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LIMINAL "SELF," AMBIGUOUS "POWER": THE  
GENESIS OF THE "RANGZEN" METAPHOR AMONG  
TIBETAN YOUTH IN INDIA.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, PH.D., 1978

Liminal "Self," Ambiguous "Power": The Genesis of the  
"Rangzen" Metaphor among Tibetan Youth in India

by

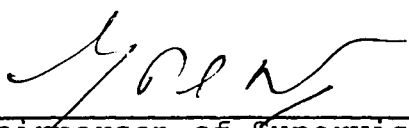
Margaret Nowak

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

1978

Approved by  (Jean-Paul Dumont)  
(Chairperson of Supervisory Committee)

Program Authorized  
to Offer Degree Anthropology

Date MAY 26<sup>th</sup> 1978

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Date: May 9, 1978

We have carefully read the dissertation entitled Liminal "Self," Ambiguous  
"Power": the Genesis of the "Rangzen" Metaphor Among  
Tibetan Youth in India submitted by  
Margaret Nowak in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
and recommend its acceptance. In support of this recommendation we present the following  
joint statement of evaluation to be filed with the dissertation.

This dissertation explores a general problem of symbolic anthropology, the emergence of new symbolic forms, in relation to a specifically defined instance of liminality: the situation of stateless exile experienced by Tibetan refugees in India. It is based on ten months of field work research in northern India.

The analytical framework of this dissertation comes from the work of Victor Turner who regards liminality as an extraordinary and fundamentally ambiguous cultural realm which is likely to engender new forms of symbolization. In this study the notion of liminality has been applied to the ambiguous situation of an uprooted and resettled ethnic group; due to their lack of citizenship in both homeland and host country, Tibetan refugees in India are living in a state of political limbo.

The ethnographic material has been organized and investigated in the light of another assumption by Turner: symbolic forms are transmitted by explicit as well as by implicit generalization from social experience. Accordingly, a whole chapter is devoted to an examination of formal schooling in the deliberately traditional environment of the Tibetan residential schools. This is followed by an analysis of the Tibetan social experience in a wider (i.e., not exclusively Tibetan) context, considering the educational, economic, and political activities of Tibetan young adults.

Within this context of dialectically interacting contradictions and ambiguities, two correlated and newly emerging symbols can be identified: a root metaphor ("rangzen"), and its dramatized counterpart (the annual 10th March commemoration). The word "rangzen" (literally, "self power") is a 20th century neologism created to translate the term "independence," but capable of suggesting a much wider range of meta-political associations. Its behavioral counterpart, the annual 10th March commemoration, serves to re-enact key elements of the abortive Lhasa Uprising of March 10, 1959--an event on its way to becoming mythologized. Together, these two symbolic

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forms act to elaborate currently relevant conceptual categories and cultural strategies. Engendered by the dialectic confrontation of opposed and opposing forces, these symbolic innovations may indeed be linked with the fundamental characteristic of a liminal state: creatively flexible ambiguity.

This is a novel and original piece of research which sheds new light on Tibetan ethnography and symbolic analysis.

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### Doctoral Dissertation

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## PREFACE

This investigation is based on fieldwork in North India, where I was a junior fellow of the American Institute of Indian Studies for approximately ten months (September, 1976 - June, 1977). My original research proposal concerned a topic which was in fact quite different from the subject I actually did study. I had wanted to do research on Tibetan folklore, particularly the present-day transmission of the Gesar epic, but the circumstances of my stay in India, especially the fact that I never once encountered any Tibetan specialists or bards of this genre, made this impossible.

According to the present policy by which project and visa clearance is issued, foreigners wishing to do research in India must be affiliated with an Indian institution of higher studies; in addition, junior fellows (those doing doctoral research) are assigned an Indian professor as their supervisor, who serves as a liason between the student and the Government of India Ministry, should the need for such ever arise. In my case, my supervisor and university of affiliation were located in a modern North Indian city, but virtually the only Tibetans living there were college students. My first one and a half months of

fieldwork were thus spent with this rather unlikely sample of Tibetan refugees: all spoke English, and all were young adults living away from their families and Tibetan communities while pursuing various programs of higher study.

It is in fact this group of Tibetans who helped me see that, given my situation, the richest lode I could mine would not be folklore, but rather education -- particularly the Tibetan primary and secondary educational system which they had just left. The evolution of my dissertation topic thus owes much to these earliest Tibetan friends and acquaintances of mine, for it was also at their suggestion that I made an exploratory trip to the Tibetan residential school which most of them had attended, and it is this institution which then became the site of my fieldwork for the rest of my stay in India.

My residence there involved another series of contingencies. Since most Tibetan schools operate under the jurisdiction of the Government of India Ministry, the latter organization can and does prohibit foreigners from observing in the classrooms when school is in session. But in addition to the school itself, my research site also included a second institution: a foster homes complex for over 600 Tibetan orphans and children of destitute parents. This latter institution consists of twenty-five individual homes modelled after the Pestalozzi Children's

Village (a home and school in Trogen, Switzerland originally established for children orphaned by World War II), and staffed by twenty-five Tibetan couples who serve as foster parents. Since this institution is privately funded (chiefly by donations of individuals and charitable organizations from all over the world), the primary school which it operates is not subject to the above-mentioned restrictions concerning foreign visitors. Thus my classroom observations were mainly confined to this school, which includes two levels of kindergarten plus grades one and two. In addition, for a brief period (barely two weeks) I coached tenth and eleventh grade students who were reviewing, during winter vacation, for the All-India Higher Secondary Examination; and finally, I also observed in the middle and upper grades of another privately funded Tibetan school elsewhere in North India.

My specific method of participant observation in the Tibetan language classes involved a fortuitous combination of actual and explainable goals and purposes. Prior to my coming to India, I had studied Tibetan language and literature at the University of Washington, but the script I learned to write was dbu-can, a style that Tibetans regard as Westerners would regard machine-produced printing: eminently readable, but not to be reproduced as a handwriting style. The cursive script which they do use in writing, however -- dbu-med -- is taught right from

primary school. Thus I could quite honestly introduce myself to the Tibetan language teachers as a student interested in learning what they were teaching: cursive Tibetan script. This explanation was readily understood by all; Tibetans in India are familiar with Westerners studying their religion and language in special courses set up for them in Dharamsala, and my request to become part of daily classroom routine caused no real disturbance once the initial novelty of an overgrown "English" student passed into matter-of-fact acceptance. In no time I had a working relationship with the students who sat near me: when I couldn't quite decipher the teacher's handwriting on the blackboard, they would explain it to me letter-by-letter, and when they felt like making sotto voce comments about anything under the sun, I was always included in the audience.

Another factor of my fieldwork was the very skewed sample of ages and kin groups represented by the community where I lived: over 1,000 children, most of them orphans, and almost all of them living at the homes foundation or in dormitories. To be sure, some 300 of these children did have their own families elsewhere in India; these were the boarders who had been sent to the school by their parents, who pay 100 rupees per month for their food, lodging, and clothing. Finally, the student population

also included about 100 local day students who attended classes either at the government-sponsored school or the private primary school, but these were the only children in the area who lived with their families.

Because of all these contingencies, then, my field-work evolved in a direction that turned out to be quite different from what my original plans had been. The vast majority of the "educatees" I lived and talked with were children and young adults living outside normal Tibetan family life; thus the truism that "education begins at home" has been neatly but unavoidably ignored here as a subject for study. Finally, it should also be pointed out that my investigations do not deal at all with those Tibetans who attend private elementary and secondary schools. These much more elite institutions do in fact have some Tibetan students (who are either from relatively wealthy families or are privately sponsored by a foreign benefactor), but their total number is comparatively small.

It would be impossible for me to acknowledge personally all the individuals who have helped me to arrive at the post-liminal state of having completed this dissertation. The support and encouragement of my family, my professors and my friends (these categories are by no means mutually exclusive) began long before I started the actual writing.

Likewise, my fieldwork experience was replete with so much warm hospitality, generosity, and ever-ready assistance from both Tibetans and Indians that I cannot hope to do full justice to them all in this brief, formalized expression of my gratitude.

Despite the inherent limitations of such an endeavor, I would still like to mention certain key individuals whose contributions to my research have been especially significant: Mr. P. R. Mehendiratta and Mr. L. S. Suri of the American Institute of Indian Studies, New Delhi; Professor P. L. Mehra of Panjab University, Chandigarh; Rapten and Khando Chazotsang of the Tibetan Homes Foundations; Dawa Norbu and Tsering Wangyal, past and present editors of Tibetan Review, respectively; Dr. Hiroko Horikoshi-Roe; and my supervisory committee, particularly my chairman, Dr. Jean-Paul Dumont. Finally, I would like to give my special thanks to Dr. Lawrence Epstein, whose constant willingness to share ideas, source materials, and constructive criticism has become for me a most convincing refutation of the assumption that territoriality is basic to human nature.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

"Liminality," writes Victor Turner, "is the mother of invention!" Pursuing this metaphor of symbol-generating "motherhood," he goes on to suggest that future studies of symbolic action direct their attention to situations where it should be most possible "to catch ritual symbols in partuition." Accordingly, he mentions such phenomena as the initial stages of prophetic movements, sects, and popular drama as contexts which would seem particularly likely to give birth to new forms of symbolization (1969a: 10).

What he does not state here, however, is the possibility that liminality -- the "betwixt and between" state of belonging precisely nowhere -- might, under certain circumstances, also characterize an entire ethnic community; that this particular kind of marginality might apply not only to "interstructural" individuals who have been temporarily separated from the mainstream of their society, but also to a total ethnic group who collectively have no certain knowledge of how or when they will ever be reintegrated into a state of belonging. This situation is in fact typical of refugees living in exile: having left their native land,

they have entered a legal limbo in which they are citizens of no country on earth. Despite Turner's silence on this point -- the explicit correlation of refugee status with liminality -- it is nonetheless clear from his writings (see especially 1967: 95) that his interpretation of the latter concept as "an interstructural phase in social dynamics" (ibid.: 98) can indeed be applied to the former condition. By thus regarding refugee status as a genuine though particular kind of liminality, we are led back by second thought to Turner's intriguing metaphor: given this particular context for symbolic action, what is the mode of birth? Restated in less rhetorical terms, the question is one of relationship between process and situation: How are new symbolic forms generated by the particular conditions of stateless exile?

Actually, the outline of an answer to this problem can already be seen in various studies by certain symbol-oriented anthropologists, although none has specifically linked the genesis of newly emerging ritual symbols with the particular situation of refugee status. Turner himself suggests an approach that would begin by comparing different (intracultural) ritual contexts, classifying the symbols used in each case "according to the goal structure of the specific situation" (1969b: 41). Elsewhere he defines his purpose as being an attempt

to probe and describe the ways in which social

actions of various kinds acquire form through the metaphors and paradigms in the actors's heads (put there by explicit teaching and implicit generalization from social experience), and, in certain intensive circumstances, generate unprecedented forms that bequeath history new metaphors and paradigms (1974: 13).

Another anthropologist who is particularly concerned with the dynamic aspects of cultural symbols is Abner Cohen, who similarly stresses the dialectic interrelationship between ideology (Turner's "metaphors and paradigms") and social experience. Cohen sees the "all pervading process of symbolization" as intrinsically related to the dynamics of institutionalization, a term he defines, citing Peter Blau, as "the processes that perpetuate a social pattern and make it endure" (Blau, 1969: 67). In addition to this concern for perpetuity and its dialectic counterpart -- socio-cultural change -- Cohen includes two other interrelated issues within his scope of investigation: the involvement of cultural symbols in relations of power, and the role of symbolic action in the development of selfhood. The interconnection of all of these ideas can be illustrated by one of his ethnographic observations: the exaggeration of traditional culture by some groups in contemporary Africa and the USA is not necessarily indicative of conservatism and reaction. Rather,

the old symbols are rearranged to serve new purposes under new political conditions. In ethnicity, old symbols and ideologies become strategies for the articulation of new interest groupings that struggle for ... new benefits (Cohen, 1976: 39).

Such an interpretation certainly supports Turner's thesis about liminality being the mother of invention; furthermore, this particular kind of "struggle" is very characteristic of transplanted refugees living in an environment of new possibilities. A final citation from Cohen's work explains why such unofficial contestations for power -- what he calls "the politics of ethnicity" -- are sociologically significant.

Ethnicity throws into relief, or rather dramatises the processes by which the symbolic patterns of behaviour implicit in the style of life, or in the "sub-culture" of a group ... develop in order to articulate organisational functions that cannot be formally institutionalised (ibid.: 101).

Again, the issues implied here -- symbolic action, institutionalization, ethnicity, and power -- are strikingly applicable to the social dynamics of refugee society. The focus on "processes" is likewise significant: it highlights the temporal dimension, the dialectic between permanence and change. For some anthropologists, in fact, the domain of the adjective "political" refers not only to "everything that is at once public, goal-oriented and that involves a differential of power ... among ... individuals" (Swartz et al, 1966: 7); in addition, the political is seen as incontestably linked with the sacred, which ideally appears to be not only permanent, but even immortal. As expressed by Georges Balandier,

power is sacrality because every society affirms its desire to be eternal and fears a return to chaos as the realization of its own death (1972: 101).

George De Vos' formulation is essentially based on the same perception:

Ethnicity in its deepest psychological level is a sense of survival. If one's group survives, one is assured of survival, even if not in a personal sense (1975: 17).

The desire of endure as a collectivity, to withstand the destructive force of entropy which threatens all societies (Balandier: 37), is a particularly vital issue for those refugee communities who believe in their right to political independence, yet have no means of legitimizing a political institution that would be officially recognized by the rest of the world. Despite their lack of de jure status, however, governments-in-exile do arise in these cases, and they are recognized by their own people for precisely this reason: even without coercive power, they provide a semblance of hierarchical interpretability, of order itself, for those who are "no longer" and also "not yet" full citizens in any other sense. Although the following observation of Luc de Heusch was not specifically intended to apply to de facto governments set up by refugee groups, it is still relevant here, perhaps in an even more immediate way.

Whatever might be its juridical form ... the State is, metaphysically, a challenge hurled at death, a negation of the ephemeral, a bridge thrown between the past and the future (1962: 15).

Seen from the refugees' perspective, loyalty to their de facto government does represent a commitment to the pre-

sent, an attempt to traverse the bridge between past and future. Yet in the eyes of the host country and the rest of the world as well, such an orientation often appears primarily directed to the past. De Vos in fact arrives at a similar conclusion with respect to ethnic groups as distinguished from "present-oriented citizens" and "future oriented" members of revolutionary groups and/or transcendent, universal religious or political movements: according to him, individuals of the first type are primarily motivated by "a past-oriented concept of the self as defined by one's ethnic identity, that is, based on ancestry and origin" (1975: 8-9). De Vos' mention of the "concept of the self" -- which echoes Cohen's focus on the relationship between symbolic action and selfhood -- can also be seen in his definition of an ethnic group:

a self-perceived group of people who hold in common a set of traditions not shared by the others with whom they are in contact (ibid.: 9).

Furthermore, this attention to self-ascribed definition, exclusive commonality, and contact with "others" is very compatible with Fredrik Barth's ideas about "boundaries;" like Barth, De Vos here focuses not on specific cultural features, which are always subject to change, but rather on "the fact of continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders" (Barth, 1969: 14). And yet the process of dichotomization is one which is essentially related to the manipulation of symbols.

Ethnicity is symbolically represented in self-conscious variations in language and customs. It is symbolized in the ritual practices which are its affirmation, particularly by dramatic symbolic representations of a past (De Vos and Romanucci-Ross, 1975: 364).

If we seem to have traced out a whole series of arabesques in this exploration of theories, it is because all of these issues -- liminality, sacrality, and ethnicity -- are themselves so interrelated. The tracery could actually go on indefinitely, proceeding to other connections in all directions, and it must be admitted that the final decision regarding focus and scope is, in the end, relative if not arbitrary. That being acknowledged, let us conclude our preliminary considerations with one last topic, which has been an implicit part of all of the above, and an explicit part of Turner's dictum that metaphors are learned.

Arnold van Gennep's now classic study of rites de passage (1960; first published in 1908) is the first work to associate the notion of liminality with the patterned rituals that often accompany culturally significant transitions. He, and many others after him, noted the common correlation of liminal rites or stages with ceremonies of initiation, in which specific instruction would be given to the initiates so as to prepare them for their future adult roles. The connection between liminality and education, particularly the formalized presentation of cultural symbols, has thus been recognized, at least implicitly, since the earliest years of anthropology. A more recent observation

gives this correlation a new, ironic significance when referred to refugee status, which is here being considered as a particular kind of liminality. Balandier sees initiation ceremonies, with their prescribed rituals and instruction, as society's means of "opening the way for a new generation;" it is this process "which conditions access to 'fullness' and to full 'citizenship'" (1972: 111). And yet in a jural sense, the primary defining feature of refugees is precisely their lack of citizenship, not just metaphorically, in quotes, but actually, in daily experience. Refugee youth, then, are doubly liminal (or "liminoid," to use Turner's neologism for post-industrial revolution societies): within their own community they are neither unsocialized infants, nor are they socially recognized as "full" adults; and vis-à-vis the world at large they are no longer citizens of their or their parents' homeland, yet they are not yet citizens of any other country. It is in this light that we will be considering the process of education in this dissertation: as a particular kind of institutionalization (see Blau's definition above, p. 3) which presents these doubly liminal educatees with the significant symbols of their culture.

To be sure, several of these terms require further clarification. Sufficient ink has already been spilled in attempts to refine the definitive definition of "symbol," "sign" and the like; what seems here to be more needed than

additional academic hairsplitting is a reference to two comprehensive reviews of the literature on this issue (Turner, 1975: 145-161, and Firth, 1973: 54-91), and an acknowledgment of one particular way of analyzing symbolism which appears most relevant to the data at hand: Sherry Ortner's notion of "key symbols" (1973: 1338-1346), which will be discussed at length in connection with the ethnographic material of this study. As for the problem of definition, this too is best resolved by first considering the data and type of analysis to follow. In this case, Cohen's statement is indeed suitable:

Symbols are objects, acts, concepts, or linguistic formations that stand ambiguously for a multiplicity of disparate meanings, evoke sentiments and emotions, and impel men to action (1976: Preface, n.p.).

With respect to the topic of education, here again the anthropological literature on the subject is enormous, with definitions of the term varying from maximal to minimal inclusiveness. Even the distinctions between such related words as "enculturation," "socialization," "education," and "cultural transmission" are by no means clear-cut and consistent; thus, for example, Anthony Wallace writes that

education is all learning (including but not confined to schooling) obtained from reading or from formally prepared symbolic presentations (1961: 29),

while other investigators, following Durkheim, limit this term by using the criterion of relative age: "education" is the "systematic socialization of the young generation by

adults" (Mayer, quoting Durkheim, 1970: xiv). James Quillen, dean of the School of Education at Stanford University, narrows the scope of reference still further by including the school as a key factor in this process. While this may not be a universal, formalized feature of education cross-culturally, Quillen's final sentence, if somewhat tautological, does at least seem applicable to all types of societies.

Educational problems tend to be concerned with an interaction between four basic factors, all of which are closely interrelated: (1) the individual learner; (2) the general cultural setting; (3) the core values of the culture; and (4) the school itself as an institution, including the various participants in the school, the roles and statuses of the participants, etc.... The essence of education, as I see it, from the cultural point of view is cultural perpetuation, including cultural transmission, socialization, and enculturation (1955: 24).

For our purposes, the most relevant definitions of education are those which are not only broad, but which also specify an awareness of processual and symbolic factors. Together, the formulations of Meyer Fortes and John Middleton answer this need. The first states that

education is a social process, a temporal concatenation of events in which the significant factor is time and the significant phenomenon is change....[It] is an active process of learning and teaching by which individuals gradually acquire the full outfit of culturally defined and adapted behaviour (1970: 16-17).

Middleton's position complements this concern for diachronic development by explicitly calling attention to the ideology conveyed by this process.

Education is the learning of culture.... The

major parts of any educational program concern the inculcation and understanding of cultural symbols, moral values, sanctions and cosmological beliefs (1970: xiii).

The focus on education in this dissertation will thus be one which considers both of the above concerns. Such an approach, dealing not only with the formalized presentation of cultural symbols, but also with the temporal factor of change, can readily be integrated with the theoretical issues which have been discussed in general terms up to now.

At this point it would be well to restate the problem in more specific terms. The case to be considered in this study -- the liminal situation of young Tibetan refugees now living in India -- involves two distinct but interrelated areas: a deliberately institutionalized education system, created to transmit and preserve Tibetan culture in exile, and a much more implicit arena of learning -- i.e. involvement in new, even radically unprecedented social experience. The dialectic interaction of these two forces -- ideology and experience -- will be investigated in connection with two particularly significant symbol-complexes: the traditional figure of the Dalai Lama, and the newly-emerging gestalt of "independence," which includes both a conceptual component (the word rang-btsan<sup>1</sup> ["independence"] itself, and a behavioral component (the annual March 10th commemoration of Tibetan Uprising Day). This dissertation will in this way attempt to explore the process by which new

symbolic forms are engendered, paying particular attention to the dialectic interaction of old metaphors and paradigms and new social experience.

The Dalai Lama and "Rangzen"/10th March:  
Historical Background of Two Key Symbols

The ethnographic focus of this study concerns the Tibetan refugees -- specifically the young generation -- who have left Tibet and have resettled (or were born) in India following the abortive anti-Chinese uprising and the Dalai Lama's flight to political asylum in that country in March, 1959. We will thus be dealing with only a small percentage of the total Tibetan population, which has been estimated to have been between two and three million in the years just prior to the Chinese occupation.<sup>2</sup> Of this number, approximately 100,000 have successfully fled Tibet to begin new lives elsewhere. According to the Office of Tibet in New York City (personal communication, February 17, 1978), 84,000 Tibetans now live in India (including Sikkim); 10,000 in Nepal; 4,000 in Bhutan; 1,000 in Switzerland; 500 elsewhere in Europe (mainly in Sweden, Germany, France, Holland, and Great Britain); 500 in Canada; and 250 in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

Tibetan explanations for this diaspora typically mention fear of persecution as a key motivating factor. Statements made by twenty-seven refugees all agree on this one

general point: the decision to escape came in each case after the individual had reached a personal conviction that life in Tibet had become unendurable. The following account, that of a 42 year old farmer from southern Tibet, is presented here so that one of these refugees might speak for himself. The volume in which it appears (Tibet under Chinese Communist Rule, 1976) was compiled by Tibetans associated with the Dalai Lama's government-in-exile in Dharamsala; they have translated the statements into English, and have edited them slightly by omitting their concluding lines (an oath as to their truthfulness and accuracy) and by deleting "unqualified personal interpretations of events and actions, expressions of hopes and prayers, and emotional descriptions of the Chinese" (ibid.: v). In the statement below, the order of four sentences has been altered in order to avoid quoting an excessively long passage.

We [the narrator, his wife and daughter] escaped from Tibet because life was getting more and more difficult, and tension and fear of persecution was increasing every year. We had nothing that we could call our own. Everything belonged to the commune or the Chinese.... The Chinese demand labour from the people and take away most of the products from the lands for themselves. The people are, in fact, slaves of an alien conqueror. The amount of food available is barely enough to feed half the population. Heavy taxes are levied on every article of daily need.... What was most unbearable was the increasing hardship and mental torture.

I was classified as a middle-class peasant and continually harassed for the "crimes" I had never committed. Last year, I decided to escape. The Chinese somehow came to know of it. I was blacklisted and accused of "turning away from the

proletarian socialist revolutionary path and following the way of reactionary Dalai bandits." I was given the alternative of either making a frank confession of my crimes and wrong thoughts or else facing public trials, imprisonment and torture. I could not change my thoughts as the Chinese wanted, and knew that the only change I was going to bring to the whole situation was escaping from Tibet. On the night of March 2, 1971, while everybody was attending the nightly study-cum-meeting session, we fled and headed towards the Nepalese border (ibid.: 126-127).

Examples such as this, multiplied by the thousands, can of course serve as individual explanations for the Tibetan diaspora, but the historical and political antecedents of this situation still remain to be clarified. It should be immediately pointed out, however, that the issues involved are part of an exceedingly tangled web of policies, precedents and legal ambiguities; thus the standard disclaimer -- "It is beyond the scope of this dissertation..." -- must really be applied here in earnest! What follows, then, is only a very simplified outline of Sino-Tibetan contact and relations leading up to the mass exodus that began in 1959.

While Tibetans themselves consider their existence as a unified nation to have begun with the reign of Gnya'-khri btsan-po (correlated with the year 127 B.C. in Tibetan Review, March, 1973: 10), Western scholars usually use the great Tibetan king Srong-btsan sgam-po (r. 627-650) to mark the commencement of safely datable Tibetan history. From the seventh to the ninth centuries, Tibet's policy was one of aggressive military campaigns and territorial expansion: for a brief 15-day period in 763, the army even succeeded

in placing a Tibetan emperor on the Chinese throne at Ch'ang-an (present-day Sian) after having invaded this southern capital. At intervals during these centuries of warfare and conquest Tibet's political authority extended past Afghanistan as far as Samarkand in the west; deep into Chinese Turkestan and China itself in the north and east; and through Nepal and into northern India and northern Burma in the south (Richardson, 1962: 2). The westward expansion of the Tibetan army between the years 785 and 805 caused the Arabian Caliph of Baghdad, Harun al-Rashid, to join forces with the Chinese in order to curb the power of these all-too-successful Central Asian warriors (Shakabpa, 1967: 44). In view of the contrast between those early days of blood and thunder and today's mood of national shame and self-doubt, it is hardly coincidental that a quote about this event by the Italian Tibetologist Luciano Petech has become a current favorite in the Tibetan press:

The very fact that nothing less than the coalition of the two most powerful empires of the early Middle Ages was necessary for checking the expansion of the Tibetan state, is a magnificent witness of the political capacities and military valour of those sturdy mountaineers (1939: 73-74).<sup>4</sup>

The end of Tibet's domination over Central Asia came in 842 with the assassination of the king, Glang-dar-ma, by a monk, Lha-lung Dpal-gyi rdo-rje, who had decided to put an end in this way to the sovereign's anti-Buddhist persecutions. (The theme of violence justified by a higher religious goal is thus an old one in Tibetan consciousness.)

For the next four centuries there was no centralized political rule in Tibet; authority fragmented into numerous small hegemonies, whose warring and intriguing rulers gradually allied themselves with one of the major Buddhist monastic orders of that time: Sakya (sa-skye), Kargyupa (bka'-rgyud-pa), or the latter's sub-sect, Karmapa (kar-ma-pa).

By the early part of the thirteenth century it was the Mongols who were fast becoming the dominant power of North and Central Asia: they had already subjugated the Tangut (Hsi-hsia) empire (present-day Kansu and Ch'ing-hai provinces), and were on their way to the total conquest of China itself. Fearing the devastation of their lands and monasteries, the leading nobles and abbots of Tibet sent a delegation to Genghis Khan with an offer of submission. The offer was accepted and Tibet was able to preserve her autonomy by surrendering -- though as it turned out, only nominally -- to a foreign suzerain.

This historical event, followed by a chain of others, eventually culminated in

that peculiar relationship between Tibet and China known as yon-mchod, "Patron and Priest," by which the ruler of Tibet in the person of the predominant grand lama was regarded as the religious advisor and priest of the Emperor, who in return acted as patron and protector (Snellgrove and Richardson, 1968: 148).

As further explained by a Tibetan who himself served in the Tibetan government up to 1951,

this relationship ... cannot be defined in Western political terms.... It was maintained as the basis of a political relationship between the Tibetans and the Mongols; and in later times, between the Manchu Emperor and the Dalai Lama. The patron-lama relationship with the Manchus ended in 1911, with the overthrow of the Ch'ing Dynasty (Shakabpa, 1973: 71).

Without an adequate understanding of the yon-mchod relationship, the fundamental disaccord today between Tibet and China (both mainland and Nationalist) cannot be properly comprehended. For this reason, we shall consider here a very basic summary of the evolution of this institution, keeping in mind our ultimate aim in this historical discussion: elucidating significant themes in Tibetan consciousness (e.g. the military glory of the time of the early kings; the precedent of violence [regicide] justified by a noble [religion-affirming] purpose; and now, the development of a polity which would combine sacred and temporal political power in one quintessentially symbolic figure). In addition, our examination of the "priest-patron" relationship should take notice of two related observations: first, this institution was operative during dynastic periods when the emperor on the Chinese throne was not, in fact, Han (ethnic Chinese); second, in reference to Sino-Tibetan contact and relations at other times, the situation was such that "Chinese political theory excluded entirely the possibility of equal diplomatic relations with any other country whatsoever" (Snellgrove and Richardson: 198).

The yon-mchod relationship between Tibetan lama<sup>5</sup> and

imperial patron actually began to take shape in 1244 when the grandson of Genghis Khan, Prince Godan, invited the head lama of the Sakya monastery to serve as religious preceptor for himself and his people. Sixteen years later the prince's son, Kublai Khan, soon to become Emperor of China, received religious consecration from the Sakya lama's monk nephew, 'Phags-pa blo-gros rgyal-mtshan. In return, the Mongol ruler gave the lama the title Ti-shih (帝師, "Imperial Preceptor"), and invested the latter with spiritual and temporal authority over Dbus-gtsang (Central Tibet), Khams and Amdo. In 1279 the Mongols' conquest of China was complete; from that time until the last years of the Yüan dynasty, the emperors of China conducted their relations with Tibet through the Ti-shih -- an office always held by a lama (Richardson: 34).

In the final decade before the fall of the Yüan and the re-establishment of a native Chinese dynasty (Ming, 1368-1644), Tibet witnessed the beginnings of a nationalistic revival on its own soil, with the glorification of the early kings as one of its prominent themes. Factions and rivalries allied and opposed noble families and great monasteries, and there was no single leader, religious or lay, who enjoyed universal support. During this period the new Chinese rulers "took over the Mongols' policy of bestowing honorary ranks on various heads of religious orders" (Stein, 1972: 79), but it was lay princes, and not lamas, who were

the governing leaders of Tibet. Over these lay rulers "the Ming dynasty exercised neither authority nor influence" (Richardson: 36, 38).

Also at this time, an important new Tibetan Buddhist sect was founded: the Gelugpa (dge-lugs-pa). With its strong emphasis on learning and strict monastic discipline, this order, right from the start, had the makings of an effective bureaucracy (Snellgrove and Richardson: 228). This administrative potential was in fact soon utilized, and the Gelugpas came to predominate in both front and backstage workings of that uniquely Tibetan religious-political system: the institution of the Dalai Lama.

Long before the inauguration of this supreme Tibetan office, the idea of metempsychosis was already an integral part of popular Buddhist belief; nevertheless, the manipulation of this theory for the purpose of directing "successorship" or otherwise identifying a continuous "lineage" of religious figures only came about with the development of religiously-based interest groups, who could, in this way, gain prestige by thus affirming their link with a great figure of the past. When the founder of the Gelugpa order died, his successor was found in his close disciple and nephew, Dge-'dun grub-pa (1391-1475), "an unusually clever man... [who] at the same time ... was an intriguer ... who did everything possible to consolidate the hierarchical system of the Yellow Church [Gelugpa order]" (Hoffmann, 1961: 168). A few years after the death of this figure, it was

recognized that a young monk, Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho (1475-1542), was in fact Dge-'dun grub-pa's reincarnation; preparatory prophecies had been made known during the first hierarch's lifetime, and the acknowledged reincarnation had, in fact, been born shortly after the death of the former.

In a similar fashion, the reincarnation of Dge-'dun rgya-mtsho was found in a child, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho (1543-1588), who was to become a brilliant scholar and a zealous missionary. It was this monastic hierarch who was the first to be recognized in his own lifetime as "Dalai Lama;" the title was bestowed on him by a powerful Mongol prince whom he converted in the course of his proselytizing activities in Mongolia. (The word "dalai" in Mongolian translates the Tibetan rgya-mtsho ["ocean"] and presumably refers honorifically to the title-bearer's "ocean of wisdom.") Since Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho was already the third in a series of previously recognized reincarnations, the title was applied posthumously to his two predecessors, making him in fact the third Dalai Lama.

Despite this recognition, however, neither the third Dalai Lama nor his successor, Yon-tan rgya-mtsho (1589-1616), was considered as supreme religious-political ruler of Tibet. This period of Tibetan history saw the central region of the country torn apart by fierce fighting between the ruling princes of Dbus province, allied with the Gelugpa

sect, and the king of Gtsang, supported by the Karmapa. Foreign intervention again played a major role in the outcome of events: the fourth Dalai Lama was a Mongol (a great-grandson of the prince who gave the title "Dalai Lama" to Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho), and the Gelugpas thus relied on and received Mongolian support in their fight against the Gtsang nobility and the Karmapa.

In this atmosphere of religious and secular factions and alliances, it was the fifth Dalai Lama, Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682) who became "the first Tibetan ruler who effectively united in his person both the spiritual and the temporal power" (Snellgrove and Richardson: 200). This occurred in 1642 when a powerful Mongol leader, Gushri Khan, defeated the king of Gtsang and "conferred on the Dalai Lama supreme authority over all Tibet from Tachienlu in the east up to the Ladakh border in the west" (Shakabpa: 111). The gesture of course recalls the Mongolian-Tibetan patron-lama relationship of four centuries past, but with these important differences: the Mongols were no longer emperors of China; the enthroned lama was now in his home country rather than at the imperial court; and finally, "the long process of adjustment between the Buddhist hierarchy and the lay nobility" had at last culminated in a unique type of government in which the Dalai Lama would be considered the supreme spiritual and temporal leader of Tibet (Richardson: 38).

At this point we will break our already abbreviated narrative and telescope history, so to speak, so that our considerations of the Dalai Lama can be applied to a more contemporary framework. The three centuries that separate us today from the founding of Ganden Phodrang (dga'-ldan pho-brang, the system of Tibetan government described above) are well described by Richardson, Shakabpa, Petech (1950), and Mehra (1968) among others; here we will only mention that the period surrounding and immediately following the reign of "the Great Fifth" (as the fifth Dalai Lama is known by Tibetans) coincided with the fall of the Ming dynasty in China; the rise of Manchu power; the elaboration of the office of Regent (sde-srid, the Dalai Lama's chief political administrator and de facto ruler during the time of the latter's minority); further wars and intrigues with foreign neighbors; and very significantly, the beginnings of the Chinese (Manchu) protectorate in Tibet.

As for the succession of Dalai Lamas who followed "the Great Fifth," their names and dates are given below;<sup>6</sup> we will resume our historical summary of this institution with the thirteenth Dalai Lama, who was Tibet's sovereign at the time of the collapse of the last Chinese dynasty, the Ch'ing, in 1911.

| <u>Dalai Lama</u>                            | <u>Lived</u> | <u>Ruled</u> |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 6th, Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho <sup>7</sup> | 1683-1706    |              |
| 7th, Bskal-bzang rgya-mtsho                  | 1708-1757    | 1751-1757    |

| <u>Dalai Lama</u>             | <u>Lived</u> | <u>Ruled</u> |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 8th, 'Jam-dpal rgya-mtsho     | 1758-1804    | 1781-1804    |
| 9th, Lung-rtogs rgya-mtsho    | 1806-1815    |              |
| 10th, Tshul-khrims rgya-mtsho | 1816-1837    |              |
| 11th, Mkhas-'grub rgya-mtsho  | 1838-1856    |              |
| 12th, 'Phrin-las rgya-mtsho   | 1856-1875    | 1873-1875    |
| 13th, Thub-bstan rgya-mtsho   | 1876-1933    | 1895-1933    |
| 14th, Bstan-'dzin rgya-mtsho  | 1935-        | 1950-        |

Even this simplified chart -- which has left out the parallel figures for the regents (given by Goldstein, 1968: 165-166) -- still suggests the enormous potential such an institution holds for being manipulated by private interest groups. Given this undeniable possibility, how, then, are we to understand the deep faith Tibetans have had and still do have in the Dalai Lama? The usual way of pursuing such a question -- distinguishing sharply between practical, tangible benefits and superimposed ideology -- yields little fruit once we have accounted for the power-distributing function of this institution.<sup>8</sup> (No Dalai Lama after the fifth has come from an aristocratic background. After each enthronement, however, the Dalai Lama's natal family would be raised to the highest ranks of the nobility, a status which would then be heritable by future generations.) The question yet to be answered -- Why the non-cynical faith in this person/institution? -- is in

fact central to the primary focus of this dissertation: the contemporary situation of young Tibetan refugees vis-à-vis their culture's traditional metaphors and paradigms. For this reason we will next consider a brief explanation of the beliefs and practices which have accompanied and supported this unique office for centuries. Then we will conclude our summary of the historical events that have led to the recent exodus of more than 100,000 Tibetans from their homeland. As for the question raised and yet unanswered, it will serve as one of the cornerstones of the conclusion of this dissertation; here we will simply postulate our starting point: the Dalai Lama may be regarded as the quintessential summarizing symbol<sup>9</sup> of Tibetanness today.

Balandier, in his chapter on "Religion and Power" (op. cit.: 99-122), makes a number of general observations which are strikingly applicable here. In considering the sacrality of power -- in particular, the sacred sovereign -- he regards this kind of ruler as "the repository of ultimate values" (ibid.: 99), whose sacralized power is linked "not so much to the mortal person of the sovereign as to a function that is declared to be eternal" (ibid.: 102). This power and this sacrality are both "profoundly ambiguous;" they are both based

on a dual polarity: that of the pure and the impure, that of the "organizing" (and just)

power and the "violent" (and constraining or contesting) power (ibid.: 108).

Finally, the identification of the sacred and the political "means that opposition to power (but not to its holders) is sacrilegious" (ibid.: 106-7); thus subjects are bound to the sovereign by "a veneration or total submission that cannot be justified by reason" (ibid.: 99).

In the case of the Dalai Lama, the political aspects of this institution have been well described by Goldstein (1973: 445-455): the cultural role of political succession by reincarnation, interacting with the techno-environmental matrix in which it existed -- the absence of new sources of economically viable agricultural land -- served to generate

an inevitable "circulation of estates," which, in turn, produced the political competition and conflict that were characteristic of the traditional Tibetan political system at any synchronic point in time (ibid.: 455, 445).

These "impure" and "violent" contestations for power, however, are balanced by the "pure," "just," and "organizing" aspects of Tibetan ideology. The Dalai Lama is an emanation (incarnation) of Tibet's patron bodhisattva<sup>10</sup> Avalokiteshvara (spyān-ras-gzigs), who has, since mythical times, been reborn in a series of culture heroes (including the greatest of the early kings). The relatively modern succession of Dalai Lamas

continues this "lineage" in contemporary times; thus the Dalai Lama is at one and the same time a direct reincarnation of his immediate predecessor (strongly "immanent" sacrality) and an indirect incarnation of Avalokiteshvara (primarily "transcendent" sacrality).

