

**Language, Politics & Identity: A Study of Missionary
Newspapers in Ladakh and Kyelang (1908-10; 1927-35;
1936-47 & 1952-59 A.D.)**

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by

Rigzin Chodon



**Centre for English Studies
School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067, India**

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SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE & CULTURE STUDIES
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CERTIFICATE

This thesis titled “**Language, Politics & Identity: A Study of Missionary Newspapers in Ladakh and Kyelang (1908-1910; 1927-35; 1936-47 & 1952-59 A.D)**” submitted by Ms **Rigzin Chodon**, Centre for English Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of any University or Institution.

This may be placed before the examiners for evaluation for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

(PROF. GJV PRASAD)
SUPERVISOR

Prof. GJV PRASAD
Centre for English Studies
School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067

(PROF. UDAYA KUMAR)
CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson
Centre for English Studies
School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067

Date 21.07.2017

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

This thesis titled “**Language, Politics & Identity: Study of Missionary Newspapers in Ladakh and Kyelang (1908-10; 1927-35 ; 1936-47 & 1952-59 A.D.)**” submitted by me for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of any University or Institution.



(Rigzin Chodon)
Ph. D Student
Centre for English Studies
School of Language, Literature & Culture
Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-67

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an attempt to study the monthly newspapers, ‘*Kyelang Agbar*¹’ and ‘*La dvags Phonya*²’ published under the editorship of the Moravian missionary, Rev. Walter Asboe, from 1927-35 A.D. and 1937 to 44 A.D. respectively, in the region of Ladakh (in Jammu & Kashmir) and Lahoul (in Himachal Pradesh).

Print media, although common in 20th century Europe, was an unusual form of medium in the Himalayan belt of the Indian sub-continent. Publication of the monthly newspapers in the local languages of Ladakh and Lahaul, using the Tibetan script, was the first of its kind.

Set in backdrop of the Himalayan regions, the year 1904 is significant as this was the year when the Moravian Missionary, Rev. A. H. Francke started using the genre of writing—print media, and published the first monthly newspaper, called ‘*Ladvags kyi Agbar*’ from 1904-1907 on the lithographic Press of the Moravian Mission in Khalatse, Ladakh. The same newspaper was published again from 1908 to 1910 under the new title; *La dvags Phonya* (also called ‘Ladakh Herald’ by contemporary scholars).

‘*La dvags kyi Agbar*’ newspaper is considered as the first newspaper publication in general, and the first newspaper in the Tibetan script in particular, in present Jammu & Kashmir and the entire Tibetan-speaking belt of the Himalayan regions. The medium of print created a new form of expression and has rightly been termed as the ‘Moravian journalistic tradition³’ by historian John Bray. The reason for its publication was purely evangelical; however, it also brought avenues for publication of historical, political, cultural, as well as secular news and subjects. According to Bray—

¹ The newspaper of Kyelang.

² *La dvags Phonya* means the ‘Messenger of Ladakh’ or ‘Ladakh Messenger’. Also known as ‘Ladakh herald’ by contemporary scholars.

³ Bray, John. "A.H. Francke's" *La dvags Kyi Akhbar*: the First Tibetan Newspaper." *The Tibet Journal* 13.3 (1988): 58-63.

The inspiration for the newspaper came from the news that Moravian missionaries were publishing an Inuit journal in Labrador, an unusual example of Inuit- Ladakhi cultural exchange. It was called *La dvags kyi Agbar* and was the first Tibetan-language paper produced anywhere in the Himalayas.⁴ (Bray 2008:3-28)

The Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel in London, published journals and magazines to keep a record of missionary work done by the Moravians Missionaries across different mission stations in the world. With the background of publications of journals by the Moravians, it is possible that Rev. Francke, thought of making use of a medium that was common in Europe but rare in the Himalayan region. It is possible that the reverence by Ladakhis for ‘texts’ written in the Tibetan-script as holy, must have initially helped to create an idea of ‘sanctity’ towards the newspaper.

1.1 *Kyelang Agbar & La dvags Phonya*

With the coming of Rev. Walter Asboe to the Himalayan region of Kyelang, the revival process of the monthly newspaper began in 1927. The newspaper titled, *Kyelang Agbar* was published from 1927 until 1935, at the Kyelang Mission House, in Lahaul (in present Himachal Pradesh). This publication was full of new ideas and the newspaper can be seen as an *avant garde* form of writing as it gave space to many local writers to write and experience a new mode of expression.

When Asboe moved to Ladakh in 1936, he continued the publication of his newspaper under the name ‘*Ladvags Phonya*’ from 1936 to 1944.⁵ Five years later by Pierre Vittoz and Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog revived the newspaper from 1952 until about 1959. No copies of the 1950s editions have been found and are not used for the study.

A facsimile of the *Kyelang Agbar* has been procured from the Berlin State library website and copies of *Ladvags Phonya* have been collected from the Moravian Church Archives as well as the Bodleian Library in Oxford, U.K. for my study.

⁴ Bray, John. "August Hermann Francke's Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906: the making of a missionary scholar." *The Tibet Journal* 33.1 (2008): 3-28.

⁵ The newspaper edition found at the Moravian Church House and Bodleian Library in Oxford have editions until the year 1944. 1945 to 47 editions have not been found so far. Same goes for the editions from 1952 to 1959, when the publication finally stopped.

An analysis of the available newspapers facsimiles *Kyelang Agbar* (1927-35 A.D.) and *Ladvags Phonya* (1927-35A.D.) has been done to get a general idea of news (local, national, international, evangelical, modern and miscellaneous news as well as articles) and other forms of writing that started to be written in this new medium.

These newspapers were unique in projecting the cultural practices, religion, tradition, folklore, history, of both the regions apart from the main reason for its publication by the editors, which was to spread the message of the Gospel among the heathens. Buddhism and Islam in Ladakh were the chief religion in region of Ladakh and Buddhism and Hinduism in the region of Lahaul.

The centers of publication i.e. Khalatse, Leh and Kyelang lie on the routes that connect India with the Himalayan region in the present and the Indian sub-continent, Kashmir to the regions from Yarkand, Kashgar into Central Asia in the past. Therefore, the location of these three points was important in disseminating the message of the Gospel through a very modern form of writing.

Languages and their variants spoken in both the regions varied. However, according to the linguistic studies conducted by the Moravians, the written form i.e. the classical literary language is different from the spoken language and was all broadly classified as 'Tibetan' in general. 'Tibetan' as a classical literary language was used in the entire belt of proper Tibet (although languages and spoken version also varied region wise in both Tibet and Ladakh).

The idea of a 'text' written in a different format, with a different content but in the same script, i.e. 'Tibetan' might have created an idea of the newspaper being 'sacred'. This was the case with the limited sacred texts of the Buddhists, i.e. '*Kangyur*' and '*Tangyur*', that the reading of the text is considered as a very special practice. And these have been reiterated upon by the Moravian missionaries in their reports on the 'religious practices' in Ladakh and Lahoul.

To be educated was difficult due to the social hierarchies of the region. One had to be from either a ruler (in the case of Ladakh) and a 'ruling family/ies like the Thakurs and Ranas' (in case of Lahoul) to read or write. Only a person from an affluent family or a novice at a monastery could afford an education to be able to read and write.

The concept of secular writing genres like novels did not exist, although unique and rich heritage of oral expressions existed in the form of drama called *Zdos-gar* based on hagiographies especially of Buddhist saints, kings and famous people. Oral transmission of knowledge in the form of stories, parables, proverbs were rich and well known.

The ideas of boundaries in context of language, in these regions were fluid. The people of this region would speak different language but read religious texts written in a standard writing system i.e. using the Tibetan script. The languages or variants spoken in various parts of Ladakh and Lahoul were different; the distinctiveness of practicing religious liturgy had always been the same i.e. with different styles of writing the Tibetan script with the nuances of colloquial languages in it.

Therefore, the newspapers published in these two regions are crucial for study. Firstly, so far a detailed study of *Kyelang Agbar* and *Ladvags Phonya* has not been done in the form of an academic discourse. Therefore, giving this newspaper the due importance it needs to formulate on various aspects of exchanges that were taking place among the Moravian missionaries and the people of these regions. Secondly, this project will be the first of its kind to study the involvement of writers from Ladakh and Lahaul; who collected, translated and imparted knowledge in the form of secular as well religious literature of their respective regions in collaboration with the Moravian Missionaries in the early 20th century.

1.2 An introduction to the writers of Ladakh and Lahaul

The blend of people comprising of writers from Ladakh, Lahaul and Poo make for an interesting study in this thesis. The writers, mostly Christian converts, create a plethora of ideas and new literary ventures through their writings in the newspaper. One of the important things to keep in mind is the migration of these new converts from Ladakh to Kyelang, who eventually turn to the Christian faith like Ga Phuntsog, Zodpa Dechen etc.

Their migration from the Kashmir governed region of Ladakh, to the British India governed Lahaul as noticed by Heyde and Pagell was due to the imposition of high taxes on them tell the tale of the misery that they had been experiencing in Ladakh.

Then there were the monasteries as well who imposed taxes on the villagers in the form of “donating” some part of their produce to the monasteries that they were affiliated to.

The background of the work done by the writers of Ladakh like Joseph Gergan, Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog, Zodpa Dechen, Ga Phuntsog, Jor Phuntsog, Paulu (Sonam Gyaltzen from Poo), Tarnyed Ali, (born in Kargil but lived in Leh) and few lamas from the monasteries of Tashi lunpo like Chompel represent the people who underwent this cultural, linguistic and religious exchange.

With these background about the newspaper for study in mind, I would like to briefly introduce the regions of Lahoul and Ladakh; the history of the Moravian Missionaries and their mission in the Himalayan belt and the writers who contributed in Kyelang Agbar. The research methodology used for the study as well as the chapterization of this thesis has also been stated.

1.2.1A brief Introduction to Ladakh

In the current political scenario Ladakh, constituting the two districts Leh and Kargil, is part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir within the Republic of India. However, if we go down in history, as per the limited historical records—

- From the late 7th or early 8th century until sometime after 842 A.D., it was part of the Tibetan empire.
- From the mid 10th century until 1834, Ladakh was an independent kingdom.
- At its height in the mid-17th century, its territory extended as far as Rudok, Guge and Purang in what is now Western Tibet. In its final years, its territory corresponded roughly with today’s Leh and Kargil districts, with the addition of Spiti (present Himachal Pradesh).

- In 1834 Ladakh was invaded by the army of Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu, and it finally lost its independence in 1842. Four years later, it was incorporated into the new princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, which acknowledged British paramountcy within the Indian empire. Since 1947, it has remained part of J&K within the independent Republic of India. (Bray 2011:1)

Meanwhile while this region had close political and historical connections with Tibet, China, and the regions that now form part of Pakistan, its borders with all these regions remain contested. Bray states that,

From the Indian, Tibetan or Chinese viewpoints, Ladakh lies on the periphery: equally, it may be viewed as lying at the centre of a network connecting all these regions. The interaction between local, regional and indeed international perspectives.⁶ (Bray 2011:2)

1.2.2 An introduction to Lahoul/Lahaul⁷

Geographical Setting:

Lahaul is part of the district, Lahaul & Spiti, which is the largest yet most sparsely populated in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh. The administrative headquarters of this district is Kyelang, that lies on the north bank of the Bhaga river. Lahaul and Spiti are very different in terms of vegetation and climatic conditions. The history of the two regions has also developed separately.

My thesis work is focussed on the region Lahaul, therefore a brief history of Spiti and a detailed geographical, linguistic and historical background of Lahaul will be presented. Lahaul's connection with Ladakh will also be dealt with.

According to the district Gazetteer of Kangra 1897—

⁶ Bray, John. Locating Ladakhi Histories. Ed. John Edt. Bray. New Delhi: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala, 2011.

⁷ Lahoul, Lahul or Lahaul. It is also called with the name *Garja* or *Garsha* and '*Swang la*' by the people who reside there. I am going to use the spelling 'Lahaul' from here onwards in this thesis with an exception of quotations used in references.

Láhaul lies between north latitude $32^{\circ} 8'$ and $32^{\circ} 59'$ and east longitude $76^{\circ} 49'$ and $77^{\circ} 47'$ and comprises an area of 2,255 square miles, and a population of 5,982 souls, or 2.6 to the square mile. It is bounded on the south by the Bára Bangáhal Taluka of the Kángra district and by Kúlu Proper; on the east by Wazíri Spiti; on the north by the Ladák Province of Kashmír, and on the west by Chamba State. To the south and west the boundary is formed by the crests of two mountain ranges which give off southwards the Rávi and Beás rivers, and south-eastwards the Spiti stream, a tributary of the Sutlej; the two ranges culminate at their junction in a great snowy peak, more than 21,000 feet above the sea, and the highest in the sub-division, visible from many parts of Kúlu Proper, a great table of rock with an immense layer of snow on its top and surrounded by rocky pinnacles, known by many names, the most popular is Deo-tibba. On their northern sides the two ranges sink abruptly down to the left edge of the Chenáb or Chandra Bhága, of which Láhul is the cradle. The crest of the ridge on the north or right bank of the Chenáb which has an average elevation of more than 18,000 feet above the sea is included in Láhul; it forms the watershed between the Chenáb and the Indus, and the northern boundary of Láhul extends a little to the north of it, so that all the six rivers of the Punjab except the Jhelum draw some part of their waters direct from the Kángra district. To the west the Chenáb though a very narrow valley, and the boundary on this side also is therefore for the most part formed by the summits of high ridges, spurs thrown out from the ranges to the north and south of the Chenáb valley.

The Chenáb takes its rise from the Bára Lácha Pass, the point where the great range to the north of it sinks to its lowest elevation at a height of 16,221 feet above the sea. There are two sources within about a mile of one another from which the Chandra and the Bhága, the parent streams of the great river, start off in almost diametrically opposite directions, each to flow through a valley of its own till they meet many miles below at Tándi. (Diack 1-2)

Lahaul is therefore divided into four parts: the first is the valley of the Chandra, locally known as Rangloi; the second is the valley of the Bhága, known as the Gara; the third is called Patan, the valley through which flow the upper waters of the Chenáb or Chandra-Bhága, formed by the union of the two streams. The fourth part land lying to the north, and bordering on Ladák;

it has a mean elevation of over 14,000 feet, is uncultivated and uninhabited, and is known as Lingti.

Historical setting:

According to the Gazetteer of the Kangra District published in 1897, the History of Lahul has been recorded as follows:

The district of Lahul finds historic mention as early as seventh century of our era, being alluded to as a district to the north-east of Kúlu by the Chinese pilgrim Hwen Tsang under the name of *Lo-hu-lo*, which is clearly, Lho-yul of the Tibetans and the Lahul of the people of Kulu and other neighbouring States.*⁸ It is probable that the country was from the earliest times a dependency of Tibetan origin, and its name, “southern district”, affording in itself a clear indication of its subjection in early times to a northern power. When the Tibetan Empire was broken up in the tenth century,†⁹ Láhul was probably included in the kingdom of Ladak formed out of the wreck by a chieftain called Palgi Gan¹⁰. In what manner and at what time its separation from Ladak took place, it is impossible to ascertain; but the traditions of the Lahoulis go to show that the separation is of long standing, and the following facts seem to prove that it took place before the second consolidation of the Ladak kingdom under Thsewang Namgyal, ancestor of the last dynasty of kings of Ladakh, which took place in A.D. 1580 and 1600. In the notice of the provinces acquired by him and his successor, Singhi Namgyal¹¹, some time between A.D. 1580 and 1660, and those divided among his sons by the latter (given in Cunningham’s Ladak from historical documents preserved by the Lama) Lahul is never mentioned, though Zanskar and Spiti, which lie to the north and north-east of Lahul and almost separate it from the rest of Ladakh are mentioned when acquired, and also as forming the share of the kingdom allotted to Singhi Namgyal’s third son. It is probable that in the confusion preceding the re-consolidation of the Ladakh kingdom by Thsewang Namgyal, Lahul became independent, and remained for a short time governed by *thakurs*

⁸ Cunningham, *Anc. Geog.*, Vol. I., p. 142

⁹ Cunningham.

¹⁰ King Pal Gyi Gon of the Gon Dynasty.

¹¹ Singey Namgyal.

or petty barons of small clusters of villages. Four or five families survived up to the present day, and are still in possession of their original territories which they hold in jagir, subject to payment of tribute or *nazrana*. The tradition of a period of government by petty independent thakurs is in every one's mouth in Lahul, and the vividness and particularly of the traditions show that they do not date from any very remote times. (Gazetteer 1897:1-70)

Mr Lyall writes:-

It is not likely, however, that this period of perfect independence was a long one, and I surmise that soon after its separation from Ladakh, the whole of Lahul became tributary to the Raja of Chamba, and that the part now forming British Lahul¹² was subsequently transferred from Chamba to Kulu. I have remarked points in one or two Lahul traditions which support this view, and would agree with the account given by the present representative of the Kulu Raja's family, according to which his ancestor in the seventh generation, Raja Bidhi Singh, acquired Lahul from Chamba. There is no reason, I think, to doubt the correctness of the account as to time, and it fixes the date of the first acquisition of British Lahul by Kulu at about 200 years ago.

The Rajas of Chamba must have conquered the country before A.D. 1600 or Thsewang Namgyal would have annexed it to Ladakh, but they must have governed through the Thakurs and interfered very little, or there would be clearer traces of their seventy or eighty years' rule in the Lahul traditions. As I have said before, I believe the Kulu Raja's account to be correct as to time; but the explanation given in it, that Bidhi Singh got Lahul as dower with a princess of the Chamba family, is generally discredited as a boastful attempt to increase the honour of the family by the invention of an alliance to which the Raja of Chamba would never have condescended, Moreover, it seems quite

¹² According to Tsering Dorjee, it was not the whole part. "From 8th C to 17th C Lower Lahul (Manchad) was under Chamba. Punan and Tinan was under a loose control under Ladakh. Nazrana was paid by petty Jagirdaris or Thakur but overall under Ladakh) (17th C to 1848, whole of Lahul was under Kullu." Dorjee, Tsering. *History of Lahaul* Rigzin Chodon. 17 May 2017. Ladakhi, English & Hindi.

opposed to all custom for a Hindu Raja to give territory as dower with a daughter¹³, and the story is not told by the people, who, if asked, say that they imagine Lahul must have been forcibly annexed. No doubt that was the case, and from that time the history of Lahul is included in that of the Kulu principality. Budh or Bidhi Singh was son of Raja Jaggat Singh, who was a contemporary of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb and the date of the acquisition may therefore be placed approximately at 1700 A.D¹⁴. (Gazetteer 1897:1-70)

It would appear, however, that subsequently to this, the Lahulis continued to pay a small annual tribute to Ladakh, probably to avert forays and to keep the roads open for trade¹⁵.

Indeed the Lahulis, without orders, continued to pay this tribute to the governor of Leh up to 1862, when our Government, being informed of the fact, prohibited its payment in future. Moorcroft says in his travels that four villages in Lahul in his time (A.D.1820) paid revenue to the Gialpo of Ladakh, though they acknowledge military fealty to the Raja of Kulu. He mentions that Thakur Dharam Singh, of Kyelang, was then the officer in charge of the country, and was treated with profound respect by the people. Mr. Lyall says: "This I can well believe, as i have never seen deeper respect shown anywhere to any one than was shown to his son, Thakur Tara Chand, the late wazir, by the Lahulis when i first knew them. Lahul passed under British rule in 1846, together with Kulu, to which it was subject. (Diack 1994: 8-9)

¹³ According to Tsering Dorjee, "The story about dowry does not seem to be true" Dorjee, Tsering. *History of Lahaul Rigzin Chodon*. 17 May 2017. Ladakhi, English & Hindi.

¹⁴ According to Tsering Dorjee, "In oral traditions, it is said that, "Kulu came to war with Lahaul and the Kulu army reached only till Phakpa/Triloknath Garja. Only lower Lahaul was under Chamba rule not the whole of Lahul.: (Interview details to be provided here)

¹⁵ According to Tsering Dorjee, "This was done in Tinan and Punan. There are three Thakurs. In the 17th C king Maan Singh of Kullu conquered Lahaul from Ladakh. It's reference can be found with German scholar, Dieter Schuh, who found a letter in Zanskar that states that the King of Kullu/Nyungti conquered Lahaul in the 17th C. Garja came under him and also Zanskar Lung nak/now present Luk nak (Eastern valley) on the way from Garja. Three parts of Zhang Zhung, Eastern side/lung nak; Zhang Zhung Stod/ wide fertile valley towards Kargil (Stod Chu) now written as Doda river in maps and Zhang Zhung khor, the confluence of *Stod Chu* and *Lung nak Chu*/river which meets at Pipi ting (Zorawar fort built by the army there) in Padum area, is the capital of Zanskar nowadays." Dorjee, Tsering. *History of Lahaul Rigzin Chodon*. 17 May 2017. Ladakhi, English & Hindi.

According to the book titled, *The History of Kangra and Kulu States*¹⁶, by J. Hutchison and J. Ph. Vogel, while describing the Kulu states, the history of Lahaul and Spiti have also been traced. This has been stated in the chapter on the history of Kulu State as follows—

In its most prosperous days Kulū included the whole of the territory now embraced in the Kulu sub-division of Kangra District. It was bounded on the north by Ladākh, on the east by Tibet proper, on the south by the Satluj and Bashahr, and on the west by Suket, Mandī, Bara Bangāl and Chambā. At times it even included a tract lying to the south of the Satluj. The total area of the principality was 6,607 square miles, but this was sometimes increased as much as 10,000 sq. Miles by temporary acquisitions from neighbouring states—

The territory was divided into eight Wazīrīs or provinces.

1. *Wazīrī Parōl*, or *Kulū Proper*, the main Biās Valley from the Rotang Pass to the Phojal Nālā ; the Malāna Valley, and the right side of the Pārbati Nālā, from the west of the Malāna Nālā to its junction with the Biās.
2. *Wazīrī Rupī*, the tract between the Pārbati and the Sainj Nālās on the left bank of the Biās, including the whole of the upper Pārbati Valley tract, known as Kanāwar.
3. *Wazīrī Sarāj*, the southern portion of the State, divided into Outer and Inner Sarāj by the Jalauri Range.
4. *Wazīrī Lag- Mahārāja*, the right bank of the Sarvari Nālā to Sultānpur, and of the Biās from there to Bajaura.
5. *Wazīrī Lag-Sāri*, the tract between the Phojal and Sarvari Nālās on the right bank of the Bias.
6. *Wazīrī Bangāhal*, a portion of Chhota Bangāhal.
7. *Wazīrī Lahul*, the tract now called British Lahul.
8. *Wazīrī Spiti*, the Valleys of the Spiti and Pin rivers.

(Hutchison & Vogel 1986:74)

¹⁶ Hutchinson, J., and J. Ph Vogel. *History of Kangra and Kulu States*. Northern Book Centre, 1986.

In the same chapter, it is stated that—

In one of the records, a reference to Chāmba is found at this early period in the history of Kulū. Much uncertainty exists as to how much of Lahul was then under these States. The Rev. A.H.Francke, our chief authority, think that upper Lahul—that is the valleys of the Chnadrā and the Bhāgā—was under Kulū from earlier times, while the main valley, from the junction of these rivers, was tributary to Chambā. Ladākh also may have exercised some influence in Upper Lahul as the name is identified with the Tibetan words *Lho Yul* meaning “the Southern country”. The Tibetans, however, call the country Gārzā. Chamba is said to have conquered Lahul from Kulū in Rudar Pāl’s reign, and seemingly about the same time as Kulū itself was invaded and subdued by the Rāja of Spiti. Possibly Chambā and Spiti combined against Kulū, and the invasions were simultaneous.

The State seems to have remained tributary to Spiti during this reign and that of Hamīr Pāl, the next Rājā, the tribute money amounting to six annas in the rupee of yearly revenue; but on Hamīr Pāl’s death his son Parsidh Pāl declined to continue the payment of tribute, and moved out with an army to oppose Chet Sen the Spiti Chief. The battle was fought somewhere near the Rotang Pass, and Pardish Pāl was victorious, thus freeing his country from the dominion of Spiti. Lahul was also recovered from Chamba about the same time. (Hutchison & Vogel 1986:74)

The chronicles collected by Rev A. H. Francke, of the Moravian Mission, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet* (Archaeological Survey of India), New Imperial Series, L, Calcutta, 1926; contains an edited text of the Ladakhi Chronicles, based on five Tibetan MSS, with English translation and detailed notes. It contains 23 sections entitled, Minor Chronicles, relating to Zans-dkar, Bzan-la, Gu-ge, Bu-rig and Lahaul (I to XIII). According to that text, three significant chronicles and genealogical trees of the chiefs of Ko-lon; Tinan and Bar-hbog have been translated from their originals in Tibetan. These chronicles were written from Urdu and Tibetan by Zodpa Dechen and translated into English by Rev. Francke.

Spiti

The Spiti valley has also been discussed by various historians and scholars. The history of Spiti according to Hartcourt is that—

The earliest reliable notice we have of Spiti occurs about the year 1055 A.D., when the country was apparently under the rule of Thibet¹⁷, of which Lhasa¹⁸ was the seat of government; and when Thibet fell, in 1262, under the sway of the Emperor Kublae Khan, Spiti probably shared the same fate. (Harcourt 1972:40-41)

He also writes that —

When the Tartar Empire disappeared, Spiti, it seems, remained as a feudatory to Chinese Thibet; but by the commencement of the seventeenth century it came under the rule of the Buddhist *Gyalpo* Jamya¹⁹ of Ladakh. On the defeat by Ali Mir, of Balti, Spiti, with other outlying provinces, revolted, and became partially independent; until at Jamya's death, his son, Singge Namgyal²⁰, overcame the Baltis about 1635, and re-conquered Spiti. The territory of Singge, on his demise being divided among his three sons, Deldan, India and Tenchog²¹, the latter obtained possession of Zanskar and Spiti, this division taking place between 1660 A.D. and 1670 A.D.. About 1710 A.D. Delek, the son of Deldan, Gyalpo of Ladakh, warred against Guge, which state called in the aid of the Lhasan army; and this interference ended in the annexation of both Guge and Spiti by the Lhasans; for in A.D. 1720 Delek made peace with the latter, and, marrying the daughter of the Lhasan general, received with her Spiti as his dowry. In 1740, or thereabouts, the Baltis again conquered Ladakh, and perhaps Spiti was once more held for a time by the Balti chief; but if this occupation ever occurred it could only have been for a short time. When Runjeet Singh seized Cashmere²², he exacted tribute from Ladakh and Spiti at that period, paid revenue to the latter, beside a *nuzzurana*²³ to the Rajahs of Kooloo and Bussahir. In 1841 A.D., Zorawar Singh, the general of Rajah Gholab Singh of Cashmere,

¹⁷ Tibet.

¹⁸ Lhasa.

¹⁹ According to the chronology by Tashi Rabgais, King Jamyang Namgyal of Ladakh ruled from 1560-1590 and according to Luciano Petech the dates are from 1595-1616.

²⁰ Singey Namgyal reigned from 1590-1620 and 1616-1623 according to Rabgais and Petech respectively.

²¹ Deldan Namgyal ruled from 1620-1640 and 1642-1649, according to Rabgais and Petech respectively. There are no references to the name of the other two sons which are India and Tenchog here.

²² Kashmir.

²³ A kind of tribute.

invaded Ladakh and placed the Rawan Hrad lake above the course of the Satluj; and then the Spiti people turned on their oppressors and slew him. In 1842 A.D., the Lhasan armies invaded Ladakh, but they were eventually expelled, and an arrangement was entered into whereby all the southern provinces of Ladakh were ceded once more to the Rajah of Cashmere, Spiti fell under this category; but, as it was deemed inadvisable to allow a rival territory to stretch between the Sutledj and the shawl-wool districts of Chang-thang, an exchange was effected, and Spiti was annexed to the British empire. It was farmed out to Manshook Dass, wazir of Bussahir, for 1846-47-48 A.D., and only taken under the direct management of the Assistant commissioner of Kooloo in 1849 A.D.²⁴ (Harcourt 1972:40-41)

Therefore, although Lahaul & Spiti fall under one district, both the regions have a different historical background and fell under the rule of British India in the early 20th century. Whereas, Ladakh was under the rule of the Maharaja of Kashmir, before it became part of India during independence. Both the regions have are connected due to the similarity in the use of the Tibetan script i.e. the use of Buddhist canonical literature. The spoken languages are very different as well as diverse.

1.3A brief history of the Moravian Church

Formally known as the Moravian Church or *Unitas Fratrum* (Unity of the Brethren) since 1457, this church was started by the followers of Jan Hus (1369-1415) in the village of Kunwald, which lies 100 miles east of Prague in eastern Bohemia (present-day Czech Republic). The history of the Church goes back to its founder, Gregory the Patriarch, who argued that a Christian was not defined by the doctrine that a person believed in but, rather by whether they lived their life according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. To understand how the Moravian Church started a brief history has been presented.

1.3.1 Moravian Church: The Religious refugee community

²⁴ Harourt, Alfred Fredrick Pollock. *The Himalayan Districts of Kooloo, Lahoul, and Spiti (1871)*. Delhi: Vivek Publishers, Reprint 1972.

The history of the Moravians and their settlement started with what can be called as “religious asylum” given by Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf, a nobleman (whose lands were located between Görlitz and Zittau in south-eastern Germany) to the followers of Jan Hus who were led by a person called, Christian David.

The news about this new place of “religious asylum” spread rapidly and many members of other religious groups began to arrive from Saxony, Prussia that included the Schwenkfelders, German Baptists and followers of other radical Protestant offshoots. Many refugees settled on Count Zinzendorf’s lands until the King of Saxony forbade the acceptance of any more immigrants in 1732. (Beszterda 2014:32)

Due to the presence of so many different religious groups, it became a necessity to create detailed rules of governing the settlers’ coexistence. This difficult task initially led to many disagreements and divergences in views on the settling of evangelistic ideals into practice. Count Zinzendorf intervened as a mediator. He resigned from a position in the royal court of Dresden (1721-1727) and led the community in a prayer session in order to come to an agreement. Several weeks later, on 13th of August, 1727, the participants in the continuous prayer session claimed to have experienced the presence of Holy Spirit and from that moment onwards, differences in views were absolved and the birth of a new religious community came into existence.

This new religious community was founded on the personal experience of God through individual and group prayer, with dogmas of faith limited to those truths generally recognized by the majority of Christian faiths. Hence, Zinzendorf assumed the leadership of this group, which reaffirmed the name of the original church: ‘*Unitas Fratrum*’ or ‘*Unity of Brethren*’ in Latin. In German it, was called ‘*Brüderkirche*’ or ‘*Brüdergemeinde*’ and in English, it came to be known as ‘*The Unity of Brethren*’, ‘*Moravian Church*’ or ‘*The United Moravian Church*’. (Beszterda 2014: 33)

Thus, in 1727, a new Protestant community, *the Unitas Fratrum / Brüderkirche* or *Brüdergemeinde / the Unity of Brethren, Moravian Church* or *the United Moravian Church* was established in Herrnhut, in Lower Saxony under the leadership of Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf.

1.3.2 The West Himalayan mission of the Moravian Missionaries

The West Himalayan Mission, as it was called, in the 20th century was started in the year 1856²⁵. Briefly, the mission started with a proposal by Karl Gützlaff who was an evangelist in China, and on his visit to Hernnhut, interceded with the Unity's Elders on behalf of the Mongols in the regions bordering northern China. The Unity of Elder's Conference concluded positively, as the Mission Church had long endeavoured to evangelise the Kalmyk Mongols of the southern steppes from its isolated congregation at Sarepta on the Volga. The final decision to evangelise the Buddhists in Mongolia was made.

In an article titled, 'The Pioneers of the Tibetan Mission' by Rev. J. E. Hutton, in the *Periodical Accounts of the Moravian Missionary*, the work of the pioneer of the West Himalayan mission and their purpose for the visit there has been stated as follows—

Two young men were chosen as the pioneers from the ranks of volunteers for the new venture. While these were receiving a many-sided training, the Board instituted enquiries in Europe and Asia as to how they could be sent to the un-evangelised nomads of Mongolia. Neither through China, nor through Russia and Siberia, nor through Persia, did any possibility of reaching their goal present itself. In this perplexity the attention of the Mission Board was directed towards in the north of British India, and here at length a door into Central Asia was found. A singular and most timely link of Providence enlisted the sympathy of Missionary Prochnow, of Kotgarh, a Church Missionary Society (C.M.S). station in the Himalayas near Shimla. He advised the endeavour to reach the Mongolians by way of Ladak and Yarkand. He invited the missionaries to use his station as a base for tentative journeys into the countries bordering on the north of India. (Periodical Accounts, 1905:137-139; 183-184)

²⁵ The background of the how the west Himalayan mission started has been dealt in detail in first chapter of the thesis.

