



Royal Thimphu College
PO Box 1122
Ngabiphu, Thimphu
Bhutan
www.rtc.bt

ISSN 2708-1850



9 772708 185006

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ISSN 2708-1869



9 772708 186904

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Rig Tshoel - Research Journal of the Royal Thimphu College Volume 3 Number 1 Autumn 2020

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Rig Tshoel



**ROYAL THIMPHU
COLLEGE**

Research Journal of the Royal Thimphu College

Volume 3 | Number 1 | Autumn 2020

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Rig Tshoel: Research Journal of the Royal Thimphu College

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A Royal Thimphu College Publication.

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ISSN: 2708-1850 (print)
ISSN: 2708-1869 (online)

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Rig Tshoel – Research Journal of the Royal Thimphu College is an open-access peer-reviewed journal intended to align with a key mission of Royal Thimphu College “to be a crucible of new ideas and knowledge that serves to enrich people’s lives and enhance the welfare of society”. The journal aims to issue at least once a year and invites contributions on a wide range of subjects. Authors are encouraged to develop their own scholarship in areas of general relevance to Bhutan, submit work that advances knowledge in their fields, and is written in a broadly accessible manner. High-quality original articles in English and Dzongkha including theoretical and empirical research, commentaries, editorials, and reviews are welcome.

The views expressed herein are those of the authors themselves and not necessarily those of the Royal Thimphu College.

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Editorial

Established in 2018, this is the third issue of *Rig Tshoel: Research Journal of the Royal Thimphu College*. As an RTC-based, open-access and peer-reviewed journal, Rig Tshoel's genesis and evolution speaks to a key mission of the College, that is: 'To be a crucible of new ideas and knowledge that serves to enrich people's lives and enhances the welfare of society.'

This issue features 7 articles, 6 of which are written in English and 1 in Dzongkha. Additionally, there are four book reviews. The articles published here were researched and written by one or multiple members of the RTC communities. They explore myriad themes and theories, as well as concern both the contemporary historical moment and the deep and even deeper past.

We open with an article titled 'Tertiary Education, Students' Experiences, and Future Imaginations in Bhutan' by Kuenzang Norbu and Jelle J.P. Wouters. Based on research carried out with an RTC Research Development Grant, this article applies the analytics of 'experiences', 'aspirations' and 'anxieties' as entries into student lifeworlds at Royal Thimphu College. The second article by Kabita Chhetri remains within the field of education. It is titled 'The Benefits of Using Rubrics to Assess Student Work' and draws on an extensive review of literature and the author's own experiences to make a compelling case for the systematic use of rubrics to enhance teaching-learning.

The third article is researched and written by Jesse Montes, Bhuwan Kafley and Thinley Dema and carries the intriguing title: 'Territory, Relationality and the Labour of Deities: Importing Raffestin on the Bhutanese Spiritual Landscape.' Claude Raffestin is a Swiss geographer known for developing relational approaches to the study of territory. Such a theoretical framework, the authors argue, can be insightfully applied to capture the mutually constitutive relations between territoriality, humans and deities in Bhutan, particularly in Haa, Phobjikha and Laya where the authors carried out empirical research. The fourth article is by Roderick Wijunamai and is titled: 'Migrant Construction Workers in Bhutan: Understanding Immigrant Flows and their Perception.' Based on a series of ethnographic vignettes and interviews, Wijunamai documents the motivations and lived experiences of Indian migrant labourers working in the construction sector in Bhutan. To them, Bhutan connotes a 'place of hope'; a place where they are able to work and earn, and through remittances are able to provide for their families in their natal villages, mostly in West-Bengal.

The next two articles do not have Bhutan as their focus of research, but whose authors are based at Royal Thimphu College. Article 5 is written by Dana M. Polanichka with a number of her students, all of whom were exchange students at Royal Thimphu College. They are: Carly M. Lewis, Casey E. Smith, Allison K. Meyette, and Briana Gausland. This article reexamines

ninth-century sources about Carolingian emperors in Medieval Europe, particularly the Astronomer's biography of Louis the Pious (r. 814–40 CE), to demonstrate that Emperor Louis employed popular tropes of female sexual immorality to remove his sisters from court on account of their political power. Article 6 is by Shawn C. Rowlands and is titled: 'The remnants of a Stone Age People': Race Theory, Technology, and Ignorance in Colonial Australia.' His article takes us to the Australian continent and to the early relations between aboriginals and European settlers. The Australian continent, Rowlands shows, became a testing ground for ideas on race and technology, and so in ways that marginalized and misrepresented Australian aboriginals. The final Article is written in Dzongkha. The author is Dorji Tshering and the title is: *ཞབས་བྱུང་ཕྱག་ཁུ་ཚུགས་པ་དང་འབྲེལ་བའི་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་པའི་ཕྱོད་*

This volume ends with four book reviews. The first is by Joseph McClellan and reviews the book *Sera Monastery* by Cabezón, J. and P. Dorjee. The second is a review of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and is written by Sonam Choden. The third is by Kuenga Norbu and reviews Orwell's famous book *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The final review is by Deki Yangzom and is a review of Wouters' *In the Shadows of Naga Insurgency: Tribes, State and Violence in Northeast India*.

Jelle J.P. Wouters
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Tertiary Education, Students' Experiences, and Future Imaginations in Bhutan

Kuenzang Norbu and Jelle J.P. Wouters

ABSTRACT: As an institution, Royal Thimphu College, akin to other university colleges in the country, is situated at the vanguard of the Bhutanese society that is to come; not just through imparting young adults with specialised knowledge and skills, with patterns of socialisation, and with canons of cultural representation and style, but equally because it constitutes a decisive stage in life-long individual and collective processes of fruition. It is in this stage, when young adults hover around intellectual, emotional and professional maturity, and usually just prior to the societal roles and responsibilities of family and employment, that young adults are engaged in often highly personalised and equally highly socially conditioned quests of self-discovery and self-making. It is when embodied experiences mould their general outlooks, and when they speculate, reflect and worry about the road they are traveling and about the paths and possibilities that fork off in the college afterlife. This essay seeks to capture precisely this moment; a phase that is fleeting, life-altering, uncertain, and often stressful. It does so through the analytics of 'experiences', 'aspirations', and 'anxieties.'

Keywords: College education, Aspirations, Experiences, Anxieties, Bhutan

Introduction

What is a university college if not a site, setting, space and sociality of social signification and change? Who are college students if not key protagonists in the contentiously interlocking of the present, past and future? Our times, like many before, are commonly captured in the language of change, transformation and disjuncture, as the heralding, or already unfolding, of a new epoch in which labour, knowledge, technology, as well as conceptions of what it means to be human, are evolving, and so in ways unprecedented. What is beyond doubt is that the coming generation is inheriting, and will make and mould –and manoeuvre into – a world that, in broad strokes, is devoid of earlier stabilities, emptied of traditional certainties, and characterised by protean horizons of work and society.

How this global future will look like, in the long haul, is for philosophers and prophets to reveal, but about the 'how', 'what' and 'towards' contemporary societies are evolving, sociologists and anthropologists may have a thing or two to say. This is because they offer a view from below, or a people's perspective, based on an intimate knowledge of the social group they are studying, which in our case concerns college students. They are therefore well placed to discuss contemporary society –

the ways in which it is changing and transforming, the continuities and changing continuities vis-à-vis what existed in the historical prior – informed by the embodied experiences, outlooks, and ambitions of its practitioners and beholders.

This essay, to be sure, does not pretend to contribute to debates and dialectics of youth, education, and the emergent human condition on a global scale. Our focus and ambitions are a great deal more modest, namely to provide a glimpse into the lived experiences, apprehensions and future imaginations of college students as they transition into, for the lack of a better word, ‘mature society.’ This is important because these students are the constitutive agents of the incipient future, because their evolving, in the upshot, connotes the evolving of society writ large. Our place and setting is Bhutan. More precisely, it is urban Bhutan and Royal Thimphu College, situated on a hilltop at the outskirts of the country’s capital city of Thimphu.

As an institution, Royal Thimphu College, akin to other university colleges in the country, is situated at the vanguard of the Bhutanese society that is to come; not just through imparting young adults with specialised knowledge and skills, with patterns of socialisation, and with canons of cultural representation and style, but equally because it constitutes a decisive stage in life-long individual and collective processes of fruition. It is in this stage, when young adults hover around intellectual, emotional and professional maturity, and usually just prior to the societal roles and responsibilities of family and employment, that young adults are engaged in often highly personalised and equally highly socially conditioned quests of self-discovery and self-making. It is when embodied experiences mould their general outlooks, and when they speculate, reflect and worry about the road they are traveling and about the paths and possibilities that fork off in the college afterlife. This essay seeks to capture precisely this moment; a phase that is fleeting, life-altering, uncertain, and often stressful. It does so through the analytics of ‘experiences’, ‘aspirations’, and ‘anxieties.’

Context, Caveats and Methodology

First some context about modern education in Bhutan. We do so in the briefest of summations. As opposed to monastic education, which has a long and rich genealogy in the country (Dukpa 2016), the history of secular education is a relatively short one. It emerged, sparsely and not without setbacks, in the beginning of the 20th century. The first school opened in 1914 in Haa, in western Bhutan. In the historical prior, modern education was not absent among Bhutanese but was obtained elsewhere, particularly in the Indian hill stations of Darjeeling and Kalimpong. This was largely confined to those belonging and descending from prominent social backgrounds, however. It were Jesuit missionaries who played a significant role in introducing and extending education in Bhutan, although so with the explicit understanding that their activities, in negation of the Jesuits’ usual manual of operation, would not involve proselytisation. Thus in contrast to the wider region, especially highland Northeast India, where early education was twinned with Christian conversion, in Bhutan modern education arrived without religious implications.

Gradually more schools opened, catering to a rising number of students, a process that accelerated with the launch of the 1st Five Year Plan in 1961 that provided vision and material resources for an

organised, modern school system aimed at free and universal primary education. Secondary education followed over time, as did a range of technical certificate programmes in civil, mechanical and electric engineering. Educational development, policy and processes went through a number of stages, transitions and revolutions, which Namgyel and Rinchhen (2016: 59-64) capture in phases of Bhutanisation, nationalisation, decentralisation, student-centredness, teacher-centredness, wholesomeness, and more recent reforms in the wake and aftermath of democratic transition.

If secular education is relatively young in Bhutan, tertiary education is younger still. The first BA degree programmes within the country were offered from 1983 at Sherubtse College, and so under the auspices of Delhi University, which set the curriculum, graded examinations, and conferred its degrees on students in Bhutan. This continued up until 2003, which saw the establishment of the Royal University of Bhutan, of which existing colleges became constitutive members.¹ The years following witnessed the emergence of private colleges, first Royal Thimphu College, established in 2009, followed more recently by Norbuling Rigter College, which upgraded from a higher secondary school.

Education in Bhutan has now been variously researched. A recently published edited volume titled *Education in Bhutan: Culture, Schooling and Gross National Happiness* (Schuelka and Maxwell 2016) sets itself the task to explore the tenets and framework of secular education in Bhutan. Its first sentences read:

The fascinating history of schooling in Bhutan starts from Buddhist monastic education well before the modern mass education movements in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Monastic education continues to this day in Bhutan, but secular education only began, albeit in a very small way, at the beginning of the twentieth century. Secular education for the common people began in the 1960s. Yet, by the early twenty-first century, near-universal mass education has largely been achieved due to the successes of the Ministry of Education (and Health) in the second half of the twentieth century (Schuelka and Maxwell 2016: 1)

This book then sets out to explore, first, ‘what are the key ideas that promoted such a development’ and, secondly, ‘How did these ideas get translated into an education system largely within six decades?’ To approach these questions subsequent contributions variously explore the history and development both of monastic education (Zangley Dukpa 2016) and of secular education (Singye Namgyel and Phub Rinchhen 2016), the role of international institutions and influences in promoting educational development (Jagar Dorji 2016), Bhutan’s policy of educating for gross national happiness (Pema Tshomo 2016), gender and education (Seden and Maxwell 2016), the role

¹ 2015 witnessed the launch of the second Bhutanese university, the Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan (KGUMSB) to serve as an ‘overarching university for existing institutions engaged in medical and health care education and training programs in the country and new institutions established hereinafter.’

of non-formal education (Powdyel 2016), and the progress and challenges of tertiary education in the country (Schofield 2016).

Other publications that exist on education in Bhutan discuss the relationship between education, employment and development. The work *Youth in Bhutan: Education, Employment, Development* (Lham Dorji and Sonam Kinga 2005) discusses a range of themes including the determinants of drop-outs and non-enrolment of students in the primary and secondary tiers of education and the significance of a rural-urban divide in this regard. It also looks at youth employment, which is presented as a new problem in Bhutanese society and, among other things, results from a structural mismatch between the quantity and quality of college graduates and the jobs available in the labour market. A linkage is subsequently drawn between youth unemployment and increasing levels of youth delinquency.

Research on education in Bhutan also appeared in relation to 'teacher education' (Van Balkom and Sherman 2010), teacher placements (Karma Lhaden 2016), the effects of education, particularly ICT use, on gender relations (Sinha 2009; Roder 2012), inclusive education (Schuelka 2016), pre-school education (Jena and Dechen Wangmo 2016), distance education (Sangay Jamtsho and Bullen 2007), and on the convergence between monastic and modern education (Denman and Singye Namgyel 2008). A general trend in this scholarship is a focus on institutions, policies and procedures. Collectively, and importantly, they present a wider framework of Bhutan's educational sector. With some exceptions, these studies do not explicitly address the actual experiences of students in the tertiary education sector, or, put differently, draw on how education is 'lived' within the extant institutional framework. It is here – through a discussion of college students' aspirations, experiences, and anxieties that this research carries the potential to contribute, even if only modestly, to ongoing debates on education in Bhutan.

From a globalist vantage, tertiary education increasingly etches itself at the centre of contemporary development discourses and praxes. It is thought to expand an individual's greater freedoms that are deemed necessary for holistic development, to facilitate upward social mobility, and to benefit society at large (Sen 1999). It is for such and similar reasons that both international organisations such as the UN and most national governments, including the Bhutan Government, situate higher education as central to development efforts. But not only institutions and governments focus on education. People themselves, in Bhutan and elsewhere, often equate education with employment and progress, and pursue it with zeal and, at times, at great financial expense.

It is a period of social, psychological, economic the concept of education is nevertheless also a contested one with some arguing that education instils false hopes for many because of a disconnect between education and employment (Jeffrey 2010). Others highlight how education works to erode traditional values and knowledge and so puts a strain on social reproduction: the perpetuation and preservation, that is, of culture and community (Reed-Danahay 1996), or argue that education, rather than manifesting itself as a social leveler, ends up perpetuating, even exaggerating, pre-existent socio-economic inequalities based on divergent levels of cultural capital students possess (Bourdieu 1977).

This essay proposes to analyse tertiary education at the level of 'process' through an exploration of students' lifeworlds while they pursue higher education. In proposing thus, we recognise the heuristic value of seeing tertiary educational engagement as a distinctive phase in the life-cycle both

of an individual and of society more broadly; a stage during which young adults acquire not just the training and degrees that prepare them for employment, but which also shapes their personalities and aspirations. Said otherwise, tertiary educational engagement may be seen as central to the contemporary transition to adulthood in Bhutan. Such a transition to adulthood, Lyod (2005: 1) writes, ‘is a critical stage of human development during which young people leave childhood behind and take on new roles and responsibilities.’ She continues:

It is a period of social, psychological, economic, and biological transitions, and for many young people it involves demanding emotional challenges and important choices. To a large degree, the nature and quality of young people’s future lives depend on how successfully they negotiate this critical period.

The research that informs this essay was conducted at a private college, which, as noted, is Royal Thimphu College. There are notable differences in the form and functioning of government and private colleges, as well as in the diversity of students they attract. We will not go into these differences here, but mention this as a caveat, namely that findings presented here must be seen as reflective of the students in Royal Thimphu College, and not necessarily, or necessarily to the same extent, reflect those of Bhutan as a whole.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 students across cohorts and degree programmes. The interviews were conducted by two student-researchers, namely Kuenzang Norbu, who is also one of the authors of this essay, and Vebaka Chhetri. In this way, interviewers and interviewees were also peers, in the sense that they were both students, and this was done to narrow the social gap and to foster an ambience in which students would be able to open up more freely. This essay – and this is another caveat – is exploratory in nature. It offers glimpses and snapshots, rather than a set of undisputable facts and conclusions, and in so doing its primary aim is to draw attention to the pursuits, dreams, and concerns of a crucial demographic, which is university college students.

Experiences: Freedom, Confidence, and Social Alarms

This section discusses some of the experiences of students, from the moment they first walk through the college until they depart three years later, in most cases with a college degree. We do so through three themes, namely freedom, personal growth, and social issues that student encounter and talk about. The latter primarily refer to substance (ab)use and instances of suicide.

‘I had this western thought of what college would look like. Without any strict rules. But I think the expectation was too much as RTC is strict with the students’, Sonam says.² Pema adds: ‘I didn’t know what to expect at first, but I thought college life would mean we get to do anything we like.’ Tashi also speaks: ‘I was quite shocked with the rules and regulations of RTC since it is a lot more

² All names in this essay are pseudonyms.

similar with those for high school level. Though there is freedom for the students, the college tries to bind us within a boundary, which is surprising and tough for me.'

Not just Sonam, Pema and Tashi. Nearly all those interviewed imagined college to be a life of near absolutely freedom, away – especially for boarder students – from the restrictions of either (or both) high school and family. In this, they were to be mistaken. Their admission was soon followed by a college orientation programme that divulged a set of rules, regulations and requirements, including class attendance, night curfews, gender exclusive spaces, and regular checks and controls. 'They tell us we are adults and should take responsibility for our own decisions, but when we have attendance shortage they immediately call our parents. Isn't that a contradiction?', Tshering poses. 'I'd never thought college life would be this strict and systematic', Thinlay agrees.

Despite these unexpected – to them – rules, most students *do* experience a substantial increase in their personal and social freedoms: 'When you go to college from class 12, you feel like freed from a cage.' About the consequences of this increased freedom, and the use and disuse of existing rules, students' opinions are diverse, of which the following two expressions are illustrative:

I feel maybe because Bhutan has a really conservative environment, till high school every one is suppressed with strict rules and even in home, as they get into college they have this notion that we are adults now and I can do anything I want so when people sneak other people into their rooms or so, at first it was a bit of a shock for me. But now I think that I can't really say that person is bad or shameless because it's not like they have hurt someone. Since they have been suppressed so much, they are just doing stuffs now because they can.

The biggest problem in College is that students aren't being monitored strictly at the dorms. They should be given freedom because they're adults but they need some regulations and rules that guides them and I think we should uphold them and not just keep it in black and white.

College life is what students broadly experience as a rite of passage. In this, they not only speak about freedom and responsibility, but also about the personal growth they notice in themselves. 'I have seen myself grown a lot after joining the college', Tashi says. She continues: 'I was never this confident in my high school. College helped me to get out of my comfort zone and turn into a butterfly.' Being responsible, feeling responsible is a positive experience', Sonam agrees. To this, Pema adds: 'Doing presentations have built up my confidence. Teachers also let us know our capabilities and guide us, giving us compliments when we need them, and constructive criticisms when required.' Making new friends, too, is seen as a positive and personality-building experience: 'You can build family, in the sense of bonds with your roommates. They are completely different people you have never met before. It's nice to know that you can build relations with other people and have trust in them.'

Such and similar statements are given by several respondents, who, on reflection, detail how their personalities change and develop while in the college. A few other responses in terms the 'college

experience' go thus:

I would not describe what kind of experience but till now college has been an 'experience' itself. Experience is a large word, I feel that staying in college life I have gone through almost everything. I have studied about almost everyone, talked about anything I have learned. I have evolved myself from what I was to what I am. The way I speak to people was different two years back and now it's a great difference that I see in myself. So, my experience of college till now has been 'life-changing'.

When I joined, I was near sighted. I just wanted to indulge in what I was doing now, I felt that because I was in college, I just had to have fun and live it up. It's good to enjoy but I now want to focus on my academics and I think this is because I am close to graduation so I am more future oriented and my focus is on my family and also personal relationships and education

Yes. I am having fun, in my high school, I used to go to school and interact a lot but going back home I used to stay in my room all alone. Staying in the College made a lot of difference. I met a lot of people and had to interact a lot with everybody. This made me an open person.

While students generally speak about college life in terms of positive experiences, the interviews also reveal a range of concerns, social issues, and negative encounters students invariably experience during their time at the College. Central among these are encounters with substance (ab)use, and the anti-social behaviour and occasional disturbances that may result from this. 'I see people using substances all the time', Dorji says, then continues: 'The magnitude is very high. What I feel like is that it is to do with peer pressure. Even I have been a victim once... I think that people should actually be educated about this, saying no and dealing with peer pressure, instead of imposing rules which they are not going to follow anyway.' Many of our respondents emphasise the use, which now then then descends into abuse, of substances as a social problem within the college premises. On the general use and abuse of substances, mostly alcohol but also various types of drugs, a range of opinions were expressed, including the following:

I have seen that substances like smoke and alcohol are easily accessible to the students and it is very common. I think it is fine unless they don't forget their purpose of being in College. College is just three years and I think everyone should enjoy their college days as they like. But as they are adults they should also know their limits.

I have seen a few people who have abused substances and when it is someone I know personally I try to make them control their habit. But it has been fruitless till now. I just hope that they figure it out themselves before it's too late. Maybe to an extent

this is due to easy availability of these stuffs. But we can't really blame the College because what can they really do if the students themselves is interested in these habits.

I think using substance by the youth is not a new thing. If they use it secretly in their rooms or when alone, I can't say much because they are not affecting anyone else and they have that right. But students who use substances and create problems with other students or the RAs [Resident Assistants], it is a big issue for the College. And I think that the college rules which are not so strict compared to high schools are encouraging students to try using substances.

The College is the last step where you have the chance of being a better person or staying the same, but we should not be stricter with things. The stricter we are, the more people try to break the rules. I would say, for those who use substances, let them do, if they want to change, they will. If they want to continue, they would. The college, I have seen does put effort in helping the students. But pushing them too much is not good, as it is their personal life.

There are people who want to try something new because they're in college and everything when they don't know how to use them and stuff and they could get into trouble. But I feel like as long as that doesn't become your identity, it's fine to try new things. And I feel drug issues are because of mental health which people don't know about so people need help in those cases. And then there's the pressure of whether or not you've experienced something from your friends especially when you're social and go to social events so you're pressured to experience these stuff.

Another negative experience most of our respondents highlight is the occurrence of suicide within the college community. 'Yearly, people commit suicide. I think about why it happens so it is a bit concerning', Yeshe says. She explains: 'When I see people go through something, I am scared they might just do that and they're gone.' 'After a certain period, there is a case of suicide. I think suicide is becoming a national issue', Ugyen opines. On further probing, most students ascribe suicide to failures both in examinations and in relationships (more on this below). For Ugyen a remedy must be sought in the realm of religion:

We leave the students a bit too free is what I feel. Also, for Wednesday [distinguished guest] talks, I think if we get religious masters to come in and teach us about the issues of suicide, I think it can change the way our students think. Another thing, our rimdros at college aren't really taken seriously. It's up to the students whether they want to go or not. I think we should have an off day when we have our rimdro, get our blessings and I think that will help

Suicides, when they occur, impact not only the student community. It also worries parents. Tshering reflects: 'The recent suicides at RTC made my parents fear about my condition. They now tell me that if I don't know something in class, "it is okay, it is fine, don't take it too personal or don't take it too serious. Get help from your friends and if you still don't know, leave it." So their perspective changed from them wanting me to excel in academics to a more relaxed stance now, even telling me that if I fail, it is fine too.' This observation that suicide occurrences change parents' expectations is corroborated by another respondent: 'My parents were initially pressurising me, but after a suicide happened they become anxious about my condition and they told me that even if I don't do well in my academics, it is okay and that I should not take things too serious.'

Expectations and Aspirations

To capture students' aspirations, we need to start with the 'why' and 'how' of them joining a university college, and Royal Thimphu College in particular. For some students, joining RTC was not their first choice. 'I had no other option, if I am honest', one student says. This is because he aspired to study abroad, but applied, and was granted, admission in RTC after those efforts failed. Others had hoped for a scholarship in one of the government colleges, but opted for RTC after their name was not on the list with selected candidates. Again for others, RTC was their parents' choice, on account of them preferring to keep their son or daughter close to home. That said, for many others RTC is the first option, informed by the College's rising reputation for academic excellence, the good reports they received from kin and friends already studying there, and because of the top-notch facilities the College is known by.

Regardless of the background of their initial joining of the College, students often speak about distinct aspirations of what they hope to achieve. Performing well academically is often highlighted, as does Penjor: 'My main goal right now would be getting into the top three of my programme.' This, thinks Penjor, will help him to clear the coveted Royal Civil Service Examination in the college afterlife (of which more below). Tells another student: 'I didn't come to RTC for a degree as such, but because of the course offered, which is Political Science. The degree that I get may or may not be of use in my future, but it will definitely broaden my knowledge. That is my ambition, to broaden my knowledge.' Another motivation is to learn and experience as much as they can, both academically and socially. On acquiring new knowledge, Tshewang says:

I had no idea about political science when I first joined, but RTC has made me become a better person in terms of knowledge. Now I have some insight about what the course is about. Generally, the belief is that taking political science means you have to become a politician but that notion has changed for me. Further, like I expect to learn how to be a better person... I want to perform well, get good marks and graduate well

Ambitions, however, may also change while at the college. Kinga recounts: 'I did not think of going

for further studies at first, but after I have been to Japan [on an RTC exchange programme], I feel inspired to go for further studies.’ Or as another student has it:

Before joining college, I always dreamt of being a successful businessman, after joining college, especially after taking this program I now think that it is not just about becoming a successful person, its more about being a good human being. So, after this I came to a conclusion. I have decided that what I have learnt till now and what I will be learning in the next two years to come I would make a difference in lives. Helping ones in need with NGO’s.

In general, students also feel that RTC is preparing them for the future that lies ahead: ‘I feel like RTC opened me to a wider range of challenges, so it definitely helped.’

Another clear source of both aspiration and motivation relates to parents’ influence. If parents may already play an important role in admissions for many, their influence lingers and translates in them instilling expectations in their college-going children. At times, this leads to the clear convergence between the expectations of parents and those of students. Pema says: ‘I think my expectations and my parents’ expectations of me are the same. My expectation is that I land a white collar job after graduation, preferably in the government sector, and this is also what my parents are expecting of me.’ Most of our respondents tell that their parents contact them frequently and never fail to remind them of their expectations. For some this works as a source of motivation as they are desire to fulfil their parents’ wishes. Others, however, experience this in terms of pressure, at times to suffocating effects. Kesang, when asked about her parents expectations of her, laments that ‘theirs is quite extreme.’ She explains:

My mother is quite pressurizing when she talks to me, but I don’t tell her that because I don’t want to hurt her feelings. I think it is because almost everyone in my family has been very successful till now and even the fact that I had to take a year gap before I joined college was a big step back, especially to my mother. And my mother is always telling me to be reminded and thankful of the opportunity that I have so that I constantly remind myself to work harder.

Another responses, along similar lines, go thus:

My mother wants me to be a good son, good student and she always calls me and reminds me that I should study hard. I am her only son so I think I have to be accomplished and competent enough to look after her when she is old. My parents would want me to be able to get a job and stand on my own feet and be a responsible citizen. I have been able to keep up academically and not disappoint them till now so, even when it comes to their future expectations, I will try my best.

What we discerned, as we analysed the transcripts, is a differential, albeit anecdotal, in parental pressure based on whether parents themselves are college educated. Samdrup says:

I don't feel any kind of pressure from my family. I think it is because of their lack of education. If they were educated, they would be concerned about my marks. But being a farmer, they are never concerned about my marks. Still I show them my marks that I have scored and they appreciate that. Otherwise they only have advice for me not to hang around town and abuse my time. Academically they only tell me to get pass marks

From expectations we now turn to aspirations. To inquire into what students aspire to achieve in the long haul, we asked interviewees to sketch the post-college life they would deem successful, as well as outline what they would deem a 'failed life.' The answers we received are highly personalised. Yet, they reveal certain trends, which we discuss presently.

One such trend, and which figures from one transcript to the next, is a strong predilection towards securing government employment through trumping the competitive Royal Civil Service Examination. Obtaining government employment is preferred on various counts. Once obtained, it near mechanically elevates social status. It also offers financial security, and, not in the least, it is emphasised as the most effective conduit to serve King, people and country. The allure of a government job among college students is such that even as some students express that, deep down, they would prefer a career outside the government, for instance in business or abroad, they would readily forego this for the prospects and perks of government employment. Students also tell that becoming a government servant is also what their parents wish them to become. This is an expectation that weighs heavy on many students, especially in a context in which civil service exam takers outnumber vacancies many times over.

In reflecting on the future that lies ahead, most students speak about the need to secure financial independence in order to both support their parents and to establish and raise a family of their own. Some students are very explicit about this:

For me, I want a job that comes with a huge pay because it is money that decides what you will be, what your children will be, and for this status is less important. So, a job with a huge pay is all what matters to me.

But whereas for this student, social status is clearly secondary to monetary gain, other students reason differently and value social status and standing greatly. 'In our society', Pema reflects, 'a lieutenant and a teacher may draw the same salary. However, if you become a lieutenant you get a title of dasho, which make it a more desirable thing in the society. For me, salary is second to social status.' Again others emphasise how an elevated social status and serving the country are intimately connected: 'When you have a better title, you are able to help more people because of the position of power you are in. I want to serve the people well and if I do that, I think the title of a dasho would show that I

am doing a good job.’ Another student talks about wealth and status thus:

I want to get a satisfying job, I want to earn enough so that I can spend it the way I want. I want some sort name or reputation of my own, till now I have been living under my dad’s shadow. In my family I am the eldest and I have brother, but he is the person who easily gets socialized with people and then people like him for who he is. For me, compared to my brother I am super hardworking. Whatever I do I feel that’s it has not been enough till now, so I mostly want to become independent and earn a name.

Serving the people and the country is, as noted, a reason why several respondents prefer a government job: ‘If you get a government job, you get more respect as well. So the main reason I want to appear in RCSE and do well is because I want to make a difference and make a change in our country and I think you can only do that if you get a government job.’

In envisioning the future we again note a class differential, with students who are first generation college students being predominantly focused on securing a job that would allow them to a sedentary life, away from the village and farming, and support their family, while second or third generation college students tend to explicitly associate ‘the good life’ with several other factors as well, including a passion for the job, the ability to travel, and to pursue their hobbies. Yeshi explains that both he and his parents want him to get a government job, but Yeshi himself emphasises the importance he allots ‘to pursue some of my hobbies in the future, but which my parents are not thinking of.’ Adds Karma: ‘My ideal job would be something where I feel I have a purpose with whatever I do. I feel like I don’t look for a job where I enjoy every minute of what I do because that is, for me a bit unrealistic and I set myself up for disappointment but I feel like to a certain extent, I shouldn’t be hating my job, I should be okay with it.’ Sonam tells: ‘I would want to be financially independent, take care of my mother and family. I would also like to be more independent in a more personal sense also, I would like to be able to travel and do things for myself without relying on other people.’

The above goes for a successful life. In terms of an unsuccessful life, students have the following to say:

I would define an unsuccessful life would be if we do not do any productive work that could help ourselves, parents or to the society and this would be very unsuccessful because after spending that much money and time on education if we land up doing nothing, it is very unsuccessful.

Unsuccessful life, I think depends on the people, how we perceive them and tell about it. For me, it would be graduating from RTC, which is a well-known college and doing nothing. Contributing nothing to the country and just staying idle would be an unsuccessful life for me.

If I was dragged down by society. I don’t want to be a machine for the society, that’s

all I want in life

The worst possible life would be just staying at village and working in the fields. We have enough land to divide and work among ourselves but I don't want to do that.

Am always expecting a better life after 10 years. Because I don't want to remain like my brothers who dropped out after high school, so I think I will bring some changes in my family at that time, some good changes.

I am not able to study well and become fairly useless without a job. My family wouldn't consider me a part of them and my friends would also leave me. I think that's the worst.

For me, that would definitely be me unemployed. That is the biggest worry I have. 10 or 20 years, I won't be unemployed necessarily but I will be involved in some uninteresting works with less pay. I think that would be unsuccessful for me. I don't get my dream job, working under a small business, that would be unsuccessful but again, my biggest fear is being unemployed and being an unproductive citizen because I want to serve my nation.