Whatever the degree of his personal charisma (and in the case of the fifth and the thirteenth, it was considerable; in other cases, much less so), the institutionalized or "routinized" charisma of each Dalai Lama was guaranteed, once the individual had been properly identified and legitimized as the true reincarnation.

Mere humans could not by themselves properly determine the incarnation, and the institutionalization depended on supplying the selection process with supernatural supports. The speeches and comments of a late Dalai Lama would be examined for any possible clues as to where he would be reborn. Other unusual occurrences, such as strange cloud formations or the shifting of the position of the corpse of the late Dalai Lama toward a particular direction, were analyzed by high Lamas, oracles, the Regent, and high ranking officials. The Regent and other high dignitaries also visited a holy lake (lha-mo'i bla-mtsho) in which visions were traditionally seen concerning the Dalai Lama's rebirth. All of these preliminary examinations of cryptic, supernatural signs ended in the sending out by the Regent of one or more search parties composed of government officials and high Lamas to areas deemed probable places where the Dalai Lama would return to Tibet. In these areas the parties would examine stories of wondrous or strange births of children in the proper age category and finally would administer a series of tests to the prospective candidates, the children and their parents not being forewarned that they were considering the boy for the Dalai Lama. These tests consisted of showing the candidate several pairs of articles, e.g. rosaries or walking sticks, one of which had been the personal possession of the late Dalai Lama. The child

was expected to choose the late Dalai Lama's things, thereby proving that he had residual knowledge of his past life, the ability to recall the events of one's past life being a characteristic of bodhi-sattvas and buddhas. On the basis on the reports sent by the one or more search parties, the Regent, after consulting with high Lamas and government officials, would inform the Assembly of the situation and guided by the Regent they would accept the candidate as Dalai Lama (Goldstein, 1968: 162-163).

To resume our historical summary of this institution, then, let us briefly reconsider our position in this diachronic overview. The death of the fifth Dalai Lama in 1682 was followed by a series of wars and intrigues which culminated in Chinese involvement in Tibetan affairs. During the period of the Manchu protectorate (1720-1911), the government still remained in Tibetan hands, and by the nineteenth century China's "patron" role as military advisor and protector was limited to the presence of two Manchu ambans (imperial representatives) and a small garrison in Lhasa.

When the Manchu empire collapsed in 1911, Tibet formally declared its independence -- "on the reasonable grounds that in the absence of an Emperor, their relationships with the Manchu house were at an end" (Denwood, 1975: 24).<sup>11</sup> By the end of the next year, the Tibetans had deported all Chinese residents, including the ambans and the garrison.

This left something of a military vacuum in ... [Tibet], which the Chinese themselves were incapable of filling consistently until after the communist takeover in 1949 -- though naturally they tried, by a combination of diplomacy and, where feasible, military efforts to retain as

much influence as possible.... Stabilisation was sought through a tripartite conference of the major interested powers -- the Simla Convention on Tibet between Tibet, Britain and China of 1913-1914 (Denwood, ibid.).

The two Asian parties came to this meeting with claims and counterclaims regarding the legality of Tibet's status as an independent state.

In an attempt to resolve the irreconcilable stands taken by the Chinese and Tibetan representatives, Sir Henry McMahon, on February 17, 1914, proposed a division of the disputed area into Inner and Outer Tibet, with Chinese suzerainty over Tibet. The Tibetans were unwilling to accept any form of Chinese overlordship in Tibet, and the Chinese were unwilling to accept the proposed boundaries; but for the sake of settling the dispute, the Tibetans reluctantly agreed to McMahon's proposal.

Under the terms of the proposed convention, Britain and China would recognize that Tibet was under the suzerainty of China. China would recognize the autonomy of Outer Tibet and would agree to abstain from interfering in the administration of that area, as well as in the selection and installation of the Dalai Lama. China was not to convert Tibet into a Chinese province, and Britain was to make no annexations. The Chinese would not send troops into Outer Tibet or attempt to station officials or establish colonies there. All Chinese troops and officials still in Tibet had to be withdrawn within three months of the signing of the Convention. The Chinese would be permitted to send a high official, with an escort not to exceed three hundred men, to reside in Lhasa (Shakabpa: 254).

The draft of this document was merely initialed by the Chinese representative, and the Chinese government ultimately instructed him not sign the final copy. After more than four months of delays and Chinese counterproposals, the British representative sent a communiqué to the Chinese, stating that "unless the Convention is signed before the

end of the month, His Majesty's Government will hold themselves free to sign separately with Tibet" (Shakabpa: 255).

That, in fact, is exactly what happened.

The Chinese Government never ratified the Simla Convention, preferring to retain their option of conquering Tibet at some future time. Contacts between Britain and Tibet thus took place without reference to the Chinese, who continued to make various overtures to the Tibetan government..... The Chinese Nationalist government was never seriously in a position to invade Tibet, which acted throughout the period as an independent state, although the Nationalists never gave up their claim that Tibet was a part of China. It was only in 1950 that the Chinese communist army forced the Tibetan government into a reluctant cooperation with China -- cooperation which enabled the Chinese to entrench themselves sufficiently to suppress the uprising in 1959 and take complete control of Tibet (Denwood: 15).

This mention of "the uprising in 1959" finally brings us to the goal of our historical overview, for it is this event which is inspiring the evolution of the other key symbol which will be investigated in this dissertation: the newly emerging symbolic complex of "independence," which is perceived and experienced both conceptually, as the word rang-btsan ("independence"), and behaviorally, as the annual 10th March demonstration affirming rang-dbang sger-langs (literally, "the uprising for freedom") -- Tibetan National Uprising Day. Unlike the symbolic figure of the Dalai Lama, this new symbolic gestalt does not serve primarily to "summarize" or to "compound and synthesize a complex system of ideas." Rather, the symbolic mode of this event is one which elaborates experience:<sup>12</sup> the word rang-btsan itself

suggests a wide range of relevant, meta-political associations, and participation in the activities of March involves a ritualized, albeit secular process of remembering and recommitting oneself to the ideals of Tibetan independence.

The preceding summary of events leading up to the 1959 uprising has, of course, been greatly abridged, and for similar reasons of economy, we will conclude our historical sketch in the same manner, presenting here only a brief outline of the Lhasa revolt. Historical works cited earlier, particularly those by Richardson and Shakabpa, cover the period immediately preceding 1959 quite thoroughly, as does the Dalai Lama in his autobiography. In addition, an insider's view of Eastern (Khams and Amdo) Tibetan resistance to the Chinese between 1950 and 1959 is provided by the Khampa guerilla leader Gompo Tashi Andrugtsang in his book Four Rivers, Six Ranges (1973).

The twentieth century buildup of Chinese strength in Tibet began late in 1949 with large-scale troop movements in the vicinity of Chamdo, the regional capital of Eastern Tibet located about 400 miles northeast of Lhasa. The People's Liberation Army, claiming as its goal "the liberation of Tibet from foreign imperialists," captured Chamdo in October of that year. Following this invasion the Tibetan National Assembly appealed to the United Nations for assistance, but the question was never taken up because of lack of support from Britain and India. The Dalai Lama,

then fifteen years of age, had been hastily invested with full power as ruler of Tibet; with Chinese presence in Lhasa an imminent certainty, he had but three courses open to him:

flight across the southern border into India, diehard last-ditch resistance in Lhasa, or a deal with the communist invaders. Since it was now clear that no power on earth was interested in aiding Tibet, the Dalai Lama, convinced of the uselessness of resistance, sent a peace delegation to China in late December, 1950. In May 1951, a 17-Point Agreement was signed between the two nations. The agreement brought to an end the Tibetan independence which had survived since 1912 without every receiving de jure recognition (Karan, 1976: 17).

After the signing of the treaty -- which gave China military control of the country but guaranteed Tibetan self-rule under the leadership of the Dalai Lama -- the implementation of new plans and programs such as schools, roads and other modern improvements was put into effect. In 1954 the Dalai Lama was given a six months' tour of China so that he might encounter at first hand the ideals, practices and benefits of Maoism and Marxist-Leninism; to this day, he, and many young Tibetans as well, find much that is praiseworthy in the reforms brought about by Chairman Mao.

But the initial honeymoon was soon over. Since those early days of carefully staged Chinese public relations, thousands of Tibetan children have been sent to schools in China against their parents' wishes. The development of Tibet-based light industries, has, according to recent refugees, primarily served to benefit the Han settlers,

while Tibetans complain of the constant threat of starvation. The country itself has become an active military base which is "strategically very important to China -- a superb defensive bastion to the southwest, through which run vital supply lines to the threatened frontier in Sinkiang" (Denwood: 17). Most unbearable of all has been what Tibetans perceive as Han colonialism. In the words of the Dalai Lama,

the Chinese began to oppress the Tibetan people and to turn Tibet into a Chinese colony with total disregard for the religious, cultural and national sentiments of the people (Address given to the Servants of the People Society, August 4, 1966, quoted in Tibetan Review, January-February, 1969: 14).

As for the Lhasa uprising itself, the following chronology of the main events of March, 1959 will serve to conclude this historical summary; its source is a special commemorative issue of Tibetan Review (March, 1969: 2), which additionally includes eye-witness accounts, photographs and more detailed descriptions of rang-dbang sger-langs -- the archetype of the Tibetan people's attempt to achieve independence. The following documentation reproduces the Tibetan Review almost verbatim (minor explanations have been added parenthetically); it is presented here in full in order to provide a more complete background for interpreting the present-day commemoration of this event by Tibetans in exile.

March 7:

The Chinese Political Commissar, T'an Kuan-san, presses for a definite date for a previous invitation to the Dalai Lama to attend a theatrical performance at the Chinese Military Headquarters. The Dalai Lama agrees to March 10.

March 9:

The Chinese impose conditions for the Dalai Lama's attendance to their invitation the next day: no Tibetan soldiers or police are to be posted along the way; the Dalai Lama is to come without the customary retinue to officials or escorts of the Kusung Regiment. By evening word spreads to Lhasa causing mounting anxiety for the safety of the Dalai Lama as the people suspect a Chinese plot to kidnap him.

March 10:

Crowds begin streaming into Norbu Lingka ("Jewel Park;" the grounds surrounding the Dalai Lama's summer palace) at dawn and by late morning ten to thirty thousand Tibetans surround the palace. A Tibetan collaborator is stoned to death. Repeated attempts to pacify the crowd fail until the people are assured that the Dalai Lama will not accept the Chinese invitation. Losing volunteers as guards, the crowd stages a demonstration to march through the city shouting slogans.

March 11:

A public meeting attended by all sections of the people is held at the Government Printing Press at Shöl, below the Potala (the Dalai Lama's palace and symbol of Lhasa for three hundred years). The meeting unanimously presses demands for a formal declaration of Tibetan independence and the removal of Chinese from Tibet.

March 12-16:

Public meetings and demonstrations are held in almost continuous session. Monks from neighboring monasteries and villagers from the surrounding countryside join in the protest. The Chinese keep off the streets but reports of massive preparations and arrivals of reinforcements come from all sides.

March 17:

At 4:00 p.m. two mortar shells fired from a nearby Chinese camp land in Norbu Lingka. Amidst rumours of imminent large-scale Chinese attack, the Cabinet persuades the Dalai Lama to leave Lhasa. At dusk the Dalai Lama slips out of the palace in disguise.

March 19:

The women of Lhasa organize a mammoth rally at the foot of the Potala and stage mass demonstrations in the city. A delegation of women requests the Indian and Nepalese Consul-Generals to witness their demands to the Chinese.

March 20:

At 2:00 a.m. the Chinese begin bombarding Norbu Lingka.

March 21-22:

Valiant and desperate fighting by unorganized and ill-equipped freedom fighters against Chinese artillery, machine guns and tanks.

March 23:

By the fourth day of fighting, the last pockets of resistance in Lhasa are overcome. Meanwhile in Delhi Mr. Nehru expresses concern about the situation in Tibet and the safety of the Dalai Lama in a statement in the Indian Parliament.

March 28:

China breaks a long silence on the Tibet situation by announcing the suppression of the uprising and dissolution of the Tibetan Government.... The Dalai Lama and the Cabinet formally proclaim a Provisional Government at Lhuntse Dzong, about three days' journey from the Indian border.

March 31:

The Dalai Lama reaches the Indian check-post at Chuthangmo in the evening.

This symbolically "loaded" chain of events was soon followed by the mass exodus of Tibetans from all walks of life, and by May 20, the first group of refugees to follow the Dalai Lama had arrived at Bomdila, India. From that point on, Tibetans too became one of the world's uprooted and stateless populations; it is to India's credit that these refugees have found such generous hospitality in a country with so many economic problems of its own.

#### Previous Research Concerning Tibetan Refugees

The general problem of refugee adaptation has received considerable attention, particularly in the years following the Second World War. Two significant studies in this genre -- Flight and Resettlement (1955), by H. B. M. Murphy, and The Refugee in the World (1963), by Joseph B. Schechtman -- both go beyond the mere presentation of demographic statistics, attempting in addition to highlight some of the attitudinal factors involved in the reintegration process. Another more recent book -- Stephen Keller's Uprooting and Social Change (1975) -- focuses exclusively on India, where the number of permanently displaced persons now exceeds 25 million (ibid.: xi). Keller's thesis regarding "a common refugee political culture" (ibid.: 1) deserves special consideration from our perspective, for many of his observations about Punjabi refugees from Pakistan seem very applicable to Tibetans as well.

Basically, Keller's study is concerned with what he sees as the two long-lasting effects of flight and its associated trauma, particularly the individual's realization that he or she has survived, while so many others have not. From this comes the dual result: a sense of invulnerability (which manifests itself in a heightened willingness to take risks), and a feeling of guilt (which may be transformed outwardly as aggressive behavior and then channeled into socially acceptable competitive drives) (ibid.: 98). As Keller points out,

in an economy of scarcity where the others do not share these sentiments ... such attitudes may lead to individual gain and community-wide economic development (ibid.).

With minor qualifications, his additional observations along this line do in fact describe the case of Tibetans in India quite well, with respect to their economic ventures at least, for it is true that these people

are more willing to do new things or do old things in new ways. They are more geographically mobile, more occupationally mobile, and more likely to adopt innovations sooner than non-refugees (ibid.: 271).

Other studies of refugee adaptation focus specifically on Tibetan examples. Claes Corlin, a Swedish anthropologist who has worked among Tibetan refugees in Nepal, uses a cognitive orientation to explore the Tibetan notion of chos (here, "religion" or "duty" in a very broad sense). Corlin regards this Tibetan concept as the "maximal category of the Tibetan's identification with his culture" (1975: 149),

and associates it with the interaction that occurs between the refugees' new environment and their traditional patterns of thought and behavior.

Melvyn Goldstein's article contrasts the negative stereotype of "the refugee syndrome" (typified by "a spectrum of dysfunctional, socially pathological traits such as homicide, suicide, alcoholism and insanity" [1975b: 12]) with the actual conditions he met in a Tibetan agricultural settlement in South India, where Tibetan adaptation has been "very successful." He attributes this to the retention of traditional Tibetan socio-cultural patterns -- particularly those of political hierarchy and authority -- and connects this continuity of tradition with the Indian government's "very liberal attitude toward the administration of the Tibetans" (ibid.: 13).

From the beginning, the policies of the Government of India were not intended to discourage or destroy Tibetan cultural institutions and traditions. Working together with the Dalai Lama's Government and a variety of foreign aid groups, the Government of India launched a program of rehabilitation within a framework compatible with the maintainance of Tibetan culture (ibid.).

As for the Tibetan refugees in Switzerland, their adaptation has not, according to Anna Elisabeth Ott-Marti, been nearly so successful. Her studies, which regard Swiss ethnocentrism as a real factor contributing to Tibetan anomie in that culture, describe the difficulties encountered by Tibetan refugees there.

For the Tibetans, the terms according to which they must find their place in our society (Gesellschaft) are especially hard. These immigrants, in contradistinction to other foreigners who have settled here, have been displaced from a religiously-oriented society ... into a largely secular one (1971: 163).

In addition, she cites Tibetans' high visibility as Asians in Europe, as well as the great divergence between their cultural origins and those of the West, as further reasons for the psychological distance separating these people from most other Swiss residents (164-165). For those Tibetans who do desire to become Swiss citizens (a course of action generally considered somewhat heretical -- at least publicly -- in the Indian context), the struggle for assimilation is made somewhat easier, for this decision usually implies a less fragmented internalization of Swiss values. And yet even in this,

the Tibetans wrongly assume that Swiss citizenship will mean an automatic equalization with the Swiss. They hardly ever ponder the consequences of political rights in a direct democracy of the Swiss type. They do not always see that jobs, housing and advanced schooling for children can only be obtained on the basis of accomplishment and not just being fellow-citizens (1976: 46).

Finally, Donald Messerschmidt considers a very specific case of Tibetan refugee adaptation: that of a group of wage-laborers who worked at a logging camp in northeastern United States. By organizing and identifying themselves as a "Tibetan Association" (a corporate group modelled after the traditional Tibetan skyid-sdug), these individuals "effectively cushioned the impact of cultural change" (1976: 48).

All but the last-mentioned study of Tibetan refugee adaptation do make some reference to the particular situation of the youth, but in none of the above cases does this become the primary focus of the research. In contrast to previous works, then, this dissertation will deal specifically with the transmission of traditional symbols and the emergence of new symbolic forms among Tibetan youth in India. Its focus is likewise different from that of prior studies: the two complementary areas that will be specially considered here will include formal schooling in a Tibetan environment, and implicit generalization from social experience in the wider context of Indian pluralistic society.

#### Fieldwork and Plan of this Investigation

Information for this study was collected during the course of ten months' fieldwork, of which seven and a half months were spent at my primary research site -- a school and foster homes complex in Northern India. In addition, I also spent one and a half months with Tibetan university and college students at my first place of residence, as explained in the Preface, and my travels through India enabled me to meet and interview Tibetans living and studying in Delhi; at a girls' college in Simla; a Tibetan institute of higher studies in Varanasi (Sarnath); and a Tibetan day school and settlement in South India in Bylakuppe. Also, in the course of three trips to Dharamsala,

the Tibetan "capital in exile," I visited and interviewed teachers and/or students from the Tibetan Children's Village, the Tibetan Music, Dance and Drama Society, the Buddhist School of Dialectics, and the Tibetan Astro-Medical Centre.

Thus I obtained my information via the standard anthropological techniques of participant observation and directed as well as open-ended interviews. Also, I have made use of the numerous Tibetan publications put out in India, ranging in scope from a quarterly journal and a monthly magazine to the local newsletters published occasionally. The fact that much of this material appears in English is, of course, fortuitous for a researcher who is a native speaker of that language; my fluency in Tibetan, while sufficient to "get by," would not have permitted the long, complex and often unresolved discussions that played such an important part in my total fieldwork experience. In addition, I am also fortunate in having two Tibetan friends -- both perceptive "insiders" in the Tibetan community in India, but with comparative experience as students at British or American universities -- who have read and criticized this manuscript as it was being written. Finally, since leaving India I have shared my slides and impressions of my fieldwork with Tibetans who now live in Switzerland, the Pacific Northwest, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Their comments and reactions have more than once served to provide me with new

insights and information relevant to this study.

The plan of this dissertation amplifies Turner's idea concerning the ways in which symbols ("metaphors and paradigms") are culturally transmitted and given form: a twofold process of explicit instruction and implicit experiential learning is involved here. Accordingly, the two middle chapters will consider the ethnographic data with respect to these complementary orientations.

Chapter Two will deal with the special educational system that has been created to instruct Tibetan youth and preserve Tibetan culture in India. This restricted focus on formal schooling within the confines of a deliberately maintained Tibetan environment will pay particular attention to the means of fostering traditional knowledge, values, and attitudes. In addition, these "old metaphors and paradigms" will also be considered in the light of the new social context in which they are occurring. The fundamental problem addressed by these Tibetan schools -- providing the young generation with a relevant basis for affirming a viable Tibetan self-definition -- will be related to the key summarizing symbol of Tibetan culture today: the Dalai Lama.

Chapter Three will consider the more implicit and experiential types of learning that occur in the broader context of Indian pluralistic society. Here the focus will include the economic, educational, and political activities

undertaken by Tibetan youth, their exposure to new ideas and ideologies, and their confrontation with international and intracultural Realpolitik. The various conflicts between ideology and experience that arise in this setting will be investigated with respect to the newly emerging symbolic gestalt of "independence," which may be seen as an elaborating symbol that operates both conceptually, in the form of the root metaphor of "rangzen," and behaviorally, in the form of the annual 10th March commemoration of Tibetan Uprising Day.

Finally, Chapter Four will conclude this investigation by relating the ethnographic findings of the two middle chapters to the broader theoretical issues raised in Chapter One. The underlying analogy of this study -- that between liminality and refugee status -- will be clarified in reference to the specific case at hand, and the data from Chapters Two and Three will be summarized with respect to the two key symbols identified throughout this work: the traditional figure of the Dalai Lama and the newly emerging symbolic complex of "Rangzen"/10th March. Final conclusions will deal with the sociological and political implications of the Tibetan word rang-btsan (literally, "self power"), as well as with two more generally applicable concepts: the notion of metaphor as an intellectual and symbolic activity, and the relationship between liminality and ambiguity vis-à-vis the generation of new symbolic forms.

## NOTES

1. The system of transliteration used here follows that described by Wylie (1959: 261-276). The term rang-btsan is commonly Anglicized as "Rangzen" by Tibetans familiar with English. Both forms will be used in this study, depending on whether the emphasis is on the broad concept of "independence," or on the literal meaning of the Tibetan morphemes.

2. This figure is from Richardson (1962: 6), who served as a British diplomat in Tibet from 1936-1940, in 1944, and from 1946-1950. However, the Tibetan press in India speaks of "the six million left behind," a number which includes the regions of Kham and Amdo (see Tibetan Review, June-July, 1975: 5). Actually, the problem of varying population statistics is an old one, compounded by the necessity of distinguishing between "three Tibets" (Karan, 1976: 5): "cultural Tibet" (including all areas which were at one time inhabited exclusively or predominantly by people of Tibetan extraction; "geographical Tibet" (including parts of Sinkiang and Sikang [Kham and Amdo]; and "political Tibet" (including only that part of geographical and cultural Tibet ruled by the Tibetan government from earliest times to 1951).

As Mehra points out:

in 1907 the Chinese government computed the population at 6,430,000, while 15 years later its figure fell to 1,500,000! This leaves a margin of five millions between the lowest and the highest estimates, which obviously vary according to the physical boundaries one keeps in view (1968: 22).

3. Actually, 100,000 is a very conservative estimate of the number of Tibetans who have tried to escape, since many hundreds if not thousands have died in unsuccessful attempts to cross the Himalayas on foot. Since 1959-1961, the peak years of exodus immediately following the flight of the Dalai Lama and his cabinet, the number of Tibetans still escaping has dropped to about 100 per year. It would appear that the sharp decline in refugee numbers is primarily due to increasing border surveillance by the Chinese, and definitely not indicative of any growing acceptance of the Chinese regime. See Tibet under Chinese Communist Rule: A Compilation of Refugee Statements, 1958-1975 (1976: 201-207); and Tibetan Review, October, 1976: 7.

As for the social backgrounds of these refugees, again, there are simply no exact and unambiguous demographic statistics available. While in India, my own impression was that approximately 90% - 95% of the Tibetans there were commoners rather than nobility; i.e. probably only 5% - 10% of the families were sger-pa -- enfeoffed with an inheritable patrimonial estate.

4. The quote has appeared in Tibetan Review and is also cited by Shakabpa.

5. As Goldstein points out (1968: 165n), the word "lama" (bla-ma, literally, "superior one") "is a difficult term to translate in English. It refers to a renowned religious personage who usually, although not necessarily, was also an incarnation. Lama may also refer to the person one has faith in or the person one receives religious teaching from."

6. Names and dates of birth and death are from Shakabpa (1973: 346-347); dates of reign, when applicable, from Goldstein (1968: 165-166). It will be noted, as Goldstein points out, that

incarnation as a means of succession necessitated recurrent periods when the ruler (Dalai Lama) was not old enough to rule.... After each Dalai Lama's death there was always a period of about twenty years when the new Dalai Lama was in his minority (ibid.: 165).

In fact, from 1751 to 1950

there was a shift in ruler on the average of every 13 years, with Regents ruling 77 per cent of the time. If we exclude the reign of the 13th Dalai Lama (1895-1933), we see that Regents ruled approximately 94 per cent of the time (ibid.: 166).

7. The sixth Dalai Lama was an unusual figure for this office: a man-about-town who wrote poignant lyrical poetry, enjoyed the company of Lhasa courtesans, and very readily renounced his monastic vows. His unlikely behavior (for a Dalai Lama at least) can very possibly be explained by his lack of early childhood socialization for this role: the Regent of the previous Dalai Lama (said to be the natural son of "the Great Fifth") had concealed the latter's death for 12 years while effectively and capably ruling himself during that period. In any case, attempts by non-Tibetan authorities to depose the sixth Dalai Lama and replace him with another, were never accep-

ted by the Tibetan people, who continued to regard Tshangs-dbyangs rgya-mtsho as the only legitimate incarnation of the fifth, and the authentic predecessor of the seventh Dalai Lama. The present Dalai Lama's elder brother devotes a whole chapter of one of his books to explain Tibetan people's love and regard for this man and his poetry. See "A Riddle of Love," pp. 279-293, in Tibet, by Thubten Jigme Norbu and Colin M. Turnbull, (1970).

8. This is not to suggest that this function was unimportant. See, on this point, Goldstein's article, "The Circulation of Estates in Tibet: Reincarnation, Land and Politics," (1973).

9. According to Ortner,

summarizing symbols ... are those symbols which are seen as summing up, expressing, representing for the participants in an emotionally powerful and relatively undifferentiated way, what the system means to them. This category is essentially the category of sacred symbols in the broadest sense, and includes all those items which are objects of reverence and/or catalysts of emotion... The American flag, for example, for certain Americans, stands for something called "the American way," a conglomerate of ideas and feelings including (theoretically) democracy, free enterprise, hard work, competition, progress, national superiority, freedom, etc. And it stands for them all at once. It does not encourage reflection on the logical consequences of them as they are played out in social actuality, over time and history. On the contrary, the flag encourages a sort of all-or-nothing allegiance to the whole package... And this is the point about summarizing symbols in general -- they operate to compound and synthesize a complex system of ideas, to "summarize" them under a unitary form which, in an old-fashioned way, "stands for" the system as a whole (1973: 1339-1340).

10. A bodhisattva is a being who has achieved enlightenment, but who has chosen, for motives of compassion, to postpone his final entry into Nirvana until all sentient beings have been liberated from the misery of phenomenal existence.

11. This article, which compares the fates of Mongolia and Tibet in the twentieth century, is the result of a seminar held at the London School of Oriental and African Studies, whose participants also included C. R. Bawden, H. E. Rich-

ardson and D. L. Snellgrove.

12. Ortner distinguishes this second, "elaborating" type of key symbol from the first -- the "summarizing" type -- as follows:

Elaborating symbols, on the other hand, work in the opposite direction, providing vehicles for sorting out complex and undifferentiated feelings and ideas, making them comprehensible to oneself, communicable to others, and translatable into orderly action.... Rarely are these symbols sacred in the conventional sense of being objects of respect or foci of emotion; their key status is indicated primarily by their recurrence in cultural behavior or cultural symbolic systems (1973: 1340).

She further distinguishes between two varieties of elaborating symbols. The first, which she terms (after Stephen Pepper) "root metaphors," are those which provide categories for conceptualizing the order of the world. These metaphors are "static formal images" (1342) which operate to sort out experience and place it in cultural categories. The second variety of elaborating symbols -- "key scenarios" -- imply "clear-cut modes of action appropriate to correct and successful living in the culture" (1341). This latter category (e.g. the Horatio Alger myth) involves "dramatic, phased action sequences" (1342), and may specifically include rituals, "in which both valued end states and effective means for achieving them are dramatized for all to see" (1341).

## CHAPTER II

### THE TRANSMISSION OF TRADITIONAL SYMBOLS THROUGH FORMAL SCHOOLING

#### The Establishment of Tibetan Schools in India

Less than one year after the abortive Lhasa Uprising of March, 1959, which precipitated the exodus of more than 100,000 Tibetans across the Himalayas, the first school for Tibetan refugee children was established by the Dalai Lama in Mussoorie, India. That such immediate priority to given to formal schooling at a time of such turmoil shows the degree to which education was regarded as a necessity and not a luxury by Tibetan leaders reacting to their loss of country and exile. The Dalai Lama himself stresses this point in his autobiography:

It is even harder for children than for adults to be uprooted and taken suddenly to an entirely different environment... We had to do something drastic to preserve their health -- and their education was also a matter of great importance. We know that our children in Tibet are being snatched away from their parents and brought up as Chinese Communists, not as Tibetan Buddhists.... So, in the next generation, the children in India may be a very important people, a nucleus of the peaceful religious life which we wish to regain (1962: 226).

This view of education as a means of keeping Tibetan culture alive among the young is uppermost in the minds of

Tibetan policy makers today, but before investigating the goal itself, we should first consider the practical, if bureaucratic bridge that had to be built so as to connect the hopes and aims of these now stateless people with the pragmatic realities of life in their new country.

Withing a year after the opening of that first school in Mussoorie, the Council for Tibetan Education was established, and subsequently two more schools -- in Simla and Darjeeling -- were set up. By 1961 there were 800 students enrolled in the three schools, and in May of that year, during the course of formal discussions between the Dalai Lama and Prime Minister Nehru regarding the rehabilitation of Tibetan refugees in India, a comprehensive educational program was mapped out. As a result of this meeting, an autonomous body -- the Central Committee on the Education of Tibetan Refugees -- was set up by the Government of India Ministry of Education. In September, 1961, this committee became registered as a Society whose purpose was to establish and administer schools for the children of Tibetan refugees. Newly renamed as the Tibetan Schools Society, this autonomous organization could now administer existing and future Tibetan schools under the auspices of the Government of India Ministry of Education. Its governing body, composed of officials of the former Central Committee, included the Union Minister of Education as ex-officio chairman, and three representatives of the

Indian government: a senior official of the Ministry of Education who was appointed as full-time Secretary of the Society; a senior official from the Ministry of External Affairs, which at that time was responsible for the rehabilitation of Tibetan refugees in India; and the Financial Advisor to the Ministry of Education. In addition, three representatives of the Dalai Lama were also numbered among the governing body (summarized from Tibetans in Exile 1959-1969 (1969: 226-227) and Tibetan Review, September, 1968: 8-9).

This brief description of the Tibetan School Society's initial governing board can be applied, virtually, unmodified, to the situation existing today. The organization -- renamed the Central Tibetan Schools Administration in 1969 -- is still directly related to the Indian government, not only by virtue of Indian ministerial representation comprising one-half the membership of directors, but also in view of the fact that the Union Ministry of Education still gives close to a 100% subsidy to the Central Schools for Tibetans in India. Such considerable assistance given by a host country with so many economic problems of its own is acknowledged with sincere gratitude by Tibetans, who have never before had such educational opportunities offered to an entire younger generation, regardless of social class. For that very reason, in fact, the first Tibetan schools in India were hardly able to draw on the

resources of their own community to staff and administer the institution. In addition to the acute financial problems suffered by the vast majority of the refugees, the group as a whole was quite unfamiliar with any kind of formal secular education beyond a narrow concentration on basic arithmetic, calligraphy, and memorization of the scriptures. To be sure, there was an elite segment of the population from noble or nouveaux riches families who had been previously sent to India or other foreign countries to receive a modern education, but in no way did the sum of these individual experiences add up to a trained stock of native pedagogues. The first teachers and administrators, then, were overwhelmingly non-Tibetan: Indians in most cases, and occasionally foreigners such as airline stewardesses who would volunteer to teach English on a short-term basis.

This lack of a Tibetan teaching staff did not, however, lead to any radical change in the collective enculturation of the younger generation. Because so many parents were scattered in various parts of the country working on road construction, or were too destitute to provide adequately for their children's maintainance, let alone education, the first seven schools built by the Tibetan Schools Society were initially all residential institutions where the students lived in dormitories under the care of Tibetan guardians or houseparents. As for the day schools which were

also set up, these were located in the Tibetan settlement camps established for large groups of refugees by the Indian government; thus in both cases, the children were in close contact with Tibetan adults who, as real or surrogate parents, provided the primary nutriment, both in a literal sense and in terms of ethnic identity.

Besides the institutionalized presence and example of Tibetan adults at these schools, another very strong reinforcement of Tibetan ethnicity has come from the almost exclusive use of Tibetan language -- particularly the now-standard dialect of Central Tibet -- in this environment. This practice has been in effect right from the beginning; no policy decisions were made or needed to enforce the use of Tibetan as the language for communication with other Tibetans outside of the classroom situation. On the other hand, however, the issue of language choice in the latter context appeared as one of the first problems to be faced by the policy makers of the Council for Tibetan Education: Which of the three -- Tibetan, Hindi, or English -- should be used as the medium of instruction for subjects (other than Tibetan language, of course) taught in the schools? Given these people's newly fired determination to be able to communicate their story to the world, it is not surprising that Tibetan, which would in any case be taught as the mother tongue, and Hindi, which could be studied as one course and practiced in daily contact situations, lost

out to English, the pre-eminent mediator language of India. The gap between the underlying theory of this decision and the actual reality of English comprehension at such "English medium schools" will be considered later. Here it is sufficient to point out that the choice of English as the medium of instruction and Hindi as a required course from grades three to eight has noticeable parallels in the policies adopted by other Indian schools whose children are not native speakers of Hindi: the mother tongue or regional language is taken for granted as the vehicle for everyday non-classroom communication, while at the same time it is accorded great emotional significance as a boundary marker, is taught almost reverently as an essential part, if not the bearer, of "the culture," and is considered one of the core features of ethnic self-definition.

As homeward-looking refugees who are generally not Indian citizens, Tibetans are, in this case, quite different from, for example, the Tamil-speaking people of South India, who see the government-supported three-language policy (regional; national [Hindi]; and international [English]) as a forced imposition of Hindi on a much older, indigenous Dravidian population. Tibetans can afford to be cheerfully pragmatic about such matters. While they do want and need to attain basic fluency in Hindi and/or some other local language, they are so clearly non-Indian

in their own and others' eyes that their use of an Indian language which is not their mother tongue involves a mere practical adaptation, and not loss of ground to any linguistic majority. Furthermore, it is even possible that an objectively incorrect but symbolically significant correlation might also be involved here. More than one person told me how "our Tibetan language came from Sanskrit" -- a misconception obviously based on the confusion of writing system with language and supported by a tradition of looking south to India as the homeland of erudite pandits, translators, and the historical Sakyamuni Buddha himself. For all these reasons -- desire to communicate with the world at large, realistic appraisal of the linguistic implications of non-citizenship, and possibly, the association of an Indian writing system (conceived by them as a language) with the land of their religion's founder -- the learning of Hindi by an entire generation of Tibetan school-goers does not seem to be posing any grave threat to the group's ethnic self definition.

And in the case of learning English, the motivation to be fluent in this language is even stronger. My attempts at speaking Tibetan, especially with older people who seldom talked with Westerners, would invariably bring forth some polite compliment about my fluency in their language, followed by an apology on their part: "As for me, I'm stupid (lkugs-pa, literally "dumb," in both senses as in

English); I don't know English." To try to mitigate my embarrassment at such a doubly inexact portrayal of us both, I would respond by pointing out that I was totally ignorant in Hindi, which almost every Tibetan knows to some degree as a second language. And then the response would come back: "Yes, I know Hindi, but outside of India it's of no benefit. In the world nowadays, everyone speaks English!"

In view of all this, it appears that the Council for Tibetan Education was not mistaken when, following the suggestion of the Dalai Lama, it chose English as the medium of instruction for its schools. At the same time, it should be pointed out that the study of Tibetan is also an official part of the instructional program, and in this area at least, the pattern of Indian expertise counteracting Tibetan unfamiliarity was reversed. From the start, the teachers of these classes have been Tibetan; in fact, the first language teachers were all monks, the traditional group in which intellectuals might be found. Despite the high degree of esteem accorded to learned monk scholars, however, the Council realized that even these specialists, "who had considerable knowledge in Tibetan studies ... could not be entrusted with teaching the children in this new environment without being trained for it" (Tibetans in Exile 1959-1969, 1969: 250).

Thus in March, 1964, a Teachers Training Centre was

started, with a Tibetan monk scholar as Director and a Canadian teacher put in charge of instructing the thirty trainees -- all incarnate lamas -- in modern teaching methods, general knowledge, and English. The one-year course was followed by a final examination given by the Council for Tibetan Education and the Council of Religious and Cultural Affairs, both of which are branches of the Tibetan government-in-exile. After the exam, the trainees were sent to visit three residential schools so as to gain practical teaching experience. The next year the same program was repeated for a new group of twenty-six trainees, also monks, after which this particular program was terminated. A similar teachers' training course for monks and laity alike is now offered through the facilities of the Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath.

This does not, of course, change the picture given earlier. The vast majority of teachers at the Tibetan schools are Indian. Moreover, the Indian government has become much more strict about the presence of foreigners in the Tibetan schools under their jurisdiction: today they are not allowed to observe, let alone conduct classes, while school is officially in session.

To sum up so far, then, the Tibetan school system in India is the direct concern of two different organizations: the Council for Tibetan Education, which is an exclusively Tibetan office representing one of the departments of the

Tibetan government-in-exile, and the Central Tibetan Schools (formerly the Tibetan Schools Society), which is an autonomous group ultimately under the jurisdiction of the Government of India . This last-named institution has been extremely helpful to the tens of thousands of Tibetans now living in India: it has assisted in the establishment of schools for an entire younger generation (now numbering more than 8,000 students), and it subsidizes their education by means of grants which cover over 95% of the CTSA's total expenditures (Tibetan Review, May, 1977: 7; September, 1968: 11). Besides providing financial aid, the Ministry of Education has also made Indian educational expertise available to the Tibetan community in the person of administrators and teachers for the schools.

At the same time, however, Indian politics, especially her desire to normalize relations with China, have resulted in stricter policies regarding prolonged contact between Tibetans and foreigners. Since India has already given asylum to what China terms "the reactionary Dalai clique," she feels she cannot risk further provoking her neighbor to the north by making it too easy for visiting foreigners (irresponsible journalists in particular) to get caught up in publicizing the Tibetans' strong hopes of winning back their country's independence. For this reason, the type of anthropological studies done by Goldstein (1968) and Epstein (1977; research done in 1969-1970) --both carried

out in Tibetan settlements -- is no longer possible today, and the days of airline stewardesses teaching English on their Indian stop-overs are likewise over. Nevertheless, it is still possible for a foreigner complying with restrictions to study various aspects of Tibetan culture, and Tibetans themselves are more than receptive to this interest.

