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## Book Reviews

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## VII. BOOK REVIEWS

Paul, Robert A.

1982

**The Tibetan Symbolic World.** University of Chicago Press, 347 pages

Reviewed by: James Fisher  
Carleton College

A few years ago Professor Melford Spiro wrote a paper entitled "Whatever happened to the Id?" One thing that happened to it is that one of Spiro's students, Robert Paul, has been nursing it along, in its Oedipal manifestations, as the core of his book, The Tibetan Symbolic World, appropriately subtitled Psychoanalytic Explorations. For Paul, unlike most mainstream American anthropologists (who trace their intellectual lineage back to the Boas-Mead-Benedict position that we are infinitely malleable creatures), believes that "the tabula is far from rasa and that . . . there are nontrivial aspects of human nature which it is essential to take into account in any discussion of either particular people or particular groups of people." Unlike the sociobiologists, who believe in a genetically fixed human nature, Paul contends that "the Oedipus complex is primarily a theory not of individual life histories and their little dramas, but rather of the phylogenetic basis of human social organization in general . . . . It is, in short, a social and cultural theory as well as a psychological one." The reason that Oedipal symbolism is universal is that it is generated everywhere by the same political, social, and cultural problem: the succession of generations. The unresolved and eternally unresolvable conflict inherent in the nature of human existence stems from the fact that societies continue while individuals come and go; the succession of junior males involves, ultimately, the death of senior males, who therefore are driven to see junior males as rivals to be killed. Each generation must both kill, and not kill, the other.

The argument is a complicated one, but of interest to readers of this journal because Paul believes that the energy generated by such generational conflicts places "rigor, order, coherence, and necessity" in a wide range of Tibetan ethnographic materials which otherwise seem "bizarre, unorganized, whimsical, and pointless."

Paul illustrates his thesis by showing how diverse Tibetan cultural phenomena, described in ten substantive chapters, represent symbolic responses to the "generative core problematic" sketched in Chapter One. His psychoanalytic perspective unifies what are otherwise two rather different sorts of data. The chapter on Descent and four chapters on religion (Cosmology and Pantheon; Religious Roles; Two Rituals (funerary rites and Mani Rimdu); and Pawa Charenzi and the Maternal Image) are based primarily on doctoral fieldwork among Solu Sherpas in the 1960's. The other five chapters are an Oedipal reworking of Tibetan history and classical Tibetan literature: The Life of Padma Sambhava; Four Tibetan Dramas; The Life of Milarepa; The Tibetan Epic: Gesar of Ling; and Tibetan Royal Traditions. Throughout, the aim is to make all of these well-known ethnographic and literary examples more intelligible by reference to the primordial, consistently recurring Oedipal conflict which informs them.

Those who are unpersuaded by the psychoanalytic framework of the book will still be intrigued by its grand sweep and provocative examples. The reincarnate lama becomes "living proof of the legitimacy of the monks' claim to the possibility of asexual reproduction, the eternal dream of the male sex." But only someone already committed to the whole Freudian enterprise will be convinced either that "throughout Tibetan lore, events taking place in caves should be interpreted as occurring in the womb or the female genitals" or that the mystic syllables Om and Hum are attempts to reproduce phonation at the breast and gain their power from evoking the experience of nursing. What is commonly hailed as the jewel in the lotus turns out to be the breast in the mouth.

One of the merits of this book is that many of its insightful observations do not require acceptance of its Freudian premises. His ingenious discussion of yaks involves not just their horns, which are, predictably, hard and phallic, but also their existence in herds, which serve as handy symbolic models for the primal horde organization of human society. And even though it comes as no surprise, with the reverberations of Levi-Strauss that ring through these pages, to learn that the triumph of Milarepa and of Buddhism in general is nothing less than the triumph of culture over nature, Paul's discussion of these and their topics is lively and engaging. These snippets do not do justice to the richness of Paul's text, which is full of long, careful, detailed, fully argued cases which, piled on one after the other, provide the kind of massive coherence that constitutes "proof" of such an analysis.

