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British Relations with Tibet and the Himalayan States, Including
Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan by Julie Marshall; reviewed by Peter
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BRITAIN AND TIBET 1765-1947: A SELECT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BRITISH RELATIONS WITH TIBET AND THE HIMALAYAN STATES INCLUDING NEPAL, SIKKIM AND BHUTAN

JULIE MARSHALL

REVIEWED BY PETER HANSEN

Britain and Tibet 1765-1947 is an outstanding scholarly reference for the history of British colonialism in the Himalayas and relations with Tibet. Julie G. Marshall, formerly head librarian and now a research associate in Asian Studies at La Trobe University, previously published a shorter bibliography, *Britain and Tibet 1765-1947: the Background to the India-China Border Dispute*, in 1977. That work has been superseded by this revised and much expanded bibliography that is sumptuously produced and expensively priced by RoutledgeCurzon. The new volume includes scholarly theses and material published 1974-2003, earlier material excluded from the previous bibliography, and new sections on Japan and Soviet Russia's interest in Tibet.

Marshall embraces the wide range of areas affected by Britain's relations with Tibet over nearly two centuries. Material on other Himalayan states is included in chronological and thematic chapters on Nepal, Ladakh, Kumaon, Garhwal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Assam to the extent that British policy towards these areas was influenced by British relations with Tibet. The author's introduction, a foreword by Alastair Lamb, and editorial introductions to chapters and sub-sections provide excellent capsule summaries and keep the focus on British exploration, military conflicts, treaties and diplomatic relations. Nearly all of the 4020 items are annotated, and some include cross-references to book reviews. All works were published in European languages. Special attention

is given to boundary questions throughout, and the bibliography concludes with references to Sino-Indian border disputes of the 1960s. Even scholars familiar with specialized topics will find obscure or unusual sources, and Marshall's bibliography will become the definitive reference for British relations with Tibet up to 1947.

Focus on British relations with the region is simultaneously the strength and weakness of this bibliography. The introduction summarizes its standpoint thus: "The history of the period 1765-1947 in the Himalayan Region is the history of Britain's gradual extension of territory and influence to the southern borders of Tibet" (xx). The sheer volume of work published from this perspective gives disproportionate attention to Bogle, Turner, and other explorers and diplomats, the Younghusband Expedition, the delimitation and demarcation of the boundaries of British India, the McMahon Line, and the "Great Game." In some ways, this compilation is the summation of the imperial archive of knowledge about Tibet and the Himalayas produced under the British Raj. The imperial/colonial provenance of so many works in the bibliography remains important because so much of what is known about Tibet and the Himalayas during this period is only retrievable through and filtered by this archive. In the foreword, Alastair Lamb suggests that perhaps the majority of users of the bibliography will be engaged in research into this question: was Tibet an independent entity

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2005. Pp xxxvi + 607.

or part of the Chinese empire? Since the bibliography excludes works in Chinese or Himalayan languages, it is not clear that this question is answerable based on the works in the bibliography. However, it is clear that Marshall's attention to the many English-language works written "against the grain" of empire over the last thirty years exceeds the limitations of the older imperial archive and will significantly improve the answers that anyone using the bibliography is likely to give to historical questions about Tibet.

The new edition of "Britain and Tibet 1765-1947" is available in hardcover or as an eBook, which should make it even more widely available. Not too long ago, bibliographical reference works of this quality were

only available in mimeographed hand lists or well-thumbed card catalogs of specialized institutions. Some bibliographies are migrating to the World Wide Web which holds the promise of a format that is easily kept up-to-date. Yet websites can disappear and institutions sometimes cancel subscriptions to eBooks. Whether on the web or between hard covers, this bibliography will remain an indispensable resource for anyone interested in Britain and Tibet.

Peter Hansen teaches at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and is working on a book on the history of mountains and modernity since the eighteenth century.