In fact, reaching out to the world at large is one of the most significant changes to have occurred among Tibetans, who by their own admission were hopelessly isolated, both by geography and by their own attitudes, barely two decades ago. The utilization of foreign volunteer English teachers, the models provided by the Pestalozzi and SOS Children's Villages in the establishment of their own institutions for orphans, the appointment of a Canadian to head the first teachers' training program, as well as the contacts made and maintained with relief agencies all over the world -- such responses point to a potential for adaptability which transcends any one national boundary.

In addition, when we consider the modifications brought about by the establishment of the Tibetan schools in India, the outline of a pattern begins to emerge: both old and new forms and expectations are accommodated by being incorporated into some sort of a workable synthesis. It was and still is necessary for the Tibetan schools to rely heavily on Indian teachers and administrators, yet the

traditional category of Tibetan intellectual specialists -- the monk scholars -- was the first group to receive the training which would enable them to continue their teaching role in the new environment. The curriculum, to be considered in detail later in this chapter, represented an array of subjects never before studied in Tibet, and yet as we shall see, it also guaranteed that more children than ever before would know their traditional heritage, particularly their language in its written form. Other examples will reveal a similar dialectic pattern: the confrontation of the familiar and the alien resulting in a synthesis which is viable at this new stage of Tibetan self-definition.

Administrators, Teachers, and  
the English Language

With the establishment of these schools, the governing body of the Central Tibetan Schools Administration, with its headquarters in New Delhi, was empowered to deal with any major policy changes affecting the organization as a whole. On the local level, however, the two highest posts are held by the rector and the principal. In each of the four residential schools the rector is Tibetan and the principal Indian -- an assignment of roles which allocates the general administrative work to the Tibetan officials, who as a group lack the academic qualifications now

required for the office of principal.<sup>1</sup>

But this state of affairs is unlikely to remain unchanged or unchallenged for long. More and more young Tibetans are completing programs of higher study at Indian institutions, and many of these recent graduates are firmly committed to helping the Tibetan community by returning to teach in the Tibetan schools. This gradual but steady influx of qualified Tibetans into the school system cannot but encourage the desire for more autonomy on the part of the Tibetan authorities, especially since the original reason for making use of Indian expertise -- the lack of Tibetan know-how and resources -- is becoming less and less applicable to the situation today. Added to this is the general feeling among the Tibetan community, particularly those directly involved with education, that the present hierarchy, that is, the local school subordinated to the CTSA which is in turn subordinated to the Government of India Ministry of Education -- involves too much red tape. If these schools could instead be taken over completely by the Council for Tibetan Education, these people say, then the curriculum could more easily be modified to suit the particular needs of Tibetans living in India. Under the present set-up, for example, a course in traditional Tibetan art cannot be offered as a school subject, since there is no prescribed syllabus already accepted by the whole bureaucratic chain for specifically Tibetan art. While

this example does not represent a crucial issue in itself, it does illustrate the general problem from the Tibetan point of view: a multi-layered bureaucracy ultimately subject to the Indian government cannot act with enough flexibility to be an efficient organization for a relatively small group of non-Indian refugees.

Such an evaluation of the Tibetan school system refers specifically to its upper-level organization and administration. In the case of the individual teachers themselves, their effectiveness is very often judged by their ability to motivate as well as instruct and explain. In the words of one young Tibetan, "Teachers should try to kindle the children's interest. They should develop to the fullest whatever potential is in each child." Such expectations are not only progressive in terms of educational philosophy, but they also put a premium on a particular style of teacher-student relationship. In such a case, both teachers and students would ideally share basic values and assumptions to an extent that would virtually guarantee mutual sensitivity and responsiveness to hidden potential or unstated demands. This kind of ideal learning atmosphere hardly seems likely to occur on a large scale when two different ethnic groups comprise the categories of teachers and students. To be sure, there are now over one hundred seventy Tibetan teachers in the four residential and twenty-nine day schools administered by the CTSA,

but in general, the ratio of Tibetan to Indian teachers is reflected by the figures from the school I studied: out of thirty-eight teachers, twenty-eight were Indian; and of the remaining ten Tibetans, seven were lay and three were monk teachers. In fact, the unanimously strong feeling throughout the Tibetan community is that as many qualified Tibetan teachers as possible should gradually replace the Indians currently holding these positions, particularly at the elementary level, where the foundation is laid for the years to come and the all-important first confrontation with the English language takes place.

The issue of language is very much involved in the criticisms voiced by Tibetans against some of the Indian teachers in the schools. As one young Tibetan, fresh from his own secondary experience remembered it, "They do not take the trouble to make the children understand; they're content when the students merely parrot the textbook." At the heart of this criticism is not only a perceived lack of interest in teaching, but also an inability or refusal on the part of some Indian teachers to make sure that the students are actually comprehending directions and explanations in the medium of instruction. In some cases it would appear that lack of English competence on the part of the teachers themselves is to blame. My own brief teaching experience during the winter vacation confirmed what I had heard from many students regarding their teachers' less-

than-perfect mastery of the English language. While using another student's textbook, its margins heavily pencilled in with cribbed notes, I noticed that many of the unfamiliar words had been defined with their secondary or tertiary meanings, in many cases inapplicable to the context or even totally wrong. Checking the books of the other students I found that whole classes of students had been given this misinformation by their teachers.

The problem here is complicated by several factors. Language bequeathed by a colonial past, more universally understood or at least accepted than any other of the two hundred-odd representatives of the Indian Babel, it is alternately cursed and over-valued as a necessary evil, with emphasis placed either on the noun or the adjective. The most competent Indian speakers of English are, quite naturally, those who have had the greatest opportunity to learn and use it with people who are truly native speakers, and in such a rigidly status-conscious country as India, that typology would rarely apply to people who would seek employment teaching poor refugees. Thus it is not surprising that government-supported institutions which are in theory "English medium schools" (and this includes schools for Indian children as well as the Tibetan schools) should in fact be staffed by "English teachers who cannot pronounce their subject," as one editorial in a Tibetan monthly expressed it. Nor is it surprising that the stu-

dents, after ten years of such schooling, should generally be so weak in vocabulary, so hesitant in pronunciation, that English is still an unusable language for many of them.

A second criticism levelled against some Indian teachers refers to their alledged lack of commitment, with the occasionally added implication that sincere interest in the children's educational progress should perhaps not even be expected of them, since "they are not teaching their own." In the word of that same editorial referred to above,

It is a fact most of the teachers find themselves in schools because they could not get [jobs] anywhere else, and perhaps this state of affairs should not surprise anyone in a developing country. It is the experience of every student from a Tibetan school that most of the gurujis (teachers) are either cramming for their degree exams or letter writing in class. It is not uncommon to find lady teachers knitting or gossiping in class (Tibetan Review, April, 1976: 3-4).

It should be pointed out that such criticisms seldom occur without qualification: the mention of Tibetan gratitude to the Indian government for its support, a clarification that not all Indian teachers lack sincere interest in teaching, and even an attempt to link the act of criticizing with the positive influence of living in a free country. Thus a follow-up editorial makes this statement:

If, however, the editor has taken too much liberty with an organisation (CTSA) that has done much commendable work for the welfare of

the Tibetan children, he apologizes. It is because the editor is educated and grown up in a democratic India (Tibetan Review, June-July, 1976: 3).

Moreover, Tibetan criticisms have not been limited to Indian teachers. A lively crossfire of dialogue alternately attacking and defending the Tibetan monk teachers has been appearing intermittently in letters to the editor occasioned by the two editorials quoted from above. One side of the argument is basically this: too many lama teachers, having spent their lives in monasteries, "have a one-dimensional approach to life." If education is to involve more than the memorization of textbooks, then the teachers must be people who can take a multi-dimensional role in the schools, helping the students widen their horizons by means of co-curricular as well as classroom activities. While at least one lama teacher should remain in each school to teach the religious subjects, they should never predominate over qualified Tibetan lay teachers (summarized from editorials in Tibetan Review, April, 1976: 4, and June-July, 1976: 4).

Response to the two editorials came in the form of ten pages of letters to the editor including a long counter-criticism from an Indian principal who felt personally attacked by the general tone of the articles. In addition, a number of secondary and college students wrote in to amplify or challenge the editorials or to take issue with other letters. Those who defended present educational

policies, particularly the institution of lama teachers, included a young official working for the Council for Tibetan Education, a student and the principal of the Buddhist School of Dialectics (a philosophy and logic college for monks), a former (Indian) headmaster of one of the Tibetan schools, as well as Tibetan students and ex-students themselves. Many letters elaborated this point made by a tenth-grade boy: irresponsible public criticism of revered Tibetan institution can serve to "destroy the very root of our culture, religion, and tradition" (letter by D. Wangyal, Tibetan Review, October, 1976: 32. See other correspondence in this issue, pp. 32-35, and in the June-July, 1976 issue, pp. 20-25).

Also worth noting is the fact that one of the letters defending monk teachers came from an Indian, the former headmaster referred to above:

I believe that every Tibetan school should have at least one or two lama teachers. Tibetan monks symbolize sacrifice and devotion with a considerable degree of purpose, which are essential elements of any useful and beautiful life for which a school should prepare the "schooled" (letter by T. A. Khan, ibid.: 21).

While thus upholding one traditional aspect of the Tibetan schools, the same writer also expresses his none too veiled criticism of a particular Tibetan administrator. "You cannot take a mission forward with feudal highhandedness, emotionalism and rigid orientation," he writes, going on to characterize the problem in this case as

autistic disregard of what the others say on the ground that the others [Indians] are foreigner and do not belong to your class of people, and in your opinion (with stress on "your opinion") do not understand you, your culture and religion (ibid.: 20-21).

It would be incorrect to conclude from this last criticism that the image of "feudal highhandedness" leaps to mins as a general characterization of all Tibetans on the part of all Indians. The issue here is a personal one, referring to a particular Tibetan administrator who has been judged, by young Tibetan teachers as well, as unfamiliar with, and therefore sometimes hostile to the implementation of policies based on contemporary educational theory. Nevertheless, it is significant that an Indian would attempt to "take his case to the people" by writing in to a Tibetan publication. In fact, while all of the issues at stake in this exchange of views are important in their own right, relating as they do to educational policy, Tibetan/Indian relations, and intra- as well as inter-ethnic disagreements about the adaptation and change of traditional institutions, the form in which these arguments were presented deserves as much attention as the content.

Appearing in a remarkably free and at times hard-hitting English-language monthly that is financed and edited in India exclusively by Tibetans, these letters and editorials testify to a certain democratization that

has been brought about by Indian education, whatever its imperfections. Both Indians and Tibetans, as long as they are functionally literate in English, can express their opinion freely, forsaking the elaborate honorifics of their respective mother tongues. Thus the awkward phrases of an anonymous letter from a secondary school student are printed directly across the page from a verbose epistle co-signed by the Tibetan rector and the Indian principal of one of the residential schools. Neither the selection nor the layout of the correspondence shows any indication that criteria of age, rank, or education were used to determine which letters should be published, and where. And yet, leaving aside the printed format and the language used, this new forum for expressing divergent opinions is not without precedent in Tibetan history. Discussing the literary style of the archaic (pre-eleventh century) Tibetan manuscripts found in the caves at Tun Huang, R. A. Stein points out the significant role of proverbs and metaphors in these early texts.

Cunning, aptness, the art of telling truths or hinting at blame in a veiled and indirect way, play a great part in these compositions (1972: 255).

Ten centuries later these same values apparently motivated more than one author of these letters to the editor. English maxims such as "Spare the rod and spoil the child" as well as translated Tibetan proverbs have been used to

bolster the weight of personal opinion. Thus a letter which protests public criticism of internal Tibetan problems gives this bit of traditional wisdom: "Do not tell the secrets of your heart even to your wife who has [borne you] three sons" (letter by Lhakpa Tsering, Tibetan Review, October, 1976: 32).

To bring together all these considerations of administrators, teachers, and English as a medium of instruction, let us look more closely at what is implied by such widespread public discussion of these issues. The very fact that people are openly debating, defending and criticizing particular educational policies is significant in itself, for it shows that they very definitely regard the schools as a fit subject for evaluation and comment. Such a high degree of individual involvement in these matters, particularly on the part of ex-students who stand to gain nothing personally from it, can perhaps be explained by the quote from the Dalai Lama presented at the beginning of this chapter: "In the next generation the children in India may be ... a nucleus of the peaceful religious life which we want to regain." Clearly, there is a very strong identification on the part of all Tibetans with their schools and their collective future. In fact, the desired changes discussed earlier -- more administrative independence from the Indian government and more Tibetan teachers in the classrooms -- reflect the very same attitude: "our

schools are our future."

In addition, any projected move in the direction of a totally Tibetan educational system -- whatever its actual chances for materializing -- represents an ideal reversal of the initial dependence on Indian expertise. To be sure, such a wish is natural coming from a group that has made considerable progress in the economic as well as educational welfare of its people. Yet beyond this, the dual criticism of poor teaching and low level of English competence -- when levelled at Indian teachers by Tibetans -- goes a step further than merely reversing the categories of the advisors and the advised. In a truly ironic confounding of medium and message, the critics have taken one of the topics of criticism and made it the language in which further criticisms are expressed! Viewed in this way, the letters to the editor are a fitting summary of all these issues, for they not only require a certain degree of fluency in the literal sense -- in English, but their very existence testifies to the fact that educated Tibetans have also achieved fluency in new codes of behavior: making critical evaluations effectively public. In short, the first Tibetan educatees have become the first educators, both inside and outside the classroom.

#### The Explicit Curriculum I: Textbooks and Subjects

The very notion of modern classroom instruction, com-

plete with textbooks and a general course of studies, represents a radical departure from the traditional educational system in Tibet, where an emphasis on the written language, particularly its calligraphy, dominated all secular schooling.

At the primary stage the traditional system concentrated on teaching pupils to read and write the Tibetan language. At the next stage the scriptures were learnt by heart as they formed the main subject taught to monks and lay pupils in the Tibetan educational system. At a more advanced stage, limited only to monk scholars, the pupils took part in dialectical discussions with their teachers, and examinations at this level were also based on this pattern. Thus the educational system completely ignored scientific subjects, concentrating on the study of philosophy, and though such a system might have suited the needs of the people as it was then -- isolated and unaware of the rest of the world -- we feel it needs a thorough overhauling to suit the present situation (Tibetans in Exile: 227-228).

From the very first year of exile, this conscious and officially endorsed desire to give "a thorough overhauling" to the traditional educational system has led Tibetans to look beyond their old horizons for new models of what education can imply.

The general principle followed in framing the educational system for these schools was that while due emphasis should be made in the teaching of Tibetan language, religion, and culture, the students should be given a thorough modern education so that the foundations could be laid for the training of future engineers, doctors, nurses, lawyers and other professions and technicians. Even in the teaching of traditional subjects such as Tibetan language and literature, efforts were made to incorporate modern methods (Tibetan Review, September, 1968: 9).

This flush of enthusiasm for modern subjects and methods is understandable, given such optimistic attraction to non-traditional professions, so it is not surprising that even the traditional areas of learning were affected by pedagogical innovations.

The primary example of this -- the preparation of a series of textbooks which would gradually present instruction in Tibetan language, culture, history, and religion to school-going children -- came as a result of a meeting called by the Dalai Lama in 1959. It is significant that the participants invited to this meeting included both religious and secular power-holders: the members of the old Kashag (Tibetan Cabinet), monk scholars from each of the four sects, the Tibetan principal of the first (and only, at the time) Tibetan school, and two Tibetan lay scholars. While Tibetans had never before had textbooks as part of their traditional system of education, they were obviously not unaware of the potential this innovation would offer for the official presentation and spread of ideology. Not only could such a graded series of books be used to instruct the children about religion and traditional culture, but in addition, a systematic attempt could now be made to shape a more cohesive group identity in the situation of exile. One of the most divisive problems experienced by the Tibetan group as a whole has been regional factionalism, exacerbated by dialect differences

and the proximity, while still in Tibet, to opposing geopolitical centers of influence -- Lhasa or China in particular. A second source of mutual suspicion, sectarianism, was not nearly so operative in traditional Tibet, since low population density and the remoteness of one center from another made it possible for each of the four major sects to co-exist without threatening the others' areas of influence. Now, however, with everyone in closer contact, differences in philosophical emphases and interpretations are made to stand out more sharply, and what is more to the point, inter-sectarian awareness of the others' relative strength (number as well as influence) promotes a certain competitive attitude which is all the more aggravated by Western devotees seeking a very un-Tibetan "one true sect." In view of all this, concerned Tibetans from all sects, including the Dalai Lama himself, are engaged in a public relations campaign to stress harmony and unity among the sects. This is likewise true with respect to regional differences. The schools, by teaching the Lhasa (Central Tibetan) dialect as standard Tibetan for all refugees in exile, are consciously setting out to produce a more homogenous younger generation who are learning to put their national identity ahead of regional loyalties.

The following song, presented as the preface to the second-grade reader in the series described above, illustrates how deliberately the textbook planners sought to

propagate the ideology of pan-Tibetanness. The lyrics begin by describing Tibet as a country at the top of the world surrounded by beautiful snowy mountains, a land of great blue-green rivers and lakes, various wild animals, and precious natural resources. Then the geography is correlated with the three major regional identities: "In the east is Mdo-khams where the heroic Khampas live; in the north is Amdo, with its diligent Amdobas; in the center is Dbus-gtsang, the home of the religious Dbus-gtsang people." The final five lines of the song are particularly significant:

yul de gsum-pa bod kyi yul  
 mi-rigs de gsum bod rigs yin  
 sha-rus gcig-pa sha-stag yin  
 bod-mi yongs kyi spyi-nor du  
 skyabs-mgon ta-la'i bla-ma bzhugs

These three regions are Tibetan.  
 These three types of people are Tibetan.  
 We are only one race (literally, "flesh-and-bone").  
 The Universal Jewel for all Tibetan people  
 Is the Protective Lord, the Dalai Lama ('dzin-gra gnyis-pa'i slob-deb skya-rengs gsar-pa (New Dawn Second Grade Textbook, 1964: 1-2)).

While acknowledging the three major regional groups and correlating each with its positive stereotype, the song ends with the quintessential summarizing symbol of Tibetan-ness, the Dalai Lama.

Besides stressing the ideology of a unified Tibetan nation, an identification that was never so true as it is now, the textbooks also serve as a means of informing the students about those aspects of their traditional culture

which could not be transplanted to India. Thus sentences from the first-grade reader, besides including such universal standbys as "Each hand has five fingers" and "The balloons are red and yellow" also feature examples like "Milk comes from a 'dri (the female of the yak species) and "Yaks have two horns" -- referring of course to that most Tibetan of animals, which cannot survive in India and which most of the younger children have never seen.

Another function of these readers -- which are obviously teaching much more than word recognition and spelling -- might perhaps be characterized as easing the transition to a matter-of-fact familiarity with Western science. As is typical of primary texts in general, many of the sentences express simple observations about natural phenomena. A pair of phrases begins with the commonplace statement that "The shape of the moon is round" (zla-ba'i dbyibs ni zlum-po red). But the next sentence is significant: "According to Western science, the moon does not have its own light; the light of the sun falls on it" (phyi'i tshan-rig ltar-na zla-ba rang la 'od yod-pa ma red/ zla-ba la nyi-ma'i 'od phog gi yod-pa red). Such a presentation neither denies nor exalts Western science; it simply treats it as one point of view, and leaves open the implication that there might be others. This openness to multiple epistemologies is further supported by another textbook lesson, which the teacher I observed took very

seriously. For homework one night the second-grade class (ages ranging from about six to ten) had to memorize the twelve-year cycle of astrological animals, and the next day those who could not recite the sequence in proper order were publically chastized by having chalk zeros (the word "zero" was said in English) drawn on their foreheads. This incident well illustrates the point made to me by a Tibetan rector regarding these language classes: "Although our curriculum follows that of the Central Schools Organization (referring to the schools established throughout India for the [Indian] children of Central Government employees), there are certain modifications with respect to the teaching of languages. For us, Tibetan is not just a second language, as is the case [with Hindi or English] in other schools; it includes a strong emphasis on Tibetan culture as well."

Thus the language classes serve as a particular means of transmitting traditional culture, while the original goal of providing students with "a thorough modern education" continues to motivate general educational policy. In line with that aim, the Tibetan schools have adopted a common syllabus for grades one through eight, with standardized curricula, courses, and textbooks all prepared by the National Council of Educational Research and Training. Besides the three languages, other subjects taught include mathematics, science, social studies, physical

education, art, and music. The schools having grades nine and above are affiliated with the Central Board of Secondary Education, and their programs of studies are likewise standardized, particularly with a view toward preparing students for the All-India Higher Secondary Examination.

This exam, given every year in March at the completion of secondary school studies, serves as a nationally recognized measure of academic achievement. It is administered over a period of approximately two weeks and actually consists of separate tests covering each subject studied. The raw scores are totalled and the results -- made public in July -- are used as criteria for admission to Indian institutions of higher study. Prior to 1976 the exams were given at the end of the eleventh grade; since then, however, there has been a significant change in policy, reflecting the Indian government's attempts to deal with the widespread problem of "the useless BA's and the educated unemployed." To counter the prevailing notion that a college education will automatically improve one's economic and social status, a new scheme, the 10 + 2 system, has been inaugurated. According to this plan, all tenth graders in India take a set of comprehensive exams at the end of that year of study. Unlike the previous scheme, which classed results as "pass" (with the individuals then ranked into divisions) or "fail," the exams taken after grade ten will not terminate anyone's school career. What

they will do, however, is determine the basic orientation of each student's final two years of secondary school: the high scorers will follow a more specifically pre-college program and the others will be tracked into vocational training.

While the theory behind the 10 + 2 system finds ready acceptance by all who are concerned about the economic relevance and quality of post-secondary education in India, the practical realities of implementing the plan are another matter. Since the new policy only went into effect in 1976, the first examinations of this type were not given until March, 1977; thus the issue was a very topical one while I was in India, and the Indian papers, particularly the editorial pages and letters to the editor, were full of opinions on this subject. The objections raised against this new system stem from two sorts of problems associated with its implementation: the lack of funding and facilities for this new emphasis on vocational training, and the traditional disdain for manual labor, which cripples any attempts to encourage vocational diversification. The scope of the first problem can be better understood by considering that even in Delhi, not to mention the rural areas, less than 50% of the schools were estimated to have the specialized teachers and equipment necessary for putting the new program into practice. In this respect the much smaller Tibetan school system has a great

advantage over its Indian counterpart, where it is feared that any shift in emphasis toward vocational training will draw scarce resources away from the standard curriculum, which can ill afford any such depletion. Tibetans, however, already have their own vocational training institute at Pachmarhi, Central India, which was opened in 1965 to provide training for the teenagers and young adults who had never been to school before and who would have been very much over-age in regular classrooms. This institute, staffed by Tibetans who have received specialized mechanical training abroad, will now provide the final two years' vocational instruction in carpentry, welding, machine operation, masonry, and tailoring for Tibetan students whose tenth grade exam results indicate a lack of promise for college studies.

The other problem associated with the 10 + 2 system -- negative attitudes toward manual labor -- applies to both Indian and Tibetan societies, although the Tibetan case is less complicated by deep-seated identifications of occupation, caste, and related associations of purity or pollution. Nevertheless, the aspirations of most Tibetan secondary students have tended toward a vague and idealized attraction to professional or desk-job careers: becoming a teacher, nurse, secretary or clerk in a Tibetan government office. As pointed out in a Tibetan Review editorial:

Being the first Tibetan generation undergoing

the process of "modernisation," the Tibetan youth does not have the advantage of parental guidance in selecting a career suitable to his ability and interest. As a result he makes a haphazard decision, often based on out-moded notions and finds himself in confusion after the long-awaited graduation. A favourite subject, for instance, among the more successful Tibetan school leavers is English, with the traditional ambition of becoming a "secretary," whose connotation in Tibetan language seems even more irresistible.<sup>2</sup> Unless there is a fundamental change of attitude which will free them from this white-collarism, Tibetan graduates with their vague general courses are likely to find themselves in the long queue of "educated unemployed" (Tibetan Review, January-February, 1973: 3, 11).

This editorial was written barely thirteen years after the first official attempts were made to give "a thorough overhauling" to the traditional system of education, and it testifies to the somewhat ironic success of the new policies and innovations. By replacing the old, narrow concentration on language instruction with a modern curriculum covering many subjects, the Tibetan school system is indeed producing graduates who can go on to complete their education at institutions of higher learning. And yet these latter students, with their expectations of "the good life" raised and complicated by their modern education, are now subject to the confused disillusionment that all too often follows when such expectations cannot be met.

The Explicit Curriculum II: Pedagogical  
Approaches and Co-Curricular Activities

While the two issues just discussed -- new textbooks and a more general course of subjects -- both represent modern innovations involving major changes from the traditional curriculum, the pedagogical approaches used in the Tibetan language classes have retained much of their original character. An important example of this is shown by the method of teaching reading, writing, and spelling to young children.

The Tibetan dialect spoken in all the schools, Modern Central Tibetan, is that of Dbus Province, where Lhasa the capital is located. The phonetic structure of this dialect, which is now spoken or at least understood by nearly all Tibetans living in India, has evolved considerably from that which probably prevailed in the seventh and eighth centuries, when the writing system was codified. For this reason, the pronunciation of Modern Central Tibetan often differs greatly from what the orthography would suggest. For example, the perfective form of the verb that means "to attain, accomplish" is spelled bsgrubs but it is pronounced [t̪up].<sup>3</sup> The word for "north," spelled byang, is pronounced [chan̪], and the word for "opinion," spelled bsam-'char, is pronounced [sāmcaa]. In addition, active rather than passive knowledge of the written

language requires a further consideration: the orthography must not only be known, but it must also be arranged properly. Syllables in written Tibetan are composed of a possible combination of one to six consonants and one vowel. The way of writing the letters, however, is not completely linear; non-syllabic (i.e. consonantal) "pre-fixes," superscripts, and subjoined consonants may also occur. The following scheme shows the order in which the letters are read; it is this progression which is followed when Tibetan orthography is transcribed into roman script.

$$c^1 + \begin{matrix} (V) \\ c^2 \\ c^3 \\ c^4 \\ (V) \end{matrix} + c^5 + c^6$$

There are constraints on the consonants which can occur in each of the optional  $c^1$ ,  $c^2$ ,  $c^4$ ,  $c^5$ , and  $c^6$  positions. However, the  $c^3$  slot, which must be filled, can be occupied by any consonant. The vowel, if it is not an unwritten a which would be inherent in  $c^3$ , will either occur below  $c^4$  if it is a u, or above  $c^2$  or  $c^3$  if it is an i, e, or o; in any case, it is read after  $c^3$  even if it is positioned above it. To summarize with some examples:

$$\begin{matrix} c^2 \\ c^3 \end{matrix} = \text{ལ་} = \begin{matrix} 1 \\ h(a) \end{matrix} = \text{lha}$$

$$\begin{matrix} (V) \\ c^3 \\ c^4 \end{matrix} + c^5 = \text{གློག} = \begin{matrix} o \\ gg \\ 1 \end{matrix} = \text{glog}$$

$$C^1 + \begin{matrix} C^2 \\ C^3 \\ C^4 \\ (V) \end{matrix} + C^5 + C^6 = \text{འཇུག་པོ་} = \begin{matrix} s \\ b \\ r \\ u \end{matrix} gbs = bsgrubs$$

When Tibetan children learn to read and write they begin with simple syllables, starting with the letters of the alphabet ( $C^3$ , with all the vowel combinations), progressing to words with consonant finals ( $C^5$  and  $C^6$ ), gradually learning words with superscripts ( $C^2$ ) and subscripts ( $C^4$ ). Not until all these combinations have been taught will the  $C^1$  "prefixes" be introduced, and only after much practice will complex words such as bsgrubs be presented.

The method of teaching this complicated orthography is unique. From the very earliest days of primary school, the spellings are sung, or more correctly, chanted, to a tune which incorporates all the implicit rules of phonetic realization. As the names of the letters are chanted in progression, the morpheme btags [tā̀à] ("to attach, affix;" allomorph [ptā̀à], which will not be further considered here) is inserted after the consonant combinations involving  $C^2$  and/or  $C^4$ . This has the effect of creating "sub-totals" of letters, so that, for example, the syllable written as spyan (honorific for "eye") will be phonetically realized according to the following process, which involves pronouncing all nine syllables (i.e. spelling the word and twice including the morpheme btags [tā̀à]) from the initial

letter, s [sa], to the ultimate pronunciation of the complete word, spyan [cɛɛn]:

|                                      |   |                                          |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------------|
| <u>s</u> ས + <u>p</u> པ + "attached" | → | <u>spa</u> སཔ                            |
| [sa] + [pa] + [tāà]                  | → | [pa] (first "sub-total")                 |
| + <u>y</u> ལ + "attached"            | → | <u>spya</u> སཔལ                          |
| [ya] + [tāà]                         | → | [ca] (second "sub-total")                |
| + <u>n</u> ན                         | → | <u>spyan</u> སཔན                         |
| + [na]                               | → | [cɛɛn] (final pronunciation of the word) |

Other syllables can also be part of the chanted formula, as for example, [wɔ], which follows C<sup>1</sup> when that consonant occurs; and the names of the four alphabetically distinct vowels, which are all bi-syllabic and pronounced quite differently from the sounds they represent:

| <u>Vowel</u> | <u>Name in Tibetan Orthography</u> | <u>Pronunciation</u> |
|--------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| [i]          | <u>gi-gu</u>                       | [k <sub>i</sub> ku]  |
| [u]          | <u>zhabs-kyu</u>                   | [ʃəp kyu]            |
| [e]          | <u>'greng-bu</u>                   | [tɛŋ pu]             |
| [o]          | <u>na-ro</u>                       | [na ro]              |

The following examples illustrate how these various possibilities are realized in chant, with the phonetic notation for each syllable given under each note of the melody. The first example, a simple word, typifies the

active and passive written vocabulary that would be expected of a student in the first year of the two-year kindergarten. The word is spelled jo-ba in Tibetan orthography; the short chant spells this out letter-by-letter (j [ca] + o [na ro] jo [co] ba [pa] jo-ba [co pa]):

jo-ba (a type of bird)



The next example, taken from the second grade Tibetan class, is a complete sentence; here, as in the example above, the final phonetic realization of each word appears in brackets. By this time, that is, the fourth year of primary school, students can rattle off complicated phrases with great speed and aplomb. The sentence illustrated below -- 'dzam-gling pa yi yang thog tu/ gces-pa'i bod kyi yul de yod//' ("At the very top of the world is the land of beloved Tibet") -- is in fact the first line of the song discussed on page 73; the meaning of the sentence, however, was not explained at the time I observed and taped the lesson.





[līŋ] [pa] ya ki-i ku-u [yi] ya-a na-a [yan] tha



na ro tho-o ka-a [thōō] ta šəp kyu-u [tū] [tsəm]



[līŋ] [pa] [yi] [yan] [thōō] [tū]/ ka wə ca tən pu



cəɛ sa-a [cəɛ] [pa] a ki ku-u [i] pa na ro po-o



ta-a [pōō] ka ya tāā kya ki ku-u [kyi] ya šəp kyu



yū-ū la-a [yūū] ta tən pu-u [te] ya na ro yo-o



ta-a [yōō] [cəɛ] [pəɛ] [pōō] [kyi] [yūū] [te] [yōō]

Several aspects of this method of teaching reading deserve attention. First, its monastic origins are

beyond question, although no one I asked was able to give any more specific information about when or how this pedagogical technique developed. In any case, in a culture where religious chanting is significant for monks as well as lay people, the possibility of mutual associations and reinforcement of religious and educational strategies is quite evident. Children chant their prayers in two half-hour sessions every day, and the same unconscious kinesic motion -- slight swaying back and forth along with the rhythm -- occurs frequently in both contexts. In addition, the concepts of sound, word, syllable, and letter are highly elaborated in Tibetan and Sanskritic philosophical and metaphysical tradition.<sup>4</sup> While this would not be directly known at the popular level, the influence of centuries of homage given to the written word can certainly be expected to affect its presentation in a formalized educational situation, particularly when the language class offers the only official opportunity during the school day to transmit specifically Tibetan culture.

Indeed, some vestiges of metaphysical "reverence" still remain in the language classes. While the time spent practicing calligraphy has been drastically reduced when compared to traditional Tibetan schools, where students had to undergo months of preparatory practice with slates before writing on paper, children in the primary grades today are still expected to bring their notebooks

to the teacher's desk so that their writing can be checked almost daily. Exams in these classes still consist of students copying sentences which the teacher has written on the board, and the standard of excellence in this case is still the perfect reproduction of forms.

The effect of such an emphasis can be best explained in terms of differential active and passive knowledge of the written language. By using such a method to teach reading and writing, the Tibetan schools are definitely succeeding in imparting a passive knowledge of the written language to the students. Graduates of these students are universally literate -- at least in terms of being able to read (and copy), and even small children, when presented with a written word whose meaning is completely unfamiliar to them, can unhesitatingly crack the complicated orthographic code and arrive at the proper pronunciation. But the ability to create and compose, which in Tibet used to be emphasized in the form of elaborate letter-writing practice, now suffers by comparison when forms -- in this case, the letters of the alphabet -- are given so much more attention than content. Although my own ability to read handwritten Tibetan hardly qualified me to judge the performance of older students in this respect, I often noted how friends of mine -- educated tri-lingual Tibetans in their twenties -- would usually write letters to each other in English rather than in Tibetan. To be sure, the

common though by no means exclusive preference for English by this age group involves other factors, which will be considered in the next chapter. Nevertheless, the universal response to my question regarding the use of written English to friends who would be spoken to in Tibetan was this: "We don't always know the spelling. It would be embarrassing to make mistakes in writing, and English is so much easier."

Such an explanation is instructive on several counts. First, the evaluation of English as the "easier" written language has more behind it than the relative complexity of Tibetan orthography. As a foreign language, neither taught nor learned by native speakers, English is not likely to be invested with the extra-linguistic emotional significance that would be characteristic of a native language taught by native speakers living in exile; thus expectations of what constitutes "proper performance" in this case tend to stop at the correct realization of explicit grammatical rules. Tibetan, however, is not just a language, but is the language of being Tibetan. While the amount of emphasis which the languages classes put on the perfect reproduction and recognition of written forms may be judged as excessive by non-Tibetans, such an evaluation is very likely being influenced by criteria which are based on the Western equation of creativity with originality and uniqueness. Other aspects of Tibetan culture -- notably

the canons of Tibetan iconography -- show a similar pre-occupation with studied sameness of form -- an emphasis which does not deny creativity, but rather shifts its locus to the unobservable realm of meditation. In such a context

the production of the work can in itself be an exercise in meditation; in this case the artist must make himself so familiar with the object he is producing that he brings it forth entirely from his own self, and yet he must do this in such a way that not only does a universally valid specimen emerge but each detail can be ritually justified; otherwise the result cannot serve the desired end. In this way the production of works of art is completely committed. Any freedom in the creation of form would signify imprecision, which would make the object invalid for its intended function and which would have rather a disturbing than an inspiring effect as soon as the object were used for purposes of meditation (Pott, 1968: 155).

All this does not imply that simple sentences written in Tibetan are subject to the same restrictions and expectations as the whole complex realm of Tibetan iconography. The uses of art and writing in Tibet have never coincided exactly, regardless of certain similarities in their regard for the precise reproduction of form. Still, it is important to point out that this culture has been treating both script and scriptures with religious respect ever since the seventh century, when the Tibetan king Srong-btsan sgam-po sent his minister Thon-mi Sambhota to India to devise an alphabet which could be used to write the Tibetan language. According to a fifteenth-century histor-

ical work,

In the beginning of the Doctrine, in the reign of Tho-tho-ri gnyan-btsan, though religious books had become available (in Tibet), there was no one to write, read or explain (their meaning). In the reign of Srong-btsan sgam-po, Thon-mi Sambhota was sent to India. He thoroughly studied the alphabet and the (Sanskrit) language with the acarya Devavitshimha (Lha'i rig-pa seng-ge). On his return to Tibet, he created the thirty letters of the Tibetan alphabet from the fifty letters of the Indian (alphabet)....

He then first taught the (new) script to the king. After that he taught it to some of the (king's) subjects known for their intelligence, and the (script) spread over the greater part of Tibet, and all were fortunate to perceive the Teaching of the Blessed One ('Gos lo-tsa-ba gzhon-nu dpal, deb-ther sngon-pa (The Blue Annals, translated by George Roerich, 1976: 39, 219).

To be sure, writing in Tibet has had its mundane, secular uses too, but the near worship of perfect form, as evidenced by the extreme emphasis given traditionally to calligraphy, probably owes much to this long association of written word and sacred, symbolic vehicle. Given such an attitude, it indeed seems likely that the fear of making mistakes in writing would weigh more heavily in this culture than in some other situation, where writing would be regarded merely as an efficient, pragmatic invention.

The same explanation -- "It would be embarrassing to make mistakes..." -- also illustrates another aspect of the pedagogical approaches used in the Tibetan schools. As in traditional Tibet, but to a less extreme degree, the primary means of appealing for "good behavior" (including

both academic diligence and respectful obedience) involves the use the use of shame sanctions. Sensitivity to ngo-tsha ("shame, embarrassment;" literally, "hot face") is highly developed in this society, and the concomitant notion of "face" receives an equally significant emphasis in the socialization process. Through their own experiences of being chastized, and also by observing the reactions of others, children learn that humiliation can be far more ego-threatening than actual physical pain. This culturally shared expectation underlies the disciplinary approach taken by Tibetan educators, both traditional and modern. Even though the severity of such measures is now much less than before, a certain continuity still exists in the type of discipline that was or is now being administered in traditional or present-day Tibetan schools: a combination of ridicule and corporal punishment.

In the traditional setting setting, as exemplified here by a pre-Chinese school in Lhasa, exams were held twice a month, with the grading based solely on the students' handwriting. According to a Tibetan woman who attended this school as a child,

all the tests on paper are given to the Headmaster for final decision, after which the Headmaster distributes the papers, calling out loud the student's name and rank. As each name is called the student stands and takes his place according to his rank. When all the students in one class have been called and are lined up, the student in first place is given the bamboo and he hits all those who are below him.