What we end up with is a novel view of Tibetan culture — a view from and of its psychic interior. It is neither a straightforward Tibetan/Sherpa ethnography, nor is it, certainly, the meanings that Tibetans and Sherpas themselves consciously hold, but rather an "explanation at the level of structure." As Paul writes in his concluding chapter: "My analytical system cannot pretend to predict or anticipate all the various possible

solutions [to the intergenerational problem] which can be invented, nor can it claim to show what are the external forces which influence the choice of one particular kind of solution as opposed to another. All it claims to do is to show, once the creation of a symbolic construct has occurred, how the generative rules of the system have been obeyed. Far from being an exercise in reductionism, my study may be thought of as a celebration of the protean powers of creativity and ingenuity demonstrated by the human symbolic faculty in the face of the monotony of concerns thrust upon us by inner necessity." Regardless of exactly where, and in what proportions, the creativity and ingenuity lie (in Tibetan and Sherpa culture, or in the anthropologist's rendering of it), this is a welcome and stimulating addition to the anthropology of Tibetan peoples.

**Peissel, Michel**

**The Great Himalayan Passage.** Boston: Little, Brown.

Reviewed by: Nagendra  
(Reprinted from The Rising Nepal, November 29, 1983)

The readers of this column may have had occasion, sometime ago, to go through examples of misinformation of Nepal culled out of pages of some 'standard' reference books. Here I am back in the game, once again, with yet some more such instances. And, this time, the relevant excerpts are torn right out of the pages of an "expert's" account of Nepal, namely, "The Great Himalayan Passage". The "expert" in question is Michel Peissel!

Relevant excerpts: "Although the Ghurkas were recruited from all the twentyfive tribes which constitute the population of Nepal, the British had soon formed a preference for four tribes of Tibetan origin — the Gurung, the Magars, the Rais, and the Limbus," writes he at one place. How he came to the figure of "twentyfive" in respect of the "Nepalese tribes" is best known to himself!

Elsewhere, he goes on to say, "Very short, ...Rai faces look far more mongolian than those of the Tibetans, or even the Mongolians". No comments, pass on!

Having visited areas like Mustang at least twice in the course of his sojourns in Nepal, one would imagine that Peissel, at least, was familiar with Hindu shrines like Muktinath almost next to the Nepal - Tibet border. But no. He is perhaps unaware even of Kathmandu's myriad Hindu temples, for he has this to say of Barah Chhetra: "On the way, we stopped at Barachhetra, a Hindu shrine which marked the northern limit of the Hindu religion". However, heard that Barah Chhetra, right in the south Nepal terai, formed the "northern limit" of Hinduism?

"When I arrived fifteen years ago," so goes another utterly misleading, if not mischievous, statement, "there were no telephones in the (Kathmandu) valley, practically no cars, not one truck . . ." To those familiar with the Nepalese scene, this is nothing short of a canard. This he wrote in 1972, and, from his own account, he was in Nepal earlier in the late fifties. Would any of my elderly readers believe that there were "no cars, not one truck," in Kathmandu at the time? We have it on the authority of Sirdar Bhim Bahadur Pande that there were no less than 500 cars in Kathmandu in 1955. Was Peissel blind-folded, then, when he visited Nepal? And what about the telephones? It is common knowledge that many houses in Kathmandu had phones even during the Rana regime!

"On New year's Day, April 12th, ceremonies were staged in all the towns and villages of the Valley, where great crowds gathered to witness the holy Jackneys (magician-priests) plead for rain and foretell the future," Peissel goes on. It is obvious that he means "Jhaankris", not "Jackneys". But even then, do the Jhaankris officiate in Nepal's New Year Day functions?

And whoever heard that "the new Chinese road built in 1963 which links Kathmandu with Lhasa in Tibet ... and is closed to all foreigners and most Nepalese"? But that's exactly what he says!

Here is another astounding revelation: "Brahmins...range from Thakuri Brahmins (warriors), through the Chetri"...etc. One is thus led to believe that Thakuris are Brahmins, and so are the Chhetris. Also, that the Brahmins are the "warrior castes" of Nepal!

"A young daughter is considered a sacred object ... a son is naturally considered even more sacred, since he alone can aid his father after death to cross the limbo of the spirits into paradise ... Indeed, a Brahmin with no children will often adopt a little girl, just for the merit derived from marrying her off." But having said that "a son is considered even more sacred than a daughter," Peissel does not explain why it is that Brahmins "often

adopt a girl" in preference to a boy! I for one would be tempted to tell this "expert," Peissel, to get his facts straight before wasting his breath in writing books on Nepal!

Did you know, dear readers, that Hinduism was getting the better of Buddhism in India? And did you know the reason thereof? Here it is: "The social attraction of the (Hindu) caste system is so great that today there are practically no Buddhists left in India, and Hinduism is spreading all over the subcontinent". To all of us Hindus who consider the caste-system the greatest single social evil, the statement that it was this very system that "attracted" Buddhists will certainly come as great news. But so what? An "expert" is an "expert." Who are we to challenge him?