Anxieties: Present and Future

College life is also a period in which anxieties are felt, some of which have already emerged in the previous sections. A commonly felt anxiety is related to academics, and the possible failure in it. Students indeed express mixed levels of anxiety about not being able to keep up academically, about the possibility of getting a 'back-semester', and about 'wasting' their parents investment and trust in them. Tandin says: 'My greatest fear is not being able to achieve in academics because of my time-management issues, so not being able to achieve what I want is the greatest fear.' Anxiety and stress figure strongly in relation to assignments: 'When I have to do assignments, I feel stressed', Kinley confesses. This is a sentiment echoed by many; it is a stress students themselves readily link to their difficulty in time-management.

Apart from academics, there are social issues as well that are generative of anxiety. As noted, occurrences of suicide is one. Substance abuse is another. A third and major one are intimate relationships. Some students comment on this in a neutral or favourable manner, such as Tshering:

I think a lot of people who come here and see that they like someone, and they get into relationships. They are of an age where they know what is right and wrong, so it is not a big issue for the college as compared to drugs. And if they know their limits and stay in a healthy relationship, I think it is what a young growing adult needs. If you have a good and sound relationship, you have the required support.

Karma agrees:

When it comes into relationships we can't say much. There is so much freedom in the college and some people just get into relationships for time pass while some are serious about it and the person. But it is based on individual opinions, so relationship isn't a big problem. I see it as a good thing.

Others, however, emphasise that relationships in the College often become unhealthy, grow awry, and that it negatively affects both students' academic performance and mental well-being. The following responses indicate this:

I think that the major social problem is relationships, when they break up. People go mental sometimes. I think that's the biggest social issue in college right now.

Because everyone thinks that now we are mature we don't need any help or someone to tell us what to do. That is what leads to so many social issues and I think bad relationships are one of the issues. Relationships in college are at a serious level and sometimes it turns out to be good, but since people think that they should be private and no one should interfere in one's life, this is a very wrong thought. And it leads to so many other problems when you keep the tension to yourself. Other than relationship issues I think that this kind of attitude leads to drug abuse, groupism and fights.

I think the number of relationships is quite high and they tend to show it to the public. I think it is inappropriate in front of our senior citizens and teachers and staff. I think it is disrespectful.

Wherever I go, I hear girls crying and when I ask them what happened, they all tell me the same thing about how their boyfriend did this or that, most of the time I see girls and I advise them. So I think it's the biggest problem here.

I'd say unhealthy relationships leading to suicide or depression. Because some people aren't used to these kinds of short lived relationships so once it hits them, they can't handle it. It is like poison for them. The people that haven't experienced such things tend to avoid the people who try to advise them and those people went through it before.

While relationships can lead to an embodied anxiety, a major source of anxiety, emphasised by the students time and again, is the competitive college afterlife that awaits them. 'Whenever I see people become successful, I feel like there is one less opportunity for me now, and that worries me a lot',

Sangay confesses. It isn't a nice thought, as Sangay also accepts. However, it is indicative of the heightened sense of competition students experience in the contemporary historical moment in which desirable jobs are experienced as increasingly scarce. This statement was indeed echoed by many. Says Anita: 'All sorts of students graduate and bring different qualities to the table and those qualities might outshine mine. So I suppose it is competition for places [that worries me].' Or again:

I am very worried about my future I think that is my greatest fear. Like I said earlier it is very competitive and I don't want to be stuck doing a job that I don't like. Also because what if I don't even get a job? That would be a constant reminder of how much I have achieved or failed in life. So it definitely is my greatest fear.

Yes, I am all the time worried about my future, like whether I would be left without a job or if I don't make my parents proud.

Some, however, have taken a more lucid, or more measured approach, to the future. Tashi tells: 'No, not really am I worried... My mother always used to say her favourite phrase: "I worry about your future." But after thinking about it I started believing that there is no point in worry about the future when you don't know what it will be.'

Conclusion

This essay attempted to provide an insight in what preoccupies College going students in Bhutan as they transition from adolescence into adulthood. We engaged the broad analytics of 'expectations', 'aspirations', and 'anxieties' to capture the diverse range of experiences and perspectives students accrue and express. Specific themes that figures centrally in our interview conversations with students ranged from freedom and personal growth, to substance (ab)use and suicide, to intrinsic motivation and parental pressure, to anxieties and fears. The findings outlined and discussed above, to be sure, should be taken as illustrative of the contemporary historical moment in Bhutan, not necessarily as definite and country-wide structures of experiences, and of feelings and sentiments. There is also a lot more to explore and research. What the above sections do offer, though, are glimpses and vignettes into the ways in which college students in Bhutan experience college life, perceive of the social and economic world around them, and imagine the future that lies ahead.

Acknowledgements

This research was enabled by a Research Development Grant of Royal Thimphu College, for which we express our gratitude. We also thank Vebaka Chhetri for her role in carrying out the interviews, and to an anonymous reviewer for insightful comments.

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The Benefits of Using Rubrics to Assess Student Work

KABITA CHHETRI

ABSTRACT: A rubric is one of the assessment tools used in academia by tutors to evaluate the performance of their students. This article reviews the existing literature on the benefits of using rubrics and its impact on student achievements. The article explores current literature on the use of rubrics by both tutors and students, the former to assess student performance and the latter to plan their work. The author's personal experience is also included to demonstrate the usefulness of having a set criteria while communicating expectations through rubrics. Since the use of rubrics is a recent practice in schools and colleges of Bhutan, it has become important to study what the existing literature reveals about using rubrics for academic purposes. This review of a wide array of the existing literature shows the significant impact of rubrics in evaluating and enhancing student performance.

Keywords: rubrics, assessment, performance, holistic rubric.

Introduction

A rubric is an assessment tool widely used in academia today. It is used for marking assignments as well as in assessing student classroom participation. Today, the use of rubrics has become popular among students and teachers at all levels, from schools to colleges (Simon & Forgette-Giroux, 2001; Reddy Y. M., 2007). This is mainly because rubrics can be used to provide clear feedback and communicate the teacher's expectations on assessments like presentation, group work, activities, and role-plays. In Bhutan, however, the use of rubrics is a fairly recent phenomenon, although it has now become common for tutors to develop rubrics for every assignment they give to students.

Literature shows that the word "rubric" originated in the 15th Century among Christian monks. In Latin, the word rubric indicated a heading on a document written in 'red ink' and used by monks for conducting church services. Over a period of time, educators came to define 'a rubric' to describe guiding rules in the evaluation of student performance. While some say rubrics are important tools for grading that augment transparency in assessment (Silvestri & Oescher, 2006), others define it as a tool that support student learning and development of higher level of critical thinking skills. It is also seen as enabling teachers to justify the assigned grades to the parents of the student (Andrade H., 2000).

The main objective of this article is to review existing literature on the meaning, benefits, and challenges of using rubrics as an educational tool.

What exactly is a rubric?

A rubric is a tool that specifies the criteria and levels used to evaluate a task and provide feedback to students on their assignments and other assigned tasks (Reddy & Andrade, 2010; Jonsson & Svingby, 2007). Further, Hafner and Hafner (2003) added that rubrics are descriptive scoring schemes that facilitate the process of evaluation and reporting of student achievement by educators. A rubric it generally contains three main features: criteria for students to guide them in completing their assignment, markers of quality, and scoring (Berkeley Center for Teaching & Learning- Rubrics, n.d).

According to Andrade (2005), rubrics denote the process of communicating expectations, providing continuous feedback, and evaluation. However, Wiggins (1991) states that rubrics are the conditions a performance must meet to be successful. Other researchers define rubrics as a set of indicators, guides, list of measures or qualities required of a student to meet an outcome.

Brookhart (2008) in her article titled 'Appropriate Criteria: Key to Effective Rubrics', states that 'Rating Scale' and 'Checklist' which was both used to evaluate student work, can be confused with rubrics. It is mentioned that checklist asks for dichotomous decisions like yes/no, has/doesn't have for each criteria, and rating scales ask for decisions across a scale (that includes numerical scales (e.g., 1-5), evaluative scales (e.g., Excellent-Good-Fair-Poor), and frequency scales (e.g., Always, Usually-Sometimes-Never) that do not describe the performance. These two are different from rubrics. Hence, the presence of criteria and performance level descriptions makes rubrics different from rating scale and checklist. Criteria expresses what to look for in the work while performance level descriptions describe how those criteria look like in work at varying quality levels, from low to high.

Rubrics are mainly categorized into two kinds: Analytic or Holistic, and General or Task-specific (Chowdhury, 2018). Analytic rubrics are the assessment technique where criteria are evaluated separately, making the use of it time consuming. Whereas, holistic rubric takes all the relevant criteria at once and evaluates all the criteria simultaneously. Holistic rubric can provide summative feedbacks and takes less time compared to analytic rubric. However, educators and instructors tend to prefer analytic rubrics since they allow for more detailed feedback.

On the other hand, general rubrics are more general in nature and assess criteria like basic knowledge and skills that would be useful for students to accomplish certain learning outcomes. While task-specific rubrics, as the name suggests, are developed for specific assignments.

Benefits of using rubrics

According to Chowdhury (2018), some of the benefits of using rubrics are:

- a. It notifies student of a tutor's expectations;
- b. It provides information and feedback on time;
- c. It helps in fair assessments, and;
- d. It helps students in learning and self-assessment.

Campbell (2005), in his paper about the application and process of rubrics, states similar benefits. Like Chowdhury (2018), Song (2006) states that rubrics can be useful in providing constructive feedback which can help students identify areas for improvement.

Andrade H. G.,(2005, p. 27) in her paper titled “Teaching with Rubrics: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly” reflected on the use of instructional rubrics. In her experience as an assistant professor, she mentioned that “I have found that whether they are good, bad, or even ugly depends on how they are created and how they are used”. She further stated that rubrics are not entirely self-explanatory. So teachers must help students to understand rubrics and its uses. Issues of validity, reliability and fairness apply to rubrics too. If rubrics are not developed well on these three qualities, it can turn ugly.

Berkeley’s Centre for Teaching & Learning, lists the following benefits of using rubrics for tutors and students:

- a. Helps tutors provide students with clear and focused feedback to improve learning;
- b. Tutors could reduce time spent on grading, and increase time spent on teaching;
- c. Develops consistency in how tutors evaluate student learning;
- d. Helps students focus their efforts on completing assignments in line with clearly set expectations, and;
- e. Helps student with self-learning and peer reflection of his/her learning leading to desired learning level.

Other researchers, for example, Bolton (2006), have indicated that using rubrics and communicating to students about its use helps them to assess themselves and notify them of their weaknesses and strengths. Bolton’s findings were based on the responses of 150 Business students using rubrics in class.

A further advantage of rubrics is that it can help students monitor and assess their own progress in a task, both during its execution and upon completing it (Panadero & Jonsson, 2013). The paper by Panadero and Jonsson further found that the formative use of rubrics improves students’ performance as it reduces anxiety, increases transparency, and enhances the feedback process for both teacher and student, improved self-efficacy. Another study conducted by Andrade and Du (2005) indicated that students who used rubrics scored higher in their assignments and produced better quality work.

In a survey of BRAC University Students of Dhaka, which focused on whether or not rubrics helped in student’s performance, Uddin (2014) found that 72% of the students strongly agreed that rubrics helped them achieve the expectation of their tutor. They also said that rubrics helped them to score higher grades. Another 72% of the respondents wanted their teachers to use rubrics. This shows that students can be highly motivated by the use of rubrics. The survey also revealed that 7 out of 8 teachers from the same university were contended with the use of rubrics and said it helped them in their students’ assessment. The teachers stated that the use of rubrics should be institutionalised to evaluate student performance.

The most important task for teachers is to communicate expectations from students through the use of rubrics (Montgomery, 2002). Clear rubrics should not only be communicated but also explained so that the desired outcomes are met by the students and that needs to be done well in advance before the student begins to work on the assignment (Davies & Brant, 2006).

Researchers around the world have stated that students are able to recognise their strengths and

weaknesses when their performance is evaluated against a set of predetermined criteria. Petkov and Petkova (2006) evaluated the final performance of two different classes, one where rubrics were provided in advance and another where rubrics were not provided. Their findings revealed that the performance of the students who had access to rubrics was better than the ones who did not use them. However, merely providing the rubrics is not enough for better performances. Instead students must be taught to co-create and use them for their own evaluation and to assess their works-in-progress and thereby guide revision and improvement (Andrade, 2001).

135 Psychology undergraduates at the University of Barcelona participated in another study to see the usefulness of formative assessment and rubrics to student performance. It was found that those students who had used the rubrics and/or attended the feedback classes had lower anxiety levels during exams and performed better. Further, exposure to rubrics had also lowered their negative attitude toward the subject (Bono & Pena, 2019).

A study done by Reynolds-Keefer (2010) was conducted to explore student uses and perceptions of rubrics, as well as how student use of rubrics might impact potential use of rubrics as a future teacher. 45 undergraduate students of University of Michigan-Dearborn, participated. The findings brought out that students found rubrics helpful in completing their assignment and the findings also revealed that those students who are exposed to rubrics as students report a greater likelihood of using rubrics in the future as teacher

Is developing rubrics challenging?

One recommended procedure in developing rubrics involves three steps: end product of the task; (2) define the rating scale and weight of each criterion; (3) determine who will assign the score (Lunsford & Melear, 2004).

According to Uddin (2014) 5 out of 8 teachers strongly agreed that developing/making rubrics is taxing and tutors need lots of time to develop one. Further, the paper also found that 4 out of 8 teachers strongly agree that making rubrics requires specialized knowledge. Some instructors resist the use of rubrics as most of them have no training or little preparation as teachers and do not have the access to training on new teaching and assessment trends (Hafner & Hafner, 2003).

Developing descriptions of performance takes time, so it should be developed only for important and complex assignments. Moreover, poorly designed rubrics could actually diminish the learning process (Wolf & Stevens, 2007). Wolf and Stevens also state that it is meaningless to have irrelevant and broad evaluation criteria. A rubric, in other words should not be too narrow or too broad.

The literature findings suggest that the art of using rubrics is more important than just knowing what rubrics are. For instance, Jeong (2015) states that teachers who are experienced and trained in using rubrics were clear of what was expected from their students and knew how to use rubrics to assess their students' performances. He further says that teachers who are new to the profession and have not received training in using rubrics usually rate students based on their overall impression

Likewise, Andrade (2005) states that rubrics literacy is not only about possessing the knowledge of what rubrics are but also about knowing how to use them correctly. However using rubrics is better

than not using them, since not using rubrics makes evaluation more subjective as it may be influenced by the subjective judgment of the grader (Spandel, 2006).

Conclusion

Today, rubrics are frequently used in the classroom to evaluate student performance. E Literatures on rubrics as well as my own teaching experience indicate the usefulness of rubrics in evaluating student performance. It is interesting to note that a rubric can act as a supervisor in the absence of the real supervisor. This has become even more important in the current context of the Covid-19 pandemic that has forced schools and colleges to remain closed for an extended period of time. In fact, with rubrics in place, Covid-19 has come as an opportunity of sorts to promote autonomous learning among students. This literature review thus reveals that rubrics are useful not only in communicating teacher expectations but also in motivating learners and encouraging autonomous learning.

The author's personal experience indicates that often teachers must communicate expectations clearly and keep reminding students to follow the rubrics. Rubrics become a base for grading wherein the tutor can provide immediate feedback and suggest areas for improvement. Subjectivity can be eliminated with the use of rubrics. When criteria are clearly communicated and each tutor knows what is expected from the specific assignment, students also clearly know their teacher's expectation thereby making it easy for them to realize their weaknesses and shortfalls.

It appears that more and more educational institutions want to introduce rubrics as a basis for assessing student assignments. However, rubrics should not simply be used as a scoring tool, and is important to continue to explore ways to take rubrics beyond their current use. Students should learn to monitor their own progress and enhance the quality of their educational aspirations.

There are some challenges, though. Developing rubrics can be time consuming, and too broad or too simple rubrics will not be very effective in grading student performance. It is also observed that along with communicating rubrics to students in advance, the use of formative assessment through continuous feedback and timely marking by the teacher also allows students to improve their overall academic performance.

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Territory, relationality and the labour of deities: Importing Raffestin on the Bhutanese spiritual landscape

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ABSTRACT: The Bhutanese landscape is highly contested by not only local livelihood practices and state policies, but also the activity of cosmological deities that lay claim to space. Territory and territoriality are explored in this context, the former of which represents physical space that is demarcated with the latter representing a social process of negotiation for space. These ideas, along with Claude Raffestin's theoretical work related to a relational approach to territoriality and labour are imported to the Bhutanese context. Respondents from Haa, Phobjikha and Laya illustrate a dynamic landscape in which human tenants are conditioned by deity landlords to act according to particular restrictions/prescriptions. The power of these deities is conceptualized as labour, and represents active shaping of both physical and social space. This work extends analyses within critical geography by illustrating the role of spiritual actors on the landscape that impose their wills and claim territory, which traditionally is understood as an activity of the state.

Keywords: Bhutan, territory, territoriality, cosmology, labour, Claude Raffestin

Introduction

For the average herder in Bhutan, the idea of territory or land ownership took a precarious turn when the 2007 Land Act scheduled to nationalize all communal and private rangelands by 2017 (Tshering et al., 2016). While traditional ownership of such land was recognized through the establishment of a compensation program, resource users found themselves at a disadvantage. Financial compensation payments were not recognized as being equal to the opportunity loss associated with not accessing rangeland areas. Regardless, many herders continued to use the land post-compensation with the only change being that tenure rights are not secure. As such, while rangeland continues to be used as it had before the Land Act in many cases, what has changed is the state's claim over the space and the power to establish user rights and conditions. This situation reflects a contradiction in which modalities of ownership do not necessarily reflect modalities of usage on the landscape. Actors in such spaces, or territories, undergo a series negotiations. Who lays claim to such spaces and what negotiations can allow access to a space's set of benefits (i.e. resources, shelter, travel corridors, etc.)? What are the spatial and temporal extents of these claims? These negotiations are made through a set of power relations in which perceived claims over space are used to legitimize territorial boundaries and allowable activities. Territory, according to Storey (2018), "is a word frequently used to refer to an area of land claimed by a state" while territoriality "is normally seen as the actions or behaviors

used to control or exert power over a geographically designated space” (p.34). The distinction between these two terms is important as the former merely expresses a unit of space while the latter is a social process of contestation and negotiation over that space. As such, this contestation provides avenues to explore power relations, discourses, and perceptions related to the landscape.

What is interesting about the Bhutanese landscape is that the state and local resource users are not the only actors laying claim over space. Non-human actors emerge as powerful claimants of territory legitimized by generations of Buddhist practitioners. Pommaret (2004) discusses territorial deities in Bhutan noting that “people have a very clear idea of the space – the territory – ruled by the *yul lha* [territorial deity] and can even indicate its exact limits” (p.49). While Pommaret (2004) focuses her attention on larger regional deities, other research supports a breadth of scale related to deities laying claim over regions, valleys, villages, households and even individuals (see Choden, 1999; Ura 2001; Kuyakanon and Gyeltshen, 2017; Allison, 2019).

In this research, we propose to explore the process of territoriality in Bhutan as it relates to sacred spaces. We conceptualize the actions of deities as labour, labour that works to impose power and establish territorial boundaries. In turn, human actors perceive this labour/power and conceptualize boundaries of influence, a process of territorialisation. However, these boundaries are fluid and porous (see Sassen, 2013), allowing flux that contradict strict boundary formations and rather support overlapping territories (Dyson-Hudson and Smith, 1978) in which government authorities, regulatory permits, private property, and other contemporary technocratic methods for delineating space contest spiritual claims. The power of deities is constantly negotiated with human actors adopting new forms of resource use and settlement patterns. These territoriality processes (that of contemporary society and of spiritual deities) represent a dialectical tension in which overlapping territories are perceived by local communities. How do communities navigate these multiple claims of territory and expressions of power? What are the repercussions of declining territorial claims of deities in the landscape? And finally, how do such territorial claims impact the relationship that local people have with the broader landscape? To this last question we turn to Claude Raffestin’s work (2012; also see Klausner, 2012) in which he conceptualizes relational aspects of territory.

We recognize the immense potential that the Bhutanese context has for engaging with critical human geography and environmental humanities. These fields are rich with theoretical material that can both be fortified and challenged by cultural specificities in the south-eastern Himalaya. As such, this research serves as an initial intervention to connect empirical material from Bhutan with such thought. Specifically, we contribute to territoriality and Bhutanese literatures by dovetailing Raffestin’s relational territory with sacred space analyses. What is shown is that the labour of deities establishes boundaries that manipulate how space is perceived and acted upon by human actors. Further, territoriality processes engage human and non-human actors in active negotiations in which territories change and overlap, acting in a porous manner in which modern and spiritual claims of space are intertwined. In what follows we first review the process of territoriality in light of Raffestin’s work related to labour and relationality. We then show how this work relates to scholarship related to Bhutanese deities and the existing spiritual landscape. After which, we present findings from Bhutan canvassed from numerous rural communities from the western region of the country.

Specifically we draw on research conducted from 2016-2018 from the communities of Haa, Laya, and Phobjikha. To conclude we summarize lessons from these case studies that reflect on issues of labour, territory, relationality in the struggle over space in Bhutan.

Territory as relational

Part of the interaction that actors have with the landscape is a perception of territory. While modern perceptions of territory are dominated by state influence in which boundaries of governance are established and defended, this constitutes a small portion of territory-making that occurs. Territory may manifest in physical barriers of demarcation, but may also be perceived spaces that are commonly understood within a community. Duque-Wilckens et al. (2019) show how non-human species manifest aggression when protecting perceived territories which allow individuals to access benefits such as access to food, shelter and mating opportunities. Further, work in anthropology also works to establish resource distribution as a determining factor for human spatial organization (Dyson-Hudson and Smith, 1978). This setting aside of space is conducted in a way that powerful actors determine ownership, use of resources and restrictions/prescriptions that must be applied to interactions within these spaces and extends much more broadly beyond state boundaries.

Critical geography has used the term territoriality as a way to explore how territory is perceived and established by actors, which has resulted in numerous conflicts (Luna-Nemecio, 2019; Fang and Li, 2020). In particular, indigenous and marginalized communities have experienced a plethora of inequalities as historically perceived territories are integrated into a modern systems of land distribution. Privatization and government appropriation of land have been a dominant modes of ensuring that land is productive in a capitalist economy and has ensured efficiency in resource use. However, at times this has been done at the expense of social welfare in order to benefit economic hegemony as new forms of accumulation and alienation result from these capitalist relations. Bosniak(2007) promotes the concept of ‘ethical territory’ which she defines as “the conviction that rights and recognition should extend to all persons who are territorially present within the geographical space of a national state simply by virtue of that presence” (p.389). Bosniak uses this approach to legitimize ethical ways of interacting based on an actor’s presence within a space, rather than one’s legal status as a way of determining individual rights and obligations of the state. This creativity in the use of territoriality interjects morality within debates around immigration and how space can be used to justify corrective actions.

One corrective action that is of particular significance to this research is the work of Raffestin (1986, 1995, and 2012) who promotes relational aspects of territory and territoriality. Raffestin (2012) claims that territory is “socially produced space” (p.122) in which “territory results from the projects of labor – energy and information – by a community in a given space” (p.126). Labour is of particular significance due to its ability to interact and produce well-being through interaction with the physical environment. Humans extract resources and as a result also construct abstract notions of territory that are perceived by those that engage in labour on the landscape. Raffestin goes on to critique the field of geography for its lack of emphasis on labour, as “labor is a constitutive category

of territoriality, because it lies at the origin of power. Without labor there is neither transformation nor conservation of maintenance of ecosystems” (p.128). To conceptualize the relationality of territory further, Raffestin uses the terms ‘exteriority’ (the physical landscape) and ‘alterity’ (social space) as means to analyse labour’s influence. In this relationship labour serves as a mediator that asserts control over physical space (exteriority), but is also used to access space, interact with space, produce barriers that include/exclude (alterity), thus the creation of territory. In these relations, labour serves as “the ‘original mediator’ that allows mobilizing and ordering the ‘world of things’” (Klauser, 2012, p.115).

Labour as a form of power is an important equation for Raffestin, as this allows him to further dissect components of labour. Klauser (2012) notes:

Raffestin distinguishes between two basic means or components of power: ‘information’ and ‘energy’. As a variable combination of energy and information, power is both genuinely related to knowledge formation (the accumulation and ordering of information) and to the accumulation and deployment of energy. With this conceptual construct Raffestin also connects energy and information with concepts of ‘labor’... and ‘mediation’(the concrete and abstract means setting the conditions for satisfying individual or collective needs in terms of energy and information) (pp.113-114).

Here we find that power manifests in both information and energy, which serve as tools to order both physical and social space. ‘Knowledge is power’ is a colloquial saying that illustrates the importance of accumulating information. Information presents numerous opportunities to create new technologies that aid in the production of space, while energy is the physical outworking of this knowledge. As such, labour is understood as ‘informed energy’ (Raffestin, 1995), which incorporates both components of power, and serves as a means to mediate both physical and social space. This mediation work is critical as labour not only represents the “relational understanding of human being-in-the-world” but also the medial action in which “socio-spatial relationships” (Klauser, 2012, p.114) are established. Labour mediates the landscape and the agent that acts within it. An agent engages and perceives their surroundings only through the act of labour, imposing power that manipulates physical space in order to produce a satisfaction of needs. Here lies the heart of Raffestin’s relational theory of territoriality; agents use labour as a mediator to perceive, understand, and act within that which becomes territory, and in turn particular social relations and norms are established that guide interaction within that space. However, to date this work has not been applied to contexts that expand the notion of actors on and within the landscape. Work by Latour (2004, 2005), Escobar (2016, 2019) and others challenge us to think critically about the social landscape of humans, which more often than not incorporates non-human entities. Raffestin’s relational theory, then, is complicated by the Bhutanese landscape in which spiritual entities also exert influence making territorial claims. Therefore, the Bhutanese context affords a strategic and creative expansion of Raffestin’s theoretical work.

Bhutan's spiritual landscape

The actions of deities, as perceived by local Bhutanese, represent powerful forms of influence that shape biophysical and social space. As such, spiritual territories are commonly understood and enforced by deity labour within the landscape, imposing a process of negotiation between deities and human society over space (territoriality). With much of this spiritual landscape dominated by Buddhist ideals and philosophy that have come to characterize Bhutanese society, there remains an undercurrent of animistic folk traditions often referred to collectively as *Bon*. While *Bon* does not have a strict set of beliefs and practices prescribed by a unified clergy, it is understood as a pre-Buddhist tradition within the Himalayan region. As such, many of the deities associated with *Bon* were 'tamed' with the spread and dominance of Buddhism. Samuel (2013) describes the activities of Padmasambhava (Guru Rinpoche) who, starting in Tibet, "subjugated the local deities through his Tantric power and forced them to take oaths of obedience to the Dharma" (p.78). While this work was continued by other Buddhist deities and human followers, "this process was never fully achieved." (p.78). what resulted, then, was a lively spiritual landscape in which both enlightened and unenlightened beings dominated space.

This history of *Bon* within Bhutan has resulted in a number of traditions/practices that still remain within the country. Pommaret (2006) highlights these practices known as *Bon chos* and notes that "practitioners...are usually devout Buddhist. However, when performing rituals dedicated to local deities, they become non-Buddhist practitioners" (p.2). This suggests that allegiances are constantly negotiated, especially as it impacts the daily lives of human agents within the landscape. Pommaret (2006) goes on to feature previous scholarly work that examines such practice in the country, specifically a collection published by the Centre for Bhutan Studies (CBS) (2004) known as *Wayo, Wayo – voices from the past*. In the collection, the numerous authors dissect case studies from around the country in which *Bon* rituals are conducted to appease local deities seeking protection over agricultural activities and human well-being. Rapten (2004), from the same volume, notes that "Bonpo [*Bon* practitioners] are known for their knowledge and skills in harmonizing relationship between humans and those spirits...they play an important role as intermediaries...promote human health and well-being. They also exorcise evil influences, carry out divinations, and suggest possible remedies" (p.72). These divinations, known as *mo*, are critical rituals in which the *Bonpo* seek to understand how a community has harmed a particular deity (Pommaret 2006, Maurer, 2019). However, in recent years many such practices have devolved, become less visible, resulting in less practitioners. Responding to this, many lay Buddhist practitioners (*gomchen*) have adopted the roles previously conducted by the *Bonpo*.

Pommaret (2004) is a useful text for framing a deity's role within a specific territory, and how these territories are determined. Territory is understood as being the extent to which a local deity can exert power and influence. She comments that local deities are sometimes referred to as "gNas po [*neypo*], [or] 'host', which reflects the deity's ownership of the place, and the inhabitants are therefore considered as his or her guests. This implies that, as in every society, host and guest have duties towards each other and have to respect a certain code of conduct so that the cohabitation can be

harmonious” (p.44). Space then is understood as belonging to agents beyond the human realm, while humans use this space through acts of propitiation. A relationship between human agents and deities is grounded in this understanding where the *yul lha* (territorial deity) protects “his or her territory...this includes not only human beings but also cattle and the whole landscape, and implies a strong notion of ownership” (p.51). Therefore, while there may be some element of Yi-Fu Tuan’s *Landscapes of Fear* (1980), there also exists a sense of belonging to and protection provided by local deities.

It should also be noted that there exists a hierarchy of deities in Bhutan as it relates territorial scope. Again, Pommaret (2004), recognizes that “each territory has its deity, each cluster of houses on the territory also has a minor deity” (p.44). The notion of scale is important in that while a more powerful regional deity (*yul lha*) may exert power over a territory that spans multiple valleys, less powerful deities may operate within this territory at smaller scales. Thus, there are overlapping territories that may be understood at regional, valley, village, household and even individual’s scales. Choden (1999) highlights a number ‘malevolent spirits’ in the Tang valley of Bumthang Dzongkhag which are understood as operating at much smaller scales than the *yul lha*, and are viewed as being harmful requiring numerous rituals to ward them off. Being unenlightened, these deities nonetheless “impinge on the lives of the people and compel interaction on a daily basis” (p.1).

Allison (2019) also recognizes these ‘worldly deities’ and emphasizes their importance in the day to day interactions of Bhutanese within the landscape. The recognition of deity territory shapes human behaviour “through a variety of geographical and temporal prohibitions” (Allison, 2019, p.11) such as “the diversion or reconsideration of human construction and resource use” (p.1). Further, Allison highlights that these interactions between humans and deities expresses “a relational ontology that views place as sacred and as the site of on-going reciprocal negotiation between humans and the natural world” (p.13). To express this relationality further, as it pertains to territory, territoriality, and the spiritual landscape, we now move to share our own findings from Bhutan.

Methods

The data that follows is a culmination of material gathered from 2016-2018. During this period, 3-4 separate field work stints were conducted each year ranging from periods of 4-14 days. Locations included Phobjikha valley (Wangduephodrang Dzongkhag), Haa valley (Haa Dzongkhag), and Laya (Gasa Dzongkhag). This multi-site ethnographic study employed field observations and semi-structured interviews. A total of 52 interviews were conducted, which included 25 females and 27 males. Interviews were conducted in local dialects, facilitated by student researchers, and later transcribed into English. NVivo 11 software was then used to code data according to emergent themes identified by the authors.

It should be noted that the original purpose of these fieldwork stints were to explore local community impacts from the tourism sector, which dominates a majority of economic activity within Bhutan. This work resulted in a number of findings related to divergences in socio-cultural and human-environment relations (see Montes and Kafley, 2019; Montes et al., 2019). However, findings

from this work diverged from the limited scope of tourism revealing numerous avenues for exploring human-environment relations. Issues emerged such as perceptions of the environment, cosmological interactions, and identity formations that were all associated with particular local landscapes. As such, significant data emerged revealing potentialities well beyond the original scope of tourism.

Results

The results from each location revealed themes related to relationality and territoriality, thus the affinity with Raffestin's work. However, as the data will show, there is a unique application of Raffestin's theoretical approach onto a spiritual landscape. The data has been categorized according to interviewee responses based on the following; 1) demarcations of deity territory, 2) the labour of deities that manifests through protection and/or aggression, and 3) human interactions that result from particular restricted or prescribed behaviours.

Demarcations

The establishment of deity territories reveals a process of territoriality. Local Bhutanese perceive boundary formations through an exchange of interactions with deities, in which spiritual beings legitimize claims through power. However, these boundaries are fluid, changing constantly due to numerous variables such as waning power relations, seasonality, and interactions with other deities. Another characteristic of these demarcations is multiple scales in which, depending on the deity, the extent of the territory varies.

One particular type of deity that materialized consistently amongst Bhutanese communities is the *lu*. Allison (2019) describes the *lu* as "a subterranean spirit associated with prosperity and the maintenance of hierarchy, which can be easily offended by ritual or material pollution" (p.11). The following response from a 37 year old male from Laya expresses such a relationship:

We believe that there are lu present in the land and tshen present in the trees, so we conduct annual rituals performed by Pow-Phajo to please the deities and to have blessings from the deities. There are stupas present in each household which is constructed to please the deities of the area. Most of the stupas are built for the lu because we believe that the deities inhabit the land. When we build our houses it is believed that we need to ask permission from lu to let us construct our house on the lu's land and we need to construct a stupa for the lu to show our gratitude.