Then the second one does the same and so on until the last. The last one has to hit an empty yak-skin bag three times and prostrate three times. After this the rest of the students will shout ridicule. In addition, he is told to sing, or dance, or bark like a dog, etc. Then the next class group goes through the same ritual (Chunden Surkhang Goldstein, n.d.: 11)

In this case, the worst punishment of all, reserved only for the lowest-scoring student, is not the beating, which all but the top student would share, but the humiliation of being made to look ridiculous in everyone else's eyes. The beating or slapping that occurred in the traditional schools, painful as it might have been in purely physical terms, apparently left few if any scars on one's self-image, for

corporal punishment was considered the only effective means of disciplining a naughty boy. We feared our teacher, not because he was a tyrant, but because he was our guru; so we respected him and loved him as well. When I escaped to India and went to school in Kalimpong, I was surprised at the resentful manner in which the students took even a gentle admonition from their teachers. Small as we were in Sakya, we took every thrashing from the teacher as an act of kindness, and never felt hurt mentally. We consoled ourselves with the thought that, because the teacher cared for us, he took pains to thrash us for the sake of discipline. In Kalimpong I found that this attitude was quite beyond the comprehension of Westernized students (Dawa Norbu, 1974: 122).

In the Tibetan schools today, the older attitude of not sparing the rod has given way to a much more moderate use of physical force -- especially on the part of the younger Tibetan teachers -- although secondary students

still fear the occasional lama teacher who does not hesitate to crack down hard on the knuckles of an inattentive or lazy pupil. Some vestiges of the liberal use of corporal punishment do remain, however. In the primary school where I observed, for example, the traditional role of rgan-bdag [qɛn taà] (a type of teacher's assistant, translated for me by Tibetan teachers as "monitor") is still filled by an older, bigger student, who is responsible for the general order and diligence of the class while the teacher is busy checking individual work. As symbols of their authority, the rgan-bdag carry stripped tree branches about two feet long and half an inch thick -- which they do not hesitate to use if they deem it necessary. One day, while the teacher was occupied in another part of the room, children began getting out of their seats and walking sociably around the classroom. The rgan-bdag proceeded to crack these errant souls over the head, hitting one little boy so hard that he was at first too stunned to react, after which he fought tears, went back to his seat, and there cried silently for about two minutes. The incident drew very little attention, and no one -- teacher and victim included -- appeared to question the justice of it.

But in general, the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure is much less common now than it was in the past. There are no longer any floggings, nor are

pupils subject to the old practice of snyug-lcab [ñū cap] -- having a piece of bamboo snapped against the palm (for girls) or cheek, which has first been puffed out with air so that the flesh will not be cut (this variety of snyug-lcab was only done to boys; it was feared that hitting girls on the face would "spoil their beauty"). In fact, the incident described above is the only case I ever saw of a child being struck to the point of tears, and even this was not done by the teacher himself, but by a student "monitor" who seemed to have gotten carried away with his role.

Much more than any form of corporal punishment, the use of shame sanctions serves as a means of correcting misbehavior in the schools today. When I first started to observe in the primary school, before I had become a more or less standard fixture, sharing a desk with another student in the back row, my presence initially served to give added force to the teacher's reprimand, which became "Ngo-tsha! Phyi-rgyal der 'dug! (Shame! There's a foreigner here!). The latter part of the admonition was soon dropped, but "Ngo-tsha!" continued to be used whenever a pupil was disruptively inattentive or when anyone's work fell below acceptable standards. Besides this very common, ordinary type of shaming, other means were also used to draw unfavorable attention to students who deserved it in the teacher's estimation. I have already mentioned the

children who could not recite the twelve-year cycle of astrological animals correctly; these ma-shes-pa ("ones who do not know") had chalk zeros drawn on their foreheads and were made to stand up while the "knowledgeable ones" recited the information from their seats. In another case, when corrected tests (sentences copied off the board) were handed back to the second grade class, the ones who failed -- eight boys and three girls -- were lined up at the board facing their classmates. The teacher admonished them by saying "Ngo-tsha!" several times; then he invited the children at their seats to laugh at them. After this, the mistakes were pointed out and the individuals were gently, even humorously chided. While ten of the children thus shamed appeared none too crushed by the experience, at times even snickering along with the others, one girl reacted with a much stronger consciousness of "face;" during the entire chastisement she refused to look at the teacher or the class, all the while averting her eyes and facing the blackboard.

The most elaborately staged manipulation of shame sanctions, however, occurred not in the classroom but outside, in the presence of all the teachers, school administrators, and entire student body. This event, called "Proclamations," took place on the last day of the school year. Officials sat on a raised dais, and students, specially dressed in their identical, school-issue phyu-pa

([chūpə]; Tibetan native dress), sat cross-legged on mats in the school courtyard below. Each homeroom teacher read out the names and final marks of every student in his or her class, along with the ultimate result: pass (in all subjects), promotion (passed on the average of all the subjects), special promotion (due to illness or other extenuating circumstances), or fail. As each name was read out, the individual had to rise, a shaking, solitary figure standing above a sea of hundreds of seated fellow students. Never was the etymology of the word ngo-tsha more apparent. Pupils instinctively covered their "hot faces" with their hands, and those who were especially shamed by failure tended to bend almost double to avoid facing the gaze of others.

As for other, less outstanding examples of the pedagogical approaches used in the Tibetan schools, these can be briefly characterized as typical of non-private Indian schools in general: a strong emphasis on the memorization of textbooks and a laissez faire attitude regarding active participation by the students. According to young Tibetan teachers who were themselves students in these schools, the more creative, evocative pedagogy takes place in the primary schools, where the all-Tibetan staff, some of whom have had Montessori training, tries harder to stimulate interest and active student participation. While I was never able to compare the two classroom situations per-

sonally, my observations of the younger students tended to support the judgment of the Tibetan teachers: primary school children participated with great zest -- and also volume -- in group activities such as spelling, reciting times tables, or singing. They vied with one another to lead the class in the recitation of the alphabet and the spelling of words written on the board, and in general, they walked to school expectant and happy, particularly after a vacation.

The final aspect of the explicit curriculum to be considered here -- co-curricular activities -- includes both compulsory and optional projects which are directly organized by the schools. The first of these -- religious instruction -- must take place outside the regular school curriculum, as government-supported schools in India are not allowed to teach any particular religion as part of their regular academic program. For this reason, then, the rector of each residential school organizes a weekly, compulsory evening class for the older students, and in this context explanatory talks by the rector or one of the monk teachers are given concerning Buddhism, Tibetan culture, and Tibetan history, particularly modern Tibetan-Chinese relations. In addition, on every religious holiday the senior monk teacher gives a sermon explaining its meaning and traditional celebration (many Tibetan holidays are now celebrated in very abbreviated fashion due to the fact

of the Tibetan community's being in exile: less time can be taken off from work to engage in week-long festivities), and the students also attend half-hour prayer sessions twice a day, in the morning after outdoor calisthenics, and in the evening before supper. Finally, there are occasions when the whole school community -- students, Tibetan teachers and dormitory houseparents -- all take part in special prayer and incense-burning ceremonies (bsangs-gsol) at the summit of the prayer hill located behind the school. While such activities more commonly occur as part of the celebration of Buddhist holy days, one such instance which I observed was marked by more than the usual blend of religious supplication and political awareness: a special bsangs ceremony was held following Mao's death, when official Chinese accusations against the Gang of Four and a radical shift in attitude toward Teng Hsia-p'ing were seen by many Tibetans as hopeful signs that internal problems in China might lead to an amelioration of the situation in Tibet.

A second co-curricular activity, described to me by a Tibetan college student as "a significant democratic innovation," is the student council which exists at the school I studied. Established by the school's first Tibetan principal, an older man familiar with both Western institutions and traditional Tibetan government, this organization gives students their first experience with

elected representation. At the head of the student council is the school captain, considered a thoroughly responsible person by students and teachers alike. Besides taking the chief leadership role in the student activities which require such (organizing volunteer work crews, for example), this person will occasionally act as the spokesman for the entire student body at such functions as the "Proclamations" or the school-leaving ceremonies. Under the school captain are four school prefects, elected from among the group leaders, who are themselves in charge of from ten to fifteen students each. The school captain and prefects are allowed to sit in on the monthly faculty meetings which involve all the Tibetan staff -- rector, Tibetan teachers and houseparents -- and they are free to bring up any points at this time. The elected group leaders and their groups -- each presided over by one Tibetan teacher -- have weekly meetings where the same principle is in effect: any complaints, grievances, ideas or problems can be brought up at these sessions, and if administrative action seems warranted, the matter will be officially conveyed to the rector or the principal.

Besides these two spheres of activity -- one mainly religious, the other a kind of initiatory democratic experience -- there are additional opportunities for student participation. A Dance and Drama Club enables interested students to learn traditional songs, instrumental folk

music and dances from Tibetan experts in these areas. Sports, particularly basketball and soccer, are very popular among the boys especially, and other more specialized extra-curriculars such as the school newspaper, woodcraft or sewing classes can also be elected. In addition, each student is expected to spend half an hour a day doing manual work -- which usually involves keeping the premises clean or, in the rainy season, growing vegetables for the school kitchen. Every now and then this requirement is challenged by a student who would rather eschew such grass-roots egalitarianism. The student always loses, however, for this policy represents a deliberate and well-enforced attempt on the part of the schools to eradicate any idle-rich pretensions or simple disdain for manual labor, which, if allowed to persist on a large scale, would be disastrous for the Tibetan community in exile, which can ill afford to fracture into occupational castes. The compulsory work experience thus serves as both a levelling device and a shaper of attitudes: students' tasks are rotated so that they can "learn how to do everything," and anyone who tries to protest by claiming an aristocratic past is promptly told that "those days are gone forever."

Finally, one last sphere of activity should be considered, even though it is neither organized by the schools nor an official part of any curriculum. In their leisure time -- that is, in the after-school hours before evening

prayers, on Sundays and on holidays -- the students at these schools are very likely engaged in none of the activities described above. Free time is of course spent enjoying some of the universal pastimes of children everywhere: games, un- or dis-organized athletic competition, walks with friends, trips to the corner shop to gaze longingly at the local equivalent of penny candy, and so on. But in addition, these students, fluent in Hindi and no strangers to the ubiquitous outpourings of Indian pop culture, are also becoming part of the global village, particularly in its more neon-lit, accoustically amplified aspects. Movie magazines, transistorized film music, a small but constantly used record collection, and special-occasion trips to the cinema halls in town all provide material for fantasy and escape, much to the consternation of the monk teachers and the older house parents, who are frankly disturbed when they perceive students making heroes and heroines out of film stars and pop singers.

But like all fantasies, this idolization of the stylish and the celebrated does not last forever, nor is it as entirely directionless as some would fear. During my stay in India, perhaps the most popular rock hit of all, played repeatedly at any gathering of Tibetan teenagers and young adults, was the Carl Douglas song, "Kungfu Fighting." The lyrics, extolling fast and funky Oriental martial skill, have a powerful attraction for the older Tibetan boys, and

the image they portary, like that of the idolized late actor Bruce Lee, speaks directly to the need these young people have for tough, courageous masculine models who do not lose their native turf to a bigger agressor. Another popular song, which many of the older students have copied into their songbooks, is the Woody Guthrie paeon to American manifest destiny, "This Land is Your Land." The lyrics, which have been changed to describe Tibetan geography and customs (in English), reveal a similar orientation in these young people's search for particularly significant themes and heroes: each verse concludes with the statement that "this land belongs to you and me."

In summarizing these considerations of the explicit curriculum -- the textbooks, pedagogical approaches and co-curricular activities offered or used by these schools -- let us briefly highlight some of the continuities and discontinuities implied by the present educational system. Textbooks specifically designed for mass instruction never existed in old Tibet, and their use in all classes, Tibetan as well as general subjects, does constitute an innovation. And yet the Tibetan scholars and officials who prepared the modern Tibetan readers were evidently not unfamiliar with the potential offered by such learning tools, not only as a graded method of presenting factual information, but also as a systematic means of incorporating ideology -- in this case, the cultural and political ideal of pan-Tibe-

tan unity -- into textual material. In fact, a very similar attitude has marked the tradition of more than ten centuries of Tibetan historical literature: "The historical works themselves were not infrequently written with the undisguised intention of promoting the greater glorification and spread of the Buddhist religion" (Vostrikov, 1962: 49). Thus the present use of textbooks -- a new institution in itself -- actually involves an old strategy: spreading official doctrine via committed, doubly "instructional" written works.

As for the wide variety of subjects now taught in the schools, Tibetans themselves have recognized the need to "modernize our education with the introduction of scientific subjects and humanities" (Tibetans in Exile: 228). This shift in emphasis from a specialized concentration on calligraphy and reading to a diversified curriculum that values Western science is, of course, unprecedented, but again, the strategy behind this move is not. In the past, Tibet may have been isolated by geography and attitudes, but when she truly desired to adopt something from beyond her borders -- as is most notably exemplified by her interest in Buddhism -- "no effort or cost seemed too much." In fact,

there is an extraordinary pragmatism in their approach to new things (if they decide to approach them at all), which might seem to be completely at variance with the mystical and philosophical preoccupations of their religious life (Snellgrove and Richardson, 1968: 236).

As was the case centuries ago, when the teachings, translators, scholars, and even a writing system associated with Buddhism were all eagerly sought as desiderata to be attained without fail, a similar goal directedness exists today with respect to the economic and social welfare of the Tibetan community. For this purpose a general education is deemed indispensable, and the new, diversified curriculum which this implies has been adopted pragmatically and energetically as the obvious means to that end.

Pedagogical approaches used in the schools show perhaps the least degree of change from their traditional form. Reading is still taught in the unique, time-honored manner, and the use of shame sanctions as a disciplinary measure continues to be a part of formal as well as informal educational practice. But despite some continuity in the emphasis given to the passive aspects of knowing the written language, there has been a marked decrease in the emphasis given to calligraphy. This change is again pragmatically motivated: elegant handwriting alone can hardly be considered adequate preparation for informed participation in today's world. In the case of the shame sanctions, however, the continued cultivation of a sensitivity to "face" seems to indicate that this aspect of a collective and individual Tibetan self-image comes much closer to being a core value than, for example, beautiful calligraphy or a single-minded academic focus on

religious texts.

Finally, the co-curricular activities offered in the schools should be regarded with special attention, for they involve the greatest amount of choice on the part of the students. Obligatory participation in religious functions, student government, and work brigades still leaves other areas -- sports, music and dance, popular media -- to be selected on the basis of individual interest. In all these cases it is significant that clear-cut boundaries between areas tend to blur. Religion and politics, for example, co-occur in worship services which directly refer to the contemporary status of Tibet, and young people's search for relevant themes and heroes brings their "Tibetanness" face to face with non-traditional pop culture. In short, these co-curricular activities, like the other aspects of the explicit curriculum, serve as powerful transmitters of both old and new forces affecting ethnic self-definition.

#### The Implicit Curriculum: Values and Attitudes

In these as in any schools, however, the explicit program represents only a part of what is being taught and learned. Given the express concern of the Dalai Lama and his government for preserving and fostering a strongly Tibetan Buddhist ideology among the school-going generation, it is particularly instructive to examine the self-

definition so often stated by these students: "Nga bod-pa yin" ("I am a Tibetan").<sup>5</sup> During the winter vacation, when I was helping tenth and eleventh grade students review for the English section of the All-India exam, I had a good opportunity to ask for written responses to open-ended questions. In the course of assigning these "practice" compositions, I asked eleventh grade students one question which had nothing to do with the upcoming exam and everything to do with my fieldwork: "What do you mean when you say 'I am a Tibetan.'?" I explained this to the students in both English and Tibetan, adding that in this case I would not be concerned with English grammar or spelling, that their written responses would be helping me in my research, and that if they preferred, they could answer in Tibetan rather than English. (Only three students did so, probably because the majority of the class still considered my request in the context of an "English class.") The following responses, while more elaborated and articulate than the rest, are nonetheless representative of all the answers I received; I have only made minor changes (tense and article use) to smooth out the English.

I am a true son of Tibet because I was born in Tibet in the state of Thingri. Moreover my parents were also true Tibetans. I have grown up til now under the guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who is the leader of Tibetans. So, I have grown up in the same manner as I have been fed. Moreover, I am practicing the Buddhist religion, which is the only religion of Tibetans. So, I am a true son of Tibet.

I think that I am a typical Tibetan boy even though I was born in India. Firstly, both my parents were Tibetan, and I have their blood. Secondly, I have the habits and customs that my forefathers have been practicing for hundreds of years. Besides that my religion is also the same as theirs was. But there is a bit of change in my outer appearance, that is, in the way of dressing. It doesn't make any difference, as I think that my feelings, habits and customs are entirely different from those of an Indian boy.

I always introduce myself as a Tibetan because of the following reasons:

- 1) I was born in Tibet in 1958.
- 2) My parents and forefathers are also Tibetan.
- 3) I always do what my parents ask me to do.
- 4) I am under the spiritual leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and I also worship him as a God.
- 5) I have adopted the religion of Buddhism which has enlightened Tibet and the Tibetan people from the very beginning of our civilisation.
- 6) I practice and preserve my religion, customs and traditions, and although I may look somewhat changed, it is because of the times and the situation.

In my opinion, to be a Tibetan means firstly one should be a Tibetan by birth, or his parents should be Tibetans. One should know what are his/her duties toward's one's motherland. He should love his country. He should know the precious culture and traditions of his nation and should respect them. He should make some changes in the field of culture and tradition which suit the modern way of living. One of the most important things is that we should know our Tibetan language and literature. It is really shameful and unbecoming to a Tibetan if one doesn't know his language perfectly, being a citizen of Tibet. We should try to unite ourselves to make our nation strong. Even if our country is not independent these days, we should preserve our religion, culture and traditions and should respect them at any cost. We should never forget that we are Tibetans and we will get our country back from the clutches of the Red Chinese, since Tibet belongs to Tibetans.

Several points in these responses deserve further comment: the intense nationalism; the concept of the Dalai Lama as a charismatic leader; the unique association of Buddhism with Tibetan identity; the focus on ancestral continuity; the emphasis on language, traditions, customs and what might be called "proper modes of interaction;" and finally, the sense of cultural uniqueness. The three admissions of cultural change, consciously justified in one case by reference to "the times and the situation," are also noteworthy in that they presuppose a qualitative difference between essential and non-essential Tibetan attributes. Let us now examine these values and attitudes in more detail, focusing this time on the implicit rather than explicit "course of studies" presented by these schools: the cultivation of a Tibetan core and the maintenance of inter-ethnic boundaries.

Nationalism has only recently come to predominate over regionalism as a conscious sentiment and motive for loyalty among Tibetans. While some separatist inclinations still persist -- particularly among people from areas other than Central Tibet -- the general feeling among people I talked with was that former intra-ethnic differences should not be allowed to divide a community in exile. In addition, the "segmentary" pattern of uniting or defining oneself against "the other" has shown all regional groups of Tibetans that they in fact do share fundamental similar-

ities, all the more so in comparison with China the aggressor and India the host country.

The schools, of course, are instrumental in promoting such attitudes. By means of the policies already considered -- the ideological stress on pan-Tibetan unity in the textbooks, the discussions of Tibetan religion and culture in regularly scheduled meetings, the strongly traditional emphasis on the written language, and the fostering of cultural knowledge and pride through instruction and performances of Tibetan music and dance -- students are taught to regard themselves as heirs of a distinct and noble tradition, which in turn leads them to perceive their "feelings, habits, and customs" as being "entirely different from those of Indians."

In addition to this lesson of "proper demarcation" between primary group and country of exile -- an attitude encouraged in other ways as well -- the schools also contribute to the development of a more militant type of nationalism simply by providing an official Tibetan context for what would otherwise be isolated statements coming from individual refugees. If, for example, a teacher expresses the belief that "we will get our country back from the clutches of the Red Chinese," the message in this case is not limited to the meaning of the words alone; students have no doubt already heard the same sentiments expressed privately, at home or among their peer group. A

teacher, however, is a respected authority figure hired by the Tibetan government; such a person speaks not only as a private individual, but also as an officially endorsed educator. Political statements from such a source, then, tend to validate any similar ideas held privately, raising these to the level of officially sanctioned expressions of patriotism. When this is combined with actual "deeds" of patriotism such as the daily singing of the Tibetan national anthem, the staging of debates on the legitimacy of Tibet's claim to independence, and the schoolwide participation in the annual 10th March Uprising Day commemoration, the schools' role in the promotion of nationalism becomes even more evident: positive sentiments of cultural uniqueness, national consciousness and group loyalty are developed, fostered, and then channeled into an all-inclusive set of values and attitudes perceived collectively as "patriotism" (rgyal-zhen). This, in fact, is what motivates the desire to seek out and fulfill one's "duties toward one's motherland." By eleventh grade, students have already learned that a good part of their self-esteem as adults will come directly from their contribution to "the cause of Tibet."

Another significant feature of the responses quoted above -- belief in the charismatic aspect of the Dalai Lama as extraordinary leader -- is particularly evident in this statement: "I worship him as a God." While such

an attitude, strictly speaking, does not coincide with orthodox Buddhist ideology, which recognizes neither God nor gods in an absolute sense, the sentiment of profound respect, if not actual worship, is nonetheless typical of the special regard Tibetans have for this unique figure. In talking extensively with sophisticated and independent-minded university students, I never encountered anyone who would say any less than "I revere him" regarding the Dalai Lama, regardless of their considerably more critical attitudes toward the Tibetan government-in-exile. The reason for this comes partly from the integrity of the man himself. His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso has impressed even non-Buddhists with his realism, his openness to democracy and change, his support of oftentimes critical Tibetan youth, and his avowed pledge to respect the will of the Tibetan people regarding the continuation of the political aspect of the institution. What he has said, in fact, is that if and when Tibet regains independence, he will willingly and completely relinquish the power and prerogatives of a Dalai Lama to a popularly elected leader, and toward this end he has already promulgated a draft constitution which, if ratified in Tibet, would make him virtually a figure-head (Tibetan Review, March, 1976: 3).

But all these reasons, of course, are insufficient to account for his unique status in the eyes of Tibetan people, his extraordinary sacrality, his charisma. It will be

remembered that the institution of the Dalai Lama is based on the belief that the patron bodhisattva of Tibet, Avalokiteshvara, has, since mythical times, been reborn in a successive chain of culture heroes culminating in recent times in an unbroken line of religious-political leaders beginning with the fifteenth century nephew and disciple of Tshong-kha-pa, Dge-'dun grub-pa. The extraordinariness of each Dalai Lama, then, comes from the continuity of this particular reincarnation, and the actual breakthrough of this sacredness into the realm of ordinary human life must be ratified by special testing. Once the young boy has been "discovered" and "proven," however, his charisma has been established for the duration of his lifetime; his validating action -- correct and officially verified remembrance of people and objects from his immediate past life -- makes it unnecessary for him to have to perform any subsequent miracles. Nonetheless, people do tend to credit the Dalai Lama with thaumaturgical powers -- extraordinary knowledge more often than deeds -- simply by logical deduction: if he is an incarnation of Avalokiteshvara, then he must have super-human abilities.

Given this background -- particularly the importance of sacred continuity in this institution -- it is not hard to see why the present Dalai Lama has become such a quintessential symbol of Tibet and Tibetanness to a people who followed him into exile and who fear for even the

ordinary continuity of their culture in the homeland they left behind. Reflecting on his feelings before leaving Tibet, his lack of fear of dying at the hands of the Chinese, the Dalai Lama himself has expressed his awareness of what he represents to his people.

I felt then as I always feel, that I am only a mortal being and an instrument of the never dying spirit of my Master, and that the end of one mortal frame is not of any great consequence. But I knew my people and the officials of my government could not share my feeling. To them the person of the Dalai Lama was supremely precious. They believed the Dalai Lama represented Tibet and the Tibetan way of life, something dearer to them than anything else. They were convinced that if my body perished at the hands of the Chinese, the life of Tibet would also come to an end (My Land and My People, 1962: 195).

This apprehension, in the full sense of the word, underlies the image of the Dalai Lama which is presented in the schools: supremely precious leader of the Tibetan "race." As Yid-bzhin Nor-bu (a Tibetan title that may be loosely translated as "Wish-Granting Jewel," suggesting omnipotent worth or preciousness), the Dalai Lama is respectfully incorporated into everyday school life in much the same way as Mao has figured in the socialization of Chinese children for decades. His picture hangs in the center of the front blackboard in every classroom, his birthday is celebrated with much festivity by Tibetans everywhere, a prayer-song which he wrote is chanted daily after the singing of the Tibetan and Indian national

anthems, and prayers for his welfare are a constant aspect of regular worship services. Students in the upper grades read parts of his autobiography in Tibetan class, and everywhere one can see Dalai Lama buttons worn on the lapels of jackets -- which might additionally be sporting a hand-drawn picture of Bruce Lee on the back.

So thorough is the indoctrination and so constant are the reminders of his status and beneficence (it was largely due to his international stature as a religious leader that worldwide attention was directed to the plight of the Tibetan refugees), that the phrase "by the grace of His Holiness" is very likely to precede any statement of progress achieved, health maintained or benefits received. Finally, one of my last memories of my fieldwork site can serve to illustrate how easily such expressions and attitudes become spontaneous: the scene of a little boy playing alone on a windswept hilltop, shooting his slingshot and unselfconsciously singing a song about Yid-bzhin Nor-bu.

Another important aspect of ethnic self-definition can be seen in the fact that every single student who responded to my question mentioned religion, specifically Tibetan Buddhism, as an essential part of Tibetan identity. Not only do the comments all stress the continuity of religious tradition and practice, but in addition, one particular statement is especially significant: "Buddhism has enlightened Tibet and the Tibetan people from the very

beginning of our civilisation."

The roots of this attitude can already be seen in early native texts which refer to "the little known country of barbarous Tibet," populated by "red-faced, flesh-eating demons," a self-description made "in relation to the civilizing influence of Buddhism" (Stein, 1972: 40). A more critical view of this identification of "pre-Buddhist" with "pre-civilized" would also take into account the fact that the introduction and royal adoption of this religion coincided with "the first, but most important stage of the Tibetan Empire, the union or subjugation of the greater part of all the tribes or nations that by the Tibetans were considered as being of their own blood" (Haar, 1969: 12).

The king at this time (r. 627-650), Srong-btsan sgam-po, is that very ruler who dispatched one of his ministers to India to bring back a writing system; like the much later succession of Dalai Lamas, he too is regarded by Tibetans as having been an incarnation of Tibet's patron bodhisattva, Avalokiteshvara. Srong-btsan sgam-po's patronage of a Tibetan alphabet -- associated, as we have seen, with the spread of Buddhism -- can also be linked with the more secular developments of an emerging empire. According to an ancient Tibetan chronicle, the institution of writing was then followed by the appearance of

all the excellent texts of Tibetan custom, Tibetan sciences (or religions) and the great laws, the hierarchy of ministers, the respective powers of the great and the small (or of the elder and younger brothers), rewards for good deeds, punishments for evil and wrongdoing, the counting of skins for pasturelands and yokes for fields, equalization in the use of rivers, duties levied by (fixed) units of volume, weights, etc. (Bacot et al., 1940-1946: 161).

Such an evident co-occurrence of newly established order and newly adopted religion lent itself perfectly to the scheme of the ecclesiastical historians who, as we have seen, often wrote with the undisguised intention of promoting "the greater glorification and spread of Buddhism." Given this orientation, which has become an established part of Tibetan historical consciousness, the introduction of Buddhism, viewed by Tibetans in retrospect, may be seen to correspond, in Levi-Straussian terms, to the archtypical event which would have marked the passage from nature to culture, with cannibalism and chaos on one side, propriety and order on the other. Contemporary Tibetan evaluations of their own best qualities continue this association. As another student expressed it, "Tibetans are by nature a gentle, kind-hearted, gay and sympathetic people because of Buddhism."

As further explained by Tibetans, the basic virtue that underlies whatever is best about them is the predominant value of Buddhism,  snying-rje  [ñĩŋci], "compassion." This word has an extensive range of usages in Tibetan: it is

intimately associated with Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva of mercy, and it figures prominently in Jataka stories (tales of the Buddha in his previous lives) which stress the supreme importance of "taking pity" on suffering beings. It is a part of Buddhist reverence for all forms of life, animal as well as human. In popular speech the term snying-rje can also be applied to those situations which rouse emotions of protective warmth or concern: seeing a pitiable beggar, sorrowful widow, lovable baby or cuddly puppy, for example.

This kind of cultivated sensitivity -- an openness to "being moved by compassion" (a stock scriptural phrase), an ability to identify, with sympathy and feeling, with all sentient creatures -- lies at the heart of Tibetan values, and as such it figures prominently in the socialization of Tibetan children. The convergence of these themes -- collective identification with the Buddhist value of compassion; association of civil order with the "taming" of pre-Buddhist chaos -- can be seen in the way Tibetan history is presented to Tibetan schoolchildren: it is the Buddhist religion which has made the qualitative, ennobling difference between light and darkness, order and chaos, those that have and those that have not been "converted/tamed" (the Tibetan word 'dul means both; it is the verb form of 'dul-ba, "discipline, taming, conversion," [Das, 1970: 686] which translates the Sanskrit word vinaya,

the title of the scriptures dealing with monastic discipline.

The statement quoted above -- "Buddhism has enlightened Tibet and the Tibetan people from the very beginning of our civilisation" -- is thus expressing an essential aspect of Tibetan self-evaluation, in which "enlightenment," with or without its metaphysical connotation, is regarded as a criterion of being a fully realized human being. In the context of recent events, which have suddenly, even violently forced a whole culture to confront new values and standards of excellence, this core belief in one's civilized, enlightened humanity has become even more meaningful.

Tibet has no oil deposits like Kuwait to boast about or machines like the West. Her sole pride and contribution to the world is what she strove for and specialized in during the last 2000 years -- Tibetan Buddhism (Dawa Norbu, 1973: 8-9).

An additional, very evident feature of the students' self-definition as Tibetans relates to their focus on ancestral continuity: being born in Tibet, the land of their forefathers, or at the very least, being the offspring of Tibetan parents and "having their blood." This concern for native roots, parentage and birth can certainly be seen by non-Tibetans too as one of the most basic criteria of ethnic "belonging." In the Tibetan case, however, the factors of biological descent and genealogy represent

only one possible aspect of a more complex and inclusive concept: that of rgyud-pa [kũ̀pə], which can be translated loosely as "lineage."

Das' Tibetan-English dictionary glosses this substantive as "extraction; lineage, belonging to a family or race; family," and then goes on to explain rgyud-pa gsum:

the three kinds of lineage are (1) gdung-rgyud - family; descent; personal; (2) sku-rgyud - descent (as in the case of incarnate lamas); (3) slob-rgyud - spiritual descent (ministerial succession by disciples) [ibid.: 318].

The verb rgyud-pa, which is glossed as "to tie, fasten, connect together," occurs in nominal form as rgyud, "a string, chain; that which joins things together; a connection, whether mental or physical" (ibid.), and all these words are related to another substantive, brgyud, which Das glosses as "(1) family, lineage, ancestors, offspring; (2) race, people, nation" (ibid.: 342). In all these cases, then, "continuity" is essentially bound up with an actual entity, "mental or physical," which is connected or "enchained" in successive links. It is precisely this substantive aspect which serves to distinguish the three types of "lineages."

The first type, gdung-rgyud ("progeny, descendants"), refers to the continuity of the family line in accordance with the ordinary concept of genealogy. The word gdung by itself, an honorific term glossed as "(1) bones or remains

of a deceased person; (2) family, descendants" (ibid.: 660-661), also suggests a patrilineal orientation, since the concepts of "bone" (rus in non-honorific Tibetan) as opposed to "flesh" (sha) serve to distinguish patrilineal relatives (rus-rgyud) from matrilineal affines, respectively.<sup>6</sup> Be that as it may, it is this first aspect of ancestral continuity, gdung-rgyud, which is most evident in the students' focus on Tibetan parentage as an essential criterion of their ethnic identity.

For these young people -- many of them orphans; some, the sole survivors of what they regard as their family's "line," -- the concept of continuity carries with it a deep sense of urgency. This is further intensified by what they learn of their relatives and "race" (brgyud) left behind in Tibet. From their Tibetan teachers in school, from the accounts of recently escaped refugees published in the Tibetan press, and at meetings held after school to keep all informed about "the situation in Tibet," students are constantly hearing of the imminent threat to their continued existence as a distinct ethnic group: "The Chinese are practicing genocide against our people in Tibet."

This charge has in fact been substantiated on several counts by an independent group of judges, professors and practicing lawyers -- the Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet -- who investigated statements and evidence from

both sides "in a detached and juridical manner" and made known their findings in Tibet and the Chinese People's Republic: A Report to the International Commission of Jurists by Its Legal Inquiry Committee on Tibet (1960). The report begins with the definition of genocide recognized by Article II of the United Nations Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (ibid.: 11).

The conclusion of this report, substantiated by over 300 pages of statements and appendices, does support many of the charges made by Tibetans. Four different types of evidence are cited, which, in the words of the Committee, "reveal ... an attempt to destroy the Tibetan part of the Buddhist religious group by two methods [(a) and (e) above] which fall specifically within the terms of Article II of the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide (ibid.: 14).

As a result of this threat, Tibetans of all ages feel a deep responsibility to "keep the culture alive" -- a goal which underlies the Tibetan government's practice of encouraging endogamy and a high birth rate. Actually, the first of these policies needs little official promotion: both Tibetans and Indians generally perceive themselves as so very "different" from each other that marriage between the two groups hardly represents a real option for either side. But the constantly reiterated slogan of the Indian government's birth control program -- "A small family is a happy family" -- does, if only verbally, challenge the Tibetan government's desire for a high birth rate among their people. As for the students in the Tibetan schools, exposed to innumerable radio commercials, billboards and posters, all extolling the benefits of limiting family size, their way of thinking is nonetheless already decided in the other direction by eleventh grade: "Family planning may be beneficial for Indians because there are so many of them. But our people are being killed in Tibet, so we should be increasing, not limiting our population."

This personal concern for Tibetan continuity in the ordinary sense of genealogy (gdungr-rgyud) represents only one of the three types of "lineages" mentioned earlier. The second type, which Das lists as "sku-rgyud -- descent (as in the case of incarnate lamas)" (op. cit.: 318), refers to the Tibetan concept of bla-brgyud, the succession

of lamas who continue to be reincarnated.<sup>7</sup> We have already seen how this principle operates in the institution of the Dalai Lama, who is regarded as the direct reincarnation of his immediate predecessor and the indirect reincarnation of Avalokiteshvara, Tibet's patron bodhisattva. The same principle is also evident in the case of many high ecclesiastical figures, in particular, those associated with various Tibetan monasteries.

Exile in India has apparently not ended this type of continuity, although accounts in the Tibetan press indicate that the reincarnations tend to be "discovered" at a much later age than two or three, which was usual in Tibet. At my fieldwork site, the local ne'er-do-well, a character referred to by everyone as "really sdug-can" ("bad, terrible, horrible"), used to drop in occasionally to bum cigarettes from me. In the course of one of his visits he told me what I thought was a fantastic story: his younger brother had been recognized as a high incarnation by one of the Dalai Lama's tutors, who had had a clairvoyant vision that this particular boy would be found living "in a green house between two mountains in a family of two sons and two daughters." To my amazement, when I checked his story with my Tibetan friends, I found it to be true: by all accounts the young man, now eighteen, had been "discovered" at age fourteen, and has since traded his former role -- that of a teenage student at an elite Anglo-Indian

school -- for that of a young incarnate lama, committed to years of religious study, meditation and pious living.

The third kind of "lineage" mentioned by Das -- slob-rgyud (lineage of disciples) -- refers to the well-established Indian and Tibetan tradition which emphasizes the very special relationship of continuity between teacher and disciple (guru and chela in Sanskrit; bla-ma and slob-ma in Tibetan). The important "substance" that is communicated and passed down in this case is oral teaching, particularly that which relates to mystical experience. Speaking of the "spiritual continuity linking teacher and disciple," Guiseppe Tucci notes further that "the two are joined together as links in a chain, guaranteeing an uninterrupted continuation of the teaching and the mystical experience" (1970: 59).

Even while still in secondary school, not as yet critical of the phenomenon of Tibetan gurus travelling to teach at Western dharma centers, Tibetan students are keenly aware of the role their culture is playing in keeping alive this "uninterrupted continuation" of the teachings of their religion. In this connection, a recent news item has filled them with pride: a committee appointed by the Government of India will soon begin work on a project to restore lost Sanskrit religious-philosophical texts by retranslating these from centuries-old, still extant Tibetan translations. This modern-day acknowledge-

ment of their culture's role in faithfully preserving religious-scholarly tradition is particularly meaningful to Tibetans living in India, who, having lost their connection with their homeland, have somewhat ironically become exiles in the land of their religion's founder. As in the cases of the continued recognition of reincarnated lamas and the uninterrupted attempt to maintain genealogical continuity, here too the concern for rgyud or brgyud emerges as an evident value within the total framework of Tibetan self-definition.

As additional set of attitudes and values which Tibetans perceive as distinctly Tibetan involves what might be termed "proper modes of interaction," referring in particular to certain socio-linguistic aspects of the Tibetan language. First, a native language like Tibetan, spoken in a multi-ethnic society such as India, will almost automatically act as a distinct boundary marker, demarcating those of "our" group from all others. In addition, social demarcation is also made possible within the ethnic group by virtue of a particular feature of Lhasa dialect Tibetan: the socially obligatory patterns of honorific speech, which can be manipulated to express proper respect, or, secondarily, humorous debunking, deliberate obscuration, or deft sarcasm.

In terms of the boundary marking function, the issue is quite straightforward; children are taught by adults

as well as peers not to mix Hindi and Tibetan in the same speech event. The relative strengths and weaknesses of this indoctrination can be observed in the mini-dramas which regularly occur when the purists among them lightly slap the wrists of their peer-group offenders -- the offense typically being a word perceived as Hindi such as baiskop ("movies") or retiyo ("radio") inserted into a Tibetan sentence. The "problem" seen here by the purists -- a too ready acceptance of loan words -- is countered by them with this attempted solution: periphrastic definitions are used to create the new words now needed in Tibetan. Accordingly, "radio" is rlung-'phrin ("wind-news") and "movies" glog-snyan ("interesting electricity"). Such attempts to stem the tide of foreign loan words will probably fail on an item-by-item basis, but the overall consciousness that is cultivated by such a policy appears to be working: the India-born generation is very much aware of the power of language, specifically their Tibetan language, to define their identity as a distinct ethnic group.