So, around the end of the year 1853 Moravian Missionaries, Wilhelm Heyde and Eduard Pagell sailed for Calcutta and in 1854 tentatively settled at Kotgarg and learnt Urdu and Tibetan for their future journeys, as those two languages would be most necessary during their journeys.

They planned to travel to Ladakh and then plan their journey forward towards Yarkand, however, the Maharaja of Kashmir would not grant them permission of residence and Tibetan border guards prevented them from passing via the Pangong lake into Tibet. The only viable solution for was to establish a tentative station somewhere in the British territory.

More and more their thoughts centred on Kyelang in Lahoul between the Rotang and the Baralacha Passes, and on the direct route of Tibetan pilgrims to Triloknath, the shrine of the “Lord of the three worlds”. This strategic location was soon chosen and with permission from the Mission Board at Hernnhut, and the British Indian government, in October, 1856, they finally settled at Kyelang, Lahoul and founded the first Moravian Mission station in the Himalayan belt.

Slowly, other stations were established. These stations were located at Kyelang, Lahoul (1856-1940 A.D); Poo, Bashahr²⁶ (now Upper Kinnaur) (1865-1924 A.D); Leh (1885- present); Chot²⁷ (Around 1904’s - 40’s²⁸); Simla (1998- 1905); Kalatse (1899- present) and Chini²⁹ (1900-1909).

Out of all these stations, Leh, Kalatse in Ladakh with a sub-station in Shey, are the only functional stations and the rest are defunct.

1.4 Research Methodology:

²⁶ Earlier, Bashahr was a princely state under the British rule. Now it this region is part of Kinnaur and Shimla district in Himachal Pradesh.

²⁷ Chot, now called Tholang, is around 12 kilometers from Kyelang, the headquarter of Lahoul.. It was a sub-station of the Moravian Mission at Kyelang, as it lay in the route to the famous pilgrimage site, ‘Triloknath’ or ‘Garja Phakpa’ , abode of ‘The shrine of the Lord of three Worlds’ revered by both Hindus as well as Buddhists..

²⁸ The dates of the establishment of this station is difficult to confirm. Since Ga Phuntsog was given a plot of land in Chot around the 1904’s and he passed away in 1940’s. Since he was the main person who took care of this place, thus the dates.

²⁹ Chini was also a sub-station that lay halfway between Poo and Shimla..

This project consisted of a lot of archival study to formulate details in each chapter. First of all, preliminary study of the literature, with the available primary and secondary literature on the history of the region of Ladakh and Lahoul was done.

A facsimile of the *Ladvags Kyi Agbar* has been compiled by Walravens Hartmut, titled, *The First Tibetan Serial: August Hermann Francke's La-dvags-kyi-ag-bar (1904-1907)* archived at the Archives of the Evangelische Bruderunitat, Herrnhut; *Kyelang Agbar* has been procured from the Berlin State library website and copies of *La dvags Phonya* have been collected from the Moravian Church Archives as well as the Bodleian Library in Oxford, U.K. for my study.

The facsimilies of the newspaper editions collected from the Moravian Church and Archives, London and the Bodleian Library in Oxford, apart from the primary documents of study, i.e. the newspaper, many documents at the archives like unpublished letters of correspondents, ethnographic books, historical books as well as reports of the West Himalayan Reports titled, 'Reports of Tibet' (these reports should have been titled 'Reports on the Himalayas) written by the Moravian Missionaries from their field of study in Ladakh and Lahoul were gathered. Various historical books on Church history written on and by the Moravian Missionaries were also gathered. These documents, along with photographs, make for invaluable primary sources of the early 20th century missionary work in Ladakh. The correspondents from the Archives provide a different insight into the lives and works of the missionaries and the local Christian converts stationed on the Himalayan belt. These documents showcase the mundaneness and the problems they faced in their lives daily.

After gathering these primary resources, almost three months were spent in documentation of these resources by translating the newspaper editions from Ladakhi/ Tibetan and Urdu into English with the help of translators. Various interviews were also taken to check the details of the newspaper (especially *Kyelang Agbar*) after the translation period.

The newspaper originally had twelve monthly editions every year. For the earlier years, these were divided and only six months per years studied, translated and analysed to get a general idea of the contents. During the Second World War, the yearly editions are reduced to only few editions per year, due to the shortage of paper in the Himalayan belt.

Therefore, an extensive use of the State Archives in Leh; the Moravian Church Archives and library, London; Bodleian library, Oxford; the personal library of Mr. Tsering Dorjee; Records of Revenue from the Kyelang, Lahaul- Spiti were used for procuring the desired documents for the completion of this thesis.

1.5 Chapterization:

In Chapter One, I have tried to briefly introduce Ladak; Lahoul; Moravian Church; their West Himalayan Mission; the newspapers, *Kyelang Agbar* and *Ladvags Phonya*, along with the methodology used to conduct the study for this project to set the background and context of my research study.

Chapter Two, deals with the journalistic tradition of the Moravians. The history of the Moravian Church, their West Himalayan missions in Kyelang, Poo, Leh, Khalatse, Shimla, Chini and Chot have also been dealt with in detail. This chapter also focuses on the use of local languages in their publications and the dilemmas faced by them.

Chapter Three, contains the contents of the newspapers, *Kyelang Agbar* and *Ladvags Phonya* in a detailed manner. The news has been classified into major categories to give an idea of the contents that were used for its publication.

Chapter Four, is solely focussed on the authors of the newspaper. The editors and the writers have been classified. A short biography of the writers from Ladakh and Kyelang, along with their engagement in the newspapers and their work while with the Moravians has been mentioned. An analysis of the contents of the newspaper from four major point of views, i.e. linguistic, religious, scholarly / literary, experimental viewpoints. An analysis of the 'cultural exchanges' have also been done through pictorial representations that were introduced to the readers of the newspapers.

Chapter Five, is devoted towards understanding the ideas of nation in the context of the region of Ladakh and Lahaul with the critical analysis of language, politics and identity as reflected among the people of both the regions during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. Few arguments have been made in relation to the concept of nation, with focus on pre

and post Independence of India and how that affected these regions, all the while keeping the context of the newspaper publications in mind.

Chapter Six, concludes the thesis. The hypothesis that was framed at the beginning of the research proposal and the result of my findings after the study of the newspaper is concluded. This chapter also looks into possible future research areas that researchers can venture into.

Chapter 2

THE MORAVIAN JOURNALISTIC TRADITION³⁰

This chapter focuses on the history of the Moravian Church in the Himalayan belt; their journalistic tradition started by Rev. A. H. Francke in 1904 in the region of Ladakh and the subsequent in Lahaul by Rev. Walter Asboe, written in the Tibetan script in the local language. The literary and evangelistic endeavours of the Moravians in this belt and the focus they put on learning the local language to propagate Christianity have also been dealt with. The dilemmas they faced during their literary and evangelistic work during their stay in the Himalayan regions and the similar kind of work done by other missionaries, like the Mill Hill missionaries in regard to language use of this region has also been briefly touched upon.

2.1 The West Himalayan Mission of the Moravian Church

The 'West Himalayan Mission' was founded in pursuit to establish a Mission station in Mongolia. The Moravians wanted to continue their Moravian tradition of reaching out to far off places, the lands of the heathens, to spread the word of God. Most of the article titles for the entries made for Ladakh and Khyelang are under various headings in reports and journals like,

³⁰ This term was coined by John Bray. 'Bray, John. "A. H. Francke's La dvags kyi agbar: The First Tibetan Newspaper." *Tibet Journal* 13.3 (1988): 61.

‘Western Himalayas: Ladak’³¹ ‘From the Lofty Himalayas’³², ‘Unveiling Tibet’³³, ‘Tibet: Leh’³⁴, ‘In the Himalayas: Chini’.³⁵

In the 18th Century, the Empress Catherine the Great had invited the Moravian Church to found a settlement in Sarepta (now a suburb of Vogograd) in southern Russia. There the missionaries had come into contact with the Kalmyks, a nomadic people of Mongolian origin who lived in the Russian steppes and practiced Tibetan Buddhism. Two missionaries had travelled for a while with a Kalmyk tribe and had studied their religious books in the Mongolian and Tibetan languages. However, they had to suspend their mission because the ruler for the time had not granted them full protection. (Heyde 2011:271)

The Sarepta settlement brought the Moravians in direct touch with the Tibetan Buddhist culture. Their contact with the Kalmyk Mongols led to the study of the language. Studying the local language, in the ‘land of the heathens’ was the way the Moravians pursued their evangelistic ventures by learning, translating the Bible and other religious liturgy in the local language and eventually by preaching in the local language at their mission stations. However, the Moravians in Sarepta, mixed commercial with missionary motives in addition to their business activities and planned to preach the Gospel to the Kalmyk Mongols who lived nearby and practiced Tibetan Buddhism. Their business thrived; however, they failed to make more than a handful of converts and in 1822 the Russian government forbade further missionary work altogether.³⁶

³¹ Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Report. Hezell, Watson and Viney Ld.London & Aylesbury.1903.

³² Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Report. Hezell, Watson and Viney Ld.London & Aylesbury.1910 &1911.

³³ Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Report. Hezell, Watson and Viney Ld.London & Aylesbury.1910.

The title of the article is ‘Tibet’ however the article description is about Ladakh and Kyelang and not Tibet. Early 20th century Tibet was referred to as ‘Chinese Tibet’.

³⁴ Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Report. Hezell, Watson and Viney Ld.London & Aylesbury.1903

³⁵ Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Report. Hezell, Watson and Viney Ld.London & Aylesbury.1903

³⁶ Bray, John. “A History of the Moravian Church in India.” *The Himalayan Mission, Moravian Church Centenary 1885-1985*. Leh, Ladakh: Moravian Church Leh Ladakh, 1985.Pg.28. English.

One of the important person to be mentioned is Isaac Jacob Schmidt. He was born on October 14th 1779 in Amsterdam, and studied at a Moravian school when he was young, with the plans to become a tradesman and to learn business as well learn languages. (Radnadev 2007:631)

He came to the Moravian colony at Sarepta in 1798 upon an invitation. He was appointed as an assistant tradesman. Between the years 1804-1806 Schmidt was sent to study the language, history, customs, and beliefs of the Kalmyks. In 1829, he was elected as an adjunct academician at the Department of Oriental Literature and Antiquities because of the publication and translation of the Mongolian historical chronicle *Erdeni-yin Tobçi* (Precious Summary) by the Ordos Prince Sagang Secen (17th century). Later on, he went on to publish the original text of the Epic of King Gesar³⁷ and its German translation. The beginning of Mongolian Studies in Russia in the first half of the 19th century is now associated with his name. I. J. Schmidt authored, *The Grammar of the Mongolian Language* published in 1831 and a revised version in 1832 and the *Mongolian-German-Russian Dictionary* published in 1835 (Ranadev 2007:631) While giving an impetus to Mongolian Studies in 1839, he also published the *Grammar of the Tibetan Language* and compiled a *Tibetan-Russian Dictionary* which was published in 1843. The lexicographical base of this dictionary was Alexander Csoma de Kőrös's 1834 *Tibetan English Dictionary* as well as three original Tibetan sources: two Tibetan-Mongolian dictionaries, the *Sea of Names* and *For a Convenient Understanding of the Rules of the Tibetan Language*, and the Manchu-Mongolian-Tibetan-Chinese dictionary '*Mirror of Words of Four United Languages*. Therefore, he became an important figure as, he was the first grammarian as well as a lexicographer in the field of Mongolian and Tibetan philology (Ranadev 2007:631-632).

In 1849 and 1850, Karl Friedrich Gützlaff (b.1800- d.1851), a pioneer missionary in China arrived in Herrnhut to appeal for missionaries to be sent to visit the inhabitants of Inner Mongolia in the Chinese Empire. The Mission Board in Herrnhut (Saxony, Germany), the headquarters of the Moravian Church, planned and decided to send two young missionaries, August Wilhelm Heyde and Eduard Pagell to the unexplored region of Mongolia. (Bray 1985:29)

³⁷Kesar Saga or Gesar Saga is the national epic of the Mongolians, the Tibetans and the Ladakhis.

Therefore, the Mission Board chose the two men—Eduard Pagell & Wilhelm Heyde to start a mission in Mongolia. These two men learned the Mongolian language and also used a Tibetan grammar and a Tibetan-German-Russian Dictionary by I. J. Schmidt, who had studied the religious books of the Kalmyks. (Francke 1901:1-3)

The Russian as well as the Chinese government would not grant them permission to cross their territory and thus, the only way to Mongolia was via a long distance first from London to India and then through the northern part of India towards Tibet and then finally to Mongolia.

Their journey proved to be difficult and they had to face many challenges on their way towards their appointed mission. Before leaving for their journey, they started studying Mongolian language with the Moravian Scholar, H. A. Zwick, the author of a Mongolian Grammar with the title, '*A Grammar of the West Mongolian, or Calmuck Language*' (Reprinted in 1852). Both the missionaries also studied the basics of medicine with a local doctor in Konigsfeld and the Charite hospital in Berlin.

Christian Heyde traces the beginnings of the West Himalaya Mission with the focus on how and where the Moravians settled in his paper titled 'The Early History of the Moravian Mission in the Western Himalayas: The Life and Work of Wilhelm and Maria Heyde' published in '*Ladakh Histories*'. He writes—

They travelled through Berlin and Hamburg to London. Then an East India Company clipper carried them from Portsmouth round Africa to Calcutta. From there another six months to Kotgarh, a village near Simla in the foothills of the Himalaya. (Heyde 2011:272)

On the 13th of July, 1853, the two missionaries set out from Herrnhut, first towards London then on 1st August, set sail to Portsmouth to their destination in Calcutta. After travelling for sixteen weeks at sea, they finally reached Calcutta. From there their next destination was Kotgarh near Shimla. They arrived at Kotgarh on the 4th of April 1854 after travelling for nearly nine months by boat through the Ganges. At Kotgarh, they were hosted by Dr. Prochnow, a German in the service of the (Anglican) Church Missionary Society. They spent the summer and

winter of 1854 in Kotgarh and revised their Mongolian while also studying Tibetan and Hindustani.

The route to Mongolia was still very long and they would have to cross Central Asia to reach their destination which would take them several months or even years. In the meantime they decided to engage with a monk who could teach them Tibetan. The monk showed them the way to the Indus valley: through Kulu, Lahaul and Zangskar to Ladakh. In the year 1855 Heyde and Pagell reached Leh, the capital of Ladakh. They met traders from Yarkhand and Lhasa to learn about the route to Mongolia but no one knew the way to Mongolia. An experienced *wazir* (itinerant Muslim preacher) told them that they would meet Mongolians if they travelled for four weeks to the east beyond the Tibetan province of Rudok and a sandy desert. (Pagell & Heyde 1860:139) In the summer of 1855 they made a journey through Zangskar to Leh and then set out towards north, to Leh in Ladakh and then towards the Pangong Lake, bestridden towards the Tibetan border. So, they took off to the east to the shores of Pangong lake, only to find the frontiers absolutely closed to any foreigner—particularly westerners—because of the Dogra invasion of Tibet fifteen years earlier. They turned south and went back to Spiti to Kotgarh in Simla. They tried several times to cross the border into Tibet but were unsuccessful. (Heyde 2011:272)

Their ultimate aim was to start a mission to the Mongols but they were turned back from the Tibetan border three times and the Maharaja of Kashmir³⁸ would not allow them to settle in Ladakh.

The Moravian Missionaries did not want to give up that easily, did not want to go back without achieving anything. Since, both Heyde and Pagell wanted to stay among Tibetans they proposed to the Mission Board in Herrnhut that they start a first settlement in Lahaul as an outpost to reach Mongolia at a later date. As Lahaul & Spiti were the only ‘Tibetan’ parts of the Western Himalayan region under the direct rule of the Britishers at that time.

³⁸ Maharaja Ranbir Singh, son of Gulab Singh. Ladakh was not a part of British India but was under the dominion of the Sikh Maharaja of Kashmir.

They applied to the Mission Board to found a mission at Kyelang, in Lahaul. They also applied to the British government for the same. The permission was finally granted. On the 16th of May, 1856 the foundation for building the Mission House began. The British government also gave permission, and provided them with land and wood for the construction of the mission house.

Bishop B. La Trobe's article titled, '*Our Tibetan Mission after Fifty Years*' describes certain important facts about this event. He writes—

Just about the same time, an English Officer, Colonel Martin, promised a handsome sum for the starting of a station in Lahoul on condition that it should be maintained, even if the way into Mongolia should eventually open to our Mission. (Trobe 1906:213)

But they ultimately led to a different goal. Tibetans, not Mongolians, were to receive the light of truth at our hands. These also are Buddhists.(Trobe 1906:213)

Thus, the first station or the mission house for the Moravian Missionaries was built in the village Kyelang.³⁹ Thereafter turned into the Himalayan mission and with time, the zeal to go for a mission to Mongolia slowly died out.

The four main stations founded by the Moravians were located in Kyelang, Poo, Leh, Khalatse and three sub-stations located at Chot, Simla, Chini. The Mission church's decision to open a new mission in the Indian Himalaya in the mid-19th century led to their sole successful mission in Asia.⁴⁰

After India's Independence, Lahoul station has no trace of the Mission House, as it was sold to the local villagers; however Leh has remained as the main functional station with Shey and Khalatse as the sub-station, with a good number of congregation members and a community, which are also functional today.

³⁹ There are many variations to the spelling of this place, like Kyelang, Keylang or Kelong. I prefer to use Kyelang as it is mentioned in the Moravian sources. Nowadays, the spelling used is Keylang in Lahaul.

⁴⁰ Heyde, Christian. 'The Early History of the Moravian Mission in the Western Himalaya: The Life and Work of Wilhelm Heyde and Maria Heyde'. *Ladakhi Histories: Local and Regional Perspectives*. Dharamsala. Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. 2011:271-280.

2.1.1 The Moravian Church in Kyelang, Lahaul (1856-1940 A.D)

August Wilhelm Heyde (b.1825 - d.1907) and Eduard Pagell (b.1820 - d.1883) founded the mission station in Kyelang, Lahaul (present Himachal Pradesh) in the year 1856.

In March 1857, Heinrich August Jäschke (b.1817 - d.1883) was appointed as the Superintendent of the new mission station. His main responsibility was to study Tibetan and to begin the translation of the Bible work.

Kyelang, which was an important centre for the Moravians initially, is situated in the district of Lahaul which lies in the state of Himachal Pradesh. Historically, Kyelang lay on the Central Asian trade route as well as pilgrimage routes to the famous Triloknath or *Garja Phakpa*⁴¹ in the Manchat valley in Lahaul as well as to monasteries and pilgrim sites in Tibet. The strategy of location has been reiterated by the Moravian Bishop B. La Trobe in an article titled, 'The Regions Beyond our Tibetan Stations' in the '*Periodical Accounts of the Moravian Missions of 1907, Vol. 06 No.72*'. It has been stated as follows—

Very soon after the commencement of our Mission in the Western Himalayas, it became clear that Mongolia, the original aim of this endeavour, could not be reached. Meanwhile the guiding providence of God had given us an ample field among the Tibetan Buddhists within the Indian frontier. That Kyelang was an excellent strategic choice for the first station has been increasingly manifest for the last fifty years. Not only does it lie on the main trade route for travelers from India into Ladak, Yarkand and the heart of Asia, but also on the route of Buddhist pilgrims from Tibet to Triloknath. Trilok-nath, "the shrine of the Lord of the three worlds" is considered holy by Hindus, Moslems, and Buddhists. The latter declare that an invisible thread connects the image in the temple there with the Dalai Lama, and they hold that a pilgrimage to this sacred places is effectual for acquiring merit as a visit to Lhasa itself. (Trobe 1907: 648)

In order for better functionality, once the mission house was built and complete, it was planned that the three missionaries acquired wives. Arranged marriage was very common among

⁴¹ '*Garja Phakpa*' refers to the Bodhisattva '*Arya Avalokiteshwara*' in Sanskrit, who resides at the temple in Triloknath village. This temple is called as '*Re Phag*' by the local Lahoulis. *Garja* is the Tibetan name for Lahaul.

the Moravians missionary circles. The Mission Board in Herrnhut selected three brides for each of the missionaries and they were sent to Calcutta. Friederike Machtle got married to Eduard Pagell in September 1859. Emilie Rosenhauer was married to Heinrich August Jäeschke and Maria Hartmann to Wilhelm Heyde before an enthusiastic congregation of Kyelang villagers in November 1859. A. W. Heyde and H. A. Jäeschke conducted each other's marriage. (Bray 1985:33)

The Kyelang mission grew. In 1858 Heyde obtained a lithographic printing press from Shimla with a publication of *Barths Bible Stories*, translated into Tibetan by Jäeschke. In order to learn the language of the region, Jäeschke set out via Rupshu to Ladakh. He spent three months in Stok village, learning the local language and script.

In the meantime, in Kyelang, the Kyelang School was opened in January 1861; knitting classes were taught in German style of knitting which was organized by the Mission wives from 1862 onwards. In 1865, Theodore Reichler arrived as the new superintendent of Kyelang so that Jäeschke could concentrate on the language work.

Heinrich August Jäeschke worked on the first *Tibetan-German Dictionary* that was published in 1871. The dictionary was revised in 1876 and later on translated into English in 1881 (reprinted many times since). Bishop B. La Trobe in an article titled, 'The Regions Beyond our Tibetan Stations' in the '*Periodical Accounts of the Moravian Missions of 1907, Vol. 06 No.72*'. reports—

Kyelang, in Lahoul, is the oldest station in the field. The little congregation here has of late years continually been decreasing in numbers, owing to the fact that with two or three exceptions, all the Christians were non-Lahoules, who after some time felt a desire to return to their respective home districts, mostly Ladakh. After the departure of another large family in 1905 (footnote: the Zodpa family) there were only 18 members left. But in the same year the missionaries were encouraged by two persons confessing Christ as their Saviour and receiving baptism through Mr. Hettasch. The great earthquake on April 4th, 1905, was severely felt here (as well as at all our stations), and though by God's Grace the missionaries' and Christians' lives were spared, the Mission and farm premises suffered a great deal. A good many houses, too, in the neighbouring villages collapsed, ad

about 20 people perished in the valley, whilst thousands were buried beneath the falling houses in the villages around. (La Trobe 1907:758)

The author Christian Heyde in his paper titled, ‘The Early History of the Moravian Mission in the Western Himalaya: The Life and Work of Wilhelm and Maria Heyde’, demonstrates the approaches undertaken by Wilhelm Heyde to reach out to the people of Lahaul. He writes—

Heyde’s main objective was to improve the living conditions of the people of Lahul which, in his opinion, was the best way to show them the advantages of a Christian life. (Heyde 2011:275)

He further mentions that Wilhelm Heyde started with a large model farm where the missionaries would work to get in closer contact with the local people. In order to channel the water to the dry slopes behind Kyelang, he built a water channel that brought the water directly from the glacier through the channels into the fields. He introduced the first ever variety of crops like potatoes, which are now the economically the most viable source of income in every home in Lahoul. For better wood supply, he introduced the fast-growing Lombardy Poplar tree along with several other fruit trees. Yellow roses were first brought for plantation in the mission compound. Under the leadership of Wilhelm Heyde’s wife, Maria Heyde, European style of knitting was introduced and a knitting school set up. Even today, this style of knitting which is very distinct from the indigenous style of knitting is still used. The Moravians also introduced the first ever small low stoves with pipes that go up through the roof. These kinds of stoves are now common in houses in the Himalayan belt, like Spiti, Kulu, Ladakh, Kinnaur. The Moravians were also the first to use wooden floors, glass windows and south-facing window gardens that keep a house warm in winters. (Heyde 2011:275)

Wilhelm Heyde, was usually called ‘Papa Heyde’ by the villagers of Lahaul with love. He stayed on in Kyelang for fifty years until 1898, when he moved to Darjeeling to work on a revised edition of the Tibetan New Testament with the British & Foreign Bible Society. The day he left is still in the memory of the octogenarians of Kyelang who witnessed this event and

remember the whole village bidding farewell to Wilhelm ‘Papa’ Heyde and his wife when they left from Kyelang⁴².

The First World War had a huge impact on the Kyelang Mission, as not a single Moravian missionary was left there. During and after the war, the Christian community was led by Zodpa Dechen, an evangelist. Only in 1921 Joseph Gergan, a Ladakhi minister arrived in Kyelang and stayed there until 1926.

Walter Asboe took over the Kyelang Mission in 1926. Asboe left Kyelang for Leh in 1935 and thereafter, Friedrich A. Peter, the last missionary in Kyelang served there with his sister from 1935 to 1940. After 1940, they were forced to leave after the outbreak of the Second World War as the government suspected them of being Nazi sympathizers although they were Swiss citizens. Their parents were residents of Herrnhut then and that could have been the reason for the suspicions.

Before leaving Peter, had to close down the Kyelang mission station and sell the farmland. The Christians were allowed to keep the chapel and burial ground. Three families moved to Leh and the veteran evangelist Ga Phuntsog was given spiritual oversight over the remainder. He died soon afterwards and with the exception of another family which moved to Kulu, the rest of the congregation lapsed. (Bray 1985:35)

Given below is the ‘Historical and Statistical Table of Moravian Mission’ that stated the details of the beginning of the Central Asian Mission in 1853; Kyelang and Tibet in 1856 and Poo in 1865.

⁴² Dorjee, Tsering. *The Moravian Missionaries in Kyelang* Rigzin Chodon. Trans. Rigzin Chodon. Kyelang, 28th May 2017. English and Hindi.

only two day's march to the first village on the other side of the border called Shipke. There were only few instances when the missionaries were successful in venturing there in order to help the people of Shipke with vaccination against a smallpox epidemic⁴⁴.

The Poo Mission station, exhibited itself as a very interesting location in the history of the region. An article 'West Himalaya: Thirteenth Report of the Mission among the Tibetan Buddhists of Lahoul, Kunawar and Ladak, from 1901 to 1906' in the '*Periodical Accounts of the Moravian Missions of 1907, Vol. 06 No.72*', also gives a clear idea of the location of this station. It is stated that—

As Poo lies nearest the frontier of Chinese Tibet, the missionaries have often crossed over into Tibetan territory proclaiming the good news there. But the Tibetan authorities have never allowed them to proceed any further than the large village of Shipke, two days' journey up that precipitous bridle-path which is the continuation of the Hindustan-Tibetan road. The local chiefs would on such occasions point out that they would risk their heads if the authorities at Lhasa were informed of their having allowed a Sahib, or even a native preacher of the "Sahib's religion," to pass through their district in the direction of Lhasa. (PA 1907:760-761)

An episode of the visit of British officers to Poo from Chinese Tibet has been mentioned by Bishop B. La Trobe in an article titled, 'British Officers at Poo on Christmas Day', published in 1905 in the '*Moravian Mission: An Illustrated Report of Missionary Work*'.

He reports that during the Christmas of 1904, Captain Rawling, Rider and Wood and Lieutenant Eric Bayley came through the frontier of Shipke, Chinese Tibet into Poo under the British sovereignty. They were to be met by an expedition under the leadership of Yaichand⁴⁵, a member of the ruling family of Lahoul. Since their visit was unexpected they camped at the Mission compound in Poo. Their expedition is of importance, as they were the four British Officers who were left in Lhasa, after the mission of Sir Frank Younghusband returned to India

⁴⁴ Bray, John. "A history of the Moravian church in India." *The Himalayan Mission. Moravian Church Centenary. Leh* (1985): 27-75.

⁴⁵ 'Yaichand' is the spelling of the person in the Periodical Accounts of the Missioanries.

in 1904⁴⁶, to explore the Western Province of which Tashilunpo (Shigatse) was the capital. The expedition was being undertaken to establish, a treaty between British and Tibet⁴⁷, to set up Gartok as the mutual trading place between British and Tibetan merchants. However, Gartok which lies at 15,500 feet above sea level had long been a regular meeting-place for traders from Ladakh; Kashmir through Indus; border provinces of Western India through Sutlej and this confluence of traders would bring them down to Shimla past the Poo and Chini station. Hence, this trade route was an important place for the Tibetan Mission to expand the evangelistic endeavours of the Moravians⁴⁸.

Pagell was a man of medicine and became popular due to that. In 1867 he was invited in the Tibetan province of Tsotso to give vaccinations to counter a smallpox epidemic⁴⁹. But after this apart from few more occasional journeys to Shipke Tibet was closed to him.

In 1872, a high-ranking lama from Lhasa called Zodpa Gyaltzen, who was the son of a member of the Dalai Lama's cabinet, was baptized. He had left Lhasa due to one of the many 19th century Lhasa government intrigues. He was christened Nathaniel and Pagell had great hopes for him as a future evangelist. A house was being built for him in Poo however, Nathaniel had a furious argument with a carpenter and hit him hard on the back with a hammer. The carpenter collapsed apparently dead, but he survived. And Nathaniel left Poo. He stayed for a short time in Kyelang and later on led a nomadic life in Lahore, Sikkim and Shimla. In 1875 Heyde heard that he had been preaching in the bazaar at Leh. He was apparently homesick for Lhasa but did remain a Christian. In 1875, the average attendance of the people attending Zodpa Gyaltzen's Sunday services was around 40 to 50 people.

Pagell and his wife passed away in January 1883 due to typhus and that summer, they were temporarily replaced by Friedrich A. Redslob who stayed there until 1885. When Redslob moved to Leh, he was followed by Julius Weber. Weber was discouraged by his time in Poo and

⁴⁶ 'Youngusband, Francis Edward. *The heart of a continent: a narrative of travels in Manchuria, across the Gobi Desert, through the Himalayas, the Pamirs, and Hunza, 1884-1894*. J. Murray, 1904.

⁴⁷The treaty of Lhasa was signed between Great Britain and Tibet on 2nd September 1904. This agreement was the result of a British military expedition from December 1903 to September 1904, led by Sir Francis Edward Youngusband (1863-1942), a British army officer and administrator in British India.

⁴⁸ Trobe, Bishop B. La. "British Officers at Poo on Christmas Day". *Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Report of the Missionary Work*. February 1905: 40-41.

⁴⁹ Bray, John. "A history of the Moravian church in India." *The Himalayan Mission. Moravian Church Centenary. Leh* (1985): Pg.36

he dissolved the congregation of three in 1889 on the grounds that they were lying backsliders and only Christians for the sake of the benefits they could get from the mission. (Bray 1985:37)

In the year 1891, Theodor Schreve succeeded Weber and his attempts to make the congregation strong resulted in the backsliders' repentance. Schreve set up a wool industry and revived the school. Soon many new converts joined and by 1908 there were 64 members in Poo. During those days, it was the largest of the Himalayan congregations. (Bray 1985:37)

Just like Kyelang, severe problems were face by the missionaries in Poo. According to John Bray's they were—

Schreve estimated that in 1894 that out of the 70 households in the village, eight had a surplus of food sufficient to support the poorest, if they wished. Thirty were self-sufficient but the remainder were poor and frequently in debt. Many of the debtors were forced to sell themselves in bonded labour as the interest rates were at 25-50% per half year. Shreve knew the dangers of 'rice-christians' - converts who adopted Christianity for the sole purpose for material gains and not for spiritual upliftment. To make sure that they do not abandon their new faith, Schreve set up a wool industry (weaving blankets) as a means and an alternative to improve the economic standards of the villagers and hence making them independent of their former creditors. Another means to help the poorer Christians was to sell them cheap grain. However, this way was not a very helpful way. When the mission stock of grains ran out, one man declared, "If you will not sell us cheap grain, then we will not come to church!" – and they never came back. (Bray 1985:37)

So people entered the church with the wrong motive and the missionaries had to be careful. There were internal controversies, like drunkenness and sexual immorality among the people; social pressure among the eligible converts from the relatives and most of the converts were low-caste people belonging to the smith fraternity and people of higher status looked at Christianity as a socially inferior religion.

In his article, *Christian Missionaries on the Tibetan Border: the Moravian Church in Poo (Kinnaur) 1865-1924*, Bray succinctly points out the three main reasons for the failure of the missionary activity in Poo, Upper Kinnaur as follows—

First reason was political, the Tibetan authorities regarded the missionaries as agents of British expansionism and therefore persistently refused to allow them to enter the country. The second reason was philosophical: few Tibetans or Kinnaurese could accept Christianity's claim to offer the sole path to salvation, even if some aspects of Christian teaching appeared attractive and even familiar. The philosophical differences and similarities between Buddhism and Christianity preoccupy scholars and religious leaders even today. Although the terms of the debate have shifted, some of the themes- Buddhist philosophical 'tolerance' and social acceptability versus Christian claims of uniqueness- still sound familiar.

The third, and perhaps most decisive, reason was the fear of losing social status. It appears that the converts in Poo recognized economic benefits in changing their religion, but even for the *Pipas*, social isolation from their non-Christian families and the wider community was a heavy price to pay. The link between Christian conversion and low social status is a common theme in the history of Christian missions elsewhere in India. Where a disproportionate number of baptism candidates were either low-caste or 'untouchables'.