Figure 1: Lu shrine in Phobjikha valley

Part of this demarcation process involves the building of *stupas* (stone shrines), that are used to provide oblations for the *lu*. The *stupas*, then, serve as a visible demarcation, but also a centre piece for human-deity interactions for which humans show submission to the deity's power (see Figure 1). As well, we see these particular demarcations at the household scale, this is further supported from Laya and Haa:

Yes, there is a lu near my house. There is a small stupa built where the lu is supposed to reside. The lu used to be inside the boundary of our house but now that has changed and the lu is outside the boundary. When the lu was within the boundary of our house, we used to worship and offer stuff such as milk but we don't do it anymore. (26 year old female, Laya)

It is believed that lus are born wherever human homes are constructed. If I construct a house in a place where there is no lu then after the construction is done then the lu will inhabit in the area where the house is constructed because it is believed that lu will be there if humans are present. Even I have a lu in front of my house. It is natural to have lu in front of the house. Before constructing a house in an area, that area will be just land, but after construction the lu will inhabit the land. (50 year old female, Haa)

If we pick up stones from the areas which is inhabited by deities then we need to put the stone back from where we picked up because if we keep the stoned then the deities will harm us. The reason for the deities for harming us is because the stones are considered as a part of deity's palace. When we construct a house we need to conduct mo [divinations] in order to see if the land is fine. If there is tshen[classification of deity] in that land then we need to conduct a

ritual asking the deity to let us construct the house. Here the deity acts like a landlord and the person who is conducting the ritual acts like a buyer. We should conduct the ritual before construction so that the house will be built on goodwill. (39 year old female, Haa)

These quotes show that demarcations are everchanging. Deities may choose to migrate, but also human migration causes territorial changes. To build a house results in the creation of new localized territories in which deities spring up to take control. As such, human actors are never seen to have ‘control’ of a particular location but serve as residents in spaces that are already owned. And even if the spaces are not owned at the time, the establishment of human settlements initiates the creation of deity territory, showing that there is a relational connection between humans, the land, and the deity that stakes claim to the territory. However, other non-human actors can also influence territorial boundaries, as the following portrays:

There is another story about how there used to be lakes in the wet land areas. Once there used to be a huge lake in the wet land areas. The deity of the lake went underground so that the cranes could migrate to that area. Cranes did not have any area to settle during migration so the lake deity moved down below the ground. The reason that the deity moved was because the deity was touched by how the loyal the cranes were to their partners, so as a reward for that the deity moved. (Phobjikha field notes)

At a greater scale, beyond the household level, Haa valley is well known for its great protector deity *Aup Chundu*. It is believed that *Aup Chundu* was subdued by Padmasambhava and became a protector of Buddhism, although he retained a number of qualities such as being “gullible and an alcohol-lover” (Pommaret, 1994, p.10) but also wrathful and protective of his territory and those who dwell there. The three brother mountains, known collectively as *Meriphuensum*, that dominate the valley are said to be the abode of many minor deities, but primarily territory belonging to *Aup Chundu*. A 57 year old female from Haa comments:

I worship Aup Chundu because he is the protector of Haa Dzongkhag and now I am staying in his territory so I need to worship him.

Our village is Aup Chundu’s territory so it is normal to be inhabited by humans and deities. There is benefit for us if there are deities in the area because if we are good to them then they do well to us and some time they also bless us.

These quotes portray a sense of allegiance that is associated with *Aup Chundu*. This allegiance is due to the interviewee’s acknowledgement that they are in a territory that is not their own. Further, being in *Aup Chundu*’s territory also affords them protection if they submit to his power and authority. As such, knowing the demarcations of various deities is critical as one negotiates a landscape. The following story of *Aup Chundu* reflects further on how allegiances are made with the establishment of

territories, with this case illustrating negotiation that involves multiple deities and human populations. In this story *Aup Chundu* intervenes on behalf of the famous Lama Sherab Mebar who stole treasures from a sacred lake deity in Haa:

Aup Chundu was walking around the mountains when he saw the lake [deity] on its way towards Paro. Sensing the danger of the lake flooding and washing away the villagers, he tried to negotiate and apologised to the lake for the unfortunate event. He then built a wall, as a treaty asking the lake not to cross it. Even the Paro people on the other side were asked not to cross it. The Lama lost all of the religious treasures on the way, except for the cymbals. So the reason why all people from the twenty dzongkhags come to witness Paro Tsechu [annual religious festival] is to receive blessing from this particular treasure. The cymbals are the main artefact of Paro Tshechu. The walls built by Aup Chundu earlier, were not built of stones, but with sheep and goat excrements. The walls were built a certain number of kilometres away from the town and the lake, as a border demarcation for people not to cross it, which even to this day people believe to be true. (45 year old male, Haa)

Here we see *Aup Chundu* actively establishing territory working as a mediator between another deity and a human being. Further, this work has wide reaching implications as the border, which still exists today in the form of five *laptsas* (see Figure 2), is still recognized as a boundary in which those from Paro are not allowed to cross (also see Montes, Tshering, and Phuntsho, in review).



Figure 2: *Laptsa* boundary created by *Aup Chundu*

As a final note on the issue of demarcations, the data shows that people are actively engaged with deities in the determination of boundaries, constituting a process of territoriality. These boundaries determine certain allegiances, feelings of belonging, and even identity formation. Further, part of this process entails a recognition of power that deities impose on the landscape.

Protection and Aggression

The power that deities impose, using Raffestin's terminology, represents a particular form of labour. Their workings within space manifest as particular actions of protection and aggression that are imposed both on biophysical (exteriority) and social space (alterity). Protection is one form of deity labour that is expressed by interlocutors. As we saw in the previous section, those who live in particular territories can also expect some sort of protection from governing deities. The following are a number of similar expressions from the various field sites:

People believe, in most cases, that there are deities residing in boulders. Some even build homes for them so that they get protection. (36 year old female, Phobjikha)

I think that the swamp where the cranes come is inhabited by mermaids which bless us with good fortune and harvest if we worship them... I have heard from others that if there are unusual rocks or trees around our house then that rock or tree will be inhabited by lu. If we worship the lu then there are chances that the lu will bless our family members. (56 year old female, Phobjikha)

If we offer offerings on time then the deities support us and protect us from evil spirits. (55 year old female, Haa)

If we have an older person among our company and we're travelling, they keep faith in such things and pray to protect the group when taking rest or sleeping in a different place. So if we are in the company of an elder person like that, we follow suit and pray with them as well to take care of us while we rest in 'your' territory. They say even if we sleep at the foot of a big tree, the tree might be the abode of deities, so we pray to them for protection. (24 year old male, Laya)

There is one deity who is believed to look after the whole community, he is called Aup Gumo. It is believed that if people worship him and pray to him, he looks after them. There are actually several such deities... if we go a little more up, about 3 hours from where we are now, there is one known as Aup Yenzop and further yet there is one known as Aum Dum. Unlike the previous two males, this one is a female. She is the overall deity of our community. Whatever we pray for, it is granted by this deity. (20 year old male, Laya)

The performance of deities in their respective territories is recognized by human tenants as power that demands not only allegiances, but also a fearful respect. Interviewees recognize that family health, prosperous crops, and safe travels are the outcomes of these powerful actors that claim territory. However, while protection is one positive form of labour that manifests, aggression also surfaces as a

primary activity that dominates deity-human interaction. Interviewees express the following experiences:

If these deities get offended, firstly, giving an example, last year we extracted a lot of stones from Aup Mayep's place. So in this time, numerous bears came from the forest into the houses and destroyed people's belongings. It's like this was a sign from these deities. We also hear about our domestic animals dying when the deities are angry and at night we hear strange noises...if we dirty the place, some people get mentally sick and lose their mind. (20 year old male, Laya)

If we offend lu then our body will have small lacerations that start appearing and if we do not conduct rituals then our sickness will get severe. If we do not react fast toward lu's action then there are chances that we might get paralyzed. It is difficult to appease lu once they are offended...and it is difficult for us to understand why it harms us. (39 year old female, Haa)

There was a cave in which there lived a family of four (father, mother, son and daughter). When the family along with their own yak, which was carrying load, were headed to a location, they came across another yak. The two yaks got into a duel. The father prostrated and offered them milk to make peace. When the other yak refused to back down, the father started throwing stones at it. The other yak started backing slowly and reached a lake. The fight however only ended when the other yak killed the family yak near the lake. They were shaken by the death of their yak so they disposed of the bloodied carcass in the lake. The lake deity got angry because they dirtied the lake and so the lake pulled the son and daughter in and killed them. So if you offer prayers, they will bless you. Otherwise, the lake could cause you harm. (52 year old male, Haa)

Here we see that the power of deities not only protect but also harm. Such harm can take the form of physical harm, paralysation, death of cattle, and death of family members. While these experiences indicate the importance of respecting and being mindful of not offending deities within their territories, aggressive actions have also been reported to go beyond established boundaries. The 39 year old female from Haa who reports the need for rituals to appease deities (quoted above) also reflects on a story that her mother told her:

Once there was a man who had cut down all the trees and taken out all the rocks from a lu's area. That man ran away from Bhutan to Tibet because that man had offended the lu and the lu was following the man. The lu wanted to kill that man. It took years for the lu to find the man. The lu transformed itself into a leaf. The man was staying in a Tibetan monastery as refugee and that was the time when the lu was able to get a hold of him. My mother was the one who told me about this story and she said that the moral of the story is that wherever we go the lu will find us if we have harmed the lu somehow.

The labour of some deities is therefore understood to surpass territorial boundaries, especially in cases of retribution. Not only does this represent the power that deities hold to impact their surroundings, but it also placates human residents and motivates particular behaviours, rituals, and oblations (see Ura, 2001). It is to these restrictions and prescriptions of behaviour that we now turn.

Restrictions & Prescriptions

The behaviours of humans is directed by the power of deities experienced within the landscape, reminiscent of Sahlins' (2017) 'original political society', thus impacting social spaces (alterity). As shown above, the power may exert protective measures that build trust and heart felt allegiances, but may also be in the form of aggression motivating fear responses. In connection with these motivations for particular types of behaviour, norms have developed over time in which particular behaviours are either restricted or prescribed. Interviewees repeatedly expressed behaviours and actions within these two categories. While restrictions were often framed in terms of activities they should not conduct within or near deity territories, prescriptions primarily dealt with specific rituals that should be performed in order to gain protection, favour or permission for particular activities.

Restrictive activities seemed simple to qualify, usually dealing with cleanliness or noise. Deities are understood to enjoy cleanliness in both human hygiene and physical space, and are angered easily over pollution such as garbage, certain smells, and burning of various items. Certain deities, often in more remote places away from settlements such as alpine lakes, are understood to act in immediate harmful behaviours when people make loud noises through yelling, singing, or other means. The following are reports from interviewees regarding such restrictions:

I heard the greatest sin that a person can do is burn things on earth because there are deities present on the earth. We believe that in my village there are lu and tshen present in the forest so we should avoid slash and burn techniques as it harms the deities' areas by polluting the air... the areas which are inhabited by the deities should not be touched and we should not cut down trees or move rocks around as the deities will harm us and our domestic animals. (37 year old male, Laya)

In order to appease them we can't just say sorry, we have to appease them by accepting our wrong doings and to clean up and vow to keep it even cleaner than before. It can even cause epidemics and disasters. (40 year old male, Haa)

That area is inhabited by tshen and lu. The area is swampy so it is an indication that deities are present there. We can eat only the walnuts that have fallen down...we cannot pluck the walnuts from the trees. Common people like us cannot cut or break any plants near the temple. Only monks and tshampas [those committed to long-term meditation] are allowed to pluck plants and fruits from the temple. (39 year old female, Haa)

There is a lake is known as Lake Wangduna and there is no such thing as people trekking to visit this lake because it is right at the top of the mountain. There are beliefs that we should not shout and scream or throw stones into the lake. If done, there will be sudden hailstorms and heavy rainfall...there shouldn't even be little amounts of pollution such as...dead bodies should not be brought near it or women during their period month should not go near the lake as well. If done so, the weather becomes extremely foggy and remains that way. (31 year old male, Phobjikha)

Contrasting the emphasis on what should not be done within and near deity territories, prescriptive activities were often associated with how to avoid harm and minimize the anger that may have been induced by the acting out of restricted behaviours. Religious rituals and oblations were often the remedies prescribed. While *mo* (divination) and *sho* (ritual dice) practices can be used to determine specific demands of deities, many prescribed rituals have become common practice. Interviewees comment:

If we want to appease the deity then we need to hire a monk to let the deity know that we will never offend the deity again. We need to promise the deity that we will not offend the deity and the ritual should be conducted by a monk near the deity's place. Rituals are conducted by monks to search for solutions and we need to conduct Lu-Thap thrice a month. Lu-Thap is conducted to please the deity and it is conducted annually to get blessings from the lu. We have to conduct different ritual for different deities because each deity has their own ritual and scripts. While conducting rituals for tshen we need sho [ritual dice], meat, and fruits but when we conduct ritual for lu we should not put meat or alcohol because lu are considered to be pure so they do not consume any kind of edible which can corrupt them. It is best if we can offer milk, butter, and curd while conducting ritual for lu. (37 year old male, Laya)

Then the people from my village invited Phasho, a pawoo [someone who subdues demons], who turned himself into a tiger and subdued the demon and that's why at present the village is peaceful. In Tseulakha, people who are working on the road and cut trees are still harmed. These people become sick and die if timely rituals are not performed. They don't die soon, rather they will be sick for a month or even a year. (Male Focus Group, Phobjikha)

When people from our community get sick we conduct mo and may find out that the tshen is angered by our action. I think tshen are not angry but from what I believe I think that tshen are hungry. As I said before deities are like us so they also get hungry...when we are sick we will conduct ritual and offer edibles. In the ritual we offer meat, eggs, milk, butter, cheese, rice, and sang according to the deity that we are pleasing. (42 year old male, Haa)

If we conduct rituals that were conducted by our ancestors then there is no problem because that way we do not offend the deities and the deities do not harm us. If we do not disturb the deities then they do not harm us and our agriculture products grow well. If we do not continue the rituals conducted by our ancestors then there are more chances of the community being in pain and becoming sick. (57 year old female, Haa)

The following also shows how these prescriptions may change over time and through the influence of other actors:

Before Je Khenpo [chief abbot of monastic body in Bhutan] banned the consumption of meat, each year our community had to sacrifice a yak in the honour of Aup Chundu and it is believed that the ritual originated during Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal. The sacrifice was conducted because there was a story of how Aup Chundu came victorious from a war, so in order to honour his bravery yaks were sacrificed. Je Khenpo had the yak sacrifice banned in Haa and he had asked the consent of Aup Chundu by conducting sho. When Je Khenpo conduct sho to ask for the ban of yak sacrifice to Aup Chundu the sho showed a good number indicating that Aup Chundu agreed on not having yak sacrifice. It has almost been five years that the yak sacrifice was banned in our community and till now nothing bad or unusual has happened. (57 year old female, Haa)

The above data reveals a sense of duty that humans have to appease those who rule territory. As subjects may appease a local king, so do human tenants appease their deity landlords. The deities make their presence known by conducting acts of labour that establish territory, and these demarcated spaces come with particular expectations of how tenants will behave. However, as we have seen, territories can be adjusted and so can these restricted and prescribed behaviours. Je Khenpo is seen to intervene on behalf of the people of Haa in order to align pre-Buddhist ritual practice with established norms of the Drukpa Kagyu sect of Tibetan Buddhism that dominates Buddhist practice in Bhutan. Therefore, while *Aup Chundu* is a deity that has established his own expectations for the people of Haa, there is a history of great saints (i.e. Padmasambhava and Je Khenpo) mediating this relationship.

During field work in 2018 we had the opportunity to observe a *bon cho* ritual in Haa valley. Pommaret (2006) describes such rituals as those “which ward off evil spirits or propitiate local deities and are performed by practitioners who are neither Buddhist monks...nor lay-practitioners” (p.2). During this three day event we observed how pre-Buddhist rituals were integrated into the lives of a community that full-heartedly identified as Buddhist. While Buddhist monks did not directly take part, they stood at a distance as observers neither contesting nor disapproving of the rituals being conducted. With this event the community embraced recognition of their submissive roles as tenants conducting oblations to a host of deities that impose power over the land. Through these ritual actions human actors ensure wellbeing for their community.

Conceptualizing the Labour of Deities

The labour of deities is represented by their ability to impact their surroundings. By applying Raffestin's emphasis on labour as a form of power, we see a more nuanced approach to understanding the deity-human relationship. The concept of labour, with its emphasis on energy and information, affords us the ability to describe deity interactions in a novel manner while also making linkages to traditional knowledge (TK) which has seen a resurgence of interest in academic and development communities. Energy is the power to impact, the effort released, but can never fully be independent of information. Energy requires direction for which information helps provide. As such, labour is 'informed energy' (Raffestin, 1995). In relation to deities, the cases point towards an experience of deity power in the landscape (energy) that is dependent upon a storied history of this relational activity (information).

Community members continuously reported interactions with deities either directly, or indirectly through other community members. This has resulted in the culmination of a large body of community knowledge and experiences that are storied over time, resulting in a form of traditional knowledge. Whether interlocutors had personal first-hand experience or not was not a determining factor in one's perception of a deity's power. Rather, what was more pivotal in one's understanding was the broader community's shared experience. This has profound implications for understanding perceptions of deity labour as a relational community experience that overlaps with previous investigations of TK. In Raffestin terms, then, we relate the informational component of deity labour to the storied experiences that a community creates and draws upon. Interlocutors are knowledgeable of their community's experience, which to them legitimizes the reality of deity interactions, and thus territorial claims. The actual stories are told and build up a storehouse of knowledge that is continually drawn upon by communities to make decisions. This historical body of knowledge is also in continuation as the relationship between communities and deities progresses over time. Therefore, the labour of deities within the landscape is dynamic and ongoing.

What is also revealed, however, is that the labour of deities also *mediates*. It not only serves to impact the landscape, but it also becomes the way in which people understand the landscape. Mediation is an act in which the performance (labour) serves as a way to understand biophysical and social space. The people of Haa, for example, heavily draw upon stories of *Aup Chundu* to understand the landscape and their own community interactions. *Meriphuensum* (the three brother hills) is understood in terms of *Aup Chundu's* historical activity, and the calendar is marked with numerous rituals for which the community comes together to celebrate his protection. Therefore, *Aup Chundu's* labour is used to understand both exteriority and alterity. The expression and experience of his power is the *labour*, while the use of this experience to interpret and understand biophysical and social space is the activity of *mediation* that the labour affords.

These laborious acts of deities then constitute the process of territoriality. Labour/power is expressed by deities, for which human communities respond through various behaviours and understandings of the landscape. These behaviours are directed to obey the restrictions and prescriptions in ways that comply with established demarcations. This social process, between deities

and humans, results in territories. And because territoriality is a negotiated process, these boundaries are fluid, changing over time, which also makes them malleable and at risk.

As Bhutan modernizes, cosmological space is contested at an increasing rate. It was noted through field observation, but also interviewees, that many who acknowledge local deities are of a previous generation, in which Bhutanese youth have less committed allegiances. This has created space for different forms of power, in a more traditional sense of local and state authorities, to take root and trump divine actors on the landscape. At the opening of this paper we spoke of the recent land reforms that have reterritorialized the landscape. This has not been done without some confusion amongst local rural communities. Yak herders in Haa previously consulted deities through *sho* (Montes & Kafley, 2019), however this practice is likely to devolve due to novel property rights that supersede these ritual performances. As well, policies related to natural resource management introduce novel ways of interacting with the landscape, such as community forests and permitting, which divert attention away from deity consultations. Ultimately, what is seen is a conglomerate of overlapping territories that compete for allegiances and recognition from human actors. While the data presented here illustrates a relational process of territoriality between deities and human communities, modern processes will certainly change the territorial landscape in the near future.

Conclusion

We would like to conclude by stating that Raffestin's theory was very much an afterthought in terms of our data collection and analysis. With field work being completed some years ago, and initially focussed on the ecotourism sector, we wrestled to understand many of the implications of the data set. What the relational approach to territory allowed us was a novel way to conceptualize perceptions of territory and deity interactions within space. While Raffestin's work has never been applied to the context of deities, we find great synergies in its application for interpreting the lived-experience of rural Bhutanese where biophysical, social, and cosmological spaces are intertwined. Further, we also recognize that other possibilities exist to which this data could be interpreted, such as within environmental humanities that is currently a burgeoning field of theoretical work.

Deities express labour, which serves as a form of power, in which they make their presence known while also claiming and demarcating territory. This labour makes an impact on biophysical space (exteriority) by creating boundaries that then guides human actions (i.e. settlements and resource extraction) and also social space (alterity) in which certain behaviours/rituals are performed. Through these interactions, there is *relation* or co-constitution between deity and space, deity and humans, and also humans and space. Therefore, as humans perceive and interact with deities, they also use this relationship to understand their surroundings.

This work points to profound resource management implications, as a long history of human-deity interactions have resulted in the current state of the environment in Bhutan, which is held in high regard internationally. To change these relations, or to manipulate long standing beliefs and ritual practices, will certainly also have outcomes for conservation practice in the country. Our field notes report one interviewee's loss of faith:

Aum Tshering does not believe in deities...long-time back she became sick and then she conducted mo. The mo showed that the deities were offended so they had to conduct rituals, but even after they conducted rituals she did not get better. So she went to the hospital and got cured. After that she lost her faith in deities. She does not have any stupa near her house. (Phobjikha field notes)

The implications of this story are that multiple challenges to spiritual and ritual adherences present themselves that go beyond struggles over territory. In a modern era that rejects the spiritual, allegiances to local deities wither. Local Bhutanese may even feel rejected and offended when they are not experiencing the protection and care of their *yul lha*. Due to the importance of traditional deity territory for the purpose of conservation, more work is required to understand the intricacies of these relations and how they can be further promoted/supported by policy and programs. In particular, emotional, or affective (see Singh, 2015; 2018), components that exist between deities and human communities could offer additional insight to how these relations are evolving.

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Migrant construction workers in Bhutan: Understanding Immigrant flows and their perceptions

RODERICK WIJUNAMAI

ABSTRACT: In this article, I describe, with the help of ethnographic vignettes, the lives and experiences of the Indian migrant labourers working in the construction sector in Bhutan. In so doing, I show how Bhutan has become a 'place of hope' for the construction workers, offering them ample reasons to stay on, for the maximum duration they desire. Furthermore, I position my argument in the larger pattern of the plains' populace mobility into the hills, in their search for 'new places for their survival'.

Ajay³ is a 26-year-old Bengali migrant from West Bengal, working in one of the construction sites in Thimphu. Ajay came to Bhutan about a year back with a few other migrant construction workers, to commence a 'secure' and better-paid employment. While he could have been among the other Indian labourers who migrate to places like Punjab, Haryana, or Kerala, where construction workers are paid much better than in his home state, he came to Bhutan owing to its proximity to West Bengal. 'I can be home in no time, in any event of emergency', he reasoned.

Ajay also mentioned the 'possibility' of going to other countries. He heard of construction workers being paid 'very well' in the Middle East. However, he inferred that 'it's a lot of hassle'. Knowing the right contractor is crucial, and many of them are 'not very reliable', Ajay said, unlike contractors dealing with construction work in Bhutan. Bhutan also offers him a longer duration of work, with a relatively higher wage rate. In India, he would have been paid on an hourly basis, every day, with no assurance of work the next day.

There are more than 40,000 Indian construction workers like Ajay in Bhutan (MoLHR, 2019, cited in Zangpo, 2020). While the construction sector provides the second-highest share of employment within the country, almost ninety per cent of them are non-Bhutanese (National Statistics Bureau, 2019). This makes Jaquelyn Poussot's (2018) statement very accurate: 'Indian labourers are everywhere in Bhutan'. Drawing insights from her fieldwork in 2016, Poussot – a psychologist who was also a researcher while living in Bhutan – remarked that the Indian labourers 'are faced with social stigma and neglect, along with poor living conditions, but they seem to be happy' (2018, p. 1). Moreover, she notes, this 'is the paradox of the invisible class who are, literally, moulding the very landscape of possibility for this country' (ibid: 3).

Poussot surely made some pertinent observations, yet some of her remarks regarding social stigma and neglect also appear a little impressionistic and anecdotal, with no sufficient data to support her claim. In this article, I describe, through ethnographic vignettes, the lives and experiences of the

³ All the interviewees are anonymized. The names of the construction workers in this paper are pseudonyms.

Indian migrant labourers working in the construction sector in Bhutan. In so doing, I show how Bhutan has become a ‘place of hope’ [similar to Karlsson and Kikon’s (2017) indigenous migrants’ ‘hope’ in the service sector of metropolitan India⁴] for the construction workers, offering them ample reasons to stay on, for the maximum duration they can. Then adopting a wider lens, I argue that the influx of Bengali labour migrants into Bhutan is part of a wider pattern in the region in which labour mobility progressively proceeds from the plains into the hills with these migrants searching for ‘new places for their survival’ (Siraj and Bal, 2017, p. 408).

Methodology

The data for this research was primarily collected through in-depth interviews, and ad-hoc ethnography through field visits, conducted by my student research assistants⁵. Eleven in-depth interviews were conducted on the migrant construction workers in three different construction sites in Thimphu, in the fall of 2019. Alongside these, to understand the youths’ perception, twelve in-depth interviews were conducted on employable youths living in Thimphu, within the same time frame. The recruitment of interviewees for the first data set focused on migrant construction workers from West Bengal, owing to their population dominance within the migrant construction workers in Bhutan. To supplement and triangulate it, I conducted four in-depth follow-up interviews from one of the construction sites, and several conversational interviews in different instances, with different stakeholders. Additionally, secondary sources such as newspaper clippings, social media discussions, NGO reports, and Government reports were consulted and used in the writing of this paper.

Locating the migrant construction workers

In Bhutan, while unemployment is a recurring concern, there continues to be a high demand for migrant workers, especially in the construction sector. Most of these migrant labourers come from the Indian state of West Bengal, an immediate neighbour of Bhutan’s main trade gate, which is Phuntsholing. A United Nation (UN) Situation Report (2014, p. 43) in this regard notes:

Bhutan is predominately a migrant-receiving country, as very few Bhutanese migrate abroad⁶. The Bhutanese labour force is reluctant to do manual jobs due to low wages and a negative stigma attached to this type of work. This has, consequently, resulted in a labour shortage and opened up opportunities for workers from neighbouring

⁴ The concept was borrowed from what anthropologists “Stef Jansen and Staffan Lofving describe as a ‘struggle for home’, a contest over how places are endowed with hope and a sense of possibility” (Karlsson and Kikon’s 2017, p. 14.).

⁵ In carrying out this research I had employed two student research assistants who are both students at RTC, to conduct and transcribe interviews.

⁶ The situation of out-migration has however changed in the last few years.

countries. The migrant labourers from abroad tend to have significantly lower pay scales.

On any given Sunday, the main streets and the market pockets of Thimphu are flooded by Indian labourers who work at the construction sites. The same scene, although to a lesser degree, is found in Phuntsholing⁷ (Chukha District) and Paro. Working from Monday through Saturday – as Sunday is their rest day and also a day for them to procure their week-long necessities – these labourers maintain a somewhat clientele relationship with specific shops and vendors. They know the exact (often best-priced) place to purchase their supplies. Calling them *bhaiya*⁸, and conversing with them in Hindi, the shopkeepers welcome them and attend to their list, with the equal attention they would give to other Bhutanese customers.

Come weekday, one will hardly find any of these labourers walking in the streets of Thimphu. Where do they all go? They confine themselves to the premises of the construction sites they work in. Only after an intensive eight hours of work, they retreat, in the evening, to their simple makeshift houses, and sometimes by the nearby local grocery, often drinking *Rockbee*, a cheap Bhutanese blended grape brandy. Interestingly, some of the younger aged labourers indulge in the *PUBG Mobile*⁹ or *PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds*, one of the most popular mobile games among the young generation today.

The coming of migrant labourers in substantial numbers in Bhutan dates back to the late 1980s when the country felt a 'strong need' for non-agricultural labour. This need was mostly to conduct infrastructure-related works, such as road constructions, hydro-projects, and so on, to roll out the country's modernisation project (Savada, 1991). Migrant workers as a whole constitute such a significant proportion of the workforce in the Bhutanese economy that the fourth objective of the Department of Labour, in the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources' (MoLHR) 2019 Annual Report reads: 'To strengthen foreign workers administration'.

While the National Assembly of Bhutan in 2004 decided to put a ceiling on incoming foreign workers to 45,000 (Palden, 2017), *The Bhutanese*¹⁰ reported the breach of this decision early in September 2012. Reporting about the then labour minister, Lyonpo Dorji Wangdi's statement made in May 2012, it cited the presence of 54,821 foreign workers with work permits (Wangmo, 2012). The figure has fallen over the years. However, with about 41,000 workers employed in the construction sector, as of June 2019, the count of these migrant workers in the construction sector alone still accounts for about ten per cent of the entire employment in the country (MoLHR, 2019,

⁷ Phuntsholing, despite being the most important border town, has lesser number of construction workers in comparison to Thimphu.

⁸ *Bhaiya* means brother in Hindi.

⁹ *PUBG or PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds* is an online multiplayer battle royale game developed by PUBG Corporation, a subsidiary of South Korean video game company Bluehole. The game is available on PC, Xbox, PlayStation and Mobile. The game was created by Brendan Greene (PlayerUnknown) and released back in 2017.

(See: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.tencent.ig&hl=en>)

¹⁰ *The Bhutanese* is a weekly newspaper in Bhutan.

cited in Zangpo, 2020). This has also translated to roughly Nu. 7bn (~ 92.6 million USD) remitted outside as payments for these foreign workers (RMA, 2019).

Flows and determinants of labour migration

At the macro level, the construction sector has always been a ‘key sector’ of the Bhutanese economy, featuring in every other sector as well. A synoptic look at the Eleventh Five Year Plan (FYP) reveals that the construction sector has consistently contributed substantially to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). At its lowest, (in the year 2008) it still contributed 11.43 per cent to the GDP (RGOB, 2013). As of 2018, the latest National Accounts Statistics notes that the construction sector accounts for 14.20 per cent of the national GDP, contributing about one percentage point to the GDP growth (National Statistics Bureau, 2019).

With the expansion of regional tourism, improved income, higher aspirations, and rapid urbanisation, in the past few years, the country has been witnessing a housing construction boom. This is reportedly fuelled by the ‘strong demand’ for rental apartments, shops, hotels and office space (Kharka, 2019), especially in Thimphu, Paro, Phuntsholing, and Wangdue. Furthermore, ‘the easy availability of loans from financial institutions has encouraged people to invest heavily in housing construction’ (ibid.). All these private housing enterprises, along with the many ongoing government construction projects, have led to high demand for construction workers. The demand for construction workers is of such a magnitude that, going by the current labourers’ population, it would mean roughly five per cent of the entire Bhutanese population would be needed in their absence to keep construction projects going.

Nonetheless, why is the Bhutanese involvement so low in the construction sector when there is already a rising unemployment problem routinely highlighted by policymakers, media, and academics? On May 23, 2019, a Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS) headline stated: ‘Unemployment rate [in Bhutan] highest in 2018 at 3.4 per cent’¹¹. The figure is a steep jump from 3.1 per cent in 2017, and 2.1 in 2016. The report then explains that ‘nearly 10,500 people were without work during the reference period, actively seeking and available for work’¹². The statistics for the year 2019 are yet to be published; however, the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) database, which pegs the figures a per cent lower¹³, estimates the 2019 figures to be higher than 2018.

While the statistics point to a relatively low figure, in comparison with the regional average or world average, the overall youth unemployment rate in the year 2018 is estimated at 15.7 per cent, a leap from 12.3% in 2017 (Labour Force Survey Report, 2019). Coupled with significant unaccounted youth underemployment, which is usually premised on ‘extremely low wages’, and part-time or

¹¹ <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=114622> (Accessed April 20, 2020)

¹² Ibid.

¹³ ILOSTAT database estimates unemployment rate in Bhutan in 2017 to be 2.358%, subsequently 2.303% in 2018, and 2.342 % in 2019 (Data retrieved March 1, 2020 from World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS?end=2019&locations=BT-AF-BD-IN-NP-MV-LK-PK&start=1991&view=chart>)

seasonal work (Pelzom, Tshering and Katel, 2018), at least some of them should have been absorbed in the construction sector. Why are they not? The answer is twofold: one is from the youth themselves, and the other from the employers.