"A Gurung apparently places all his wealth upon his wife, and most of these ladies have as many rings as they can afford on their fingers, huge discs attached to the lobe of their ears, little discs sewn into the top of the ear, and one or sometimes two large rings in their noses, not to mention innumerable bracelets and pendants," writes Peissel. It is astonishing that he witnessed these practices — and ornaments — only amongst the Gurungs, and not amongst others in Nepal.

Minor lapses: At many a place, Peissel drops in hints that he is well-versed in the Tibetan language. Having given us to understand, at one place, that the word "Tamang" is derived from Tibetan and that it means "many horses," he goes on to say, elsewhere, that "the Tamang language differs from the Tibetan more than the Magar language"!

Also, the meaning of the term Tamang, as given by Santabir Lama, a reputed Tamang himself, differs from Peissel's in so far as it stands for "cavalrymen", not "many horses". Misspellings like Gora Pani (for Ghode Pani), Daveghat (for Devighat), Machupuchari (for Machha-puchhare), Ghurka (for Gurkha) abound in the book under reference. But they can be considered minor lapses. To conclude, here is another great verdict that Peissel has passed on the Botes (or Botays): "The Dunwar Maji and Darai tribesmen, collectively known as Bots, live by fishing." Once again, no comments!

**Snellgrove, David L. and Tadeusz Skorupski**

1977      **The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh, Vol. 1 Central Ladakh.**  
Westminster, U.K.: Aris & Phillips. 144 pages, 147 illustrations,  
20 color plates, 3 maps, Hardbound.

1980      **The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh. Vol. 2. Zangskar And the Cave Temples of Ladakh.** 166  
pages, 85 illustrations, 8 color plates. 1 map. Hardbound.

Reviewed by:      Paljor Tsarong  
                         University of Wisconsin-Madison

The review begins with certain observations and comments and the rest is a summary.

The title of the volumes, "The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh," begs the question of what cultural heritage we are concerned with. But as usual in the case of Tibetan-speaking areas, it is Buddhism.

In a sentence, we can say that the two volumes are mainly concerned with the description and analysis of various iconographic representations the authors encountered in their travels in Ladakh and Zangskar.

Volume I consists of a general presentation of Buddhist heritage in Ladakh with a look at images and paintings in monasteries and castles as well as various rock-carvings and stupas. It also has a specific purpose of analysing the paintings at Alchi Monastery. Both of these subjects are accompanied with geographical and historical data and brought to reality and given life through a description of the present day conditions in Ladakh.

Volume II complements the first volume very well. Both part three and part four, the biography of Rinchen Zangpo and the inscriptions are either concerned directly or associated with the specific study in the first volume on the early monastery of Alchi. It also follows the general pattern of description of individual sites as well as geographical and historical information on the area.

These two volumes must be considered one of the most important sources dealing with Ladakh. Their specific contribution lies in the history, description and analysis of images, statues, paintings and other representations found mainly in the numerous monasteries and certain secular institutions. They rank with what I find are few

important sources on Ladakh. I include, below, a very selected number of English language sources which I hope HRB readers will find useful. The most important one will always be the Tibetan one, the Ladakh Gyalrab. A number of manuscripts were used and translated by A.H. Fracke in a two volume rendition called the Antiquities of Indian Tibet. The use of numerous Tibetan sources highlights this yet another important historical work, The Kingdom of Ladakh by Luciano Petech. Two other sources of importance are Ladak, Physical, Statistical, And Historical by Alexander Cunningham and Ladakh and Western Himalayan Politics: 1819-1848 by C.L. Datta.

The volumes of The Cultural Heritage of Ladakh attempt an ambitious and admirable task of studying a multitude of sites, mainly monasteries belonging to all the religious sects of Tibetan Buddhism. At the same time such a task does result in certain shortcomings. I will confine the discussion to only one religious sect, the Drigung Kagyu.

The authors state that Lamayuru and Phiyang are the only two monasteries in Ladakh that belong to the Drigungpas (Vol. I, 21). This, of course, is not correct, for there are three main monasteries and around 45 other smaller ones. The one main monastery which is not mentioned is Phuntsog-cho-ling or Sharchukhul situated in the Lalok area of Eastern Ladakh. Its cho-zhi (estate) compares to that of Phiyang, it has twice as many monks and is rich in religious artistic expressions. The reason this monastery was excluded is probably that the authors were not able to visit the area since it is closed to tourists and scholars. This then should make one aware that the two volumes, although talking about Ladakh and Zangskar, are only concerned with monasteries and other sites which lie within the tourist-permitted areas. They do not include monasteries and sites in other areas of Ladakh and Zangskar which are situated in the restricted areas. It is important to point this out because the authors fail to do so and the reader would be unaware of it. At the same time it is the very reason why it renders such statements as the one referred to above untrue.