In the case of Poo, the combination of the philosophical divide between Buddhism and Christianity; social pressures on potential converts; and the Moravians' own lack of financial resources proved fatal. The mission made an important contribution to education, health care and the local economy, but had no lasting impact on the villagers' religious outlook." (Bray 1992:375)

Even though a lot of it can be credited with impactful contribution to education, health care, and development of the local economy through the knitting school, as well as spinning and weaving industry; apart from evangelistic work by the missionaries stationed there, due to the problems listed in the above article, the Poo station was considered for closing after the First

World War. Bishop Arthur Ward visited this station in 1920 and the difficulties in transport and general expenses to maintain the mission was not rewarding. It was finally closed down in 1924.

Most of the congregation lapsed after the missionaries left and around 1953 there were two old ladies who despite their isolation sang hymns together. They moved to Leh for some time and were given the charge of the Gospel Inn.

Another former member of the Poo congregation, Tharchin, went to Darjeeling and subsequently became the minister of the Church of Scotland. He is noted for his activities, especially for the publication of his Tibetan newspaper, '*Yul So So Gyi Sargyur Melong*' or popularly known as 'Tibet Mirror' in English, which was published in Kalimpong and circulated in Tibet as well. (Bray 1985:38)

2.1.3 The Moravian Church in Leh, Ladakh (1885-present)

The first Moravian missionaries to reach Ladakh were Eduard Pagell and Wilhem Heyde. They made regular visits to Ladakh during their ventures into the border region of Ladakh to travel towards Mongolia through Yarkand. After the establishment of the Kyelang station in 1856, for twenty years, they kept contact with Ladakh.

In 1884, because of the personal support from the British Viceroy, the Maharaja granted them permission to stay in Leh. According to the 'Reports in the 1884-1886', in '*Periodical Accounts Relating to the Missions of the Church of the United Brethren Vol. 33 June 1884*', published by Society for the Furtherance of Gospel, it has been documented that—

Br. Redslob, in a letter dated Poo, March 9th, communicates the cheering and important intelligence, that the Maharaja of Kashmir, at the personal request of the Viceroy, has consented to withdraw his objections to the leasing or building of a house by the Moravian Mission at Leh, the capital of Ladakh...Br. Redslob intends proceeding to Ladakh as soon as the mountain passes are sufficiently free from snow. He will be obliged to return to Poo in the autumn of this year, but hope, if such be the Lord's will, to be able next year to settle permanently at Leh. (Periodical Accounts 1884:68)

In the next letter—

Br. Redslob, writing under the date of march 12th, reminds us that we have been permitted to settle permanently at Leh solely in consequence of the mediation of the Viceroy, and that the Government of Kashmir entertains no very friendly feelings towards us on that account. He intends to push on to Leh as soon as possible in order to commence the building of a house Br. Redslob was very wishful that Br. Heyde, too, might proceed to Leh, in order that he might benefit by the experience gained by the latter during his residence in that capital. (Periodical Accounts 1884:103)

And in 1885 the Leh Mission was finally established. A small church called 'The Moravian Church' was built in 1886. Friedrich Redslob and Dr. Karl Marx, a medical doctor were stationed in Leh to start the mission work. Next year in January 1887 F. Redslob started a small school, now called 'The Moravian Mission School'⁵⁰ and in April Dr. Karl Marx⁵¹ arrived to take over the hospital and clinic which were partly sponsored by the British government. A beautiful Moravian Church now stands on the same land where the Moravian Mission station was first started. The missionaries made attempts to evangelise as well as help the people in Leh,; by establishing a dispensary as well as a school. Most of the patients would visit from various places, like Yarkand, Kashmir, British India, Baltistan, Tibet and Central Asia as Leh was a centre for trade therefore attracting a blend of people across the Himalayas and the plains. They also established a Christian Inn for travelers from these regions who needed a place to stay. This Inn was established in a house that was gifted by a Ladakhi Christian woman.

In the year 1891 F. Redslob and Marx died of typhus within a few days of each other. The mission survived with the coming of Becker Shawe, an English Moravian who nearly died of typhus and Julius Weber (a Moravian missionary who came from Poo). In the year 1894 S. H. Ribbach came to Leh from Kyelang and two years later in 1896, A.H. Francke arrived straight from Germany. No suitable doctor was found until 1897 when Dr. Earnest Shawe came. Even his wife died of typhus within a year and so did he himself in 1907.

⁵⁰ The Moravian School caters to the education of the students of Ladakh. The teachers were Dr. Karl Marx, Missionary Schrewe, Yoseb Gergan, Samuel Joldan (then postmaster of Ladakh) and British Joint Commissioner's Munshi (scribe).

⁵¹ A Moravian Missionary doctor.

In the year 1920, the first two native ministers were ordained to and Joseph Gergan and Dewazung Dana were chosen. They were given the Ladakhi title ‘*nyenpo*’ in lieu of the word ‘Minister’ in English. From then onwards Ladakhi Ministers or ‘*nyenpo*’ took charge of the congregation in Ladakh. Since then many Ladakhi ministers have been ordained like Rev. Yonathan Paljor, who was ordained in 1956: he continued to serve in Ladakh for quite some time and later on went on to serve in the church in Srinagar. The present pastor of the Moravian Church is Elijah Gergan, the great-grandson of Joseph Gergan.

2.1.4 The Moravian Church in Khalatse, Ladakh. 1899-present

In the year 1899 a daughter station was started at Kalatse, three days journey from Leh (around 90 kilometers from Leh) on the way to Srinagar. Rev. A.H. Francke and his wife, Theodore Weiss also called ‘Dora’ led this station. They were assisted by the evangelist Chompel who had been a monk in the great Tibetan monastery of Tashi Lhunpo⁵². Another assistant was Ishey Rigzin from Kalatse village, he helped Francke at the school as a teacher. When the Mission school had to be shut due to the constant threats from the local monastery, Ishey Rigzin, at the request of Francke, set up a school at his home. He was given a certain amount of money for retaining students at the school.

During the First World War in 1914, missionary G. Reichel stationed at Kalatse had to leave Ladakh.

The ‘Thirteenth Report of the Mission Among the Tibetan Buddhists of Lahoul, Kunawar and Ladak from 1901-06’ published in the *Periodical Accounts of the Moravian Mission Work* published in December 1907, reports on the Khalatse station. It stated in detail that—

In *Kalatse*, the second station in Ladak, 52 miles down the Indus Valley, where Mr. and Mrs. Francke were first stationed after its foundation in 1899, they were privileged to see the first-fruit, of the seed sown in 1904. Stobgyes, a young married man, was baptized (though not in Kalatse, but in Leh). He was in consequence cast out by his family, his

⁵² Tashi Lhunpo is the monastery founded by the first Dalai Lama, Gendun Drup. It is presently situated in Shigatse, Tibet, People’s Republic of China.

young wife left him, and he was deprived of his right to inherit his father's house and fields. But Stobgyes remained firm in his resolution to follow Christ up to the present day. Later in the year another man of Kalatse was received into the Church by baptism, along with three adults from Leh and one child.

Mr. Francke frequently visited the numerous villages and ham lets around the station, along the Kashmir-Ladakh road, as well as those along the Baltistan road, which branches off at Kalatse, following the course of the Indus, and also the numerous places in the side-valleys. He also made several longer tours to Zangskar, Dras and Dah.

When Mr. and Mrs. Francke had to leave the place, in the autumn of the year, Mrs. Francke's health making a home furlough necessary, the little company of Christians was left in the care of the evangelist Chompel, a converted Lama, who under the supervision of the Leh missionaries did his work satisfactorily. He also carries the glad tidings with zeal and enthusiasm into the neighbouring Buddhist and Brogpa villages, in which latter he used to live formerly as a Lama. The same people to whom in former times he used to read the word of Buddha now hear him preach the living Word of Christ. In some of the Dard (Brogpa) villages the message has been received with joy; some people have expressed their desire to become Christians, and we hope that there may be an opening for new activity among the Dard population in and around Dah.

In the summer of 1906, when Mr. Francke had temporarily returned to his station, he baptized Chompel's young wife, before he started for Kyelang. Later on Mr. and Mrs. Ribbach arrived there and took up the work. The work done by the Mission in Ladak, and its beneficial influence on the people of that country, has been recognised by H. H. the Maharaja of Kashmir and Jammu in an Order in Council, dated October 1st, 1904, which concludes thus: "His Highness appreciates the good work done by the Moravian Mission, brought to his notice through the Resident, H e would wish his thanks tendered to them. (Periodical Accounts 1907: 764-766)

2.1.5 The Moravian Church in other minor sub stations i.e. Shimla (1898-1905); Chini (1900-1909) and Chot (Established around 1850's)

The Moravians had sub-station located at junctions that were located at a position where different people met for different kinds of interactions like, trade centers, offices, transit points etc. The sub-stations at Shimla, Chini and Chot functioned with the purview to exchange religious ideas, and teachings in the form of books, tracts, and religious stories through magic lantern shows of the Christian faith among the people who visited these trade centers. Below is a look at the three sub-stations and their functionalities.

2.1.4.1 Shimla (1898-1905 A. D.)

The Moravians had a station in Simla from 1898- 1905. It was thought that a Tibetan-speaking missionary might be able to work among Tibetans and Baltis working in that area. The mission therefore, bought a house named 'Murrayfield' near a Tibetan colony of Sanjoli but this mission was soon aborted when it was discovered that the Moravians were after all, duplicating the work of other missionary societies. Most of the local Tibetans spoke Hindustani and could be reached in that language. In an article titled, 'West Himalaya: Thirteenth Report of the Mission among the Tibetan Buddhists of Lahoul, Kunawar and Ladak, from 1901 to 1906' in '*Periodical Accounts of the Moravian Missions of 1907, Vol. 06 No.72*', details about Shimla Mission have been presented as follows—

Simla which for a time served us as a base, especially for our Lahoul and Bashahr stations, was worked by Mr. and Mrs. Fichtner, until they had to go home in the spring of 1905. After this Mr. and Mrs. Ribbach took their place for some months, until in the autumn they had to move to Khyelang, in order to fill a gap there. As there is a constant lack of workers, the; means are limited, and as, moreover , our endeavours to reach the numerous Tibetans who come to Simla from all the surrounding mountain districts in search of work and wages have proved more difficult than we expected, owing to the fact that few of them ever settle permanently at Simla, and those who do so, mostly Baltis, after a short time adopt the Urdu language instead of their own, the Home Board at the suggestion of the General Mission Conference, thought it wiser to give up the work at

that place and transfer the Morton grant from it to our work at Kalatse, And as other Missionary Societies had been for a long time before us at work among the Urdu-speaking population, we could confidently leave this work to them, using the workers and the means saved in this way to strengthen our work in Ladak, where we are the only ones in the field. (Periodical Accounts 1907:765)

2.1.4.2 The Chini Mission (1900-1909A.D.)

The sub-station in Chini lay halfway between Poo and Shimla. It was taken care of by Mr. Julius T. Bruske and his wife Mrs. Bruske for eight years and subsequently handed over to the Salvation Army.

In the *Moravian Mission: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work* an article has been dedicated on the Chini station of the Moravians. Dr. Ernest Shawe of Leh gives descriptive details of the place. He writes—

The chief village of the district of Kanaur, on the Upper Satlej River, in north-west India, is Chini. It is about 150 miles from Shimla to Chini along what is called a “very good road” in these countries—i.e. laden animals can usually go in safety, through wheeled vehicles are as yet out of the question—and passing through some of the finest sceneries of all our Himalayan stations. The mission compound lies some distance above the village itself in some 3,000 to 4,000 feet above the River Satlej. (Moravian Missions. 1903:181)

He further describes—

The Mission in Chini was begun in 1900. We are fortunate in having experienced missionaries like the Rev. and Mrs. J. T. Bruske to open the work. In the three years Mrs. Bruske has accomplished much, part of which can only be seen on looking beneath the surface. He has built a small mission house (see photo), and is preparing a larger one.....The people of Chini do not speak Tibetan, but Kanaure, a language of which Mr. Bruske, is compiling a grammar. Most of them are Hindus, their favourite goddess

being blood thirsty Kali, to whom it is more than suspected that they offer human sacrifices at times. They are exceedingly dirty, and are much given to stealing and lying. But Mr. Bruske says all are not alike. (Moravian Missions. 1903:181)

An account of the problems faced by Mr. and Mrs. Bruske have been mentioned in the article, '*West Himalaya: Thirteenth Report of the Mission among the Tibetan Buddhists of Lahoul, Kunawar and Ladak, from 1901 to 1906*' in the Periodical Accounts of the Moravian Missions of 1907, Vol. 06 No.72, The following has been mentioned—

In Chini, our second station in the Sulej Valley. Mr. and Mrs. Bruske have a difficult work among a hill-tribe which speaks a language quite distinct from Tibetan, and whose indifference on the one side and distrust towards Europeans on the other proved a great obstacle at the beginning. But a good beginning has been made, and the confidence of the people has been gained by frequent visits and through school work. Mr. Bruske is about to build a, larger and more comfortable dwelling-house for the missionaries, in place of the temporary abode in which they live now Mr. and Mrs. Peter, who worked there during the Bruske's absence on furlough in 1904-05 moved to Leh before the return of the latter in the summer of 1905. (PA 1907: 765- 766)

The people in Chini spoke Kinnauri which was very different from the ones compared to those in the other regions of the Himalayan region. Apart from the problems stated above, language was one of the main reason why this mission station did not last long. By this time the Moravians has gained specialization in Ladakhi and Kinnauri was quite different from Ladakhi.

2.1.4.3 Chot⁵³ Station (Established in late 1890's)

Chot, now called Tholang, is around 12 kilometers from Kyelang, the headquarter of Lahoul. This village lies in the valley called Manchat, and on the left flows the Chenab river. This village was the sub-station of the Moravian Station at Kyelang, as it lay in the route to the famous pilgrimage site, 'Triloknath' or 'Garja Phakpa', abode of 'The shrine of the Lord of three

⁵³ Chot village is presently called Tholang. The Moravians had a land holding there however, it was later sold to local villagers and now their existence almost forgotten.

Worlds’ revered by both Hindus as well as Buddhists. Ga Phuntsog, the local evangelist was of this village and he partook in every attempt to spread the Gospel among the people in that village as well as those close by.

Excerpts from an interview with an octogenarian and a local scholar, Mr. Tsering Dorjee of Gyuskar village in Lahoul, he provides few details about this sub-station and the man who ran it. He narrates—

Ga Phuntsog, who came from Ladakh to settle in Chot, was given 10 biga which is about 20 Kanal of land for living by the Moravian Missionaries. Yakob, and his children sold the Missionary land on which they lived and left to settle down in Kyelang.⁵⁴

The ‘West Himalaya: Thirteenth Report of the Mission among the Tibetan Buddhists of Lahoul, Kunawar and Ladak, from 1901 to 1906’ in the *Periodical Accounts of the Moravian Missions of 1907, Vol 06 No.72*, has a brief note on Chot. It has been reported that—

Besides Kyelang, our out-station at Chot, in the Chandra-Bhaga Valley, is a centre of Christian influence, where we work with the help of our evangelist Ga-Puntsog. The latter has already been the means of leading several persons to Christ, and, besides preaching the gospel in that place, he makes frequent tours down the valley towards Chamba, and conveys the good tidings to the people in their own (the Manchat) language, which is quite different from Tibetan. (PA 1907:760)

2.2 The focus on the use of local languages and the use of Tibetan script by the Moravians:

The Tibetan script and the variants of the Tibeto-Burman languages, spoken in the Himalayan belt was the foundation of all learning experiences for the Moravians who came to stay in the Himalayan belt of Ladakh and Kyelang. Learning the script and then the local language gave way into the lifestyles of the people of the region in which the missionaries lived. Their compelling focus on learning the language can be seen as a direct involvement with the

⁵⁴ Dorjee, Tsering. *The Moravian Missionaries in Kyelang* Rigzin Chodon. Trans. Rigzin Chodon. Kyelang, 28 May 2017. English and Hindi.

culture of the people in this region. The language learnt, became a point of contact, whilst in the beginning the missionaries sought help from local translators as well as “scribes” who would help them in their work, whether it was evangelistic i.e. production and publication of biblical works or literary i.e. linguistic as well as historical study of the region through field study.

Since, the Moravians always focused on the use of the local language as a key feature towards spreading the Gospel to the “heathens” they visited for proselytization. Their chief occupation in any of the other regions of the world like Surinam, Labrador, East Africa etc. was the learning of the indigenous spoken as well as written languages.

The languages of the regions of Ladakh and Lahoul became an important factor for the missionaries to understand how their missionary activities could be carried on, i.e. with direct interaction with the people in their local languages, both spoken as well as written. Henceforth, local language use was the main step towards their work.

There are evidences from the works of the missionaries that prove that a deliberate attempt was made to produce their Christian liturgical texts in a specific language or script to disseminate their theology.

2.2.1 Languages in Ladakh:

The region of Ladakh was very close to Tibet, due to the practice of Buddhism, that had a direct connection to Tibet due to the past history of “Tibetanization”⁵⁵ of Ladakh as Janet Rizvi calls it. Ladakh was under the Tibetan rule in the 7th as well as 8th century. This form of Buddhism was termed as ‘Lamaism’ by the Moravian Missionaries. They include both Ladakh as well as Lahoul & Spiti under the religion of ‘Lamaism’ where the focus lay on the monks or the ‘lamas’ who focussed more on the rituals and practices that created a direct impact on the control of the lay people through the hierarchical monasteries under which different villages functioned

⁵⁵ Rizvi, Janet. *Ladakh Crossroads of High Asia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983.

according to the different sects of Buddhism the people followed. So instead of calling the religion of the people of Ladakh as Buddhism, it was usually called ‘Lamaism’.

The language spoken in different parts of Ladakh fall under the Tibeto- Burman family of languages, apart from ‘Shina’ which is spoken by one particular ethnic group called Drokpas, who live in the lower region. ‘Shina’ falls under the Indo-Dravidian family of languages and is quite distinct from the rest of the languages of Ladakh. Rest of the languages are mutually intelligible and can be classified as Chang-skat, Sham-skat, Zanskar-skat, Nubra-skat, Leh-skat and Purigi (also called *Podh-rig* by few scholars. It is spoken in Kargil and is called as the most archaic form of Tibetan that is close to the written/literary form of Tibetan).

In the year 1914, Dr. Hieber, who was stationed at the Leh hospital mentions the initial attempts of a missionary to learn the spoken, written and the respectful language of the people of Ladakh. The article is quite a delight as it gives few details about how words are pronounced, how the written language, i.e. Tibetan is taught to them by a Munshi (Hindustani clerk). Heiber writes how the women missionaries excel at the colloquial Ladakhi whereas the men do the same in the written language. The article published in 1914, titled, ‘The Tibetan Language as it appears to a Newly arrived Missionary’ in the *Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Works*, by Dr. A. Hieber⁵⁶, concludes the following about language—

In this country there are therefore three distinct and separate languages, viz., the written, the colloquial, and the respectful, and a missionary should know all three. (MM 1914:153)

Dr. Hieber’s classification is important as it gives a picture of how language in its forms is interpreted by a missionary in field; how the distinction between the spoken Ladakhi, the written Tibetan and the respectful Ladakhi is made by them.

There have been contesting views about the use of the term ‘Tibetan’ for language by modern scholars as Ladakhi as a language is stated to have its own grammar that is distinct from the various other variants spoken in proper Tibet. Only the Tibetan script is borrowed to write

⁵⁶ His changes his name from ‘Hieber’ to ‘Heber’.

the Ladakhi language and the literary and religious form of writing called ‘Tibetan’ here varies from region to region.

The article titled, ‘The Languages of Western Himalaya’ about language in the *‘Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Works’*, written in 1907 by Bishop B. La Trobe highlights this issue—

Urdu, or Hindustani, is the language of the railway and the road. It is the lingua-franca of Northern India, and is said to be spoken by 170,000,000, or about as many as speak English throughout the world. (Moravian Missions 1907:222)

For the Tibetan language he writes further—

Tibetan is, of course the main language, in which our Himalayan missionaries work. It is an ancient tongue with its classic literature, written on printed letters somewhat similar to those of the Hebrew alphabet. In one form or another, it is spoken throughout Tibet, the great land in the heart of Asia, from its Indian and Chinese borders on the west, south and east, right up to the Chang Tang, or Northern Plateau, so lofty that it is practically uninhabited. On the other side is Mongolian. So it comes that the Bible, whose translation into an easy classical Tibetan is mainly the work of our Moravian missionaries, is available over an area north of the Himalayas of, roughly speaking, 2,000 miles in length and from 500 to 1,000 in breadth. (Moravian Missions 1907:222)

2.2.2 Languages in Lahoul

The region of Lahoul is linguistically very diverse compared to Ladakh. There are three valleys that get divided into linguistic belts and can be categorized as the Tinan, the Bunan and the Manchat Valleys. Apart from what was called Tibetan then, the people of this valley speak distinctly different languages in each valley. Bishop La Trobe, in his article, ‘The Languages of Western Himalayas’ about language in the *‘Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Works’*, published in 1907 writes—

Ladaki, or the Tibetan dialect of Ladak, the province of Kashmir, in which our stations at Leh and Kalatse lie, differs very materially from the Tibetan spoken in Lahoul, where Kyelang is situated, or in Bashahr, the native State, in which Chini and Poo lie.

A more serious difficulty, however, presents itself in these border districts. On the one side are the languages of the plains—Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Kashmiri, etc. On the other side Tibetan is spoken, not only in Tibet itself, but far within the frontier provinces of India. All these exercise an influence on the life and speech of the dwellers in the hills. The consequence is, that between India and Tibet there are groups of languages, distinct from any of those mentioned above. Many of the inhabitants of Lahoul and Bashahr speak languages which are neither Tibetan nor Indian.

Small as the British province of Lahoul is, our missionaries there have to do with three distinct languages besides Tibetan—Bunan, Trinan, and Manchat.

Again in the little native State of Bashahr, Kanauri is spoken in the district of Kanaur by several thousands, for whom the station at Chini is our base. Between Chini and Poo, where Tibetan begins, a kindred but different language is used in several large villages. ... Mr. Bruske at Chini is making a very thorough study of Kanauri. He was formerly employed among the Kols in Bengal. These Kols were originally hill-people, and his knowledge of their language has been of great assistance in his present post. He finds much more affinity between the Kol language and Kanauri than he anticipated, and he has already prepared a grammar in the latter tongue. Meanwhile Mr. Francke is studying Bunan, Manchat and Trinan, and he declares that Mr. Bruske's Kanauri grammar furnishes the key to all three, and indeed to the whole group of hill languages between Tibet and India." (Moravian Missions 1907:222)

Therefore, although the Himalayan belt and the stations seem to have been chosen with factors like proximity with trade route towards Tibet as well as the usage of a common language, i.e. Tibetan, the Moravians slowly saw the great shift in the language among the indigenous inhabitants of the various stations that they were located in. Their work in studying a language, compiling a grammar as well as publishing a dictionary for the sole purpose of translation of the Bible into one local language seem to be an attempt towards standardization of the Bible into the

written or the literary form i.e. Classical Tibetan, that was used among the Buddhist population to read their Buddhist canonical texts like Kangyur and Tangyur.

The irony was that most of the people except for the monks at the monasteries who despised the missionaries were educated and well apt in reading Tibetan. The common man had no business to read or write, and with the attempt to educate, schools were opened by the Moravians to provide the younger children avenues to study and learn the language that was monopolized by the “lamas” of the monasteries.

Interestingly the language surveys by G. A. Grierson for the Linguistic Survey of India, in 1909, give us an idea of the categorization of the valleys and the languages spoken in each valley. Grierson who was helped by Rev. Heyde, in conducting the survey in year 1906 shows how the local name of the valleys were given alternate names and hence the names of the valleys changed in the survey. These names for the valleys have still been used by modern scholars, historians who have studied the region.

A new paradigm shift can be seen with the change of the names of the languages in use, which as some linguists have proven to have been defunct. For example in the case of the Zhang Zhung languages, scholar Tsering Dorjee, from Kyelang, Lahoul emphasizes that the indigenous language spoken in the Manchad valley, as well as languages like ‘Patani’ (constituting many dialects in the valley) is part of the Zhang Zhung family of languages that many western linguist think are extinct. Manchad language is recognized as Tibeto-Burman language, however, linguists state that it shares certain features with Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and Munda languages. In the article, ‘A Manchad Grammar’, Shunu Ram Sharma , states that—

The language has also retained some features of the ancient Zhangzhung language spoken in Western Tibet before the establishment of the Tibetan empire. (Sharma2006:30)

Keeping these above factors on language in mind, we can see that an attempt to use a standard script for publishing Christian texts and also for writing the newspaper that got published in Kyelang in 1927 was started by the Moravian missionaries.

Therefore, the preliminary studies done by missionary scholars on the language of these region, during linguistic survey, or making of grammar books or for dictionaries, scholars and

linguists like, H. A. Jäeschke; A. H. Francke, Sarat Chandra Das, G. A. Grierson, etc. seem to have categorized them differently.

All these changes and standardization was done by the Moravian missionaries and this makes it an important study to understand the control or their power over formation of a literary space in the choice of language among the people.

The use of these standard texts to preach and speak to the people also shows the pressure it brought about on the people to use the standardized language. The local population had been using or understood what they called the spoken “Bhoti”⁵⁷ (Sanskrit) form of saying *Bod-yig* or Tibetan, which is still used today.

In Ladakh, it is used in the areas that were close to Zanskar (present Ladakh); Pangi (Present Chamba) and villages like Khoksar, Jispa, and Khangsar towards Spiti region. Trade was an important factor which made the population linguistically diverse as they (traders) had to learn languages of the places where they traded. There was a limitation of the usage but with the standardization of the written form in Tibetan script for writing the Christian religious liturgy the local population had to now learn (with an exception that not everyone learnt it) what was not indigenous to them. However, the language which soon was to become a dominant language for their interaction with the missionaries in processes that involved economic, educational and other engagements apart from few religious engagement that locals were engaged in. Therefore, a shift in the use and production of a standard form of writing in Tibetan script/ *Bod-yig* can be seen to have affected the indigenous identity of the people through language use by the Moravian Missionaries.

⁵⁷ ‘Bhoti’ is a contentious term, as the Lahaulis use it to define dialects in their valley like ‘*Stod boli*’ which is close to ‘Zanskar skat’, ‘*boli*’ of Pangi as ‘*Bhoti*’. Since Hindi language is used as the *lingua franca* among the Lahaulis, ‘Bhoti’, a Sanskrit term is used to group together, people who speak similar languages. Bhoti is also a modern term that was first used around 1990s. It might not have been used in the 1980’s at all. There has been a demand for the recognition of ‘Bhoti’ as a language in the 8th Schedule of the Indian constitution as this umbrella term, by Himalayan Buddhist Cultural Association (HBCA) for more than three decades now. ‘*Bhoti*’ is said to be, spoken among the people in the Himalayan belt of the present Republic of India. Bhoti can be seen as the literary language but not the spoken language, because written and spoken languages vary in the Himalayan belt of India.

Chapter 3

CONTENTS OF THE NEWSPAPERS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the contents of the newspapers; *Kyelang Agbar* (from the year 1927 to 1935) and *Ladags Phonya* (from the year 1937 to 1944)⁵⁸. These newspapers have been translated from Tibetan into English, arranged and classified⁵⁹ in detail to give an overview of the writings that were circulated among the readers of the newspaper. The articles written in the papers are of interest as they represent the ongoing news, cultural, historical accounts, folklore, and religious writings in the local language that tell a lot about the exchanges of new ideas, and representations of those ideas in the local language. Engagement of local writers in this new form of writing i.e. through print media, can be seen as a new experimentation in writing that brought about a change in how we see this region.

I. The major classifications of the sections of the *Kyelang* newspaper (1927 A.D. to 1935 A.D.) after reviewing the articles are as follows:

1. News about Garja/ Lahoul (Local News)
2. News about the World (International News)
3. Historical accounts of Kings of Ladakh
4. Stories:
 - a. Real fatherland (*Phayul Nyospo*)
 - b. *Regma tang Du ser la Gya*
 - c. Helen's Story
 - d. The story of an ant and an insect

5. Moral teachings on Christianity in the form of :

⁵⁸ Only one sample of all the classified news are presented for *Ladvags Phonya*.

⁵⁹ Translated from Ladakhi to English by the author with the help of a translator, Sonam Dorjee.

- a. Maxims (*Tampay*)
 - b. Wise Sayings (*Khas sPey*)
 - c. Treasure of teachings (*Tok Dzot*)
 - d. Articles on the following topics:
 - i. Teachings on Religion
 - ii. God's Love
 - iii. Being a good Human being
 - iv. About Debt
 - v. Way after Death
 - vi. About Jesus
6. Other secular and interesting topics, that include articles are on :
- a. Air
 - b. Diseases (Tuberculosis, Cholera, Disease of Livestock)
 - c. Birth
 - d. Flying (Aeroplanes)
 - e. Rainfall
 - f. Earth
 - g. Harvesting
 - h. Methods of Farming
 - i. Alcohol
 - j. Light House
 - k. How not to let the land freeze in winters/
 - l. Volcano
 - m. Earthquake
 - n. Excavation of sea gems
 - o. Different kinds of Ploughs
 - p. Fauna of Tibet
 - q. Description of a huge Aeroplane
 - r. American Aeroplane
 - s. Crash of an Aeroplane

- t. Healthy livestock
- u. Example of marriage
- v. Discussions going on in the world
- w. Creator (Christian idea of creator)
- x. Weather
- y. Measuring rainfall (About rain gauge)
- z. Charity
- aa. Earthquake
- bb. New Year
- cc. Local customs of offering and sacrifice
- dd. Raja Ram Mohan Roy
- ee. Mahatma Gandhi
- ff. Socrates

3.2 Classification of the News

From the above given details of the titles of the contents in the newspapers, I have tried to broadly categorize these news entries to provide an understanding of the categories into which these have been compiled.

After studying the contents of the paper, broad classification of Kyelang Agbar newspaper has been done as follows:

- I. Local news (About Lahoul / Garja, Ladakh and neighbouring region, Tibet)
- II. National News (About India)
- III. International news (News about different countries)
- IV. Evangelical news (Maxims, proverbs, stories etc. that have a Christian teaching to it)
- V. Modern secular news (News about new technology on farming, diseases, countries, world wars, etc. that are new for the people of the Himalayan belt).

3.2.1 Local news (About Lahaul / *Garja* on a yearly basis):

This section is based entirely on the articles written on or about Garja or Lahaul. Compiling these articles in one section gives us a comprehensive overview of the kind of news that have been chosen and written about this region. It is interesting to note that a lot of the news articles start with history and go on to talk about the culture, tradition, development, alcohol, agriculture and general news about the region.

About the land called Lahaul (*Garja yul gyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. January 1927)

The origin of the people of Garja: they are said to have come from places like Chaura Champa, Pangi, Banghal⁶⁰, Kukti⁶¹ by the old men of Garja. The people of this region believe in or worship spirits and deities of fire, lizard, *bu-ring*/ snakes⁶² etc. that are respected and served. *Shindey*/Spirits are offered offerings of beverages like tea, alcohol etc. There are many Pundits⁶³ who are well versed in Hindu religion. Brahmins reached the places between Guskyar and Yurnat⁶⁴. In the place called Kardang, Rana and *Tamtzey*, monks have also reached. The Cho of Tinan⁶⁵ (family name is Tinan Khar) is a Rajput and reveres the teachings of the Pandit. The Rana and the Pundit have also reached the place called Gandala and Kusyul. There is also one Rana in the place called Chot. *Tamtzey* and people from different places collect every year to go to Tangti Sum Dor to provide offerings of blood (men, animal etc). During those days there was no mention of Buddhist monks Buddha and his teachings. Everyone was following the Hindu religion. Similarly, for many years these offerings were given however the danger of spirits and other supernatural beings did not become less. This religion can also be called as a debt of our impermanent life. Many years later, a monk from Ladakh came here to spread the religion of

⁶⁰ A small village near Bejnath and Kangra.

⁶¹ This place is presently called Brahmour in Chamba district.

⁶² Bu-ring literally means long insects, but here it might refer to what is popularly known as Nagas.

⁶³ Pandits are called '*Baht*' in the language of the local people of Lahul.

⁶⁴ There are several villages adjacent to Kyelang including these two.

⁶⁵ (Background: This info seems incorrect. According to Tsering Dorjee, "The 13th century Cho Dorjay Pal, came from Guge Tholing (in sTod Ngari or Western Tibet) to Tinan. He stayed in Tinan and built the first palace and spread Buddhism there. He also built a small monastery called 'Mani Gompa'. Brought few monks who wrote the book of Kangyur in the 13th Century and even now those 52 volumes of Kangyur that were written are preserved in the monastery. The King of Kullu or Nyungti (Tibetan name for Kullu) had planned to give his daughters to him as him as his wife and although there are links with him and Hinduism but he never converted himself into a Hindu. Earlier there were only three Chos's of Tinan and the only written record is that of The Cho of Tinan, Dorjay Pal.")