Many of the youths my student research assistants interviewed, especially the school and college graduates, prioritised either employment in the public sector or going abroad. The National Statistics Bureau of Bhutan (2017) estimates that about 30 per cent of youth studying bachelor's degrees and above are abroad. Within this segment, many of them go abroad, not just to study but also to earn.

There is no systematic data collection on the out-migration of the Bhutanese population (UN, 2012). Still, the United Nations' Population Division projected the rate of Bhutanese out-migration rate to be about 4.2 per cent in the year 2019. While the details of these emigrants cannot be ascertained, the Royal Monetary Authority (RMA) reports a spike in remittances, in the past few years, with the maximum coming from Australia and the USA (Dorji, 2019). Approximately Nu 1.5 Bn. from Australia and Nu 1.3 Bn from the USA, Kuensel¹⁴ reported (ibid.), were remitted to the country in the year 2019 alone.

A document published by the Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs (2018) stated that, as of 2016, almost 6,000 migrants living in Australia were Bhutan born, within which the participation rate (for age 15 above) in the labour force was 56 per cent. This has created a spiral effect in the aspiration of the educated Bhutanese youth. Their desire to migrate is furthered by seeing and hearing about the lucrative remittances. With this, the number of youths who are willing to stay back and work in Bhutan is reduced significantly.

As for their employability in the construction sector, for many Bhutanese, especially the youth, interviews suggest that construction work is 'not dignified'. It is seen as an 'occupation of the Bengalis', or an 'occupation of the *Jagar*¹⁵' (as they put it) more broadly. Besides this, public media (such as Kuensel, BBS, The Bhutanese, and others) recurrently report on the lack in the skillset among the youth for construction work. Additionally, from the employers' side, the Indian migrant workers are seen as more skilful and 'experienced', as against the novice Bhutanese in the (construction) labour market. Most Bhutanese employers, apart from what has been mentioned, find it more economical to employ the Indian migrant construction workers too.

A consensual provision is put in place, perhaps to encourage the Bhutanese to join the workforce, where the Bhutanese workers are paid higher than the migrant workers, at least in the construction sector. While a skilled migrant mason earns anything from Nu. 500 to Nu. 800, and an unskilled migrant labourer (usually apprentices) earns Nu. 300 to Nu. 400, a Bhutanese involved in any of the two in construction work is to be paid about Nu. 200 above that.

After the outbreak of COVID-19, Bhutan witnessed a large number of returnees from abroad, comprising both students and migrant workers. This also led to an increase in unemployment. The Bhutanese government, addressing this while also trying to bridge the halting of many infrastructure projects (which was among the worst hit during the pandemic) owing to the need for construction workers, called for the recruitment of around 15,000 workers, in collaboration with Project Dantak

¹⁴ *Kuensel* is the single largest daily in Bhutan.

¹⁵ *Jagar* is a Dzongkha (official language of Bhutan) term to refer to an Indian.

(a subsidiary of India based Border Road Organisation). Reporting about this, *The Bhutanese* in their Facebook post,¹⁶ quoted the Prime Minister as saying: ‘Dantak put job vacancies to pay Nu 12,000 for those without [any] qualification but not a single Bhutanese applied’ (Sic.). Simply put, it appears that the unemployed Bhutanese prefer to stay unemployed than to join the construction sector, especially in manual labour. Another deterrent, however, could have been the monthly cash grant provided by the Druk Gyalpo’s Relief *Kidu* programme¹⁷, which is a noble initiative from His Majesty the King. A monthly cash grant is provided to all Bhutanese individuals whose livelihoods have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the objective of protecting the most vulnerable citizens.

This need and demand for construction workers in Bhutan, owing to the situation described above, is then readily met by the surplus-labour in India. In India, as is the case with many other countries, unemployment is a major problem. As of 2019, the already underreported employment rate stood more than three times that of Bhutan¹⁸. Already accentuated with its vast population, the Indian working population has much lower wage expectancy, and higher resilience (Pandey, 2019), especially in terms of manual work. Accordingly, construction work (especially abroad) provides many of these unemployed ‘low-skilled’ or ‘entry-level’ workers with much-needed employment (Buckley et al., 2016). These labourers who otherwise receive low wages with no proper long-term contract, in their home state(s), readily reap the situation in Bhutan. This opening also, to a certain extent, contributes to West Bengal in having a much lower unemployment rate, in comparison to India’s national average (Mint Analytics, 2020). Besides reducing the number of unemployed persons in their home state(s), the remittances of these migrant construction workers help generate employment (Siddiqui, 2003).

Becoming a labourer in Bhutan

Key in this supply of (surplus) labour from India are the contractors, who are mostly non-locals. These contractors serve as the middleman who recruit the labourers from the hubs of the neighbouring states Assam and West Bengal, mostly from the latter. They are also the person in direct contact with the owners of the construction sites, and the variability of the worker’s wage depends on them, and their contract. Unlike the recruitment for other ‘advanced Asian economies’ like Singapore (MOM, 2017), these workers are not required to go through testing centres, nor pass any exam. They are simply recruited based on their personal testimony of work experience, or recommendation from the existing contract labourers.

Once the workers are recruited from their native places, they are brought in to the country with a tentative letter of permit from the owners, along with a certificate of approval from the Department of Labour, Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, to be allowed to enter the country (RGOB, 2008). The owner, or someone on his/her behalf, then applies for a formal ‘Work Permit’, after their

¹⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/TheBhutaneseNewspaper/posts/2761912963914616> (Accessed July 16, 2020)

¹⁷ See: <https://royalkidu.bt/press-release/index.html>; <https://bhutanfound.org/press-release-from-the-druk-gyalpos-relief-kidu/> (Accessed July 16, 2020)

¹⁸ <https://tradingeconomics.com/country-list/unemployment-rate> (Accessed July 7, 2020)

arrival, which is to be issued by the Department of Immigration (under the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs). These work permits are usually issued for a maximum period of one year, with multiple shorter duration options.

While the number of labourers allowed in government projects depends on the 'actual cost of contract' (RGOB, 2008, p. 3), for private constructions, five to twelve foreign workers are allowed 'depending on the total square feet of construction as certified by an engineer' (ibid.). The Royal Government of Bhutan also mandates that foreign workers who come to work in the country must be aged between 20 to 50 years, and the permit is to be issued after determining 'whether Bhutanese workers are available to do the jobs against which foreign workers are requested' (ibid., p. 5).

Migrant construction workers' accommodation. (Photo: Author)

On arriving at their worksites, these labourers are housed in makeshift houses, usually with no windows or furniture inside. The inside is dimly lit, and the space is just about adequate to shelter after a tiresome day. Most of these migrant construction workers, especially the ones working in private construction sites, leave their families at home and come to the country without any



dependents, hence the issue of privacy does not arise in the housing. Dependent permits are issued, by the Government, for any immediate relative of a Work Permit holder, but the workers prefer not to bring them. 'My kids are studying; they are in the village school. My wife does not earn. She looks after my two kids and my old mother,' Amit, a labourer, said. 'It is better for them [meaning to say, it is more convenient and cost-effective] that they stay back in the village,' he added. Some reportedly own small farms, including animals, in which their families work. 'My wife, she works in our tobacco field. It is a small farm, but we earn a bit from there,' a co-worker of Amit mentioned.

At dusk, holding a partially empty travel air-bag in one hand, and somewhat old winter blankets draped in a transparent blanket bag in the other, these workers reach Thimphu, after an entire day,

or sometimes two days, journey in small groups. Wasting no time, they are often set to work the very next day after their arrival. Although there are many first-timers among them, many others have been working in the country for several years, and some as long as 15 years, going in and out of the country based on work availability. 'I cannot calculate the exact number of years that I have lived in Bhutan because I come to Bhutan for work on a contract basis, and after the contract expires I have to return to India till I get a new contractor who hires me to work in Bhutan,' Abdul, another labourer, explained.

Plenty of research discusses a growing trend of precariousness in construction work (Standing 2011; Buckley et al., 2016; Hamid and Tutt, 2019, among many others), in the sense of uncertainty, unpredictability and/or risk (Branch and Hanley, 2011), owing to the neoliberal work regime. The testimonies of the construction workers interviewed reveal the same. On being asked how they view their position in the Bhutanese labour market, all interviewees stated that they see themselves as being there only temporarily. Amit mentioned – despite having worked in Bhutan for five years, and although he would like to continue working consistently – employers and the state still view him as transient. 'We can only be here for two years in a stretch, after that we have to go back home for some time to cool down and renew our visa again,' he said. Even as the precarity of work persists, many reportedly find another job before completing their existing work contract; thus, they remain.

Living in Bhutan

Although many labourers admit to their experiences being pleasurable, they are not without unpleasant episodes. Several articulated a few such unpleasant encounters. 'It's not very explicit, but they treat us in a somehow demeaning manner, and sometimes they discriminate against us overtly just because we are labourers and we do manual work,' labourer Faisal said. '...but not everyone is like that, and that's not every time or every day,' he clarified. Another respondent, Faisal's co-worker, elucidated: 'It's not very different, although, in [Indian] *Shehers* (cities). Because of the nature of our work, we are not treated properly, even in India'.

As is the case for all foreign workers in Bhutan, these migrant labourers who work in Thimphu are not allowed mobility beyond Thimphu and Paro. Foreign workers require special permission from the Department of Immigration, both for work and sightseeing to other dzongkhags. Interestingly, however, these migrant labourers do not show interest in 'exploring' Bhutan. They will instead have all their days spent working and earning money. Much to the contrary, given a chance, they indicated, they would happily work overtime. 'It would be nice if we could get a chance to do overtime so that we can make additional income... Most of these houses we work in do not have light facilities to facilitate overtime work after daylight,' Abdul said.

These workers work six days a week, eight hours each day, and take a day off on Sundays. For any long break, spanning about a week or more, they would rather go to their homes and visit their families. Only in some occasional 'emergencies', do they take leave for a few days, within their contract duration, which they usually prefer not to. 'Visiting home frequently makes it difficult to save money,' they said. As with the finding of the earliest construction ethnography of Sykes (1969),

these workers show great keenness on 'high earnings'. Their keenness, however, unlike the *navvies*¹⁹ Sykes studied, was not for 'high consumption', and 'high saving'. It was only for the latter. They optimise their spending and consumption as much as possible. On an average, interviews reveal, they spend just Nu. 1000 each week for their food and other basic necessities. Hence, they are able to save a good proportion of their earnings.

Many, if not most, of these labourers revealed that they do not use formal Bhutanese banking (and a few of them do not use formal Indian banking either) for their transactions and savings. They take their earnings only at the time of going home, after completing their contract, in bulk, so that they can 'take a huge amount home'. Alternately, a few prefer to send money to their families if and when one among them goes to their native places. Apart from not feeling the need to regularly send money home, in their reasoning, they 'mispend' their time by going to the bank, and alongside they also 'waste' money both on taxi fares and the remittance fees the bank charges.

The nature of their work – being on construction sites – often gets them injured, but almost everyone interviewed, on being asked, mentioned their decrease in the propensity to fall ill. 'It is a little cold here [meaning Bhutan], given the place I come from [which is West Bengal], but Bhutan is very clean and has less pollution compared to India, so when I am here, I stay healthy. In a year, I get sick just twice or thrice – that's usually when there is a change of season,' Ajay said. 'I also get sick. I got sick twice, but it is much less frequent than when I am in India. Besides, we get medicines readily for free, from the hospital itself; health service is very good in Bhutan,' his friend concurred.

All but one construction worker interviewed either never went to school or dropped out of school. This, however, did not stop their aspirations. Again, like the *navvies* (Sykes, 1969) many of them aspire to earn, save, and invest their money in their home towns/villages – either starting a new business, buying a farm, or expanding and upgrading their existing cottage scale enterprise. To triangulate the data, intending to enhance the credibility of the research information (Salkind, 2010), obtaining information about them from their co-workers was quite easy, as they usually knew about each other's background and circumstances. In that sense, rather than being individualistic, these workers show strong communal ties.

¹⁹ Coined in the late eighteenth century in Great Britain, *navvies* refer to the manual labourers working on major civil engineering projects (See: <https://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/britain-1700-to-1900/transport-1750-to-1900/navvies/>)



Fig. 2: A construction worker at work. (Photo: Author)

Conclusion

While it is true that these labourers first come to Bhutan out of economic necessity and, after reaching the kingdom, their experiences constantly make them feel dispensable. Nevertheless, most of the labourers interviewed indicated their desire to stay as long as they legally can. For them, like the case of indigenous migrants from Northeast India working in the service sector of the metropolitan, Bhutan offers hope; ‘hope and a sense of possibility’ (Karlsson and Kikon, 2017, p. 14). Although faced with multiple challenges and occasional discrimination (perhaps to a lesser degree than North-eastern Indian migrants in the metropolis²⁰), as well as being housed in makeshift shanty accommodation, Bhutan offers them ample reasons to remain. From being provided with a much longer contract (often renewed with a new project before completion) to higher pay, better welfare facilities, and healthier environment, most of these migrant workers would stay for the maximum duration they can.

This phenomenon of labour in-migration, however, is not unique to Bhutan. Nasrin Siraj and Ellen Bal (2017) in their ethnographic account showed how Bengali migration, in the case of Bangladesh, apart from a state-sponsored ‘population relocations scheme’, saw a spontaneous movement from the plains into the hills, owing to ‘the large number of impoverished people who were looking for new places for their survival’ (p. 408). In the states of Northeast India too, despite

²⁰ See: McDuie-Ra, D. (2012). *Northeast migrants in Delhi: Race, refuge and retail*. Amsterdam University Press; Haokip, T. (2020). From ‘Chinky’ to ‘Coronavirus’: Racism against Northeast Indians during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Asian Ethnicity*, DOI:10.1080/14631369.2020.1763161.

taxing document procedures and necessities (such as Inner Line Permit²¹), incentivised by higher pay, recurring work availability, and longer and more stable work duration, labourers from the plains of West Bengal come to work and stay, wherever, and for as long as they can. Having said that, the migrant construction workers in Bhutan often face the dilemma of wanting to be with their families too, while also desiring to make the best of the opportunities they get. This came out loudly during the outbreak of COVID-19. After the announcement of lockdown in India and Bhutan, thousands of these migrant labourers in Bhutan wanted to return to their homes (Yuden, 2020). Many stayed back in Bhutan however, and some who went home for a short break before the lockdown wanted to come back to work, but were not allowed to. This only highlights the constant quandary in choosing between their livelihoods and their loved ones.

Acknowledgements

This article is a partial outcome²² of a research project funded by RTC Research Development Grant (2019 to 2020). I would like to thank the RTC Research Committee for the same. Additionally, I would also like to thank my student research assistants Kuenga Norbu and Kristina Powdel for helping me collect data for this research, my senior colleagues Dolma Choden Roder, Jelle JP Wouters and Shawn Christopher Rowlands for reading the earlier draft and helping me make many improvements.

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²¹ 'Inner Line Permit is an official document issued by the state government that allows Indian citizens to travel to the state under IPL for a limited period of time. It is compulsory for the citizens from outside those states to issue the permit for entering into a protected state.' [Source: <https://www.deccanherald.com/national/how-is-inner-line-permit-related-to-cao-805813.html>]

²² The quantitative dimension of the research will be published in the next issue of *Rig Tshoel*.

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Slandered and Expelled: Female Monastic Exile in Carolingian Europe, c. 814 CE

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ABSTRACT: This essay reexamines ninth-century sources about Carolingian emperors, particularly the so-called Astronomer's biography of Louis the Pious (r. 814–40 CE), to demonstrate that Emperor Louis employed popular tropes of female sexual immorality to remove his sisters from court on account of their political power. Although Louis used political language to describe the monastic exiling of male relatives, he chose sexualized and gendered language for female relatives who presented similar dangers. We argue that this discrepancy in language reveals an early-ninth-century discourse that lacked either the language for understanding, or the willingness to acknowledge, female political power—as well as a reluctance in modern historiography to recognize the political potential of women beyond their reproductive capabilities.

The Astronomer offered one of the primary attestations to the 814 “cleansing of the palace.” Writing shortly after the emperor’s 840 death, he described Louis’s preparations for his move to Aachen. He explained how Louis, although “most mild by nature,” had “long since made up his mind about the behavior of his sisters in his father’s household, by which stain alone his father’s house was blemished” (2009, p. 247). The Astronomer then narrated how the emperor first had some of his men go on ahead and “restrain carefully, until Louis’s arrival, a few [women] who were particularly debauched or whose scornful arrogance was treasonous” (p. 247). Then, once he arrived at the palace, Louis “ordered the whole crowd of women—it was extremely large—to be excluded from the palace, except for a very few whom he deemed suitable for royal service” (p. 248).

The Astronomer never named the members of this “whole crowd of women,” but they certainly included Louis’s sisters, half-sisters, nieces, and even other relatives such as Gundrada, his father’s cousin. The Astronomer instead painted the nameless lot of women as immoral—and his protagonist, Louis, as the obedient son: the sisters “withdrew to the properties they had received from their father” since “they got what they deserved from the emperor” (2009, p. 248). He never mentioned that the sisters, not specifically deeded any lands by their late father, were compelled to join convents. Nor did the Astronomer specify the exact nature of their problematic behavior. The emphasis on women and use of the term “debauched” (*stuprum*), however, points to gendered—namely, sexual—sins.

The princesses’ promiscuity is further suggested in Einhard’s biography of Louis’s father. In his *The Life of Charles the Great*, Einhard wrote, “although [Charlemagne’s] daughters were most beautiful and were deeply loved by him, strange to say he never wanted to give any one of them in marriage to anybody, whether a Frank or a foreigner, but kept them all with him until his death, saying that he could not give up their companionship” (2008, p. 33). Then Einhard hinted at the

women's supposed improprieties, explaining, "because of this, though in other respects happy [Charlemagne] suffered the harshness of malign fortune. But he concealed this so well that there was no suspicion of anything shameful about them" (p. 33).

Einhard was purposefully coy. He had been a close advisor to Charlemagne and then one of the few courtiers to survive the 814 transition in power. In the 820s, as he wrote his *Vita*, he did so at the court of Louis the Pious. In composing this biography, Einhard had to please the son, now his lord, while not betraying the father, once his beloved lord. These carefully crafted passages hint at the reason for the siblings' expulsion (and thus echo the then-dominant story that Louis's court had woven about the princesses' indiscretions) without directly maligning Charlemagne's daughters. Moreover, as Anne Latowsky (2013) has written, "Einhard offers ample celebration of his subject, while protecting the king's memory from critics who might scoff at unrestrained praise" (p. 38). Similarly, de Jong (2009) has seen Einhard's words as rhetorically informed: "Real praise was all the more effective if perfection was mitigated by one flaw, and not a very serious flaw, for that matter. Indulging one's daughters and overlooking their peccadilloes could count as such" (pp. 191–2). Still, de Jong has acknowledged, "Einhard wrote his *Vita Karoli* in Louis's court, and his oblique remark about the daughters creating scandal may well have been a public acknowledgment that *mores* at the court had changed since the old emperor's death" (p. 192).

Whatever Einhard's motivation, his words were soon elaborated. When he wrote that Charlemagne could not do without his daughters' company, he used the phrase *contubernium earum* in a neutral manner. Two decades later, the Astronomer situated the sisters' shameful conduct...in *contubernio paterno*, that is, in their father's company and in his household; this had caused a moral contamination of the 'paternal house' ... that affected the entire palace community. The Astronomer deftly contrasted the royal quarters with the palace, at large, suggesting that this female depravity spread outwards from the centre like a stain that affected the entire royal household (de Jong, 2009, p. 190). But if these women were depraved and thus jeopardized the palace and realm, what was the nature of their immorality?

Einhard claimed that Charlemagne never allowed his daughters to marry; one might thus infer that any relations the women had with men were, accordingly, illicit. Or one might wonder, as did Nelson (1996), whether Charlemagne gave "his permission [that] they might have lovers" (p. 241). Neither need be true. During Charlemagne's reign, official, Church-sanctioned marriages were not the norm. People regularly entered into long-term partnerships lacking marriage rituals, and these unions were widely recognized as legitimate. That is precisely what Charlemagne's two eldest daughters did: Rotrude (774–810) with Count Rorigo and Bertha with Angilbert of St. Riquier (c. 740s–814). Only in Charlemagne's later years and then, more so, at Louis the Pious's court did the Frankish world start to draw clearer distinctions between such partnerships and "official," Christian marriages. For Charlemagne's daughters, who initiated their relationships at the end of the eighth century, such lines had not yet been drawn.

Nor would the princesses' relations have been secretive or unknown to Charlemagne, as some English translations of the original Latin (and later medieval tales) imply (Tourney, 2003). Rotrude's and Bertha's partners were key men in the realm, and the sons born from these unions (one to

Rotrude, two to Bertha) lived at court. Rather than Charlemagne's daughters engaging in furtive, illicit relationships behind their father's back, this emperor, well-known for his vigilance (as Einhard himself tells us), certainly knew and approved of these relationships.

Moreover, as Nelson (1996) and Anton Scharer (2009) have convincingly argued, the father likely encouraged his daughters *not* to enter into formal marriages in order to ensure their political help at court (namely, with containing rivalries among their brothers), to prevent rival claimants to the throne, and to guarantee smooth transitions in power. Charlemagne had himself experienced the troubles born out of unwelcome unions, as when Hiltrude, the half-sister of Charlemagne's father, Pepin the Short (r. 751–68), married Bavarian duke Odilo against her own brothers' advice—ultimately spawning a rival line that included Charlemagne's challenger Duke Tassilo (Anonymous, 1972, pp. 59, 64–67; Einhard, 2008, p. 26).

The Astronomer points to this very concern when narrating the reason for Louis's expulsion of his sisters: the emperor “wanted to remedy the offense [of the women's debauchery] but also to prevent a new scandal arising like the one that once happened on account of Odilo and Hiltrude” (2009, p. 247). In offering this second reason, however, the biographer undermined his first, since rival claimants to the throne could only spring from stable and licit relationships like that between Bertha and Angilbert, not from the immoral promiscuity in which, he implied, they engaged. Although de Jong (2009) has interpreted “the Astronomer's innuendo [as] clearly directed against the dominant role of women in the palace, and on the fact that their choice of partners had been beyond male control” (p. 190), textual depictions of Charlemagne present a man with significant control and influence over his household. It is difficult to imagine his second-eldest daughter, Bertha, and one of his closest and most beloved advisors becoming intimate against this powerful man's wishes. Moreover, following Bertha and Angilbert's initial coupling, Charlemagne rewarded Angilbert with multiple prestigious duties—hardly the reaction of a king upset with that man's actions (Rabe, 1995).

If the women's lack of discipline could “damage royal authority and the ruler's reputation” (de Jong, 2009, p. 190), one must find proof of the princesses' disorder or debauchery. The only possible evidence from Charlemagne's reign comes in one letter written by court scholar and royal advisor Alcuin of York (735–804). In an 801/2 CE letter to his pupil Fredegisus, Alcuin writes of “crowned doves” flitting at palace windows, most likely a reference to the king's daughters and female relatives (1895, p. 392). He does not, however, explicitly warn the young man of the doves' moral laxity or sexual promiscuity. Indeed, another letter to Fredegisus asks the pupil, based at court, to send Alcuin's greetings to Charlemagne's sister and eldest daughter and encourages him to teach the women (1895, p. 420). Moreover, other letters by Alcuin—often ones written to the women themselves—demonstrate his close relationships with, and praise of, them. Charlemagne's second eldest daughter, Bertha, was particularly close to Alcuin, and she received a nickname and many poems in her honor from him (Garrison, 2005). Considering the weight of the textual evidence, it is most likely that Alcuin was encouraging a young cleric not to become too involved in worldly matters or engage too often with laywomen.

A few texts may suggest moral laxity on Charlemagne's part. Scholars sometimes interpret the Astronomer's biography as juxtaposing Charlemagne's morally questionable reign with Louis's

morally sound one, but de Jong (2009) has convincingly argued that historians have exaggerated this contrast (p. 190). She also has found it unlikely that Charlemagne's many concubines would have been the cause of so much criticism (p. 191).

So too should we acknowledge how later readers of Einhard's text have interpreted Charlemagne's closeness to his daughters and his desire to never be without them as suggesting incest. Among early medieval royal families, there was an "utter taboo of incest even among distant kinsmen, let alone close ones" (de Jong, 2009, p. 190), and Janet L. Nelson (1996) has examined and soundly dismissed suggestions of incest based on Einhard's text or Charlemagne's original sarcophagus—a marble structure that depicted the Rape of Proserpina (pp. 223–5, 240–1).

The most damning text is a dream by Walahfrid Strabo, written during Louis the Pious's reign that describes Charlemagne's genitalia being attacked in hell due to his sexual depravity. Paul Edward Dutton (1994), among others, has used this text to demonstrate a surge in criticism of Charlemagne during his son's reign, but de Jong (2009) has argued that such dreams were simply meant to remind Franks that even the smallest of sins could affect the afterlife of someone so great and pious as Charlemagne (pp. 136–41). Whether one follows Dutton's or de Jong's arguments, promiscuity on the late emperor's part need not involve or reflect upon his daughters.

In the end, no textual evidence supports the Astronomer's claims that Louis the Pious's sisters were disordered or debauched. If, however, the princesses had not "blemished" their father's house with their immorality, then why would the new emperor remove female family members who themselves could not, on account of their gender, make claims on the throne? Was the issue indeed, as de Jong (2009) has read from the Astronomer's biography, that these women might "yield dangerous political opponents of the kind of Tassilo, that is, men of royal blood who might pose a challenge to the throne" (p. 190)? While this is, of course, possible, we shall argue that Louis's primary concern was not the heirs of his sisters, but rather the sisters themselves and the significant political and social capital they possessed.

The Forgotten Son

Understanding Louis's need to cleanse the palace and malign his sisters requires examining his history with his father and his brothers. Louis (b. 778 CE) was the fourth-born son of Charlemagne and was never intended to rule the whole realm. Charlemagne's first son, Pepin the Hunchback (b. c. 768), would, by the 790s, be officially removed from the line of succession after leading a rebellion against his father. Charlemagne's second son and namesake, Charles the Younger (b. 772), became the obvious heir, remaining at court with his father. The third son, Pippin (b. 777), named King of Italy, would become one of his father's favorite children and provide much-cherished grandchildren to Charlemagne.

Louis meanwhile was given the new kingdom of Aquitaine, and as the Astronomer related, Charlemagne sent Louis, at age four, to southern France to rule (with the aid of adult advisors). Although scholars have described Charlemagne as "closely monitoring his youngest son's early education as king in Aquitaine" (de Jong, 2009, p. 15), such an interpretation proves too generous.

The Astronomer instead told of a father mocking his son for acquiring Basque customs and dress and worrying about the boy learning proper Frankish customs (2009, pp. 231–3).

The tensions between father and son are quite apparent—if not fully recognized by scholars—in Louis’s biographies. According to the Astronomer (2009), Charlemagne repeatedly ordered his son Louis around: demanding his presence, only to change his mind; refusing to join the son when requested; dismissing his son; not allowing him to go on campaign; and even uninviting him to the imperial coronation. Again, de Jong (2009) has offered a positive reading of these episodes: “Both Thegan and the Astronomer depicted Louis as an exemplary and therefore obedient son.... In this way paternal dominance was emphasised, but so also was Louis’s suitability for kingship.” The proper relationship was, after all, one of “paternal dominance and filial submission.” She has also highlighted how Charlemagne’s refusal of his son’s invitation to inspect Aquitaine was done “without publicly offending his son” and that Charlemagne later received Louis “with great joy” (p. 15). While we agree that the Astronomer portrayed Louis as the dutiful son, the biographer simultaneously painted him as neglected, even forgotten, by an uncaring father.

Louis was also regularly absent from key events, where other royal children were present. When Charlemagne rescinded his original invitation to Louis to join him in Rome in December 800 (where he was to be crowned emperor), Louis’s brothers, Charles the Younger and Pippin, his many sisters, and possibly some nieces, nephews, and other relatives were present for the historic occasion. Louis’s absence from this significant moment is echoed in texts memorializing the event. The *Paderborn Epic*, a poem composed in 801 to celebrate the coronation, describes an elaborate royal hunt in which the king, queen, princesses, and princes Charles the Younger and Pippin were all present—but at which Louis is absent and receives not even a hint of recognition as a family member. Scholars studying the Carolingian period, however, have not yet given sufficient attention to the fact that this poem memorializes every member of the Carolingian family except Louis—and what that might mean. Instead, the son’s absence at important royal rituals and from literary encomium is connected to his being at the other end of the empire in Aquitaine.

Heir Apparent (?)

It is also the case that for the first thirty-some years of Louis’s life, no one ever expected him to extend his rule beyond his Aquitanian borders. Then circumstances changed suddenly and dramatically. In July 810, when Charlemagne was in his sixties, his thirty-two-year-old son Pippin, King of Italy, passed away. Not long after, so too did Pepin the Hunchback, Charlemagne’s exiled son. Then, in December 811, the emperor’s eldest son, Charles the Younger, died. As the year turned to 812, only one legitimate son remained: Louis the Pious. The King of Aquitaine was now the obvious choice to become Charlemagne’s imperial heir and co-emperor.

Yet, Charlemagne hesitated. Historians have wondered what other options he might have considered while biding his time. One possibility was his cousin and close advisor, Wala. There was also the emperor’s grandson, Bernard of Italy, son of the late Pippin. Charlemagne had given much support to this grandson and the other children of his beloved, but now deceased, Pippin—Einhard

even wrote that Charlemagne brought Pippin's five daughters into his court after their father's (his son's) death and raised them as his own daughters (2008, p. 32).

It took considerable convincing—and nearly two years—but finally, in September 813, Emperor Charlemagne made his only living legitimate son co-emperor. The opposition to this heir can be inferred from the excessively positive textual depictions from Louis's reign. A poem by Ermold the Black in praise of Louis emphasizes how Charlemagne's favorite advisor, Einhard, had called for Louis's coronation (2009, p. 143). Biographer Thegan represented Louis as the youngest and thus overlooked son, but then demonstrated how this revealed him to be the most worthy of Charlemagne's progeny. He further described how the Franks willingly consented to Louis's coronation (2009, pp. 196–7).

Worthy or not, Louis the Pious was a palace outsider—a man firmly situated beyond the networks of power based at the Aachen court. He had spent nearly his entire life in southern France, building his own power base, forging ties with noblemen there, and perhaps even adopting some “foreign” customs. Louis did not know well, if at all, the situation at Aachen or the members of Charlemagne's court. Nor did his father's men know him. The death of Charlemagne thus created anxiety both for Louis in Aquitaine and for the court in Aachen.

It is no wonder, then, that, although “the hope of ruling everything welled up in Louis” upon his brothers' deaths, he initially delayed before making his way to Aachen lest he “give his father cause for suspicion” (Astronomer, 2009, pp. 244–5). And then, despite his imperial coronation by his own father, even his move toward Aachen after Charlemagne's death was “slow and hesitant, with messengers rushing to and fro in order to test the waters” (de Jong, 2009, p. 20). Louis, after all, was entering a turbulent sea.

Crowned Doves

While Louis the Pious was an outsider at his father's court, his sisters and half-sisters, as well as his nieces and some female cousins, had been firmly ensconced in Charlemagne's court for decades. In a seminal article, Janet L. Nelson (1996) demonstrated the very real, if somewhat intangible power, held by the women closest to Charlemagne. Mothers and wives of kings were, as one would expect, quite influential at court. Charlemagne's widowed mother, Bertrada, was heavily involved in her sons' power struggles and in Charlemagne's choice of wives. His wife Hildegard, through her success as a queen and especially producer of heirs, helped secure the political rise of her own brother. Charlemagne's next wife, Fastrada, despite producing no sons, became the most influential queen. When, for example, the king was on campaign in 791–2, he placed her in charge of organizing fasts and liturgies; when he was away in 793, Fastrada presided over a judicial case, possibly declaring the sentence herself. And finally, Charlemagne's last queen, Liutgard, corresponded with key courtiers about her husband's whereabouts and helped distribute the spoils of war to clergymen (pp. 232–6).

At Charlemagne's court, however, other female relatives played prominent roles—especially after his wife Liutgard died in June 800 and he chose not to remarry for the last fourteen years of his reign. To start, the king's daughters boasted greater longevity at court than any of Charlemagne's wives (or,

for that matter, his concubines, whose status would have prevented them from possessing serious political clout). For example, the king's longest marriage, to Hildegard, lasted twelve years (during most of which she was pregnant), while his second daughter, Bertha, had been at court for nearly thirty-five years at the time of Charlemagne's death. That proximity and constancy created deep intimacy and trust between father and daughter.