As for the honorific aspect of Lhasa dialect Tibetan, the full range of its secondary symbolic possibilities (debunking, obscuration, sarcasm) does not find much expression in the schools -- at least not among the students. For them, the most important implications of zhe-sa (honorific speech) lies in its primary function: expressing

various shadings of proper respect. For this reason, the deliberate teaching of the honorific language, both inside and outside the classroom, represents much more than linguistic pedagogy. For Tibetans, being "respectful" is a core value which characterizes fully human, thoughtfully humane behavior. What this ideally implies is a constant awareness of the other person vis-à-vis oneself, and it is precisely this kind of a dialectic interpersonal relationship which characterizes the socially "correct" manipulation of honorific speech. Briefly, the system works like this: nouns, pronouns, verbs, and a few adjectives have two forms — one honorific, the other non-honorific. In third-person speech referring to two different individuals, there are thus four possible ways of expressing the statement, depending on the status of the persons involved. For example, the sentence "He gave him a (Tibetan) dress" can be realized in any one of these patterns:

|                            |                               |                              |                                                                              |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>khong-gis</u><br>He (h) | <u>khong la</u><br>to him (h) | <u>na-bza'</u><br>dress (h)  | <u>phul-gnang-pa red</u><br>gave (both giver and<br>recipient are honorific) |
| <u>khong-gis</u><br>He (h) | <u>kho la</u><br>to him (nh)  | <u>na-bza'</u><br>dress (h)  | <u>gnang-pa red</u><br>gave (giver honorific;<br>recipient non-honorific)    |
| <u>khos</u><br>He (nh)     | <u>khong la</u><br>to him (h) | <u>na-bza'</u><br>dress (h)  | <u>phul-pa red</u><br>gave (recipient honorific;<br>giver non-honorific)     |
| <u>khos</u><br>He (nh)     | <u>kho la</u><br>to him (nh)  | <u>phyu-pa</u><br>dress (nh) | <u>sprad-pa red</u><br>gave (both giver and<br>recipient non-honorific)      |

In first and second-person speech, however, the word choice signifying status is almost always pre-determined by the "rule" of respect which takes precedence over the objective status of the two persons involved. Accordingly, I the speaker should always refer to myself with non-honorific nouns and verbs; the person I am addressing is properly referred to in zhe-sa. To be sure, this brief explanation greatly simplifies all the possibilities that could occur in an actual speech event; in fact, two good friends could choose not to use zhe-sa at all and there would be no disrespect involved. Nevertheless, the point remains: the socially "correct" use of zhe-sa implies an obligatory attention to social distance as well as dialectic appraisal of oneself and the other. Whenever the honorific potential of the Tibetan language is activated, then, the key Tibetan values of respect and propriety are further cultivated and reinforced.

Finally, all these characteristics -- nationalism; special regard for the Dalai Lama; particular identification with Buddhism; concern for continuity; emphasis on the Tibetan language -- contribute together to the strong sense of cultural uniqueness which is so much a part of Tibetan young people's ethnic self-definition. To them, the influence and borrowings from Tibet's two great neighbors, China and India, appear to be either "superficial" (Chinese cuisine, brocade and other penchants of the Tibetan

aristocracy) or "significant," but re-adapted "according to the native genius" of Tibetan culture (Indian Buddhism) (Dawa Norbu, 1973: 8). The schools' role in promoting such attitudes involves more than the explicit means and media of education. Besides directly conveying specific cultural information through officially organized institutions and activities, this environment also serves to transmit a whole set of definitely focused, though less consciously communicated values and attitudes. In terms of the expressed goal of fostering a strongly Tibetan Buddhist identity among the students, this "implicit curriculum" of the Tibetan school system is no less important than the explicit one.

Summary: Goals and Results of Education  
in a Tibetan Environment

From the very first year of their people's exile in India, Tibetan policy makers have given top priority to the formal schooling of the younger generation, hoping in this way to achieve several interrelated goals. Foremost among these is the broadly conceived aim of insuring the continued viability of Tibetan culture. This objective not only serves to promote the traditional ideology; in addition it also has the effect of expanding key ideological concepts to accomodate new problematic situations. This was all indirectly explained to me by a young official of the Coun-

cil for Tibetan Education. In response to my question about the specific purposes of this organization's policies, he named three different objectives and then described each in relation to two touchstones: Tibetan Buddhist beliefs, and the current exigencies of life in India today.

According to him, the first aim of education is "to lead men to happiness, which is the desire of every sentient being." This pre-eminently Buddhist statement -- which in fact re-echoes the words of the Dalai Lama on this subject -- he further clarified by referring to the core values of compassion (snying-rje) and "emptiness" or selflessness; that is, the cultivated attempt "to eradicate selfishness; to act for the benefit of all creatures." Strictly speaking, of course, Buddhist theory does not talk of "happiness," but rather of the negation of its opposite, the elimination of suffering. As accordingly explained by this young man, then, education can contribute to this end by providing "the right view," that is, by offering a counter-perspective which would replace craving with contentment, attachment with renunciation.

But in addition to this ideological explanation -- evidently based on the Buddhist doctrine of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path -- this person also spoke of "happiness" in more concrete terms, in relation to the grim economic realities of the employment situation in India. "Modern youth thinks that education will automat-

ically bring a good job. When this doesn't happen, they become disappointed. Unlike Tibetans of the older generation who may have been poorly educated but who were content with their life, many young people today are dissatisfied and unhappy."

While this individual did try to suggest a solution to the problem in terms of ideology ("We must integrate our traditional Buddhist values with modern education"), it is also clear that the Council for Tibetan Education is attempting to deal with the situation on a practical basis as well. We have seen how the schools were initially established, with immediate attention given to the implementation of a modern curriculum, followed by a concerned search for qualified teachers. The mandatory co-curricular activity of work experience as well as the vocational orientation fostered by the new 10 + 2 system also focus squarely on the economic problems which students are likely to encounter after high school. In this respect, then, the expressed goal of promoting "happiness" is not only ideological in nature; it is also closely associated with the eminently practical concern for livelihood.

A second goal of the Tibetan education system is that of "eliminating superstition or rnam-rtog." This Tibetan term, which can also be glossed as "unreal conclusions" or "doubt" (Das: 759), has a special meaning in Buddhist philosophy: "discursive knowledge" based on the (false)

dichotomization between a thinking subject and a thought-about object (Tucci, 1970: 81, 106). As explained by the young official, however, the elimination of "superstition" or rnam-rtog is directly related to the cultivation of an educated, critical-mindedness which would ideally replace "blind faith" with a properly reasoned religious affirmation.

But once again, the ideological concept -- rnam-rtog in this case -- can also be interpreted in such a way as to relate directly to a very real and current problem facing Tibetan youth. The deliberate introduction of scientific subjects into the curriculum represents a significant attempt on the part of the Council for Tibetan Education to familiarize students with rationalism, which is perceived as the prevailing intellectual philosophy of the modern world. Needless to say, the transition between old and new ways of thought can be difficult, involving what one young Tibetan has described as "inner personal conflicts, especially between the traditional norms and the scientific spirit" (Tibetan Review, January-February, 1973: 3). But officially, Buddhism has never been anti-rational, and in this connection it is significant that the young official I talked with put so much stress on the "reason-affirming" aspects of the Tibetan language textbooks, which introduce upper grade students to the traditional intellectual exercises of dialectic logic

(rig-lam). The promulgation of such sophisticated philosophical techniques at the high school level is thus likely to continue, despite the occasional protests in the Tibetan press by students who claim that such texts are "overly emphasized" or "difficult to understand" (Tibetan Review, January-February, 1973: 9, 10). In fact, such a means of combatting rnam-rtog actually serves two purposes: in addition to its ideal function of promoting critical thinking, the teaching of dialectic logic in high school also serves to remind young Tibetans that their intellectual tradition too is characterized by a highly developed mode of specialized reasoning.

A third goal of this educational system is the constantly reiterated aim of "preserving and promoting Tibetan culture and tradition." This was likewise clarified for me in reference to the ideal of compassion or service to others: "Our tradition, which has kept intact the essential teachings of Lord Buddha, can be of benefit not only to Tibetans, but to the whole world as well."

Here the case is somewhat different. Instead of expanding some traditional ideological concept to accommodate a new situation, this third goal directly associates traditional values with their potential for worldwide, beneficial influence. Such international -- or rather, pan-national -- consciousness has been a part of the Tibetan educational system ever since it was first estab-

lished in India, a foreign country. Initial contacts with teachers, administrators, short-term volunteers and far-flung relief agencies have made all levels of Tibetan society aware of the world at large, not only as a potential source of friends, benefactors and allies, but also as an instructive arena where the dramas of other stateless peoples are played out for all who are able to catch the implications. In addition, many children in the Tibetan schools regularly correspond with foreign "sponsors" who, by contributing toward their education and writing them personal letters, are also giving their "godchildren" their own private window on life in a non-Asian context.

All of these new situations help foster a global consciousness which contrasts sharply with the geographic and attitudinal insularity that characterized Tibet of old. For this reason it is doubly significant that the goal of preserving and promoting Tibetan culture should be directly associated with its perceived ability to "benefit the whole world." While such an awareness of "others" -- transcending both ethnic and national boundaries -- may still be quite in keeping with the traditional "compassionate" ideology, it is nonetheless hard to overlook the new political element here: as stateless refugees, the Tibetans in India and elsewhere in the diaspora really are world citizens now. Furthermore, this outward-looking attitude also involves an extremely important subjective

factor. When children are taught that their culture has such unique potential for worldwide beneficial influence, they are also being given the most powerful reason of all to remain Tibetan: self-esteem, meaningful identity, and even a sense of "mission" are all offered together as an intrinsic part of the self-definition that is so carefully fostered by the supportive Tibetan environment of these schools.

## NOTES

1. The present system of titles has only been in effect since 1976. Prior to that, the Tibetans were the "principals" and the Indians the "headmasters." Despite the name change and the increased emphasis put on the academic qualifications of the principal, the duties and responsibilities of each have remained the same.

2. In Tibetan, the word drung-yig suggests a civil officer, usually of official governmental rank. Furthermore, the title "Secretary" is used all over India to refer to the head or chief official of an organization. Thus there are actually three possible connotations suggested by the English word "secretary": a high official, a lower level bureaucratic functionary, and an office worker-cum-typist.

3. See Goldstein's dictionary (1975a: 24) for the phonetic values of the transcription used here.

4. See, for example, Agehananda Bharati's The Tantric Tradition (1969), especially the chapter "On Mantra" (pp. 101-163).

5. Even the term bod-pa ("Tibetan") requires some clarification, as its reference has only recently been expanded to include Tibetans from outside Central Tibet. As Goldstein points out,

Actually, this term, even in 1959, was used by Eastern Tibetans to refer only to Central Tibetans. They considered themselves khams-pa rather than bod-pa, and many of them actively sought to remain, or become, independent of the Tibetan (Dalai Lama's) Government (1975b: 21).

6. With respect to all these kinship terms, it must be emphasized that no single, conclusive scheme has yet been worked out to account for the entire Tibetan system, which would include centuries of particular historical and regional usages.

7. Actually, the term Das identifies as descent "in the case of incarnate lamas," sku-rgyud, is today used as an honorific for rgyud, that is, "lineage" in the sense of genealogy (gdung-rgyud). The term bla-rgyud is applied to the continuous succession of incarnations.

### CHAPTER III

#### SYNTHESIZING A NEW METAPHOR: THE INTERPLAY OF IDEOLOGY AND EXPERIENCE

The previous chapter has considered the ways in which formal schooling -- specifically, that provided by the Tibetan schools in India -- serves to transmit traditional cultural symbols while at the same time offering students a modern diversified curriculum. The "metaphors and paradigms" presented in this deliberately maintained environment -- including such important Tibetan ideals as "compassion" (snying-rje), "respectful behavior" (ya-rabs spyod-bzang), and group consciousness and solidarity ("working for the Tibetan community") -- can be summarized by the one symbol that subsumes them all: the Dalai Lama, who represents and inspires commitment to the entire Tibetan ideological system as a whole.

But at this point in most young Tibetans' lives -- that is, in childhood and adolescence, in this extremely supportive ethnic milieu -- this ideology has yet to be tested against the demands of practical experience in the broader context of Indian pluralistic society. To be sure, high school students are already aware, in a general sense at least, that serious financial responsibilities await them once their school years are over. But besides

this economic sphere of obligations and challenges, two other categories of experience will also affect the young generation's understanding of, and need for, relevant cultural symbols: more sustained intellectual encounters with non-traditional modes of thought, and political involvement in Tibetan as well as international situations of Realpolitik.

This chapter will thus examine all three of these general areas, beginning with a consideration of post-high school options and activities. The focus here will be less concerned with the explicit lessons of higher education and adult employment than with the implicitly learned strategies that young people are developing as a result of these experiences. The economic contingencies of young adult life will be looked at in connection with two types of problems faced by Tibetan youth: obtaining financial assistance (scholarships) for higher education, and balancing the implications of group-centered ideology ("working for the people") against the demands of supporting one's immediate family. Problems related to cognitive consistency will be investigated in the light of the ideas and ideologies currently influencing young Tibetan thinkers and critics, and the young generation's political undertakings and experiences will serve to provide background for interpreting the new symbol that is emerging in this situation of liminal exile: the polysemic theme of "inde-

pendence," which is elaborated both conceptually, as a root metaphor ("rangzen"), and behaviorally, in the form of the annual 10th March commemoration of Tibetan Uprising Day.

### Post-High School Options and Activities

The options that are open to young Tibetans at the completion of their secondary school program are limited by several immediate constraints, almost all of them economic in nature. As a refugee population living in a developing country with economic woes of its own, the Tibetan community as a whole can scarcely afford to offer higher educational opportunities to all its young members without qualification.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, few of the approximately 25% of the high school graduates who do continue their formal education are able to choose a profession solely on the basis of their individual interests and aptitudes. Even if a student has proven his or her academic ability by achieving a qualifying score on the All-India Higher Secondary Examination, other factors likewise play an essential role in determining the actual possibility and course of studies: financial support, coming from funds channeled by the Tibetan government or a foreign relief agency or private sponsor; a felt need on the part of the Tibetan community for more college-trained specialists in that particular profession; and finally, an opening

or "seat" occurring at the proper college at a time when the student's own schedule of responsibilities permits him or her to take advantage of it. As one young man put it, "Having a definite goal guarantees nothing. So many other conditions must also fall into place -- all simultaneously. Without this happening, you cannot realize your aim." This person, who scored third in his class at the University of Delhi and wanted to continue his B.A. major to become an agricultural economist, is today teaching in a small Tibetan elementary school in an isolated settlement in eastern India.

His situation, by no means unique, well illustrates the tangle of contingencies facing this first generation of college students and would-be students. While economic conditions among the Tibetan community have decidedly improved in the two decades of exile, government-allocated financial resources -- in this case, the scholarships channeled through the Tibetan administration -- still represent a very scarce commodity. Accordingly, the issue of financial sponsorship for higher studies has engendered attitudes of tense resentment and suspicion on the part of many young Tibetans. These individuals, coming from backgrounds of poverty, envisioning the barely subsistence wages that await most of them even if they do complete college -- are not unfamiliar with economic hardship; moreover, they are quite ready to assume adult financial res-

possibility "for the cause of Tibet," or more personally, for the sake of an old, sick parent or younger, dependent cousin/siblings. What these people fear, with respect to the allocation of scholarships, is thus not some new deprivation, but rather, any repetition of an old injustice whereby the "haves" of yore might still get more than their due. Some wealthy families, in fact, are the object of doubly strong resentment. According to more than one source, several of them, having left Tibet early, with gold, then had their sons and daughters apply for -- and receive -- financial assistance for higher studies on the grounds that they were, after all, "poor refugees." For all these reasons, young Tibetans today regard their government's policies of appointments and allocations with wary concern, always on the lookout for any evidence of favoritism in general and nepotism in particular.

Correspondingly, the Tibetan administration has, since those first chaotic years of exile, attempted to announce and award scholarships according to a clearly publicized and equitable strategy. In a lengthy explanation -- actually, a rejoinder to earlier criticism -- the Deputy Secretary of the Council for Tibetan Education has stated that "the sole criterion for awarding scholarships is the order of merit achieved in the schools' final result" (Tibetan Review, October, 1976: 33). This in fact corroborates what I was told by the rector of the residential

school where I did my research. "The schools' final result" -- referring here to the Higher Secondary Exam -- serves to rank candidates into five ordered categories: first division, second division, "pass with compartments" (overall pass with failure in an individual subject), and failure. Students who obtain a first division pass (10 Tibetan students out of the 194 eleventh graders who took the exam did so in 1977; 25 out of the 181 in 1976) are then eligible to be chosen by the Council to receive the fifteen scholarships that are awarded annually by the Government of India through the Central Tibetan Schools Administration.

In addition, other volunteer agencies -- and some foreign individuals as well -- also offer full or partial financial sponsorship for higher education. The German Academic Exchange awards about ten scholarships, each worth 400 rupees per month, to Tibetan students who pursue higher studies in science (average monthly salary is only about 200-250 rupees -- about US \$26 at the time I was in India -- for young employees of the Tibetan government). American and Swedish organizations also offer a small number of scholarships per year, and the Charitable Trust Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama likewise provides funds for promising but needy students. Finally, Swiss Aid to Tibetans represents the largest single source of financial assistance for the higher education of young

Tibetans.

This latter agency is significant in another way too. Although it does additionally sponsor a six-month Tibetan Language Teachers Training program through the auspices of the Council for Tibetan Education, its primary way of allocating support for higher studies is to deal directly with the students who request assistance. Decisions regarding these scholarships are thus not made by the Council, but by the director of Swiss Aid to Tibetans himself, a man who travels often to India and appears to be personally familiar with the individual backgrounds and abilities of many young Tibetans. I once witnessed an exchange between this man and a close friend of mine who was about to complete her B.A. and hoped to do an additional year's study to earn a B.S. in Education. (In India, this latter degree takes one year longer to achieve than the B.A.). She had hardly expressed her wish before the director began contemplating aloud: her scholastic record was excellent; her contribution as a teacher would be increased by this opportunity; the requisite program was offered by two different colleges, each with a different deadline date for admission... With laconic Swiss directness he quickly stated his decision: "I support you," he said. "Apply for admission as soon as you get your B.A. results."

The implications of this direct avenue of appeal, with its built-in ability to circumvent bureaucracy, are not

lost on the young. I know of one case where a high school girl, desiring to transfer from the Tibetan school to a more elite Anglo-Indian institution, wrote a letter -- intended to be secret -- to her foreign sponsor, asking the latter to please help her attain her goal. In this particular case, other complications caused the plot to misfire, but the very fact that such an attempt was made shows that this girl was learning -- however imperfectly -- the intricacies of "proper" but efficacious appeal. In fact, the whole process of personally requesting financial aid for education -- whether through the Council or from an independent source -- has the effect of teaching a primary lesson in adaptive strategy: individual initiative counts, especially in an economy of scarcity.

The discussion so far has considered those constraints and contingencies -- mostly economic -- which affect and limit the opportunities of the young Tibetans who would like to continue their formal education at various institutions of higher learning. While such a program of post-high school studies definitely represents, in their eyes at least, the preferred, prestigious ideal, it is by no means the only option that can provide further learning experience. Besides the standard academic programs offered by Indian colleges and universities, the modern vocational training course conducted at Pachmahri (described in the previous chapter), and the various

training programs for teachers, nurses, secretaries, and accountants -- a special course for Tibetan language teachers is offered by the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies. In addition, other Tibetan-run institutions provide instruction in traditional modes of Tibetan knowledge. Four of these -- the Central Institute mentioned above, located in Sarnath; the Buddhist School of Dialectics, in Dharamsala; the Sakya College, in Rajpur; and the School of Buddhist Philosophy, in Leh, Ladakh -- specialize in religious-philosophical programs of study. A fifth, the Tibetan Medical Centre, in Dharamsala, continues the tradition of the famous Chakpori (lcags-po ri) and Menze Khang (sman-rtse khang) medical and astrological colleges of Lhasa; and the Tibetan Music, Dance and Drama Society (bod kyi bro-gar tshogs-pa), also of Dharamsala, instructs future teachers and performers in the music, dance, and folk operas of Tibet.

The Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, inaugurated in 1967, was initially established as a center of learning where monk-students would be able to study traditional Tibetan Buddhist philosophy in an atmosphere conducive to the practice of monastic routine. At the same time, certain departures from the old system of monastic education were also built into the program: examinations were re-organized in accordance with the policies operative in modern universities, and scholars who com-

pleted their education there were assigned new jobs elsewhere, instead of staying on as was customary in Tibet (Tibetans in Exile: 198). In the beginning, the school was affiliated with nearby Varanasi Sanskrit University, but this arrangement was intended to be a temporary one, lasting only "until such time as the Tibetans would be able to run the institute on their own" (ibid.: 201).

That time has now arrived. A news item in the November, 1977 issue of Tibetan Review (p. 10) notes that the administration of this institution will soon be transferred to the governing body of the Central Tibetan Schools Administration. Two other changes are even more significant in terms of learning opportunities: the institute is now open to both male and female lay students as well as monks; and the study of traditional subjects is now being augmented, due to the wishes of some deeply interested students, by serious investigation of Marxist social and economic theories.

The principal of this institute, a young but erudite monk scholar who is well versed in modern political ideologies as well as Buddhist philosophical studies, explained to me how this school tries to integrate both modern and ancient types of instruction. Students study English and Hindi as well as traditional subjects such as Sanskrit, Tibetan grammar, history, literature, and philosophy; in classrooms without Western chairs and desks, they sit

cross-legged on the floor, and their teachers sit likewise on small rugs. The "classes" or levels of study are referred to by Sanskrit terms associated with Indian Buddhism -- titles which can be roughly correlated with the grades or degree programs of a modern educational system: Madhyama, corresponding approximately to the last four years of secondary school; Shastri, approximating the B.A. level; and Acharya, the M.A. level.

Such examples, of course, hardly prove of and by themselves that a viable integration of old and new has been achieved. In fact, the institute is not without its problems in this respect. The five pioneer girl students who were enrolled there at the time of my visit told me how discouraged they felt about the difficulty of their courses. Their reaction, according to the principal, was typical of beginners in the program, but unlike the others in their class, these girls did not feel free to commiserate beyond their own small circle; in fact, they had no way of knowing that they were not alone in their sentiments. Despite the principal's strong conviction that Tibetan women too should study and contribute to the field of Buddhist philosophy, these first female Madhyama students were more affected by the comments of older, conservative Tibetans living in the area: "If we talk to boys (especially to monks!), they tell us we're 'bad girls'" When I returned to the United States, I received a letter from

one of these students, telling me that all five of them have now left the institute and have returned to regular Tibetan secondary schools.

Given the radical change that was implied by these girls' very presence at such an institution, the denouement of this first attempt is probably not too surprising. Another problem faced by this school also has its roots in old, slow-to-die attitudes: the alleged predominance of Gelugpa students and teachers as compared with those of the other Buddhist sects (See Tibetan Review, September, 1976: 7-8 and December, 1976: 23-24 for a full discussion of this criticism). Despite such difficulties, however, the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies is nonetheless making an unprecedented contribution to the learning opportunities of young Tibetans, offering them a program of scholastic depth in an atmosphere of intellectual ferment and ongoing syncretism.

In contrast to the open admissions policy of the institute at Sarnath, the Buddhist School of Dialectics at Dharamsala remains a strictly monastic institution which accepts only male novices from the various Buddhist sects as students. Established in 1972 in order to preserve the special religious-philosophical traditions of the Gelugpa sect (mtshan-nyid), this school is particularly characterized by its emphasis on rig-lam -- a sophisticated form of logical argumentation which has been used for cen-

turies to illustrate the Madhyamika doctrine of the Middle Path. In brief, this school of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy teaches that the phenomenal world is "real" only in a relative, qualified sense; what truly exists in an absolute, non-conditioned sense is Emptiness (stong-pa nyid). The ontological nihilism of this position can itself be challenged by its own logic, and this whole process of systematic argumentation can be used, according to the principal of this school, "to penetrate those teachings of Lord Buddha which are most deep and most difficult to understand by ordinary study alone."

The seven-year program of studies, which begins for most young men after the completion of regular secondary school, concentrates on Buddhist logic, metaphysics, and philosophy, but apart from this, students are also encouraged to pursue standard B.A. and M.A. programs through correspondence courses offered by various Indian universities. This supplementary emphasis on modern subjects reflects the Council for Tibetan Education's desire that the emerging generation of young monks be capable of interacting with and teaching people who do not speak Tibetan. In view of current statistics and interests (the December, 1976 issue of Tibetan Review [p. 7] notes that "there are already 119 monasteries in exile, including 9 in the West"), such concern does not seem at all misplaced. In fact, the

School of Dialectics, located in what must be the world's capital for Westerners studying Tibetan Buddhism, thus offers its students both a formal program of studies and a raison d'être which is daily confirmed by the constant sight of Dharamsala's international population of Dharma seekers. The principal himself implicitly recognized this when he explained the projected goals of this institute to me, enlisting the aid of a monk-student interpreter, whose very presence further illustrated the point: "We hope to produce learned men who are familiar with both English and Dharma. We are not teaching Buddhism as missionaries, but because it is very beneficial for all living beings; for peace and happiness. That is why we are studying dialectics: to give these teachings to the West."

Another Dharamsala institution -- the Tibetan Astro-Medical Centre -- is also consciously motivated by an ideal of service to the Tibetan community in particular and the world at large as well. Established separately in 1961, the Tibetan Medical Centre and the Tibetan Astrological Centre were incorporated in 1967, reflecting the close relationship that is held to exist between these two categories of traditional knowledge (e.g. specific rhythms of seasonal or monthly time are believed to have an effect on the efficacy of gathering and preparing medicinal herbs). In its present merged form, the Centre aims to

preserve and deepen the traditions of Tibetan medicine through research, which includes the further study of Tibetan medical and astrological texts, and the comparative study of Western medical theories, particularly regarding incurable diseases such as cancer. The chief physician -- a woman who has lectured at American universities -- diagnoses and treats an average of sixty to one hundred fifty patients per day -- Indians and foreigners as well as Tibetans. In addition to the dispensary where she works, the Centre also includes a medical college, small hospital, and pharmacy, where Ayurvedic medicines are prepared from the extracts of herbs, metallic compounds and precious stones.

As of November, 1977, the college had fifteen students, including four young women. Their seven-year program of study follows the traditional Tibetan syllabus for this profession: medicine, astrology, grammar, poetry, and religion. In addition, students go on field trips to learn how to identify and collect the medicinal plants, and their last years of study are particularly devoted to a supervised internship, where they learn how to diagnose illnesses.

The inclusion of grammar, poetry, and religion in the prescribed course of study reflects the fundamental difference between Western and Tibetan medical theory. According to Doctor Yeshe Dhonden, the Dalai Lama's personal physician and former head of the Medical Centre,

Tibetan medicine, firmly rooted in religion and philosophy, takes man as a whole, in the empirical and transcendental aspects, as a physical entity and metaphysical potentiality....

While the cultivation of the art and science of medicine is predominantly intended to cure the physical ailments of a being, Tibetan physicians place an equal degree of stress on the cultivation and development of mental power and the observance of moral laws (Yeshe Dhonden, 1976: 6-7, 5).

The effect of such a radically holistic perspective of humanity can result in diagnoses which are just as surprising -- to an empirical particularist at least -- as the Tibetan physician's emphasis on "transcendental aspects" and "metaphysical potentiality." A good friend of mine, a Tibetan graduate student in physics well acquainted with the principles of scientific rigor and rational proof, went to this dispensary for a check-up, after numerous visits to a modern university hospital had failed to cure him of a persistent sinus aggravation. The Tibetan doctor, however, did not confine her investigations to the "obvious" source of the problem; in fact, she concluded that the real source of his illness was "in the bones," and would manifest itself later in his life as rheumatoid arthritis.

While this diagnosis may not have been particularly cheering or even immediately verifiable for my friend, he was nonetheless intrigued by its broader theoretical basis, which allows for and even emphasizes multi-dimensional systematic associations which would not likely be considered

in a medical examination based on observable and recounted symptoms alone. For many young, Western-educated Tibetans, in fact, it is precisely this aspect of traditional Tibetan medicine -- its more inclusive sphere of relevant concerns -- which prompts them to take a second look at this centuries-old institution. For some of them -- the curious/hopeful patients as well as the uninvolved but interested observers -- the Tibetan Astro-Medical Centre primarily offers an alternative or supplement to Western medical practice. For others -- specifically, the full-time medical students -- the Centre is likewise a full-time supporter and product of a systematized and comprehensive ideology of integration, culminating in the belief that "health is the proper relationship between the microcosm which is man and the macrocosm which is the Universe" (ibid.: 7). In terms of formal, post-high school learning opportunities, then, the medical college associated with this Centre thus represents one of the most tradition-affirming options open to young Tibetans in India today.

The last organization to be considered in this general category of Tibetan-run institutes, the Tibetan Music, Dance, and Drama Society (bod kyi bro-gar tshogs-pa, often referred to simply as "Dhoegar" [bro-gar]), was officially established for two purposes. First, the traditions of singing and dancing -- considered by Tibetans as a mark of "that inner contentment which is so characteristic of the

Tibetan people" -- were regarded as "an indispensable part of Tibetan life," and therefore became an essential object of cultural preservation (Tibetans in Exile: 251).

Secondly, Tibetans also saw the staged presentation of this tradition as a potential means of spreading positive propaganda: "We also needed to acquaint the world with our unique culture which had hitherto remained a mystery to them due to our having kept aloof from the rest of the world" (ibid.: 251-252). The learning opportunities offered by this Society can be similarly classed according to these two orientations, relating either to the concerns of the Tibetan community, or to the more far-reaching implications of international Realpolitik.

In the first case, the stated aim of the Dhoegar is by and large being achieved. Performers as well as future teachers for the Tibetan schools are being trained in the instrumental music, songs, dances, and folk operas of Tibet, thus guaranteeing that the next generation, at least, will have its own specialists to keep alive and continue these traditions. But this institution, which operates on a shoestring budget, is not without its problems. In an interview which appeared in another Tibetan publication -- a bilingual (Tibetan and English) quarterly called Rangzen(rang-btsan, "freedom, independence"), which is put out by the Tibetan Youth Congress -- a young actor, Phurbu Tsering, has expressed his views on this subject.

Even though the Government does provide for this Institution, they do not seem to realize the tremendous value and potential of the Dhoegar. The Administration uses the Dhoegar as a dumping ground for people that they have no other place to send. The Dhoegar never has enough money, and our staff and actors receive a very inadequate salary. Even a peon in a Government office receives a larger salary than one of our trained performers... But the worst and most irritating problem is the incredibly stupid attitude that most Tibetans have towards actors and dancers. They think that it is a low profession. Due to all these difficulties many young people are discouraged from joining the Dhoegar. Even some of our own members have been forced to leave because of family pressure or financial difficulties. I do not feel that I am stretching things when I say that it is a great tragedy for our nation when a talented actor, dancer or musician painstakingly trained for many years has to leave to find work in a factory all because of a few rupees (quoted in Rangzen, Summer Issue 1976: 22-23).

To be sure, the attitude referred to and criticized here -- "acting is a low profession" -- is one that is hardly unique to Tibetan society. Yet in the Tibetan case, the second stated aim for establishing the Dhoegar -- "acquainting the world with our unique culture" -- adds particular weight to the actor's counter-statement: the feeling of being insufficiently supported is intensified when official verbal praise only serves to highlight the gap between ideal goals and actual financial assistance.

More than any other organized group of Tibetans, the members of the Drama Society have had the opportunity to present selected aspects of their culture to a world-wide audience. In addition to staging performances at their home location in Dharamsala, the Dhoegar has also gone on

tour, traveling in 1975-76 through Europe, North America, Southeast Asia and Australia under the sponsorship of a New York-based enterprise, Kozuko Hillyer International Inc. The twenty-three member troupe, most in their late teens or early to middle twenties, learned much from this experience, particularly with respect to the workings of international Realpolitik. As described in the January-February issue of Tibetan Review, two days before the group was scheduled to leave Switzerland for the United States,

the American Embassy in Switzerland tried to take back the visas issued to the troupe, saying that there was "some mistake." The Tibet Office in New York had to approach the China desk in the State Department to [request them] to reconsider the decision of withdrawing the visas. This abrupt action of the State Department seems contradictory when it is remembered that earlier on the State Department, in response to vehement Chinese protests against the coming of the Tibetan drama troupe to the U.S.A., had replied that "the activities of the Tibetans were in accord with the constitution and laws of the United States." Clearly there was some outside pressure put on the State Department (op. cit., January-February, 1976: 11-12).

In addition, the U.S.-China People's Friendship Association picketted and distributed pamphlets outside performances in Berkeley, Ann Arbor, Madison, Washington, D.C., and New York City (Rangzen, Summer Issue 1976: 18). These leaflets elaborated the Chinese point of view: Tibet belongs to China, and those Tibetan exiles who say otherwise are traitorous, upper-class reactionaries. Given the opportunity to respond to such criticism, the Tibetan mana-

ger and interpreter for the Dhoegar countered the charges in several TV and press interviews, "the honesty of which," according to him, "convinced far more people of the truth of our cause than the hollow lies of Peking" (*ibid.*). Be that as it may, this entire group of young Tibetans was unquestionably affected by the tour, which can most aptly be described as multi-level political theater. In fact, by publicizing these experiences via the Tibetan press, the members of the Tibetan Music, Dance and Drama Society are doing more than just "acquainting the world" with their "unique culture;" they are also contributing significantly to the entire Tibetan community's growing familiarity with the public relations tactics of international politics.

In addition to the two general types of post-high school options and activities which we have already considered -- formal education at Indian colleges, universities, and training centers, and enrollment in various Tibetan-run institutes -- one other very broad category of instructive experience remains open to Tibetan youth: employment, whether this be in a salaried position, private enterprise, or agricultural work at one of the settlements.

The first of these actually includes two possible types of jobs: working directly for the Tibetan government in one of its offices, or teaching in one of the Tibetan schools. Neither of these situations offers much in the way of financial remuneration, so this type of employment

often becomes an initial stereotyped goal for the idealistic young students who talk a lot about "working for our people." Reality intrudes quickly, however, and the views of those who have already begun such work -- or who are just about to do so -- are much more critical. First, there are the predictable problems caused by a new type of applicant: college educated, yet automatically subordinate to older, more experienced officials. As one young man expressed it,

as a Tibetan, I'm much better off than most, but in our society there's nothing to look forward to except being a teacher in a Tibetan school or a clerk in a Dharamsala-office. And if I do become a clerk, even with a Master's degree, nobody will think any more of my opinion than if I had no degree at all.

Another young man, now working in a (Tibetan) government office in Delhi, admitted to me that it is a real temptation for him not to strike out on his own after having received specialized secretarial training in Calcutta. In fact, he had even had a private interview with the Dalai Lama about his plans; he would prefer to work in Ladakh (a cold, bleak region in northern India), where he could put his expertise and initiative into practice, rather than remain in Delhi "stuffing envelopes." For the time being, however, he has decided to stay at his present post, justifying this to himself in terms of commitment ("I do believe in what I'm doing") and qualifying it by limiting the duration ("In another two years I'll see...").

The issue of "working in Ladakh" in fact represents much more than a preference for this rather than that job location. This desolate region, restricted until 1975, was therefore unable to receive assistance from foreign relief agencies before that time. Approximately 4,000 Tibetans live there now, most in extreme poverty; thus for some young Tibetans, it has become the focus for idealistic slogans about "working to help our people." For others, however, living and working in such conditions seem all too much like "a second exile" (Tibetan Review, June-July, 1976: 4). One individual explained the different attitudes to me in this way:

It is the more [economically] privileged Tibetans who are the first to proclaim such a cause, but in the end, they are likely to find some excuse not to do it. On the other hand, those of us who have "grown up in difficulty" know enough to shirk such activity if possible, but in the end, even though we wouldn't volunteer for it, we would do it.

While Ladakh might be the proving grounds of idealism par excellence, a much more common test of young teachers' and clerks' loyalty to the Tibetan community is simply their willingness to continue working in the system, month after month, for the same low wages. This is particularly the case with young government workers, who, unlike the teachers hired and paid by the Central Tibetan Schools Administration, are not subsidized at all by the Indian government. This point is emphasized in an editorial

appearing in the December, 1976 issue of Tibetan Review.

Its author, Tsering Wangyal, begins by describing the types of people that can be found in this situation:

A member of this establishment falls in any one or various combinations of the following categories: Those who are sincerely desirous of helping the people; those who aspire to a position of rank and respectability, which does not necessarily come in the way of working sincerely; those who want to try it out and see if it is more interesting than all the other occupations they have tried; and those who just fulfill the requirements to fit in Dharamsala and not anywhere else. Financial reward has never been an incentive in Dharamsala. Tibetan Government officials are perhaps less well off materially than any other people, including most other Tibetans (ibid.: 4).

For both groups of salaried employees -- teachers as well as government workers -- the idealistic aim of "working for the people" faces a stiff challenge from social and economic realities. For a young, educated person, a job at a large school in Mussoorie, Darjeeling or Dharamsala also implies the possibility of living near friends of a similar age and educational background; Ladakh-motif to the contrary, it is these places which get far more applicants than small day schools in various remote settlements. For young clerical workers, poorly paid and usually at the bottom of the status ladder, the motivation is similar; they are much more likely to "scramble for government posts" (Tibetan Review, July, 1977:4 ) than to continue to talk, vaguely and idealistically, about "working for the Tibetan community." In both of these cases, the situation

of employment teaches hard lessons of practicality, realism and compromise with untested idealism.

For those who make their living by engaging in private enterprise, circumstances are somewhat different: in most cases, the element of economic risk is greater, but so too are the perceived chances of a Horatio Alger success story. In fact, the present editor of Tibetan Review told me that it is private enterprise which represents the greatest source of personal income for Tibetans in India. This category includes everything from large-scale, high-risk ventures such as restaurant management, sweater-selling, and major investment in Tibetan marketing schemes (e.g. selling and exporting Tibetan carpets) to part-time petty trading. In the first case, where the initial capital investment usually necessitates borrowing (most often from a kin-based network), the would-be entrepreneur must first pay back the loan before any profit can be realized.

The activity of sweater-selling offers a good illustration of how this works. As explained to me by a young man who had himself engaged in this venture alone at age seventeen, first he had had to borrow six thousand rupees (approximately US \$ 780) in order to buy the Indian-made sweaters and shawls from the factory in Ludhiana (an industrial city in northern India). Then he set out with his wares, following the seasonal climate changes (going down to South India during their cool season, then returning to

the hill stations when the rest of India became hot). At the end of the selling season he paid off his creditors and kept the profit of several hundred rupees, which would support him and his old, sick mother until his next commercial venture.

Such a way of life, with its built-in mobility and its alternation of busy season with slack period, appeals to few other ethnic groups in India -- especially since non-Tibetans who own even a little piece of land are loath to leave it, even temporarily. For the landless Tibetans, however, sweater-selling has become an occupation they have virtually monopolized, all over India. Furthermore, the life style that necessarily accompanies itinerant selling and trading does not involve any conflict with traditional sex roles, as Tibetan women are among the most independent in Asia. Wives have long been regarded as equally if not more capable of managing money than their husbands, and the temporary separations sometimes occasioned by this activity are not considered threatening by or to either party.

