlightened society.⁶² In Tibet, the recipient of *terma* becomes the first lineage holder of the practices that were transmitted. Trungpa Rinpoche, therefore, is the first lineage holder of the Shambhala teachings and practices that he received. Following Trungpa Rinpoche's death, his eldest son, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, became the main holder of the Shambhala lineage.

Although Trungpa Rinpoche continued to transmit the Buddhist teachings until the time of his death, he dedicated significant amounts of time during his last ten years transmitting the Shambhala teachings and practices he had received as *terma*. The Shambhala *terma* resonates with Tibetan Buddhism, but it has distinctively secular characteristics.⁶³ In this "sacred secular" path, individuals wishing to undertake meditation training can be from any religious tradition. Today, the Shambhala teachings and practices mark the community's commitment to social change,⁶⁴ as accomplished through personal meditation training and social engagement, which is referred to as a path of "warriorship."⁶⁵ Through practice and social engagement rather than monastic life,⁶⁶ the Shambhala community, like Dawa Sangpo, intends to engage fully in both meditation practice and society. The story of Dawa Sangpo, then, serves as a paradigm that exemplifies Trungpa Rinpoche's aspiration for the realization of enlightened society through a personal commitment to meditation.

Chögyam Trungpa's rich and varied life began in a remote, nomadic region of Eastern Tibet and unfolded as he travelled across the globe. Detailing only his major life events, including his work in a refugee camp in India, academic study at Oxford University in Eng-

land, establishment of Naropa University in Colorado, and creation of retreat and meditation centers throughout the world could fill volumes. Such work has already begun through written biographies, memoirs, and online chronicle projects, to name just a few.⁶⁷ But if one had to capture the most essential aspects of his life—from a traditional Tibetan Buddhist perspective—and convey their import through the mediums of concrete, clay and paint, the final product would look a lot like *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya* in Red Feather Lakes, Colorado. This visual biography of a Tibetan *tülku*'s life, which spanned three continents, selectively focuses on the meditation practices and lineage affiliations that provided continuity throughout his journey. Like written *namtars*, *The Great Stupa* records these important aspects of Trungpa Rinpoche's life with the intention of teaching and inspiring future practitioners. Through its artistic forms, one can learn about key elements of this renowned teacher's biography while glimpsing two essential aspects of Tibetan Buddhism: lineage and the progressive path of meditation.

Readers of written Tibetan *namtars* connect to a teacher's life narrative through words and mental images, visualizing the journey in their minds. Visitors to *The Great Stupa*, on the other hand, physically encounter the teacher's presence and artworks that convey his life story. In walking through the eastern entrance, they enter the *guru*'s mind, as Tibetans often say. Religion scholar John Strong's suggestion that the Buddha's relics are "*an expression and extension of the Buddha's biological process*"⁶⁸ corroborates the notion that a Buddhist reliquary can function as biography. From this perspective, Trungpa Rinpoche's skull-relic could similarly be viewed as an extension of his biological life. *The Great Stupa*'s visual *namtar*, then, would be the biography that provides historical context for Chögyam Trungpa's ongoing life narrative.