The authors are also not quite sure as to who founded the Drigung monastery of Phiyang. One statement mentions that it " ... was founded in the 16th century by King Taski Namgyal who invited the Grand Lama of 'Brigung" (ibid). Another statement says that the founder was Kun-dga Grags-pa (Vol. I, 123). Now we know from Tibetan Drigung sources and from local oral historical accounts that Choje Dema Kunga Drakpa (Kun-dga Grags-pa) was the head of the Drigung establishments at Gyangdrak monastery (Mount Kailash area). So he is not the Grand Lama of Drigung ('Brigung of quotation). On this matter, English readers should consult Luciano Petech's "The 'Bri-gun-pa Sect in Western Tibet and Ladakh" in Louis Ligeti edited, Proceedings of the Csomo De Koros Memorial Symposium; Budapest, 1978. The correct statement is that Kunga Drakpa founded Phiyang Monastery during King Tashi Namgyal's time, although local oral traditions say it was during the reign of King Jamyang Namgyal.

Aside from these elementary facts there are others that draw certain comments. Regarding Lamayuru monastery, the authors mention some information on a temple being knocked down in 1971 (Vol. I, 21). This is interesting information because aside from the one temple they visited (must be referring to Senghesgang), local tradition has it that there were four others. It is unfortunate that the authors were not able to visit two neighboring temples at Wanla and Kangi which function under Lamayuru administration and are also associated with Rinchen Zangpo. Limited information on these two temples can be found in two Tibetan language sources written by two local Ladakhi scholars. These are the three volumes entitled, The Monasteries of Ladakh by dGe-rGan dKon-mChog-bSod-Nams and An Introduction to the History, Monastery, Castles and Buddhism in Ladakh by Thupstan Paldan. Since they are about the monasteries and other sites they complement the two volumes in question.

There is a very insightful and truthful statement on Phiyang monastery which time has unfortunately rendered untrue today. This makes one aware that it has been seven years since many of the materials on Ladakh were collected and that things are always changing. The statement is regarding the "Head-lama of Phiyang" who actually should be correctly called the Choje, the representative of Drigung Labrang in Tibet, appointed in 1956-57 to look after all the Drigung monasteries in Ladakh. The authors felt that Phiyang monastery was not very well run since the "head-lama" was married and was more interested in politics than religion (Vol. I, 123). All this has changed since 1978 when the head of the Drigung sect, Drigung Kyamgon Chetsang Rimpoche, came to reside in Ladakh. Today he personally sees to the administration and a feeling of Drigungpa revitalization and resurgence has taken hold.

These then comprise a few shortcomings and comments in the sections on one religious sect and its two monasteries. To what extent these shortcomings exist in the descriptions of other traditions and their numerous monasteries, as well as other sites covered in the two volumes, is a question I am not qualified to answer. But even if they did exist, one must consider them to be only minor when one looks at the main objectives of the volumes.

When we look at the objectives, the principle one being the description and analysis of iconographic representations in Ladakh and Zangskar with special emphasis on Alchi monastery, the authors achievements are more than outstanding. I doubt it can be done any better. Even when the writers are outside the realm of their main subject matter and are dealing with present day issues like economic development, military economy and its effects, ethnic Buddhist-Muslim interactions and problems of transportation, their views are stimulating and accurate. They are also very sympathetic and extremely concerned about the slow but sure withering away of the Buddhist cultural heritage.

The two volumes are and will always remain the most important sources on the Buddhist cultural heritage and art history of Ladakh. Any serious scholar or travelling scholar caught studying or wandering about Ladakh and Zangskar without them will be greatly handicapped. Therefore, I feel that the importance of the two volumes necessitates a formulation of the various materials covered. These are presented below in a summary from whose specific length will enable the reader to acquire a comprehensive idea on what each chapter or parts contain.

Volume I, chapter 1, entitled "Cultural Background," begins with the geographical setting. It describes the road from Srinagar to Leh-Ladakh and east with brief comments on the villages, mountain passes, monasteries and citadels, rock carvings and inscriptions along the way. Historically, it presents Ladakh as the recipient of early Buddhist cultural influences from Kashmir and India, and, from the 10th century onwards, from Tibet. The various artistic forms are shown to relate to these influences.