In comparison with more sedentary types of private enterprise (e.g. managing a restaurant or small shop; engaging in local trading), sweater-selling from bazaar to bazaar all over India is definitely a more striking occupation, and indeed, the adaptive strategies used by these people could easily become the subject of a com-

plete study in its own right. From our perspective, however, this activity is instructive insofar as it serves as a learning experience for the whole Tibetan community. Those who actually make their living by sweater-selling or other forms of private enterprise of course learn a great deal about risk, profit and loss in particular, and about economically motivated human nature in general. But in addition, even those Tibetans who support themselves in some other way are still affected, in terms of collective self-image, by that segment of their own population that engages in private enterprise, on whatever level.

Tibetans readily describe themselves as "born horse traders" (Tibetan Review, April, 1973: 3), but their attitude toward this self-acknowledged stereotype is ambiguous. On the one hand, they sincerely admire economic savoir faire, revealing in this some of that "extraordinary pragmatism" which Snellgrove noted in another context (see p. 103 above). While walking through a bazaar with some Tibetan college girls, I passed a group of sweater-sellers who were carrying on an animated conversation in Hindi with prospective Indian customers. Sensing my curiosity about her reaction, one of the girls turned to me and said, with a touch of quiet pride, "You never see our people begging." On the other hand, Tibetans have also expressed the fear that "hustling" (a word used commonly by English-speaking Tibetans) can go too far. A

young man said this to me: "When you're a full-time hustler, you become after a while so willing to trade anything that you trade a lot of other things too. At that rate, if people just stick to hustling, they can never get back a free country." Such attitudes toward aggressive private enterprise -- both pro and con -- are particularly significant for the young generation, which is trying to make peace with the oftentimes conflicting demands of single-minded youthful idealism and realistic respect for pragmatic adaptability.

Other types of employment have also provided Tibetan young people with opportunities to observe, learn, and thereby shape or modify their personal conception of their ethnic identity. In 1966 a small-scale industrial program -- the Tibetan Industrial Rehabilitation Society (TIRS) -- was established in order to create jobs for non-skilled or semi-skilled Tibetans in such projects as working on tea estates, a limestone quarry, a lime-producing factory, woollen mill, and fiberglass plant (Tibetans in Exile: 95-102). By 1973 these attempts were so fraught with problems that headlines in the Tibetan press appeared to be announcing the program's imminent and total collapse: "TIRS: Not a Success Story" (Tibetan Review, July, 1973: 3 ), and "The Tearful Tales of TIRS" (ibid.: 7, 13). One result of this experimental program has, however, been successful: TIRS has re-directed its

orientation from an industrial focus to one emphasizing settlements which are "agriculture-based, supported by handicrafts" (ibid.).

These handicraft centers, where Tibetan workers are trained and paid on a piece-rate or monthly basis, have been established in the various Tibetan settlements all over India. The products made there -- carpets, jackets, Tibetan aprons, belts, boots, and other traditional items -- are sold on location or in cities like Darjeeling or Delhi where foreign tourists are likely to visit. The workers -- men and women of all ages -- are usually people who have had limited or no formal education. The management positions, however, are most often filled by young adults who know English, and the whole enterprise can easily serve as a temporary foothold, so to speak, for ambitious but impecunious individuals who are on their way up from carpet-weaving apprentice to (All-India) Marketing Man of the Year -- an award won by a Tibetan in 1977.

The communal aspects of these handicraft centers (workers are in many cases provided with housing, Tibetan schools and day-care centers for their children) are even more characteristic of the last type of employment which will be considered here: the agricultural settlements. A complete description of these planned, flourishing Tibetan communities would of course take us far afield of our focus on post-high school options and activities. In pass-

ing, however, a few important points should be noted about these institutions.

The first of these settlements was established in 1960, one year after Tibetans had begun arriving in great numbers at the temporary transit camps established for them in Assam and West Bengal (northeastern India). As part of a large-scale rehabilitation program worked out by the Indian government and assisted by international relief agencies, thousands of acres of unused land were leased by the state governments to Tibetan settlers through the administrative network of the Dalai Lama's unrecognized but de facto government. These settlements, which are concentrated in Karnataka State (2,000 miles south of Dharamsala), are now home for more than 19,000 Tibetans; in addition, another 20,000 people have been officially settled in smaller settlements in other parts of the country (Tibetan Review, December, 1976: 9). Despite the great change in physical environment and the considerable distance from Himalayan vistas, Tibetans living in the settlements in South India are very successfully maintaining their traditional culture and identity. As Goldstein points out,

there has been virtually no assimilation to Indian cultural and social institutions. Concomitantly, there has been the impressive economic adaptation which combines traditional and modern agro-business techniques to exploit successfully the energy potential of a traditional

niche. The economic success of the Tibetans is one of the most striking accomplishments of the program (1975b: 17).

An important aspect of the "modern agro-business techniques" referred to above is the cooperative society, whose members include all settlers above the age of sixteen. In addition to providing heavy equipment (tractors and trucks), seed and fertilizers, running consumer stores and flour mills, and arranging for the sale of harvested crops, the society also pays the annual rent to the state government on behalf of the settlers; after the harvest, this will be repaid by them in cash or in kind ("Tibetan Settlements in Bylakuppe, South India," Tibetan Review. February-March, 1977: 12-14).

For the youth growing up in the settlements, all this represents as much if not more of an education than the formal instruction they receive in the local day school or -- for those who are sent by their parents as boarders to North India -- the residential schools. Quite a few of these students will not finish or even begin secondary school, since their help is very much valued at home. For all of these young people, then, the options for further learning center around agriculture and management, although a limited number of employment possibilities might also be found at the local day school, handicraft center, machine shop, and other institutions not directly related to farming.

To sum up all these post-high school options and activities, let us briefly review some of the more important lessons taught by these various life experiences. For those who aspire to continue their formal education at an Indian institution of higher learning, the problem of getting financial support is crucial. This in turn puts a premium on individual initiative, but at the same time two controlling forces serve to keep personal ambition within socially acceptable limits. Young people must make their appeal for scholarships in ways that are not only efficacious, but also "proper." Furthermore, an intense resentment for favoritism of any type implies a corresponding respect for personal merit, and it is on this basis, rather than that of desire alone, that young people, would like to see grants, positions of rank, and recognition awarded.

The young adults who are enrolled in Tibetan-run institutions are also subject to a variety of new learning experiences. The Institute at Sarnath serves as a center of syncretism, a place where old and new philosophical and political ideas and ideologies are debated and considered; the discussions themselves will become part of the intellectual repertoire of the entire Tibetan community. The School of Dialectics, Medical Centre and Drama Society -- all located in Dharamsala -- not only teach their respective specialities, but also involve their

students, at least indirectly, in a cultivated awareness of the whole phenomenon of Westerners being interested in Tibetan religion and culture. Global consciousness has also been increased by the drama group's international tour experience, which has served as a two-way mirror for Tibetans and the world to view each other's theatrics.

Young teachers and employees of the Tibetan government, like those engaged in private enterprise, often face conflicting demands due to their different and sometimes competing personal and social economic responsibilities. In the end, single-minded devotion to the cause of "working for the people" usually becomes somewhat modified by a realistic respect for pragmatic adaptability. Finally, one of the most significant lessons for the entire Tibetan community comes from the experience of the agricultural settlements, where economic success has resulted from policies and practices based on elected leadership and communal management. While this last point is subject to some clarification (i.e. economic endeavors at the local level are still very individualistic (Epstein, personal communication) -- the general ideal of democratic cooperation is nonetheless being actively promulgated in this context by the programs and rhetoric of the Tibetan government.

Ideas and Ideologies

The "metaphors and paradigms" presented in the Tibetan schools face other counter-influences besides those that stem from practical economic experience. Young Tibetan thinkers must also confront alternative ideas and ideologies in their intellectual searching, and their struggle to maintain cognitive consistency is further complicated by the shame and despair which they and their entire ethnic community feels as a result of having lost their homeland. Such an emotional climate, with its peaks and valleys of idealized national pride as well as bitter disillusionment, can be seen as a very likely environment for demagoguery. In the Tibetan situation, however, this is not the case: those personalities who are most associated with persuasive rhetoric are not demagogues, for their goal is not self-aggrandizement. Rather, they are engaging in political consciousness-raising.

The themes of this rhetoric touch both ends of the pride/despair continuum, implying if not promising self-respect as a correlative of commitment to a program of Tibetan militancy. The following excerpts from two Tibetan youth publications illustrate this; in passing, it should also be noted that the names of the magazines -- Rangzen and March -- refer directly to the root metaphor and key scenario of the Lhasa Uprising of March 10, 1959.

Being a refugee is at best a difficult thing. Being a refugee from Tibet, a land which has for centuries been cut off from the rest of the world, is an extremely traumatic experience. And the hardest-hit victims of this affliction are the young -- disoriented, disillusioned and bitter. At that precious moment of youth when life should begin to hold a new and deeper meaning, we the young are confronted with a cynical and indifferent world.... The expression "tasting the bitter fruits of defeat" is not a flight of poetic fancy but the accurate description of an extremely unpleasant and intolerable truth. Thus it is that we who once lived proudly in our own land without anybody's help, are now reduced to accepting handouts from the West....

Our position is not an enviable one. A few of us have given up hope and are attempting to gather the shattered fragments of our lives, away from all the bitterness and sorrow, away from our own people. But can we truly escape in this manner? Can we avoid being what we are by merely fleeing from the truth? Never! Flight can never be the answer. For no matter where we flee, we carry with us the blood of our ancestors. It is strong and virile -- the same stuff that drove us to transcend our weakness and made us once masters of Central Asia. It is the same stuff that brought the glorious T'ang dynasty of China ignominiously on its knees -- and we have it still. Deep down within each one of us is the same potential. Yet untapped and sluggish after so many years of disuse, but it is there. Thus it is for us to remove all our bitterness and self-pity and to begin exploring our own vitality, assess our strength, analyse our problems and our ideas so that eventually, step by step we may begin to realise our dreams (Rangzen, Autumn, 1976: n.p.).

The second quote is even more specific in its exhortations:

It is high time for the youths to rise and mobilise their potentialities rather than waste it. Let us not recite the particular empty word Ahimsa [the Buddhist ideal of non-violence] which has no room in this terrorizing world of today. The policy of Bismarck is the most appropriate

one for us to adopt. There is no country in the world who achieved her independence without violence, bloodshed and sacrifice (March, Vol. III, No. 2: n.p.).

Such appeals for action, sometimes written and published in English, other times proclaimed aloud at youth meetings in Tibetan, can be seen as the contemporary manifestations of a skill that has traditionally been a prerequisite for leadership roles in Tibet: kha bde-po -- rhetorical ability. The younger generation, caught between at least two languages and cultures, is consequently less familiar with the finer points of their own rhetorical tradition; thus today's Tibetan oratory lacks the finesse of the old Tibetan style, which

involved the use of expressive vocabulary within clauses and a sophisticated linking of clauses to express ideas and convey information in subtle, often artistic constructions usually garnished by highly appropriate folk sayings, proverbs and anecdotes (Goldstein, 1968: 132).

On the other hand, contemporary Tibetan writers and speakers now have a wide variety of global media at their disposal. At least one Tibetan publication makes use of a worldwide clipping service, and a prominent spokesman for the militant cause recommends popular fiction such as Leon Uris' Exodus and Mila 18 to Tibetan teenagers in order to "inspire their patriotism."

As for the content of the quotations cited above, such unequivocal militancy might be applauded as rhetoric, but it would be wrong to conclude from this that all Tibe-

tans, or even all young Tibetans, would universally support such policies. Nevertheless, such writings and speeches do serve to influence the political consciousness of the Tibetan community, whose younger members are growing up with a newly cultivated interest in power struggles occurring throughout the world.

Israel in particular is highly regarded by politically minded Tibetans, for the Jewish diaspora followed by the triumphant reclaiming of a religious homeland appears to them as positive proof that a tiny but tough nation can ultimately defeat and hold its own against millions of hostile neighbors. During the week of Tibetan New Year, an evening social and dance for young people in Dharamsala was advertized on posters proclaiming the theme: "Next Year in Lhasa." Although the dance organizers told me they had never heard of the corresponding Jewish sentiment -- "Next Year in Jerusalem" -- their explanation could just as well have served to clarify the Passover wish: the capital, a holy city, is a metonym for the nation. In any case, they were delighted to learn of this additional parallel between Tibetan and Jewish experience: almost all youth leaders have read O Jerusalem, and their interest in the Middle East strongly favors the Israeli point of view.

While Tibetans' admiration for Israel is virtually unqualified (the one aspect of Jewish history that invariably does draw unfavorable comment is the duration of the

diaspora: "It shouldn't take us 2,000 years to get our country back") -- they are also aware that the tactics of Israel's enemies have met with success too. Yasser Arafat's gun-wielding entrance into the United Nations Assembly received much attention in the Tibetan press, and an editorial commenting on this and other such events has itself been quoted and re-quoted all over India.

The article sets out to explain the growing militancy of Tibetan youth, who have "grown up in exile under alien influences, being thrown aboard and submerged in a sea full of ideas and changes their parents never experienced before." It then mentions some of the events in world politics which have had their effect on impressionable, stateless young refugees:

They have watched with envy the creation of an independent Bangladesh, the consummation of a popular national liberation struggle in Vietnam, Bhutan's spectacular entry into the United Nations as an independent nation, and more recently, Yasser Arafat's astonishing success in the United Nations, which seems to vindicate the use of violence or terrorism as an effective instrument of struggle for national rights (Tibetan Review, January-February, 1976: 3).

The most frequently cited lines of this editorial appear sensational when quoted out of context; taken alone, they seem to be quite simply advocating terrorist tactics.

Apart from the current sound and fury of violence, there has been no actual demonstration of sacrifice for the national cause by any youth. There have been no hijackings, no bomb outrages or spectacular kidnappings. The lamas have done no better. While Buddhist monks in Vietnam or elsewhere immo-

late themselves for their faith, Tibetan monks in exile seem to abhor the prospects of life after death and content themselves with rituals for a struggle that they hope their gods will fight for them (ibid.: 3-4).

Despite the strong, almost bitter tone of these particular words, the editorial as a whole does not exhort its readers to either violent or non-violent action, but rather to collective self-examination. In seeking to account for the failure of Tibetan resistance movements, it examines the unique sacral-political form of Tibetan leadership, and it finds there a tragic irony: such a dually-oriented institution is "an asset for peaceful means" (of accomodating to present realities), but it is also "a liability for an armed struggle" (ibid.: 4).

The editorial goes on to explore the implications of this ambiguity, pointing out both the benefits that have accrued to Tibetan refugees as a result of the Dalai Lama's international stature as a religious leader, as well as the disadvantages that stem from this "preponderantly spiritual" mode of leadership: "the conspicuous lack of progress in their armed struggle for independence." The crux of the problem here concerns the unique institutionalized sacrality of the Dalai Lama. Once legitimized as the authentic reincarnation of Avalokiteshvara, this figure is regarded by Tibetans as being personally above what Balandier refers to as "impure, violent contestations for power." And yet militant Tibetans, acutely conscious of

their need for a leader who would rule "by steel and blood" (ibid.: 7), must look in vain for the Tibetan equivalent of a Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevera or Sheikh Mujib, for

it is impossible for any other leader, secular or otherwise, to replace or even challenge the Dalai Lama's leadership as long as he lives. This is not because he wants to perpetuate his "rule" like other worldly politicians, but because of the five centuries of "papal" authority and aura surrounding the name of the Dalai Lama... All this makes any alternative in the leadership impossible and adds a tragic inevitability to the Tibetan drama (ibid.: 4).

Attempts to come to terms with this cognitive/ideological impasse can be noted in the intellectual and symbolic expressions that are being formulated and elaborated by Tibetan refugees today. Three general types of ideological strategies can be identified in this respect. First, young people who took their religion for granted in elementary and secondary school are now turning to a less devotional, more intellectual study of Buddhism, seeking to find there precedents and justifications for violence as well as areas of rapprochement between this religious thought-system and other more secular and political ideologies such as Marxism, socialism and communism. Secondly, many of the most radical youth have adopted a neo-puritani-cal attitude, characterized by an intense single-mindedness of purpose and a fierce intolerance for other Tibetans' complacency or opportunism. Far from wishing to desacralize the "pure, just and organizing" character of their

leader's legitimacy, these concerned young monitors of "proper" symbolization speak out strongly and often against any perceived disrespect to the Dalai Lama or (Western-influenced) commercialization of their religion. Finally, the word rang-btsan itself (hereafter to be presented in its Anglicized form as "rangzen") suggests significantly more than its translation as "independence" might indicate. In fact, the broader connotations of this twentieth-century neologism make it a particularly apt symbol for a whole set of attitudes and strategies which Tibetans associate with the concept of "freedom," and this multivocalic potential is definitely, though not always consciously, being exploited by Tibetans from all walks of life. Let us now consider each of these three strategies in more detail, paying particular attention to the interaction between traditional ideology and current socio-political experience.

The fact that many young Tibetans are now attempting to re-examine their religion with more sophisticated questions in mind does not, in itself, represent a radical break with tradition, for Buddhism has always been able to accommodate a wide variety of rational and critically minded believers. What is new about the present case, however, is the direct influence of earlier schooling on this first refugee generation of Tibetan young adults. Having been exposed to a modern education, complete with large

and deliberate doses of Western science and rationalism, the more thoughtful youth are now experiencing what a close friend of mine described as "psychological anguish." As he saw it, the vast majority of Tibetans in the past believed in their religion uncritically, "with a blind faith." Now that is no longer possible, especially for those who feel a strong personal need to integrate old traditions with new ways of thought. Yet as my friend put it,

the mere realization that some beliefs and practices were "absurd" solves nothing. I have to decide what to accept and what to reject "with my own brain." I want to preserve my culture, but I have also learned to question.

In his book, Dawa Norbu relates an incident from his own life which illustrates the same problem. Eight years after his escape to India, he was a scholarship student at an Anglo-Indian school in Kalimpong.

My class was doing Twelfth Night. The clown, disguised as a curate, asks Malvolio: "What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?" Malvolio from the dark house replies: "That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird." The whole class roared with laughter. I joined in half-heartedly. I was neither as negative as my class-mates, including the teacher, who thought that the theory of rebirth was a joke; nor was I as positive as my mother, who felt that rebirth was as certain as the certitude of death. Ever since then I have been seeking explanations (1974: 52).

This search for intellectual integrity is being pursued with specific directedness by a small serious-minded group of students at the Central Institute of Higher

Tibetan Studies, which was described in the first part of this chapter. The principal of this institution is a remarkable man on many counts: he is young, but a recognized scholar according to traditional standards (he completed his Geshe Lharampa degree -- roughly equivalent to a PhD in Buddhist philosophy -- in 1968-69), and he has also acquired considerable expertise in both the practice and the praxis of contemporary Indian politics. In an interview he told me how deeply disturbed he had been when he first heard the Dalai Lama speaking in praise of certain positive aspects of Marxism and communism. Like most other Tibetans of that time (prior to 1970), his political views were then, if anything, anti-communist; thus

I was very much perturbed, for I could neither deny His Holiness' words nor could I accept his praising of communism and Marxism.

Later I studied more and came to know more facts. My views got changed. Similarly, the views of many students here have also changed.

The year 1970 in fact marks the date of the All-India Seminar on Marxism and Buddhism, which was held at this Institute and personally attended by the Dalai Lama. The next year, the Institute hosted a second meeting of this type, this one on the Social Philosophy of Buddhism. Ideas presented and discussed at both gatherings shared the general theme of social dynamics -- particularly the dialectic interaction between religious-philosophical principles and actual temporal problems -- while giving specific con-

sideration to relevant issues in Indian and Tibetan history (problems of caste and warfare, respectively).

At the 1971 seminar, the then-newly appointed principle of the Institute read his paper on "The Social and Political Strata in Buddhist Thought," which has since been reprinted in two different Tibetan publications. Included in this presentation is a discussion of the principles that should govern a defensive war; furthermore, it is this paper which cites the Jataka story of Sarthavaha Sattvavana, which has become the standard justification for violence among militant Tibetan youth.

The story concerns a wicked ferryman who was about to murder and rob the passengers on his vessel. The Buddha, who was also on board in the form of the bodhisattva Sarthavaha Sattvavana, was moved by compassion for both the passengers and the criminal; thus motivated, he slew the ferryman in order "to save him from the great sinful act which he planned to perform, by which he would incur the consequences of the sinful deed" (Samdong Rinpoche, 1977: 2).

This particular story was quoted to me every time I talked with young Tibetans on the subject of politically motivated violence. In fact, their sensitivity to its symbolic potential was much more acute than mine in this case; in response to my question of why Dpal-gyi rdo-rje (the ninth-century monk who killed the king's assassin)

was not cited more often as a precedent for suspending ahimsa (the Buddhist ideal of non-violence), I was told that that particular incident was indeed relevant, but the Jataka story had the Buddha himself, and not just a mere man, performing the action.

I heard similar justifications for violence from young people who seemed on the surface to be quite different from one another. A shy young poet who had been a guerilla fighter in Mustang (Nepal) several years ago told me that "Ahimsa has to be temporarily put aside because in Tibet today religion is being attacked and demolished." An irrepressible young monk who has been jailed for engaging in political demonstrations in the Lok Sabha (Indian Parlaiment) explained his militant participation in this way:

My family has traditionally been involved in religion as well as politics: in fact, as a monk I feel I'm even more free to devote myself to the cause than a layman with family responsibilities. As for violence, there is a Jataka story with this message: "Better one should die than many."

Finally, the same kind of intellectual manipulation can be seen in an editorial from Rangzen (Spring, 1977: 1-3), which interprets the Buddhist doctrine of the Middle Path in this way: "It is in this instance the Middle Path between the virtual suicide of pacifistic complacency and the unjustifiable aggression against the weak" (ibid.: 2). The article concludes by seeing in Buddhism a kind of

situation ethics which can ultimately be linked with a traditional Tibetan aphorism supporting a holy war.

The strength of Buddhism lies in the fact that it takes into account the fact that the problems in life are far too complex and contradictory to be instantly solved by a set of rigid ethical codes.

Thus Buddhism exposes the hollowness of modern pacifism and other similar naive ideas. Instead it directs us to the wisdom and common sense of our ancestors who coined this saying:

For the Buddha faced by foemen  
His disciples don their armour (ibid.: 2,3).

The counterpart to this strongly expressed regard for "violent, contesting power" can be seen in the corresponding idealization of the "pure and just" aspects of Tibetan tradition, beliefs and values. It is in this root sense that the term "neopuritanism" may be used to characterize these tendencies and attitudes: adherents of this point of view are resolutely intolerant of any perceived "corruption" in the mentality and practices of their own people -- and that of outsiders too, whenever the latter's behavior impinges on Tibetan sacred/profane boundaries.

Foremost among their concerns in this regard is the maintenance of proper awe and respect for the sanctity of their key summarizing symbol, the Dalai Lama. A leader in the Tibetan youth movement explained this to me:

I'm different from you. I have a sense of identification with His Holiness -- a link so strong it continues past death into the next life. That's why we can't tolerate any sort

of criticism of His Holiness. He is a symbol of a lot of things we aspire to.

The same individual also expressed the deep shame he feels upon seeing the stream of all too casual Westerners coming to Dharamsala to have an audience with the Dalai Lama.

Every two-bit freak goes to ask His Holiness weird questions. And sometimes you feel bad. They would have a harder time trying to meet President Carter, but it's easy for them just to talk to His Holiness and ask questions. I don't mind if people really talk to His Holiness, but there's something important there. I prefer Indians meeting His Holiness. They never ask very many questions. They just go there and get darshan, you know, Indians feel this sense of blessing in the presence of a holy man. We try to do the same. We try never to abuse this privilege when we see His Holiness.

On the other hand, however, Tibetans' supreme respect for their leader is never so totally "transcendence oriented" as to preclude their very real need for a flesh-and-blood symbol. In 1976 the worldwide Tibetan community was deeply upset by indications that His Holiness might end the lineage of Dalai Lamas -- a piece of news conveyed both traditionally, through the prophecies of the State (Nechung) Oracle, as well as through the modern medium of a BBC television interview with the Dalai Lama, which had been broadcast the previous November. In that interview, His Holiness had stated that "most probably" he would be the last Dalai Lama, for he doubted that the office could continue to be beneficial to the Tibetan people much longer, in view of present political realities. Then in

the first week of March, 1976, the oracle made its prediction to the monks of Drepung monastery (re-established in Karnataka State): "The Dalai Lama will not be in your midst much longer." At the 10th March commemoration which followed, the Dalai Lama gave his customary address to the Tibetan public, but instead of reading his prepared speech (which Tibetan Review described as "ambiguous" and possibly "in favor of more positive action [violence] in the national struggle"), he spoke extemporaneously, at one point castigating his countrymen for "indulging in squabbles and factionalism" and "desiring and emulating the luxury life styles of other rich people" (English translation presented in Tibetan Review, March, 1976: 4-5).

Soon after the 10th March address the Dalai Lama refused the symbolic gifts (an image of the Buddha, a copy of the scriptures, and an image of a stupa -- representing the Buddhist triad of body, speech and mind) of the brtan-bzhugs (invitation to long life) ceremony which his followers tried to offer on his behalf; then he went on a three-month retreat. Subsequent developments (i.e. the Dalai Lama's return to a "normal" leadership role) have been explained by the Dalai Lama himself as indicating that "the danger which existed now seems to be over" (op. cit., August, 1977: 23), but the actual basis of this "danger" has never been clarified, and the drama itself brought forth a discussion which has yet to be concluded. The

strongly expressed words of one young man were met with ready agreement every time I quoted them to other Tibetans: "His Holiness has no right to end the line. We need him far more than any god."

This fervent desire to preserve the supreme Tibetan institution unchanged has its counterpart, among the "neopuritans," in their outspoken criticism of a trend they see as deplorable: the "cheapening and commercialization" of traditional cultural expressions. An editorial in Rangzen begins with this observation:

Bco-lnga mchod-pa or "The Offering of the Fifteenth" is a serenely beautiful festival when the monks of the Tantric College of Lhasa display fascinating examples of butter sculptures, fourteen days after the Tibetan New Year. Last year a sad note crept into this occasion. The festival was illuminated with numerous and garish Christmas lights blinking off and on, casting the harsh shadows of Las Vegas and Reno on the delicate features of our gentle Buddhist deities. Is this our culture (Rangzen, Summer, 1976: 2)?

The article goes on to point out other examples of "bad taste," "diluted Buddhism," and "bastardized" cultural forms: sacred images put out for unrestricted sale in the now lucrative "dharma market;" Tibetan lamas going abroad to join the "guru racket" instead of teaching their own people first; and, in a non-religious vein, a style of speech that is "riddled with unnecessary English phrases and Hindi words" (ibid.: 5). Other items in the Tibetan press mirror this concern. An article on dharma courses

for Westerners in Dharamsala (Tibetan Review, December, 1972: 8); an interview with a Western specialist on Buddhism (op. cit., October-November, 1973: 23-26); a discussion of Tibetan Buddhism in the United States (op. cit., November, 1975: 14, 10); and a cautionary note on "adopting Dharma to American conditions" (op. cit., January, 1976: 7-9) -- all document the fears of even the most mildly "neopuritanical" Tibetans: their "pure" tradition, which idealizes the image of the solitary saint meditating in the mountains, is in danger of being replaced by a grotesque caricature, which would evaluate a religious teacher's "success" according to the appeal of his "show business" (ibid.: 8).

The two general intellectual/symbolic strategies which have been discussed so far -- the politically motivated study of Buddhism, and the "neopuritanical" war on "corruption" and opportunism -- complement each other by balancing the demand for violence and militancy with a concern for preserving intact the most "pure" and "just" aspects of Tibetan tradition. (In passing, it can be noted how this pattern replicates a characteristic feature of Tibetan iconography: the standard acknowledgment of two contrasting forms -- a "wrathful" [drag-po] and a "peaceful" [zhi-ba] aspect -- for one and the same deity.) A similar ambiguity can also be detected in the words and actions of the Dalai Lama (see especially the article "Dalai Lama's

Dual Tactics," in Tibetan Review, October-November, 1973: 16-17): he is both a political and a non-political leader, and he speaks of going back to Tibet, yet heads a government-in-exile which pursues policies that are clearly geared for continued Tibetan residence in India. A third symbolic strategy for coming to terms with conflicting ideas and ideologies is likewise based on polysemy, but in this case the possibilities for interpretation are not merely dual, but multiple.

The word "rangzen" has only recently been introduced into the Tibetan lexicon. As is the case with newly-needed terminology in general in this language, this neologism was coined by compounding already-existing Tibetan morphemes: rang, meaning "self," and btsan, meaning "power." The first element is quite straightforward in its denotation and usage; it can occur alone as a free morpheme, and it also occurs as the first syllable in scores of binomial compounds formed according to the general pattern of "one's own ... N." or "self-N." The second morpheme, btsan [ts̄ɛn], has a much more evocative range of meanings. Its primary denotation is "power" or "force," but a comparison of this word and its related compounds with other close Tibetan synonyms reveals that this particular kind of "power" is aggressive, compelling, and even violent in nature; thus the morpheme btsan appears in such Tibetan terms as btsan-rgyal ring-lugs ("imperialism"), btsan-gnon

("oppression"), btsan-'dzul ("invasion"), and, interestingly enough from our perspective, btsan-byol-pa (literally, "one who has escaped from oppression"), which is one of several Tibetan words for "refugee."

Since the Tibetan term rang-btsan was newly if not deliberately concocted, it is worthwhile to consider the differences between this binomial and its closest synonym, rang-dbang, which Tibetans translate as "freedom." The morpheme dbang [waŋ] also means "power," but this latter kind of "power" is that of legitimized authority rather than forceful coercion; thus the Tibetan phrase dbang-skur (literally, "to bestow power" -- which can be translated as "consecration" or "initiation") -- has in fact a religious acceptance. The official Tibetan name for the 10th March commemoration employs the "dbang" or "legitimate" rather than the "btsan" or "aggressive" morpheme for "power;" the complete phrase is rang-dbang sger-langs ("the uprising for freedom"). On the other hand, the name of the most militant youth magazine is Rangzen, a term which is also the impelling watchword of Tibetan political consciousness. One final observation can likewise be made in this connection, although no definitive conclusion can be drawn from it: the word btsan, which in ancient times indicated "a most important class of Tibetan deities (demons)" (Haar, 1969: 78), appears in the names of seventeen of the thirty-two kings traditionally associated with

the prehistoric Yarlung Dynasty (ibid.: 40), and it is also present in the names of the three greatest "Dharma-rajās" (chos-rgyal -- the Tibetan kings who most supported Buddhism) in Tibetan history: Srong-btsan sgam-po, Khri-srong lde-btsan, and Khri-gtsug lde-btsan (Ral-pa-can).

The word "rangzen" is thus replete with semantic as well as historical connotative possibilities. As such, it may be considered as an "elaborating symbol," specifically, as a "root metaphor" which acts as "a vehicle for sorting out complex and undifferentiated feelings and ideas, making them comprehensible..., communicable..., and translatable into orderly action" (Ortner, 1973: 1340). The "feelings and ideas" which we have just been examining stem in part from traditional Tibetan ideology, but in addition they are also being shaped and modified by contemporary social experience. As children, today's young Tibetan adults learned that "Buddhism is the best religion in the world," since its domain is the most inclusive: all sentient beings, and not just humans alone, are capable of achieving Nirvana. Thus "compassion," -- i.e. being able to identify and suffer with "the other," is recognized as a primary Tibetan value, and this is true to such an extent that Tibetan individuals, from the Dalai Lama on down, often emphasize how "we don't hate the Chinese, but rather their policies of oppression and colonialization."

A second, very characteristically Tibetan attitude

which this generation has also acquired in the course of their socialization is their sensitivity to ngo-tsha ("shame"/"face", literally, "hot face") -- that is, a heightened awareness of culturally shared expectations and behavior patterns which together inform the ideal of "proper" interpersonal relationships. This concern for "the other" has its dialectic counterpart in the special attention paid to the "self," whether this be an individual "I" or a collective "we." In either case, it is not just failure that is to be avoided, but even more important, public humiliation. A striking acknowledgment of "face" consciousness can be noted in the following words of a Tibetan youth leader:

When you become a refugee, you lose dignity because you've lost the land. You feel shame: His Holiness has been kicked out of his own country when you know there's no better leader in the world. Sometimes you feel so mad -- ashamed of your own people just sitting here doing nothing [for independence]. That's why I admire people like the Japanese, who, if they can't do it, they commit hara-kiri. It's a positive thing. It's showing that you can't bear the shame anymore.

The metaphor of "rangzen" impinges on both of these models of and for action -- "compassion" as well as "shame"/"face." In the latter case, its applicability is obvious: by achieving "independence" in the political sense, Tibetans would vindicate their shame at having lost their country. But it is with respect to the first value -- "compassion" -- that the notion of "rangzen" is

being most creatively manipulated, for this linkage of "independence" with the primary value of Tibetan Buddhism involves a subtle intertwining of traditional religious associations and contemporary political consciousness.

In my conversations with the most politically active Tibetan young people, I would often hear them criticize certain devotional practices which they considered "excessive" or "too much for show" (e.g. "the waste of all that butter" for votive lamps, or "phyag-'tshal [prostrations before sacred images] done only to impress others"). I then began asking a simple question: "What is sacred to you?" Without a moment's hesitation the answer would come back (unanimously, from this group at least): "Rangzen!" A university student clarified this somewhat: "Not just independence, but freedom in an intangible sense." Another young man elaborated this even further: "We are fighting for freedom in the very highest sense -- the freedom to reach Nirvana."

This explanation is extremely significant: it in effect sacralizes the goal of "rangzen" by broadening the (political) concept of "freedom" to the point of utter (religious) transcendence (Nirvana). This association can be even further elaborated. The youth leader I quoted earlier told me that "Tibet produced saints the way Ford produces cars." He, and others too, specifically mentioned Milarepa -- the mischievously joyful ascetic who

glorified both nature and the supernatural in poetry and song -- as the primary example of what "a free Tibet could offer to the whole world." Milarepa, who lived in the twelfth century, and whose style in some ways resembles that of Francis of Assisi in Christian tradition, is regarded by all Tibetans as a saint; in fact, as the beloved prototype of the most highly esteemed Tibetan figure of all: the hermit meditating in the mountains "for the benefit of all sentient beings." "If Tibet were free," goes the argument, "the whole world could profit by the religious activities of such spiritual giants." "Rangzen" would thus permit all sentient creatures to share in Tibet's special glory: saints, who by definition are "compassionate."

In summarizing these considerations of ideas and ideologies, let us review the socio-political realities and the cultural ideals which Tibetan young adults must confront at this stage of their lives. Current political events throughout the world -- particularly struggles for jural recognition by other stateless peoples -- play a major role in influencing many young Tibetans' views about the efficacy of violent as opposed to non-violent means of achieving a national goal of independence. And yet the sacredness of the Dalai Lama, the supreme Tibetan authority figure, would be compromised were he ever to appear unequivocally as a militaristic leader; thus it is

extremely unlikely that an explicitly pro-violence policy could ever gain the unambiguous support of the entire Tibetan community. Intellectual and symbolic attempts to come to terms with this impasse can be classed into three general strategies: a less devotional, more politically motivated reconsideration of Buddhist tradition; a "neo-puritanical" concern for maintaining the purity of essential Tibetan symbolic forms; and finally, a sometimes deliberate, sometimes unconscious manipulation of a newly emerging "root metaphor," "rangzen," which, at the intellectual level at least, can help stabilize the see-sawing tensions between religious faith and rational doubt; sacred and secular power; violence and non-violence; and "shame"/"face" and "compassion." It is this last symbol -- the word for "independence" or "freedom" -- which seems most capable of translating all the ideas and ideologies discussed above into a comprehensive, coherent, and experientially relevant model of and for action: working for "the cause of Tibet."

### The Politics of Youth

Before investigating the dramatized counterpart of this root metaphor -- i.e. the "key scenario" of the annual 10th March commemoration -- we should first give some consideration to the political context of these two evolv-

ing symbols, particularly with respect to the focus of this study, Tibetan youth. To be sure, a thorough examination of this topic could easily become a study in its own right; thus it should at once be specified that the aim and scope of the present section will be limited to providing relevant background information rather than a complete description of contemporary Tibetan politics. With this acknowledged, then, let us proceed to explore the implications of two general types of confrontation which Tibetan youth are experiencing today: that between "old" and "new" style politics within the Tibetan community, and that between the group as a whole and the world at large vis-à-vis "the cause of Tibet."

In the first case, both the officials of the Tibetan government and the Tibetan population in general are being affected by the growing trend of democratization in Tibetan socio-political institutions. A Constitution of Tibet, formulated over a three-year period (1960-1963), was promulgated by the Dalai Lama on March 10, 1963. In the Foreword to this bilingually published document, His Holiness explains the conditions of its inception:

Even prior to my departure from Tibet in March, 1959, I had come to the conclusion that in the changing circumstances of the modern world the system of governance in Tibet must be so modified and amended as to allow the elected representatives of the people to play a more elected role in guiding and shaping the social and economic policies of the State (ibid.: v).

In addition to providing for democratic representation, however, the Constitution also continues the traditional and explicit Tibetan affirmation of chos-srid zung-'brel -- the domain of "the religious and the political combined."

This Constitution ... takes into consideration the doctrines enunciated by Lord Buddha, the spiritual and temporal heritage of Tibet, and the ideas and ideals of the modern world. It is thus intended to secure for the people of Tibet a system of democracy based on justice and equality and ensure their cultural, religious and economic development (ibid.).

This clearly acknowledged attempt to come to terms with both worlds -- the spiritual and the temporal, or alternatively, the traditional and the modern -- can be seen in other aspects of contemporary Tibetan polity as well. The implementation of the Constitution is regarded by Tibetans as "still provisional," since "it can only be finalized after consulting the wishes of all Tibetan people, and this can only be done when we are able to go back to Tibet" (Tibetans in Exile: 315). Nevertheless, since 1960 Tibetan refugees over eighteen years of age have been electing delegates every three years to serve in the legislative branch of their government-in-exile. It is in this connection that we can see another attempt to accommodate past attitudes into a new political framework: regional and sectarian affiliations are not only recognized, but actually built into the system.