Bertha and her sisters' relationships with their father, the king, did not go unnoticed—and the realm's most important men worked to forge their own close relationships with the women. The courtiers relied upon them as intermediaries, requesting the women to pass along messages to the king. Alcuin, the heart of Charlemagne's cultural and intellectual renaissance, exchanged letters and texts with the king's female relatives, whom he affectionately referred to as his 'daughters'. When sick or otherwise unable to submit to the king's summons, a courtier would send his excuses and requests for forgiveness not to Charlemagne, but to his female relatives—as Alcuin asked of Gundrada (1895, p. 387). As these letters and other narrative sources suggest, the daughters also helped control access to their father. Thus, Nelson (1996) has surmised, after Liutgard's death in 800 and in the absence of an official queen, Charlemagne's daughters and other female relatives took over the queenly duties and became a "collective queen" (p. 239).

The women's significant political, cultural, and social capital is most apparent in the same sources that often demonstrate Louis the Pious's *lack* of capital: court poetry. Frankish poets crafted verse encomiums to glorify the royal family and win favor, heaping praise upon Charlemagne's daughters, as well as his sister and cousin. Theodulf's (c. 750–821) poem, *On the Court* (1985), situates the daughters as participating in the court's central rituals: processions, feasts, and hunts. In another poem, Theodulf (1881) emphasized the women's proximity and presence, describing how they encircle their enthroned father and then steadfastly remain by his side after the courtiers leave. These letters and poems, acknowledging the women's influence and lavishly praising them, demonstrate the court's recognition that Charlemagne's daughters held positions at the very center of the Carolingian realm. Thus, the great men of the court sought, as Nelson (1996) has written, the daughters' "*amicitia and familiaritas*, that is, political friendship," and it is in those poems that one can truly glimpse "the real power of these *puellae* [daughters]" (p. 239).

The same cannot, however, be said of attention to Louis in Aachen courtly poetry (or in Aachen palace life more generally). For example, Angilbert's (1985) poem to Charlemagne and his entourage praises Charles the Younger, Charlemagne's sister, and daughters Rotrude and Bertha; it even references Pippin who is away from court. Louis the Pious, however, never appears. While Theodulf's *On the Court* depicts both Charles and Louis as obedient sons, his other poems (as noted above) emphasize the princesses and ignore Louis. The *Paderborn Epic* glowingly describes Charlemagne, Queen Liutgard, princes Charles and Pippin, and the king's six daughters riding into the royal hunt—but never once mentions Louis the Pious. Perhaps most significantly, the *Paderborn Epic* poet describes Charlemagne's second eldest daughter, Bertha, and not her brothers, as resembling Charlemagne in character and physique (Anonymous, 1881, p. 371). Fabrice Guizard is right to note that the power of Bertha at Charlemagne's court, so apparent in the *Paderborn Epic*, could be seen as an encroachment on the structures of authority (2012, p. 249).

In fact, we would argue that that is precisely what Louis thought when he ascended the throne. An outsider to Aachen, he was fully aware of, and threatened by, his sisters' and other female relatives' insider status. They were connected to, and seemingly beloved by, all the key members at court. Women like Bertha may even have supported her nephew Bernard of Italy or her father's cousin Wala over her own brother Louis for the throne (Nelson, 1996, p. 239). If Louis the Pious was going to establish his power in the northern part of the realm, specifically at Aachen, then he needed to gain control of the palace and its inhabitants—especially his own sisters.

Monastic Exile

The Astronomer revealed potential threats to Louis's ascension. He wrote of the late emperor's cousin, "For Wala, who held the highest place with Emperor Charles, was especially feared in case he might be organizing something sinister against the new emperor." Thankfully, however, "Wala came to [Louis] very quickly and with humble submission yielded to Louis's will, commending himself according to the custom of the Franks." The emperor then capitalized on his relative's need to prove his claims of loyalty: Louis sent Wala to Aachen to "retrain [...] carefully, until Louis's arrival, a few [women] who were particularly debauched or whose scornful arrogance was treasonous" (2009, pp. 246–7). That is, the new regime employed a member of the old regime to detain fellow old-regime members. As de Jong (2009) has rhetorically asked, "What better way to emphasise Wala's total submission to the new ruler than to make him the instrument of the old guard's undoing?" (p. 191).

But the new emperor was not done. After Wala enforced the first wave of palace cleansing, Louis forced Wala and his siblings from the palace, into monasteries, and thus out of political life. For these three male cousins, the language is clear in medieval and modern historiography: they were victims of monastic exile.

Monastic exile had long been an important means for early medieval Franks to deal with political tension and conflict. The Merovingians, the previous Frankish ruling dynasty, placed (potential) political rivals in monasteries to subdue them, while other politically connected Franks chose retreat into monasteries when they themselves sought refuge from political life and protection from secular powers. Often, such monastic exiles were temporary, with the aristocrat able to leave the monastery when he chose, and the king able to recall exiled magnates back to the court (de Jong, 2001). If, however, an exile accepted monastic tonsure, gave up his sword belt, and took religious vows, then he was generally regarded as unable to return to lay or political life lest he break a solemn vow to God.

Einhard described the end of Merovingian kingship with the tonsuring of that hereditary line (2008, p. 18). He also narrated the decision of Pepin the Short's brother, Carloman (that is, Charlemagne's paternal uncle), to remove himself from political life and retreat to an Italian monastery (2008, p. 20). Charlemagne's rival Duke Tassilo would also end his political career (and attempts at rebellion) in a monastery, choosing to accept tonsure, rather than execution, alongside his son and other rivals of the king (Anonymous, 1972, pp. 66–67). And, in another noteworthy case,

when Pepin the Hunchback rebelled against his father in 791–2, Charlemagne responded with a sentence of monastic exile (Einhard, 2008, p. 33).

Monastic exile, a political strategy used amply by Charlemagne, became even more prevalent during the reign of Louis the Pious. After the suppression of his nephew Bernard of Italy's rebellion, the emperor, in spring 818, sent the rebels to monasteries. Included in this new group of monastic exiles were Louis's half-brothers, Drogo, Hugh, and Theodoric (Charlemagne's sons by concubines). Although nothing suggested their involvement in the rebellion, they had reached ages at which they might become political threats. As Thegan wrote, Louis "ordered that his brothers be tonsured to diminish discord, and commanded that they be educated in the liberal arts" (2009, p. 206).

Three years later, the emperor would employ the reversibility of monastic exile when he recalled his half-brothers Hugh and Drogo; in future years, the two would number among his closest supporters. Louis's female relatives would not, however, be called back, despite the emperor's overtures of familial reconciliation. Indeed, they were never heard from again. Their situation had been framed differently from their brothers': they had been removed from the palace not for political reasons, but for moral ones—forcefully highlighting the different treatment of powerful men and women.

As Mayke de Jong (2009) has shown, Frankish women were rarely "removed from the political arena by means of monastic exile," and the few cases of female monastic exile dated to the Merovingian period (p. 208). Royal women who possessed significant political clout were seldom described as powerful and thus exiled to convents. Rather, accusations of adultery or witchcraft were flung at them. Not just accusations, but also punishment and revenge were highly gendered: where men such as Bernard of Italy might be blinded for his rebellion (a means of removing one's future ability to rule), women were drowned as witches (Bührer-Thierry, 1998; de Jong, 2009, pp. 201–2).

When Louis the Pious entered an unfamiliar, even hostile, court in 814, he felt compelled to deal with female relatives who possessed more political, social, and cultural capital than he did. Unlike his male relatives, the women were not outright threats to the throne: how could they be in a Frankish world in which women were not allowed to rule? As Nelson (1996) has explained, "in the years around 800, in both eastern and western Christendom, any representation of female power was bound to be a sensitive and controversial area" (p. 230). The presence of a woman, Irene, on the Byzantine, or Eastern Roman, imperial throne (r. 797–802) offended the Franks and suggested the apocalypse's approach (Nelson, 1996, pp. 229–30; Latowsky, 2013, p. 14). Ninth-century writers blamed the wives of kings for exerting too much and too negative an influence over their husbands (Anonymous, 1972, p. 71; Einhard, 2008, pp. 26, 33; Ermold, 2009, pp. 163–7). As Nelson (1996) has explicated, "*femineum imperium* [the rulership of a woman] was a contradiction in terms—a monstrous regiment" (p. 230). Nor had the late Charlemagne specified how his son ought to deal with female political opponents. His 806 *Divisio regnorum* had insisted that his future heirs were not to unlawfully punish their male relatives, but no mention was made of how to handle the women, beyond allowing them to live under the protection of the brother of their choice; of course, in 814, only one brother was left, and he would not have been their preferred choice.

The Astronomer could claim that Louis was motivated by concerns that his sisters might start rival lines, but raising that concern alone would have legitimated Bertha's relationship with Angilbert and thus bolstered their sons' legitimacy (on the other hand, if a rival line was Louis's real concern, then why did the new emperor allow Nithard and Hartnid, sons of Bertha and Angilbert, to remain at court indefinitely?).

The true issue for Louis the Pious—and what the Astronomer and other ninth-century writers failed or refused to document—was the threat, not of rival heredity lines (nor, it should now go without saying, debauchery), but of the women's own authority and influence at the Frankish court. Theirs was an authority and influence that was exerted in informal, even intangible ways. And it was a much more serious power than the “female meddling in politics” that Scharer (2009) has claimed often provoked charges of immorality (p. 280).

No Frankish emperor could, however, have named that political threat, and so Louis instead proclaimed his female relatives' immorality. Doing so had the added bonuses of slandering the women indefinitely (and with no hope for a future return), undermining their relationships with their partners (and thus delegitimizing heirs such as Bertha's sons), and establishing a new, more moral court.

Thus, Louis the Pious never labeled his sisters as powerful or described their expulsion as a monastic exile akin to that of his half-brothers, cousins, and other rebellious courtiers. As historians, however, we must recognize the tales woven by Louis, the Astronomer, and others for what they are: deeply gendered reactions to political threat. We must, then, avoid language of sexual immorality and not allow ninth-century rhetoric about pollution and disorder to affect our interpretations of the events; so too ought we to refrain from calling Bertha Angilbert's “mistress” or “lover” simply because they were not officially married. Even if Louis the Pious or his biographer, the Astronomer, could not do it, we must begin to call the palace cleansing and expulsion of Louis's female relatives what it really was: the monastic exile or political tonsuring of individuals with significant political influence...who happened to be women.

Epilogue

When the Astronomer wrote about Louis's cleansing of the Aachen palace in 814, he did so from the vantage point of 840/1—just after Louis the Pious's death. He knew then, what the emperor could not have known upon his ascension: that in the 830s, Louis the Pious's own wife, Empress Judith, would be publicly accused of the very debauchery and arrogance of which he accused his sisters in 814. Judith, also accused of witchcraft, adultery, and incest, not to mention plotting regicide, would be twice removed from the imperial throne and placed (temporarily) in monasteries, as would Louis.

The deep irony behind claims, in the early 830s, that Louis the Pious's palace needed to be “cleansed” has not been lost on historians, such as Courtney Booker. Nor was it lost, he has argued, on the ninth-century opposition to Louis and Judith. Booker (2009) has explained, “The rebels' claim that they had been compelled to cleanse Louis' court doubtless draws on these well-known

deeds as a subtext” (p. 154). He later described this as one of the “great ironies of the many that characterize Louis the Pious’s career”—that “early in his reign Louis fostered an ideological program within which he would later find himself enframed” (p. 214). The powerful Empress Judith became a victim of gendered slander, just as Bertha, her sisters, and her female relatives had less than two decades earlier.

Yet, both Emperor Louis and Empress Judith, after each removal from the throne, climbed their way back into power. They ultimately held onto their thrones until Louis’s death in 840. The Astronomer, writing in the following year, could describe the 814 cleansing of the palace and the supposed debauchery of Charlemagne’s female relatives with all the insight garnered from the recent scandals. He could even “project” them back “on to the transition of 814” (de Jong, 2009, p. 191).

Other writers in the early 840s also composed their texts with the knowledge of these various palace cleansings. Bertha’s son Nithard, who remained at Louis the Pious’s court after his mother’s monastic exile, eventually transitioned to the camp of Louis and Judith’s son, Charles the Bald. In the civil wars of 841–3, Charles requested that Nithard write a history capturing the volatile events; in doing so, Bertha’s son became one of the greatest Carolingian historians. Despite opening his work with a retrospective of Charlemagne’s and Louis’s reigns, and having personal knowledge of his own mother’s circumstances, Nithard was relatively silent on the matter of his mother. De Jong (2009) has read his words as “lacking in moral indignation,” despite the fact that “his own mother Bertha was one of Louis’s (half-) sisters banished ‘to monasteries.’” She continued in her assessment: “For [Nithard,] the most important thing was, however, that Louis had endowed his legitimate sisters (including Bertha) with their rightful inheritance. As far as one can see, there was no particular resentment on the son’s part about his mother’s exile from the palace. Nithard had to accept this brave new world” (pp. 192–3).

Newer readings of Nithard’s *Histories* reveal, however, the subtle ways in which Bertha’s son demonstrated his resentment and moral indignation—criticizing Louis the Pious for his treatment of his siblings, praising Charles the Bald for his forgiveness of a rebellious sister, arguing for the legitimacy of Nithard’s parents’ relationship, and even asserting the sainthood of Nithard’s father, Angilbert (Polanichka and Cilley, 2012). Yet, one would be hard-pressed to argue that Nithard possessed the words to express the political power that his mother, her sisters, and their other female relatives possessed. Nithard might have believed that his uncle, Louis the Pious, did not behave toward his sisters as a brother should, but he focused more on the injustice done to his mother, his parents’ union, and thus his present circumstances than on the political, social, or cultural capital that forced his mother into monastic exile.

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‘The remnants of a Stone Age people’: Race theory, technology, and ignorance in colonial Australia

Shawn C. Rowlands

ABSTRACT: Colonial-era anthropology, ethnography, and collection were dictated by predetermined conclusions regarding race and technology that emerged in the eighteenth century and solidified by the mid-nineteenth. The Australian continent represented a testing ground for ideas on race and technology, especially in European studies of Australian Aboriginal people. Such notions converged with colonial policy and protection agencies, but protection measures were secondary to the acts of recording and collecting. This article uses the textual records of the leading anthropologists, ethnographers, and collectors in colonial Australia to build on prior research into Australian Aboriginal material culture and the prevailing attitudes of contemporary European observers, and explore how their preconceptions determined their research and collection practices.

Keywords: Scientific racism; three-age system; artefact collection; colonial anthropology; colonial Australia

Pernicious and flawed philosophies combined with emerging ideas on a hierarchy of technology to profoundly influence the practice of native¹ artefact collection and categorisation in the Victorian world. Coupled with the development of nineteenth-century anthropological theory, these ideas saw the colonised peoples of the world ranked under a series of misguided assumptions about racial and technological inferiority that would ultimately lead to the notion that the preservation of artefacts of

¹ The title of this article refers to a quote by Stanley D. Porteus (1931), used later in the text. A note on nomenclature: readers will quickly notice that I use ‘native’ instead of ‘indigenous’ to refer to Aboriginal Australians. This is a conscious choice as ‘indigenous’ has a tendency to create a totalising effect on modern native cultures that do not necessarily share much in common beyond the colonial experience. Paul Tapsell (2015), a Māori professor of Indigenous Studies at Melbourne University, has spoken about the ‘pre-indigenous’ wherein he argues that the use of the term ‘indigenous’ obscures the cultural complexity of communities labelled as indigenous and acts as more of a convenient term for the non-indigenous. As such, I have generally preferred the term ‘native’ when describing groups in generalised terms. It is a more universal word that could be applied to any original inhabitant of a region. One could write ‘native Aboriginal’ or ‘native Englishmen’, for example. Where I refer to the white settler populations of a region, I use ‘European’. ‘Australian’ would be a misnomer for much of the period I discuss in this article because Australia did not exist as a nation until 1901. Furthermore, ‘British’ is not entirely accurate in the Australian context and is inadequate to discuss some of the individuals in this article. For example, Dr Walter Edmund Roth was British-born but of Hungarian-Jewish descent (a fact that his political opponents pointed out in their criticisms of him). Using ‘European’ also has the interesting effect of homogenizing settler populations in the same way they sought to do to native populations.

what were imagined to be vanishing races was more important than the protection of those races. This article explores the historical relationship of such theories with ethnographic and collection practices, focusing on the Australian context in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The article argues that collectors' interpretations of the peoples they studied were predetermined by their own notions of racial and technological hierarchies. However, such notions failed to account for the true complexity of the material record that the individuals in this article collected because of their own assumptions of native authenticity. This article first broadly summarises European racial science before defining technological classifications that became crucial in the categorisation of cultures, particularly regarding dominant museum theories on display. Using Australian collections as a case study, I summarise the ideas of some of the most noteworthy anthropologists and natural scientists of the period to explore their relationship to the themes of the article and demonstrate that, despite a genuine empathy for native suffering, they regarded collection to be of greater importance than protection.

The aims of this article are broadly two-fold. First, I intend to expand my previous publications on this topic by exploring the written records of major anthropologists and ethnographers in the colonial period of Australia. Although the conclusions herein align with those of my earlier work, this article specifically emphasises textual records, drawing heavily on the writing of phrenologists, antiquarians, collectors, anthropologists, psychologists, colonial agents, and natural scientists. I have previously only lightly touched upon or not used many of these sources, but here I trace the legacy of their ideas from their eighteenth-century foundations through the colonial period, to finally suggest the implications of their assumptions well into the twentieth century. I discuss men who were instrumental in advising and framing government policies towards Aboriginal populations and the misconceptions they had. Second, this article is intended to reach an audience to whom Australian anthropology and colonial history are largely foreign and unknown. I hope that the sources and perspectives discussed enable readers to consider like practices in other periods and places beyond my subject.

Literature Review

This article explores in detail the notions of Aboriginal 'purity', race, and technology held by European scientists who conducted fieldwork among the native populations.² This includes research conducted a decade ago but builds on other research and ideas in which I have since engaged. For example, see *Frontier Shores* (Rowlands, 2016). I have previously argued that the collection record of Aboriginal Australia in this period was misinterpreted by the collectors of the material, who ignored, reviled, failed to notice, or sometimes destroyed artefacts that demonstrated cross-cultural contact and adaptation (Rowlands, 2011a; Rowlands, 2011b; Rowlands 2016). Later, I summarise these earlier arguments, but my focus here is mostly on the textual sources.

Other authors have discussed cross-cultural contact in Aboriginal artefacts and the desire for the

² This material includes prior research into primary source data that was not previously used, largely for reasons of brevity and flow, and was thought lost for some years.

‘authentic’, unadulterated object by European collectors in this period. Notably, Tom Griffiths (1996), Rodney Harrison (2006), and Phillip Jones (2008b) explored the antiquarian’s and collector’s desire for objects from a so-called Stone Age of Australia, which frequently led to more common cross-cultural objects being ignored or not noticed. These works have been accompanied by such noteworthy volumes as *The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections* (Peterson, Allen & Hamby, 2008) that also considered notions of authenticity in the museum context, and how this shaped collection and display practices. My own PhD thesis explored these ideas by conducting a detailed analysis of roughly two thousand objects at two museums, gathered by two collectors, how the Queensland Museum constructed a flawed view of Aboriginal people as a Stone Age people in an exhibition that remained open from 1914 to 1985, and how such practices formed part of state-building in the colonial period and beyond. Within the context of Australian archaeology and anthropology, it is now well-accepted that collectors held profound biases regarding the peoples they studied, leading to mischaracterisation and under-representation of the cultural diversity of the material record.

This article owes a debt to the works cited above, as well as additional material on the historical individuals discussed throughout. Of particular significance here is the writing on Professor Baldwin Spencer (1860–1929) by John Mulvaney (2008a; 2008b), one of the most admired archaeologists in Australia, and whose work on Spencer had no rival. Furthermore, the collection of articles cited throughout from *The Roth Family, Anthropology & Colonial Administration* (McDougall & Davidson, 2008) is an indispensable source on a significant family in the field of anthropology during the colonial period, which relates to two of the major figures discussed in this article. Supplementing this source, other works on Dr Walter Edmund Roth have been used throughout, such as by Richard Robins (2008) and Kate Khan (1993). Although both authors discussed Roth’s collection practices and his collection (at the Queensland Museum and Australian Museum respectively), they did not conduct detailed analyses of the presence of cross-cultural contact within the artefacts collected. This, of course, was not their aim, and such a perspective was the focus of some of my past research. Nevertheless, Robins and Khan provide additional invaluable insights to this article.

Race, Technology and the Museum

By the early nineteenth century, scientific racial theories were emerging as the central argument to justify why the European powers were displacing non-European people in the global competition for land, life, and labour. Following the European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, it began to be understood that social, technological, and moral divisions were chiefly the product of differences in race.³ Carolus Linnaeus (1707–78) and Johann Friedrich Blumenbach 1752–1840) were the earliest European commentators on race as a scientific concept. The former created a four-race model that the latter expanded into a five-race one, both seeking to classify perceived racial differences

³ For example at the tail-end of the Enlightenment period, John Pinkerton wrote his *Dissertation on the Origin of the Scythians or Goths*, which posited that the origins of European greatness (particularly the north) lay in its supposed Gothic ancestry, ‘accepting [excepting] only that of Ruffia [Russia], Poland, and Hungary’ (1787).

scientifically (Gould, 1996). These theories were quickly adopted by racial theorists, yet, crucially, Blumenbach's assertion that his classificatory system did not imply that 'race' meant inherent human differences or social and evolutionary hierarchies were ignored.⁴ For example, the Scottish antiquarian, John Pinkerton (1758–1826), described the differences between races as akin to those between breeds of dogs, with the Europeans being the hunting dogs and the rest being the lapdogs (1787). Evidently, the inevitable conclusion of those European scientists who supported the notion of racial difference was that the so-called European races were superior to non-Europeans. The Scottish phrenologist George Combe wrote, in 1832, that: 'The inhabitants of Europe, belonging to the Caucasian variety of mankind, have manifested, in all ages, a strong tendency toward moral and intellectual improvement' (as cited in Horsman, 1976, p. 398).

Race theory had been prevalent and enormously popular in Great Britain, long before the rise of Social Darwinism. The controversial anatomist and scientist Dr Robert Knox (1791–1862) had enjoyed a successful career travelling throughout England lecturing on the racial dominance of Anglo-Saxons.⁵ Knox published *The Races of Men* in 1850, though he had enjoyed success on the lecture circuit since the mid-1840s. His principle belief was that humans had both a zoological and intellectual history and that the first determined the latter. Knox (1850) wrote that: 'Race is everything: literature, science, art, - in a word, civilisation depends on it' (p. 7).

Such theories combined with notions of technological epochs in civilisation that would then influence artefact collection and display and see native peoples categorised in exclusionary and backward terms. The Danish antiquarian Christian Jürgensen Thomsen (1788–1865) sought a means to conveniently describe and curate the vast collection under his care at the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen. He labelled the artefacts in his collection as belonging to a Three-Age system (Stone, Bronze, and Iron). Although there was some initial opposition to the idea, it had largely been accepted by the 1860s (Daniel & Renfrew, 1988). The effect of this on nineteenth-century natural science was profound, and it enabled collectors to describe peoples whose artefacts exhibited stone as their primary material as belonging to the Stone Age. While Europe had long since moved on from the manufacture of stone tools, many native peoples had not, and those collectors who gathered such objects began to classify their parent cultures as fixed in time, in a so-called 'primitive' condition. Such narratives sought to explain and justify European dominance and right-to-rule over the peoples they colonised.

⁴ Blumenbach had written that 'although there seems to be so great a difference between widely separate nations . . . you see that all do so run into one another, and that one variety of mankind does so sensibly pass into the other, that you cannot mark out the limits between them'. Cited in Gould (1996), p. 407.

⁵ Dr Robert Knox was chiefly controversial because he had been involved in the Burke and Hare scandal in Edinburgh in 1828. William Burke and William Hare were two Irish immigrants who murdered sixteen people in Edinburgh in order to supply Knox with fresh cadavers for dissection in his anatomy classes. Whether Knox was aware he was being supplied with cadavers of the *little-too-fresh* variety is a matter of conjecture; however, he was able to escape prosecution at the cost of his license to practice anatomy. Burke was hanged after Hare turned King's evidence against him, while the precise fate of Hare is unknown and is the stuff of folk myth (reputedly, his eyes were torn or burnt out by a vengeful mob). For more context see, for example: Richardson, (1987).

That the Three-Age system had a major effect on anthropology museums, and theory is evident in contemporary records. According to the anthropologist Henry Ling Roth (1911), by which time he was the curator of the Bankfield Museum, almost all museums ran their ethnological displays on the same template as done by the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, and at Salisbury.⁶ The Pitt Rivers system was essentially an evolutionary model of classification, not unlike Thomsen's Three-Age system, which used material culture to support a hierarchy of anthropological development from primitive peoples to European civilisation (Coombes, 1988). Lt.-General Pitt Rivers (1891), who founded the museum, saw his museum as primarily educational in purpose. In 1891, he declared:

The masses are ignorant . . . the knowledge they lack is the knowledge of history. This lays them open to the designs of demagogues and agitators, who strive to make them break with the past . . . in drastic changes that have not the sanction of experience (p.115).

Lt.-General Pitt Rivers, as a military man, was fundamentally tied to the business of the British Empire, either in its defence or in its expansion. That museums based on his model became educational tools for the Empire is hardly surprising. This role was explicitly outlined and understood by major scientific organisations. For example, the Royal Anthropological Institute, in 1909, explained:

Heaven-born Cadets are not the only Englishmen who are placed in authority over native races There are Engine Drivers, Inspectors of Police . . . Civil engineers of various denominations . . . to mention only a few whose sole opportunity of inhibiting scientific knowledge is from the local museum of the town or city in which they have been brought up (Cited in Coombes, 1988, p. 10).

At the close of the nineteenth century, museums had become integral to the research and theory of anthropology (Henare, 2005). Henry Ling Roth (1911) recommended that museums were best used when they displayed ethnological materials to demonstrate the relative development of an indigenous people and to educate Europeans as to the nature of the world's people. Anthropology, in the Victorian Age, assumed that the physical evolution of 'man' was related to everything he did, and that material culture studies could demonstrate the links between them (Coombes, 1988). Museum curators, therefore, had to make their exhibits informative by visually explaining the evolution of technology and indigenous peoples. This would often involve the presentation of objects in hierarchies, so as to emphasise a dichotomy between the old and the new. Hence, the evolutionary system of classification used in the Pitt Rivers Museum was ideal for this purpose. As Henry Ling Roth (1911) explained:

⁶ To avoid confusion with Henry Ling Roth's younger brother Walter Edmund Roth, his full name is always used in this text.

Now as regards the ethnological arrangement, the idea is to give within a certain or uncertain perspective a view of the manufactures of any given people, in order that we may get some notions it may be as to their productions, or to understand their position in the scale of art or manufactures, or to get some knowledge as to their general state of culture, or a fair idea as to what sort of people they are (p. 287).

What is important here, in terms of the collection record, its use, and how collectors and scholars evaluated native populations, is that such hierarchical views were chiefly useful to scholars in providing insight into European ancestry (Roth, 1911). As empathetic as many anthropologists were, or believed themselves to be, to the people they studied, they nevertheless could not avoid seeing through a lens that coloured native peoples as curios. Having been conditioned to think of others in racial or technological hierarchies, the collectors and ethnographers thus set to their work with ultimately flawed assumptions, and this is especially evident in colonial Australia.

The Australian Laboratory

Australia became a ripe testing ground for theories on racial and technological sophistication, partly because of the notion that its native population was doomed to extinction and because they were classified as incapable of escaping a Stone Age level of technology. On the 22nd of August 1770, Captain Cook claimed the eastern coastline of the Australian continent for the British Empire. However, it was not until the 26th of January 1788 that Governor Arthur Phillip annexed roughly half of the landmass for a tiny penal colony consisting of just over seven hundred convicts, two hundred marines, and three hundred naval officers and sailors (Frost, 2011). The settlement of Australia had been dictated on the false notion of *Terra Nullius*, an assumption that the land was without meaningful human habitation. In fact, hundreds of different Aboriginal language groups had inhabited Australia for at least sixty thousand years, developing ways of life eminently suited to the harsh landscape of the continent. Phillip was immediately aware that the new colony of New South Wales was in fact inhabited by native peoples, but he found it difficult to establish amicable relations with them. As a succession of governors replaced him and the tide of European settlement washed over Aboriginal land, conflict and exploitation of native lives and land followed.

Australia soon became a lucrative prospect for European settlers, particularly in marine and mineral resources. Europeans and Chinese people migrated in vast numbers to Australia, seizing opportunities for gold-mining and pastoral settlement (Khan 1993). This led to clashes with the native population who were too few in number in their own communities (often only existing in settlements of upwards of fifty people) to resist such a flood. Consequently, Aboriginal people lost access to their game and resources and, often, their lives. Ethnographers and anthropologists frequently discussed the depopulation of the Australian Aboriginal peoples in the face of European economic aggression. For example, the anthropologists Professor Baldwin Spencer and Francis James Gillen (1855–1912) were both engaged in active research among Australian Aboriginal peoples. They witnessed the harmful effect that European settlement had on them, describing exploitation and dwindling

populations (Rowse, 1998). Alfred William Howitt (1830–1908), an anthropologist and natural scientist, and Lorimer Fison (1832–1907),⁷ an anthropologist and missionary, described the process of native depopulation in the face of European settlement as a ‘line of blood’ (1880, p. 181). Both men wrote that the native population of Gippsland in Victoria had shrunk from as many as 1,500 in 1839 to 159 in 1877. In the state of Queensland, the situation was perhaps grimmer, with the state employing the native mounted police in the extermination of Aboriginal settlements (Richards, 2008).

Despite frank condemnations of European violence and the economic and sexual exploitation of Aboriginal people on the frontier, Aboriginal decline was unquestionably an issue of race in the eyes of mainstream Victorian ethnographers and anthropologists. These opinions are evident in the observations of contemporary literature, from men such as Spencer and Gillen, and Fison and Howitt. Spencer and Gillen’s *The Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899/1968), elaborated on racial decline:

In the more southern parts [of Australia], where they have been long in contact with the white man, not only have their numbers diminished rapidly, but the natives who still remain are but poor representatives of their race, having lost all or nearly all of their old customs and traditions. With the spread of the white man it can only be a matter of comparatively a few years before the same fate will befall the remaining tribes, which are as yet fortunately too far removed from white settlements of any size to have become degraded (p. 7).

Fison and Howitt, as damning as they were of European violence against Aboriginal people, nonetheless believed that violence and loss of resources alone could not possibly account for the decline of the Aboriginal people of Australia. In their introductory section on the Kurnai (1880), they wrote:

If the aborigine could have become physically and mentally such as a white man, he would have been in equilibrium with his new surroundings. If his physical and mental nature had been able to become modified with the changed conditions, he could have survived. But the former alternative is self-evidently an impossibility, and probably the strength of hereditary physical and mental peculiarities has made the latter alternative also an impossibility. The consequence has been that he is rapidly and inevitably becoming extinct (p. 185).

When Stanley D. Porteus (1883–1972), a professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Hawaii, was invited to study the Aboriginal people in 1928, his various researches and tests came to the single conclusion: ‘They [Aboriginal people] are not unintelligent, but are certainly inadaptably to a civilised environment’ (1931, p. 420). Porteus was a theorist on human intelligence, arguing that European races were inherently superior in mental faculties to others, and his assumptions on anthropological

⁷ Both men were credited with having produced the first work of ethnography in Australia.

issues echoed those of professional scholars of the field on native levels of civilisation and technological sophistication. His preface includes this summation of his unique opportunity:

I received an invitation from the Australian National Research Council to visit Australia and carry out a series of investigations on the mental status of the aborigines of that continent. With the exception of one or two very minor studies involving small groups of half-castes as well as full bloods, nothing whatever had been attempted in the way of psychological examinations of individuals of this most interesting race. Yet here in Australia are the remnants of a Stone Age people, cut off, in all probability, from other racial contacts for thousands of years and universally considered as belonging in the most primitive stages of culture (p. v).

Twenty years earlier, Henry Ling Roth (1911) had similarly written on the uniqueness of native Australians, although his perspective differed from some of his contemporaries. He had commented that: 'The Australians [Aboriginal people] are by most people looked upon as a degraded race, who are said to have no religion, and no government, and are in fact the worst of savages!' (pp. 287–88). Henry Ling Roth made it clear that he did not believe these views were true, but emphasised that their intellectual currency held value among European people in Australia and beyond.⁸ He does not specify whether 'by most' refers to scientists like himself or the broader public, though it seems unlikely that the finer distinctions between 'degradation' and 'primitiveness' would have been of great interest to any but scholars. Despite his qualification that native Australians were not 'degraded', his general assumptions still tended to agree with his contemporaries that Aboriginal people existed in an exceptionally primitive state. Some other influential anthropologists in this period agreed with Henry Ling Roth's sentiments. For example, Howitt, in his *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, wrote in 1904 that:

The level of culture of the Australians cannot be considered lower than that of the ancestral stock from which they separated, and their language discloses nothing that can point to a former knowledge of the arts higher than that of the present time, in their natural savage state (p. 30).