NOTES

1. Chögyam Trungpa, *The Mishap Lineage: Transforming Confusion into Wisdom* (Boston & London, Shambhala Publication, Inc., 2009), 3.
2. Unless otherwise noted, the information contained in this paper is based largely on several site visits to *The Great Stupa*, which began in December 1999. I extend my appreciation to the Shambhala *saṅgha* for their generosity and numerous formal and informal conversations with me. I especially would like to thank Carolyn Gimian, Larry Mermelstein, Greg Smith, Joanne Fordham, Joshua Mulder, and Hellen Newland (editors, translators, artists and senior students of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche) for reading draft versions of this article and offering many invaluable suggestions. The research presented here is part of a larger, global study of Tibetan Buddhist *stūpas* in the diaspora.
3. Shambhala. <http://www.shambhala.org> (accessed December 21, 2012).
4. Shambhala Mountain Center. <http://www.shambhalamountain.org/> (accessed January 12, 2013).
5. The iconometrics used for *The Great Stupa* were taken from the teachings of 19th century Tibetan master Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Tayé. Personal communication, Larry Mermelstein. For further information on *stūpa* guidelines and other fine arts iconometrics, see Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye, *The Treasury of Knowledge, Book Six, Parts One and Two: Indo-Tibetan Classical Learning and Buddhist Phenomenology*. Gyurme Dorje, ed. and trans., Kalu Rinpoche Translation Group. (Boston: Snow Lion Publications, 2012), 177-291.
6. Adrian Snodgrass, *The Symbolism of the Stūpa* (1985, reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992), 360-365.
7. A richly illustrated commemorative publication for the 2001 consecration ceremony describes the monument's history, construction and symbolism. See *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing* (Boulder, CO: Vajradhatu Stupa Publication, 2000).
8. This article addresses some of *The Great Stupa*'s formal and material innovations that resulted from its historical context. It should be noted that broader social, economic, political, and cultural circumstances affected Tibetan *stūpas* built in the diaspora. The impact of these factors on the monuments and their related communities is also an important research area. For an example of this emerging field of study, see Sally McAra, "Buddhifying Australia: Multicultural Capital and Buddhist Material Culture in Rural Victoria" in *Buddhism in Australia: Traditions in Change*, Cristina Rocha, Michelle Barker, eds. (Oxon, UK and New York: Routledge, 2011), 63-73.
9. *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing*, 43.
10. *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing*, 80.
11. *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing*, 53-55.
12. Sir Alexander Cunningham, *The Stūpa of Bharhut: A Buddhist Monument Ornamented with Numerous Sculptures Illustrative of Buddhist Legend and History in the Third Century BC* (1879, New Delhi: Munshi-