The first elections were held to fill thirteen posi-

tions: three members from each of the three major regions of Tibet (Dbus-Gtsang -- Central, Southern, and Western Tibet; Amdo -- Northeastern Tibet; and Khams -- Eastern Tibet) -- to be chosen by lay people originally from those areas; and one member from each of the four main Tibetan Buddhist sects (Rnying-ma-pa; Sa-skyapa; Bka'-rgyud-pa; and Dge-lugs-pa) -- to be selected by religious of the corresponding order.<sup>2</sup> This group of officials -- the Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies -- represents the top level in the administrative hierarchy of the legislative branch of the Tibetan government;<sup>3</sup> its function is ideally conceived of as exercising a check on the executive branch -- the Kashag (bka'-shag) or Cabinet of Ministers -- which is composed of the Secretaries (directors) of the six administrative departments: the Council of Religious and Cultural Affairs; the Office of Home Affairs; the Security Office; the Office of Service and Management (formerly combined with the previous department, which was then known as the Security and Personnel Office; the Council for Tibetan Education; and the Information and Publicity Office.

This group of appointed officials and their staffs make up what is known as the Tibetan Secretariat -- an expansive network of ranked positions which are still correlated with traditional honorific titles, even though access to these posts is now open to all. Together with

the elected representatives of the Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies, these members of the Tibetan government are known collectively (and with the usual connotations) as "the Dharamsala establishment" -- a political hierarchy that receives de facto recognition from all Tibetans in exile.

Despite this basic acknowledgment of legitimacy -- given concretely in the form of a "voluntary" tax paid annually by Tibetans both in India and abroad -- the government has its share of Tibetan critics as well. In addition to the usual areas of contention which might occur in any government setting with respect to personalities, vested interests, and so forth, a significant new factor is entering into much of the anti-establishment criticism the institution receives. Young and old Tibetans alike are learning more and more about democracy, both in theory and in practice. The new Constitution guarantees equality regardless of "sex, race, language, religion, social origin, property, birth or other status" (Chapter II, Article 8). School children are being indoctrinated with a new ideology, which puts national, group consciousness above regional and sectarian loyalties. Finally, some of the statements made by recent refugees are also affecting the development of Tibetan political consciousness. A Tibetan woman who arrived in India in 1974 has written a book (translated into English) about her experience under

the Chinese regime. Her words -- and others like them -- are becoming more and more commonly heard, repeated, and considered throughout the Tibetan community today:

Though the Chinese indoctrinations do not make me an atheist, I still think that Communism has a lot of practical lessons for the Tibetans. In the old days when Tibet was independent, religion became increasingly dominated by temporal things like power, wealth and rank -- instead of compassion (Dhondup Choedon, 1978: 70).

With ideas such as these becoming more widely known and discussed by all segments of the Tibetan population, it is no wonder that certain policies -- those which are suspected of at least tacitly supporting old sources of inequality -- are coming due for more criticism than ever before. A Tibetan research scholar who has lived and studied in London, Paris and Tokyo has written a rather tendentious essay decrying the role played by sectarian feuds throughout Tibetan history (Samten G. Karmay, "Religion: A Major Cause of Tibetan Disunity," in Tibetan Review, May, 1977: 25-26). In addition to discussing past problems of this nature, he also shows how the same policies are being continued today, still to the detriment of Tibetan unity.

The present trend of Tibetan activities in setting up meditational centres in the U.S. and Europe is good as far as it goes. It may be providing much needed spiritual healing for the mentally tired people of a materialistic world. However, there is nothing new in this movement. Far from it, it is a logical extension of the old sectarian interests seeking foreign patronage. The sectarian bias is not only thus maintained, but also

imparted to those faithful western followers who naturally feel that it is their duty to uphold such differences (ibid.: 26).

Another young Tibetan -- an employee of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala -- has made similar protests, first against sectarianism, which he sees as "still a very living disease in the exile Tibetan society" (letter by K. Dhondup in Tibetan Review, July, 1977: 34), and then against the present policy by which delegates are elected to the Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies according to regional and sectarian affiliation (op. cit., November, 1977: 29-30). What he suggests to replace this system is a new policy, according to which deputies would be elected "on the basis of the population strength of Tibetan settlements, camps and other areas where Tibetans live" (ibid.: 30). Furthermore, he would like election campaigns to be introduced in order that the voting public might be educated to select politically conscientious representatives rather than "rimpoches, tulkus [sprul-sku -- incarnate lamas] and sons and daughters of high and rich families.

These and similar comments and criticisms are spoken, written, and promulgated quite freely in the Tibetan community, but the actual impact of all this on official government policy is felt to be negligible by the proponents of such views. Since Tibetans still very definitely regard the Dalai Lama as their supreme ruler, both religiously and

politically, no anti-government protests have ever gained sufficient momentum to present a real challenge to the establishment, for the latter group is very adept at intimating that dissent against the government could amount to sacrilege against its sacred symbol. Despite (or perhaps more accurately, because of) this traditional, built-in guarantee of the status quo, certain alternative political groups have not only been tolerated, but even actively encouraged to some degree by the Tibetan government. In October, 1970, a conference was held in Dharamsala for Tibetan youth from all over India. At that eight-day meeting, which strongly emphasized the common bond of religious, cultural and national identity, the Dalai Lama himself addressed the assemblage, speaking on one day on "Buddhism and the Future of Tibet," and concluding the conference on the last day with these thoughts:

Having held this youth conference during the past few days, let us ask ourselves what is the most essential task for the young people. The answer is: service to the people. In order to serve the people one must learn the difficulties and the sufferings of the people by keeping close touch with them. Similarly, you cannot lead the people if you lose touch with them (quoted in Tibetan Review, November, 1970: 7).

As a result of this meeting a permanent organization -- the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) -- was created. With its headquarters in Dharamsala, it now has over 5,000 members (there is no upper limit on age) in twenty-eight different regions in India and abroad. While many activi-

ties of the TYC at the local level are oriented toward service to the Tibetan community in that area (e.g. adult literacy programs, hygiene education, help with filling out registration forms, interpreting, etc.), the stated goal of the group is much more political and all-embracing:

The avowed aim of the Tibetan Youth Congress is the creation of a free and independent Tibet and the restoration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to his rightful position as the sole religious and temporal leader of all Tibet (standard back page of Rangzen, the bilingual magazine published by the TYC).

Given the profound affective importance of this goal, those who speak out on its behalf are by and large assured of Tibetan support for their speechmaking; thus the oftentimes militant rhetoric of TYC leaders is generally accepted, or at least unchecked by the establishment, just so long as it is directed toward the international situation and not against the government-in-exile. Nonetheless, criticism against the latter organization does occur, and not infrequently. The young, who see less and less hope for the efficacy of subtle, indirect and cautious strategies, are beginning to express their strong impatience with and disapproval of present priorities. The Dharamsala establishment was particularly stung by an editorial in Rangzen (Autumn, 1976), which accused it of being little more than "a giant charitable organization rather than an effective machinery designed to fight for the rights of a nation" (ibid.: 7).

In fact, the issue of verbal disputation is important in its own right. TYC leaders are proud of the free and open way their meetings are conducted. As one official of the Central Executive Committee told me, "If someone talks rubbish, we put him down immediately. We want results -- not old-style respect." But at the regional level, away from the sometimes heady atmosphere of Dharamsala the "capital," there is some disillusionment among the more reflective youth: "What has the TYC ever done for independence besides fight a war with words?"

This phrase -- "a war with words" -- is indeed a significant one. Despite all the self-proclaimed difference between the quasi-militant Tibetan Youth Congress and its parent figure, the Tibetan government itself, the actual activities of both groups vis-à-vis "the cause of Tibet" have in most cases been quite similar except for the contrast in verbal style. Both organizations have gone on record affirming the spiritual and temporal leadership of the Dalai Lama, demanding a supervised plebiscite in Tibet, and recommending that petitions be sent to the United Nations, urging that body to implement resolutions it passed in 1959, 1961, and 1965 which called for the restoration of human rights in Tibet.

Furthermore, it is instructive to observe what happened to two other alternative political organizations, both of which, unlike the TYC, arose independently of the

establishment. In the first case -- that of the Movement for the Restoration of Tibet's Rightful Independence (bod rang-dbang bden-pa'i slar-gso'o las-'gul) -- a conference "organized and attended entirely by the masses" first convened in July, 1972 following a statement by India's External Affairs Minister that "Tibet is a part of China." As a result of this meeting, Tibetan college and university students postponed their annual examinations and dispersed throughout India to educate and mobilize the Tibetan community regarding the need for and the tactics of the new independence movement. At the conclusion of the conference, it was agreed that the group's leadership would henceforth be taken over by the Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies (Tibetan Review, August, 1972: 4-5). From that point on, the pattern of "the war with words" was fixed. The outcome of subsequent meetings -- in October, 1973, and in March, 1976 -- was basically a verbal one in each case. As a result of the second conference, "a strong reminder" was submitted to the U.N. Secretary General regarding implementation of the three resolutions it had previously passed on Tibet. The third meeting ended similarly: yet another petition sent to the U.N.

The second grass-roots organization -- the Tibetan People's Freedom Movement -- met a different fate: its leaders -- the Coordinating Committee -- reluctantly agreed

to the demands of the Tibetan government that the group disband. The short-lived history of this most recent popularly formed body is particularly relevant to the next topic to be considered in this chapter -- the 10th March commemoration -- for it was in connection with this demonstration in Delhi in 1977 that the Tibetan People's Freedom Movement came into being.

Some of the circumstances of this episode were influenced by sheer coincidence: the recent relaxing of the Indian Emergency, the stunning upset of Indira Gandhi in the national elections, and the coming to power of the Janata Party, whose leaders had been outspoken defenders of Tibetan rights for the past two decades. On the other hand, certain doubly significant elements of this symbolic drama (Tibetan volunteers, acutely conscious of national "face," go on a "hunger strike unto death;" newly-elected officials of the Janata party bring them fruit juice -- an unprepared but "pure" food -- to break their fast ten days later) -- were certainly not without precedent in the context in which this all occurred: twentieth-century India, three decades after Mahatma Gandhi's passive resistance against the British.

What happened, in brief, was this. Anticipating the annual 10th March demonstration, two days earlier the Indian authorities had published a ban on public meetings and processions in the Chanakyapuri area of New Delhi,

where the Chinese and other embassies are located. Ignoring this, six busloads of Tibetans began proceeding from their early morning meeting place -- a Tibetan Buddhist temple near a large Tibetan camp -- to the site of the embassy. When they arrived there, a cordon of police was already waiting for them. A disturbance broke out between the two groups over the Tibetans' insistence that a memorandum be delivered to the Chinese, who were watching all this behind the embassy wall. As a result of the ensuing mêlée, 209 Tibetans, including 53 women and an unstated number of children, were arrested and jailed for two days (Tibetan Review , February-March, 1977: 7).

According to a participant in all this -- a high school boy from my fieldwork site -- the jail experience was one of exceptional "communitas," to use Turner's term. What little food, tobacco and matches the group possessed was generously shared with all: "We were like one big family." It was in this atmosphere that the idea of a hunger strike was first suggested -- some say by the women, who were jailed separately. (The proposal was seen as a possible means of forcing the Indian authorities to deliver the ill-fated memorandum to the Chinese -- which never happened.) In any case, after two days in jail the entire group was released on bail. Hundreds of other Tibetans who had not been arrested were waiting for

them -- and also for a new plan of action. From this situation, which resulted in a spontaneously mobilized group, the Tibetan People's Freedom Movement was born.

This extremely purposeful gathering of Tibetans, headed by leaders who just happened to be there (representatives of the various local Tibetan communities who had come to Delhi to be part of the demonstration), decided to channel the tremendous sense of excitement and hope that had been generated by the experience. Meetings were held and eighty-three Tibetans volunteered to go on a "hunger strike unto death." (The plan called for an initial group of seven volunteers, who would be replaced one by one as soon as an individual would die.) The first group -- six men and one woman -- sat down cross-legged on a raised platform outside the United Nations Information Centre, resolutely determined to die slowly and publically if their demands for U.N. action on the Tibet resolutions were not met. The following is an excerpt from a press release explaining their position.

We Tibetans are treated as political lepers by the international community and our cause as an embarrassing and contagious disease. We the victims are ignored and shunted while our oppressors are courted and feted by a world gone mad.

We are a peaceful people and we have nowhere to turn to for justice except the United Nations. We do not ask for charity. We only demand what is ours, what was assured to us by the U.N. in its three resolutions. The United Nations in those days claimed impotence, as Red China

was not a member of that international body. But now Red China is not only a member, but also sits in the Security Council. Hence, we urge the United Nations to implement your resolutions passed on Tibet....

The first significant but unplanned event to impinge on the hunger strike occurred shortly after midnight on March 21, when returns from the three-day Indian national elections showed quite conclusively that the "impossible" had indeed happened and Indira Gandhi would no longer be Prime Minister. (The strike had begun on March 20 at 10 a.m. and it continued until 12:55 p.m. on March 30. No one died.) In this atmosphere -- where even regular (Indian) Congress Party supporters were exultant over what they saw as the triumph of Indian democracy over authoritarianism -- Tibetans themselves became hopeful about the implications of all this for their own cause. And, in fact, the initial omens were very good indeed.

On March 28, the General Secretary of the Janata Party, Surendra Mohan, wrote a letter to the hunger strikers, asking them to discontinue their fast, and including with the letter the text of a telegram which his party had sent to the United Nations: "Strongly urge immediate implementation United Nations resolutions on Tibet." On March 30, other Janata Party notables also appeared at the site of the fast, made speeches defending Tibetan rights, and personally requested the seven volunteers to end their fast: George Fernandes, the fiery opposition who had him-

self been jailed during the Emergency; Raj Narayan, another newly appointed Cabinet Minister; and the party's grand old man, Acharya J.B. Kripalani, who was the actual person to offer the orange juice to the fasting volunteers. This public and very sensitively managed affirmation of Tibetan "face" on the part of the Janata leaders was backed up on the Tibetan side by a message from the Dalai Lama, also asking the group to break their fast. Encouraged by all these indications of support and solidarity, they did so, and the statement they released on that occasion shows that their action too was very much motivated by a concern for proper "face" relations.

The Janata Party having reassured us of their unequivocal support, have asked us to withdraw our fast. Some of its prominent leaders, Mr. Surendra Mohan, Mr. George Fernandes, and especially Acharya Kripalani are here today to ask us not to carry on. It would be ungrateful in the face of all this sympathy and support to refuse. Furthermore, we have no desire whatsoever to embarrass the New Janata Government and the nation....

But their statement also contains this acknowledgment of Tibetan disillusionment with "the rest of the world."

The total silence maintained by the Secretary General of the U.N. has led us to regretfully conclude that the U.N. is no more than a facade for the hypocrisy of the big powers, and its Charter, noble as it may sound, is not worth the paper it is written on. We are simple people and we believe that speech and action should go hand and hand....

This reaction of disillusionment is felt all the more keenly by young Tibetans who, having been brought up to

attach great value to respect, propriety, and good intentions, are quite unprepared to shrug off the harsh realities of international Realpolitik. The kind of expectations this produces can be seen in the following letter by a high school student urging all Tibetans to write to President Carter about human rights in Tibet:

When such petitions are made in a lawful and proper manner by all Tibetans who are in a position to do so, we feel certain that the conscience of the leaders of these great nations will be moved to take into consideration our just appeal (letter by Pasang Dhondup, Tibetan Review, June, 1977: 25).

As for the ultimate denouement of the Tibetan People's Freedom Movement, this incident too ended in disillusionment for those who had hoped too much. After the termination of the hunger strike, the seven volunteers travelled to Dharamsala, where they were received as heroes by the general Tibetan population there. While the Kashag (Cabinet) and the Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies were likewise pleased with the public recognition and support called forth by the demonstration, they were not, however, favorably disposed to the continued existence of the movement's leadership -- the Coordinating Committee -- which they saw as a potential challenge to their own authority. (The official position is presented in a Statement [gsal-bsgrags] published in Shes-bya [April, 1977: 19-22], a monthly magazine put out by the Tibetan government. It is summarized and criticized in English in a

letter by Samten G. Karmay in Tibetan Review [June, 1977: 25-26].) Anti-establishment sentiment ran high for some weeks in Dharamsala and elsewhere throughout the Tibetan community, but in the end the government did succeed in convincing the Coordinating Committee to dissolve the movement on the grounds that, if allowed to continue, it would further rouse that old, destructive bête noire of Tibetan history: factionalism.

The decision to disband the Tibetan People's Freedom Movement of course did little to ameliorate tensions between the Tibetan public, who generally saw the hunger strike as a major strategic breakthrough (it was both attention-getting and yet also non-violent), and the Dharamsala establishment, who feared that a third freedom movement (in addition to the Tibetan Youth Congress and the Movement for the Restoration of Tibet's Rightful Independence) would serve to alienate Tibetans from their government. Many people I spoke with agreed strongly with these words of a young college student: "If the leaders aren't responsive to the emotions of the people, the people will go on without their leadership."

And yet, for all the reasons discussed above, primarily, the unique tradition of chos-srid zung-'brel ("religion and politics combined"), and the supremely sacral character of the Dalai Lama's symbolic leadership, it is most unlikely that a real separatist movement could

ever capture the hearts and minds of the people. For the youth, who are generally more aware of the tactics and workings of successful international politics than their elders; for the first refugee generation, who are much less likely to put regional or sectarian considerations ahead of their Tibetan national identity; and for all those in the Tibetan community who have learned and are learning the personal implications of democratic and egalitarian ideologies -- the pain of disillusionment is felt all the more strongly. In both of the cases of confrontation which we have been considering -- that between "old" and "new" style politics within the Tibetan community, and that between the group as a whole and the rest of the world vis-a-vis "the cause of Tibet" -- the ultimate lesson is a sad one: to succeed, even only partially, one must go it alone.

This in effect was told to me by one of the hunger strikers, whom I met on the third day of their fast. I was genuinely moved by the calm, almost meditative resolve shown by these seven people, who were quite ready and willing to die for their cause. In response to my awkward question -- What could I as a foreigner do to help? -- the answer of one of these volunteers was simple: "Thank you, she said politely, "but there's nothing you can do. We have to do it ourselves."

Given the economic pressures of life in India, and the individual hopes generated by being "the first educated

generation," for many young people, this national, collective realization -- "We Tibetans are alone in the world" -- has a personal correlative as well: the group does indeed have a legitimate claim on one's loyalties and resources, but "First I must take care of my own." The self-image this implies, however, is hardly more positive than that suggested by the tough-minded evaluation of "us versus them" quoted earlier: "We Tibetans are treated as political lepers by the international community." On two accounts, then, young Tibetans are confronted with the very real threat of alienation: as individuals vis-à-vis their group, and as a national collectivity facing the rest of the world. It is this negative range of possibilities -- that of being cut off, isolated as an "other," dis-illusioned -- which suggests its own positive counterpart: regaining the "illusion," the feeling of belonging, the sense of purposeful Tibetan "selfhood" -- all of this through the activation of the most powerful, affirmative, and politically relevant symbols of the culture. We have already seen how the word "rangzen" is both consciously and unconsciously being manipulated with respect to this general goal. Now we are ready to examine its dramatized counterpart: the annual 10th March ritual of renewed commitment to "the cause of Tibet."

Tibetan Uprising Day

In the first chapter, an outline was given of the main events of March, 1959 -- the "illud tempus" which has become the archetype of the Tibetan people's struggle for independence or "rangzen." Our focus on this latter term has in part been suggested by Ortner's dual classification of "elaborating symbols": we have treated the Tibetan word as a "root metaphor," and have associated it with a "key scenario," which will occupy us now. A brief review of the definition of this second type of symbol reveals that the annual commemoration of the 10th March uprising can indeed be interpreted in this way, for this newly evolving, secular ritual is definitely one "in which valued end states and effective means for achieving them are dramatized for all to see" (Ortner, 1973: 1341).

We shall be considering the "valued end state" of this symbolic demonstration shortly; first, however, let us begin by investigating how various aspects of the commemoration serve to dramatize to the Tibetan community the means of achieving "rangzen." On one level, many of the activities repeated annually by Tibetans on March 10 can be seen as a re-enactment or re-affirmation of key elements of the original drama which took place in Lhasa in 1959: the mass rally outside the Dalai Lama's palace; the converging of monks and villagers from the surrounding

monasteries and countryside; the threat, or actual outbreak of violence (in addition to the impending attack by the Chinese, a collaborator was stoned to death); the city-wide protest march and shouting of slogans; public meetings; and finally, two non-repeatable events: the formal proclamation of a provisional Tibetan government (March 28, 1959), and the arrival of the Dalai Lama in India (March 31, 1959). Present-day 10th March commemorations, which are held all over the world wherever there is a sufficiently large Tibetan population, employ most if not all of these same elements: a crowd gathers in a central location; speeches are made; and a vociferous public demonstration takes place, marked by slogans, banners, and placards proclaiming the Tibetan cause. In addition, the two happenings which could occur but once historically are also affirmed: the Dalai Lama delivers an annual 10th March address (in places other than Dharamsala, his pre-written speech is read out by a local Tibetan official); and the theme of India, the host country, is played up by frequent mention of the long centuries of Indo-Tibetan historical ties and friendly relations.

On another level, however, the 10th March commemoration can also be seen as an unstable type of symbolization engendered by "the dialectic that operates between a traditional (declining) system and a modern system (imposed from outside)" (Balandier, 1972: 179). My own participa-

tion as a spectator in this event took place in Dharamsala, where the mood of the day was decidedly "routinized," in comparison with the ferment of pretest, arrest and jailing that was going on in Delhi, 300 miles to the south. For me, at any rate, the most striking feature of the whole program was not the message, but the media: a *mélange* of symbolic elements coming from Tibetan, Indian, and universal-modern cultural repertoires.

Like everyone else that day, I was wearing my best Tibetan clothes for the occasion. For that reason, perhaps, while walking down the mountain road to Gangchen Kyishong (the location of the Tibetan Secretariat, Library, and other official buildings) where the ceremonies would be held, I was hailed by two nuns who were burning juniper (shug-pa) at the side of the road. This very Tibetan symbol of auspicious benediction usually co-occurs within the context of a wider religious ritual such as the bsangs-gsol (incense offering) ceremony, or it may be carried out without much other ritual simply for the sake of purification. The burning of juniper which I witnessed on March 10 -- just off a road which would be travelled by hundreds of people going to the event -- might be seen here as an attempt by these two nuns to diffuse the religious aura as well as fragrant odor of shug-pa, that is, to confer benediction on the secular, political activities of the day. In any case, their comment to me as I passed acknow-

ledged both the modern ideal of autonomous statehood as well as the very traditional Tibetan value of hospitality: "Tibetan dress suits you," said one nun by way of a greeting. "When we get our independence, come and visit us in Tibet."

The scene of the ceremony itself suggested the most famous landmark of Lhasa: the Potala. Instead of the Dalai Lama's palace, however, it was the Tibetan Library (built according to traditional Tibetan architectural norms) and an enormous hanging Tibetan carpet which served as a sort of lower level backdrop for the proceedings. Officials were seated under a large canopy just in front of the Library; below them (the ground drops sharply here to another level) people were gathered on a flat playing field. The key event -- the Dalai Lama's personal address -- was scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. Arriving before that, I witnessed a truly striking clash of symbols: a Tibetan drum and bugle corps complete with drummers wearing leopard skins on their backs (I had seen similar costumes at the Indian Republic Day parade in Delhi); an imposing number of Indian (Sikh) policemen dispersed throughout the crowd; and music I recognized at once: the March from Bridge on the River Kwai. Two other significant and relatively new symbols were also incorporated into the program: the ceremony prominently displayed the Tibetan flag (introduced by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama in 1912), and it began with

the playing of the national anthem (also a product of recent years).

The Dalai Lama's address, which lasted barely five minutes, was basically a reminder of "the sufferings of the six million left in Tibet" as well as an exhortation to be faithful to primary Tibetan values such as respect and benevolence. This was followed by two reports from representatives of the executive and the legislative bodies of the Tibetan government: a member of the Kashag (Cabinet) and the Chairman of the Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies. All of these speeches, which were the official high-light of the day, were over by 9:50, after which the high-ranking members of the administration accompanied the Dalai Lama into the Library to view a photo exhibit documenting the progress of various Tibetan settlements located throughout India. Outside, many of the common people were unfolding blankets and opening thermos flasks of chang -- Tibetan barley beer -- which signalled the end of the solemnity and the beginning of a picnic-like atmosphere. Later in the afternoon a sports event was held, and cultural shows put on by the Drama Society were also on the program. The final touch to the thoroughly "routinized" character of this celebration of Tibetan Uprising Day à la Dharamsala was provided by the schedule for the following week: from the 12th to the 19th of March approximately two hundred fifty officials and delegates from all over

the Tibetan community in exile would assemble for the annual meeting of the entire Tibetan government. This whole set of temporally linked events -- the commemoration of past martyrs, affirmation of present progress, and commitment to ongoing bureaucracy -- contrasts sharply with the fervid demonstrations taking place elsewhere on March 10, away from the headquarters of the establishment. And yet, despite the attitude of Dharamsala's critical youth, who viewed the holiday picnics, cultural shows, and general socializing as a deplorable acceptance of the status quo, the unique tone of "the capital's" 10th March ritual makes eminent sense in the light of de Heusch's formulation: "the State is a challenge hurled at death" (1962: 15).

For people trying to find a balance between projected hopes and remembered tragedy, it is not surprising that relative security and the institutions that seem to guarantee this would not only be recognized and affirmed, but even celebrated. Furthermore, there is not the same need in Dharamsala as elsewhere for spontaneous outpourings of enthusiasm, nationalistic fervor and strongly proclaimed ethnic self-definition: the actual physical presence of the Dalai Lama makes this location, like Lhasa in the past, a "holy city" which of and by itself implies charismatic leadership, regardless of how routinized the charisma has become. Finally, the people living in Upper Dharamsala and Gangchen Kyishong are almost exclusively Tibetan. In

this situation, where the food, the clothes, the language and the faces are only occasionally Indian, there is no sufficient foil or ethnic "other" to call forth a deliberately staged affirmation of Tibetan "self." For this reason too, the urgent public speeches and protest marches that so characterize 10th March commemorations elsewhere in India are strangely prosaic in Dharamsala, where there is virtually no chance of demonstrators being opposed or arrested, and very significantly, no curious crowd of non-Tibetans to convince of "the cause of Tibet."

More direct illustrations of the "key scenario" aspects of this event can be seen in published accounts of other areas' activities; also, Tibetans friends and acquaintances have told me of their experiences elsewhere in India on March 10. The predominant quality of these demonstrations -- a sharply defined affirmation of national identity -- seems to appear much more noticeably in these less Tibetan contexts than in Dharamsala, and as such, it is very reminiscent of the original Lhasa uprising. In fact, in one of his addresses on this day, the Dalai Lama referred directly to this strongly perceived awareness of "us versus them." While his words were meant to describe the archetype itself, they can definitely be related to its present-day re-enactment as well.

It was that fateful day which united the whole country in defiance of the Chinese and re-declared our sense of nationhood in no uncertain terms to

the outside world, and that struggle to assert ourselves as a people still continues today both inside and outside Tibet (quoted in Tibetan Review, March, 1968: 8).

Accounts and descriptions of recent demonstrations almost invariably refer to a march or procession from one significant point in the city to another, with the route as well as beginning and end points carefully selected to insure maximum publicity for the Tibetan cause, deliberate manipulation of symbolic overtones, or both. In 1969, for example, demonstrators in Delhi marched from a Tibetan Buddhist temple to Rajghat, a pilgrimage site near the sacred Jamuna River where Gandhi was cremated, where they publically "reaffirmed their faith in the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi" (Tibetan Review, April, 1969: 4). A recounting of this event as celebrated in South India (Goldstein, 1975b: 22) mentions another of its important features: the slogans, placards, banners and speeches are written or spoken in English, Hindi, and/or other local languages; clearly the affirmation of national "self" is done with great concern for ethnic "others." A third way in which this commemoration dramatizes the effective means of achieving "rangzen" is likewise bound up with impression management: speeches, posters and placards all place great emphasis on the mutuality of Indo-Tibetan relations, both from the perspective of ideology (recalling the long centuries of shared religious traditions) and pragmatism

(pointing out how a free and neutral Tibet could serve as a buffer state between India and China.

As for the second characteristic ascribed to "key scenarios" -- the public dramatization of "valued end states" -- we have already seen how the goal of "rangzen" connotes far more than its literal referent, "independence." The richly polysemic potential of this verbal symbol -- its ability to suggest a viable means of mediating between religious faith and rational doubt; sacred and secular power; violence and non-violence; and "shame" and "compassion" -- likewise colors the predominantly political goal of the 10th March demonstrations with many-hued implications for life here and now in India and elsewhere in the diaspora. In many ways, in fact, the Tibetan commemoration of this event can be regarded as a "rite of modernization," a phrase used by James Peacock in reference to ludruk, or Indonesian proletarian drama. As he describes the latter type of public performance, ludruk plays aid

those who are engaged in ... movements [from traditional to modern situations] to make sense of them and to identify with them. This ludruk does in three ways: first, it helps ludruk participants (when I use this term, I mean spectators as well as actors) to apprehend modernization movements in terms of vivid and meaningful symbolic classifications; second, it seduces ludruk participants into empathy with modes of social action involved in the modernization process; third, it involves the participants in aesthetic forms that structure their most general thoughts and feelings in ways stimulating to the modernization process (Peacock, 1968: 6).

For the Tibetans, of course, the issue of modernization is but one part of the larger problem they face: stateless exile, with all its implications of alienation, disillusionment, and confused ethnic identity. Rephrasing Peacock's formulation in more generally applicable terms, then, we can see how Tibetan Uprising Day does indeed dramatize both means and model for achieving the "valued end state": a sense of selfhood that is based on purposeful, well-integrated and proudly affirmed Tibetan identity. The symbols that are employed in this event -- pictures and speeches of the Dalai Lama, a national flag and anthem, the conscious wearing of national dress; as well as the incorporation of new, non-Tibetan symbolic forms, considerations, and media (elaborate processions; the use of other languages; loudspeakers, banners and other paraphernalia of public demonstrations) -- all help Tibetan participants to apprehend and articulate what is happening to them, not only as refugees in exile, but also as people attempting to keep their balance on an unstable bridge between tradition and modernity. Peacock's second point -- the "seductive" role of the dramatization -- likewise applies to the Tibetan case. Taking part in the 10th March commemoration not only increases empathy for the national cause, but it also serves to recharge the ethnic battery, so to speak, giving those who speak out in defense of Tibetan rights a renewed sense of their own and their group's worth.

Finally, the thoughts and feelings of the Tibetan community have, for two decades, been preoccupied with a national tragedy. Although the demonstrations commemorating Tibetan Uprising Day will never be able to obliterate the source of those bitter memories and self-recriminations, this regularly recurring ritual of politicized re-commitment can at least aid in the transition from past attitudes of naive isolationism to a more realistic understanding of international Realpolitik.

Summary: Chos-srid zung-'brel  
in New Social Contexts

In this chapter we have been examining the experiential learning of Tibetan young adults, particularly those who have moved beyond the physical and/or attitudinal confines of a deliberately maintained Tibetan environment. Throughout all of our considerations -- post-high school options and activities; ideas and ideologies; the politics of youth; and Tibetan Uprising Day -- we have encountered example after example of conflicting demands, pressures, and even total modes of life, all of which pose a real threat to this first generation's chances of achieving personal integration. Most if not all of these oppositions can be understood as involving either or both of two general types of confrontation: that between traditional and modern ways of thinking and acting, and that between

pure, "unlived" ideology and the pragmatic "compromised" practices which occur as a result of actual social experience.

In both of these situations, however, it is not the case that the people concerned live in a dualistic world, or that they must make either/or choices between two clearly separated realms of existence. Throughout this investigation, the dynamic aspects of symbolization and institutionalization have been emphasized; thus Balandier's observation about "the dialectic that operates between a traditional (declining) system and a modern system (imposed from outside)" can be directly applied to our specific focus on the "root metaphor" and "key scenario" which are emerging as "elaborating symbols" in this new social context. In this connection too, we can point to significant acknowledgments of dialectic interaction which have been part and parcel of Tibetan culture for centuries: philosophical principles such as relative and absolute truth; a sophisticated system of dialectic logic; iconographic forms portraying the same deities as both "peaceful" and "wrathful;" a metaphysical tradition that emphasizes both active, effectual "means" and quiescent, contemplative "wisdom;" and most relevant of all from our perspective, the profoundly ambiguous figure of the quintessentially Tibetan "summarizing symbol": the Dalai Lama.

This sacred leader heads a government which has long

been characterized by Tibetans as chos-srid zung-'brel, that is, one based on "religion and politics combined." Today as well, these two terms continue to be applicable to the dynamics of symbolic and social interaction; in fact, much of the material in this chapter supports just such an interpretation. As we have seen, many of the conflicts experienced in connection with post-high school activities basically involve a confrontation between untested idealism ("working for the people") and dependably expedient pragmatism ("hustling" or independent enterprise). A similar opposition appears even more explicitly when we consider the ideas and ideologies encountered by these young people at this point in their lives. Because of the pure, sacred character of the supreme Tibetan authority figure, the Dalai Lama, an unequivocal policy of violent militancy -- which would otherwise be regarded as most efficacious -- can never be embraced unreservedly and universally as a Tibetan political strategy. Attempts to come to terms with this impasse employ concepts and symbols which are clearly associated with the gestalt of chos-srid zung-'brel: the use of Buddhist popular tradition (Jataka stories) to justify violence; corresponding "neopuritanical" efforts to monitor and preserve the purity of sacred, "non-violent" images; and the intellectual manipulation of the word "rangzen" -- which can

signify "freedom to achieve Nirvana" as well as political independence.

If we extend the semantic boundaries of the words chos ("religion") and srid ("politics") to refer to "ideology" and "experience" in general, a consideration of this age group's first experiences with politics shows the same pattern: newly learned ideals of democracy, egalitarianism, and national identity contrast sharply with the "old style" criteria of power which are still recognized and catered to by many in the Tibetan administration: region, sect, and status ascribed by birth. In addition, public demonstrations outside the Tibetan community have further confirmed this hard lesson: the noble words of comminuéés and U.N. charters have little effect on the actual workings of international Realpolitik.

Finally, we have seen how the critical problems of potential alienation, disillusionment, and confused ethnic identity are all addressed by participation in a newly evolving secular ritual: the 10th March commemoration. While this event may at first appear basically political in nature, we have but to recall the built-in religious implications of the "rangzen" metaphor and the essential symbol of Tibetan leadership -- the Dalai Lama -- to conclude our observations on the experiential education of Tibetan young adults: they are learning how to incorporate

the lessons of contemporary social experience within a  
traditionally ambiguous and therefore flexible ideology of  
chos-srid zung-'brel -- "religion and politics combined."

## NOTES

1. The newsletter published by the Council for Tibetan Education (Tibetan Students Fraternity, May-October, 1977: 17) notes that approximately 300 young Tibetans are currently enrolled at institutions of higher study. The cities with the greatest concentration of these students are Bangalore, with 85; Chandigarh - 62; Delhi - 46; and Calcutta - 45.

According to a report published in Tibetan Review (January-February, 1973: 8, 11), the following number of students from the Central Schools for Tibetans have appeared for the All-India Higher Secondary Examination since the first year these institutions have had a graduating class: 1969 - eight; 1970 - seventeen; 1971 - fifty-three; 1972 - ninety-three; 1973 - one hundred sixteen.

In addition, the estimated number of Tibetan students graduating from private schools is stated to be between thirty and forty per year. In 1977, the number of students who took the exam was one hundred ninety-four, and in 1976 the number was one hundred eighty-one (Tibetan Review, July, 1977: 13); using an average approximation of one hundred twenty-five and one hundred fifty for the years 1974 and 1975 respectively (I lack statistics for those two years), then the total number of Tibetan students to complete high school is as follows:

|        |                                                                             |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1969 - | 8                                                                           |
| 1970 - | 17                                                                          |
| 1971 - | 53                                                                          |
| 1972 - | 93                                                                          |
| 1973 - | 116 (projected)                                                             |
| 1974 - | 125 (estimated)                                                             |
| 1975 - | 150 (estimated)                                                             |
| 1976 - | 181                                                                         |
| 1977 - | 194                                                                         |
|        | <u>937</u>                                                                  |
|        | +315 (35 students graduating<br>per year from private<br>schools x 9 years) |
|        | <u>1252</u> total number                                                    |

Thus the percentage of high-school graduates who go on to continue their formal education at institutions of higher learning is less than 25%.

2. In 1963 the total number of representatives was raised to 17; the Dalai Lama nominated one member, and three positions were to be reserved for women. The latter policy was subsequently rescinded during International Women's Year (1975) on the grounds that a preferential quota system -- which in effect denied the possibility of equal competition -- was actually discriminatory to women.

In 1977 a further change was made in the composition of the Commission: at the request of the Tibetan Bonpo community, the Dalai Lama gave his consent for a Bonpo representative to be included in that group as well. This move is significant, since Bonpos, or "followers of Bon" -- a native religion often (and incorrectly) considered as the direct survival of an ancient, pre-Buddhist and shamanistic cult -- are for that reason regarded as marginal by orthodox Tibetan Buddhists. While it is true that the Bonpos worship Ston-pa Gshen-rab instead of the Sakya-muni Buddha, their liturgy, monastic life, iconographic forms and scriptures are virtually indistinguishable from the corresponding Buddhist forms, which they obviously absorbed and adapted over the course of centuries of parallel existence in Tibet. The Norwegian scholar Per Kvaerne, who has done research in a Bonpo community in Himachal Pradesh near Simla, has written two articles dealing with Buddhist/Bonpo similarities and differences: "Who Are the Bonpos?" in Tibetan Review (September, 1976: 30-33), and "The Genesis of the Tibetan Buddhist Tradition," Tibetan Review (March, 1976: 9-15).

Following the news of the policy change in favor of Bonpo representation, the former president of the Tibetan Youth Congress, which had unsuccessfully tried to achieve the same goal "through the proper channels," wrote a letter to the editor in which he congratulated the Bonpo community for "having the courage to make a direct appeal to His Holiness the Dalai Lama in order to obtain their legitimate rights in spite of repeated refusal by the concerned authorities" (letter by Lodi Gyari in Tibetan Review, (November, 1977: 30-31)).

3. For a description of local level administration positions, see Goldstein, 1975b: 19.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSIONS

#### Final Clarifications and Summary

The hypothesis underlying this dissertation was stated at the outset in the form of Turner's intriguing epigram: "Liminality is the mother of invention!" Proceeding from that formulation, we have been investigating a general problem -- the generation of new symbolic forms -- in relation to a particular instance of liminality: the "betwixt and between" situation of young Tibetan refugees living in India. The organization of this study likewise owes something to Turner. His observation that metaphors and paradigms are transmitted "by explicit teaching and implicit generalization from social experience" (1974: 13) is reflected in the division of the ethnographic data into two complementary areas: Chapter Two, dealing with formal schooling in a Tibetan environment, and Chapter Three, which considers the experiential lessons taught and learned by participation in various educational, economic, and political activities in the wider world.