Spencer and Gillen shared similar views on the state of Aboriginal civilisation though, like Henry Ling Roth, they were also doubtful of the truth behind overly negative stereotyping. They wrote that:

It is sometimes asserted that the Australian native is degenerate, but it is difficult to see on what grounds this conclusion is based. His customs and organisation, as well

⁸ It is important to stress here that 'degraded' in this context means that others considered them to have originally existed in a higher level of civilisation from which they had declined. Henry Ling Roth certainly objected to such a view but, nonetheless, there is no reason to suspect that he disagreed with the prevailing attitude among racial theorists that Australian Aboriginal were on a lower tier of sophistication than others.

as his various weapons and implements, show, so far as we can see, no indication of any such feature . . . [There is] no evidence of . . . any stage of civilisation higher than the one in which we now find them (1899/1968, p. 54).

These views demonstrate that, within the Australian context, such writers observed Aboriginal people in terms determined by broader attitudes on race. Although exploitation by European peoples was considered, most observers concluded that native problems were racially determined: they could not resist because they were perceived to be of lower racial stock. This perception was reinforced by a flawed interpretation of the material culture that was gathered to feed the museum desire for objects of Aboriginal 'tradition'.

Protection and Collection

Observers like Spencer, Gillen, and Howitt were generous and even impressed by the lifestyles of the Aboriginal people of Australia where they observed them in what was considered their traditional state. Where Aboriginal people intermingled with Europeans, adopted their customs, habits, and materials, this was almost always considered to be a clear sign of the degradation of the Aboriginal race (Mulvaney, 2008a). Indeed, the perceived inability of Aboriginal people to adapt became the primary determinant of their inevitable extinction in the eyes of European researchers. This idea proved to be the fundamental notion for scientists in conceptualising the Australian Aboriginal during this period. The idea was so widespread and readily accepted that it clung to psychological, historical, and anthropological thought concerning Aboriginal people for decades. A key element to this notion that Aboriginal Australians could not adapt was drawn from the collection of material culture on the frontier. I have written extensively on how European collectors misread the objects they gathered and failed to notice the profound signs of adaptation within them, or how the collectors fetishised objects they defined as showing no cross-cultural contact (Rowlands, 2011b). Suffice to state here, the desire of collectors for the 'authentic' object led to a significant collection of native material showing foreign influence and adaptation to be ignored or, in some cases, deliberately modified to remove the admixture. Museums, likewise, sought collections of what they considered to be the unadulterated 'pure' material culture of native peoples, so as to display what were perceived to be the last relics of vanishing cultures. This desire for the authentic by museums drove the collection of material on the frontier. It also had a legitimating effect on the flawed interpretations of the artefacts collected since museums were the pre-eminent domain of cultural education at this time. Yet this collection also convinced the collectors and those who interpreted the collections that Aboriginal people were destined for extinction because the elision of so-called inauthentic material culture from the collected record constructed a false impression of native inadaptability.

Not all collectors were ignorant of the fact that Aboriginal people could introduce new ideas and innovations. Nevertheless, they felt that Aboriginal society was fundamentally opposed to adaptation. As Spencer and Gillen (1899/1968) wrote:

That changes have been introduced, in fact, are still being introduced, is a matter of certainty; the difficulty to be explained is, how in the face of the rigid conservatism of the native, which may be said to be one of his leading features, such changes can possibly be mooted (pp. 13–4).

According to the anthropologist Adolphus Peter Elkin (1891–1979), Aboriginal adoption of European goods was determined based only upon the economic attractions of the goods or customs, and upon the zeal of the Europeans (especially missionaries) (1951). As Spencer and Gillen had observed, however, Aboriginal culture was seen as inherently conservative and utterly resistant to change. This apparently simple assertion is nonetheless completely contradicted not only by the material culture of Aboriginal people but also by the condemnations of the same observers towards Aboriginal material adaptation.

The material record, therefore, seemed to bolster the conclusion that Aboriginal people were doomed. The perception of the rapid destruction of the Aboriginal population bothered the more humanitarian impulses of some of the European population of Australia. At different times, the various states and territories adopted protection acts designed to slow the anticipated extinction of the native population, control its sexual reproduction, and segregate it from the European and other non-native groups. Anthropologists were key figures in this drive and often became informants to the various protection offices, or protectors themselves. For example, in Queensland, the 1897 *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act* was created to protect and control the native population. It is demonstrative of the link between anthropology and colonial power that the most prestigious post of Northern Protector was filled by the British-born anthropologist and surgeon, Dr Walter Edmund Roth (the younger brother of Henry Ling Roth).⁹ Roth was a surgeon, as well as a committed ethnographer and the Protector of Queensland Aborigines from 1897 until 1906.¹⁰

Roth, like Spencer, travelled to Australia to begin his career in the field of anthropological studies on the Australian Aboriginal people. Roth and Spencer considered Australia to be a rich country for research. Evincing the common view that Australian Aboriginals were within a few short generations of extinction, Spencer wrote in 1900 that: ‘There is no end of pioneer work [in Australia] to be done and work which, in Anthropology at least, must be done soon if it is to be done at all’ (Cited in Mulvaney, 2008a). Spencer and Roth shared the idea that to properly study Aboriginal people, one had to make themselves first of all thoroughly familiar with Aboriginal people and gain their confidence. On this matter, Roth commented in the preface to his 1897 publication that:

⁹ The *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act* (hereafter referred to as *The Act*) was largely established by the amateur anthropologist, politician, writer, and adventurer Archibald Meston. Meston received the less prestigious post of Southern Protector, a fact that incensed him and led to a bitter rivalry between himself and Roth. For Meston’s report, which led to some of the policies of *The Act*, see: Meston, (1896).

¹⁰ Roth became overall protector in 1904, after Meston was retrenched from his position.

At Boulia, where strictly professional work was conspicuous by its absence, almost my whole time was devoted to a careful study of the local (Pitta-Pitta) language: only when this was sufficiently mastered did I find it possible to understand the complex system of social and individual nomenclature in vogue, and ultimately to gain such amount of confidence and trust among the natives as enabled me to obtain information concerning various superstitions, beliefs, and ceremonial rites which otherwise would in all probability have been withheld. To any future observers of, and writers on, the Queensland aboriginal, I would most strongly recommend this method of making themselves familiar with the particular language of the district before proceeding to make any further inquiries (p. v).

Roth was typical of many of the leading authors of anthropological and ethnological work in late-Victorian-era Australia who shared similar backgrounds in education, from which they gained similar disciplinary perspectives. For both Spencer and Roth, exposure to the field of anthropology came from their shared educational background and early experiences with the Pitt Rivers Museum in Britain (Mulvaney, 2008a). Roth and Spencer began their university studies in 1881, enrolling in a new course on Darwinian Biology at Oxford University's Museum of Natural History (Mulvaney, 2008b). Henry Balfour (1863–1939), who would later become the first curator at the Pitt Rivers Museum and remain in written contact with Spencer, was also enrolled in the same course as he and Roth. Roth and Spencer both actively collected for and eventually became directors of museums: Spencer as honorary director of the National Museum of Victoria and Roth at the Georgetown Museum, Guyana. Although many of their ideas of native peoples were premised on false assumptions and tended towards racial theories, and although Roth's policies as protector—which included segregation and the control of reproduction—would be considered a form of racism today, both men exhibited strong humanistic tendencies for their time, and Roth's policies emerged from a genuine desire to protect Aboriginal peoples.

The establishment of formal regulations over Aboriginal people created the necessity to regulate what classified an Aboriginal person. In order to have laws governing a certain kind of people, it was essential that what constituted that kind be properly understood. Race, therefore, became fundamental to the implementation of *The Act*. As an example of this, Roth was greatly concerned with the inter-breeding of Aboriginal people with 'Asiatics and Kanakas' (Cited in Ganter, 2008, p. 162). He wanted an amendment Bill to *The Act* under which permission would be needed to be sought from the protector for any cross-racial marriage with Aboriginal people. Europeans were theoretically exempt from this Bill, though not practically, as Roth believed passionately that for Aboriginal people to be preserved, there must be no admixture of race.

When Roth became the royal commissioner investigating claims of exploitation of Aboriginal people in Western Australia, in 1904, he also cautioned the state government of the danger of allowing racial miscegenation. The appointment of Roth to this post was largely the result of the bad publicity the state was receiving for its treatment of Aboriginal people. Indeed, Roth's report on the conditions in Western Australia would eventually be discussed in the House of Commons in Britain,

where it was claimed that ‘cruelties committed in the dark ages’ were going on in the state (Haebich, 1992). Roth warned the Western Australian government that there were far too many mixed-race children amongst Aboriginal people, and if this continued, the future of these children would ‘be one of vagabondism and harlotry’ (Cited in Haebich, 1992, p. 77). The perceived dangers of racial admixture was not an obsession peculiar to Roth, as it was shared by many of the leading ethnographers and anthropologists of the time in Australia.

While Roth recognised that mixed-race Aboriginal children were increasing in number, his estimation of the population of full-blooded Aboriginals was grim. Archibald Meston, the Southern Protector in Queensland, agreed with Roth’s figure predicting, in 1902, that ‘50 years will finish it’ (Taylor, 2003, p. 127). As Mulvaney (2008a) has observed, Roth often wrote to his old classmate Spencer and opined that Aboriginal people could not compete with the European population of Australia, nor adapt to new forms of life that would allow them to do so. Therefore, in his view, they were destined for extinction. Even so, Roth ignored the evidence of adaptation he collected, or that he saw in the growth of certain kinds of Aboriginal populations. He observed that Aboriginal children of mixed-race descent were more frequent on the frontier contradiction of assertion that Aboriginal people would die out. Yet, for Roth, there was no contradiction—like many other Victorian observers of race, pure-bloodedness defined the features of a racial type; admixture and miscegenation only diminished bloodlines.

The idea of racial miscegenation did not end at discussions of sexual relations but also filtered into broader cultural and technological issues. When Aboriginal people adopted the habits of Europeans, this was almost always seen as a bad thing. Similar propositions existed in the broader anthropological literature. For example, as early as 1880, Fison and Howitt had observed that Aboriginal customs were fast disintegrating in the wake of European settlement. As a result of the frontier contact between Aboriginal people and Europeans, Aboriginal people had been influenced by European culture. Fison and Howitt (1880) cautioned that: ‘They [Aboriginal people] only adopted some of the habits of the white men; but with these they also adopted some of the vicious habits of the new comers’ (pp. 183–4). In particular, Howitt believed that the influence of European goods and customs had been a pernicious one. In his 1904 publication, he romanticised traditional Aboriginal lifestyle and condemned the features adopted by Aboriginal people from Europeans:

Such contrasts between the old and the new condition of things struck me forcibly at the Kurnai *Jereaeil*, where the people lived for a week in the manner of their old lives, certainly with the addition of the white man’s beef and flour, but without his intoxicating drinks, which have been a fatal curse to the black race. That week was passed without a single quarrel or dispute (Howitt, 1904/1996, p. 777).

As stated, the collecting practices of anthropologists and others were influenced by these pre-conceived notions of race and technology. Roth’s collection of Aboriginal artefacts is considered to be the most systematic and emblematic of Aboriginal material culture collections in this period. Besides the material Roth collected, Richard Robins (2008) defines Roth’s other work as ‘the most

significant body of anthropological work on Queensland Aborigines for that period' (p. 177). Roth's work cannot be removed from the context of the man himself, nor from his duties as protector or his publications on the ethnology of the Queensland Aborigines. His collection also indicates how Roth and other collectors were constructing Aboriginal culture in accordance with their own notions.

Roth collected and catalogued a vast number of objects of Aboriginal material culture, and his patient and scientific recording of his collections rival any other collector of like artefacts at the time. Indeed, only the German collector Otto Finsch's collection of Pacific Island material culture shows greater attention to detail on an object-by-object basis (Rowlands, 2016). Of the artefacts that Roth collected for the Queensland Museum that I studied, 33 of 194 demonstrated clear evidence of cross-cultural contact. These included objects made with metal, ceramic, or European machine-manufactured cloth. Of the collection he gathered for the Australian Museum, 98 of 1,617 objects showed such materials.¹¹ However, if we consider that objects made with iron-headed chisels were used for engraving or shaping wooden objects, the actual incidence of cultural entanglement is likely much higher. Furthermore, as it was undoubtedly the case that Roth (and other collectors) had a distaste for collecting such 'impure' objects, the actual presence of cross-cultural contact and adaptation to foreign materials within Aboriginal culture was almost certainly significant.

This obsession with objects of pre-contact Aboriginal society could blind observers to what they were actually witnessing. For example, though not an artefact collector, Porteus (1931) had come to Australia to observe 'traditional' Aboriginal people, and he too missed the significance of what he saw. Consider his description that:

To see how a Stone Age people actually make their weapons was not to be lightly disregarded. This matter of making stone or glass spearheads probably represents the aborigine's high-water mark of achievement in manual skill and design (p. 109).

Porteus concludes that Aboriginal people are 'Stone Age' and inadaptably, yet he fails to notice that the weapon making he is privileged to observe is being done with materials other than of Aboriginal making or naturally occurring in the environment (glass). Yet, observers and, especially, collectors sought 'authentic' Aboriginal Australia. When presented with evidence of integrated material, they either did not recognise it or considered these objects as degenerations. Such collections were then used by their host museums for display purposes, initially demonstrating the perceived cultural purity and inability to adapt of Aboriginal peoples. Nevertheless, more patient observation of the collected record has shown that even the material that was collected evinces that Australian Aboriginal people, at the time of collection, could by

¹¹ It is important to note that I excluded all objects considered to be Secret Sacred (culturally or spiritually sensitive artefacts) when I examined these collections. Although I was given full permission by the Queensland Museum and the Queensland Museum Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee to examine this material, I decided it was not necessary to use material reserved for initiated Aboriginal men and women for my own research agenda. Furthermore, some of the objects Roth collected have been lost, misplaced, or possibly repatriated since their original collection.

no means be described as inhabiting an inescapable Stone Age civilisation (Rowlands, 2011b) and, instead, creatively adapted foreign materials to their own purposes.

Conclusion

In the Australian context, Aboriginal people were considered primarily of interest for the same reasons as other native peoples. Howitt made this evidently clear when he wrote that: 'The Australians [specifically Aboriginal people] may therefore be classed as representing hunting tribes of the Neolithic age' (1904/1996, p. 9). Stone tools were the primary basis of Howitt's evidence for this deduction, and he considered Aboriginal civilisation to be fixed in development from time immemorial (Mulvaney, 2008b). Spencer explicitly stated the same views as Howitt. In an address to the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, in 1921, he declared:

The second [duty] is to protect [Aboriginal people] . . . The first is to study as carefully and intensively as possible, their customs and beliefs, and all that is included under the term of their culture, because they stand further back in time . . . than any other people still existing; they represent the last surviving relic of really primitive stone-age people; and it can only be a matter of comparatively a few years before they are extinct, or the surviving remnants of the tribes have lost all knowledge of their original tribes and customs (Cited in Mulvaney, 2008b, 157).

The disturbing implication here is that despite the observer's empathy for Aboriginal people in the face of European settlement, protecting Aboriginal people was considered to be a secondary aim to simply studying them. Such flaws in the European study of the 'other' have been notably stated by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, in her *Decolonizing Methodologies* (2012), in which she argues that the elision of native voices and perspectives in such anthropology inextricably links Western research methods to the colonial mission, offering nothing of use to the peoples who were studied. Indeed, from the perspective of the men discussed in this article, the study of native peoples was chiefly of value because it helped to inform on the European past. Nevertheless, there was a sense of urgency to collecting and in establishing museum stores and exhibits of Aboriginal material culture. This sense of urgency in collecting artefacts was commonplace in Australia. For example, the Queensland Museum demanded Aboriginal material culture from collectors *before it was too late*, and many of the institution's regular collectors expressed the same sense of urgency. In other states in Australia, these sentiments were also common: Herbert Basedow (1881–1933), an anthropologist and Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Northern Territory in 1911, believed that it was imperative to collect Aboriginal material culture before they became extinct (Kaus, 2008).

Australia was not alone in having collectors motivated by a fear of the extinction of their favoured subject. Since the Darwinian revolution of the 1860s, colonial territories and peoples gained a scientific significance. According to Henare (2005), those who studied the so-called primitive peoples of the world 'emphasised the urgent need to collect the material productions as

well as textual accounts of contemporary “archaic” peoples before they died out’ (p. 214). Many of the quotations cited from Spencer and Gillen in this article refers to the urgency of material culture collection in regards Aboriginal people. For example, the preface to their *Native Tribes of Central Australia* (1899/1968), states:

The time in which it will be possible to investigate the Australian native tribes is rapidly drawing to a close, and though we know more of them than we do of the lost Tasmanians, yet our knowledge is very incomplete, and unless some special effort be made, many tribes will practically die out without our gaining any knowledge of the details of their organisation, or of their sacred customs and beliefs (p. vii).

Museums began to lose ground to universities as the primary area for the dissemination of anthropological theory, and artefact collection began to fall out of vogue. By the 1930s, Australian Social Anthropology was firmly ensconced in the university, with the museum being of peripheral importance to the field. Yet, the conception of Aboriginal people as relics of the Stone Age was so enshrined in the European imagination that, even when the museum’s importance to anthropology was replaced by the university, observers still conceived of Aboriginal people in terms of flawed collections and arrangements of their material culture.

European race theories and ideas of technological hierarchies were intimately connected, and this determined early ethnographic and collection practices in the colonies. The written records of contemporary anthropologists and collectors demonstrate that such people viewed Aboriginal people as unchanging, stubborn, and resistant to adaptation. As has been shown in the cited texts, the prevailing view of European anthropologists and natural scientists regarding the survival of the Aboriginal people was that they simply could not adapt and that their extinction would occur soon enough as a consequence of this. As late as 1945, academic observers of Aboriginal society were still making this prediction. Elkin, in the preface to his 1977 edition of a book he first published in 1945, wrote that: ‘In 1945, the depopulation of full-blood Aborigines, which began in 1788, was still continuing and their extinction in the not far-off future seemed inevitable’ (p. vii). History has proven Elkin’s earliest assumptions wrong, and the modern-day Aboriginal Australian population has shown robust growth.

Regardless, flawed theoretical constructions lingered for decades, leading to the mischaracterisation of Australia’s native population and serious flaws in the work of noted anthropologists. Had these men more critically analysed the dominant European theories on race, their observations on the frontier would likely have profoundly differed. The material culture they collected would likely have differed in scope, and their analysis of their collections could have disproved their incorrect assumptions of inadaptability in Aboriginal culture. Unfortunately, their flawed assumptions buttressed exclusionist attitudes and segregationist and restrictive policies directed at Australia’s native peoples, which helped to bolster the idea that Australia was a ‘white man’s country’, not because of the European conquest of the continent, but because of pseudo-scientific views of racial and technological sophistication.

Acknowledgements

Part of the research for this article was conducted under an Australian Research Council Grant in partnership with the Queensland Museum (2007–2011). This was supervised by professors Iain Davidson, Russell McDougall, and David Roberts, to whom I will ever be grateful for their advice and support. Some additional research was undertaken while I was the Postdoctoral Fellow in Museum Anthropology at Bard Graduate Center and the American Museum of Natural History (2014–2016). While there, I was able to supplement my research with the AMNH's vast material culture and archival collections, and some of that appears within this article. I am grateful for their support.

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ཞབས་བྱུང་ཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་པ་དང་འབྲེལ་བའི་ཚེས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་པའི་སྟོར།



༡། སྤུན་ཚྱེངས་སྤྱེད་ཚལ་ཡངས་པའི་སྤྱེད་གྲུ་སྤྱིའི་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱི་དཔལ་ལས་འཁྲུངས་པའི་རྒྱལ་ཀུན་ཐུགས་རྗེའི་རང་གཟུགས་འཕགས་པ་འཇིག་རྟེན་དབང་ཕྱུག་གི་རྣམ་རེལ་དོན་གྱི་སྤྱད་དུ་མཚན་ནས་སྤོས་ན་དཔལ་འབྲུག་པ་ཞབས་བྱུང་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་མཐུ་ཆེན་ཚེས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་དག་དབང་རྣམ་པར་རྒྱལ་བ་དེ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་རྣམ་རེལ་ཚེས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་པ་དཔལ་འཇིགས་མེད་སངས་ཀྱི་དབང་ཕྱུག་མཚོགས་དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ཞབས་བྱུང་དག་དབང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་རྣམ་འབྲུལ་ཡིན་པའི་སྟོར་ལས་སྐྱབས་རྗེ་ཁྱི་རབས་༡༠པས་ཞབས་བརྟན་གྱི་ཚོགས་སུ་གསུངས་ཡོད་མི་གྱུར་གཞི་བཞག་སྟེ་ཞབས་བྱུང་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་འཁྲུངས་རབ་ཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་པའི་གོ་རིམ་དང་སྤྱར་ཞིན་ན་རྫོང་ཁའི་ཐོག་ལུ་མདོར་བསྐྱུས་ཏེ་སྟོན་གྱི་ཞིབ་འཛུལ་དང་མཁས་པའི་གསུངས་ལས་བརྒྱུ་ཏེ་འཁྲུངས་རབ་ཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་པའི་སྤྱར་རི་བཙས་ཏེ་ལུ་ནི་ཡིན།

སྤུལ་གཞི།



ངོ་བོ་ཀ་དག་ཆོས་སྐྱོལ་འོད་དཔག་མེད། །རང་བཞིན་སྒྱུ་གྱུ་བ་ལོངས་སྐྱོ་སྒྱུ་རས་གཟིགས། །ཐུགས་རྩེ་ཀྱན་ལྷུ་སྐྱོ་
པ་སྒྲ་འབྱུང། །སྐྱོ་གསུམ་རྒྱལ་བས་དེང་འདིར་གིས་པ་སྒྲོལ། །



སྐྱོ་འཕྲེང་དང་པོ་སངས་རྒྱུས་སྒྲུང་མཐའི་སྐྱུན་

སྒྲུང།

ཀྱན་མཁུན་པ་སྒྲུང་དཀར་པོའི་ཞལ་ལས། །ཐུན་སྐྱུམ་
ཆོགས་པ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་རྣམ་རྩལ་གྱིས། །ཡིད་ཅན་ཀྱན་
ལ་པན་བདེའི་མཆོག་སྐྱུན་མཁན། །ཆོ་དཔག་མེད་
ཀྱི་སྐྱུས་ཀྱི་མཐུ་བོ་པ།འཇིག་རྟེན་དབང་ལྷུག་འདི་
ཉིད་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །ཁུབ་ཕོགས་བདེ་བ་ཅན་གྱི་
ཞིང་གི་སྐྱོན་པ་སངས་རྒྱུས་སྒྲུང་བ་མཐའ་ཡས་

སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱལ་ལུ་མ་བཟོད་པར་སྐྱུན་གཡམས་པ་ལས་འོད་ཟེར་ཕྱོས་ཏེ་ཕོགས་ད་མཚོའི་ནང་ལས་མེ་ཏོག་པ་སྒྲུ་ལོ་
འདབ་སྐྱུན་སྐྱུམ་ཆོགས་པ་ཅིག་སྐྱེས་ཏེ་མེ་ཏོག་ཁ་གྲུས་པའི་སྐྱུག་ལས་ཨ་ལོ་རྒྱུ་ དང་འ་བའི་ཁ་དོག་དཀར་པོ་ཅིག་ལོ་
བཅུ་དྲུག་ལོན་པའི་ལང་འཆོ་ཅན་མཚན་དང་དཔེ་བྱད་ཀྱི་འོད་འཕྲོ་བ་ཅིག་འཁྱུངས་ལྷུག། ཨ་ལོ་དེ་རྒྱལ་བོ་འཁོར་དང་བཅས་

པ་གིས་པོ་བྲང་ནང་ལུ་གདན་འདྲེན་ཞུ་ཞིན་མ་དུ་ཨ་ལོ་འི་སྒོར་ལས་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཚུ་སངས་རྒྱུ་སྤང་བ་མཐའ་ཡས་ལུ་ཞུམ་དང་
 སངས་རྒྱུ་ཀྱིས་འདི་སངས་རྒྱུ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་ བྱགས་ལས་སྤྱུལ་པ་འཕགས་པ་སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་ཕྱག་ཡིན་ཟེར་
 གསུངས་པའི་སྤྱུལ་གཞི་དང་པོ་འཛིག་རྟེན་དབང་ཕྱག་ཟེར་རུང་སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་ཕྱག་གཉིས་པ་འདི་རང་ཡིན་པས།
 རྒྱལ་བ་མེ་ཁྲི་རབས་༡༠པ་མཆོག་གིས། རོ་པོ་ཀ་དག་ཆོས་སྤྱོད་དཔག་མེད། རང་བཞིན་ལྷན་སྒྲུབ་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་སྤྱན་རས་
 ཟིགས། ཟེར་ཞབས་བརྟན་གྱི་ཆོགས་སུ་བཅད་པའི་ཤིས་པར་སྦྱོལ་བའི་རྒྱལ་བས་གསུངས་པའི་དོན་དང་ཡང་མཐུན་པར་ར་
 བཅས་རའི་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་པ་མཆོག་འགྲོ་བའི་དོན་དུ་བསམ་ཞིན་ཕྱོད་པའི་འཕགས་པ་སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་ཀྱི་སྤྱུལ་པ་ཡིན་
 པས་ཟེར་ཞུ་ནི།



སྤྱོད་འཕྲེང་གཉིས་པ་བྱང་པོ་གསུམ་ཤར་ལའ་རིག་ལྡན་ པར་དབང་པོ།

ཀུན་མཁྱེན་པར་དཀར་པོ་གིས། ཤར་ལའ་ཡི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་
 སང་གའི་ཁྲིར། དཔལ་ལྡན་རྒྱུད་ཀྱི་རྒྱུ་འགྲེལ་བྱེད་
 པ་པོར། རམས་གཙང་སྤུལ་གྱི་ལུང་བསྟན་པད་དཀར་
 འཛིན། རིགས་ལྡན་དབང་པོ་གཉིས་པ་བདག་རང་
 ཡིན། །

འཇམ་གླིང་མིའི་སྤྲང་ལོ་ལུ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཚུལ་བཟུང་
 སྟེ་ཤར་ལའི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་པོ་བྲང་ཆེན་པོ་ཀ་ལ་པ་ལྷ་ཟེར་ས་

ལུ་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་ཁྲི་བ་བཟང་པོའི་བརྒྱུད་པ་ཡབ་རིགས་ལྡན་འཇམ་དཔལ་གྲགས་པ་དང་ཡུམ་ལྷ་མོ་སྦྱོལ་མའི་སྤུལ་སྤེ་སྤྱོད་
 འཁྱུངས་ཏེ་མཚན་ཡང་རིགས་ལྡན་པད་མ་དཀར་པོ་ཟེར་གསལ་ཏེ་ཡབ་རྒྱལ་པོ་རིགས་ལྡན་འཇམ་དཔལ་གྲགས་པའི་རྒྱལ་
 ཆབ་སྤེ་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ཆོས་བཞིན་དུ་སྦྱོང་སྟེ་དགྲུང་གངས་བརྒྱ་གཅིག་བཞེས་པ་དེ་ཞིང་ཁམས་གཞན་ལུ་ཕེབས་ཅུག། རྒྱལ་བ་མེ་
 ཁྲི་རབས་༡༠པ་མཆོག་གིས་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཞབས་བརྟན་གྱི་ཆོགས་སུ་བཅད་པའི་ནང་། ཤར་ལའ་རུ་རིགས་ལྡན་པད་
 དཀར་འཛིན། ། གསུངས་ཏེ་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། དེ་འབད་མ་ལས་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་དཔའ་རྒྱ་གང་ལ་གང་འདུལ་དུ་ནམ་པར་རོལ་
 པ་སྤྱོད་ཆོགས་ཀྱི་ཚུལ་གྱིས་འགྲོ་དོན་འཕྲིན་ལས་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྱལ་པ་མཛད་དེ་ཡོད་ཟེར་མི་འདི་འཕགས་པ་སྤྱན་རས་
 གཟིགས་ཀྱིས་དུས་གསུམ་དུ་གདུལ་བྱའི་རོར་འགྲོ་དོན་འཕྲིན་ལས་བྱང་རྒྱལ་བཟུམ་ཅིག་ཡིན་མ་ལས་འཛིག་རྟེན་དབང་ཕྱག་

གི་ནམ་ཐོལ་ཚས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་པ་མཆོག་ཀྱང་སྔོན་གྱི་དུས་ལུ་བྱང་ཤུལ་ལའི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ནང་ལུ་ཡང་ཚས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྟེ་བསྟན་པ་
དང་སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་འགོ་དོན་མཛད་དེ་བཞུགས་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།

སྐུ་འཕྲེང་གསུམ་པ། ཚས་རྒྱལ་སྔོང་བཅན་སྐམ་པོ།

ཀུན་མཁྱེན་པད་དཀར་གྱིས། བོད་འབངས་ཀུན་ལ་བྱུགས་མཛེད་དབང་གུར་པས། །བྱབ་པའི་རིང་ལུགས་ལྟ་མིས་མཆོད་པའི་
སྔོལ། །དང་པོར་བསོད་པའི་བཀའ་ངི་རྩེ་མེད་པར། །སྐུ་ལ་པའི་ཚས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །ཚས་རྒྱལ་སྔོང་བཅན་
སྐམ་པོ་མཆོག་ཡབ་གནས་རི་སྔོང་བཅན་དང།



ཡུམ་འབྲི་བཟའ་ཐོད་དཀར་གཉིས་ཀྱི་སྐས་ལུ་ སྤྱི་ལོ་
༤༡༧ འི་ལོ་ལུ་བོད་བྱམས་པ་མི་འགྲུར་གླིང་ལུ་སྟེ་སྐུ་
འཁྲུངས་ཏེ་མཆོན་ཁྲི་ལྗེ་སྔོང་བཅན་ཟེར་གསོལ་བྱས།
དགུང་ལོ་༡༣བཞེས་པ་ད་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཁྲི་ཐོག་ལུ་བྱོན་
བལ་ཡུལ་ལས་སངས་རྒྱུ་ཤུག་བྱབ་པའི་སྐུ་འ་དགུང་
ལ་ལོ་བརྒྱད་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ཚད་མ་དང་རྒྱ་ནག་ལས་སངས་
རྒྱུ་དགུང་ལོ་༡༩བཞེས་པའི་སྐུ་ཚད་མ་ཇོ་བོ་ཤུག་ལུ་
ནིའི་སྐུ་འབྲུ་ཚུ་གདན་འདྲེན་ལུ་སྟེ་དགུང་ལོ་བྱ་གཉིས་
ལུ་དགོངས་པ་ཚས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་སུ་ཐིམ་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།

སྐུ་བས་མཛེས་ལོ་ལྔ་པ་མཆོག་གིས་ ཞབས་བརྟན་གྱི་ཆོགས་སུ་།ཁ་བ་ཅན་དུ་སྔོང་བཅན་སྐམ་པོའི་ཞབས།། ། ཟེར་
གསུངས་ཏེ་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། དེ་འབད་མ་ལས་ཚས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་པ་མཆོག་བོད་གངས་ཅན་ལྗོངས་ལུ་ཡང་དམ་པའི་ཚས་ཀྱི་སྔོང་
གཏད་གནང་བའི་སྐབས་ཚས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྟེ་ཚས་དང་འཇིག་རྟེན་ག་ཅི་གི་ཐད་ལས་འབད་རུང་བཀའ་ངིན་ཅན་ཡིན་པས་ཟེར་
ལུ་ནི།

སྐུ་འཕྲེང་བཞི་པ་བ་ཉར་ཡུལ་དུ་མཁན་ཆེན་ཞི་བ་འཛོ།

ཟབ་མོ་ལྟ་བའི་ཞི་བའི་མཆོར་འཁྲུངས་ཤིང་། །ཟབ་རྒྱས་ཚས་ལུང་བྱེ་བའི་རྒྱ་ཁྲུང་གིས། །གདོང་དམར་ཅན་གྱི་ནང་གི་གདུང་
སེལ་མཁན། །ཤུན་རྒྱུ་ཏེ་ཉིད་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །



མཁན་ཆེན་ཞི་བ་འཛོའི་འཁྲུངས་ཡུལ་དང་ཡབ་ཀྱི་
རུས་བརྒྱད་ཀྱི་ཁ་གསལ། ཤར་ཕོགས་ཟ་རྟོར་
རྒྱལ་པོའི་སྲས་ལུ་སྐྱེ་འཁྲུངས། མཚན་གྱི་རྣམ་
གྲངས་མཁན་པོ་ཡང་དག་རྣམ་སྤང་མཛད། བོ་རྟེ་
ས་ཏ། ཤར་རྒྱུ་ཏ། ཞི་བ་འཛོའི་ ཟེར་ལུ་སྲོལ་
ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། བོད་ལུ་འབད་བ་ཅིན་མཁན་ཆེན་ཞི་
བ་འཛོའི་ཟེར་བའི་མཚན་འདི་ཡོངས་གྲགས་སྤེལ་
ཏེ་བཞུགས་ཅུག། ཆོས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་པ་མཆོག་སྤུན་
སུམ་ཆོགས་པའི་སྐྱེའི་ཕྱིང་བ་བཅུ་གཉིས་པ་མཐུ་

ཆེན་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཡང་སྤྱིད་དང་སྐྱེ་གོང་མ་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་ཚུ་གི་སྐྱེ་ཕྱིང་ཡིན་པའི་ཁར་སྐབས་སུ་བབས་པའི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་
དཔའ་བོ་རྟེ་ས་ཏའི་མཛད་པ་དང་འབྲེལ་ཏེ་འབད་རུང་རྒྱལ་བརྒྱད་ལས་བྱོན་པ་འཕགས་མཆོག་སྤུན་རས་གཟིགས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་
འཕྲུལ་ཡིན་མ་ཐེ་ཆོས་བཟའ་དགོཔ་མིན་འདུག་ཟེར་ལུ་ནི། དེ་འབད་མ་ལས་སྤོན་གྱི་རུས་ལུ་ཡང་རྒྱལ་པོའི་སྲས་ལུ་བྱོན་
ཡོད་པ་ད་ད་རེས་ཡང་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྤེལ་བྱོན་ཏེ་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།

སྐྱེ་འཕྱིང་ལྔ་པ་ཁ་ཆེའི་ཡུལ་ན་པན་ཆེན་རྒྱ་རོ་ཏ་པ།

ཀྱན་མཁུན་པད་དཀར་གྱིས། ཕྱི་ནང་ཤེས་བྱའི་འཛིན་མ་མ་ལུས་པར། །མི་བཟླེད་གཟུངས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོས་ལེགས་བསྐྱར་
བས། ། ཡས་ཀྱིས་རྒྱལ་བའི་ཕོགས་ལས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་བའི། །པན་ཆེན་རྒྱ་རོ་ཏ་པ་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །



པན་ཆེན་རྒྱ་རོ་པ་འདི་འཁྲུངས་ཡུལ་ཤར་ཕོགས་རྟ་ག་
ལའི་ས་ཕོགས། སྤྱི་རྟ་ག་དལི་གོང་ཁྱེར་ཇོ་ཟེར་སར་
ཡབ་ས་སྐྱེད་རྒྱལ་པོ་དགེ་བའི་གོ་ཆ་དང་ཡུམ་བུམ་ཟེམ་
དཔལ་གྱི་སྤོ་སྤོས་ལུ་གནམ་ལོ་སྤྲུག་ལོ་སྤྲུག་གི་ལྷ་བ་
ཆོས་བཅོམ་སྐར་མ་རྒྱལ་གྱི་ཉིན་མར་ངོ་མཚར་བའི་སྲས་
ལུ་སྐྱེ་འཁྲུངས་ཅུག། བུམ་ཟེམ་མཚན་མཁན་ལུ་སྤོན་པ་ད་
འདི་ནི་ཟས་གཙང་སྲས་བཞིན་དུ། །མ་བྱུང་མི་ཡི་བདག་
པོར་འགྱུར། །བྱུང་ན་སངས་རྒྱས་སྲས་པོར་

འགྱུར། །ཟེར་ལུང་བསྟན་ཞིན་ན་མཚན་ཡང་ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་ཟེར་གསོལ་ཏེ་ཡབ་ཡུམ་གྱིས་རྒྱལ་སྤྱི་དྲུང་བཅུག་ནི་དོན་
ལས་ཐབས་ཤེས་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་སྟོན་རུང་འཁོར་བ་ལུ་སྟིང་པོ་མེད་པར་གཟིགས་ཏེ་ཁ་ཆེའི་གྲོང་ཁྱེར་ཕུར་ཟེར་སར་བྱོན་ཏེ་བཅ་
ཟེ་གནས་བརྟན་ནམ་མཁའ་ལས་དག་བསྟེན་གྱི་སྟོམ་པ་སོགས་ལྷ་སྟེ་ཤེས་བྱའི་གནས་ཀུན་ལུ་མཁས་པ་གྱུར་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།
བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པས། བདེ་མཚོག་གི་རྒྱུད་དོ་རྗེ་མེད་བའི་ནང་། རྒྱ་རོ་པ་ཞེས་གྲགས་པའི་ནལ་འབྱོར་པ། །བཙམ་ལུན་
ཤྱུ་བྱབ་པའི་བསན་པ་ལ། །མྱ་ངན་མི་འད་འཇུག་སྐྱའི་འཕྲོ་དོན་མཛད། །འདི་ནི་རྒྱལ་བ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ནམ་པར་འཕུལ། །ཞེས་
སངས་རྒྱུས་གྱིས་ལུང་བསྟན་གནང་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།

སྐུ་འཕྲེང་དུག་པ། ཆོས་རྗེ་དགས་པོ་ལྷ་རྗེ།

དུས་གསུམ་རྒྱལ་བ་ཀུན་གྱི་འཕྲིན་ལས་པར། །རོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱུས་ཉིད་གྱིས་ལུང་བསྟན་པའི། །ཤུནྟི་རི་བོ་དག་པའི་
བསམ་གཏན་པ། །རྗེ་བཙུན་ལྷ་འོད་གཞོན་ལུ་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །ཨོ་རྒྱན་ངན་མཉམ་སྦྲད་ལྷ་རྗེར་སྟེ། །དུགས་པོའི་རི་ལ་དོན་
མམ་འབྱུང་ཞེས། །ལུང་བསྟན་བདེན་ན་གསར་རྟིང་འགལ་མི་སྲིད། །འགལ་བར་བསམ་ནམས་འཁྲུལ་པ་སྟིང་རེ་རྗེ། །
མཉམ་མེད་དུགས་པོ་ལྷ་རྗེ་འམ་ལྷ་འོད་གཞོན་ལུ་མཚོག་སྐྱུ་ལོ་ ༡༠༧༩ ལོར་མཉམ་པོད་རྟིང་གྲོང་གསར་ཟེར་ས་ལུ་སྐུ་འཁྲུངས།



དགྲུང་ལོ་ ༢༤ རྒྱུན་བོད་གངས་ཅན་དུ་གསོ་བ་རིག་
པའི་མ་ལས་འཕྲིན་ལས་བསྐྱུངས་ཏེ་བཞུགས་པའི་
སྐབས་སྤྱི་མཐུན་དང་བཙུན་མོ་བཅས་འཇིག་རྟེན་
ལྷ་པའི་ལམ་དུ་ཐལ་བའི་ཤུལ་ལུ་རྗེ་མཚོག་དག་
བཤེས་ཤིག་བསྐྱེད་པའི་རྩ་བ་ལས་རབ་དུ་བྱུང་ཅུག་
ཡིན་རུང་རྗེས་སུ་ཁོ་རེ་ལུ་ཆོ་གཅིག་ལུས་ཅིག་ལུ་
སངས་རྒྱུས་པའི་གདམས་ངག་གནང་མི་བཀའ་ངོན་
ཅན་གྱི་བམ་ངོམ་དེ་གྲུང་ཐང་མི་ལ་རས་པ་ཡིན་པས།
རྗེ་བཙུན་མི་ལ་རས་པ་དང་མཇལ་ཞིན་མ་ལས་རྗེ་
བཙུན་མི་ལ་རས་པ་ལུ་སྟོབ་མ་ནམ་མཁའི་སྐར་

ཚོགས་ལྷ་བྱ་ཡོད་པའི་ནང་ལས་ཉིམ་ལྷ་བྱ་ནི་རྗེ་རྗེ་བསོད་ནམས་རིན་ཆེན་ནམ་སྐམ་པོ་པ་དང་ལྷ་བྱ་ནི་རས་རྒྱུང་པ་རོ་
རྗེ་གྲགས་པ་གཉིས་པོ་འདི་མི་ལ་རས་པའི་སྟོབ་མའི་གཙོ་བོ་ཡིན་པས། སངས་རྒྱུས་བཙམ་ལུན་འདས་གྱིས། ཀུན་དགའ་བོ་
ང་མུ་ངན་ལས་འདས་པའི་རྗེས་སུ་ཕྱོགས་འདིའི་བྱང་ལོ་སུ་དག་སྟོང་གི་རྗེ་རྗེ་ཞེས་པའི་དག་སྟོང་ཞིག་འབྱུང་བར་འགྱུར་

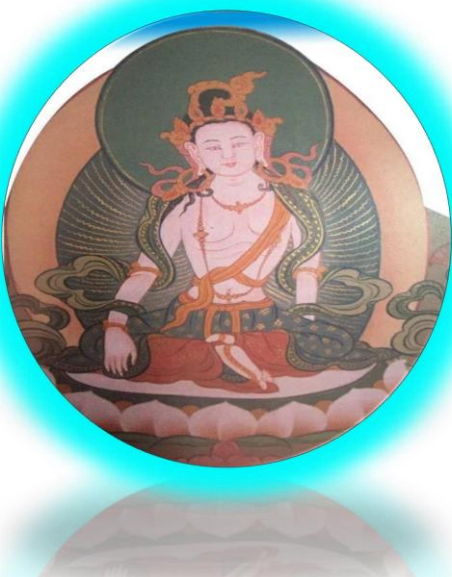
ཞེས་སངས་རྒྱལ་ཡུང་བསྟན་པའི་སྒྲེས་ཆེན་དམ་པ་ཅིག་ཡིན། ལྷ་རྩེ་མཆོག་བསྟན་དང་འགྲོའི་དོན་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྱལ་
 པ་སྤེལ་འགྲོ་དོན་རྒྱ་ཆེར་མཛད་པའི་མཐར། སྤྱི་ལོ་ ༡༡༥༥ ལུ་དགོངས་པ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབྱངས་སུ་ཐེམ་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།
 སྐུ་འཕྲེང་བདུན་པ་སྐུ་སྟོད་རྒྱའི་རིགས་ལས་ཆོས་རྩེ་གཙང་པ་རྒྱ་རས།



གངས་རི་མགུལ་དུ་རོ་རྩེ་གདན་བཞག་ལ། །
 སྤུབ་པ་སངས་རྒྱལ་སོང་གི་རྣམ་རྟེན་བ། །
 ལུས་ཅན་དཔྱིད་ཀྱི་སྐལ་བ་བཟང་མཛད་པའི། །
 འགྲོ་བའི་མགོན་པོ་འབྲུག་པ་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །

སྐུ་འཕྲེང་བརྒྱད་པ་ཤར་ཕྱོགས་མངོན་དགའ་

བའི་ཞིང་ན་བྱང་མེམས་སྤང་བ་རྩལ་བྲལ།



ཤར་ཕྱོགས་མངོན་པར་དགའ་བའི་ཞིང་ཁམས་སུ། །
 སྐུ་འཕྲལ་རོ་རྩེའི་སྤང་བ་རབ་འབྱམས་ཅེར། །
 བྱང་རྒྱལ་སྟོད་པ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་སྟོན་བྱེད་པའི། །
 སྤང་བ་རྩལ་བྲལ་མེམས་དཔའ་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །

སྐུ་འཕེང་དགུ་པ། གངས་ཅན་ཕུལ་ཉ་ཟེར་ རྒྱལ་དབང་རྩེ་ ཀུན་དགའ་དཔལ་འབྱོར།



བརྒྱད་ཁྱི་བཞི་སོང་ཆོས་ཀྱི་མར་སྤྲས་པ། །
 ཀུན་དགའ་དཔལ་འབྱོར་སྐལ་བཟང་གཏུལ་བྱ་ལ། །
 ཅིད་གར་འགྲེས་པའི་མཚུངས་མེད་ལོ་རྩ་བ། །
 རྒྱལ་བ་ཀུན་གྱི་དབང་པོ་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །

སྐུ་འཕེང་བརྒྱ་པ་ བྱ་ཡུལ་གོང་མའི་སྤྲས་སྐུ་ འཇམ་དབྱངས་ཆོས་ཀྱི་གྲགས་པ།



ལྷོ་ཕྱགས་ཤོར་འཛིན་ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྦྱང་བའི་དབང། །
 མ་སྤྲད་གྲགས་པའི་གཏེར་གྱུར་སྤྲིགས་དུས་འདིར། །
 ཡང་དག་ལམ་གྱི་ས་མཁན་མཆོག་གཅིག་སྤུ། །
 གོང་མ་གྲུབ་པའི་རྩེ་པོར་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །

སྐུ་འཕེང་བརྒྱ་གཅིག་པ་ཤར་ཕོགས་གོང་བུའི་ཡུལ་དུ་ཀུན་མཁྱེན་པརྩ་དཀར་པོ།

འཇམ་མགོན་ཉལས་བྱང་ཉི་མའི་ཁྱ་བ་ལ། །ལན་བརྒྱར་འཕྱང་པའི་པརྩ་དཀར་པོའི་འཕེང། །དྲེགས་ལྷན་ཀུན་གྱི་རལ་པའི་
 རྒྱན་གྱུར་པའི། །མཚུངས་མེད་བ་མ་མཆོག་ཀྱང་བདག་རང་ཡིན། །

ཀུན་མཁྱེན་ཆེན་པོ་པདྨ་དཀར་པོ་ནི། ཤར་ཀོང་པོའི་ཡུལ་གཙང་ཤོད་དགོན་བླ་བར་ཡབ་ཇོ་སྤྱུ་ལྷའི་དབང་པོ་དང་ཡུམ་
 ཆོས་སྦྱང་སྦྱོལ་མའི་སྤྱུ་སྤྱེ་ རབ་བྱང་དགུ་པའི་མེ་མག་༼ ༡༥༡༧ ༽ལོར་འཁྲུངས་ཅུག། སྤྱི་འཁྲུངས་ཏེ་ཞག་ཉི་ཤུ་དེ་ཅིག་ལུ་



ཡི་གེ་དྲུག་པ་ཤིན་ཏུ་གསལ་བ་ཐེངས་གསུམ་
 གསུངས་ཅུག དགྲང་ལོ་བཅུ་ཐམ་ལུ་བཟ་ཤིས་
 མཐོང་སྦྱོན་ལུ་སྤྱེ་ཁྱི་མངའ་གསོལ་ཅུག། དགྲང་ལོ་
 བཅུ་གཅིག་བཞེས་པ་ད་དག་དབང་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་ལུ་
 གཙུག་ཕྱད་ཕུལ་ཏེ། མཚན་རྒྱ་རོ་ཏ་པའི་རྒྱལ་ཆབ་
 འགྲུར་མེད་དག་དབང་ལོར་བུ་དབང་པོའི་སྤྱེ་དང་།
 མི་ཡམ་པདྨ་དཀར་པོ་ཕྱོགས་ལས་རྣམ་པར་རྒྱལ་
 བའི་སྤྱེར་གསོལ། མདོ་སྤྱུགས་རབ་འབྱམས་ལ་
 དབང་འབྱོར་བའི་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པ་པདྨ་དཀར་
 པོ་ཞེས་སྟན་གྲགས་ཀྱིས་འཛིན་ཏེན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཏུ་

ཐབ་ཅུག། བསྟན་འགྲོའི་དོན་རྒྱ་ཆེར་མཛད་པའི་མཐར། རེ་དྲུག་པ་རྒྱ་འབྲུག་ ༼ ༡༥༧༩ ༽ལོའི་བོད་ལྷ་བདུན་པའི་ཆོས་བཙུ་
 རྩ་ལུ་སྟན་མེད་པར་གཟུགས་སྤྱི་བཀོད་པ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ལུ་བསྟུ་བའི་ཚུལ་བསྟན་གནང་ཅུག། ལོག་སྤྱེ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་
 ཞབས་བྱང་དག་དབང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་ཟེར་འབྲུག་མི་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་ལྷ་སྐལ་དུ་བྱོན་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།

སྤྱི་འཕྲེང་བཅུ་གཉིས་པ་ དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པའི་གདུང་རབས་ལས་ ཞབས་བྱང་དག་དབང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ།
ཀུན་མཁྱེན་པདྨ་དཀར་པོ་གིས།

སྟོན་བྱོན་རྒྱལ་བ་ཀུན་གྱི་སྤྱུལ་པའི་གཞི། ཁ་བྱོན་རྒྱལ་བ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་འབྲུང་ཁྲུངས་བ། །ད་ལྟོའི་སྦྱོབས་པ་དག་དང་དབྱེར་མེད་
 པའི། ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཞབས་པད་བརྟན་གྱུར་ཅིག །

ཨོ་རྒྱན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་གིས། རྣམ་མཁའི་སྤྱི་པོ་རང་འོད་འབྲུག་གི་མཚན་ ངག་གི་མིང་ཅན་སྟོང་རོང་ཕོགས་སུ་འབྱུང་ ཞེས་
 དང་། ངག་གིས་མིང་ཅན་ག་སྤྱུགས་གྲུབ་པ་འདིས་ མོན་ཁྱི་བཟུང་ནས་བོད་འབྲུག་གསོལ་སུ་འགྱུར་ ཞེས་དང་།

ང་བཅས་ར་ཁ་བཞི་སྟོའི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ཀྱི་གདུལ་བྱ་རྒྱ་གི་ དོན་ལས་འཕགས་པ་སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས་ཀྱི་སྤྱུལ་པ་ཀུན་མཁྱེན་པདྨ་
 དཀར་པོ་མཚོག་སྤྱུགས་འཆང་རྟོ་རྩེ་འཛིན་པ་དག་དབང་འདུད་འཛོམས་རྟོ་རྩེ་འཛིན་ཞབས་བྱང་དག་དབང་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་སྤྱེ་བྱོན་



དེ་ཡང་མགོན་པོ་དངོས་གྲུབ་འབྱུང་བའི་བརྒྱུད་
ལས། འཁོར་བའི་བདུད་རྣམས་འཛོམས་པ་
པོ། །རྩི་སྒྲུབ་དཔོན་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེ། །ཟེར་
གསུངས་ཏེ་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཚད་ཨོན་ལྷན་པོ་ཆེ་གིས་
བདུད་འཛོམས་རྩི་སྒྲུབ་བྱ་བ། །གསང་སྤྲུགས་
བསན་པའི་བདག་པོ་འབྱུང་། །དག་གི་མིང་ཅན་
ག་སྤྲུགས་གྲུབ་པ་འདིས། །མོན་ཁྱི་བཟུང་ནས་
བོད་འབྲུག་གསལ་སྤྱེ་འགྲུར། །རི་བོ་གླང་ཆེན་
འགྲིང་འདི་སྤྱེ་སྟེང་དུ། །སྤྱོད་བྱ་རྣམ་རྒྱུལ་ཞེས་
བྱའི་མཚན་ཅན་འབྱོན། །ཟེར་ལུང་གིས་ཡང་ལས་

ཡང་དུ་ཟེན་པའི་ཚད་མའི་སྤྱོད་བྱ་ཆེན་པོ་དེ་སྤྱི་ལོ་ ༡༥༩༩ ལུ་ཡབ་རྩེ་བསན་པའི་ཉི་མ་དང་། ལུ་མ་བསོད་རྣམས་དཔལ་གྱི་སྤྲུག་
ལུ་འབྲུག་མེ་བ་བྱང་རྒྱུ་གྲིང་ལུ་ཆོས་ཉིད་རྣམ་དག་གི་ཨ་ཉྱ་གི་སྤྱོད་དང་བཅས་པ་སྤྱོད་ལུངས་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། དེ་ལས་དགྲུང་
ལོ་ ༡༥༩༩ ཞེས་པ་ད་ཅན་དན་བཀོད་པའི་ཁ་བཞི་སྟོན་རྒྱལ་ཁམས་འདི་ན་བྱོན་ལུགས་གཉིས་བསྟན་སྤིད་ཀྱི་ལམ་སྟོན་བཟང་པོའི་
མ་ལས་མི་སེར་བདེ་སྤྱིད་ཀྱི་དང་ལུ་སྤྱོད་སྤྱོད་གནང་མ་ཚད་ཉེ་མ་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ཀྱི་མིང་སྟོན་མོན་ཟེར་མི་འདི་འབྲུག་ཟེར་མིང་གནས་
འགྲུར། མི་ལུ་མོན་པ་ཟེར་མི་འདི་འབྲུག་པ་ཟེར་བདགས་གནང་། ལམ་ལུགས་སྟོན་ལུ་དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པའི་ལམ་ལུགས་
སྟོན་ཟེར་བ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྱབ་པའི་འགྲོ་དོན་མཛད་པའི་མཐའ་མར་སྤྱི་ལོ་ ༡༦༠༡ རབ་བྱུང་ ༡༡ པའི་ལྷགས་
ལོས་རྩྱུར་གསུམ་པའི་ཆོས་བཅུ་ཐམ་ལུ་དགོངས་པ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ལུ་ཐུམ་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། ད་བཅས་རའི་མི་དབང་ཆོས་
རྒྱལ་བཞི་པ་མཆོག་སྟོན་མ་ཡང་ཅན་དན་བཀོད་པའི་ཁ་བཞི་སྟོན་རྒྱལ་ཁམས་འདི་ན་བྱོན་ལུགས་གཉིས་བསྟན་སྤིད་ཀྱི་ལམ་
སྟོན་བཟང་པོ་གཞི་བཅུགས་གནང་མི་མཐུ་ཆེན་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཟེར་ཆོས་སྤིད་གཉིས་ལྷན་གྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་སྤྱོད་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།

དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཞབས་བྱུང་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་ སྤར་ཡང་ང་བཅས་ར་འབྲུག་མི་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་ལྷ་སྐལ་སྤེ་
འབྲུག་ཆོས་ལྷན་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་རབས་བཞི་པ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་དཔལ་འཛིགས་མེད་སེངྒེ་དབང་ཕྱག་སྤེ་བྱོན་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།

སྤྱི་འཕྲེང་བ་ཆ་ཆང་ཅིག་
ལར་སྤེ་བཀོད་ཡོད།

གཏུལ་བྱ་གང་འདུལ་ནས་
རོལ་སྤེ་ཆོགས་སུ་བྱོན་པ།



གུ་རུ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་གིས་ནམ་མཁའ་སོང་པའི་ནང་ལས་གཏེར་སོན་འབྲུག་སྤེ་རོ་རྩེ་ལྷ།

བྱ་སྤྱིང་ཁམས་མ་རྒྱུད་དྲུང་ཉོན་ ལྷོ་སྤེས་ཡུལ་རོང་གསུམ་རྒྱུ་བའི་ནགས་ ཉམས་ཆགས་འཛིན་འོ་གོང་མིང་འཛིན་ནང་

གནས་དེ་རུ་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཤིང་ལུག་པམ་ བཞིན་ལ་བའི་འཇུག་དཀར་སོ་ལེགས་པམ་ ཆོས་རྒྱུ་གཙང་བ་རྒྱ་རས་ཀྱིས། མ་འོངས་པ་
ན་དབུས་གཙང་ལྗོངས་ནམས་སྤྱ། ལངས་རྒྱས་བསྟན་པ་མི་འབྱུང་གྲོ་རོང་དེར། བསམ་པ་ཡུན་རིང་གནས་པར་འགྱུར་བས་
ན། ཟེར་བའི་ལུང་དོན་དང་མཐུན་མ་སྟེ་ཉེ་མ་བ་དམ་པའི་ ཆོས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པ་དར་བའི་ཁར་ལྷག་པར་དུ་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་བྱང་རྒྱུབ་
སེམས་དཔའ་གསེར་གྱི་གྲུང་ཕེབས་ཞིན་ན་ དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པའི་བསྟན་པ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སྤར་ལས་ཀྱང་དར་ཞིང་རྒྱས་ཏེ་
ཡོད་པ་ཡིན།



གཏེར་སྟོན་ཆེན་པོ་འབྲུག་སྤྱོད་རྩེ་མཆོག་ལ། གྲུ་རུ་
རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སྤྱོད་དངོས་མདུན་གྱི་ནམ་མཁའ་ལུ་བྱོན་ཏེ་དེ་
སྟེ་གསུངས་གནང་རུག། བུ་སྤྱིང་ཁམས་མ་རྒྱུད་ད་དུང་
ཉོན་ ལྟོ་སྤྱོད་ལུལ་རོང་གསུམ་རྒྱ་བའི་ནགས་
ཉམས་ཆགས་འཛིན་འོ་གྲོང་མིང་འཛིན་ནང་ གནས་
དེ་རུ་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཤིང་ལུག་པམ་ བཞིན་ལུལ་བའི་འཇུག་
དཀར་སོ་ལེགས་པམ་ ཟེར་དེ་སྟེ་ལུང་བསྟན་དང་
མཐུན་མ་སྟེ་གནས་འོ་མའི་གྲོང་ད་ལྟོ་བདེ་ཆེན་ཆོས་གྲིང་
གི་ཕོ་བྲང་ནང་ལུ་སྟེ་གནས་ལོ་ཤིང་མོ་ལུག་ལོ་ལྷམ་
དགུ་པའི་ཆོས་ ༢༥ གྱི་ལོ་ ༡༧༥༥ གྱི་ཟླ་ ༡༡ ཆོས་ ༡༡ ལུ་

ལུམ་གྱི་སྐྱེ་ལུ་སྤྱིང་གཞི་ག་ནི་ཡང་མེད་པར་བདེ་བའི་ངང་ལུ་སྐྱེ་འབྱུངས་ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། དེ་མ་ཚད་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་བྱང་རྒྱུབ་སེམས་
དཔའ་མཆོག་གྲུང་ལོ་བཞི་བཞེས་པ་ད་ཐིམ་ཕུ་བཀྲ་ཤིས་ཆོས་རྒྱུད་ནང་ལུ་ཕེབས་བསུ་ཁུ་སྟེ་བཞུགས་གཤམ་ཕུན་སུམ་ཆོགས་
པའི་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་བ་ཅི་སྤྱིང་ལུ་བའི་སྐབས་མཁས་སྤྱོད་བྱེ་བའི་བདག་པོ་སྤྱོད་ཕྱོད་བསྟན་ནམ་རྒྱལ་མཆོག་གིས་ལུགས་
གཉིས་བསྟན་སྤིད་ཀྱི་བདག་པོ་མཐུ་ཆེན་དག་དབང་ནམ་རྒྱལ་མཆོག་སྤར་ཡང་འབྲུག་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ལུ་བྱོན་པའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ལས་
བཅུམས་ཏེ་དོན་ཟབ་ལ་ཆོག་སྟན་པའི་དབྱངས་ཀྱིས་ལེགས་སྤྱིང་ཕུལ་བའི་སྐབས་ཞབས་དྲུང་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་དངོས་སུ་ཡིན་པའི་
ལོ་རྒྱུས་གསུངས་ཡོད་པ་སྟེ་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་བྱང་རྒྱུབ་སེམས་དཔའི་བཀྲིན་སེམས་ཀྱི་འོད་སྤྲང་ཟེར་བའི་དེབ་ནང་ལུ་གསུངས་ཏེ་
ཡོད་པ་ཡིན། རྒྱུབས་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུ་མཁའ་ཁྱི་རབས་ ༡༠ པ་དཔལ་འཇིགས་མེད་ཆོས་ཀྱི་གཤགས་པས་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་པ་མཆོག་ལུ་ཕུལ་
བའི་ཞབས་བརྟན་དུ་༡༩ བསྟན་ལུ་རུ་རིགས་ལྷན་པད་དཀར་འཛིན། ཁ་བ་ཅན་དུ་སྤོང་བཅོན་སྐམ་པོའི་ཞབས། ཞིང་འདིར་
དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པ་བདུད་འཛིན་མེད། སྤྱིང་ནས་བྱོན་ཏེ་བྱང་རྒྱུབ་བར་དུ་སྤྱོད་སྤྱོད། གང་གི་གསང་གསུམ་སྤྱོད་ལུ་མཐའ་

ཡས་ཀྱང། རྒྱུངས་འདིའི་འགོ་ལ་རྩེས་སུ་ཆགས་པའི་དམིད། སྐར་ཡང་འོ་མའི་གོང་གི་ཤར་རིའི་ཅེར། གཟུགས་སྐྱེ་ཉིན་
 བྱེ་འཆར་འདི་ཨེ་མ་རྟོ། ། ཟེར་ངོ་མཚར་བའི་ཚོག་གི་ལམ་ལས་སྟེ་དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པ་རིན་པོ་འབྲུལ་མེད་དུ་ཨིན་མ་སྟེ་
 གསུངས་ཡོད་པ་ཨིན། དེ་ལས་སྟེ་སྟོན་བསྟན་འཛིན་རབ་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཡང་སྟོན་རྒྱལ་སྐས་འཇིགས་མེད་བསྟན་འཛིན་དབང་པོ་
 མཆོག་གུང་ལོ་བཞི་སྟེ་བཞུགས་པ་ད་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་བཞི་པ་དང་མཇལ་འཕྲད་འགོ་དང་པ་མཇེད་པའི་སྐབས་མི་དབང་ཆོས་ཀྱི་
 རྒྱལ་པོ་མཆོག་ཞབས་བྱུང་དག་དབང་ནམ་རྒྱལ་འབྲུལ་མེད་དུ་ཨིན་པའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་གསུངས་ཡོད་པ་ཀུན་གྱིས་མཁྱེན། དེ་གིས་
 ཡང་མ་ཆད་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་མཆོག་སྐྱེ་མ་འབྲུངས་པའི་མཆན་ལམ་ལུ་བདེ་ཆེན་ཆོས་སྤྱིང་གི་ཕོ་བྲང་གི་མཐའ་འཁོར་ས་
 གཞི་ག་ར་གསེར་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་འོད་མདངས་ཅན་སྟེ་གཟིགས་ཡོད་པ་ད། སྐན་ཆུད་ཀར་མོའི་ཆུ་ཡང་ཨོམ་ལུ་གྱུར་ཡོད་པ། དེ་
 བཟུམ་སྟེ་སྤྱངས་ཐང་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལྷ་ཁང་ནང་བས་བྱུང་རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་སྐྱེ་འབྲེལ་མདུན་གྱི་ཡོན་ཆབ་ཨོམ་ལུ་འགྱུར་ཡོད་པ།
 བཀ་ཤིས་ཆོས་རྫོང་དགེ་འདུན་ཀུན་དགའ་རུའི་གདོང་ཁར་སེར་ཤོམ་མེ་རྟོག་བདུན་ཅེགས་སྟེ་ཤར་བ་དང་མེ་རྟོག་མགུ་རྟོག་
 ལྷ་བཅེགས་སྟེ་ཤར་བ་ལ་སོགས་པ་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་ཨིན་པའི་ངོ་མཚར་བའི་མཆན་མ་ལེ་ཤ་བྱུང་མ་ད་རྟེ་མ་ཞབས་
 བྱུང་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་བོད་ལུ་སྐྱེ་འབྲུངས་པའི་སྐབས་བོད་མི་ཚུ་གིས་དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པ་བྱོན། གྲུ་ཞུ་གནམ་ལ་རོངས་སེ་
 རོངས། ཟེར་དགའ་སོ་བསྐྱར་རྟེ་ཞབས་ཁྲ་འཐེན་དོ་བཟུམ་སྟེ་འབྲུག་པའི་མི་སེར་ཚུ་གིས་ཡང་དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པ་མཆོག་
 ལོག་བྱོན་པའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་བཤད་དོ་ཡོད་པ་མ་ཆད་མངའ་བདག་འཇིགས་མེད་རྟོ་རྩེ་དབང་ལྷུག་གིས་ཡང་ཞབས་ཁྲ་ལྷགས་རྩོམ་
 མཇེད་དེ་གཞུང་གི་ཞབས་ཁྲ་རྒྱབ་མི་ཚུ་ལུ་གནང་ཡོད་པའི་ལོ་རྒྱུས་ཚུ་ཆོས་རྒྱལ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་ལུ་བཀའ་བྱིན་བྱུང་པའི་སེམས་ཀྱི་
 འོད་སྦྲང་ནང་ལུ་གསུངས་རྟེ་འདུག།



ཞིང་འདིར་དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་པ་བདུད་འཛོམས་ཇེ།

ཤས་ལ་རུ་རིགས་ལྷན་པད་དཀར་འཛོན།

ལ་བ་ཅན་དུ་སྒྲིང་བཅན་སྐུ་པོའི་ཞབས།



གང་གི་སང་གསུམ་སྐྱེ་འབྲུལ་བསམ་ཡས་ཀྱང་། དེས་ན་འཛིགས་མེད་བརྟུལ་ཞུགས་རབ་འཆང་ཞིང་། །
 ལྷོངས་འདིའི་འགོ་ལ་ཇེས་སུ་ཆགས་པའི་དཔྱིད། མི་ཡི་སེལ་ནམ་རོལ་ས་ཡི་ལྷ། །
 དབང་ཕྱག་ཆེན་པོའི་དཔལ་གྱིས་མཛེས་བཞིན་དུ། སྐར་ཡང་འོ་མའི་གྲོང་གི་ཤར་རིའི་ཕྱོད། །
 རོ་ཇེའི་ཁྲི་ལ་བསྐྱལ་བརྒྱར་ཞབས་བརྟན་ཤོག། གཟུགས་སྐུའི་ཉིན་བྱེད་འཆར་འདི་ཨེ་མ་རྟོ། །

Book Review

Sera Monastery

Sera Monastery by Cabezón, J. and P. Dorjee. (2019). *Sera Monastery*. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications. ISBN 978-1-61429-611-9.