The longest section of the chapter comes under the sub-heading of "Phases of Buddhist Doctrine" and begins with a brief mention of Buddhism at the time of Asoka and at places like Gandhara and Mathura. Then follows a discussion on the ideological evolution and explanation of the Buddha Image through time as well as its iconographic representations. The first Buddha images produced around 400 years after the death of Sakyamuni Buddha are mentioned and the Bodhisattva idea is discussed with its stimulus for chronological changes in the Buddha images. The Buddhist concept of numerous Buddhas, the seventh being Sakyamuni, and Maitreya, the eighth-to-be, and their representations are characterized as Historical Buddhas. The diffusion of Christian cosmic and spatial conceptions into Indian Buddhism is seen as the stimulus for "cosmic" Buddhological changes. Amoghasiddhi, the Buddha of the North, Ratnasambhava, the South, Amitabha, West, Akshobhya, East and Vairocana the central Buddha are described and their hand-gestures, color and associated Goddesses distinguished.

The Five Buddhas are known as the Five Tathgatas because of the word's meaning of absolute transcendence; a transcendence whose relationship to phenomena is symbolized by the mandala. The mandala's symbolism, meaning and structure, as well as its surface variations are described in some detail.

The final section of the chapter, "External Cultural Influences," sees the Tibetanization of Ladakh with its monasteries and forts as the only prominent historical legacy still surviving. It was Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055) under the patronage of King Ye-Shes 'od of Guge who built the early temples of Ladakh. It was done in the Tibetan style with the artistic expressions, objects and paintings being those of North-West Indian and Buddhist Kashmiri. Nepalese influences are not ruled out. Later influences include Persian and Moghul, Tibetan and Chinese. The diffusion of these artistic expressions is seen to be essential to the understanding the art history of Ladakh.

Chapter two, "Early Monasteries of the Time of Rin-Chen bZang-Po," is the main focus of Volume I. It includes briefly two monasteries, Lamayuru and Mang-gyu, and the rest of the chapter is devoted to the monastery of Alchi. Lamayuru belongs to the Drigung Kagyupa branch of Tibetan Buddhism. Its religious tradition and historical role in Tibet along with the monastery's one main temple and some rooms are very briefly mentioned. Mang-gyu receives even shorter attention and the authors sidetrack into an interesting note on how and why they got to Mang-gyu as well as the subject of polyandry and ethnic Muslim-Buddhist fertility.

The general introduction of Alchi village begins with a note on the problems of spelling Ladakhi place names, and then follows a description of the geographical location of Alchi valley, means of approach, village subunits, stupas and temples. The description of the monastery includes its general situation and a brief comment on various temples and stupas.

The first temple discussed is the Assembly Hall. It is concisely defined, and its foundation attributed to sKal-ldan Shes-rab, around the early 11th century. A royal drinking scene depicting a Tibetan king and queen is analyzed for its chronological importance, and a description of a four headed Vairocana and his entourage follows. The mandala section describes six mandalas whose subject is the central Kunrig (Sarvavid). Also mentioned are the latter's associated divinities. A central Mahakala painting receives less attention than his

entourage, which is done in an interesting Tibeto-Kashmiri style, dating around the 11th century. The section concludes with miniature paintings, inscriptions and wood carvings in and around the courtyard to the assembly hall.

The next temple discussed is a three-storied one called the Sumtsek. The pillars and beams are said to be Western Himalayan in architectural style. Stupas, and images of a Bodhisattva, Avalokitesvara, Maitreya and Manjusri adorn the ground floor. Paintings of Vairocana, Avalokitesvara, Prajnaparimitra, mandalas and miniature paintings decorate the second story. The third contains mandalas and five Protector Deities. Various inscriptions bear historical as well as religious information on Alchi. All the various representations are considered in discussing style, and what may be old or new, touched up or redone.

Three other temples, Lhakhang Soma, Lotsawa, and Manjusri, are described along with their various iconographic representations. The chapter wraps up with an account of three stupas and a chronological note on the Alchi murals.

Chapter three, "Citadels and Royal Residences," begins with an historical account from the time when Tibetan royalty migrated to Western Tibet and ruled Ladakh to the time when the country fell to the Hindu rulers of Jammu. During this account, citadels and royal residences are chronologically mentioned. A discussion of the walls and buildings, temples, images, paintings, and historical information on the royal residences of Shey, Leh, Basgo, and Ting-mo-gang takes up the rest of the chapter.