- ram Manoharlal Publishers, 1998).
13. See for example Jamgön Ju Mipham Gyatso's (1846-1912) writings on *Stūpa* construction in Robert Beer, *The Encyclopedia of Tibetan Symbols and Motifs*, 4th ed. (Chicago: Serindia Publications, 2004) and Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye noted previously.
14. Chögyam Trungpa was cremated at Karmê Chöling, a Shambhala retreat center in Vermont. The *purkhang* (*pur khang*), a *stūpa*-like monument used for the cremation, still stands as an object of veneration at the site.
15. Personal communication. Also see *The Great Stupa Which Liberates Upon Seeing*, 23-27.
16. Chögyam Trungpa, "First Shambhala Day Address: Year of the Earth Horse." 1978. *The Chronicles Project*. MP3 file. http://www.chronicleproject.com/stories_342.html (accessed December 3, 2012). For a thorough discussion of spiritual materialism, a term coined by Trungpa Rinpoche, see Chögyam Trungpa, *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism* (1973, Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 2008).
17. Tibetans also acknowledge the attainments of meditators who are not part of Śākyamuni Buddha's lineage, such as the *pratyekabuddhas*. See Reginald Ray, *Indestructible Truth: The Living Spirituality of Tibetan Buddhism* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2000), 74, 81.
18. For a brief introduction to Tibetan Buddhism's historical place among Buddhist traditions in Asia, see Donald S. Lopez, Jr., "Introduction: The Buddhism of Milarepa" in *The Life of Milarepa* by Tsangnyön Heruka, Andrew Quintman, trans. (New York: Penguin Group, 2010), ix-xviii.
19. J. D. Willis, "On the Nature of rNam-thar: Early dGe-lugs-pa Siddha Biographies," in *Soundings in Tibetan Civilization*, Barbara Nimri Aziz and Matthew Kapstein, eds. (1982, Delhi: Manohar Publications, 1985), 304-319. For information on the Tibetan language transliteration systems used here, see The Tibetan and Himalayan Library, <http://www.thlib.org/reference/transliteration/> (accessed March 14, 2013).
20. These constitute the "three jewels" of Buddhism, the Buddha, the *dharma*, and the *saṅgha*. These become the objects of refuge once a practitioner has taken the Refuge Vow. In the Vajrayāna context, the objects of refuge become the *guru* (teacher), the *yidam* (meditation being), and the *dharmapāla* or *ḍākinī* (protectors).
21. Tsultrim Allione, *Women of Wisdom*, (Ithaca: Snowlion Publications, 2000), 131. Eva Dargyay discusses the inspirational power of *namtar*, particularly as they are used to describe the reigns of Tibetan kings who supported the *Buddhadharma* and became known as *dharmarājās*. See Eva Dargyay, "Strong-Btsam Sgam-po of Tibet: Bodhisattva and King," in *Monks and Magicians: Religious Biographies in Asia*, by Phyllis Emily Granoff, Koichi Shinohara, eds. (1988, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1994), 99-113.
22. Tsangnyön Heruka, *The Life of Milarepa*.
23. Dilgo Khyentse, *Brilliant Moon: The Autobiography of Dilgo Khyentse*, Ani Jinba Palmo, trans., Michael Tweed, ed. (Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 2008).
24. The historical development of the three-*yāna* system in Tibet and its relationship to Indian Buddhism, including terms like Hinayāna, Theravāda and Mahāyāna is complex. For a summary discussion see John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism* (1995, Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2007). For a thorough discussion of Tibetan Buddhism's three-*yāna* progressive path of meditation, including the view, practices and fruitions of each *yāna*, see Reginald Ray, *Indestructible Truth*.
25. For a detailed outline of the Hinayāna stages of meditation and their outcomes, see John Powers, 81-94.
26. For a detailed outline of the Mahāyāna stages of meditation and their outcomes, see John Powers, 94-109.
27. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet* (1966, Boston & London: Shambhala Publication, Inc., 2000), 25-26.
28. Greg Zwahlen, "The Shambhala Sangha and Tibet: A Brief History," in *The Dot: The Newspaper of Shambhala* vol. 6, no. 1 (Spring 2008), 1, 6-7. See also Chögyam Trungpa, *The Mishap Lineage: Transforming Confusion into Wisdom*, 20-23.
29. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet*, 29.
30. The actual refuge ceremony was likely more elaborate than Trungpa Rinpoche's simple description suggests, given that most Tibetan Buddhist ceremonies incorporate music, chanting, special dress, and the presence of meditation masters and other community members. But, as with most Tibetan biographies, the author conveys only the essential aspects of the teacher's life.
31. Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices* (1990, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 208-209.
32. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet*, 121.
33. *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing*, 29.
34. For the Four Noble Truths as expounded in the Pali Canon, see Pali Canon Online. <http://www.palikanon.org/en/sutta-pitaka/transcribed-suttas/majjhima-nikaya/108-mn-141-saccavibhanga-sutta-the-exposition-of-truths.html> (accessed January 3, 2013).
35. Chögyam Trungpa, *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, 177-194.
36. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet*, 115.
37. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet*, 56.
38. *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing*, 80. As part of the monument's speech consecration ceremony held in 2006, archival CDs of Trungpa Rinpoche's teachings, numbering approximately 3,000 lectures, ceremonies and other events, were installed elsewhere in the *stūpa*. Today, an MP3 player continuously plays Trungpa Rinpoche's teachings.
39. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet*, 57.
40. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet*, 261.
41. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet*, 164.
42. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet*, 205. Oral histories of the escape frequently state that three hundred