Buddhism among the people. The King of Ladakh lived in Garja and ruled for many years. During the rule of the king of Zahor/Mandi, he would send iron to the king of Ladakh and the king of Ladakh sent *Tsaley* Borax and *Muzi* / and sulphur(In Puga) to the King of Zahor. Then with *Tamzey*, the Hindu religion became less and Buddhist religion spread. Where ever there are stone statues there is Hindu religion in those places. The land of Garja is dark without chos. I am going to ask a question to everyone, when one dies, the soul does not die. Who is there to take care of your soul? When you start thinking that after death, the wealth of this world does not benefit you, then who is there to help your soul then? If you lean towards Christianity, the path of the sky and water will be made available to you. Think about it carefully. Writer's name: Ga Phuntsog Name of village: Chot⁶⁶

About Kyelang Gong⁶⁷ (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. March 1927)

On the 23rd of February 1927, Asboe Sahib, Zodpa Dechen and Ghaphel went to Kyelang Gongma and spoke about the ill effects of locally brewed alcohol to the villagers. They decided not to cook even one bushel⁶⁸ of wheat beer⁶⁹. An agreement has also been written in English. That agreement states that, if anyone breaks that agreement, then the culprit has to pay 100 rupees as a penalty. Everyone signed that agreement and Zodpa Ghapel was the witness to that event. The names of the people in that agreement are follows:

Tholak Sonam⁷⁰

Kukuji Bimal⁷¹

Miyong⁷² Rigzin

Karpa Tsering and Tashi, father and son⁷³

⁶⁶ This village was called Chod and not Chot and presently it is called, Tholong.

⁶⁷ Upper Kyelang.

⁶⁸ *Tey / dey / bRay* (In Punan language, it means a wooden bushel. There are two varieties of bushels, one is wooden and other also made out of wood, but covered with iron frame.

⁶⁹ Locally called *tsakmo*.

⁷⁰ Sonam is the name of the person and 'Tholak' is the family or household name. Lama Paljor's father from Tholak family.

⁷¹ Bimal is the person's name and Kukuji is the family or household name.

⁷² Miyongs not Miyong. Rigzin is the person's name and Miyong is the family or household name.

Karpa Phuntsog Mutup⁷⁴

Kukuji Sonam Tsang⁷⁵

Karpa Tsering Nurboo⁷⁶

Bukar⁷⁷pa Tsering Nurboo Ataji Tsering Tashi, father and son

Kyamoji Tsewang Namgyal

And if others take their example, then this land will be peaceful. Fighting and other events related to drunkenness would also be averted. Even *doh*⁷⁸ and wheat will be saved, that you would know.

News about Lahaul (*Garja yul kyi kor*) : (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. March 1927)

If we say a little about the happiness and sadness about the land of Garja, then, earlier, the culture of the people was difficult to define. Many years earlier Garja was under the king of Nyungti (local name for present Kullu). The foolishness of the people (Garja) was evident. That was because the king's rule was without compassion and his rule was monarchial according to the history. That was like this—if anyone in the public had wealth, then the king would send a soldier or a messenger to get the wealth. If the wealth was sent then the person would live happily but if that was not done, then the person would be tied in ropes, beaten and his wealth taken by force. That is why the people have become very poor and without wealth. If anyone was

⁷³ His name was Tsering Tashi. Karpa was the family or household name. He was called infamously called 'Yamraj' (the Hindu God of death) by old people. He was also engaged in killing Chimet, Joseph Gergan's son and involved in illegally theft of the herb, '*kuth*'.

⁷⁴ Phuntsig Mutup is the name of the person and Karpa is the family or household name. He is the great great grandfather from the Ralak Karpa family who presently live in Upper Kyelang. He is said to have been a very good businessman.

⁷⁵ Sonam Tsang is the person's name and Kukuji is the family or household name. He was an attendant of an oracle and was called the 'lap dak', a title which means an oracle bearer.

⁷⁶ Tsering Nurboo is the person's name and Karpa is the family or household name. He was the eldest brother, father to the grandfather Morup from Karpa family, Upper Kyelang .

⁷⁷ Tsering Nurboo Ataji Tsering Tashi are the person's names and Bokar pa and not Bukar pa is the family or household name.

⁷⁸ *Doh (gro)* meaning wheat. This is one out of many varieties of wheat.

able to gain wealth, they would hide it under the ground. Nowadays, if such wealth is found that is called ‘*Pyaksa*⁷⁹, by the Kaja⁸⁰ people.

*Chang*⁸¹ and *arak*⁸² are a major source of attachment because of which many ill effects are happening. The people can otherwise be rich as well. Right now because of brewing alcohol people have to get more wheat from outside to add to the supply of wheat consumption. If all the people do not drink alcohol, it is going to be good for all the people. These faults of chang, if written, are too many. My name is Barong Lotus Namgyal (who) wrote this.

About the army of Lahoul (*Garjey magmi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. March 1927)

In the English language, the army is called the ‘Territorial force⁸³’. That means that they protect their country. Firstly, the villagers and the government⁸⁴ had to pay for the army and the army’s wage was less. If there is war, then the salary of the army would become more just like other armies. This tradition was started in Europe. Right now, this has also started in India. The rank of this force and the permanent forces are the same. The salary is less for this army. And the salary is 11 rupees per month. Food and clothes are provided by the government.

First, the work has to be taught for two months. As one month each year is enough. The salary is given only during holidays. And the Garja Army had to go to Jalandar⁸⁵. And I have requested the government to let the army stay for only 3 ½ months. And the fare to go to Jalandar and back is being given by the government. And whosoever has trained for the army would not have to give duty at the *Begar* System⁸⁶ and whatever job is given by the government they would get the preference to get that job. Writer: Pon Nyima Wangyal⁸⁷

⁷⁹ *Pyaksa* meaning ‘corrupt wealth’.

⁸⁰ Kaja, is the capital of Spiti.

⁸¹ Chang meaning Alcohol. Chang is usually brewed from barley in the Himalayan belt.

⁸² Arak is the distilled form of Chang. It is opaque in colour, highly concentrated and very strong.

⁸³ The ‘Territorial Force’ was an army recruitment style that was first introduced by Nyima Wangyal (Buddhist name given by the people of Garja) alias Thakur Abhey Chand.

⁸⁴ The government here means the British India government who ruled Lahul and Spiti during that time. Please provide year and other details.

⁸⁵ The station for this force was at Jalandar, Punjab.

⁸⁶ Begar system was introduced in (details please)

⁸⁷ His Hindu name was Thakur Abhey Chand.

About the common trees of Lahaul forest (*Garja jungle am bhotha ey kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. April 1927)

Earlier legend says that there was a big Jungle in Garja. The names of those places, if listed were, as below:

In the place called Nes, in the upper side of Garja, lie the trees of Deodar (*Som Shing*). Places like Dartsey, towards Stod (towards Ladakh), Tinan, Khakling have Juniper trees. Even now the trees with deities are not cut due to the fear of the deities. Nowadays the forests of Garja are diminishing as their predecessors did not think about the future generation and cut down many trees. After the English government came to power, no one could cut down trees without the permission of the English government. All the small and trees with less plantations are not permitted by the English government to be cut down. The ones that have been cut down, their money has been collected and kept at Nyunti (Kullu). The money of the trees is spent only for Garja. For example, the roads of places like Gus⁸⁸ and Muling⁸⁹ have been built with the money collected at Nyungti (Kullu). The laws made by the government have been made for the benefit of ourselves. I, would like to make a notification⁹⁰, to all the people of Garja. On empty lands, plant as many tree plantations like *Yarpa*⁹¹. Do not make request to the government, if there is no need for them to be cut down. Do not harm the jungle from the back. In places between Manchad, Tangti and Shangi⁹² there are no name of trees⁹³. Now they are planting tree saplings and sustaining themselves. If the trees on the mountains are not taken care of, then they will finish just like the Juniper trees of Kyelang. Due to the cold weather the saplings do not grow more than 3 inches. Nyungti (Kullu) is warmer therefore they say that the saplings grow 2 foot tall in one year. Earlier Deodar and Juniper trees would grow well but now even if saplings are planted they would dry up in a year and would not grow properly. So, all the people of Garja should plant a sapling each. Writer: Pon Tashi Dawa

About Lahaul (*Garja yul kyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. April 1927)

⁸⁸ Ghoshal is the new name for the village

⁸⁹ A village little farther away from Gus village. It is situated three or four kilometres, right above the Chandra river.

⁹⁰ Notification or '*Kulma*'. The word *kulma* is also used in other contexts like 'revolution'.

⁹¹ *Yarpa* is a variety of tree.

⁹² This area is called Shang or Shan Sha not Shangi.

⁹³ Meaning no trees are to be found.

Earlier, people were not educated enough to understand how to leave bad work and learn new kind of works, that kind of hard work was not there. Whatever work is done by the father is also done by the son and there is no new thinking of learning any new kind of work. If a new kind of work is learnt, then the people look down upon it, since that new work was not done by the father or the grandfather. That bad tradition of the son still doing the father's work is going on. That bad tradition should be thrown away and any new kind of knowledge should be learnt. That tradition is very sad. During autumn even the birds are rich is what people say⁹⁴, during spring when the wheat is roasted, even one grain seems as big as yak's meat, that is because one should understand that wheat was scarce then. During summer a grass variety called 'tsro lo'⁹⁵ etc. is also eaten (due to scarcity of food) which is a pitiable state⁹⁶.

News about Lahaul (Garja Yul Kyi Kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. May 1927)

The English ruled Garja for the last 50 to 60 years. Till now, they have taken good care of the people with love and care. That is because of the doings of the English. (Remaining later on...)

News about Lahaul (Garjei Kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. May 1927)

To look after the benefits of the land, the Tehsildar⁹⁷ and his office bearers have reached. Doctors have reached and hospital for the patients has also been inaugurated. Still, there are few people who do not like these new ways. There are many similar things to be told but what more can I tell. Last year, the wife of Bokhar family from the village Ci-ling⁹⁸, could not bear children and two dead babies were taken out of her womb, and the mother saved. This was done by Dr.

⁹⁴ As the birds have enough to eat during autumn.

⁹⁵ (Botanical name of this plant is *Sedum Uarzee's eyes*. It is also eaten in Ladakh. It used to be eaten quite often at Rizong monastery in Ladakh). It is fascinating to note that, in the 21st century, the plants mentioned as a poor person's food, i.e. the nettles, which were consumed especially during scarcity of food in the Himalayan belt, are now served in famous Tibetan restaurants in New Delhi as a delicacy and eaten by locals as well as foreigners. This idea of consuming food items that were once eaten by yogis (like Milarepa and others, who had no access to agriculturally produced food items and relied on wild plants during their long months of meditation in the Himalayas) and people of the Himalayan belt shows how the perspectives on consumption of food has changed. The point being, that which was local were not valued before but with the whole new paradigm shift on food culture coming from the west that focuses on keeping things local and organic has drastically effected the way we consumed or produce food now.

⁹⁶ This proverb also said now. That one grain is equal to a piece of Yak's meat. In Pangri there is a big leaf called 'chukuri' or nettles. It is called *za tsot* (in Ladakhi) and *acho koar* (in Lahouli or Zang Zhung language).

⁹⁷ The term used in the newspaper is 'thim dak' which is closest to the position of a Tehsildar hence, the use of the word Tehsildar here.

⁹⁸ Village in Lahul. This word can be confused with the word Chi-ling which means a western country.

Padre Sahib. Similarly, what have been seen by the eyes, earlier in the village Basparak⁹⁹, a mother died as she could not conceive a baby. Then yesterday, the dead woman's elder sister also died in the place called Korko zang¹⁰⁰. They did not request Dr. Padre Sahib, instead they called a monk and requested a prayer and therefore she died. **Writer: Barok Lotus Namgyal¹⁰¹**

About Harvesting time (*Napsey Tus Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. September 1927)

Harvesting time is going to start in Garja. There are different timings in the world for harvesting. In the land called Australia, harvesting gets over in the seventh month. Barley harvest is very good there. Some farmers grow 1,10,00,000¹⁰² *mana*¹⁰³ of barley collectively. Apart, from the wheat needed for themselves, 400000000¹⁰⁴ *mana* of wheat is exported out of their country. Since there are a lot of fields, there are two horses tied with wheels to harvest the fields.

In the West side of the world there has been very less rainfall. There is danger of the livestock dying due to less amount of grass. In order for the livestock to live, grass and water have been arranged for the animals.

Towards the North side of America, the fields are sowed in the seventh month¹⁰⁵. They say that these days the fields are growing very well. All the fields there are big and plain.

There are rainfalls again and again in Africa and therefore, there is possibility of the fields turning out well. Due to good rainfall the water in Nile River has increased and the farmers have made channels from the river in order to plough their fields. In that land, a cloth called '*Kashika*' is made out of the stem of wheat.

In the seventh month *Ol*¹⁰⁶ is harvested in *Chi ling*¹⁰⁷. In the ninth and the tenth month, the fields are harvested. There is a lot of water and rainfall in that country. Sometimes, due to a lot of water, the harvest is not good and there is scarcity of barley and wheat.

⁹⁹ The name if the village is Pas parak and not Basparak.

¹⁰⁰ This place is called, Go tsang. It has been named after yogi Gotsang-pa who also meditated at this spot and hence, the name.

¹⁰¹ Lotus Namgyal from Barok Pa family.

¹⁰² 1 crore, 10 lacs.

¹⁰³ A *Mana* is a unit of measurement. 1 *Mana* = 40 *Seer*; 1 *Seer* = 0.925 grams. And 1 *Mana* = 37 kilograms.

¹⁰⁴ 4 Crore.

¹⁰⁵ The seventh month of the year, i.e. July.

This year, due to flood in different parts of India, many houses have been destroyed and people do not have a place to stay. Many cattle have also died. In some land, tragic news was heard and due to excessive water, railways could also not function.

In this land (Garja), the weather is good. That is because of God and we thank him. In happiness and sadness, it is important to offer offerings to God because the control of rain and water is with God. If the control of rain and water had been with men, then some lands would need them and some won't and there would be a fight among men. This wang/power is kept with God and as per the need of men they are given the rain and everyone is satisfied.

In the text called '*Thing tzang*', this has been said—

The God raises the sun from above for a good as well as a bad man. For people who follow true teachings and untrue teachings the God makes the rain fall the same on them.

News about Lahoul (*Garjay Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. September 1927)

Kullu (Nyungti) is seven days distance¹⁰⁸ towards the south of Garja. In the month of April, the first motor came there. These days there are motors in Manali as well. Those traders, who are travelling from Garja to Kullu on horses and taking *ra-lug*¹⁰⁹ with them, are having a lot of trouble. That is because, the horses and the cattle who have never heard the sound of the motor on the road, are having a lot of trouble adapting and that is why the traders are having a lot of trouble.

It has been about a month that the Taktsang Rinpochey of Hemis gompa has reached Garja. These days he is residing in Tinan Khar¹¹⁰. On the first day of the month of September, we heard that he left towards Rebak¹¹¹.

¹⁰⁶ *Ol*, is a variety of grass, usually used as a fodder once dried on the roof of houses, is very common in Himalayan region of Ladakh and Lahul.

¹⁰⁷ Chi-ling literally means, 'outside' 'country'. This word has been used in different contexts, usually used to denote 'western countries, sometimes for 'Europe'. Basically any place which is outside the peripheries of the regions that are way outside the point of the Himalayan region. This word gives a very good understanding of what one sees as a region that is inside and the opposite of which would be. Hence, 'Chi-ling', a region or a country or a land located outside or that exists outside in context of their own region. There is a duality in the use of the term.

¹⁰⁸ Distance measured according to the time it takes to reach a place by walking.

¹⁰⁹ *Ra-lug* means sheep & goats. *Rama* means goat and *lug* means sheep in Ladakhi.

¹¹⁰ Tinan Palace.

Livestock diseases (*Chuk Nat*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. September 1927)

It has been a year now that the disease of cows has spread in different places in Kullu (Nyungti). This year, in the month of August, in a place called Tsrob near Ranglo in Garja, 20 cows have died due to the disease. To make sure that that this disease does not spread in other places, the *wazir* of Garja, Nyima Wangyal, has posted a *Chaprasi*¹¹² at the place called Tsrob. That man does not allow the people and cattle of one place to convene with the people and cattle of another land. He (*wazir*) went to Kullu and made sure that no one is allowed to bring any cattle or hide products here. This was done to make sure that this disease does not spread anywhere else. That has become very beneficial.

The judge Assistant commissioner Sahib who lives in Kullu Nagar came to Garja, in the month of August for a visit. From there he went to Spiti. These days he is on his way to Kullu (Nyungti). Till now the government did not have a health centre and they gave medicines from a home. Next year the government is definite about building a health centre.

News about Lahaul (*Garja Yul Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. October 1927)

Harvesting is over in Garja. Today the weather is good and the grass has dried well. They have been kept inside the house. In the fourth month of September, a 16 years old boy and 14 years old girl from Manepa family of the village of Kartang had gone to the water mill.¹¹³ They had gone to play near the river. Their bodies had been swept away in the water and now even their bodies have not been found.

Other than the land called Tsrob, the cattle disease has not spread anywhere else. The *wazir* of Garja had given the permission for the traders who used horses to come to Garja; however, sheep are not allowed.

¹¹¹ Rebak/Triloknath is the place in Garja where *Phakspa Chendrazik* (Sanskrit: Avalokiteshvara) and *Dorjey Phakmo* reside.

¹¹² A peon.

¹¹³ Local water-mills are called *rantak*.

Pon¹¹⁴ Tashi Dawa has reached back to Garja from Rudok in the fifth month¹¹⁵. He has decided not to take the 10 % tax¹¹⁶ that was usually taken by him. Thank you.

Today Thok Pul Taksang Rinpochey has reached the village called Guskyar. He is anxious to reach Ladakh but people keep requesting him to stay, so it might take time for him to reach Ladakh. If he listens to the people, they are requesting him to stay there. On 25th September, at 2 am at night, the house called Bokarpa in the village Ciling¹¹⁷ was engulfed in fire. Many thousand rupees burnt down and even the homeowner died. It is very sad. Few villagers from there and the Padre Sahib from Kyelang also came for help. On the 12 September, the schools of Garja have been closed down for 1 and ½ month. All the teachers have gone to their home.

The poor Orphan, Gyatso (*Da tuk Gyatso Nying re jey*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. October 1927)

All the people of Punan know about the orphan called Gyatso. No one knows who his parents are and where they are. He cannot walk as his arms and legs are disabled. The wazir of Garja has been looking after him for the past five years. From this autumn onwards, Kyelang's Yokpa¹¹⁸ has provided him with food and now he is with Tharba Tsak shi¹¹⁹ family. These days the mother of this family is feeding him. Thank you. All those who have heard the news after reading about Gyatso, those who are compassionate are requested to help him in whatever way they can for his food. Thank you. In Ladakh, those who want to help him (Gyatso) can contact Bishop Phey Ter Sahib¹²⁰. Those who help him, their names will be written down in sequence in the newspaper.

The king of Romania passed away in the sixth month due to illness in his head. His wife is the niece of the king of England, the seventh Albert. The prince promised not to stay here and rule this country. Now the prince who is called Michael has been crowned the king. Right now Michael is young and till the time he becomes older, there are two, three knowledgeable ministers who will run the country.

¹¹⁴ *Pon* means 'Officer' in Ladakhi / Tibetan.

¹¹⁵ I.e. Month of May.

¹¹⁶ Tax was called '*thal*'.

¹¹⁷ A village in Garja.

¹¹⁸ Yok-pa is the family or household name.

¹¹⁹ Again the family or household name.

¹²⁰ Bishop Peter Sahib.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. December 1927)

Venerable Taksang Rinpochey left on the 10th of Nov from Kyelang to Kullu.

The Wazir of Garja, Lieutenant Nyima Wangyal and his soldiers have left for Jalandar.

Walter Asboe has donated 11 Rupees and 8 Anna for the treatment of the orphan, Gyatso. Thank you for that. There has been no snowfall in Garja. The weather is good and warm

About Farming (Zhing Noy Ey Kor) : (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. January 1928)

Methods of farming in different lands (Zhing Khak So soi' Zhing Ngo Tsul):

The farming tools are also very different. People from the east use wooden plough that is because most of the soil there is soft and sand soil. They are able to plough the soil with light wooden ploughs as there is no danger of it breaking. In the west, due to rainfall the fields remain wet. Even the soil is hard the *dzo*¹²¹ are not able to plough it and wooden ploughs cannot be used. That is why they make ploughs out of steel and use a pair of horse to plough their fields. If you look at the design¹²², a man is holding the *sholda*¹²³ and the halter¹²⁴ and ploughing the field. He does not even need a helper.

Since the fields in Garja are very narrow, so it cannot be ploughed in the style of Europeans. Each field in European countries is about 20 Biga¹²⁵. There is no need of a hand plough or horses in America, as they plough their fields with the help of motor.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. January 1928)

¹²¹ Mix breed of a Yak and a cow. This word seems to have been used to cite the example for the readers to understand the context of ploughing in Western countries.

¹²² The term 'rimo' meaning design, according to H. A. Jäschke's Tibetan-English dictionary published in 1881.

¹²³ *Sholda* means the part which is put on the neck or back of a *dzo*. The figure shows the handle of the plough as *sholdar*. The figure seems a bit incorrect.

¹²⁴ Lagam, an Urdu word for halter. A rope tied to the neck of cattle while ploughing a field.

¹²⁵ 20 biga=1 acre, 1 biga=0.5 acre.

Traders from Garja have returned back for Kullu (*Nyungti*). Compared to this year the price of wool has decreased. The price of wool per '*Kaccha Mana*' is 17 to 19 Rupees. The price of the pelt of the animal called Kokgar¹²⁶ is 18 rupees.

Alcohol (*Chang*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. January 1928)

Last year in the house of Sonam of Tholak family from Kyelang Gongma, 10 people gathered and had a meeting. Last year on the 23rd February of 1927 they made a verbal as well as a written agreement, not to produce *chang* and till now everyone has kept their promise. Thank you. Lon Sonam,¹²⁷ has told me clearly how much *chang* does not benefit us, if we could state that to other villagers then it would benefit them. Yogi Nurboo Rinpochey of Khimtses family from Kardam village has given order to his fellow monks not to consume alcohol in and around the monastery. And if all the monks do not drink alcohol and teach the villagers not to do so then everyone would benefit.

The orphan Gyatso has been given Rupees 5 for his *tso* treatment by Asboe Sahib. Thank you. (Zodpa)

Lahaul (*Garja*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. April 1928)

In the year 1919, Mr. H. L. Shuttleworth Sahib had opened a school in Kyelang. Slowly that school is now a middle school. This year in March, all the students passed their exams from Middle school. Out of the ten students, only one is from Kyelang and the rest are from Manchad. There must be around 60 children in total from Kyelang Gongma and Yogma¹²⁸. But somehow only 10 children come to the school. The students from Manchad come with their ration. The school has come to your doorsteps, do not say '*kha lik chum*¹²⁹', instead send your children to school. Otherwise people from Manchad will go forward and all of you will stay where you are. These days there are 8 schools in Garja. People from Keylang send your children to school

¹²⁶ Kokgar is a Hindi word. This animal is called '*Koarr*' in Punan language and Beech Marten (*Martes foina*) in English. They are also known as stone marten, house marten or white breasted marten. This species is native to Europe and Central Asia but now it is also found in North America.

¹²⁷ A *Nambadar* is called Nang Lon.

¹²⁸ One of the students could be Master Rigzin Nurboo from Kukuji family. The missionaries made it compulsory for at least one child to go to the school. The Kyelang village Panchayat chose Rigzin Nurboo and even gave money to send the child to school. Rest of the people feared that the children would get converted into Christians.

¹²⁹ An expression used in Kyelang which means, '*kha lik chum*' meaning 'what to do?' in Gari language.

otherwise you will regret later on. And in that same year, a Sahib brought a sheep called the Marino Sheep from Australia and that breed of lamb has spread and there are more than 200 lambs now. They brought 'charkha' which spins wool. That made the people happy and nowadays they are going to Kullu to purchase it. Sahib has brought about a lot of benefit to the land so we should be thankful. Asboe Sahib has again donated Rs. 8 to the orphan boy called Gyatso. These days good quality fox skin costs Rs.35. (Zodpa)

The wazir of Garja Lietenant Nyima Wangyal and his soldiers have reached Kullu after returning from Jalandar.

Choktrul Taksang Respa Rinpochey has come back from Nepal and are residing in Rewalsar these days.

Wool traders have already sold their goods and are now relaxed. The news of traders who sell other goods is not good.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. May 1928)

The wazir of Garja, Pon Nyima Wangyal¹³⁰ has returned to Garja from Jalandar chavni. *Tashi Delek*/Welcome.

Tak rey¹³¹ has reached Kullu, in the fourth month he is going to reach Garja.

Kullu and Lahoul (Nyungti dang Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. July 1928)

In different lands of Kullu due to the disease called 'Nya-lok¹³²', more than 500 people have died. That is the news. Not just this disease, that the disease called 'small pox' has also spread is also heard. By the grace of God, *Garja/Lahoul* is disease free and clean. The festival in Kullu¹³³ has been stopped due to the danger of the diseases. Wool traders were also not able to collect much money and money is scarce.

¹³⁰ Also called 'Thakur Abhey Chand'.

¹³¹ Tak Rey is a short form for Taktsang Repa/Respa. The literal meaning is a 'man from the rocks who wears cloth;.

¹³² A reference for this disease,

¹³³ The festival held in Kulu in October must be Dusheera.

Children and adults who are need of *jau*¹³⁴/money, then collect butterflies and get it to Asboe Sahib. He will look at the butterfly and pay for it. If the butterflies closer to the snowy mountains are caught then better price will be paid for them.¹³⁵

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. September 1928)

On the fifth of August, Taksang Rinpochey left from Garja to Zanskar. On the 4th of August he went from Kullu (*Nyungti*) to Kyelang, and then to Tinan, Phus, Muling, Chot, Lot, Shang, Yanaphel, Kyelang, Kardang, Kungling, Tod-Kolong schools for visit. One of his men carries a *lalten*¹³⁶. He stayed for two nights in Kyelang, where people started gathering around him and he told about the ailments, small pox and *Ngya Lok*¹³⁷. Through figures or design he told many details so that the disease would not spread. Not just that, he also showed figures and spoke in detail about the ill-effects and shame related to drinking alcohol. If the people of Garja listen to his teachings/advice then they will benefit from it.

This year Muslims from Kashmir brought many groups of sheep-goat that numbered to one thousand each. Those people were men ready to fight and strong¹³⁸. Even the *ra-lug*¹³⁹ were huge with long hair and long ears. They are also strong and sturdy¹⁴⁰. Their horses' milk is also milked. Such is the saying.

About Ploughs (Shol): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. September 1928)

When Europeans see the farmers here working on their fields with ploughs, it seems like their work is incomplete. The plough is not good then even the product is not good. Farmers who remain poor and not able to take care of the livestock are due to the bad plough. Using plough by turning over just the upper portion of the land is not a good way. Even the hay produced is less. Even the farmers as well as the livestock get insufficient food to eat. These days in Bihar, a

¹³⁴ A '*Jau*' refers to a little silver coin.

¹³⁵ Extra information: Asboe Sahib used to send his men to collect butterflies in Baralacha la and Sarchu. One of the famous person from Kyelang, Mr. Ghaphel, was in charge of collecting butterflies from different snow ranges.

¹³⁶ Urdu word for a lantern.

¹³⁷ According to Tsering Dorjee, "Ngya lok used to be a disease of the neck. The neck would swell and people would die. It was called 'Pok shit' in Garja local language. In Hindustan during those times, it was called Heza." This disease is called Cholera Bacillis, a bacterial disease.

¹³⁸ The term used in the newspaper is *hara hurey*.

¹³⁹ Sheep and goats.

¹⁴⁰ The term used in the newspaper to describe this is '*ranga rong ey*'.

plough which can be used both on high and low can be bought for 5 to 8 Rupees. It would be better if a trader from Garja who goes there in the winters, could buy one to check how well it works here.

This year produce (food) is just alright (neither good nor bad).

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. March 1929)

Earlier in the month of February, a boy and girl from Garba family of Cilling village went to Chukh da village to deliver ration for their father who was in meditation. Due to an avalanche both the children died. If the father had stayed at home to meditate then the lives of both the children would have been spared and would not have suffered on their way to him.

In the month of January, there was less amount of snowfall in Garja. In the month of February, snow fell again, these days the fields are covered with snow as high as 2 *thu*¹⁴¹. The weather these days is also warm.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. December 1929)

In the month of December, the snow fell again and again and the traders of Garja got stuck in Kullu (Nyungti). During the winter, the government sent a doctor and two compounders and one *dai*¹⁴², and it has been very helpful to the patient. In order to learn from the midwife the people of Garja have collected 1500 rupees so far for help.

Healthy livestock of England: A good thing (Angerz Yul Gyi Zang Rig/ A chalak gyalajik):

There is good pasture land and good grass for the animals to remain healthy in Europe. The animals there are healthier, stronger and larger than the one's in Garja. Please look at the *design/figure*. The variety of cow is called 'Ru-thung'.¹⁴³ It is ten years old. It gives 100 *pakka Seer*¹⁴⁴ or 94 *seer*¹⁴⁵ of milk in one day. In seven years, it gave a total of 29,794 *bati* of milk. The

¹⁴¹ Thu is a unit of measurement of height. 1 *thu*=?

¹⁴² A *dai* is a Hindi word used to denote a mid-wife, who helps in delivery of a baby at home.

¹⁴³ A cow with small horns.

¹⁴⁴ According to the Indian 1 *pakka Seer* = ? grams.

¹⁴⁵ 1 *Seer*= 0.925 ??? grams; therefore 94 *Seer*=kilograms.

owner cares for his cow by feeding her food and cleans her body everyday with a brush to make it shine.

News about New Year of Lahoul and Bunan (*Dawey nang Garja Punan Pey Losar yin, Losar la Tashi Shok*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. January 1933)

New Year has come, do not forget that bad deeds result in harm. The demons fool and harm us and they come again and again so we have to be attentive. The three examples are the examples of three ships that float on the water. The paths they take are different from each other's. If we look at the life of all those we call people, then just like the way these three ships are different, similarly even person is different (in quality). The first one (in the figure) is drawn by a horse otherwise it would not move. Similarly, when others try and help again and again to walk on the correct path, only then can a person walk on the correct path. It is similar to a horse pulling a ship for it to move on the correct path. The person, who represents a small ship that works on wind, is the one who sometimes walks on the path of peace at joyous times. When it comes to the path towards enlightenment then the person (like the small ship) does not have a strong heart and loses his path. The ship runs on its own strength. It has grown on its faith's strength, has been cured from demons and sin, and can move with stability or safety.

In the second figure, just like a man who walks with stability is able to make a mark of his feet on stone, just like that people who follow Christianity according to Jesus do good deeds in this world, even if they leave this world. Good deeds are like the mark left on stones forever, if others also follow then they will also benefit from it. That is why dear friends, if you like walking on righteous path then you should follow a good teacher. That top teacher is Jesus. If you follow him with full faith, then he will take care of you in happiness and sorrow.

Lahoul (*Garja*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. January 1933)

This month there was 1 *thu*¹⁴⁶ of snowfall in Garja. The weather is very cold. Wool traders have still not arrived back from Kullu (Nyugti). Kyelang school teacher and children have been infected by a communicable disease of the ear. In the small region of Garja, New Year is celebrated in four parts. The first one celebrated in December is Christians' big celebration i.e.

¹⁴⁶ Thu is a unit of measurement according to the measurement system used throughout the Himalayan belt. 1 Thu=

Christmas. The second is Punan people's New Year in January. In the beginning of February, is the New Year of the people of Tinan. In the middle of February, it is the New Year of the people of Manchad. This year in Punan the people living on the either side of the river celebrated their New Year with a day's difference. The reason being, the date 13 was auspicious for the Pharka-pa as per their astrology and similarly, the date 14 was auspicious for the Tsarka-pa.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. March 1933)

In the month of February and March, the measure (*paktsat*) of snow water is 8 inches¹⁴⁷ and the measure of the snow is 7 foot. The wool traders from Garja have reached back to Garja. The price of the wool is 1 Rupee (*Mul*) per *Bati*. There is news that the same has been sold to Su dah ri val Factory at the same price. People from Garja who had gone to Nepal for pilgrimage have reached back. The tulku¹⁴⁸ of Sera, a monk called Ngawang Palden Takpa Wangchuk had left from Garja to Nepal, but on the way back he could not find the path and now he is staying there. One of his attendants, suffered from diarrhea and vomiting that lead to his death. Hemis Kushok Taksang Rinpochey reached from Nepal and is now in Lahoul (*Garja*). Soon, he is going to go to Tibet.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. May 1933)

Harvesting is over in Garja. Rain is scarce. The snow from the fields in Khoksar, have not melted on time and due to that the fields have not been ploughed. Due to less fodder, many cattle like horses, goats, and donkeys are said to have died. The steel bridge of Khoksar has been constructed.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. July 1933)

On the 18th of July, Garja traders left for Changthang. In the place called Dozam¹⁴⁹ traders from Khampa¹⁵⁰, Kinnaur¹⁵¹, Zanskar, Piti¹⁵², Nyungti¹⁵³, Garja¹⁵⁴ and Changthang have collected and

¹⁴⁷ Use of inches and foot instead of Paktsat from here onwards.

