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Book review of 'Tibetan Thangka Painting: Methods and Materials' by David and Janice Jackson

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effective in conveying his argument and method--but perhaps less effective in creating a sense of Yolmo worlds in the mind and body of the non expert reader.

I read this book as a medical anthropologist with a specialty in the Andes, not as an expert in Nepalese culture. As such, I was excited by similarities and differences in the cultural constructions of body, self, society, illness and healing between Quechua and Nepalese villagers. I found Desjarlais' detailed definitions of ailments and their symptoms extremely useful for comparative purposes. The book exposed me to Nepalese ethnographic material that facilitates the forging of comparative links for explaining the connections between social tensions that result from particular historical transformations in society and the individual's experience and manifestation of distress. Desjarlais significantly points out that divination and healing may provide ways for Yolmo individuals to express distress over the conflict between cultural values and the demands of group interdependence versus individual desires and autonomy. In his view the shaman makes this explicit to others in the community who have created the difficulties experienced by the patient. I would add that such a conclusion has important implications for understanding depression, soul loss, and healing in other cultural settings and resonates with recent work done on fright, soul loss, and symbolic healing by other scholars, particularly in Latin American contexts.

I will have to leave it to those more expert in the ethnography of Nepal to evaluate the book's contribution from a regional standpoint. I would recommend the book to anyone interested in experimentation in ethnographic representation, medical and psychological anthropology, and cross-cultural studies of body, self, emotion, healing, and religion. Although it would not be particularly useful as an introduction to Nepalese culture, the book would certainly complement other texts that give a fuller picture of everyday life and a broader social and historical background.

Christine Greenway

Christine Greenway is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Holy Cross College. She conducted research, as a Fulbright Scholar, in a Quechua community in the southern Peruvian Andes. The focus of her research is on cultural constructions of self and identity and the relationships between symbolic healing and ethnic identity and political resistance.

David and Janice Jackson. *Tibetan Thangka Painting: Methods and Materials* 1988 Illustrated by Robert Beer. Ithaca, New York, USA: Snow Lion Publications, 1984 (second revised edition 1988). 202p. \$29.95

This book represents an extensive effort to offer step by step, practical descriptions and guidelines for the production of thangka paintings as carried out by Tibetan artists. It is a good introduction for beginning artists who have never seen thangka painting being done in person before to learn how thangka painting can be done in one's own studio. Based on five journeys to India, Nepal and Tibet carried out over an eleven year period and involving careful study with many Tibetan thangka painting masters, the authors developed a detailed insight into how a Tibetan thangka is painted. Their book covers this process from the preparation of the canvas, to making sketches of the images, to pigment selection and preparation, to the application of colors, to the tools used, and finally to the finishing of a thangka painting. Their description of this process is particularly detailed concerning the sketches of the images (proportion theory in particular), the explanation of the traditional pigments being used, and the methods used to apply the colors. This record of the techniques developed by many generations of Tibetan thangka painters is the most valuable contribution of this study. The thorough illustration of shading techniques and the rich collection of motifs are a major accomplishment. Robert Beer's drawings are exquisite and clear and successfully help present the topics under discussion. In order to maintain authenticity and to offer a clear reference for artists or scholars who wish to pursue this topic further, the authors patiently recorded the Tibetan pronunciation for most of the technical terms used by Tibetan artists.

To begin their book the authors educate us with useful background information on Tibetan culture and the indivisibility of thangka painting and related art forms from Tibetan Buddhism. However, it would have been very helpful to the reader if this concern had been continued out throughout the book. For example, ideas about the significance of specific images in their religious context should have been introduced as each motif was discussed.

My suggestions for further improvements would be as follows:

1. The plates should be colored, particularly when the authors seem to put extra emphasis on the application of color. Moreover, the black and white reproductions of the richly colored and detailed paintings lose not only their colors but also the details of the compositions themselves.

2. The amount of detail given to the earlier stages of a painting's preparation is short cut, especially on the topic of canvas preparation, e.g., how to cook hind glue (since the masters' studios often do prepare it themselves.)

3. It would be helpful to the reader to footnote most of the religious terms since at least some readers will not be specialists in Buddhism.

4. Since there are two major traditions of thangka painting in the world, one being Tibetan, the other being Newari, and since these traditions share not only a majority of the same religious connotations, techniques, and materials and produce thangka paintings in the same general region, i.e. northern South Asia, it would not be stretching too far to make note of the small differences between these two kinds of thangka paintings, even including an explanation about why these differences exist.

In order to preserve this major form of traditional Buddhist art, the authors have sustained thangka painting with words in great detail and with splendid illustrations that show both scientific measurements as well as artistically original drawings. The honest recording of a particular master's way of mixing paint, the order in which the paint was put on the canvas and the specific ways to avoid smudging or making mistakes are all very thoughtful, practical and, in the long run, of historical value. For this reason *Tibetan Thangka Painting* will be an important resource and bring a touch of hue to Himalayan Studies.

Yin Peet

Yin Peet, an Asian-American sculptor/painter, has studied art in Taiwan, Nepal and America. During her four-and-a-half years of continuous residence in Nepal between 1984-1988, she was actively involved in various art communities and in learning about Buddhist art in Kathmandu. She holds an MFA in sculpture from Massachusetts College of Art.

John Crook and Henry Osmaston (eds), *Himalayan Buddhist Villages: Environment, Resources, and Religious Life in Zangskar, Ladakh*. Bristol: University of Bristol, 1994. £25. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. ISBN: 0-86292-386-7, xxx + 866 pages, maps, diagrams, photographs, indices, appendices, glossary and bibliography.

In early September 1989 while I was marooned in the Delhi Airport on my way home from Nepal, the airport was suddenly filled with refugee tourists from Ladakh many of whom were sporting new T-shirts bearing the slogan "Free Ladakh from Kashmir." Behind this slogan was an eruption by Buddhist Ladakhis against Muslim Kashmiris, Hindu administrators, and the ubiquitous European tourists. Another community in the Himalaya had rebelled against the intrusion of outsiders into its domain. Crook and Osmaston, a psychologist and a geographer, along with nineteen other authors, have produced a very good book that provides the reader an entry into not only Ladakh but into a less traveled part of Ladakh, Zangskar. Several chapters in the book assist the reader in understanding the causes behind the 1989 disruption.