- refugees were in Trungpa Rinpoche's group.
43. For a photograph of the sculpture brought by Trungpa Rinpoche from Surmang, see http://www.archives.shambhala.org/gallery_surm.php (accessed December 12, 2012).
44. Nalanda Translation Committee. <http://nalandatranslation.org/projects/articles/karma-senge-rinpoche-on-kyere-monastery-and-trungpa-rinpoche/> (accessed January 5, 2013).
45. Chögyam Trungpa, *The Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa, Volume 3*. Carolyn Rose Gimian, ed. (Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 2004), 172.
46. Trungpa Rinpoche's western students, with some assistance from Bhutanese sculptors, were the primary artists of *The Great Stupa's* artwork. Personal communication with Greg Smith.
47. *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing*, 53.
48. Adrian Snodgrass, 129-131.
49. Jeremy Hayward, *Warrior-King of Shambhala: Remembering Chögyam Trungpa* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2008), 359.
50. *The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing*, 53.
51. Chögyam Trungpa, *The Mishap Lineage*, 87.
52. Chögyam Trungpa, *The Mishap Lineage*, 89.
53. Personal communication.
54. Shambhala Mountain Center. <http://www.shambhalamountain.org/great-Stupa/great-Stupa-symbolism> (accessed January 2, 2013).
55. See Patrul Rinpoche, *The Words of My Perfect Teacher: A Complete Translation of a Classic Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, Padmakara Translation Group, trans. (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2004), 226.
56. Personal communications.
57. Chögyam Trungpa, *Born in Tibet*, 74.
58. Ringu Tulku, *The Ri-me Philosophy of Jamgön Kongtrul the Great: A Study of the Buddhist Lineages of Tibet*, Ann Helm, ed. (Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, 2006), Chapter 1.
59. For a didactic, three-dimensional visual modeling and discussion of the Kālacakra Maṇḍala, see The Kālachakra Maṇḍala. <http://www.cs.cornell.edu/~kb/mandala/> (accessed February 3, 2013).
60. For a discussion of western and traditional views about the Kālacakra, see Roger Jackson, "The Kalachakra in Context" in Geshe Lundup Sopa and Roger Jackson, *The Wheel of Time: The Kalachakra in Context* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1985), 1-50.
61. For an oral history describing Trungpa Rinpoche's commitment to the cultivation of enlightened society, see Hayward, 246.
62. For examples of Trungpa's Shambhala *terma* transmissions in the United States, as conveyed through oral histories, see Hayward, 140-141, 250-253. In addition, according to oral histories, before Trungpa Rinpoche left Tibet he began receiving Shambhala *terma*. These included a several hundred-paged *terma* text, later referred to as *The Golden Dot: The Epic of Lha, the Annals of the Shambhala Kingdom*. The text, unfortunately, was lost during his escape from the Chinese. Trungpa Rinpoche rewrote only the first two chapters. Dr. Robin Kornman, a scholar of comparative literature who analyzed the chapters, states that they draw primarily on "...the creation myths found in Tibetan royal chronicles and in the *Epic of Gesar of Ling*. These literary works evoke the cosmology of indigenous Tibetan traditions, rather than Buddhism." The story of King Dawa Sangpo and his Shambhala Kingdom, as communicated through *The Great Stupa's* first level iconography, similarly draws on ancient metaphors of enlightened kingship. See Robin Kornman, "The Influence of the Epic of King Gesar of Ling on Chogyam Trungpa" in *Recalling Chogyam Trungpa*, Fabrice Midal, ed. (Boston & London: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 2005), 363-364.
63. To clarify, the Kālacakra Tantra was transmitted and widely taught in India and Tibet from an earlier date and is not part of Trungpa Rinpoche's Shambhala *terma*. See John R. Newman, "A Brief History of the Kalachakra Tantra," in Geshe Lundup Sopa and Roger Jackson, 51-91.
64. For a compelling discussion of Shambhala society through the lens of comparative social and political philosophy, see David Cummsky, "Comparative Reflections on Buddhist Political Thought: Aśoka, Shambhala & the General Will" in *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy*, Steven Emmanuel, ed. (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell Publisher, 2013), 536-552.
65. Shambhala. http://www.shambhala.org/about_shambhala.php (accessed January 23, 2013).
66. The Shambhala *saṅgha* includes a monastic community, located at Gampo Abbey in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, which hosts a three-year retreat center called Söpa Chöling. The majority of Shambhala practitioners, however, are householder-practitioners. Not all, but many, of the Shambhala householder-practitioners engage in Vajrayāna teachings and practices, including those visually articulated at *The Great Stupa*.
67. For example, see The Chronicles of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche. <http://www.chronicleproject.com> and The Chögyam Trungpa Legacy Project. <http://www.chogyamtrungpa.com>.
68. John Strong, *Relics of the Buddha* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 5.