"The Later Monasteries," Chapter Four, is concerned with the monasteries that have been built or revived since the 15th century; and, therefore, monasteries built on the basis of Central Tibetan Buddhist Orders. The institutions dealt with are the Gelugpa monasteries of Spituk and its dependent monastery of Sankar; Tiktse, Likir and Rizong monasteries. The Kagyu-pa monasteries described are the Drigung monastery of Phiyang, the Drugpa monasteries of Hemis, Stakna and Chendey; the Nyingmapa monastery of Traktok and Matro of the Sakyapas. The monastery buildings, courtyards, paintings, images, and statues are described, and historical references given for most of them.

From the long account of numerous sites, religio-artistic representations and symbolism, The final chapter of volume I is like a breath of fresh air as it deals with the realities of present day life in Ladakh. It is written in a subjectively frank, caring and concerned manner. The authors examine the historical context within which the stranglehold of Ladakhi trade, the Islamic advance and the Buddhist retreat, the processes of modernization and development, and the new military-economic dependency relationships are discussed. Some of these "new" factors are seen to affect the Ladakhi language, and the authors hope for a continual survival of the monasteries and their traditions.

Volume II, part one begins with the geographical factors of Zangskar and describes the west to east route through this ancient kingdom. The historical fate of Zangskar is seen to approximate that of Ladakh; from the pre-Tibetan Kashmiri contacts to the plunders of Mirza Haidar in the 1530's, from the kingdom's involvement in the Tibeto-Ladakhi war (1681-83) to the 1835 invasion of Zorowar Singh and the kingdom's post-1842 status as part of Jammu and Kashmir.

The description of the 1976 journey through Zangskar by Tadeusz Skorupski has two parts. The first is from Srinagar to Leh, Leh to Alchi and on to Chiling-Sumda. The main part of the journey is from Kargyl to Kargya and back. It is an interesting narration interspersed with accounts of encounters with a money craving monk, the jaws of a mastiff, helpful rum-laden army officers and problems of transportation. These and other incidents make a vivid presentation of the few joys and many sorrows associated with fieldwork in such areas as Ladakh and Zangskar.

The section on the Tibetan Buddhist Pantheon sees the diffusion of Early Central Asian and post 10th century Indian influences, as well as the adaptation of numerous local divinities, as culminating in a most complex pantheon. These are described under nine categories of various Buddhas, Divinities and Protectors of the Faith.

The survey of monastic foundations looks at the founding of early monasteries associated with Rinchen Zangpo, the Zangskar Translator 'Phags-pa shes-rab, and the Indian yogins Tilopa and Marpa. Later monasteries from the 15th century on were said to be either occupied or built by the Geluggas and the Druk-pa branch of the Kagyupa order. The dating for various works like images and murals is categorized into four periods.

Part one concludes with the description of numerous sites, mostly monasteries, and their murals, statues and other iconographic representations. The sites accounted for, some in greater detail than others are: Karsha, Tonde, Phugtal, Muni, Rangdom, Dzongkhul, Bardan, Sani, Tagrimo, Pipiting, Sumda, Zangla and Padurn.

Part two consists of a short section on the cave temples of Ladakh, mostly associated with the great yogins of the Nyingma and Kagyu traditions. A description of the cave temples at Spituk, Phokar Dzong, Wakha, Lamayuru, Hemis, Hemis Shugpa and Saspol follows.

The subject matter of Part three is the edited translation of the biography of Rin-chen Zang-po prepared by David Snellgrove. There is a useful commentary on the original sources. The biography is divided into eleven chapters which are mainly concerned with the Great Translator's birth, education and accomplishments. Those interested in reading the biography in Tibetan will be delighted with the inclusion of a text. The appendix consists of another Tibetan text as well as its translation. This Sakyapa text is used as proof of Rin-chen Zang-po's knowledge of the composition of religious chants, and also as an affirmation of various facts in another version of the biography.

The final part of Volume II, on the temple and rock inscriptions around Alchi monastery, is the work of Philip Denwood. The authorship, wherever possible, and the contents of the temple inscriptions in the Assembly Hall, in the Three-Tier temple, and in and around the Lotsawa temple are given in transliteration, and translation. The language, style, orthography and historical contribution of the inscriptions are noted. The rock inscriptions are said to consist of written and carved figures of humans, animals, and stupas. Examination of orthography and names places the inscriptions around the 8th and early 9th century. Their origin is traced to the colonizing Tibetan army.