¹⁴⁸ A Tulku is a reincarnated monk who heads a monastery.

¹⁴⁹ This place is around 20 km away from Darcha, the last village of Garja towards Ladakh, which is part of Garja. This place is like a trading point for people of the Himalayan region.

¹⁵⁰ Gyagar Khampa

¹⁵¹ Kinnaur is called Khunu by the people of Ladakh, and Tibet.

¹⁵² Spiti.

trading commenced. Like last year Dr. Bhagwan Singh left from Garja to Piti on the 1st of July. Another doctor has also reached Garja. Assistant Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner are coming to Kyelang on 23rd July and staying here for three days. After that, the Deputy Commissioner will leave for Kullu and the Assistant Commissioner Sahib will leave for Piti that is the news.

In the month of June 1930, Padre Gergan Sahib's son Chimet and his assistant were killed by a 'Ruta',¹⁵⁵ stealing thief from Kinnaur (Khunu) who fled towards Chamba. This is known by everyone. In last month's edition of the Indian newspaper called 'Milap', that thief has been caught and that is good news.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. September 1933)

While repairing the tilted bridge of Tangti Sumdo¹⁵⁶ a small bridge has been made on its side¹⁵⁷. One day when goats were crossing over that smaller bridge, 20 goats fell into the water. No man was hurt.

On the 24th of September, the Deputy Commissioner, the head of Kangra came towards Keylang. Singey Dawa¹⁵⁸ of Garja led and welcomed him along with the different heads or leaders of Garja, and the people of Kyelang lined both sides of the road with signs like (WELCOME) and everyone gave him a lot of respect.

About Kyelang hospital (Kyelang Man Khang): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. September 1933)

This year in spring, the construction of the Kyelang hospital had started. These days most of the construction is over. This hospital is strong and beautiful.

The Weather (Nam da): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. September 1933)

¹⁵³ Kullu.

¹⁵⁴ Lahaul.

¹⁵⁵ Name of a medicinal plant grown in Garja.

¹⁵⁶ Hindus call this place Tangdi.

¹⁵⁷ Earlier there used to be a 'Chug dzam', meaning a bridge made out of tree branches. These branches were woven together to make a bridge. Late on wooden bridges started to be made.

¹⁵⁸ He was also called Thakur Pratap Chand, wazir of Lahoul. Nowadays the name Thakur is used at the end of a name.

This summer, it rained again and again. These days there was no rain during harvesting and the weather is good.

About the inauguration of Kyelang hospital (*Kyelang man khang go thok mar chey vey*):

To inaugurate the new and beautiful hospital of Kyelang the Deputy Commissioner of Kangra and the Wazir Sahib of Garja and around 600 people gathered. The Deputy Commissioner opened the gate/lock to the hospital. Then the wazir Sahib offered a garland to the Deputy Commissioner and showered others with flowers. The government provided hospital and medicines for the Garja people and the Kyelang Padre, Walter Asboe Sahib lectured the people of Garja to come and collect medicines from the hospital. Deputy Commissioner praised the builder of the hospital, Lala Mehar Chand for doing a good job with the hospital.

About the annual produce of Lahaul (*Garjey Lo thok*):

This year the produce of wheat in Garja is okay and grass and hay are very good. This year the people of Garja are planning to sell ‘*Ru ta*’¹⁵⁹, that has been grown in their own fields, between 15,000 to 20,000 rupees.

Lahaul (*Garja*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. September 1933)

Pon Sangey Dawa and under him Nono Prem Chand, Phata Chan, Zodpa Dechen are the recruits¹⁶⁰ who went to Jalandar.

Harvest is over and the grains have already been thrashed and taken out. Manure is being taken out at one place on their fields. The weather is warm and pleasant. The doctor and nurse have started working in the new hospital. Wool traders have reached Kullu. It has been heard that the selling price of wool is 23 Rupees per *Pakka Mana*. The selling price of the next group is yet not clear. Earlier on the 20th of November, a son of Phakpa family called Dorjey was herding his sheep near the place called Tuki ling and he died by slipping off the mountain. *Ah kha kha*.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Essay on Ruta in chapter 3.

¹⁶⁰ Recruits of the ‘Territorial Force’.

¹⁶¹ An expression to express grief by people of Garja.

Lahaul Garja: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. January 1934)

This month New Year was celebrated three times. The first was the Christian New Year, second was Punan's New Year, and third is the New Year of the people of Manchad.

Till now there has been less snowfall. The old and young people say that weather is colder than last year.

Lha Lha Luk, Chot par phul O: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*.. January 1934)

Everyone knows that sheep is sacrificed to the Gods (*Lha*). Few generations earlier, there was a bad custom of offering one child in one¹⁶² year to the Gods (*Lha*). Now that bad custom has been abolished and sheep is being offered instead.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. March 1934)

Pon Sangey Dawa and the aristocrats of Garja have reached back to Garja safely. The people Garja are working very hard in the *Ruta*¹⁶³ garden. In the month of March the snowfall in Garja was 1 foot high.

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. May 1934)

There was no snowfall during the winter this year. The people were fed up of that and they prayed to their respective Gods in many ways. Manchad people are compassionate towards their animals and they do not offer their animals (sheep) for sacrifice to the Gods. It is a very good thing. A pregnant girl from the village Gotsang came to Kardang. On her way, we do not know whether the baby's birth was premature or on time, she gave birth to a baby. She hid the dead baby under the soil in the valley. She did not tell anyone and returned back home. One day a dog dug up the dead body of the baby and this was reported to the Tehsildar. Then everyone investigated and found out that the girl broke the law so she was fined Rs.30 and was kept in prison for 1 month. Hiding a baby like this is unlawful. This girl was prosecuted; other girls will learn not to do such unlawful act from this incident.

¹⁶² According to Tsering Dorjee, this sacrificial ceremony would take place every 12 years and not every year as mentioned in the newspaper.

¹⁶³The same plant is called Kuth in Hindi.

In the last week, in one day two *dzomo*¹⁶⁴s died in one house in ‘Billing’ village. Next day four cows died. The village seems to have been infected with a disease. That is my doubt. If other cows die as well then the news has to be reported to the Tehsildar of Kyelang. It is better to investigate.

Zodpa Dechen

Lahaul (Garja): Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar..* July 1934)

On the 22nd of June, a man (youth) from Kardang had gone to watch the Shashur Tsechu (festival of Shashur). On his way back, just before reaching the Kardang Bridge, he jumped from the mountain and died. The reason for jumping whether it was a fight at home or some other reason was not known. Whatever it is, committing suicide is a big sin. If there is sadness or trouble in your mind, first tell your near and dear friends and make attempts to resolve it. Otherwise, go to your villages’ minister in times of unhappiness. He will come out with a good solution. If that is done, dying and the sin that comes with it goes away.

In the place called Chuk da, once a year the villagers make offerings of sheep to their village God, *Tang jzhar*, that is the tradition. This year an *Amchi* (A Tibetan doctor) of the village Cilling (in Garja), who is called Kya Thuk, made a request to the villagers that instead of blood offering, an offering of an imitation of a sheep made out of flour dough¹⁶⁵ and be offered instead. Slowly, there will be hope that blind faith will become less in Garja.

No title (Translated from Urdu to English with the help of Meme Tsering Dorjee.) (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar.* No. September 1934)

On 25th of August, 1934, baroz day on a Saturday, time 02:30pm, day time in Gemur Nalla in Kothi Kolong, came a very terrifying water storm, about 12 mile far away from peak, crores and crores of tonnes of soil and stones along with it came rushing in. The blasting sound of which was equivalent to dozens of cannons. Several trees and including juniper and willow were torn

¹⁶⁴ A female yak.

¹⁶⁵ Flour dough sheep is called ‘pyah’ and the one made out of butter is called ‘ mar ken tsi’.

apart and uprooted and taken far off. *Garat* or water mills and five houses were uprooted and destroyed. Only Thakur Mangal Singh's three-fourth house was left and about 100 *bhiga* farming fields were destroyed. Even now there is danger of the storm. Estimated property, crops, fields with harvest that have been destroyed: 300 willow trees worth Rs.600/- have been destroyed. Land destroyed is worth Rs. 200/-, Kuth worth 1500/- were destroyed. Houses worth Rs.2500/- were destroyed. Shelter for animals worth Rs. 2000/- were destroyed. Rooms for storing hay, worth Rs.1000/- were destroyed. Other miscellaneous things worth Rs. 1000/- were destroyed. A total estimate of destructed things is Rs. 85000/-. Apart from this, pack-animals (*Khur-ta*). Two horses, salt, wool worth Rs.200/- were destroyed.

These people who suffered do not have clothes to wear, homes to live in. food to eat nor any money. Women are crying, children are shouting, "food, food" and men are expressing their remorse. Even a strong hearted person is being pitiful after looking at them. Therefore, dear wonderful people, try and give charity from your body, mind and wealth. This opportunity to give charity hardly comes. If possible help these troubled people. Today they are in trouble, tomorrow we will be in trouble.

Lala Babu Lal, shop at Akhara bazaar¹⁶⁶ has given a charity of Rs. 10 and 8 anna to a person in need. He was present during the storm

In the village called Gemun¹⁶⁷ a flood destroyed four families and completely uprooted them. 75% of one house was gone. That is why all those who have home, food and clothing can help those in need through Thakur Priti Chand .

Writer: Priti Chand¹⁶⁸

About Lahaul (*Garja Yul*) : (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. November 1934)

¹⁶⁶ Akhara bazaar is the famous market area in Kullu.

¹⁶⁷ The village name is Gemur and not Gemun.

¹⁶⁸ Priti Chand's Buddhist name was Thakur Sonam Dawa.

S. No		1919	1934
1.	School	There is 01 Mission School.	There are 12 government schools and 01 Middle School ¹⁶⁹
2.	Medical Health Centre	There is 01 small Mission medical Health centre.	There is 01 big government Medical Health Centre ¹⁷⁰ .
3.	Post Office	One Post Office ¹⁷¹	This year there is 01 Post Office in Kyelang, next year one Post Office in Loth village has been sanctioned.
4.	Education	There was not even 01 Middle School passed student.	There are 03 intern (10 th pass) students and many Middle School passed students.
5.	Shop	There are 02 Shops.	There is 01 shop in Chilling and 12 other shops.
6.	House	Low ceiling with dark rooms, which are without any windows.	High ceiling. One room with windows which is 6*8 and a glass house.
7.	Fields	Making new fields is scarce.	This year 03 <i>jagirdars</i> /landowners of Garja,.... (words not clear) 200 family were given permission by the government to occupy lands, in

¹⁶⁹ In Kyelang.

¹⁷⁰ In Kyelang, established in 1934.

¹⁷¹ Postal runner in 1905 was from Sissu village. In 1940, Babu Tuk Tuk (from Upper Kyelang) was the post master of Kyelang. He is from Kyamoji family.

			order to use it as fields.
8.	Traders	There are 3 to 4 traders who bring wool of <i>Mana</i> 300 each in quantity. And few traders who bring 80 to 90 <i>Mana</i> each.	There is 01 trader from Changthang who brought wool of <i>Mana</i> 900 each. For <i>Mana</i> 500 there is 01 trader; for <i>Mana</i> 300 there are 13 traders, <i>Mana</i> 80 to 90 there are many traders. This year the price of ' <i>Ru-ta</i> ' is more than Rs. 50,000.
9.	Hand skills (<i>Lak shey</i>)	There is a poorly skilled carpenter; even the tailor is poorly skilled.	There are expert builders and carpenters who can build buildings like bungalow. There are many who can use sewing machines.
10.		Kyelang Tehsildar can authorize only Rs.100 as fine. He does not have the authority to fine people for more than that amount.	Now the government has sanctioned Rs.300 as fine. This authority has been given to Nono Pratap Chand Sahib. Not just that, Indian representative Bumves Rai presented Pratap Chand Sahib with a gold watch as a gift. The people of Garja congratulated him.

Till now rain and snowfall did not occur at all. It was beneficial for the traders and walkers.

Zodpa Dechen.

The New Year of Lahaul (*Garjey Losar*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. January 1935)

This month the people of Garja celebrated their New Year and wished the New Year to be well. This year all of us should forget the bad things of the past and from now on will promise to do good deeds and have a truthful mind, which is a difficult task to achieve. In the past year, all the problems we faced were due to our own actions. Now, to make sure that we do not have such problems this year we should be cautious. On the 1st day of Losar or New Year, people of Garja drink a lot of alcohol (*chang & arak*) thinking that they will celebrate, however, after drinking, they fight. For example:

A person, who is physically not strong, does not have self-confidence. That is why that person is unhappy. When that person drinks alcohol (*chang & arak*) then the same person feels strong and happy.

If people who drink alcohol know the limit of drinking alcohol, then I do not have to write this. God has written this—whoever gets drunk by alcohol is foolish. For example, the person who does not know the limit of drinking, and still drinks alcohol has nine steps towards his grave. If you ask what those (steps) are, they are—

First, he drinks one cup of alcohol with his friend. Second, in order not to feel cold, he drinks another cup; third, not knowing the limit, he drinks another cup; fourth, he drinks a lot, gets drunk and fights with others; fifth, he does not have the ability to think anymore and becomes friends with bad people; sixth step is that the man becomes poor (in wealth) and sick (in health); seventh, his friends and others show their back and flee from him; eight step is that he gets confused and robs houses, kills and does many other bad deeds; last step is that the person ends up killing himself / committing suicide. Biblical reference please find.

Lahaul (*Garja*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. January 1935)

There are mad dogs in Garja, even if they are killed, they are not decreasing in number. It was heard that till now mad dogs bit cattle in Punan, wounded them and killed them. The list include 1dzo, 2 *dzomo*, 3 cows and calves, 2 goats and many other cattle were bitten but they have died so far. Similarly the dogs have bitten 2 people. The government ordered that dog owners should either tie their dogs or kill them. All this happened as a result of not listening to the orders. Most

of the mad dogs came from Manchad, and it is due to their carelessness. There is news that most of the cattle and people have been bitten in Manchad. On the 6th of January, a huge dog called 'Gya-ser'¹⁷² was killed in Kyelang. That dog was owned by 'Ruling-pa' family. The dog had bitten a girl from Barzi-pa family and few cattle (mostly goats and sheep.) If it becomes sure that the dog was really owned by the Ruling- pa family then the family should be investigated.

This month the snowfall was less in Garja but the weather was cold as the sky remained unclear and without sun. On the 15th of January it was Garja New Year and *Hal dah*.¹⁷³ When *Hal dah* is thrown away, then the tradition of leaving the bad year and embracing the auspicious New Year is observed. Saying that the gone year is bad and the coming year is good is not the custom. The New Year that has come, can be seen as a year which is the result of paying respect to the God and meditating on him.

Zodpa Dechen

Lahaul (Garja): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. March 1935)

The price of grains and other eatables, except for rice, has gone down. During winter, after snow fall in Garja, if you want to know whether the people of Garja are working or not, then the news I have to tell you is this—

After harvest, adults and children are done collecting firewood for winters. After snowfall, the livestock were locked inside the houses. A person who is given the responsibility to give water and fodder is called '*despa*'. Every family member of a house, wakes up early at dawn and sit in

¹⁷² A breed of Himalayan dog, that has black hair, yellow hair on the neck, and two spots each above the eyes, that looks like an extra pair of eyes is called a '*Gya-ser*'.

¹⁷³ Garja people call this fire torch '*halda*'; it is called '*Me-tho*' in Ladakhi and '*Mashaal*' or '*torch*' in Hindi and English respectively. This tradition (also practiced in Ladakh) seems to be a Bon tradition where fire from the hearth in a home is given importance. Fire, lighting lamps, laying out a plate with wheat grains (*bang ma*: the wheat grains used for making chang); flour in the form of chapatti; slices of meat; some money and more importantly a handful of dough that is rubbed on to one's clothes, face and hands symbolic of cleansing one's body of the negativities and putting them on a platter which is then carried out of the house with a big torch (made out of wood, usually men of a house carry them out) and taken to an open field. There a big bonfire is already lit and the torches and the platter from each house are carried by a house where men from four generations of the same family then carry the fire torch and the platter to the riverside. The platter is thrown, the fire is also extinguished and the four men, young and old carry huge stones each. On the way back, a song is sung. The people near the bonfire ask what they have brought back? One by one they place a stone near the bonfire and the biggest stone piece is kept first. That is then followed on with a smaller and smaller one. The last stone is symbolic of a very precious stone. And the song ends there. Everyone drinks chang. Once the bonfire ends, everyone goes back home. And that night marks the eve of New Year. This tradition is practised in both Lahaul as well as Ladakh.

line in the kitchen and spin wool. Among the children, the ones above five year of age are needed to separate wool and draw a yarn together. During winters, the children stay inside the house and do not go outside without the instructions of the father or the head of the family. When they work, they are not allowed to make noise. They sleep mostly after 11 pm. During that time, at Losar, the elders or the children, no one is allowed to make any kind of noise. During those time everyone works till 11pm nicely and quietly, if you look at the adults and the children's' work. The elders, whether it is the father or any other elders, they need to be praised. There are one or two Charkhas to spin the wool. And other spinners do not have that and the whole house looks like a factory. This work is done till the end of February. In March the *nambu/* woolen fabric is woven. Women comb the *nambu/*woolen fabric and give chak¹⁷⁴ and clean the fabric. After all this is done, in the month of April, the field work is started. Boys and girls of Garja do not stay idle without any work. If someone stays idle, then that person is disgraced as one who does not have any other way to live. Those people who are idle and do not work, they can look at the people of Garja and work harder, that way they can learn how to earn daily wages. People we are impermanent. We tend to do something or the other for our body. We consider our body as important and in order to make sure that we do not feel hungry or cold, we come up with a lot of solutions. Similarly, your mind is more important than your body, that which is without any price. If one also finds the food for your mind, then God will pour more blessings on you.

By Zodpa Dechen

3.2.2 National News (About Ladakh, Tibet and About India)

About Tibet:

About Tibet (*Pod Yul*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*February 1927)

The country called '*Pod*', has China in the East; India, Bhutan and Nepal in the south; *Khache* in the West and Mongolia in the North. That land has snow clad mountains and therefore is colder

¹⁷⁴ The process of making a woollen fabric tight by soaking the woollen fabric into water and cleaning it several times until the fabric becomes tight.

than India. The mountains are so high that the people there live in the valley and the plains. The river called Brahmaputra flows from Tibet towards India and meets in the west side ocean. In the country of Tibet, it snows like Lahoul (Garja) and Ladakh. Earlier, when there was no alphabet in Tibet, the King Srongsten Gampo sent Minister Sambhota to India to make the 30 consonants. Some people say that Srongsten Gampo's wife brought the tradition of drinking alcohol to Tibet. The religion that was followed was the teachings of Buddha however there were many Muslims living in Tibet. Few Europeans reached there and they do not have much knowledge about the *thim* (rules) of the government and the people. There is danger of robbery between Ladakh and Tibet. Many robbers rob the wealth of these travellers and sometimes they even kill them.

About Tibet (*Pod yul kyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar..* April 1927)

Sometime back, few Englishmen made a request to the Tibetans to climb high mountains, but their request was not sanctioned. The reason they were not allowed was because till now all those who climb up the mountains, 13 people died. That was because the *lhas* (local spirit deities) were not happy and the Tibetans think that those people have died due to the bad effects. Another reason is that among the climbers were soldiers and their commander. They think they might come to war to Tibet later on. The third reason is that a few years earlier, a mountaineer Sahib took few monks abroad and that was not liked by the ministers of Tibet. Because of such kind of opinions the permission to climb the mountains was not given.

About Tibet (*Pod Yul Kyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar..* May 1927)

In the last edition there was news about electricity reaching Lhasa. Now the news has been heard in detail. The machines that will be used to generate electricity have reached Lhasa but the main machine has still not reached Lhasa. It still remains in Kalimpong that was because that machine could only be lifted by around more than 500 people. It could not reach Lhasa as 30 men were hurt badly and their hands and legs were broken. But now, the Tibetan government has ordered the road between Lhasa and Kalimpong to be widened. Secondly, the telephone wire would also reach Lhasa. Third, different factories for machineries would also be installed (*tsukches*). Next, the uniform of the Tibetan is said to be similar to that of the English. Finally, there is not even one Chinese Amban (government official) and hence no Chinese rule in Tibet. There is saying

that Panchen Rinpochey is in Mongolia. Some people say that he is staying in China, which is not very clear.

News about Tibet (Pod Yul Kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar..* July 1927)

One and a half year earlier, a Sahib called Pil ka nner' (Phil Connor) came from China to Tibet in different parts of the mountains. On the way he met two missionaries and the three of them went to Tibet. When they reached Lhasa, the people were apprehensive (*nam thok*) and did not allow them to go anywhere. They kept guards in order to keep a definite check on them. One of the Sahibs sent a letter to the representatives of England in India about their sufferings in Tibet. This letter was also sent to Gyawa Rinpochey (H. H. the Dalai Lama). H. H. Dalai Lama sent all the three Sahibs towards Ladakh with ration, this was the order. It takes a lot of time to reach from Lhasa to Ladakh. Europeans thought that the three Sahibs would suffer/*parchat*¹⁷⁵ a lot during that journey towards Ladakh. Bill Connor Sahib (Phil Connor) suffered a lot during the journey. The weather was bad and caused a big wind storm. Their legs froze. Their hands were injured they could not use machines (*thul kor*). Even though they had a lot of sufferings, still they made a lot of effort and reached Leh. The reason they went to Tibet was to calculate the height of the different mountains and places of Tibet since these had not been recorded in the world map. They had gone there to check and to include that in the map. They went through a lot of trouble and the problems they had have now been taken care of.

Tibet (Pod Yul): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar..* July 1927)

In the last winter, there was heavy snow in the land called Ngari, Western Tibet, in places like Chang Tashigang, Chu murti, Guge and Lomat. Due to that horses, yak, dimo (female yak), sheep and goats did not have anything to eat therefore thousands of them died without food.

(2) In the month of December, both sides of Khunu/Kinnaur, cow disease killed many cows, dzo and dzomos. Many people spent 40 to 50 Rupees and bought cattle from far away places. Poor people did not have so much money to spend, so they used *toktsey/* to till and sow their land. In few villages nothing was found not even milk, curd and lassi could not be seen. The disease called influenza has spread in *stod-mad* (up-down) of Kinnaur. There is no danger of older

¹⁷⁵ Cause of death like illness etc..during the journey.

people dying but if younger children are not taken care of then there is the danger of them dying.
- Tharayed Nasib Ali

About strange Fauna of Tibet (*Pod Yul gyi Semchen Mindah*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No March 1928)

In America, all the animals and birds of different varieties live in a house called 'zoo'. In India it is called '*Chidiya Ghar*'. That Zoo has a very strange animal from Bhutan. The Americans call that animal, '*They kin*'. The upper part of the body of that animal is like that of a cow. The lower part is like that of a goat. The Tibetans consider that animal good/sacred and do not let anyone kill it. If anyone kills that animal then the person's hands are chopped off. Therefore there are less people who try to capture it and take it to other countries. In the 1909 a sahib caught a young one of that animal and took it to England, but it died after 10 years. In the 1923, a commissioner Sahib staying in Sikkim caught a female one and took it to England. I do not know what this mountain animal is called in Tibetan. If anyone who reads this newspaper and knows the name of the animal please let me know.

About India:

News about India (*Gyagar Yul Gyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1927)

Few years ago, Indians were not happy with the rule of the English. They decided not to work for the English and not to listen to the political rule of the English, for this they made a decision. Nowadays those opinions have changed and the country is peaceful again. Even the public are helping each other and making close decisions with the ministers. For example, the Prime Minister or the Viceroy went to Punjab and looked after a lot of work and the public gave him a good reception. If we look at the different religions of Hindus and Muslims, they are having a lot of trouble due to which it is difficult to have peace. That is why there needs to be more tolerance towards each other to make peace.

About India (*Gya gar Yul Kyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No June 1927)

Earlier in the place called Lahul, there was a big fight between the Hindus and Muslims. To curb the fight the government sent its soldiers there and now that place should be peaceful. Big

people say that the people who made this fight happen are the clever politicians. Out of those fighters, the ones who killed people have been made to flee. The government should be thanked that guns were not fired and the fight was resolved.

Just like the government sends representatives to other countries, a famous Indian man called Shastri, was sent by the Indian people as their representative to a place called Africa. He tried very hard to educate his fellow men so that they can attain freedom. If more people like him are there then India can reach its path of freedom very soon¹⁷⁶. (Meaning of this passage not very clearly written by the writer)

News about India (Gyagar Yul): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No August 1927)

There are many races in India. Firstly, the Hindus and the Tibetans have the same skin colour. Their body, arms and legs are thinner than the Tibetans and the religion is that of the *tamzey* (Brahman). Many of their historical books are in Sanskrit. The language is known by few scholars and is not known by many. There is a lot of discrimination due to caste, because of which *mang rik* (lower castes people) and *dolba* (harijans or dalits) are not allowed to be taught scriptures or be educated. If someone else is reciting a *chos* (dharma), they are not allowed to even to listen that. Many Muslims came from Mongolia and *Tagzing/ Xinjiang* to India and ruled many provinces here. Many people were forcefully converted to Islam and changed the names of the people in Farsi and the language they spoke was called Urdu. That language is known by the Indians. During another time, traders and army from Europe reached India. Slowly many of the provinces were ruled by the English. Even now India is under the rule of the ruler of England. The Europeans like the teachings of Christ. Monarchical rule was over and *Chosthim* () has been declared. There is no bias, we have understood. Burning of a woman on her husband's pyre—this tradition is now over. Robbers and murderers have been prosecuted. There are attempts to teach script to people. Good roads have been made in different *yul* (lands).

News about India (Gyagar ey Yul Na): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No December 1927)

¹⁷⁶The meaning of this passage is not very clearly written by the writer.

In the city called Bombay, in India there are children who have not even come of age and have been married -- there are 74000 children in total¹⁷⁷. Out of which 3,570 girls have already become widows. Children who have married between 5-10 years are 3,50,000 in total. Those children who have not reached 1 year of age and are married are 2,000 in total. Those young girls who are still in the lap of their mothers but have become widows already, there has been a talk about a meeting who are against such practices. Mahatma Gandhi is trying his best to finish this bad custom but the *tamzhey*¹⁷⁸ are against him. If the people who are not capable of completing work (*go mi chod*) and widows are helped by good people and these bad customs abolished then there is a hope of good news.

India (*Tha yul*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No December 1927)

The responsibility to bring peace between the Hindus and the Muslims has been taken by the representative (of the British Empire)¹⁷⁹. The representative has collected the important members in order to solve the issue through talks. That is why, it is very clear that the representative (of British Empire) is a real friend for India.

News from India (*Gyagar Yul Na*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No April 1928)

In the first month, the English government has sent its representatives (*da pon*) to different parts of India to check how much more independence is justified to the people. The public fought with those representatives. That is like harming oneself. Not just that, the Indians who are 60 crore in total are a lot. If they are educated then they will automatically get independence. We hope that God (*konchog*) because of your benevolence we will gain wisdom and education and such a time will come soon.

Meeting about making new channels in Punjab (*Punjab Yul Na Mayur Sardu ko vey dab*):

The British government is making new plans for the people under them to get rich. In order to grow new agricultural crops on the empty plains in Punjab, the government is planning to channelize water from Satluj River through big channels. The government has kept 27 crore

¹⁷⁷ Child marriage in Bombay.

¹⁷⁸ Hindu Brahmins were called 'tamzhey' in Tibetan.

¹⁷⁹ *Gyal sab*: like a representative of (present) an embassy. Also a representative of the British empire.

rupees as the budget for these to be made. In 12 years if this channel which is worth 50,000 *paksat*¹⁸⁰ is made then there will be a lot of agricultural crops in Punjab. Not just that, near the Himalayan mountains a very big water reservoir might be made. If that is made then there will be no danger of shortage of water. And from the water of Satluj river electricity will be generated. For the people of other places an electricity plant in the place Haribagh near Mandi, has already started generating electricity from water. This electricity will reach Kullu and other villages. Right now Kullu is called a wonderful (*skitpo*) place. After 12 years if rail and electricity and road are made very soon then that Kullu will be a different from present Kullu. There will be no danger of famine in Punjab. May such kind of helpful (*tin chan*) rule of the government remain firm (*tanpo*).

About India (Gyagar Yul): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No July 1928)

In the place called Malikpur in Punjab, on an auspicious day the Muslims took a cow to be slaughtered for an offering when the Hindus stopped them. The Muslims were not happy about that. Both the sides fought. In order to stop the physical fight, the army came. Even the army could not handle the fight and had to kill 190 people by firing guns at all of them.

India (Gyagar): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No September 1928)

A famous English Sahib has written a collection of 11 books about languages of lands¹⁸¹ (*yul skad variants* and many other different languages (*kad lug*). There are 1_9 *yul skad* and 554 *skad luk*¹⁸². Languages that are close are being studied. The 11 texts took 55 years to be completed. It took many years to understand different languages and customs of places. This work is about understanding different culture and customs of India.

News about India (Gyagar ey kacha): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No March 1933)

Representatives of India and England have tried to make decisions thrice but have been unable to come to any conclusion. Whatever they talked about, they were not able to come to a conclusion

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¹⁸¹ Yul Skad would mean language of people from lands.

¹⁸² There is a slight confusion about the use of the word yul skad and kad luk. Kad luk might mean families of languages and yul skad might mean local dialects from different lands. Please check.

hence, the *dos pon*¹⁸³/ ministers are going to look into the matter and come to a conclusion very soon. The people in India who are against the government are heard to have reduced. In the month of (Jan/feb the word is not legible in the facsimile) in the land called Bombay, a Hindu boy was playing with a ball in a field and the ball hit a Muslim Pathan. The Pathan was angry and scolded the children, while he was scolding; a Hindu *Chowkidar* reached there and scolded the Pathan. Slowly, people from these two religions reached there and fought. Two Musalmaan and one Hindu died. 20 Hindu and 5 Musalmaan and 1 Parsi were injured.

About India (*Gyagar Yul*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No November 1933)

On the 23rd of October, a very famous man called Phatel/Patel passed away in England. That is the news. When he was alive, he said—

“May my Indian and all my friends be blessed. Before I die, I pray that Indians get a clean Independence.”

When he was alive, he fought for freedom. Many Indians are sad for his death.

Kashmir (*Khachul*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No September 1934)

The people have elected many representatives from their respective villages. The work of the government is expected to be good and safe (*tanpo*).

2.1.3 International news (News about different countries)

From the country of Denmark (Denmark Yul Na): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January 1927)

To educate the womenfolk, there is a very good way. A young daughter of a rich family, along with her accompanies started a school so that everyone can be educated. After few years, the school started to grow and many girls went there to study. Many people think that a woman’s responsibility should be to do different works at home and raise children. Now even in India, the

¹⁸³ Ministers who make decisions.

thoughts of educated women have grown. The schools for girls in Denmark include many facilities like studying, writing and tailoring. Now, even in India educated women are studying to become doctor, minister, nurse and an advocate. If one looks at a woman's body then it might look weak but if you look at her wisdom, then they are equal to men. Now people from different regions and religions should not treat their womenfolk badly like their servants, but treat them well and protect them.

About the country of Italy (*Italy yul ki kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January 1927)

It has been forty years since the government of Italy has become weak and due to that the country has become less powerful. During that time, a man called Mussolini became the prime minister and did many useful things for the country. He looks after the country and is not afraid of anyone. If one asks, what he did, firstly, he tried to sell different products to other countries; secondly, bread and eatables used to be of bad quality earlier, due to which those products did not sell. He cleaned and improved the quality of the flour and hence increased the sale of bread and related eatables. Thirdly, he wanted to introduce railway so that it would benefit the people. But many opposed him, but since he was a leader who took responsibility for his country and did not get scared to risk his own life. Five men tried to kill him by gun but they could not kill him and even then Mussolini would not deter until he completed his work for his people. Sometimes, a truthful person is searched for in each country..... (not clear)

About the country of Germany (*German yul kyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January 1927)

Due to the war, the Germans are striving hard to keep themselves happy and their country peaceful. Their race is spreading very fast. There is a danger of shortage of food supply therefore; many items are in the process of being sold to others. These days, Germans and English business men are making plans to sell and exchange products with each other. So, these kinds of businesses would bring peace between the two countries and understanding of each other's opinions. If people do not connect with each other then there will be danger of prejudice and wrong perspective against the other.