JOSEPH MCCLELLAN

Since the founding of Samyé in the eighth century, nearly every substantive topic in the field of Tibetan Buddhism or history is either linked directly to, or removed one or two short degrees from, Tibet's magisterial monasteries. In this volume, José Cabezón and Penpa Dorjee leave very few stones unturned in their quest to tell the story of Sera Monastery, which lies at the heart of the Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism, and therefore also of half a millennium of Tibetan intellectual history and politics. Diving into minute detail on some topics and throwing brief light onto dozens of others, the book rewards readers with diverse backgrounds and interests (anthropological, sociological, historical, economic, etc.). Its greatest value, though, will be realized in generations to come as scholars emulate its ambitious scope on the way to unpacking the complex histories and structures of other Tibetan monasteries and their role in so much cultural production.

With chapters weighing in at more than five hundred pages (and carrying more than fifty pages in appendices, a twenty-page bibliography, an index, and other back matter that total another hundred pages), non-specialists may demure at the text's proportions. Yet, the book, based on more than a decade of research compiled for Cabezón's online *Sera Monastery Project*, is encyclopedic without being dry.

¹ As former monks of Sera and long-term affiliates, Cabezón and Dorjee sprinkle the book with insider perspectives, anecdotes, and speculations that would scarcely occur to an armchair academic. Despite its heft and unabashed meandering, patient exploration carries the reader through a fascinating scholarly field green with insights and encouragement for further inquiry.

The first twenty-three introductory pages gloss Sera Monastery's founding (as well as the founding of its various colleges, or *densas*), historical trajectory, key figures, administrative structure, and social and cultural impact—all of which are developed in painstaking detail in later chapters. This circuitous introduction is representative of the book's general structure; its effectiveness in the end, however, does not necessarily suffer from this approach.

In what may appear as a case of lede-burying after the data-laden buildup, the authors offer a concise declaration of their motives and goals:

Considering how important the densas have been to the history of Tibet, there is little European or American scholarship on these institutions. To our knowledge, there are no serious book-length studies of Ganden and Drepung in any European

¹ <http://www.thlib.org/places/monasteries/sera/>

language, but several exist in Tibetan. The same is true of Sera. This book charts Sera's history from its founding until the present day (Cabezón & Dorjee, 2019, p. 23).

Within this straightforward framework, the authors give themselves considerable freedom to roam, and one of their greatest successes is their demonstration of the value of a piece of encyclopedic scholarship that need not stand on the stilts of a finely wrought critical-synthetic thesis. In the prime of distinguished careers, the authors show no anxiety to dazzle with creativity. Instead, they array copious research for the reader to sort through, mull over, and run with on rhizomatic offshoots. Moreover, unlike in most standard academic monographs, the authors do not commit themselves to any recognizable, canonical research methodology. Modestly, they write,

The book is, we hope, a realistic and accurate portrait of Sera. We have not shied away from mentioning the more problematic aspects of life in the monastery or the less-flattering episodes in Sera's history. So many Tibetan works on the densas are idealized portraits of these institutions. Our intention was to provide a balanced, critical account. It will be up to the reader to decide whether we have succeeded. This book is not the final word on Sera, but we hope that it begins to address the pressing need for more research on Tibet's great monastic universities (Cabezón & Dorjee, 2019, p. 25).

How have others approached Tibet's great monasteries? It is worth comparing two younger scholars' monastic histories to Cabezón and Dorjee's, not to tally a scholarly score between them, but to highlight the legitimacy of various scholarly styles. In her 2012 PhD dissertation, *Materials of Buddhist Culture: Aesthetics and Cosmopolitanism at Mindroling Monastery*, Dominique Townsend sets out a far more specific, historical agenda that "focuses on the first three generations of Mindroling, looking in particular at the institution's role as a center for culture and aesthetics" (Townsend, 2012, p. 3).² Throughout her introduction, she explains the implications of her scholarly decisions, and how the skillful unpacking of certain themes can lead to wider and fuller historical understandings:

Through the education of lay people, monks and nuns in a wide range of subjects, Mindroling's influence reached far beyond the scope of doctrinal Buddhist subjects, pervading worldly matters as well as religious ones. Mindroling was the place to go for the cultivation of good taste, high style, and cosmopolitan aesthetics among the Tibetan aristocracy. This joint religious-secular influence is one of the main sites of productive tension this project investigates. This aspect of Mindroling's history complicates commonly held preconceptions about the relationship between Buddhism and culture, and to some extent between religion and culture more generally (Townsend, 2012, p. 6).

² Townsend, D. (2012). *Materials of Buddhist Culture: Aesthetics and Cosmopolitanism at Mindroling Monastery* (Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, New York, USA). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.7916/D8VH5VX9>

When Cabezón and Dorjee assert that theirs is not the final word on Sera, they are soliciting applications of Townsend's sound method to Sera, or to any other Tibetan monastery, and they provide most of the raw material needed to begin such new synthetic projects. This raw material is explicit in the fulsome presentation of their own prodigious research, as well as latent in the book's generous bibliographical footnotes referencing hundreds of Western and Tibetan sources. Should one desire to follow Townsend in complicating "commonly held preconceptions about the relationship between Buddhism and culture," Cabezón and Dorjee offer dozens of footholds. For example, in the introduction they write,

Despite their fame as centers of learning, not all the monks of the two philosophical colleges were students or "textualists." Far from it. In the mid-twentieth century only about 25 percent...were actively studying. The rest were involved in various other activities: administration, cooking, overseeing the conduct of monks, supervising chapels, administering the monastery's estates, managing corvée workers, and so on (Cabezón & Dorjee, 2019, pp. 12-13).

The authors are surely aware of the sociological richness of this passage and the many like it in the book, but it is not their goal to unpack it. They simply present their observations with enough clarity for future scholars to make use of and supplement. Similarly, should one wish to follow Townsend again in looking for "productive tensions" stemming from a monastery's "joint religious-secular influence," Cabezón and Dorjee (2019) usher the reader in that direction:

Many aspects of Tibetan monastic life may seem strange to Western observers, who often have an idealized image of Tibetan monks as living a serene, contemplative existence, aloof from worldly concerns. That this stereotype is inaccurate can be seen, *inter alia*, from the fact that, throughout history, Sera monks have been active participants in Tibetan politics and governance (p. 16).

Similar comparisons can be made to Jan Ronis' 2009 doctoral dissertation on the history of Katok Monastery, an important Nyingma institution in eastern Tibet.³ Having pored over the Tibetan literature, Ronis, like Townsend, takes the approach of a traditional critical scholar-investigator, identifying particular issues, people, and a particular period in order to draw out important historical lessons. His research "explores a crisis in the continuity of traditions and administration at Katok as impelled by volatile changes in regional politics and religion during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (Ronis, 2009, p. ii). He writes that his deep dive into this limited time and place contributes to more general scholarly concerns, including "1) the historical process of growth and decline of individual monastic institutions, 2) the development of Buddhist scholasticism, 3) the institutionalization of cults of revealed scriptures, 4) the rise of reincarnate lamas, and 5) the religious

³ Ronis, Jan M. (2009). *Celibacy, revelations, and reincarnated lamas contestation and synthesis in the growth of monasticism at Katok Monastery from the 17th through 19th centuries* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.18130/V3QJ77X7C>

history of eastern Tibet” (Ronis, 2009, pp. 2-3). Cabezón and Dorjee’s book clearly focuses on point one, charting Sera’s growth and challenges, and to some degree its relationship to its sister monasteries, Ganden and Drepung. Point five is also thoroughly addressed, *mutatis mutandis*, for the region of central Tibet. Regarding point three, the institutionalization of new scriptures, the authors discuss this not as a sustained theme, but in various parts of the book, particularly in its many biographical profiles of Sera’s major personages. In one section, they reveal the curious fact that Sera’s third throne-holder, Gungru Gyaltsen Sangpo (1383–1450), had, early in his career, revealed treasure, “a practice usually associated with the Nyingma School” (Cabezón and Dorjee, 2019, p. 160).⁴ More apropos to the highly scholastic Geluk School, the authors give us glimpses of many fascinating scriptural dramas in Sera’s history. They describe the scriptural and philosophical diversity of the early Geluk school, demonstrating, for example, that the aforementioned Gungruwa ran afoul of Khedrup Jé (one of Tsongkhapa’s closest disciples and a major power broker) who “considered some of Gungruwa’s madhyamaka positions inconsistent with the view of Tsongkhapa” (Cabezón & Dorjee, 2019, p. 163). For this reason, Gungruwa’s writings were phased out by subsequent generations of Sera leaders. Again characteristic of the book’s fecundity, the authors write, buried in a long footnote, that, “All of this paints a picture of Gungruwa as someone who believed that there were different paths to the ultimate, some of which were not philosophical. Whether or not any of this is borne out by Gungruwa’s recently discovered writing remains to be investigated” (Cabezón & Dorjee, 2019, p. 164 n. 373). This, like dozens of other pearls scattered through the book, will make a fine dissertation for some future scholar.

Similarly, they profile the fascinating figure of Kunkhyen Lodroe Rinchen Senge (15th cent.) who, like Gungruwa, seems to have been a powerful and independent thinker who posed a threat to the Geluk school’s burgeoning orthodoxy. His writings were thus likewise suppressed, and the authors encourage research into them: “On the surface, these texts do not evince the radical departures from standard Geluk view that one would expect of banned books, but scholars are still in the early stages of examining this literature” (Cabezón & Dorjee, 2019, p. 173).

Back to Ronis’ themes—Cabezón and Dorjee treat the fourth, “the rise of reincarnate lamas,” dedicating a several-page section to the tensions between competing ideals found at Sera: the ideal of the institutional scholar versus the ideal of the charismatic meditator and his subsequent reincarnations. They illustrate this tension through a study of estates attached to Sera’s affiliated hermitages:

But for an institution to thrive as a meditation retreat it requires the leadership of a charismatic contemplative. Almost all of the founders of the hermitages had this type of drive and charisma. Once a founding figure had passed away, however, the leadership of the hermitage passed on to the founder’s reincarnation instead of to a senior student who might also have had this calling. The trulkus were rarely as committed to the contemplative life as their predecessors. There were several reasons for this. The young trulkus, who had high official status at Sera, were encultured

⁴ While not specified, we assume that these were not scriptural revelations.

from an early age in dharma life. Wherever the yearning to be a hermit comes from, it does not generally come from a scholastic education....The historical lesson here is a simple one: it is difficult for hermitages to remain meditation-oriented institutions so long as succession is through the tulku system (Cabezón & Dorjee, 2019, pp. 339-341).

While Ronis' goal is to exhaust this theme in the context of Katok, Cabezón and Dorjee are content to record their pithy speculations and move on with the exposition of their trawling research.

The final point on Ronis' list is the "development of Buddhist scholasticism" (2009, pp. 2-3). On this theme Cabezón and Dorjee make a masterful contribution. They do not limit their scope to Geluk scholasticism, or even Tibetan scholasticism; they take us all the way back to early Buddhist monasticism in India and the scholastic traditions developed in mahāyāna institutions like Nālandā and Vikramaśīla.

Anecdotally, in preparation for this review, I happened to read their chapters "Early Indian Buddhist Monasticism" and "The Culture of Learning in Buddhist India" as I was simultaneously teaching these topics to my undergraduate class in Buddhist history. While there is no shortage of scholarly material on early Buddhism, the Vinaya, or mahāyāna intellectual history, I found Cabezón and Dorjee's digest so clear and convenient that I assigned these two chapters as a review assignment after I had already covered the topics relying on several older, more scattered sources. Chapter one, in particular, answers many questions that arise for students trying to differentiate between the customs of the Theravāda Vinaya and the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya of the Tibetans. For example, it discusses why Tibetans frown upon temporary ordination, a practice common in Theravāda traditions. It also attends to other Tibetan monastic idiosyncrasies, such as their lax observation of vinaya codes regarding begging for food and fasting after midday. In addition to its clear and thorough treatment of vinaya details, the authors contribute to the already substantial literature on the development of the mahāyāna canon. Western theoretical discourses are not sustained in the book, but compelling, passing references are made, for example, to the relevance of psychological theories related to writing and literacy and their anthropological role in the evolution of self-consciousness (Cabezón & Dorjee, 2019, p. 89). More research on these developments in South Asia can only be beneficial for critiques of Eurocentrism.

In the book's introduction, the authors promise not to hide controversies and bits of ugliness, and this is for the most part delivered. The Geluk reputation for sectarianism, while not developed as a theme, is alluded to a number of times, inviting more investigation.⁵ Modern controversies are treated, including the assassination of the fifth Radrang Rinpoche (1912–47) (an important teacher to the present Dalai Lama) and his associates, such as the interesting Sero Khardo Rinpoche.⁶

⁵ For example in the aforementioned profiles of Gungruwa and Kunkhyenpa.

⁶ While not mentioned by the authors, Khardo Rinpoche is alleged to have had an illicit affair with the female mystic Delog Dawa Drolma while on a visit to eastern Tibet, which led to the conception of the modern Nyingma master, Chagdud Tulku, who taught extensively in the West (See Chagdud Tulku. [1992]. *Lord of the Dance*. Padma Publishing, pp. 32, 41). Regarding Reting Rinpoche, it would have been interesting to hear

The controversy around the cult of the protector-spirit Dorje Shukden is given a clear and concise treatment near the end of the book. The only controversial topic that seems to be given short shrift is the profile of Pabongkha Dechen Nyingpo (1878–1941), arguably the most influential Geluk teacher of the twentieth century. He is mentioned a few times in various sections, but probably because he was not one of Sera’s official throne-holders or abbots, he is not treated under his own heading, despite his close affiliation with Sera and his reputation as either the ultimate saint or the embodiment of toxic sectarianism. Regardless, short biographies of Pabongkha are available elsewhere,⁷ and the authors may be forgiven for leaving him largely to the side.

Admittedly, some sections of the book recall Melville’s unpopular chapters in *Moby Dick* that dwell on every conceivable detail of a ship’s tackle and whale’s anatomy. For example, in a later section on Sera’s administration, the authors are sure to let us know that,

During the rigchen debates... every monk got a large scoopful—a *daso* (*zla zo*), about two lbs.—of barley meal every day for the fifteen days that the rigchen lasted. Monks also received one large *khapsé*, a piece of fried dough, every day....The oil used to fry the *khapsés* was reused from year to year....Laypeople coveted the *khapsés*, and individual monks and *khamtsens* would often purchase additional *khapsés* to offer patrons....All told, some 100,000 *khapsés* were prepared at this time (pp. 413–14).

Certainly, many readers will have no interest in such details, but it is commendable that the authors (and editors at Wisdom) left them in the book. They will contribute to some sociological, anthropological, or economic research in the future, for monasteries are material sites embedded in rich concrete networks; they do not run on mere philosophical vapors.⁸

It is uncertain how soon anyone will be able to match this study’s scope and usefulness, but Buddhist studies, Tibetan history, and connected fields of anthropology and sociology will be immensely enriched if Cabezón and Dorjee’s lead is followed and historical treasures are mined from monasteries like Ganden, Sakya, Palpung, Zurmang, Palyul,⁹ Dzogchen, Kumbum, Tsurphu, and others. Dozens of important research projects will emanate from studies of these cultural lodestars, just as they will, before long, from the publication at hand.

mention of his controversial involvement with Nyingma teachers such as Chatral Rinpoche, but this admittedly, comes from my own Nyingma interests.

⁷ For example, Joona Repo. (2015). The Second Pabongkha, Dechen Nyingpo. *Treasury of Lives*. Accessed June 30, 2020, <http://treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Second-Pabongkha-Dechen-Nyingpo/3989>.

⁸ See Ward, J. A. (1956). The Function of the Cetological Chapters in *Moby-Dick*. *American Literature*. 28(2) pp. 164-183: “All human means are used to examine the whale: science, legend, art, history, literature, and religion are but the most obvious; the examination of the whale leads to an examination of all humanity and the entire universe. In the center is the whale itself, and behind every reference there is the concrete physical detail of the whale. For Melville... all things are vitally related to all other things, and differences of basic category are for him negligible” (p. 172).

⁹ An English translation of a short Tibetan history of Palyul is available: Tsering Lama Jampal Zangpo. (1988). *A Garland of Immortal Wish-Fulfilling Trees: The Palyul Tradition of Nyingmapa*. Snow Lion.

Book Review

Things Fall Apart

Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe, UK: Penguin Random, 1958, xiii+152. ISBN: 9780141186887

SONAM CHODEN

Written by a Nigerian author, *Things Fall Apart* is full of rich proverbial quotes and is a great literary work. The book tells the story of a small fictional village, Umuofia in Nigeria and gives an overview of Igbo society. The story is primarily about a character named Okonkwo, who is a strong man, but he fears failures and has no courage to fight back. The story illustrates the coming of 'whites' in Umuofia with their Bible unexpectedly and the sudden changes in their institutions and political structure.

Chinua Achebe tells the story in three parts. The first half of the story portrays his life, customs, and cultures of his Igbo society having a complex patriarchal society. The story begins with the sentence saying, "Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond" (p.3). The author goes on to give a more complete picture of Okonkwo, as he describes his physique as "tall and huge, and his bushy eyebrows and wide nose gave him severe look" (ibid.). Chinua labels him as a man of short temper who "had no patience with unsuccessful men – he had no patience with his father" (p.4).

Okonkwo is at the height of his fame as a respected warrior and a wrestler from the Umuofia clan. However, his father Unoka died without taking any title and he was heavily in debt. Fortunately, in Umuofia, a man is judged according to his worth and not according to the worth of his father. Okonkwo is young but he was not like his father. He marries three wives and has two barns full of yams, 'king of crops' grown by men, and he has taken two titles. At a young age, he earned respect from others and became one of the greatest men of his time. "Age was respected among his people, but achievement was revered. As the elders said, if a child washed his hands he could eat with kings. Okonkwo had washed his hands and so he ate with the kings and elders" (p.8). That was how he was given the responsibility to take care of the ill-fated lad, Ikemefuna who was sacrificed by the neighbouring village to Umuofia to avoid war for killing the daughter of Umuofia.

Marriage is a women's ceremony and the central figures are the bride and her mother. The bride receives a dowry from her family. Good words and prayers are exchanged such as "we are giving you our daughter today. She will be a good wife to you. She will bear nine sons like the mother of our town" (p.111). Once again, Achebe takes readers through the Igbo funeral, in an incident where Okonkwo accidentally kills a young boy and has to go exile for seven years. He flees to his motherland, Mbanto.

The second and the third part of the story is about his stay in Mbanto where his family was gladly received by his mother's family. It is also about his tragic experiences when British missionaries arrive. During his second year of exile, Okonkwo's friend Obierika brings bad news about Abame, another

village being evaded and destructed by the white man. The whites enter into both Mbanto and Umuofia with their Bible as their weapon of choice. They gain some converts who are the outcasts of the society and Nwoye, Okonkwo's eldest son also converts himself to Christianity which displeases his father. Moreover, the white man's government came to Umuofia and the clan no longer has the freedom to judge its own. It was the District commissioner judging the case of ignorance, backed by the armed power. As Obierika tells, "The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peacefully with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers and our clan can no longer act like one" (p.166).

Coming of whites leads to the collision of African and European culture in people's lives. Okonkwo is not happy with the intense changes brought about by the colonial rule, the mixing of two cultures. Here Achebe brings in the theme of 'struggle between change and tradition'. Okonkwo is against the entry of the white man but "there were many men and women in Umuofia who did not feel as strongly as Okonkwo about the new dispensation" (p. 168). The entry of white man has built the trading store and "for the first time palm oil and kernel became things of great price, and much money flowed into Umuofia" (p.168). During a gathering, to decide whether to fight against the war or to live peacefully with the whites, Okonkwo kills a messenger infuriated for ruining Umuofia's independence. Okonkwo wanted war against the whites but he realized that his clan members have chosen not to fight the war as they let other messengers escape. Okonkwo hangs himself and his friend Obierika seeks help from the whites to bring his body down and bury his body, thus Okonkwo's world fall apart.

With the story of Okonkwo, Chinua Achebe describes both the flaws and strengths of Igbo society's unique culture and traditions and also, how cultures vary among themselves and how they change over time. He provides examples such as belief in the evil spirits and the power of the ancestral god, oppression of women, complex patriarchal system, farming traditions, and killing of twins. Achebe gives insight to Igbo society before the British missionaries invaded their land and he wants to educate his readers about the Igbo society's values and culture. The readers are aware of the arrival of white missionaries in Umuofia and reactions of both the parties' differences in culture and values.

Although there were some positive impacts with the arrival of whites missionaries, towards the end of the story, readers witness Igbo society falling apart. The Igbo were impacted by the advent of the British government, religion, education, and trade. Instead of fighting back and protecting their motherland, the citizens of Umuofia show their weakness compromising with the whites. Everything falls apart as the people start to accept the British values, cultures, and laws imposed on them. Achebe describes Okonkwo as someone who is haunted by the fear of weakness and failure and becomes a successful person. However, at the end of the story, due to his rashness, Okwonkos' bravery and confidence also falls apart. Okonkwo is not able to challenge his fear and commits suicide which is a disgrace for a man to take his own life. Just like the death of Okwonko, as Umuofia sees changes in their culture with the arrival of whites, without culture, Igbo society can be considered dead. 'Things Fall Apart' is a story of Okonkwo's tragedy, yet it presents Igbo life before the coming of the white man threatening their religion and their tribal life. The story documents what the white man destroyed. Igbo's customs and traditions are the central part of the book.

Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* can be allied to *The River Between*, a novel by another African author Ngugi Wa Thiong'o. In his book, Ngugi also tells the story of the coming of Christian missionaries in Kikuyu (in Kenya) and losing their tradition. The protagonist Waiyaki tries to educate his people without forgetting his traditions. Yet, his dream of educating Kikuyu dies when he falls in love with Joshua, who is the daughter of a Christian convert. Both *Things Fall Apart* and *The River Between* tells the story of African colonization by Europeans and demonstrate the culture of Nigeria and Kenya before colonization.

Book Review

Nineteen Eighty-Four

Nineteen Eighty-Four, by George Orwell, Haryana: Penguin Random House India, 2011, III+325. ISBN: 9780143416302

KUENGA NORBU

George Orwell, in the book under review, takes the readers on a journey of a fictional historical timeline after the real events of World War II. Orwell alarms the readers of the dangers of an all-encompassing and powerful regime that has been allowed to gain and maintain power. The third person writing employs nuanced symbolism by paralleling and referencing actions, objects and persons to the real world and is, therefore, a very interesting read. Orwell's experiences with cruel regimes of this era culminated in this twentieth-century classic.

Winston Smith, the main character, is introduced in a post-World War II dystopia. The year is supposedly 1984, and the world consists of three super states in a perpetual state of war: Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia. The totalitarian ruling party of Oceania, INGSOC (English Socialist Party), is headed by Big Brother, a figure whose poster appear throughout Airstrip One (formerly Britain). The party rules with an iron fist. Individual expression is not allowed. *Telescreens*, which are in every home and office, disseminate party propaganda and spy on people. Thought police (secret loyal party adherents who protect its integrity) work actively to quell any act of dissent against the party. Here, Orwell shows the insurmountable power totalitarian regimes can wield with the advancement of technology.

Winston, who works in the Records Department of Ministry of Truth in Airstrip One, alters records of the past according to the desires of the party. For example, rewriting a newspaper article which makes it seem like Big Brother had predicted enemy troop movements, while contradictory information is purged into the 'memory hole' (a furnace). Winston faintly remembers a time before the party acquired power, and he develops a distaste for what the party had done to him and society. One day, he commits 'thought crime' (engaging in actions or thoughts which are anti-party) when he writes in a diary. This is where Orwell highlights the precarious nature of individual thought and expression in a surveillance society. Winston writes in the diary simply because "the beautiful creamy paper deserved to be written on" (p.8). He has no idea why and for whom he is writing. Despite knowing it being punishable by death, he pens down his thoughts. Orwell means to remind us of the sacredness of free expression and individual actions – which is not to be given up.

During 'Two Minutes Hate' event, a screening where the party directs the anger of the audience against Emmanuel Goldstein, who is supposedly the prime enemy and nemesis of Big Brother and the party, Winston catches the glimpse of an O'Brien. He is convinced that O'Brien shares his hatred of Big Brother. Winston also notices another person, a dark-haired girl, Julia. He initially despises

her for her ostensible reverence of the party but he is attracted to her at the same time.

In a conversation with Winston in the canteen, Syme from Research Department, reveals their intent to limit vocabulary to the point where revolutionary thoughts against the party cannot be formulated in 'Newspeak' (the official language of Oceania). Like this, the book does raise interesting thought experiments: if the vocabulary of our native tongue was eliminated to a significant degree, would we be able to think complex thoughts?

Winston and Julia rent a room from Mr. Charrington after they get closer to each other. They promise that they will never let the party betray each other. Later on, they visit O'Brien in his mansion and declare for Goldstein's cause. Unbeknownst to both, O'Brien turns out to be a thought police and had been aware of Winston's activities from the start. The members of the thought police barge in and take them to the Ministry of Love for correction. Winston is conditioned with torture, and his entries in his diary are used against him: O'Brien succeeds in inculcating 'doublethink'

¹ in Winston, even getting him to accept that $2+2=5$, not 4. To completely break Winston, O'Brien decides to take him to *Room 101*. A chamber where worst nightmares of individuals are used against them – it was rats in Winston's case. A contraption is set over Winston's head; starved and carnivorous rats will devour his face if O'Brien presses a lever. In horror, Winston cries out that Julia takes his place. O'Brien feels satisfied and releases him from Ministry of Love. Winston and Julia meet randomly on the streets and both confess that they betrayed one another. They are both husks of their former selves and unable to love each other. Now, Winston frequents the Chestnut Tree Café where he works on sub-committees and "he loved Big Brother" (p.311).

Why is it that the party is so successful in controlling everyone? Like any other state, it too has a monopoly on coercion. Winston succumbs to it. So, what keeps the majority of Oceania in check? Foucault's 'panoptic discipline' provides an explanation. While studying power, the French philosopher Michel Foucault, explains 'panoptic' social control in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975). The panopticon is an architectural design made to ensure that the watched is always unaware of the watcher. The watcher can see all, while the watched has no way to know if they are being watched at any given moment. Foucault explained this in the context of the prison, which he states is a recent phenomenon. He argued that while the discipline and correctional system may seem more humane now than in the past, it isn't all that in reality. Rather, he argues, a standardized control of every aspect of the prisoner's life is a superior form of social control compared to the gruesome scaffold. It begs one to think: if one can create panoptic prisons, one can also create panoptic schools, military, media, economy and even a nation-state. Power exercised in panoptic society can impose conformity – with minimal or no use of coercion. Such an imposition, Foucault believed, was inherently undemocratic as it stifled individual thought through fear. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Winston's apartment is analogous to Foucault's panoptic discipline. He can be watched by anyone and at any time through the 'telescreens,' but he has no way of knowing by whom or when – this forms an effective mode of social control in Oceania. Only when panopticism fails is the proverbial scaffold brought out as a last resort.

¹ 'Doublethink' is making people accept two opposing or contradictory ideas

Orwell wrote this book through his own experiences such as fighting in the Spanish Civil War. The book is heavily inspired by the real events and people of this era and his political satire becomes very clear in that context. As we steer our modern politics through economic nationalism, cults of political personality and government surveillance, the threat that Orwell warns us in his book is largely still relevant. The book also explores many other themes, which deserve an analytical lens, such as: the relationship between war and power, language and knowledge, class struggle, privacy and historical revisionism.

Book Review

In the Shadows of the Naga Insurgency

In The Shadows of Naga Insurgency: Tribes, State, and Violence in Northeast India. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018. 356 pages. Hardcover, £34.99. ISBN: 9780199485703.

Deki Yangzom

This comprehensive monograph is the result of intensive ethnographic fieldwork over roughly two years, particularly in the villages of Phugwumi (pseudonym) and Noksen which are located in the western and eastern parts of the Indian state of Nagaland respectively. This book offers both a historical and contemporary context of the still unfolding Naga struggle for the right to self-determination, a struggle that violent erupted in the 1950s. Not just Nagaland, but places across Northeast India have endured protracted political conflict since decolonisation. Discussing the Naga struggle from a people's perspective, Wouters describes the everyday sufferings of the Naga, as well as discusses how Naga villagers perceive and experience the enduring political volatility and violence. The concept of 'insurgency complex' is introduced to show the repercussions of insurgency and counterinsurgency in shaping the everyday social lives and mentality of ordinary Naga people.

The introduction offers a historical account of the formation of Naga identity, which is based on the coming together of smaller identities, namely that of village, clan and tribe. It then shows the progression of Nagas' sense of nationalism, which resulted in a claim for independence. The first unified Naga organisation was the Naga Club, which was formed in 1918 and followed by the Naga National Council (NNC).

The book's second chapter breaks down and discusses Naga identity, particularly the identities of clan, village and tribe. It shows how these identities are very strong and lie at the root of factional rivalries that emerged within the Naga Movement, as well as in a general problem of tribalism. The author uses both historical and ethnographic insights to explain why the Naga Movement began to stagnate and split along tribal lines, arguing that tribal identity often supersedes projections of a singular Naga national identity.

The third chapter is titled 'ceasefire as conflict' and provides a very critical discussion of what is unfolding during the ceasefire. The Indo-Naga ceasefire is viewed "as a complex and contentious social reality that saw the continuation of conflict by other forms and means" (p. 29). He also introduces the idea of 'post-ceasefire recruits', which refers to 'national workers', as cadres of the Naga underground are called, with no personal experience of struggle and who often indulge in extortion and corruption in the name of the Naga Movement. Their behaviour and actions has agonised many Nagas, who feel that the Naga Movement has denigrated after the ceasefire, which was signed in 1997.

The fourth chapter discusses the emergence of Nagaland state in 1963, as part of India. The author argues that the present-day functioning of this state is influenced and shaped by an embodied

experience of state violence (p. 128). As the creation of Nagaland state did not end Naga insurgency, India's central government resorted to a 'policy of seduction' by granting huge development funds to Nagaland, but not so necessarily to effectuate development and good governance, but with the explicitly political intent to tie the Naga elite to the state. The next chapter shows Nagas' response to this policy of seduction, which comes in the form of a moral economy of corruption in which many people do not see it as morally wrong to pilfer development resources given to them by the state. Hence the author puts it that, "to situate corruption in its historical and political contexts seems especially relevant for Nagaland" (p. 173).

The penultimate chapter of the book discusses the disputed demand of Eastern Nagas to form a separate state from Nagaland. Their argument is both historical and contemporary. The historical argument is that eastern Nagas unlike western Nagas were never formally incorporated into the British Raj. The contemporary argument is that eastern Nagas feel dejected and deprived by western Nagas in terms of government employment, development, and other state benefits. This brings to the last chapter of the book which focuses on how Nagas engage with modern democracy and electoral politics. The chapter offers an exploration into how democracy and the election process are being 'vernacularized' by Nagas in their context of villages and clans. Wouters provides substantial ethnographic accounts to demonstrate how the democracy process is subject to loyalties of clan and village, as well as is influenced by what is locally known as the 'underground factor.'

The book ends with an epilogue which reflects on the possibility of Nagas moving beyond the shadows of Naga insurgency after the anticipated signing of a final political deal. Wouters argues that the success of any political treaty will not just depend on the deal itself, but on the unravelling of the 'insurgency complex.' *In the shadows of Naga Insurgency* is an excellent political ethnography which probes the shadows of insurgency as experienced and embodied by ordinary Naga villagers. This book is of great interest to South Asia scholars (anthropologists and sociologists) who are engaged in the study of politics, ethnicity, state, resources, neo-development and nationalism. Moreover, this book will also be of an interest to general audience who are keen to learn about the politics in Northeast India.