Before presenting an overall summary and conclusion, however, the analogy that has served to inform this study should be given a final clarification, as the similarities

between refugee status, which is primarily characterized by lack of jurally recognized citizenship, and liminality, a "neither/nor" period of ambiguity, still do not make these two states absolutely equivalent. In fact, the notion of liminality, as defined and described by Turner, itself derives from a metaphor: that of the limen (Latin for "threshold"), a word and image employed first by van Gennep in reference to the middle or "marginal" phase of rites of passage. Turner's use of the term, like van Gennep's, accords well with the concerns and techniques of processual analysis, whether this be of actual initiation rituals properly so-called, or of less formally structured phenomena such as pilgrimages or millenarian movements. According to his definition, then, liminality "represents the midpoint of transition in a status-sequence between two positions" (1974: 237). Elsewhere he again acknowledges his debt to van Gennep in specifying what these "two positions" themselves represent: an initial phase of separation or detachment from a previous state, and a final stage of reaggregation or reintegration, when the transition is culturally recognized (1969b: 94).

It is evident, however, that this total definition, involving clearly demarcated initial, intermediary, and final states, cannot be applied with any great precision to the ethnographic case we have been considering, especially as the aspect of affirmative cultural recognition

of status-change is hardly likely to occur in conjunction with a traumatic event such as loss of a homeland. Nevertheless, the idea of the mid-point of transition can still serve as an apt and suggestive metaphor for the refugee experience:

During the intervening "liminal" period, the characteristics of the ritual subject (the "passenger") are ambiguous; he passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state (1969b: 94).

These characteristics are not accidental, for according to Turner, liminality itself "is essentially ambiguous, unsettled, and unsettling" (1974: 274). Furthermore, it is also a period replete with creative possibilities, at once liberating and dangerous.

Symbols and metaphors found in abundance in liminality represent various dangerous ambiguities of this ritual stage, since the classifications on which order normally depends are annulled or obscured -- other symbols designate temporary antinomic liberation from behavioral norms and cognitive rules (ibid: 273).

Finally, this temporary suspension of "ordinary" or "normal" thought and behavior patterns has the effect of permitting if not encouraging "extraordinary" activities and critical speculation.

In such situations as the liminal periods of major rites de passage the "passengers" and "crew" are free, under ritual exigency, to contemplate for a while the mysteries that confront all men, the difficulties that particularly beset their own society, their personal problems, and the ways in which their own wisest predecessors have sought to order, explain, explain away, cloak, or mask ("cloak" and "mask" are different;

"cloak" is to "conceal," "mask" is to impose the "features" of a standardized interpretation) these mysteries and difficulties (ibid.: 242).

Each of the three preceding statement regarding liminality can also serve to describe in some measure the similar condition of refugee status, but the analogy is not perfect, and several important qualifications should be made in this respect. First, the notions of "passenger" and "crew" which Turner applies to ritual subjects and leaders, is indeed an apt metaphor for the personages involved in an actual initiation rite: the journey from former to future state, however free it may appear at the time, is ultimately controlled in this case by knowledgeable specialists who have themselves traversed the same open seas. For the Tibetan refugees, however, no such experienced "crew" exists to guarantee a safe reintegration at the opposite shore. Although the Tibetan community still includes a publicly acknowledged hierarchy of leaders and subjects, the elders and officials are in some ways as uninitiated as the youth. Events and ideas of the recent past -- flight and resettlement, programs, and rhetoric based on democratic, egalitarian, Marxist or communist ideology -- these and other new experiences have occurred and are occurring to leaders and subjects without distinction; thus they are all in this respect "passengers" together, regardless of intra-cultural status differences. Furthermore, the hierarchy itself is self-contained within

a society-in-exile, and the lack of de jure recognition for the government, and citizenship in the host country for the individuals, constantly challenges the possibility of real socio-political integration.

A second qualification about the liminality/refugee status analogy concerns the temporary suspension of "behavioral norms and cognitive rules." Again, the two situations differ in this respect. A rite or phase that is liminal in the strict (i.e. Turnerian) sense of the term can well afford to cultivate ambiguity by annulling or obscuring "the classifications on which order normally depends," for the deliberate abolishment of ordinary ranks or roles within this extraordinary context has the ultimate effect of making these distinctions all the more significant once this intermediate stage is safely concluded. For the Tibetans in exile, however, such norms and rules are already strained and taxed by the sudden confrontation with values and mores which are often at variance with traditional patterns. The new education system, for example, with its emphasis on rationalism and its validation of knowledgeability through academic degrees instead of life experience, has given rise to unprecedented ways of acting and thinking, particularly among the youth. Given this situation, it is hardly likely that additional "antinomic liberation" -- however temporary -- would be actively sought in this society, for no guarantee exists to insure

a safe return to the old order.

Finally, a third distinction can be made between narrow and broad interpretations of liminality: in both situations, the people involved are in a position to contemplate "the difficulties that peculiarly beset their own society" as well as "the ways in which their own wisest predecessors have sought to ... explain ... these mysteries and difficulties," but the impelling motive behind this speculation is different in each case. For those "passengers" who are participating in a ritual that is institutionalized and thus clearly bounded in its liminality, the freedom to criticize and elaborate cultural beliefs and rationalizations is secure; the explanations will still retain their efficacy once the non-liminal end state of reaggregation is attained. For the Tibetans, as we have seen, such searching is not a free gift of the moment, but a necessity brought on by circumstances beyond their control. This kind of contemplation is above all characterized by urgency, or even, as one Tibetan put it, "real psychological anguish."

To review these clarifications, then, the status of being a refugee is somewhat different from that of liminality in the strict sense, because several important guarantees of ultimate stability are lacking in this case: an experienced "crew" to keep the whole community from going adrift; a built-in assurance that the suspension of

norms and rules will indeed be only temporary; and a freedom to question and contemplate without the ever-present threat of cognitive dissonance. On the other hand, however, the analogy is still useful as long as these qualifications are acknowledged. In both cases the "passengers" are removed from a state of normalcy: refugees are no longer citizens of their homeland, and they are also not yet citizens of any other nation. Furthermore, both situations involve a certain abolishment or obscuration of traditional classifications of order. While the "haves" and the "have nots" of yore might still be recognized as such today, a gradual change is taking place in the attitudes of the entire Tibetan community, and as a result, considerations of personal merit and achievement are coming to replace aristocratic birth or other ascribed criteria of high status. Finally, a critical confrontation of old and new ideas is definitely occurring among Tibetans in exile.

It is this aspect of the analogy that is most relevant to the general problem of this dissertation. As Turner has stated in so many ways, symbols and metaphors proliferate in the ambiguity of liminal status. For participants in traditional rites of initiation, symbolic forms are most often conveyed and elaborated through staged re-enactments of mythology. For Tibetan refugees, however, the mythology itself is being elaborated, refashioned, and even newly

created out of the dialectic interaction of old and new ideologies and experiences. In the light of all these clarifications, then, the data of Chapters Two and Three may now be summarized in connection with the underlying question addressed by this study: with respect to the Tibetan refugees living in India, how are new symbolic forms being generated by the liminal situation of stateless exile?

The first general areas considered in this investigation, formal schooling in a Tibetan environment, began with a quotation from the Dalai Lama's autobiography regarding "the next generation" and their education in India. The system that was devised to meet this need, has, since its establishment in 1960, attempted to fulfill two goals at once: the preservation of traditional Tibetan culture, language, and religion; and the presentation of modern subjects and ideas, which are considered to be an essential preparation for successful participation in today's world. This dual concern for ideal as well as practical aims occurs in various forms throughout this system: the initially great reliance on Indian and foreign aid and expertise was balanced by an immediate policy of using traditional Tibetan intellectual specialists -- the monk-scholars -- to teach in the schools; and the curriculum, which offers an array of subjects specially geared for maximizing future employment possibilities, also places

much emphasis on the faithful transmission of Tibetan language and literature.

The issue of language is important in another sense too. Given the multi-lingual situation existing in India, and the policy of bi- or tri-lingual instruction (international, national, and/or regional languages) followed by many Indian schools, the pattern of valuing English as a mark of high status and as a presumed guarantee of better job possibilities was already set even before the Tibetans arrived there. The extra-linguistic importance of Tibetan to Tibetans in exile compounds the problem of language choice: while Tibetan elementary and secondary school students are overwhelmingly more fluent in their native language than in English, once they leave a predominantly Tibetan environment, they too tend to esteem or even over-value English as a symbol of and strategy for achieving "the good life" (or at least a better one!). Such a preference, as we have seen, soon becomes grist for the mill of the "neopuritanical" youth leaders, who from a vastly different experiential perspective, end up agreeing with much more conservative older Tibetans on this point, in any case: language "purity," real or imagined, has tremendous emotional significance as an ethnic boundary marker.

The curriculum of these Tibetan schools illustrates Tibetan leaders' attempts to achieve a viable synthesis

between old and new subjects and pedagogical approaches. On the one hand, the introduction of textbooks and a modern syllabus represents a radical change from the traditional system of education in Tibet, which was characterized above all by its extreme emphasis on the written language. On the other hand, however, one of the ways in which these textbooks are being used today clearly reflects an old strategy: disseminating official doctrine through committed, doubly instructive written lessons. The ideology in the present case, while not exactly equivalent to that presented in the earliest models (centuries-old religious-historical texts written with the undisguised goal of glorifying and spreading Buddhism), is still by no means contradictory to it. In addition to their religious message, however, modern Tibetan textbooks also serve to advocate or at least introduce new patterns of thought and behavior: a spirit of pan-Tibetan nationalism which should ideally subsume old sectarian and regional differences, and a familiarity with, if not acceptance of, elementary scientific statements, which may be seen as tentative intellectual bridges spanning the gap between mythological and rational explanations of the natural world.

As for the pedagogical emphases and approaches used in these schools, two examples have been explored in some detail. The unique way of teaching Tibetan reading, writing, and spelling can be regarded as a very effective

transmitter of traditional and positive attitudes toward the written Tibetan language in particular, and toward a perfect reproduction of significant form in general.

Appealing for "proper behavior" by means of shame sanctions was also discussed and analyzed, especially in conjunction with the deliberate cultivation of a sensitivity to ngo-tsha ("shame;" literally, "hot face"), which is expressed socially as an acute consciousness of "face" vis-à-vis others. In the case of co-curricular activities such as participation in religious functions, student government, work brigades, sports, traditional music and dance, and pop culture entertainment, it is significant that the boundaries of these pastimes often overlap, and, in effect, involve their participants in concerns which are multiple and relatively integrated rather than isolated from one another. Religion and politics, for example, occur together in worship services which mention the contemporary status of Tibet, and young people's searching for relevant themes and heroes has them trying to associate their "Tibetanness" with new information and styles of self-presentation conveyed and suggested by globally influenced mass media.

An examination of high school students' interpretations of the commonly stated introduction -- nga bod-pa yin ("I am a Tibetan") -- has revealed several key values and attitudes underlying this self-definition: intense

nationalism; the central importance of the Dalai Lama as extraordinary leader; the unique association of Buddhism with Tibetan identity; the focus on ancestral continuity or "lineage" (brgyud or rgyud-pa); and the special regard for the language, traditions, and customs of Tibet, including a significant emphasis on "proper" or "respectful" modes of interpersonal behavior (ya-rabs spyod-bzang).

The deliberately maintained Tibetan atmosphere of the Tibetan schools plays a major role in the promotion of such sentiments, encouraging, shaping, and then channeling these feelings of cultural uniqueness and national consciousness into an all-inclusive set of values and attitudes perceived collectively as "patriotism" (rgyal-zhen). Furthermore, this environment also fosters the image of the Dalai Lama as an intensely significant, personally relevant charismatic leader who motivates the very core of Tibetan self-definition. The presentation of Tibetan Buddhism through formal instruction and implicit example and practices likewise adds to this aspect of self-described ethnicity: to Tibetans, it is the Buddhist religion which has made the qualitative, ennobling difference between "pre-civilized" chaos and cultivated order, or alternatively, between nature and culture; correspondingly, the concept of "enlightenment," with or without its metaphysical connotation, is regarded as a criterion of being a fully realized

human being.

The notion of "lineage," elaborated with respect to incarnation and discipleship as well as physical parentage, represents an additionally important component of Tibetan self-definition, as does the "correct" sociolinguistic use of Tibetan honorific speech (zhe-sa), which, combined with "proper" behavior (ya-rabs-spyod-bzang) implies a key Tibetan value: fully human, thoughtfully humane "respect."

All of these lessons conveyed through the formal education system discussed in Chapter Two of this study occur and are influenced by an ongoing confrontation of ideology and actual experience. The goal of "preserving Tibetan culture," particular those values and attitudes mentioned above, serves to motivate the explicit teaching, programs and policies of the Tibetan schools, but at the same time, the exigencies of refugee life in India must be taken into account as well. Within the context of explicit education, this secondary but very real concern is primarily acknowledged by two practical emphases: one on the mastery and use of the English language as a mark and strategy for gaining economic success; and the other, also economically motivated, on vocational preparation and training, likewise geared toward achieving a good livelihood. The seeds of global consciousness -- of an awareness of how "we Tibetans" relate to "the rest of the world" -- have already been planted in this supportive ethnic

milieu, even though long-term social experience with non-Tibetans is still quite limited at this stage. As for the metaphors and paradigms that have been transmitted via this total gestalt of "explicit teachings," all of these are summed up by the symbol that inspires the very core of Tibetan self-definition: the Dalai Lama, who stands for all of the above-mentioned values and attitudes at once, "summing up, expressing, representing for the participants in an emotionally powerful and relatively undifferentiated way, what the system means to them" (Ortner, 1973: 1339).

The scope of the second general area examined in this study -- the educational, economic, and political undertakings of young Tibetans -- corresponds to the other field of symbolic activity suggested by Turner: "implicit generalization from social experience." As we have seen, graduates of the Tibetan secondary schools must confront several immediate constraints regarding the possibility of continuing their formal schooling; the economic situation of the Tibetan community as a whole, and their own immediate family responsibilities in particular, both have the effect of restricting these opportunities to approximately 25% of the number of students who have completed their secondary studies. The constant concern for "getting a good job" in a country with vast numbers of "educated unemployed" gives particular urgency to young people's pursuit of scholarships and other forms of academic

sponsorship, for they, like their Indian counterparts in general, tend to see a college degree as providing a significant competitive advantage in the struggle for individual and group economic advancement. This experience of calculating resources (in this case, past scholastic record and future chances of financial support) occurs in non-academic contexts as well. Private enterprise, which represents the largest single source of income for Tibetans in India, demands a similar strategy, only in this case the network of dependable associates will most likely involve kinfolk rather than sponsors, and the relevant personal aptitude is not scholastic excellence, but pragmatic adaptability.

Other types of activities engaged in by Tibetan youth include working for the Tibetan government, teaching in a Tibetan school, farming in one of the agricultural settlements, or pursuing a traditional program of higher studies at one of the Tibetan-run institutes such as the Buddhist School of Dialectics, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Tibetan Astro-Medical Centre, or Tibetan Music, Dance and Drama Society. All of these promote ethnic consciousness by various means and in varying degrees, either by emphasizing traditional ideology and behavior, as is the case with the last-mentioned institutions in particular, or by involving participants in an unavoidable confrontation with non-Tibetan ideas, lan-

guages, expectations and modes of life, as is the case with higher education and private enterprise within Indian pluralistic society. The predominant practical lesson of all of these experiences -- the critical importance of individual initiative -- is somewhat moderated by concern for group welfare, particularly in reference to the often-cited goal of "working to serve the Tibetan community." Nevertheless, the conflict between fulfilling responsibilities to one's ethnic group on the one hand, and to one's immediate family on the other, is felt very strongly by these young people, and it is this tension, among others, which finds expression in the contemporary root metaphor of Tibetans in exile: the word and concept of "rangzen" (rang = "self;" btsan = "power").

Other opposing tendencies, concerns and proposed strategies -- particularly those associated with current political ideas and ideologies -- are likewise capable of being elaborated by the "rangzen" metaphor. As we have seen, the all-important figure of the Dalai Lama is one that is profoundly ambiguous: his extraordinary "power" is both sacred in its transcendence, and temporal in its immanence. His unique status as a political leader who is also the reincarnation of Avalokiteshvara, the Compassionate One, makes it impossible for Tibetans to associate the Dalai Lama unequivocally with violent mobilization "by steel and blood," which would otherwise be seen by many as

the most effectual means of fighting for "the cause of Tibet." It is this cognitive as well as ideological impasse which underlies the various intellectual and symbolic strategies that are being formulated and developed by Tibetan refugees today.

These attempts to come to terms with the problem of violent efficacy versus non-violent ideology can be classed into three general categories. First, many militant Tibetan youth are turning to a less devotional, more intellectual reconsideration of Buddhist tradition, seeking to find there precedents and justifications for violence as well as areas of rapprochement between this religious thought-system and other more secular and political ideologies such as Marxism, socialism and communism. Secondly, many of these same individuals have also become outspoken monitors of the "purity" of what they consider to be essential Tibetan symbolic forms. This "neopuritanical" attitude is further characterized by an intense single-mindedness of purpose and a fierce intolerance for any "cheapening" or "commercialization" of the Tibetan religion in general and any lack of sufficient respect for the Dalai Lama in particular. Finally, the "rangzen" metaphor itself can be seen as a strategy for synthesizing conflicting ideas and ideologies. In the minds of militant Tibetan youth, "rangzen" is a sacred goal equated with "independence in the very highest sense -- the freedom to

reach Nirvana." Such an interpretation links the literal, basically political meaning of this word -- independence for Tibet -- with a broad soteriological justification for freedom fighting: "A free Tibet would provide the whole world with a region uniquely suited for compassion-minded saints who could expend their lives "for the benefit of all sentient beings."

The "rangzen" metaphor and its dramatized scenario, the annual 10th March commemoration, have been interpreted in this study in relation to the consciousness-raising that is being promoted by political-minded Tibetan activists. Within the Tibetan community itself, the implications of democratic, egalitarian, and even Marxist-communist ideologies have filtered down to all levels of society, changing, or at least influencing certain expectations of who should be the contemporary powerholders. At the same time, however, older ideas and practices still hold sway: sectarian and regional affiliations are not only recognized, but are actually built into the recently inaugurated electoral system, and high government officials, religious figures and noble families still manage to perpetuate their influence despite the new ideology -- taught in the schools and voiced by many young Tibetan critics -- of pan-Tibetan unity and meritocracy.

The fate of alternative political groups is illustrative in this respect. The Tibetan Youth Congress, which

was established with the blessings of the Dharamsala establishment, sometimes appears to its own members to be the radical counterpart if not goad to the more cautious, conservative government-in-exile. Despite the two bodies' sharp differences in verbal style, however, the actual activities of each organization vis-à-vis "the cause of Tibet" have been quite similar: affirmation of the spiritual and temporal leadership of the Dalai Lama, demands made for a supervised plebiscite in Tibet, and petitions sent to the United Nations. In the case of the Movement for the Restoration of Tibet's Rightful Independence, the incorporation of an alternative political organization by the "orthodox" de facto government was even more clear-cut: after the first meeting of this group, it was agreed that the Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies would henceforth take over the leadership.

Finally, the Tibetan People's Freedom Movement, another grass-roots political organization dedicated to the goal of "rangzen," was in fact disbanded due to the establishment's manipulation of an old fear: the destructive potential of factionalism that would be implied by such a group existing outside (Tibetan) government control. The major undertaking carried out by this movement -- the 1977 Delhi Hunger Strike -- was nonetheless extremely significant for the entire Tibetan community. Successful as an intra-Tibetan mobilizing experience, it was further-

more seen by Tibetan government and subjects alike as an act which fittingly called public attention to the plight of Tibet. On the other hand, the minimal response of the international community in general and the U.N. in particular gave this event negative importance as well. Disillusionment followed when the ideals expressed in the U.N. charter were measured against the "total silence" occasioned by the Tibetan protest: the charter was deemed "not worth the paper it was written on."

In the political arena, then, Tibetan youth face two types of confrontations between ideology and actual practice. Within their own community, the newly affirmed values of national unity, egalitarianism and meritocracy are still being challenged by the continued implementation of policies which at least tacitly support old sources of inequality, and the realization of this contradiction makes it all the more difficult for young people to harmonize their priorities of responsibility toward immediate family and entire ethnic group. With respect to the world at large, the experience of feeling one's fellow countrymen isolated and ignored because of "big power hypocrisy" implies a similar threat of alienation. In both cases, the lesson to be learned is a realistic one: real access to power occurs more through backstage manipulations of Realpolitik than through orthodox adherence to ideology.

As for the scenario itself -- the annual 10th March

commemoration -- our first observation of this newly emerging secular ritual noted how the events of this day serve to re-enact or re-affirm key elements of the original Lhasa uprising. In addition to the conscious and deliberate display of Tibetan national identity -- conveyed through speeches, banners, national dress, flag and anthem -- the public demonstrations and protest marches act even more forcibly to galvanize the emotions of a shared sense of purpose, particularly when this takes place outside the almost exclusively Tibetan atmosphere of Dharamsala. This proud assertion of Tibetan identity is accompanied by two related strategies of impression management, both aimed at non-Tibetans. First, outside of Dharamsala, the speeches, banners and slogans of the day are addressed, written and shouted in English, Hindi and/or other local languages; thus the affirmation of Tibetan "self" also formally acknowledges the distinct existence of ethnic "others." In addition, the mutuality of Indo-Tibetan relations is emphasized with respect to that ever-present dialectic: ideology (shared religious traditions in this case) and pragmatism (equating a free Tibet with an effective buffer state for India).

As we have seen, then, the annual commemoration of Tibetan Uprising Day takes place in a situation of stateless exile, which entails numerous threats and implications of alienation, disillusionment, and confused ethnic iden-

tity. Within this context, the ritual dramatizes both model and means for achieving not only "rangzen," in all its polysemy, but also a more immediate goal: a sense of selfhood that is based on purposeful, well-integrated and proudly affirmed Tibetan self-definition. The symbols that are employed in this event, ranging in importance and "thickness" from the Dalai Lama himself, to special-occasion Tibetan dress, all help Tibetans participants apprehend and articulate what is happening to them, not only as refugees in exile, but also as people attempting to harmonize the conflicting tensions of tradition and modernity.

The issues considered in Chapter Three of this study all concern social experience in a world that is much wider than that deliberately bounded environment of the Tibetan schools. Economic, educational, and political undertakings of Tibetan youth, as well as their exposure to new ideas and ideologies, and confrontations with international Realpolitik -- all of this can be seen as a "field" in the Turnerian sense, that is, as an abstract cultural domain "where paradigms are formulated, established, and come into conflict" (1974: 17). Within this field, then, three general types of conflict can be discerned: first, that between "self" and "group" (the paradigms of independent enterprise and "working for the people"); second, that between violence and non-violence (the paradigms of avenging "shame" -- or alternatively, saving "face" -- and

"acting compassionately"); and third, the all-inclusive dialectic confrontation of ideology and experience (which also subsumes the paradigms of chos ["religion"] and srid ["politics"]). This total field may thus be seen as a particular cultural domain characterized above all by liminality and ambiguity; in this context, the drama of Tibetan Uprising Day and the root metaphor of "rangzen" operate as key symbols that aid in the elaboration of these "complex and undifferentiated feelings and ideas, making them comprehensible to oneself, communicable to others, and translatable into orderly action" (Ortner, 1973: 1340).

### Specific and General Conclusions

The general problem explored in this dissertation -- the generation of new symbolic forms -- has been investigated with respect to a specifically defined instance of liminality: the situation of stateless exile experienced by Tibetan refugees in India. Within the parameters of this "field," as Turner would use the term, we have identified two complementary types of key symbols: the figure of the Dalai Lama, which serves to summarize the entire Tibetan ideological system, and a root metaphor ("rangzen") and its dramatized counterpart (the 10th March commemoration), which together act to elaborate the dialectic interaction of conceptual categories and goal-directed modes of action. Our focus on Tibetan youth, on their formal school-

ing as well as their implicit learning from social experience, has noted both traditional and modern ideological "components," so to speak, out of which a new symbolic gestalt is beginning to emerge: the flexibly ambiguous metaphor of "rangzen."

The cognitive framework that supports this new symbol is not, however, entirely new in itself. Despite the radical break with the past, occasioned by flight from Tibet and resettlement in India, one significant aspect of the Tibetan ideological system has retained its ability to accommodate contemporary as well as traditional values and strategies: the culturally recognized "combination" or "joining" of religion and politics (chos-srid zung-'brel). Writing about the same world-religion, though in a different national setting (Thailand), Tambiah has arrived at a similar conclusion:

our thesis has been that canonical and post-canonical doctrines, the commentaries and the verbalizations of the believers, the structures embedded in their myths and rites, the pattern of their actions -- which together reveal the coupling of Buddhism and the polity -- are ridden with dialectical tensions, paradoxes, and ambiguities...

Our submission is that the dialectical tensions and paradoxes contained within the ambit of Buddhist doctrines (canonical and postcanonical) and practices (including myths and rites) provide reference points, charters, justifications, and interpretations for different historical eventualities (1977: 515, 516).

For the Tibetan refugees as a group, the recent his-

torical event most fraught with consequences has, of course, been the loss of their homeland, and the eventuality that appears most impelling to them is "rangzen" in its basic sense, "independence." Between past event and future goal, however, there exists the reality of the present, with all its contingencies, tensions, and uncertainties. It is in this context that the primarily political referent of the word "rangzen" is interacting with a broader range of associations: conscious and unconscious elaborations of the "freedom" theme (e.g. "freedom" to achieve Nirvana; "independent" enterprise, and so forth). All of these attributes together give shape to the notion of "rangzen" by alluding to motifs of triumph, honor, and success (victorious warfare, dedicated spirituality, personal achievement, and so on); like the constituent morphemes of the word "rangzen" itself, this part of the metaphor fundamentally involves values and strategies related to "self" and "power."

The latter part of the metaphor, however, is much more vague (and therefore potentially "open") in its connotations. Expressed tersely in the equation "Rangzen is the cause of Tibet, this second phrase has been only somewhat clarified by the Dalai Lama in one of his speeches on Tibetan Uprising Day: "The cause of Tibet is the struggle of the Tibetan people to determine their own destiny" (quoted in Tibetan Review, March, 1974: 6). Consciously, of

course, the statement hardly appears vague at all to most Tibetans: stateless exiles living in India, still close to Himalayan vistas, very naturally tend to equate a national "cause" or "destiny" with "self-determination" in the immediate political sense. But what about those Tibetans of the diaspora who can no longer believe in political miracles? What if "real" independence for Tibet is never possible? Here the vagueness of the second part of the metaphor is an asset rather than a liability: even if the equation implied between "rangzen" and "the cause of Tibet" fails to hold true in an immediate, political sense, the broader associations of the first term and the vagueness of the second can at least serve to keep the analogy viable as a metaphor, that is, as a relationship between two systems of values and strategies.

Furthermore, the contrast between the "vague" and the "attributive" parts of this or any metaphoric relationship is itself significant, for such complementarity makes possible what Fernandez has termed "the mission of metaphor." For him, a metaphor essentially involves "the predication of a sign-image upon an inchoate subject" (1974: 120), with the subject typically representable as "a pronoun (an I, a you, a we, a they)" in need of an identifying nominal attribute (1977: 102, 105), which, in turn, is provided by the "concrete and ostensive" sign-image (ibid.: 106). In the case of the metaphor under con-

sideration -- "Rangzen is the cause of Tibet" -- "rangzen" would be the nominal attribute; even though this sign-image is not "concrete" in the strict sense, its multiple, though clearly interrelated associations all point to a definite gestalt: that of "independence" in the root sense of "self power."

As for the other part of the metaphor -- "the cause of Tibet" -- this "subject" is not only "vague;" it is even doubly "inchoate" with respect to Tibetan social and political reality. The elaboration of this phrase into an interpretation -- "the struggle of the Tibetan people to determine their own destiny" -- highlights its "pro-nominal" aspect: it is "we Tibetans" (or "they," from an outsider's point of view) who are struggling to achieve not only "rangzen," but also a viable sense of selfhood, both personal and ethnic, as well as a socially recognized and workable system of ordering relationships of power between individuals and groups.

In its totality, the "rangzen" metaphor predicates its attributes not only conceptually, as a verbal symbol, but also behaviorally, through symbolic activity that likewise serves to affirm Tibetan selfhood. The foremost example of this -- the annual 10th March commemoration -- has been treated up to now as a key scenario; without changing any of its latter implications, it can also be regarded, using Cohen's words, as "the crucial politico-

symbolic drama" (1976: 131) of the Tibetan group-in-exile. For such people, living as non-citizens outside their homeland in a state of jural liminality, the acquisition of self-identity is especially problematic, for, as Cohen points out, selfhood "can be achieved only when the various roles that a person plays are integrated together within one unified system or whole" (ibid.: 54). What this integration requires, in fact, is social interaction involving the whole of one's personality, and this is maximally achieved "through non-contractual roles and activities in symbolic action" (ibid.: 55). Cohen amplifies this point by quoting J.F. Morris to the effect that "people are at their most individual and personal when they engage in drama" (ibid.), an idea he (Cohen) proceeds to develop further.

It is in these dramas that the political and the symbolic orders interpenetrate and affect one another. Each drama tries to effect a transformation in the psyches of the participants, conditioning their attitudes and sentiments, repetitively renewing beliefs, values and norms and thereby creating and recreating the basic categorical imperatives on which the group depends for its existence (ibid.: 132).

Applied to the 10th March commemoration, this interpretation indeed accords with the data. Participants in this event manipulate, and are in turn affected by, powerful symbols affirming their ethnic identity: their rang; that is, their "self." As for the other idea implicit in the "rangzen" concept and drama, the principle of btsan or

"power" is likewise asserted in this politico-symbolic event; in fact, it may be directly associated with "the 'the basic categorical imperatives' of Tibetan refugee society.

In a general sense, power is intrinsically related to order; it "results from dissymmetries affecting social relations, while these relations create the differential 'distance' necessary to the functioning of society" (Balandier, 1970: 78). In the case of the Tibetan community, these relationships between individuals within the culture, and between the group as a whole vis-à-vis the rest of the world, are all affected in some way by the liminal situation of stateless exile, where recognition of power in its primary institutionalized form -- the Tibetan government -- is fundamentally ambiguous: de facto but not de jure. At a deeper level of analysis, however, power as a conceptual phenomenon is even more ambiguous: it implies both danger (violence) and benevolence (compassion), and its manifestations may be either sacred (miraculous) or profane (routinized).

These instances of potential duality have already been investigated with respect to the quintessential symbol of Tibetan culture -- the Dalai Lama, who, as both temporal, immanent leader and spiritual, transcendent incarnation, is able to summarize the whole cultural system, with all

its inherent oppositions, contradictions, and complementarities. But this is a traditional symbol, with a scope too vast and subsuming for its form to be appreciably changed by specific and immediately relevant symbolic innovations. To the contrary, it is the new metaphor and drama, less "dense" than summarizing symbols, which are therefore more malleable, more able to reflect and respond to the pressures of particular goals and exigencies.

As for the general problem addressed by this investigation, then, it may be concluded that the more likely category for new symbolic forms is that of elaborating rather than summarizing symbols. It is these "essentially analytic vehicles" (Ortner, 1973: 1340) which act, by definition, to order conceptual experience ("root metaphors") and to provide cultural strategies ("key scenarios") (*ibid.*: 1344); directly opposed in "density" to the synthesizing variety, this elaborating class of symbols is one in which tentative projections are spun out like filigree, attached to a cultural base at the center, but most free and responsive to outside influences at the periphery. On the other hand, summarizing symbols act rather as a cultural lodestone, drawing together, compounding, and blurring the distinctions between bits and pieces of ideology and experience. While this latter category

may very appropriately be correlated with core or unitary themes (Ortner's "crystallization of commitment"), its overwhelmingly concentric magnetism makes it an unsuitable domain for the essentially mutual workings of dialectic interaction.

It is at this point that these observations and conclusions can be integrated with the underlying hypothesis of this dissertation: the relationship between liminality -- specifically exemplified here as a political case of stateless exile -- and the generation of new symbolic forms, which are most likely to be classifiable as elaborating symbols. The direction of Turner's research, which has served to suggest a line of inquiry for the present study, in fact acknowledges two concerns in this respect, both related to "the ways in which social actions ... acquire [symbolic] form" (1974: 13). In the situation of normally structured, non-liminal activity, Turner sees the process of symbolization as occurring by virtue of "the metaphors and paradigms in the actors' heads (put there by explicit teaching and implicit generalization from social experience)" (*ibid.*). But also, according to Turner, "in certain intensive circumstances," social actions may "generate unprecedented forms that bequeath history new metaphors and paradigms" (*ibid.*).

It is this latter case which best typifies the experience of an ethnic group that has had to face traumatic

separation from its homeland. While living through the liminal period of statelessness, these people, struggling to endure as a collectivity, are vitally involved in apprehending and articulating the dialectic tensions that threaten, yet also in some measure invigorate them. But Turner's use of the word "unprecedented" in the above citation, like his statement that "liminality may perhaps be regarded as ... a realm of pure possibility" (1967: 97; emphasis mine), both demand some qualification.

Dialectic confrontation, the interaction of thesis and antithesis, does not create its synthesis ex nihilo. Rather, the impelling forces of tradition and modernity; violence and non-violence; perpetuity and change; ideology and experience -- all of these or other relevant oppositions -- generate forms that may be new, but which are still informed by antecedent ideas and behavior patterns. Furthermore, this generation of new symbolic forms is especially influential for, and influenced by, the "real" new generation: the youth. Brought up in a society within a society, where power, order and legitimacy are ambiguous, and self-identity can no longer be taken for granted, these children and young adults are being doubly socialized: both through institutions, which are planned to be as traditional as possible, and also through new, sometimes radically different social experience. For them, specifically, the young Tibetan refugees in India, the most

crucial problem -- that of self and group definition -- is also the fundamental issue underlying the newly emerging root metaphor of "rangzen." Such a coincidence is not accidental, for as Turner points out, "Root paradigms emerge in life crises, whether of groups or individuals, whether institutionalized or compelled by unforeseen events" (1974: 64).

Even more to the point,

paradigms of this fundamental sort reach down to irreducible life stances of individuals, passing beneath conscious prehension to a fiduciary hold on what they sense to be axiomatic values, matters literally of life or death (ibid.).

For Tibetan culture to survive, even in adapted form, Tibetan people must continue to define themselves as such. For this to occur, they must come to terms with the fundamental and dual problem addressed by the struggle for "rangzen": a liminal sense of selfhood and an ambiguously recognized ordering of power. In abstract and general terms as well, this same correlation is likewise relevant to the hypothesis and problem investigated by this study. New symbolic forms are generated by the particularly fertile conditions of a liminal state. The manner of this "partition" is dialectic; that is, it is essentially dependent on the active confrontation of opposed and opposing inclinations -- bi-valent forces coupled in a relationship of ambiguity.

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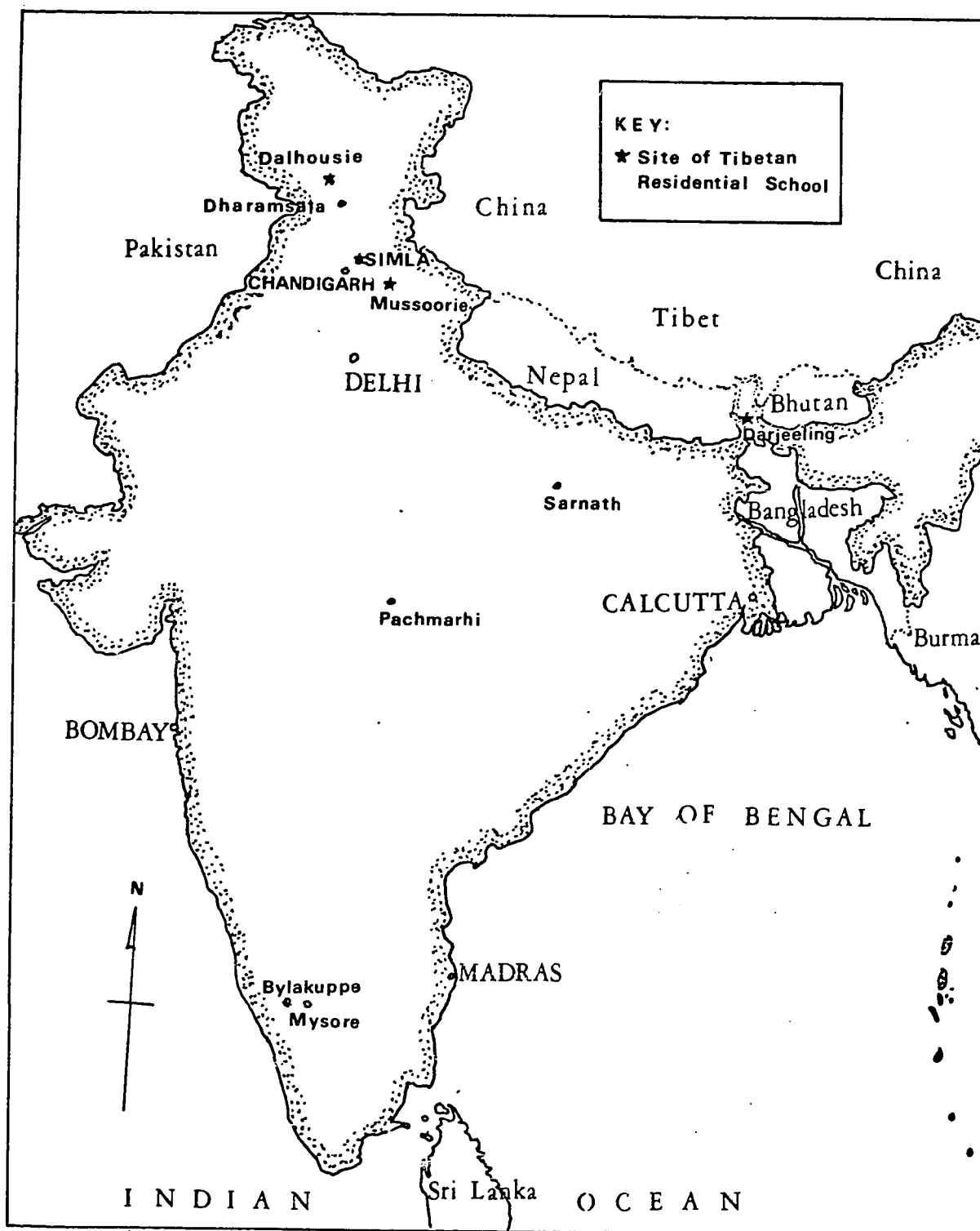
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Appendix: Map of India

## VITA

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