British discuss about their colonies (*Angrez gyi gyal khag so so' i kor dab tong wa*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January1927)

The rule of the English has become powerful in the world. If you ask the name of the biggest colonies, they are in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India and Africa, which include five countries. There is one representative each for each colony during the discussion. And these days they have met in London, a place in England. If you ask why they have met there, firstly, it is to bring unity among everyone under the King of England. Secondly, to discuss the problems among the people and how to deal with those problems. Thirdly, to exchange goods and do business with each other. These are the reason why they have met. If the agendas of everyone are agreed upon, then the English rule will prosper.

News about China (*Gyanag yul kyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January1927)

There is still a lot of bad news from China because of which robbers are getting good opportunities to rob. In the land called Canton, the Chinese soldiers fled towards north and a big group of robbers have been heard of going towards Canton. That is because the Chinese soldiers have separated among each other in different groups, and on the Yangtse River the Chinese are still firing cannon at the English boats. The general Young San has not been able to take control over his soldiers. The robbers have arrested a lot of Chinese soldiers and put them in jail however, since they did not have enough food to feed the prisoners, they were released. Those robbers have also beaten few Americans, English Christians and kept them in prison. Twenty five English men went to the Chinese camp and released their fellow men from the Chinese captivity. These 25 men must be very brave. There were 20,000 Chinese soldiers and their guns and cannons were fired incessantly towards the Englishmen even then they were able to free their fellowmen.

News about different countries (*Yul so so 'i kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January1927)

On the 13th of November the ship of France 'Aluwei', started travelling from the place Jzha phang (Japan) to Hongkong in China.

From the land called 'Jai', 26 robbers robbed \$20,000.

News about Turkey (*Turuk yul kyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January 1927)

Earlier women could not come out of their home but nowadays, that tradition has been abolished. Now, women wear clothes like women from Europe, where women wear makeup, lipstick, modern clothes, smoke cigarettes, drink tea at the hotel and talk to men. These changes came about in the last few years and people find it strange. Generations of traditions have been finished. Wrong traditions have also been abolished is a sign of education. May Lord guide them in the new ways of learning good traditions from bad.

News about China (*Gyanak kyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No February 1927)

Long time ago, many people thought that the Chinese could only plant rice and eat rice. Nowadays such kind of thoughts seems useless. The Chinese have become educated and learnt many *thim*/ways from the Europeans and left their culture. Silk, *cosheen* and many varieties of cloths are manufactured in factories. They have become well educated. Just like the working hours in other countries, they are demanding for 8 hour work hours, 8 hour sleeping hours and few hours for leisure. This custom can be adhered to by the people living in the cities and not in the country because the farmers have excessive work. Because sometimes they have to work both during the day as well as night.

The sayings of the world,

“If you always work and not play, men get bored.

Work, leisure and sleep should be maintained on time.”

About Tibet (*Pod Yul*):

News about different provinces of England (*Angrez yi yul gyi gyal khak so so 'i kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No April 1927)

In the different colonies of England, in that discussion, all the representatives have come together and decided that the agenda discussed earlier i.e. for all to stay peaceful, trade amongst the countries and to rescue each other during difficult situations, have been agreed upon.

News about Belgium (*Belguim yul kyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No April 1927)

In the eleventh month last year, the prince married the niece of the ruler of Soviet¹⁸⁴ and the people of Belgium were very happy to see the huge marriage procession. The total amount of people was said to have been 3,000 during the marriage. Now there is more hope of peace among both the countries.

News about China (*Gyanak yul kyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No April 1927)

Internal problems have increased in China. Russian terrorists are spreading rumors about the war plans of the English to the Chinese. Therefore the Chinese are now troubling the English more. Therefore the English have requested their government and the government have sent few of their war ship towards Canton. There is danger for the English as their food grains are getting scarce. The English are not really happy to go to war. The English are of the opinion that the Chinese government's freedom stays intact, that is their hope. The war ships that were sent by the English were to protect their own men. If the terrorists called Bolsheviks leave China, then i think that their country can be peaceful again. The English government asked their English men in China to yield (*tzotpa gom*). The internal problems in China were due to the Bolshevik terrorists who are trying, not just in China but in every place in this world, to be against each other.

News about Italy (*Italy yul gyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No April 1927)

The news of Italy, is good and definite day by day. Mussolini is making new ways to make sure that the money of his country is not drained elsewhere. Other men are allowed to come to his country. And in the place called Rome, the roads are being made wide. Old and dilapidated houses are in the process of being broken down to make new houses. Old streets, where rail and wooden wheeled carts were driven upon, were narrow. Now underground railways are being constructed in the cities. Not just that, new playgrounds are being made and anyone's children

¹⁸⁴ This could be reference to the Russian Soviet Union.

can go there to play. Due to such things, this land had become more joyous and peaceful than before.

News about China (*Gyanak Yul Gyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1927)

If we write the news of China in detail, it will not fit well in this newspaper. In the month of November the English sent 9 war ships and 2000 soldiers to the Chinese so that they can fight the terrorists. In December, the people from Canton robbed the goods of the people of Hanko. The English residing in Hanko, out of which 300 women and children suffered a lot of abuse, fled to Shanghai. The English representatives who were sent there could not make arrangements to make peace with the Chinese. This was because they could not recognise who the Chinese minister was. The English wanted these to be done:

1. They wanted that the European traders not to be troubled.
2. The Europeans staying there, if they have any problems were to be resolved by the Chinese Ministers.
3. The taxes levied by the Chinese government had to be collected properly.
4. To make sure that the Europeans are not ruled by the Chinese.
5. The soldiers who were sent from England to China were not going to be at war with the Chinese, if the English were not troubled.

In the month of February, the Chinese and the English went to war in Shanghai, in which the Chinese were defeated. In Hanko, the Chinese and the English made arrangements for peace and from then on there was no war/trouble.

The tour of the prince of England (*Angrez gyi Gyaltras Chey la Skyot pey Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1927)

The name of the English prince is Albert. He and his wife left for New Zealand and Australia. The travel was very long. That was because, the road was 34,000 miles long and it takes 6 months to travel such a distance. They reached the place called Canberra and inaugurated that as the capital and they will soon send new members there.

News about Japan (*Japan ey Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1927)

There was a massive earthquake in Japan that was very destructive. This was one of the first massive earthquakes in the last 73 years. There is news of 2,000 people dying there.

About the Christians from China (*Gyanak ey Na Naskang Ey ma shik ka ey Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1927)

The Padres who are living in China are being rumoured about and given a bad name. A scholar from China, Hu Shi said that the padre Sahibs brought medicine, school, library and other knowledgeable things. For example, the bad traditions of tying the feet of women and having opium were reduced due to the teachings of the padres. Instead of bad mouthing them, they have done a lot of good work here and you should praise them. **Writer: E D.**

News about China (*Gyanak Yul Gyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No June 1927)

Even now, there is no sign of the bad traditions dying out from China. Right now it is very difficult to trust the Chinese. That is because; if a General is paid more money, then the ministers who rule are opposed. Soldiers from Shangtung are in Shanghai and are trying to go to *Chilling* (Western countries) however, the English soldiers defeated them and so they could not go out. Bolshevik terrorists have taught bad things to the people in Canton and they have killed many workers. In a factory 2,000 men left their work and went home due to this problem. This is because the factory owner, wrote something bad on a piece of paper and that was erased by the factory workers and due to that they ran away from that place. English women were troubled by the Chinese and therefore they are now hiding in the English war ships.

In Peking: The Chinese have caught one terrorist and put him in jail. Even now, the Bolsheviks are ruling the people in China.

News about China (*Gyanak Yul Gyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1927)

In the second month, i.e. February, the soldiers living in Canton, captured the land called Nanking and killed a few foreigners who were living there. American and English embassy have held a meeting regarding this. They have threatened the Chinese and said that if they do not stop these wrong doings before tomorrows' sunrise then they will bombard them with cannon. While rescuing their fellowmen, a few foreign soldiers are told to have died during this event. I think that

if the women and children of foreigners do not flee to their own camps there is a definite danger of dying.

News about Japan (*Japan Yul Kyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No July 1927)

Japan is a country, which has three to four big islands and many smaller islands put together. Manju (?) and is on the east side of the country. The weather is not same as *Pod* (Tibet). There are few human races (*mi rig*) as well. Earthquakes are very frequent. The houses and villages in Milee (? Name of village) are sometimes destroyed completely. There are small water bodies and no big water bodies. There are not big carnivorous animals. Flora, Tsa Shing, different types of horns and vegetables. Gold, Silver, copper, iron, coal, prcious gems like ruby are also available in abundance. The people here are of better quality than the Chinese. Each year many European ships reach there. Those qualities are learnt from the Europeans. They do not eat any othe meat other than fish. They drink a lot of tea and smoke a lot. Their religion is not similar to the Buddhist religion. If the king gets angry at a person, or if the king is replied back to by a person, that person has to cut himself at his stomach with a big knife and jump into the water¹⁸⁵ (therefore killing himself. ?)

News about Misr (*Misr Yul Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. August 1927)

The king of the land Egypt (*Misr*), named Phuat, reached England. The king of England gave him a grand reception and was a good host. Earlier, the king and the people of Misr, wanted to keep their own commander for the English force that was stationed at Misr. However the kings of both the countries, Misr and England, could not agree on this and after the kings met face to face, they cleared their doubts. And after the English began ruling over Misr, since then every year it was better ruled. Not just that, the English taught various kinds of education. The educated people wanted to revolt against the Egnlish in Misr. Therefore, the English need to look after those countries.

News about Australia (*Australia Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. August 1927)

¹⁸⁵ The Japanese tradition of killing oneself, is called ‘ ‘ disobedience to the king.

The prince of Australia, Albert and his wife had left for a long journey and now they have reached back to their own country. The husband and the wife went to Australia¹⁸⁶ and the couple are closer now. And the people of the five countries trust the rule of the English and the English land has become stronger.

News about China (Gyank Yul Kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. August 1927)

Compared to before, China seems more peaceful now. The Chinese prosecuted many of the Bolshevik terrorists. And the rule of the government is stronger now and there are chances for peace in this country.

About different countries (Yul So So 'i kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. October 1927)

To gain more knowledge and to educate the people, the government of Afghanistan have opened a school. In that school farming and the knowledge of using telegraph has started.

Earlier, in the north of Australia, there were 62,000 humans but now there are only 59,000 humans. Earlier those men use to eat human flesh and stay naked. With the coming of the teachings of Chrsit, old men and women have left those customs and have become good beings.

About South America (America Lo chok so): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. October 1927)

In the south of America, railways are being constructed for transportation purposes. For the rail to run, the land has to be made plain and iron layed down. The rail is been laid down for 160 *pakshat* from Buenos Aires to Peru.

Uncountable fish have landed on the fields in Burma due to huge floods. People are killing those fish with knives. There are a many *chang khi*¹⁸⁷ in Urus. Sometimes these *chan khi*'s come bite many humans. In order to safeguard the people, army has been installed.

News about different countries (Yul So So i Kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. December 1927)

¹⁸⁶ They are from Australia.. ?? Please check

¹⁸⁷ Cross of a dog and a wolf.

In the place called New Guinea, in America, lots of gold has been found. These days many people have gone to dig gold. In that land there are many cannibals who live there. They catch and kill the people who dig gold. Sometime earlier, out of the five Australians who had gone there to dig gold, the cannibals killed three of them, one escaped and one has still not returned. Even with such danger in order to benefit one's own self, people are crowding those places and considering gold more precious than human life. Most of the people are attached to treasure and temporary wealth of this world and tend to lose their precious life. *Kyamgon* Jesus said—

“Wherever your most precious thing is, even your heart is there.”

Even though the mountains in European lands are not higher than the Himalayas, but one mountain is very high. A ten year old boy from Switzerland was climbing the mountain, at a height of 14,000 *Thu*¹⁸⁸ a strong storm came and he could not climb any higher. In order to climb a high mountain in Tibet few Italians sent in a request to the government to climb it but we do not know whether the request was sanctioned or not. In earlier newspaper Tibetan monks have written that if someone climbs the mountain, it would bring problems.

However, people who are wise, in order to be more knowledgable they climb the mountain step by step.

About freedom of the people of Go yal¹⁸⁹ (*Go Yal un la Rangwang*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. January 1928)

In the place called Sierra Leone in Atica¹⁹⁰, 20,00,000 (20 lac) people who were slaves got their freedom. What will they do after their freedom is not known. Sometime earlier, in America when Americans got freedom, they killed their minister (*ponbo*) and took away their home, land and wealth. People thought that these *Go yals* (slaves) in Atica would do the same but they did not. That was because these *Goyals* are Christians who lived very well after their freedom. They did not harm the earlier ministers at all. Even when they were not independent they did not have to worry about their food or clothing as they were given those by the ministers. Now after freedom

¹⁸⁸ ‘Thu’ is the measure used earlier that measures from elbow to tip of the middle finger of an adult.

¹⁸⁹ Go yal means someone who is forced to work under another. Here, slaves.

¹⁹⁰ Here it is pronounced Atica but it could be Africa as Sierra Leone got its independence from UK in 1961.?? Please check. IT is Africa. Domestic slaves were freed around this time in Sierra Leone.

they do not have food and home to stay in. Therefore they find it very difficult. They feel as if they are like children who are useless/pathetic and left to go. Some think that it would be better to work under their older minister, so they are going back to them. Some are working hard so are able to be useful.

Now that the *goyal pa* are free and do not have that name anymore, even we will congratulate the people of Sierra Leone.

News from Japan (*Japan Yul Na*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. April 1928)

The Japanese have become experts after Europeans taught them about technology. In the place called Tokyo, they have dug a big hole underground where rail can run inside the hole. The lines¹⁹¹(*remo*) below is an example of the rail that runs inside the holes underground. There are uncountable and continuous people and cars that are travelling here and there in different streets and bazaar. It has become easy and beneficial for the pedestrians after the construction of the underground way. There was a big earthquake in Tokyo and many houses were destroyed, still then there is no danger of the underground tunnel to collapse (*dipches*).

News from Europe (*Chi lling Yul Na*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. April 1928)

This year the weather in England has not been good throughout the winters. News of a lot of flood there has been heard. The roads and streets are full of water and the people are using boats to travel. Poor people are suffering more. The water from the flood reached the first floor of the houses and swept away their money as well as other things. Since England is surrounded by water, therefore there are more rainfalls there than other countries.

China (*Gyanag*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. April 1928)

In the eleventh month, news of famine in a place called Shingtung has been heard. People numbering 4,00,000 (4 lac) do not have anything to eat. This year there has been only 10 khuru profit instead of the usual 100 khuru¹⁹². Many people do not have anything to eat, so they are on

¹⁹¹ Remo literally means designs but the writer here means the diagram that has been created using lines.

¹⁹² 1 Khuru= the amount that can be carried on one's back.

the verge of eating barks of trees as well as straw. Robbers and the incapable army have taken away the remaining wheat and barley (*toh* and *nas*) and troubling them a lot.

About Persia (*Iran Nam Farsi*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. July 1928)

In the land of *Farsi*/Persia, young girls weave carpets. Those carpets are called '*zilcha*'. Mothers take contract of weaving carpets from others and make their daughters weave carpets. In four years they collect 400 *mul* /rupees. If girls work at a young age, then when they grow older, they have a lot of problems giving birth. If a lot of work is given at a young age, then there is problem giving birth. That is why Europeans are requesting the Farsi government to give less work to the young girls.

Afganhistan (*Ab ganistan*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. September 1928)

In the land Afghanistan, according to the Muslim religious tradition, one man can marry more than one wife. The king of Afghanistan is not happy about that, he collected the higher officials and told them that having many wives is unethical. This affects the governance in a negative way. A solution to finish that needs to be found. This is what the king says. "From now on, if any high or low official of the government has more than one wife, then that person will have to quit their job." Not just that, he ordered his people not to consume alcohol (*chang* / *arak*). The king of Afghanistan has given a beneficial advice to the people just like a father or a grandfather would advice their children. May the blessings of God pour down on him and him rule be firm (*tanpo*). The Afghan King is buying three huge ships from Europeans.

About one of the coldest places called Labrador (*Labrador Chawa shing tu tang wey yul Kor*):
(Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No march 1929)

There is a very cold place in the north side of the world. The effect of the cold is so much that their livestock like horses, cow and *ra-luk* (sheep-goats) do not survive at all. There are no *du*¹⁹³ (grains) and food crops that grow there. The race of the people who live there are called Es ki mo. Although they look similar to Tibetans but their language is not the same. That place is very far from other places. Even wood is very scarce. Food is very poor. They live by killing white

¹⁹³ Du rig: peas, wheat, toh, rice etc.. Basically grains.

bear, fish and animals of the mountains¹⁹⁴. The animals are less now and famine strikes that place. During summers they go to far away places to catch fish. A fish called 'kong' is used for its oil. They eat it and sell it to the Europeans. Summer weather is warm.(?) In autumn, when the snow falls, the houses get destroyed and they build their house with ice and live there. When the snow freezes because of cold, then they cut it with knives and build houses like mountains. Please look at the houses made of snow in the *rimo* (lines or diagram) shown below. The houses made of snow do not melt until spring. There is a sledge which is pulled by 6, 7, or 20 dogs to go here and there. In order to whip dogs, there are whips that are 15 *thu* long. The *rimo* (lines or diagram) below, show five people with parcels on a wooden sledge. They are believers of gods. They say that there is an angry *lhamo* (goddess) below the surface of the water. In order to catch many fish, they make many offerings to the goddess. Such offerings are foolish. These days they have left making offerings or believing in the goddess and have started having faith in the teachings of Jesus. Jesus can protect each sinner. Even though their life is more difficult to live than other people however they stay happy. This is what is there in the teachings—

If a person is happy with his/her religion and content with the wealth he has, then that man is the richest.

Eskimos are happy with the teachings (of Jesus). Even though they live in cold and difficult region, they have the ability to live through those situations because of *chos*/ teachings.

Country of Iraq (*Iraq Yul*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No December 1929)

It has been 10 years since the English government has taught the Iraq government to govern their land and also about politics. These days the Iraqi government are said to be able to rule their own land and use politics. This year after two or three years, they might get freedom soon.

About the Emperor of England (*Angrez Gyalpo Chenpo*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No December 1929)

Last year our King George the fifth, had lung disease and as everyone knows, he stayed in danger for three to four months. These days he is doing well. His health is like before and he

¹⁹⁴ Like deer, etc.

went for hunting. Few months before the English thought he would not be well. The prince went to Africa, his father's health became ill and they had to return from the journey. The people and supporters prayed to the god for his recovery and the king's health recovered.

Afghanistan: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No December 1929)

Due to internal problems in Afghanistan, in one year four people came to power (rule). First the King Aman Nul lah, governed his country with the rules of Europeans and that was not agreed upon by the people and they dethroned (*phing tangs*) him. The second ruler was Inayat Ali, brother of the first king, after ruling for a bit, even he had to flee. The third was Shukur Habiba Allah, he was the one who dethroned the first two kings, he was unjust to his people and even he was thrown out by the people. These days a minister called Nadir Khan is the ruler.

By looking at the news of the lands, Jesus says this—

If there are fights in countries then it would get destroyed. If there is fight in a house, then it would not be secure(tanpo) and peaceful.

News about different countries (*Yul Chogs So Soi' Gyus*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January 1933)

Due to the winter weather, the mails have not been running therefore there is no new news. Therefore, I will write news from last month that I have not yet written. In the land called Farsi, there are many oil mines. The Farsi and the English both are working together as partners. On 15 December 1930/1932 (?), the Farsi took away the share of the English and took it all away unethically. The English inquired about it and found out that the Farsi took away the American share illegally against their agreement. And even though they have already told the Farsi about this situation, it has yet not been resolved. The English have requested their case to be taken by the League of Nations. Whatever result will come out will be known only in spring.

Japan and China (*Japan dang Gyanak*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No March 1933)

Japan and China are at war. The Japanese are throwing bombs in places called '*Je ho vah*' / '*Je ho la*' and destroying those places. 200 Chinese soldiers fled. The Japanese commander and his soldiers have attacked the Great Wall of China.

On the 4th of March there was an earthquake in Japan due to which 1,500 people died. 700 people have been missing and yet have not been found. And 300 people have been injured. Around 500 houses have been destroyed and people have become homeless. The city Tokyo is not secure, people cannot build their homes high as the earthquake would come again and again. The people are in suffering and my heart is sorrowful.

About England (*Angrez Yul*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No March 1933)

In the land of England, a communicable disease through cough has spread. People who are of high or low status; rich or poor, all are dying. Other than that, in all big cities, there are those who do not have any work and due to that even in England there is less food to eat. Those who had wealth fled, those who did not have anything to eat and they also taught them many different kinds of trades.

About an American aeroplane (*America ey Lungtu*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1933)

The biggest aeroplane in America caught fire and fell in the water. 74 people are heard of being dead. Some people think that the aeroplane was struck by lightning from the sky.

Germany (German): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1933)

In Germany, soldiers called the ‘Nazam¹⁹⁵’ are heard of hitting the people called ‘Yahuda pa¹⁹⁶’. Yahuda people/Jews are rich and have a different language therefore the former think that they will destroy their land and are attacking them. The people of this race who have settled in other places, are against the Germans and say that their actions are not justifiable. The Yahuda people have been chosen by their God Yehovas as his people and therefore, since they have been tortured, God should take revenge. It is important to be careful because earlier Russians harmed the Yehudas and then they had enemies.

Russia (*Urus*): Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1933)

¹⁹⁵ Nazis.

¹⁹⁶ Yahuda-pa meaning the Jewish people.

The Bolsheviks from Russia arrested 6 Americans, saying they were terrorists and blamed them without any reason and did injustice. They made those imprisoned accept that they were terrorists. Among them, one was imprisoned for three years, one for two years and two were thrown out of the country. The Americans were very unhappy with this decision and delinked all their trade relations with Russia. Sir H. W. Emerson has been heard of going to Punjab in the stead of the Lieutenant Governor General.

Japanese soldiers reached the land of Peking in China and the Chinese are topping them at their doors? *go kug duk* Soon these two government (Japan and China) are heard of coming to an agreement (*nang dik*).

Yarkand (Yarken): Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No May 1933)

People of Khomal from Khotan and Kashgar in Yarkend, have gone against the Chinese and those robbers have killed a few Indian traders. A few have been heard of fleeing towards India to save their life. In the land called Urum chi, the Chinese and Russians have sold their property. They are planning to flee and come towards India.

(Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No July 1933)

The people who are against the government and those who are not listening to them are becoming less in number. In the month of June, 1800 prisoners have been released. In the month of May 9,144 prisoners were in prison. Due to God's grace China and Japan's war has ceased. They have made agreements and are peaceful now. Even the soldiers have gone back to their respective homes and according to the earlier rules; trade has also come back to its normal routine.

Russia (*Urus*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No July 1933)

In the earlier newspaper, we wrote about Russian Bolsheviks who had beaten up a few Americans and put them into prison, and the Americans have decided to cut all trade links with the Russians. Now the Russians are regretting their actions, and have released and allowed the prisoners to go back to their homes.

World discussions (*Zam ling tab Chen*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No July 1933)

Representatives from all four sides (meaning all sides) of the world met in England in order to keep the world peaceful; to make sure there is no war; to make sure that trade goes well in all the countries and are making other decisions as well. However, they have not been able to come to a conclusion even after the discussions. If people do not trust each other, show selfishness and anger then the news will become worse and more dangerous than this.

(Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No September 1933)

The king of Iraq has passed away. The king had reached England, after meeting the king of England, while he met with different people of different countries and looked at different kinds of works; he suddenly had a disease of the heart¹⁹⁷ and passed away suddenly. His body was taken to the place called ‘Hepa’¹⁹⁸, where around 15,000 people came together to mourn his death. They would sing ‘Allah Uh Akbar’ and mourn. Then, his body was taken from Hepa to place called ‘Baghdad’ on an aeroplane by the English. This dead king was a reliable friend of the English King.

Nepal (*Bal po*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No September 1933)

The wife of the king of Nepal was unwell. On the 17th of September, two doctors and a female nurse from England flew for two days on an aeroplane and reached Nepal. The wisdom of humans¹⁹⁹ has spread due to which thousands of miles have been covered in two days and that is very astounding.

News about Yahuda (*JewsYul Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No September 1933)

These days people of Yahuda are going back from Germany to their land, due to which Iraq grew jealous and hastened. In a big fight 3 Iraqi and 1 policeman died and 22 people got injured. The reason for this is that the Iraqi people like tilling their land, however Yahuda people are good at building home, factory (Leh khang) and are working in different trade and started different works and have become rich.

World News (*Jigten natsul*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January 1934)

¹⁹⁷ Probably heart attack.

¹⁹⁸ Locate the place HEPA.

¹⁹⁹ This word suggests new technologies.

From now till spring, the news of the work of the world is difficult to tell, that is why I will write some beneficial news here.

News about Japan (*Japan Yul Gyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No January 1934)

There is news about disagreement among the people of Japan and Russia. This means that there was a war in the north side of Russia and China. Many Japanese were stationed there and talked about railways (*chak lam*²⁰⁰) and trade.²⁰¹ In the place called, Man chu ko, a famous man called ‘Phu ie’ became the king. That is the news. He started his political rule from the month of March. Earlier that man worked in the politics in a place called Peking in China. Later, he went against the Chinese government and supported the Manchu.

Now no one can tell whether there will be any agreements between Japan and Russia, because the two countries do not trust each other. Due to that there is danger of conflict anytime. Just like one person can light a small fire which can then light up a whole mountain, just like that, out of both the fighters, even if there is a small fight then there can be a sudden fight among them. Therefore, we are silent and do not side anyone. Please pray that the countries in the east become peaceful.

News about Germany (*German Yul*)²⁰²: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No July 1934)

The government’s work and politics in Germany is not very secure or stable. The king’s rule, whether it will remain like before or a new ruler will rule, there are lots of doubts. The king on one side says that, “If Germany wants me as their king then I am ready to rule.” The circumstances of the country cannot be clearly stated right now. By the grace of God, pray to God for happiness in that country.

About knowing the world (*Jigten ey Gyus*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No September 1934)

²⁰⁰ Chak lam literally means, chak= iron, lam=road. But here it means the railways as it is a road made out of iron bars.

²⁰¹ No information about with whom the Japanese had the talk about trade and railways.

²⁰² Check the political scenario of Germany during 1934.

On 26th August, a person called Par Huang Mu Sang from China came to Tibet along with his servants and a huge entourage. He gave lots of gifts to the monks and not just that, since Lhasa did not have telephone wires, he even gave things which could connect Lhasa to Nang kin. Now the people can talk between these two places. The Chinese Commander, called 'Lieu Phieu' has made the rules better. He has come to terms with those who were against the government. He reached Kashgar in an aircraft through the sky. He is also a kind Christian. He is 40 years old. It has been heard that the Chinese have given more power to the Musalmaans living there since a long time.

About knowing the world (*Jigten gyi Gyus*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No November 1934)

In the month of October, there is news that aeroplanes are competing to see who can go fastest from England to Australia. The fastest one to reach will get the prize of 15,000 Rupees (*mul*). A capable person flew at the height of 11,000 *pakshat* in the sky from England to Australia and reached safely in 2 and half days. Even we should congratulate that capable person. That is because the person had demonstrated different types of knowledge even at the risk of his life. Slowly, people from even the remotet corners of the world, would be able to reach another place in 4 to 5 days.

News about Japan (*Japan Yul Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No November 1934)

The people of Japan have become more knowledgeable and wiser than before. It has been heard that the Japanese are trying to secure lands in different lands in different ways. In the land called Manchu ko, Japanese are installing many types of factories and day by day they are getting more powerful. Not just that, the Japanese people are showing signs of planning to go for war to Russia. One day there will be a big war. Earlier, the plan made by the American, English and Japanese ministers regarding the lessening of warships has not yet been concluded. That was because the Japanese think that the number of their warships should be equal to the number of warships of other countries. Jesus thinks that if there will be no peace between different countries then later there will be a big war.

About knowing the world (*Jigten Gyi Gyus*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No march 1935)

The land called ‘Sar’²⁰³ is between Germany and France. There was a huge war, till sometime back they were under the rule of France, but in December they had to make a decision whether they want to stay under France or Germany. They decided to stay under Germany. This decision did not turn into a war that was by the grace of God. If there are disagreements between other countries as well then negotiations between different countries are able to be made through League of Nations. We would like to thank God for such negotiations. If countries do not have agreements among them then they can sit and talk and make negotiations. If such agreements are made then the world will be peaceful that will spread towards each corner of the world. Not just that, when each person makes an effort to help another then, God who is like a good father to people. If everyone considers each other like brothers and sisters then it will be like the coming of a very good time.

3.2.3 Evangelical news (Maxims, proverbs, stories etc. that have a Christian moral teaching)

This section is interesting as it provides an insight into the proverbs used by the people of the region of Ladakh and Kyelang. The proverbs have been translated into English by me whereas the sections along with the proverbs carrying evangelical messages have been written in the newspaper by the editor.

a)Maxims/ Proverbs/Sayings:

A Maxim (*Tampey Jik*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. April 1927)

Yul gyi nas la,

Yul Gyi Phap Taap.

Translation:

²⁰³ Probably Strasbourg.

If you make alcohol out of the wheat produced in your own place, then ferment it with the ‘*phap*’²⁰⁴ of your own place.

Similarly, whatever is produced in your land is beneficial for that land. If you look at this example from a religious point of view, in your own land if there is only one religion, then it would be seen as very good. If you think about this carefully, then it is like this, many different kind of English products have reached Ladakh and Garja which are beneficial to the people. Many people like those things. Those things include felt and guns; needle and other things although they are not from this land but they are beneficial to the people. By looking at this example, even this can be seen that according to the earlier traditions, the people who are inclined to their deities might not be able to have the wisdom of making new things and technologies. The blessing that has now benefitted the people is the blessing of the teachings of Jesus.

Maxim (*Tampay*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. September 1927)

“*As kuta Shing maan,*

Lowa Sha maan,

Drokpa Mi maan.”

Translation:

As kuta²⁰⁵ is not wood,

Liver is not meat,

Drokpa are not humans.

²⁰⁴ Phap means the fermentation used to ferment beer.

²⁰⁵ *As kuta* is not a tree.

Why this proverb used is because the people of Ladakh are insulting the Drokpa's. They do not consider the Drokpa's as men and do not respect them. From earlier times, different races consider themselves as more important than the other and therefore are proud. Even though the *ib* (face), clothes, language of people from Ladakh and Drokpa are different, not respecting the Drokpas is not justified. Earlier times, even the Europeans used to think the same about themselves but now after the teachings of Christ everyone considers each other as same and are praying to reach heaven²⁰⁶.

Tampay: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. March 1929)²⁰⁷

“*Tak/Lion pawo in na,*

gyab la pung gos.”

Translation:

“Even if a girl is very beautiful,

she would need to carry a child on her lap”

Meaning:

Even if a lion is powerful he would need supporters to fight. As he cannot fight alone.

Even if the girl is very beautiful, when she grows old, she would want to have a child.

Each religion has its own path finder.

Maxims (*Tampay*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. January 1933)

1. *Khatey mitsang pey zos pey chu,*

Tsa tsang jhan la bat ney chi.

²⁰⁶ This interpretation has been provided in the newspaper by the editor.

²⁰⁷ The meaning of this proverb is not very clear, since I could not locate a reference to it.

Translation:

A crow eats unclean things,

And cleans his beak on clean soil. Meaning:

Meaning:

When a crow eats unclean things and then rubs his beak on clean soil he tends to unnecessarily dirty the clean soil.

2. *Dza wo khatay zos,*

Chunkey kha marpo

Translation:

The crow ate,

But the Chough's beak is red.

Meaning:

Someone else is blamed for someone else's deeds just like the bird Chough is blamed due to its red beak but the real culprit who has eaten (something) is the Crow and not the Chough.

(Ladakhi Proverb)

The meaning is that a clever man hides what he does and points at another and says that it was done by the other person.

Maxim (*Tampay*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. November 1934)

“Laziness is the mother of bad actions.”

Most people do not work and stay idle either at market or home. That is the time when bad thoughts come. Not just that, they do many bad actions. Just like that there is another proverb that will be helpful to understand. If you ask what it is, it is here—

“An idle person is like a demon or devil (*duth*)²⁰⁸”

b)Other religious articles:

About the love of God (*Konchog gyi champey kor pey jik*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. February 1927)

Once upon a time there was a ship in which many men were travelling towards south of America, when the ship started to sink in the water. To protect themselves, the people took to the boats. But then, since there was no food on the boats, the people were bound to die. The people on the land were compassionate and decided to save the people on the boats. The people on the boats were troubled by thirst. A man on the land said, “Why don’t you take a hat and drink water from the river?” The people on the boat replied, “If i drink the water of the sea, we will be thirstier”. These people did not know that the water was from the Amazon River and not the sea. The river ran about 200 mile along with the sea. The people on the boat were in the fear of dying if they drank the river water.

Keeping this example in mind, most of the people are actually in the loving care of God, which they do not understand, due to the overwhelming fear of spirits.

There is no limit to God’s love.

[One paragraph- not translated]

About real fatherland²⁰⁹ (*Phayul Nyospo*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. February 1927)

Once upon a time there was a *fakir/Usang*. He roamed about and reached a land. When he looked here and there he saw the king’s palace. He thought it was a *serai*²¹⁰ and when he reached

²⁰⁸ This maxim could be this one- ‘An empty mind is a devil’s workshop’. This is not a Ladakhi proverb.

²⁰⁹ The term *Pha-yul* has two meanings. One means the land of one’s father and literally it means land of father. ‘*Pha*’ means ‘father’ and ‘*ma*’ means ‘mother’ in Tibetan. And when the word ‘Phayul’ is written it denotes fatherland and also the land of the parents. The usage can depend on the context in which it is used. Here it seems to be used for the Father, which is the Christian God and Phayul or fatherland means the land of the father who is the God in the Christian context.

inside, he spread his mat, made of Hyena's skin, on the floor and rested. Meanwhile, one of the king's guards came and got furious at the *fakir* and said, "Why are you here? This is the home of the king. Did you not understand?" In his reply, the *fakir* said, "Even if it's a king's palace, this is a *serai*. I have understood very well that today evening I will stay here and leave in the morning." So, while the king's guard and the *fakir* were arguing, the king reached there. The king angrily said, "Hey *fakir*, can you not make out the difference between a king's palace and a *serai*. You are very strange. You must leave now". The *fakir* folded his hand and said to the king, "King, even if this palace must be your home, I have a question for you. Do not be angered". The king agreed to his request. The *fakir* said, "Who all lived in this palace before you?" The king said, "My grandfather lived here before me". "Who after that", said the *fakir*." "My father", spoke the king. "Who after that?" said the *fakir*. "Then me", said the king. "Then who is going to stay here after you?" "My son", said the king. To this the *fakir* replied, "That means that this palace is a *serai*, right?" No one gets the power to live in this palace permanently. One comes and one goes, just like that, let me stay here tonight and tomorrow i will leave. Even you, the king are also going to leave this place soon."

The king thought about this matter very well. He said, "Really this place is a *serai*. What you have said is true." Since then the king understood that everything in this life is impermanent. To search for permanence, he thought that even though I am a king, I need to search for a life that is everlasting (*Phayul*). In order to do that I need to show my love and kindness to the people, give charity to the poor and find the God who is even greater than me.

Dear people, most of the people think that their fatherland is in this life, they collect wealth, work hard to earn their name in this world to enjoy their life. Now think carefully, when one dies one has to leave one's relatives, friends, wealth and everything else. When people leave to the other side, they die. In death, there is no place to spend the wealth, no place to rule, if one is very poor, there is no room for death to evade you.

²¹⁰ An inn in some eastern countries with a large courtyard that provides accommodation for caravans.

Jesus Christ says, “Food is impermanent, do not cling to it. To benefit in your next life donate it away in charity.”²¹¹ (To be continued in the next issue..)

About Birth and Destiny (*Kewa tang sodnam kyi kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. February 1927)

Many people think that when a man dies, they think they are born again as men but in the book called ‘*Nawey Chutlen*’ this is written:

“I, because of interdependence and cause and effect, have been born as a human and after meeting you my heart is happy”. To this, the teacher replied, “You should remember “What I taught you about Merit (*gewa*), non-virtuous acts (*dikpa*), animals (*choltson*). That is because, for example, even though you have ‘*tsal*’ at home, you look for ‘*tsak*’²¹². Just like that when you do not look at your own mind, do not ask your father and grandfather. Can you remember who you were in your previous birth?” To this, the student replied, “I do not remember what I was, what can I say?” (To be continued in the next edition...)

About real Fatherland²¹³ (*Phayul ngospey kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. March 1927)

In this world, wealth and *dod yon* () and *la zen* () for the rich and the poor has been clearly told by Jesus. My loving friends, all of us have to go away from this world, it is definite. Right now you are alive, everything you eat etc. are impermanent. When you have money etc. you take advantage of it, and when it gets over, what is the use of crying over it. All these are impermanent. In that, before death, it is better to be a friend and be close to one’s father²¹⁴. If you are close to Him then it is the only way to reach heaven. This is because we are sinners, we separate from God. Our hope to reach the heaven is over. If we become friends with God again,

²¹¹ An interesting piece of narrative for the reader. A lesson on one’s fatherland is connected to living an impermanent life which are not based on objects of human existence. The concept of impermanence used in this article seems to be borrowed from Buddhism and used to impart a Christian understanding of leaving this world after death to talk about Jesus. The contradiction here is that there is no next life in Christianity, only heaven or hell, so the use of the concept of next life in this example of a dialogue between a fakir and a king is used to make the target readers, who seem to be Buddhist and understand the concept of ‘next life’ has been used efficiently to give a lesson on giving charity and discouragement towards a worldly engagement towards wealth etc.

²¹² Tsal: a good red colour, tsak: also red colour but not very grand.

²¹³

²¹⁴ Here father denotes the Christian ‘God’.

then there is a way. To meet God, there should be a middle man. That person is *Mashika pey Ishu* (Jesus Christ). He (Jesus Christ) took all our sins and ended God's anger towards us. Even though we are sinners, because of Jesus we have become the children of God. That is why repent for your sins and we can go to Jesus. He will show you right now whether you have become the children of God or not. Then you will reach heaven which is called the real *Phayul*/parents' land.

Nying Tsangma lus pey Kor: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. September 1927)

The people follow their own culture from earlier days till now. The utensils that are kept inside a house are kept shining and clean. If there is a black dot on the outside of any cups or plates (ceramic wares), they say '*Ah kha Kha*²¹⁵', and clean them. Even then, the dirt of the sin inside one's heart is ignored. Dear friend, listen a bit to the teachings of *Skyabgon* Jesus. When he was living in this world, he said this to those who looked clean from the outside, "All of you clean the outside of cups and plates, still then, inside of you, you are full of deception and wrong rules. First clean the inside of cups and plates, the outside will be cleaned later." If what Jesus says is put in brief, it is like this, "first clean your own heart, the body and your actions will automatically be cleaned."

And there are a lot of sayings of '*chi-pa*' (an outsider²¹⁶) and '*nang-pa*' (an insider) and eating food from one and not eating from another is practised a lot. If an insider eats from an outside they make a fuss that they are unclean. During that time Jesus said this, "When one eats something from the mouth, it enters the food pipe and it then gets out as waste. One would not become unclean, still then when bad words come out of one's mouth then people become unclean". That is because there are bad thoughts in heart, killing another, etc. (other bad deeds). Due to these bad deeds people are also making people unclean. For that, no matter what kind of rule of the lands that you follow, becoming unclean is not due to the rules but becoming unclean is due to the bad deeds. One will not become clean. That is why educated people are not following such old, whether its rules of dharma or rules of lands, and useless rules and have left them. That is why keeping a clean heart is important and that is now known by everyone.

²¹⁵ '*Ah kha kha*' is usually an expression among people in Keylang which means 'chi chi' in Hindi.

²¹⁶ Chi-pa, 'chi' means outside; 'nang' means 'inside' and 'pa' is used an accusative word. So these words are used in the Buddhist religious sense of a person understanding what's inside one's mind and body can be called a 'nang-pa' or a Buddhist and a person who does not is called a 'chi-pa' or a Non-Buddhist.

c)Articles on Christianity:

An example of a prayer book (*Monlam Deb Pey Pey*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.October 1927)

Some people trust in themselves and think that they are themselves truthful that they do not respect others. Jesus Christ has said this—

Two men went to the prayer room (*Chot khang*) to pray. One was of higher caste and one lower. The one of higher caste stood up and said this to *Konjog* (Jesus), “I am not good and trustworthy like other men. I have done many bad deeds, still I will not danches/ will people of lower caste. I will make offerings. Once a week I will observe two days of *Nyung nas*²¹⁷. Whatever wealth I collect I will offer 10% of it to you.” Still then, the person of lower caste who had stood there for a long time could not even see towards the sky. While thrusting his chest he said, “*Konjog*, I, who is a sinner, please look at me and think of me.”

I would say to all of you that this second man had a better heart than the other and he went home. Whoever thinks that he is higher becomes lower and whoever looks at himself as lower actually goes higher. This is what Jesus says.

About good human (*Mi Tampa*²¹⁸ *Nam Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.January 1928)

This world which has been created has many religions and races of people. Many people do not believe in creation due to their own selfishness and foolishness. Apart from many Buddhist yogis, many people who meditate upon on Jesus have also come (to this world). One very good monk called *Si mi yon* (Simon) is well disciplined in Christian religion. Other monks spoke badly about him, due to which he was thrown out of monastery. Then, Simon built a six *thu*²¹⁹ high home and lived there for 30 years. His benefactors gave him food and clothes. Just like that due to changes in the weather, communicable diseases spread. Many good monks died. A man called Tho lu mu lived 50 years in a meditation house (*tsam khang*). He made a coffin (*ro gam*) of stones by digging on stones. Along with that, wherever you travel from the East to the west,

²¹⁷ Buddhist practise of meditation when fasting is done for a day and a night.

²¹⁸ Good.

²¹⁹ Thu=Length of the arm from elbow to the middle finger of an adult.

there are a lot of meditators and practioners of dharma who are suffering a lot. Some sleep on the roadside; some are hurting their body by making it dry up like a dry branch. Although good men are seekers of truth, but they cannot take care of poor men and clever men. Now a person who does not live in the mountains but comes down to the village instead and gives good advice, then the poor will be taken care of and really see the path. The suffering of people will really be tended to. That person is better that a spiritual man. A man who is not selfish and gives charity is better that a man who is selfish and makes himself suffer in order to learn the universal truth (*chos*).

Do all sentient beings need religion ? (Sem chan tham chad la chos gos min): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.May 1928)

Like a poisonous tree's roots, branches, trunk all have poison, such a tree will not have a good seed (*dasbu*). Just like a person whose life (*lus*), mind (*sem*), actions (*yal lak*) is that of a sinner; that person will never attain the path to liberation. For example, if all the people of the world have communicable disease then there will be no one to help the patients. Those people will not be able to even take care of themselves. If all people are sinners then there will be no one to take care of oneself or the people. A *kyamgon* or a saviour will not be there among these people. And the god of all the religions is one. A lie is seen as a lie by everyone. From the starting to the end of the teachings (*chos*) are the same. Since religions are different therefore there are disagreements between religions. Josphe Gergan

New Year (*Lo Soma*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.January 1934)

To all the reader friends of the newspapers, Christian and Sangyas New Year is gone, all the near and far ones congratulations (*Tashi Shok*). We meet in circumstances which are unstable (*mi dey vey*) and in the New Year I think that those circumstances become peaceful/stable. Now dear friend, in New Year, ignorance leads to bad deeds/sin (*dikpa*), bad deeds leads to different types of sufferings which have been inflicted upon men and they cannot come out of it. If you lean on a true God then one will be free from all these inflictions. If there is no faith and hope in God then living in the New Year is going to be full of suffering. For example, if one has to visit to a new place, then without a guide, the person will be full of fear and uncertainty in his heart. Similarly, when we die if there is no true God (*Kyab gon*) and true guide of the consciousness

(*Sem nyit*) when it leaves the body ,then we cannot go on the right path or destination after death²²⁰. Therefore, the one who helps to release oneself from sin is *Kyabgo Yeshu* or Jesus, believe in Him.

3.2.4 Modern news (News about new technology on farming, diseases, countries, world wars, about famous scholars etc. that are new for the people of the Himalayan belt).

a)About scholars:

About the scholar, Socrates from Greece (*Hellend pa Khanchen Soc rate Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.March 1928)

Earlier there came a scholar called Socrates in the place called Greece. He taught many knowledgeable things to the people. His method of teaching consisted of asking various questions to people and giving answers himself. His enemies would *than tok/* about him and took him to the judge. He was blamed by bringing witness and was made to die through the rule of being killed by poisoning. Socrates told the judges to listen to him, he said, “Do not hurry to kill me. I am already old and close to dying, dying is a dangerous thing. Think about death. Death means leaving this life and going to another. Death is also very *tinchan* (thankful). I will go to dead people, what is more thankful than that? Just for asking questions about the world to others, it is not important to have a rule to kill that person. There is no need to be afraid of dying because a good and truthful person is not harmed by death. And I have another request, for you to kill my children according to the rules. And if my children do not do good deeds and instead do bad deeds then persecute them. Now it is time for me to go. I have to go my way. I am going to die, all of you stay alive. Only god knows the path to heaven.”

Then Socrates told the truth and in order to find the truth, he drank a cup full of poison and died.

²²⁰ The writer has used the term ‘*Tsrok gyi lam khar*’ instead of ‘*Chi mey lam*’ which is the path that leads one’s consciousness to its destination after death. These include the path ways after death or that which is called ‘*Bardo*’ in Buddhism.

Many people died for truth and one of them is Jesus. He died on the *kyang shing/* cross for the sinners. He said this during that time, “Giving your own life for a friend is the biggest *chos/practise* in this world.”

About Raja Ram Mohan Roy (*Raja Ram Mohan Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.November 1933)

On the 27th of September in the year 1833 a famous Indian man died. It has been 100 years since he passed away and his work for Indian women is something to be remembered. He was not only attached to his country but he was also a reliable friend for the English government. In order to educate the Indians he *rok choches* and with the government, started many schools. If we ask the reason why he was famous, that was because, the bad custom called ‘Sati’, where a wife would burn herself on her husband’s pyre, was abolished by him. The death year 1811 when Ram Mohan’s brother died, according to the tradition his wife had to burn herself with the fire. The widow, who was scared decided to flee but her villagers threw her into the fire. Ram Mohan saw that and went to England and worked hard to make sure that this custom is abolished (by the government). When the government heard about this bad custom, they made sure that it was abolished from its roots. From the year 1816-1818 2,500 widows have been made to burn on the pyre of their husband. Amongst them, the life of a Brahmin widows is very difficult. She cannot wear her jewels, she has to wear ordinary clothes, can eat only once in a day, once every seven days she has to stay on fast. She cannot talk to any other men. This bad custom is now getting less. These days Indian women are being educated in different fields and can become self reliant. That is the result of the work of Ram Mohan’s work.

Mahatma Gandhi: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.July 1934)

On the 27th of June, in the land called Pune a man planned to kill Mahatma Gandhi. On that day two cars were moving in a street, the bad man threw a bomb from the window of a house but it hit the first car. Seven people in that car were injured. Mahatma was in the second car so nothing happened to him. In order for the life of the common people to be better, Mahatma Gandhi worked hard in many different ways to do that. Many men harmed him, not just that, they even tried to kill him many times. Mahatma Gandhi grew very compassionate towards the culprit and instead looked at his actions and became surprised and said, “*Ah kha kha!!*” And while

expressing his grief for the seven people who were injured by the bomb he said, “These 7 people were about to die for me. You can kill me. I am prepared to die for the common people.” This is what he said.

b)Other articles:

About a book that has to be read (*Ngo Tok Sil gos pey pecha jig ey kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.january 1927)

Yoseph Gergan has written a book titled ‘*Nawe Chutlen ey Tokzhot*’. The writer of the book is Tibetan and along with his thoughts and the thoughts of different religions have been explained in that book. The style of writing the book is such, that it shows students asking their teachers different questions related to religion. In chapter one, the fundamentals of different religions have been explained. In chapter two, explanation of why one needs a particular *dharma* (chos) have been explained. In chapter three, about *Punya* (Merit) and *Paap* (Demerits). In chapter four, about *Kewa* (birth) and *Sonam* (Destiny). In chapter five, about meat, alcohol, smoking and property, those which are needed and those which are not needed. In chapter six, about ‘*tharba dechen*’ (life after death) where there is no one other than Lord. (No chapter 7). In chapter eight, a chapter from teachings of Islam. Chapter nine includes a chapter about the path of enlightenment according to Buddha’s teachings. Chapter ten includes a chapter from Christianity. Chapter eleven includes ‘*karma Tsum chu*’ (the 30 Tibetan alphabets) and Poem (*Tsig chat*). The last chapter includes an epilogue.

There are 68 pages in this text. The price of this text is 06 Anna, whosoever wants a copy can purchase it from Moravian Mission Kyelang. The writer of the text has written it unbiased. If you read this text you will understand not only the views of your religion but also the views of other religions.

About a bad disease (*Nad Nyanpa Jik Kyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.February 1927)

Foreign doctors have been researching about the disease called ‘*Khansa*’²²¹ for many years. That disease has weird symptoms of boil that can occur on different parts of the body like tongue, thyroid, stomach, breasts etc. That disease is usually cured by operating and removing the boils, but now a new technique has been discovered to cure the disease. A ray of light is emitted from a machine and the area of disease is treated. That is a very dangerous job. Just in case, the person, using the machine, by chance exposes his/her arms or legs in that area of light, the persons’ arms and legs gets rotten and he/she eventually dies. Many people have been able to understand the seriousness of this disease and they do not hesitate to even die, in order to cure their patients’ disease. Out of those people who give their life for others, it is only Jesus Christ who gives his life for others on the cross.

About Flying in the Sky (*Par nang la phur wey kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.May 1927)

Now, it will not take much time to reach Europe from India by flying in a craft that flies in the sky. In the month of November last year, two Europeans from England reached Delhi through Karachi. Which means that they flew from Cairo to Karachi. The distance between Karachi and Cairo is 2500 miles. Just like that, the people in the world can now travel here and there fast in an aircraft.

About rainfall (*Nam Phap Ches kyi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.June 1927)

Earlier there was shortage of rain. A few monks collected butter and *phye* in order to come out with a solution for a rainfall. The solution for a rainfall like this was understood by few people as illogical. The monks recited prayers, rang the *tilu* (), even then there was no rainfall. If everyone understood the reason for the shortage of rainfall then what one man says cannot be believed upon. Now, I will explain all of you about rainfall. Everyday water gets collected very strangely in the clouds and remains there. The wind chases the water in the clouds towards cold regions and then the water falls in the form of water or snow. Just like that, the one who made the sky, the earth and all of this has been made by *Konchok* (God). Those who are sinners cannot change the making of God. They cannot pray and make the rains fall. Which means that the meaning of this world, some become happy as they need water from the rainfall and some do

²²¹ This disease must be ‘Cancer’.

not need the water from the rainfall. If this power of starting the rainfall and stopping the rainfall is in them, then one land will gain and another would not gain from it and then the world would fight again. Earlier, people would be fooled by killing a man and a ritual with prayers was done with that man's bones. Such practices and such people who believe in them are very few now. Just like that, now there are few people who believe in what the monks say about rainfall through prayers. Now my prayer is that do not follow such men, who are sinners and not capable, instead you should believe in God. They are people who are lost and wrong. The one who shows the path is God and you should in trust and believe in him.

About the Earth (*Saa jzhi Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.July 1927)

Everyone thinks that the earth is flat, but it's not flat, it is spherical. This can be learnt through the example I give. If a man stands on a dry land and looks at the sea, one can see the flag first and then slowly sees the ship. If the Earth was flat, then one should see the whole ship at first. Therefore, the earth is spherical, that is very clear. For example, if a man sails in a ship towards East side then he would reach the point where he started. This example means that the earth is round like an apple. The diameter of the earth from east to west is 7,912 miles and the circumference of the earth is 24,856 miles. For example, if a ship travels very fast, it would take three months to circumambulate the earth and if a man walks 235 miles per day then it would take him three years to circulate the earth. Just like the Moon, the earth also stays in the space. If a man says that the earth is like an apple, then one cannot stay balanced on the earth. There is a power that pulls men and animals towards itself. The earth spins itself in 24 hours and makes it day and night. The earth spins 365 days around the sun and that makes one year.

(Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.August 1927)

In the last edition of the newspaper, what the earth looks like and how it revolves has been shown. This time seven days of the week will be explained. The sun is 12,50,000 times bigger than the earth. The coming of the bright light i.e. (day and night) is because the earth revolves around the sun that makes the season. If we see the distance between the Sun and the earth is 92000000 (9crore 20 lacs) *Paktshat*²²². The distance between Lhakpa and the Sun is 35000000 (3 crore 50lacs) *paktshat*. The distance between Passang and the Sun is 66000000 (6crore, 60 lac)

²²² 1 domba= length of the arm from the left to right side of hands diagonally; 500 domba= 1 paktshat.

paktshat. The distance between migmar and the sun is 140000000 (14 crore) *paktshat*. The distance between Phurbu and the Sun is 480000000 (48 crore) *paktshat*. The distance between Pemba and the Sun is 880000000 (88 crore) *paktshat*. The stars which can be seen to fall off the sky seem to collide with the path of the *dza*/planets and fall off. Two figures are provided on this page. There are many other planets in the group of the planet earth. The planet migmar has two other moons. Phurbu has five moons; pemba has eight moons. The reason for the shadow between the Sun and the moon is this:

When the moon is between the Earth and the sun, then there is solar eclipse. When the earth's shadow falls on the sun then there is lunar eclipse.

Most of the Tibetans believe in blind faith and say that the *dza dachan* swallows up the sun. And in order for the *dza* to throw out the planet, people would scream and make a lot of noise. Still, educated people do not believe in such things. If old people see shooting stars, they think that there will be war or famine but that would not happen because there are a lot of stars in the sky.

Konchok (Jesus here) knows how many stars there are in the sky and the *wang* (rule) of the movements of the planets are also with him.

Ways to cure diseases (*Nad Phan Chuk Pey Thab*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.December 1927)

In a home in England, an insect which is called 'mosquito' in English, is used as a cure, by letting it bite people who are either mad or paralysed. Once it bites these mad and paralysed people it tends to heat up their body and then it cures them. This procedure is used in many clinics or hospitals/*maan khang*. Out of 579 patients 125 have completely been cured. When the insect (*bu*) that infects one's body is met with the other poisonous insect then, the disease is cured. This knowledge is spreading everyday.

A Light House (*Don mey Piyu*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.May 1928)

Earlier travelling in a ship to the sea was very dangerous. Sometimes wind storm would take the ship where the wind blew and there was danger of the ship breaking as it would hit the rocks in the sea. At the place called Alexandria, due to this danger, people built a house of marble that

was 500 *thu* high, on top of which they made/burnt a huge fire. The light of the fire can be seen 30 *paktzat*²²³ away. It was a method to show the way to the sailors. In the second figure given here, just like the first lines, the house is built like a high cylindrical pipe (*puri*), inside which light is produced by kerosene oil. The light can be seen on all side and can be seen 40 to 50 *paktzat* away. This light house is able to show the way. The light is different it is sometimes white, sometimes red and sometimes green. It signals the sailors and shows the way to the ship. When there is a strong wind, the people in the light house sometimes stay there for a month or two without meeting people. The guard is able to hear the sound of the wind and tell if there is any strong wind or surf in the sea. In order to make sure that the ship is not harmed, he stays night in and out in the house (light house) and shows the way to the sailors. His work is commendable.

About places and people (*Sa ji ga mi ga ey Kor*): Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.May 1928)

In the year 1906 a big earthquake hit the place called San Fransisco. After that America and Japan was hit by earthquake 5 times again. The place that was hit by earthquake has been shown with lines across the map in the first page. Scholars think that the earth has slowly shrunk and due to that, the outer layer of the earth has cracked and that resulted in an earthquake. Even last year different places were hit by earthquake and the scholars say that, the earth became cold and due to that it shrank a bit which made Africa and India move towards the east. In order to understand this, a Russian came to Turkistan and researched well and found out that an old mountain has come out on the new mountains. And that was the result of the earth shrinking. That is now well understood.

A method for an unfrozen land (*Sa Khyak Michuk Pey Thab*): Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.May 1928)

The land called Sweden is very cold. If anything is planted early during spring, then because of cold nothing would grow. That is why with the use of electricity the soil was heated up and different varieties of potatoes were grown. If we ask how that is done, a wooden cardboard vegetable garden of 6 *thu* in length and 4 *thu* in breath is dug 4 to 5 inches inside the ground.

²²³ 1 paksat= 500 domba; 1 domba=length of an extended arm from left to right tip of the middle finger of an adult.
1 da= size of an arrow, app 1 meter.

Similarly, boxes of cardboards are placed. Then the electric wire is wired in all the boxes. Because of the electricity, the ground becomes warm and the seed grown faster just like it does in warmer lands.

Destruction by Fire-mountain / Volcano (*Mey Ri Nod pa*): Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.May 1928)

In a European land called Pompeii, it has been many years that a volcano has erupted and everything got destructed. The mountain called 'Besubius' the fire and its heat, and its smoke erupted from beneath the mountain and caused *me rut* quake by fire (volcano in this context). All the houses, people, cattle, wealth everything on that side was finished. These days people are digging those lands and are writing about the suffering of the volcano disaster. The disaster and the suffering of the people had not been reported. The ruined houses and other items make it very easy to understand how all this happened. I will write a little bit about that below:

The night of the volcano eruption, in order not to be harmed one man had wrapped himself in a cloth from a big statue and he was lying dead like that. In another house, the people could see the eruption the people had left all their precious belongings and fled. In another house 18 women, one child's bones and eatables were found. Another poor girl could see the eruption, she ran to another house and even though there was food to eat, everything got buried and she died. If the stones and the soil could talk, then they could narrate the details of the suffering of those people very well. Still then scholars these days can study the ruins and understand the history of this place.

Earthquake (*Sa Gul*): Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.July 1928)

In the west of Europe, a place called Bulgaria was hit by a big earthquake. Around 80,000 people of Bulgaria are without wealth, food and house. Since they do not have a house to stay in, they are staying on the roads.

Methods to take out precious ratna from the sea (*Gyatso ey ting ney Nurboo natsok phings pey thab*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No.September 1928)

Wise people are discovering many precious items (*nurboos*) and many varieties of fishes from under the sea. To work inside the sea, clothes that protects one from water, a pipe that does not suffocate one's breath (*mitsub ches*) is connected from the ship to the bottom of the sea. Because of that people are safe and protected from being suffocated or by being killed by big fishes. The above written (figure on the page) men's clothes or cover (*shup*) like or armour like has been made by the Americans. Not just to search for precious items (*nurboo*), the armour is also used to find and take out ships that hit on rocks and have sunk in the sea.

About Ploughs (*Shol*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. September 1928)

(Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. March 1928)

An American doctor met a man on the way who was without a leg and had wounds. On the way he did not have any medicine and bandage, so he collected twigs, wood and lit a fire. He let the ashes of the wood cool down and *yoks tey*/smeared it on the wounds and covered it with an envelope. Now if a person has wounds and has no medicine then follow the method mentioned above. Ashes prevents wounds to get infected by *bu*/ insects.²²⁴

About a big Aeroplane (*Lungtu Chen po'i Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. December 1929)

80 years ago there was no name of the thing called 'Lung tu' or an Aeroplane. Experts have made different kinds of aeroplanes that can fly in different directions in the air. One variety of the aeroplane can fly 300 *paktshat* in 1 hour. Some of the aeroplanes look like a big fish. Some have the ability to fly for 60 *paktshat* in 1 hour. Please look at the *remo* (lines/ diagram)²²⁵ given on this page. The length of the aeroplane here, is biggest. It is 700 *thu* in length and 100 *thu* in breath and 100 *thu* in height. The aeroplane has many *khang mik* (section of houses)... The people inside the aeroplane fly day and night in the air. Sometimes they sleep and they also eat food and fly in the sky. There is no larger aeroplane than the aeroplane called R101 in this world. That big aeroplane is heard of being flown over from Europe to Bombay. If this happens then

²²⁴ Probably means infectious germs.

²²⁵ Figure.

travellers can reach India from Europe in seven days. The house in the figure is where that an aeroplane is tied to. One has to climb up a staircase in the house to go inside the aeroplane.

About good digestion (*Khams dey*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. January 1933)

If a sharp axe is used for a very long time to cut wood, then it would become blunt just like that, when the energy of a person's body slowly becomes less due to intense work, then the energy is lost. In order to regain the energy one has to eat again and again. Important food items like milk, meat, fats, butter, vegetables, sugar and salt etc. have to be consumed. Meat helps the skin, veins, and muscles to gain strength. Fat and butter brings heat to the body. Few people say that it is better to eat vegetables than to eat meat. Some people say it is beneficial to eat both vegetables and meat. I will not say that, that it is wrong to eat either vegetables or meat. Whatever food is eaten should be eaten in copper utensils. Lands which are in the Himalayan²²⁶ region have the custom of eating meat. Places which are warmer have the custom of eating vegetables and fruits. If too much meat is eaten, then it is difficulty for digestion. Green vegetables do not have the danger of indigestion. Children from east do not get the amount of food they deserve or need and due to that, many children die. People from west are wise and give good and right amount food to their children and that is why less number of children die. That is why people from east should benefit and learn how the parents from west side care for their children. The parents from East side, do not have the capability to give the right amount of food to their children. (This part to be written later on/ **T Namgyal**)

The highest mountain in the world is called Everest in the language of the Europeans. Two Europeans flew over that top of the mountain which is 35,000 feet in an aircraft. They clicked pictures of the place and other things were also known. Till now, no one had the courage to climb that mountain. Two English were the first to reach the top in the aircraft. Congratulations to them. These days, climbers have started to climb towards it. If there are no problems on the way then we hope that they reach there. (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. May 1933)

About measuring rainfall (*Char chu paktsat*): Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. September 1933)

²²⁶ Khang chen= Snow clad regions.

On the 17th of September, because of heavy rainfall which measured 10 inches high in 6 hours a place called Delhi was flooded and a house got destroyed with one person dead. Such instances of heavy rainfall has been not been recorded in India before.

This year the weather in England is very pleasant. That is the news.

On the 26th of September, Rev. Canon E.F.E Wigram²²⁷ passed away in England. He preached at C.M.S. Missions for many years and did a lot of other works (next sentence is not understandable). May his family and relatives be taken care of by God.

About a big earthquake (*Sa Yo Chenpo ey Kor Zhuna*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. Novemeber 1933)

Due to an earthquake people are suffering, requests were made and I have also written similar request in this newspaper. This year Wood-Dog year, on the 20 of the 11th month (of the Tibetan calendar) a huge earthquake hit Nepal and Awadh side where countless people's (about ten thousand) homes were destroyed and people died. The remaining people, those who were injured and disabled, are in distress. They are staying in the plains and are on the verge of dying. Right now the government²²⁸, the Mahabodhi Society and Arya Brahmin (*Tamyzey*) are giving as much help as they can. Even we should also....²²⁹

For example like—

“If a drop of water is added to the ocean's water, then till the time the ocean won't dry up, even that one drop will not dry”

“And if charity should be given, give it to the ones who are in real suffering.”

“If there is no kindness then the seed of Dharma will rot”

Earlier on the 4 April 1905, there was a huge earthquake as well; there is no need to write about it. For example:

²²⁷ Find out where his grave is. WHY?

²²⁸ British India government.

²²⁹ This sentence is not completed by the writer. It should read, Even we should help them'.

Dear compassionate people, those who can give charity, please do so with your body, mind and wealth and help those in need. (Urdu to English)

About lung disease (*Lo nat Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. September 1934)

I am going to tell you about disease related to the lungs in brief. What has to be done for the disease, precautions that can stop the disease and I hope that all of you will listen to it carefully and my words be helpful. I will ask you to tell others about this helpful advice. Lung disease was already present in this world, but it was less. Now that disease is increasing day by day. Out of that, in two cities in Yunan (Greece) lung disease spread a lot. The number of people is increasing there day by day. For example, there is lot of lung disease in Punjab, Lahore, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Multan and Rawalpindi. Hippocrates²³⁰ or *Aflatoon* (in Yunani language) from Yunnan²³¹ is the first doctor of lung disease. He was the first one to separate the disease of malaria and lung disease. He was an expert. During that time the doctor would listen to the disease with his ears and diagnose the disease, just like the way the doctors nowadays diagnose patients with different things or apparatus. One day when a malaria infected patient came to him, while diagnosing him by putting his ear on the patients' lungs, there was a noise like that of a '*sirka*²³²'. From then onwards the Lung disease was diagnosed. And a doctor called Len came to understand the disease of lung he made the apparatus to listen to the lungs and was able to understand the root of the lung disease. A German called 'Auerbreguer' announced that this disease is communicable.

(Remaining in the next issue...)

About Lung disease (*Lo nat ey Kor*) Tuberculosis: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. Novemeber 1934)

A family should not have less income and more expenditure. Factory and office workers should get fresh air. Otherwise the lungs are infected and a person becomes weak. When a person becomes weak, then the germ (*bu*) that spreads Lung disease (*Lo nat*) becomes stronger. In order

²³⁰ Father of medicine. C 460-377 BC. Aflatoon is Arabic word for the disciple of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle. i.e Aflatoon is Plato.

²³¹Yunaan is aso called Greece.

²³² Sirka= ?

to make a cure so that lung disease does not spread, the most important thing is to diagnose and know the disease. Then it will not spread to others. The disease should be checked again and again and a separate health centre for the disease should be opened. And the doctor in that health centre should be an expert. And the patients' mucus (*chimak*); stool, urine and blood should be checked in the laboratory. The patient gets less amount of fever in the evening, cough in the morning, less appetite, reduction in weight, coughing and fever. Not just that even this has to be told that—even though Lung disease primarily infects the lungs, it also infects kidney (*khalma*), bones(*ruspa*), and joints (*tsak tsik*). But those infected in the kidney are diagnosed soon. Whatever problems one has regarding lung disease should be informed to the doctor. That will also benefit those who are healthy.

-(Remaining in the next edition)

About Lung disease (Lo nat ey Kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. January 1935)

Staying in 'purdah' is not a good thing. First of all one does not remain fine and healthy. The difference is that the girls who stay under 'purdah' get infected with lung disease more often. Many people come to factories and other working areas. There should be a provision to keep those places clean. When people work in factories there are a lot of dust due to which the workers have to come out of their factories sometimes. That is in order to make sure that the dust does not go into their lungs. The workers have to reduced their time of work by one or two hours. That is so that the workers do not become weak. Not just that, the workers should get good food to eat. In big cities, notice should be written so that people do not say 'thu' and spit in different places. In places like *serais*; *lhakhang*/ church; *gompa*/monasteries; cinema hall/*tanmo khang*; lecture hall/*lecture khang* etc. spitting vessels should be splashed with phenyl. Then a health centre for lung disease should specifically be opened. In our land called Punjab, there is no such hospital. There must be around 100 patients in Lahore alone. That is why; it is my request, that a hospital/health centre should definitely be opened in the city of Lahore that is very

important. Please open a health centre soon for the poor and unfortunate patients of lung disease.²³³

Disease related to animals (Chuk Nat Kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. March 1935)

Animal disease is spreading in different parts of Punjab. Because of that countless animals are dying. That land came under a lot of loss. There is shortage of oxen to till the fields, not just that even milk or children to drink is in short supply. After looking at those losses, the people living in the mountains think that this loss is their destiny. No one can do anything, people think there is no way out to stop the disease and they stay by saying 'konjok khen'. Still then God is not the enemy of people but he is a friend to each and every person. That is why He has given a *sems*/mind to each person to distinguish between good and bad. The loss is not something that fell off the sky. The cattle which were infected spread this disease to healthy cattle. If people think and take *kadar*/precautions then there is a solution to the problem.

The solution to this problem is this-- if someone buys cattle from another land, then for ten days they should not mix that cattle with the cattle of the house. If the cattle stays healthy for ten days then you can mix it with the cattle of your home. If the cattle is unhealthy and dies, then dig 1 ½ *gaja*/yard deep pit and bury it inside. If, the disease spreads in one country, then you should call the animal doctor and follow what he says.

3.2.5 Miscellaneous articles of interest (Secular stories, Poetry, History of Ladakh, School in Spiti etc.)

a)A secular Poem: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. January 1927)

‘This world which is very big’²³⁴, a poem/*Tog Dzot* has been written like this—

²³³ It seems like a person who has written this is a Punjabi.. Tuberculosis. Please check for reference.

There are few to be made friends and many for enemies,

People with clear mind are few and those without are many.

People who guide are few but who deceive are many.

People who help others are scarce but those who are selfish are many.

People who follow the rules of dharma teachings are few but those who do not follow them are many.

People who respect others are few but those who are boastful are many.

People who are good are few but bad are many.

People who donate are few but those who receive are many.

People who are truthful are few but those who lie are many.

b)Stories:

The story of Regma Thang Dhu Ser La Gyur / The story of how Regma and Dhu turn into gold:
(Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. March 1927)

Once upon a time there was a king who was fond of gold and he collected a lot of gold. He had a beautiful daughter whom he loved a lot. One, he was attached to his daughter and then to his gold. He would keep looking after his gold. One day when he was looking at his gold in his store, he saw a white man who said, “Oh King, one who loves gold! There is no one in this world who is richer than you”. To this he replied, “Even though I have so much gold, I am not satisfied”. “What do you want? You will get what you ask”. The king was delighted. He replied, “If whatever I touch would turn into gold, then I would be satisfied”. The white man said, “You might regret if I give you what you want”. The king said, “If I get what I want, then why would I regret?” “Now whatever you touch would turn into gold”, saying this the man left. Then the king

²³⁴ This is the title of the poem.

went to get his glasses, but it turned into gold and he could not see a thing. Then he thought he would read his text, when he touched the book, it turned into gold and he could not read even one word. From there, he went to the garden and when he touched a *sia* (yellow flower) even that turned into gold. When he reached the palace, his daughter was crying as she did not get the flower which smelled good. The king consoled his daughter and at meal-time, when the king drank his tea, the tea turned into gold and his mouth got burnt. Hot potatoes turned into hot gold and his tongue and mouth got burnt and he could not eat his food. When the king tried to console his daughter he touched her and even his daughter turned into gold.

The white man came again and said, “Are you satisfied now? Is one cup of water and one mouthful of food more precious or is gold more precious?” The king replied, “Food and a sip of water is much better than gold. If there is a way for my daughter to turn back into human, I do not wish for anything else.” Now the white man understood that the king’s intention towards gold had changed. He asked him to get river water in a utensil and pour it over his daughter and the things he turned into gold. When the king did that, everything turned back into what it was before. The lesson that one can learn from this story is that even though gold is precious, food, water; love and compassion of a father towards his daughter cannot be replaced by gold.

The Story of Hellenes (*Helen Pey Drung*)²³⁵: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. July1927)

There are a lot of old tales from the land called Hellas. There are many stories, which would make one happy out of which, I will write one story.

Once upon a time, there was a young boy and a young girl. One day, the young girl went to another room in her home and saw a golden trunk that was tied with a rope. The girl wanted to know what was there in the box, so she asked the boy, “What is there in that box?” The boy replied, “I cannot tell anyone what is there in the box and cannot tell who gave me that box”. When the boy was not at home, the girl was very anxious to know what was there in the box, so she untied the rope. Poisonous flies which would harm others, causing distress, diseases and troubles, flew out of the box and bit the boy and the girl. Earlier these two children would always

²³⁵ The story about Greece.

be joyful and play and now that they were infected upon this, were in a lot of trouble and pain. It had not been many days; one day the young girl heard a cry from that same trunk. The girl listened intently; the voice said this, “Take me out! Because I am eager to make all of you happy.” The scared girl opened the trunk and an angel (*lhamo*) with wings came out. The angel healed the wound or malady of the boy and the girl and said this, “My name is *Rewa*²³⁶,” She said. “Dear children do not be scared. I am here to end the suffering and pain of the world.” Then they brought the angel out of the box. While repenting for the mistake they had done before, they hoped that all the troubles they had before would go away.

The story of ant and an insect (*Semchan Dokma*²³⁷ *dang Dangmey*²³⁸ *Dung*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. December 1927)

2500 years ago a scholar called Aesop came to the land of Hellenes (Greece). Even though he was a scholar he was **go yal**²³⁹ or slave for others. His stories were very meaningful and heart touching which were written with examples. The monks of those lands caught him and threw him in the water and killed him. Even though Aesop died, his stories still continue. One of his stories is about an ant and an insect, let me narrate it.

Once there was an argument between an ant and an insect. The insect proudly said to the ant, “I am not like you. I have to participate in everything in this world. I have to be present in prayer halls and palace. Who else is there to eat the *tzog*²⁴⁰? I reach the cap of the king and even reach the lips of girls. Do not compare yourself with me.” In reply to this, the ant said. “Yes, it is like that brother insect. What can I say about your chatter? Please listen to me insect (*dangbu*²⁴¹). According to the proverbs of the world—

‘Uninvited guests are like dogs who steal.’

Just like that, even if you go to the prayer hall or the palace, no one wants you. Who ever sees you, kills you. Isn’t that worse than a thief? Wherever you reach, you bring poison and filth. You

²³⁶ ‘Rewa’ meaning ‘hope’.

²³⁷ An ant.

²³⁸ An Insect.

²³⁹ He would help others. Someone who is not independent. Who loses one’s independence to someone else.

²⁴⁰ Food substance that is a religious offering in Buddhism.

²⁴¹ An insect that stings. *Dang* meaning ‘sting’ and *bu* meaning ‘an insect’.

go over filth and then humans' food and make their food dirty. I do not do that. I work on my own and eat. Whole summer I work and collect ration for winter. Unlike you, I do not fool others to survive" he said.

Now if I say what we need to learn from this story is that—

“Most of the people are like the insect who are idle and gossip about others, and hence survive on others' work.” This is what the ant says, “Work like me. If we work with the capabilities given to us by God, then you will be alive and you can also help others.”

c)History/ Gyal rabs:

From History (*Gyal Rab Ney*): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. June 1927)

In attachment to the previous newspaper.

The younger brother, Tashi Namgyal was a very selfish man. He took out his elder brother's eyes, and kept him and his wife in Lingshed. The younger brother did not have an heir but his elder brother had three princes who were Lhachen Tsewang Namgyal, Namgyal Gombo and the youngest Jamyang Namgyal. All the three children grew up very fast. When other children grew up in one year, these children grew up in one month and when other children grew up in one month, these children grew up in one day. During this time the reign was under Tashi Namgyal. That king's region extended from Purig till *Rto Shot*²⁴². They got a lot of horses. Khukhar Leh, Namgyal Tsemo, Chubi Tongkher were set down. Many Hor²⁴³ men were killed and their corpses were laid down below, over which Namgyal Tsemo was built. And the *tsri*²⁴⁴ was *nankyak*. Drikung's *Chos jzhey* (title) Dama (name of the monk) came and built the monastery called the Gangon Tashi Chonzom²⁴⁵. Many children were collected from each family and were ordained as monks here. The Tharchok that is erected in front of a portion of a land of a monastery is the place through which if any culprit comes through, he will not be penalized or will be free of his/her punishment by the King or anyone else at all.

²⁴² Present Tibet.

²⁴³ Present Yarkhand.

²⁴⁴ Similar to a 'gin' or spirit in Muslim tradition.

²⁴⁵ This monastery is at Phyang, Ladakh.

From History (Gyal Rab Ni): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. July 1927)

During the reign of this king, monasteries in Sakya, Galden, Lhasa, Samyes were offered tea, *ser chap*, *darchen* (flag) and books offerings, Kangyur, Tangyur and many other Buddhist texts and many *chorten* (stupas) were also erected. The king Tsewang Namgyal was coronated as the king. He went to war at a young age. In the east, Ngari, Loh O, Purang, Guge also came under him. Towards, Zumlang, Nyungti (Kullu) in the South, Shigar in the south and Khakar came under his rule after war. A yearly tax called *chambul* levied by the king includes 300 goats (that could be milked) from Guge, 100 female lambs, one horse, 10 *kyl wa* (pashmina goat's wool) that are wrapped in goat skin from Ruthok. Khar Oh Jong, Tarchen, Tarsum, two places in Tzhing also receive a lot of tax. According to the opinion of the king, teachings of Buddha have flourished in places like Lhasa, Samye, Guge and Tholing due to his father and his grandfather and just like that I am also going to spread the teachings of Buddha. But his people were unlucky and the king died.

Joseph Gergan

History (Gyal rab): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. August 1927)

Jamyang Namgyal is ruling now. One of the cho²⁴⁶ is Tsering Malik. Two Cho's of Purig were in disagreement and during that time the king of Ladakh helped Tsering Malik at war. During the coming of the end of time (of Ladakh/rule of king of Ladakh), the army of Ali Mir met with the army that was being led by the king of Ladakh, at Nangkon. Ali Mir made sure that until the time when the road was blocked due to snow, they would not fight with the king of Ladakh. As soon as snow fell and the road blocked, the king of Ladakh was defeated and kept imprisoned at Garlok. Now the Balti army went inwards to Ladakh, burnt sacred texts, some were thrown into the water, libraries/ monasteries were destroyed and they went back to their own country. There Ali Mir, gave away his daughter Gyal Khatun who is a embodiment of white Tara, as a wife to Jamyang Namgyal. In his dream, Ali Mir saw a lion coming out of the river, which then got absorbed into Gyal Khatun. And then Gyal Khatun became pregnant. Then Ali Mir, coronated Jamyang Gyalston to the throne. Jamyang Namgyal's Army was given a good feast. Gyal Khatun wore good jewelleryes. Then Ali Mir said "Few days ago, I saw a lion come out of the river and

²⁴⁶ A title under a king. A cho who has a small region under him, separate from the rule of that of a king.

dissolve into Gyal Khatun. That child has to be named Singey Namgyal of Ladakh was made the king of Ladakh once again. The king had two sons, one was Singey Namgyal and the other was Nurboo Namgyal. (rest is in the next issue).

History (Gyal Rab): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. October 1927)

The king thought, this time I will support Tsering Malik of Purig in war so that there is peace in Ladakh and that Buddhism spreads. The spreading of Buddhism depends on the people. I will support my people by abolishing the rule of *thal* (work without wages) and supporting the people like growing a child. I have equalized the rich and the poor thrice by now.

Zanskar: (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. July 1934)

These days the traders from Zanskar have reached Garja. There is news that there is deficiency of money in Zanskar. Nono Tsering Stobdan has been changed from the post of Zildar and if possible Nono Rinchen Wangyal will be the Zildar; if not then the father (of Nono Tsering Stobdan) would be asked to take up the post of Zildar. (of Padum)

Ngari Tulku reached backed safely to Lhasa. One day before he reached Lhasa, His Holiness Dalai Lama passed away and he (Ngari Tulku) could not meet him. Hemis Kusho Taksang Rinpochey is doing well in Tibet. This year in Ton/autumn there is news that he will come to Ladakh. Zodpa Dechen

About a Buddhist School (Sangya pey da khang jik kyi kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. May 1927)

In autumn, the Buddhists of Ladakh collected few thousands of rupees in order to build a library and a school for the generation of new students to come. In order to teach them the teachings of Buddha. A decision was made.

About the School in Spiti (Chite/Spiti ru dah khang chey pey Kor): (Asboe, Walter. *Kyelang Agbar*. No. June 1927)

The *kharkhur gyi Ponbo*²⁴⁷ of Kangra district has inaugurated a school in Spiti. Inaugurating this school will bring a lot of benefits to the people of Spiti. There is word around that the Minister Ghaphel has to go to Spiti as a teacher. If that happens, then he cannot be one of the writers of this newspaper. To do this good deed, even I am happy. Till now, he has written in this newspaper and I offer him *tangrak* (appreciation). From this sixth month onwards I have requested Zodpa Dechen to be the writer of this newspaper.

3.3 Ladvags Phonya (1936-44 A.D)

As a part of this chapter, I have translated and classified the contents of the newspaper, *Ladvags Phonya*, (1937-44 A.D.) published by the Moravian Missionaries under the *editorship* of Rev. Walter Asboe. Asboe, started publishing *Ladvags Phonya*, after he came to Leh from Kyelang in 1936. The title of the monthly newspaper is unique, as '*Phonya*' means 'messenger' or 'herald'. This newspaper is also called 'Ladakh Herald' in English. His attempt to include a range of news articles is refreshing. Since this newspaper was written and published before and during the Second World War, it includes many contemporary news stories as well as evangelistic articles.

The contents of only one year i.e. the Coronation Number Year, 1937, is presented here to give a general idea of the contents, as there is no further scope to accommodate all the translations in the thesis. The contents of the newspaper have been classified as follows:

- a) World News (*Jigten gyi Natsul*)
- b) News from Ladakh (*Ladags ey Natsul*)
- c) News from India (*Tha yul Gyi Logyus*)
- d) Evangelistic material (In the form of articles, proverbs and Ten questions with answers)
- e) Letter writing
- f) About War (World War II)
- g) Moral and Social Ethical responsibilities
- h) Miscellaneous

²⁴⁷ This title could be an equivalent to a District Commissioner now.

²⁴⁸ A Christian minister in Kyelang.

a)World News (*Jigten gyi Natsul*):

World News (*Jigten gyi Natsul*): (Asboe, Walter. *Ladvags Phonya* May 1937 No.5)

This month the king of England, George, is going to be enthroned on the 12th of the sixth month (i.e June). Not just the English dignitaries, but also many other visitors and dignitaries of other countries will come to London to give respects to the king. When the prince was young, he helped many people, both big and small, who worked in his factory. All different kinds of people are going to welcome him. In this world, he is the biggest King and, not just that, he is also a God-fearing man. The king is going to set a good example for the people under him. That is why everyone prays that he lives for a long time. Therefore, in order to ensure that he governs the public properly, the people are going to pray that the king becomes hardworking (Ngying.rus).

The weather in England was bad. It snowed; storms and floods came again and again and troubled the people badly.

In the land of Israel, people of Iraq and Israel are not in good terms again. Near the city of Jerusalem, people fought and killed each other.

The conflicts in the land of Spain are still not over. These days the army is with the public/people and seems to be more violent against the government than the people.

b)News from Ladag (*Ladags ey Natsul*): (Asboe, Walter. *Ladvags Phonya* May 1937 No.5)

Nono Angchuk from Tsangyar family died after suffering for many months and died at a very young age and is regretted about. And his family is sad about this event.

April of this month the Hindu merchants celebrated their New Year. Noble/Big people from Leh were invited. Due to the kindness of God, good amount of snow fell on the mountains. Even then, it was beneficial for Leh, Sharnos (village near Shara), Chem-sak (Chemrey Sakti). And it was a happy sight to see snow on the Phu of those mountains.

c)News from India (*Tha yul Gyi Logyus*): (Asboe, Walter. *Ladvags Phonya* May 1937 No.5)

If we speak about which religion do the Hindu people follow, then the book called ‘RigVeda’ has all the details about all the Hindu religion and the Buddhist religion are very similar. (Page 3)

According to the Buddhist religion, the power of Sun, moon and all that is made up of soil, water, fire and wind will destroy this earth. (Chak, Nas, Jig, Tong/ create, growth, destroy and extinct/vanish Ref: can be found in a text called *Ngong par Dzot*). Later, in the land of India, there was a lot of difference between the people of low and high caste.²⁴⁹ Those from low caste and the common people faced hard times. Sangya/ Buddha has preached the dharma for the benefit of the lower caste and the poor. If we look at the teachings of Buddha, there are a lot of good teachings/lessons in the Dharma. Due to the kindness of the *Konchok/* Christian God, many people have been able to know/learn which deed is good and which is bad. It shows that doing good deeds is more difficult to do. Even then, If Sangay is present in Tibet and Ladakh, then if sangyas sees the people who pray; circuambulate the mani walls; who believe in the *la* or *lu; sa dak* or *jhi dak*; then Sangay would be angry and say that, “This is not the way that I showed”. 329 years before Jesus was born, there was a king called Alexander from Holland and he came to war against India. A Hindu king, called *Phorus* lost the war. And the *makpon/general* called ‘*sey lo yi ku*’ married a Hindu queen. And then the king Chandragupta became relative. Chandragupta and the *Sey Lu Yi Ku’s* nephew called Ashoka became very *wangchen/victorious*. Ashoka’s kingdom, Maghada (now Gaya) and the capital, Pataliputra. After raging way he go many other kingdoms under his kingdom. Ashoka’s rules and regulations have been written on stones and are still available in many parts of India. (the remaining to be continued in the next paper..)

d) Evangelistic material (In the form of articles, proverbs and Ten questions with answers)

i) About travelling far away (*Je thagring ki Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Ladvags Phonya* May 1937 No.5)

When people go for travel, they make a lot of preparations like taking eatables for the travel etc. During that time they think of taking horses. Shoes and old *kos/* garments are stitched and made nice. Then an auspicious day is chosen from before and plans for travelling that day is done.

²⁴⁹ The reference here are the use of the words, *yarab, marab* , that refers to the moralilty of people, instead using the term high and low caste.

Now, I will tell you a bit about that travel, if we look at this human life, when we are dead. For this travel, no one knows when this journey will take place. That is because, the time of death is not known by anybody. People do not make preparations to start this type of journey because, very few people think about this kind of journey. In this journey, those who have left, do not come back that is why no one has come back to tell what kind of journey it is. Most of the people think that they are young and do not think that will die. There is a saying that goes like this—Do not promise anyone for tomorrow, one will not know what is going to come tomorrow. After death, one cannot walk alone that is why one needs someone to guide you. If we ask who that guide is, it is Jesus Christ. He has taught that—I am the way, the truth and the (Sonpa Nyit/someone who does not die). If we explain it briefly, then it is like this. The person to take one to (way of sonpa) is Jesus. Anyone who believes in him becomes alive after death. And whoever will believe in him will not die because those who believe in Him does not go to Hell. Those people will never die. That is why Jesus is the truth and the one to show the way heaven (tse ta met). If he did not come from God then, there is no power in the words he said that He is the way, the Truth and the *Sonpa Nyit*. Till the time there is a way after death on this earth, to make sure that one reaches heaven people will have to work hard to reach heaven. One should not have attachment to the worldly wealth and other treasures. Those who do that, will make God happy.

ii)Ten Questions: (Asboe, Walter. *Ladvags Phonya* December 1941 No.59)

Dhi wa Chu/Ten questions:

1. Who sold their share of wealth for the benefits for others?
2. As per God's word, who went from one's land to another land?
3. Where was the name 'Mashika' given to the believers of Jesus?
4. Who blamed Jesus when that person was in prison?
5. To whom did Jesus preach about the hook in a fish's mouth, when that fish was caught?
6. Who brought down Jesus from the kyang shing/Cross?
7. What happened on 50 days of Sunday?
8. Who became the thinpo/ from a Shepherd in the land of Misr?
9. Who got water out of the rock?

10. Where did the Israel people get 10 kag gya chu/ commandments?

e) Moral and Social Ethical responsibilities:

About Educating women (*Pomo nam la Yountan lab ey Kor*): (Asboe, Walter. *Ladvags Phonya* May 1937 No.5)

If you have one person who is educated or is full of wisdom, then there will be no fights in that house and live happily. Even then, many people do not consider it important to educate their own wives and female children. It is mostly the work of the mother to take care of the growth small children. Therefore, it is very important for the mother to be educated. Otherwise, if the mother is not educated, then the mother might not be able to teach or educate her children about the different ways of life. Saying bad things and fighting is sometimes due to the ignorance of the parents. Mostly, some siblings are very hard natured by themselves and due that they are not obedient. If some parents are good even then some children in this world are disobedient. Even then, if a mother can read and write then it benefits her children. An educated mother, can make her home a beautiful place. A mother who keeps her home and utensils etc. clean, then even the children will stay clean. In this land, knitting socks and reading was first taught by the Christians. Now even *Musalmaan* are taking this example and educating their women. Just like if this tradition of educating girls are followed in each village of Ladakh, then it would be very good.

f) About War (World War II)

Jigten Natsul: (Asboe, Walter. *Ladvags Phonya* May 1942 No.64)

Earlier, a famous Englishman called Serta Port Kharib flew in an aeroplane and came to India. In Delhi, he talked to many leaders of Hindustan. From there, he used the radio and told the people of India about the preparations that Hindustan should do once they get their freedom. They met the Congress and Musalmaan leaders and had many meetings. Even then, later on what Kharib had shown could not be agreed upon. The reasons for which Serta port Kharib had come could not be accomplished, so he went back to England. In my thoughts, the people of Hindustan have

missed the opportunity of their freedom. That is because, the famous people of Hindustan do not agree with themselves. Still, when the world war will end, there is hope that Hindustan will be free. The Russians are still making the Germans run back.

We don't know maybe the Germans might be stronger in spring and kill many more people. That is because, if the Germans do not win this time, then they would never win. The Japanese had fought badly in Burma. There is danger of harming Hindustan. Due to the blessings of God, Hindustan will not be captured by Japan. All the people of Hindustan should make plans to protect themselves. Many countries under German are again and again revolting against them. That is because, there are many people who are being troubled and *nyon mong/* by the Germans. (page 2) Sometimes the Germans shoot and kill people without any reason. If this injustice rule does not get over then, there will be a chance of a lot of suffering spreading everywhere.

g) Miscellaneous:

Lessons about Cataract in the eye (*Ling tok Yot Pey Mi La Labja*): (Asboe, Walter. *Ladvags Phonya* October 1937 No.10)

There is lady doctor who looks after blind and *lang gda*/handicapped, in order for your disease to be better should go to there. Out of those, blind people with cataract should go to the doctor who will take out the cataract.

1. If a person's eyes are blurry or if still see light then, that person can be well by removing the cataract.
2. Cataract should be removed during the time of spring and autumn. In the spring one should go during the third and fourth month of Spring and during the eighth and ninth months of autumn to *Khalatse*.
3. One should take one help and ration that should last for a month.

Each patient should get one rupee and give it to the doctor. In order to take out the cataract only after giving medicine for one or two days, cannot take it out. It is strange that the blind people in Ladakh, cannot even go to the nearby doctors. In other places, patients are charged 100 to 500 rupees to correct their eyes.

Therefore, the contents of both Kyelang Agbar and Ladags Phonya, are presented that represents the content and the contribution of the writers from Ladakh and Lahaul along with the editors.

Chapter 4

AUTHORS AND AUTHORSHIP

An attempt to study the writings of the editors, writers like Rev. A. H. Francke, Rev. Walter Asboe, Ishey Rigzin, Sonam Tsetan Joseph/Yoseb Gergan, Zodpa Dechen, Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog and Tharnyed Nasib Ali who wrote in *Ladvag Phonya* and *Kyelang Agbar* have been made. *Kyelang Agbar* has been translated with the help of a translator and translated from Ladakhi into English²⁵⁰. A background to their life and their contributions in the newspaper is of relevance as it shows how the missionaries and the local people of the region interacted with each other due to a common link i.e. their Christian religion.

4.1 Authorship (Editors and writers/reporters of the Newspapers)

The authorship that the editors created and propounded brought about many significant writings that changed in time with the interaction of the people of Ladakh and Lahoul in the making of the newspaper. One can witness the signature of the local writers, in the newspaper as special markers gives legitimacy to the articles in the newspapers apart from the editor's name on top of the newspaper i.e. Rev. A.H. Francke and Rev. Walter Asboe for *Ladvags Kyi Agbar* and *Kyelang Agbar & Ladvaga Phonya* respectively. The interesting thing is that those few writers, scribes and contributors are all men. Local women have never written even a single piece in the newspaper and hence, have not been placed in this tradition that was started by the Moravians.

We see that Sonam Tsetan Joseph/Yoseb Gergan contributed immensely in writing articles not just on the history of Ladakh but also on evangelical topics which were mixed with the tone of local Ladakhi and Buddhist way of expressions by borrowing excerpts from the Buddhist canonical texts and local proverbs and sayings in his writings.

²⁵⁰ *Kyelang Agbar* 1927-35 & *Ladvags Phonya* 1937-44 have been translated from Ladakhi to English by Rigzin Chodon with the help of Mr. Sonam Dorjay from the month January to February 2016 and August to October 2016.

There are four major people who have been entitled as the editors of the monthly newspapers of Ladakh and Kyelang are Rev. A. H. Francke; Rev. Walter Asboe; Pierre Vittoz and Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog.

Contributors, correspondents, reporters like Ga Phuntsog, Zodpa Dechen, Joseph Gergan, Ali, etc. are also mentioned. We see a blend of signatures under articles of the paper in English (for Zodpa and Joseph/Yoseb Gergan who would also undersign their name in full or in an abbreviation like J.G); Urdu (in the case of Ali) and *Bodyig* (Joseph Gergan). Rev. Francke and Rev. Walter Asboe have their names under the editor title in both *Ladvags Kyi Agbar*, *Kyelang Agbar* and *Ladvags Phonya*.

So, we see while this trend was not observed in *Ladvags Kyi Agbar*, *Kyelang Agbar* differs in that it contains the names of the news reporters therefore, the credit of any piece of writing has been duly credited to the writer.

This is lists of the writers, apart from the four main editors, who wrote in the *Kyelang Agbar* and have undersigned their names with the title of the articles they wrote are as follows:

(Unfortunately, the names of writers, except the editor, in *Ladags Phonya* have not been undersigned like it has been here.)

1. Ga Phuntsog from Chod News about Lahoul (*Garja yul gyi kor*). *Kyelang Agbar*. January 1927
2. Barong²⁵¹ Lotus Namgyal News about Lahoul (*Garja yul gyi kor*) *Kyelang Agbar*. March 1927
3. Pon²⁵² Nyima Wangyal. About the army of Lahoul (*Garjey magmi kor*) *Kyelang Agbar*. March 1927

²⁵¹‘Barong’ is the family or household name. The Buddhist of Ladakh and Lahoul usually do not have surnames. Usually Buddhist names are given by a Buddhist religious head of a family, depending on which ‘*Rinpochey*’ or the head of a monastery, the family wants to choose. The distinguishing factor of being recognized according to one’s household or family name is unique in Ladakh, Lahoul & Spiti as, each family name is distinct in a village, and is usually on the hierarchy of their family genealogy of their ancestors. Therefore, ‘Barong’ is the family name and ‘Lotus Namgyal’ is the name of the person. There are similarities to the use of family name among the Muslims in Ladakh as well, although in modern times, and especially after the coming of the Moravian Missionaries, using surnames has become common among the Ladakhi Christians.

²⁵² ‘Pon’ here is used to mean ‘Wazir’ or a ‘Thesildar’ of an area.

4. Pon Tashi Dawa. About the forest of Lahoul (*Garja jungle am bhotha ey kor*) Kyelang Agbar. April 1927
5. E D²⁵³. About the Christians from China (*Gyanak ey Na Naskang Ey ma shik ka ey Kor*) Kyelang Agbar. May 1927
6. Barok Lotus Namgyal. News about Lahoul (*Garjey Kor*). Kyelang Agbar. June 1927.
7. Walter Asboe. "From this sixth month onwards I have requested Zodpa Dechen to be the writer of this newspaper". Kyelang Agbar. June 1927
8. Joseph Gergan. From History (*Gyal Rab Ni*). Kyelang Agbar. July 1927
9. Joseph Gergan. *Navey Tok Dzhot*. Kyelang Agbar. October 1927
10. Joseph Gergan. Teachings on religion (*Chos Gyi Tsan Nyit*) *Universal Truth*. Kyelang Agbar. January 1928.
11. Zoda. *Alcohol*. Kyelang Agbar. January 1928
12. Joseph Gergan. Do all sentient beings need religion? (*Sem chan tham chad la chos gos min*). Kyelang Agbar. May 1928
13. Tharnyed Nasib Ali .Tibet (*Pod Yul*) Kyelang Agbar. June 1928.
14. Joseph Gergan. Maxims (*Tampay*). Kyelang Agbar. July 1928
15. (AHF)²⁵⁴. Incomplete Maxim (*Tampay Therel*). Kyelang Agbar. July 1928
16. J Gergan. *Tharba Dechen* . Kyelang Agbar. September 1928
17. Joseph Gergan. Do all sentient beings need religion? (*Sem chan tham chad la Chos gos mein*) . Kyelang Agbar. March 1928.
18. T Namgyal²⁵⁵. About good digestion (*Khams dey*). Kyelang Agbar. January 1933
19. Joseph Gergan. *Tok Jhot* . Kyelang Agbar. July 1933
20. Joseph Gergan. A Man's mind like a festival (*Mi sem Tad mo chey*). Kyelang Agbar. Nov 1933
21. Zoda Dechen. Lahoul (*Garja*). Kyelang Agbar. May 1934
22. Jor Phuntsog. About Jesus (*Zo wo Yeshu la Pangpo Chat pa*). Kyelang Agbar. May 1934
23. Yoseph Gergan. About human mind (*Mi sems Tan mo chey*. Kyelang Agbar. May 1934

²⁵³ ED is probably an abbreviation for the 'Editor' of *Kyelang Agbar*, since there were no other Christian writers with such an abbreviation for their name.

²⁵⁴ AHF is the abbreviation used for August Hermann Francke. He has a collection of proverbs that were used in the first newspaper, *Ladvags Kyi Agbar*, and some of those have been borrowed and used in the *Kyelang Agbar* as well by Rev. Walter Asboe.

²⁵⁵ No information found on T Namgyal. He could be a Buddhist as there is no reference to his name in any of the correspondence or journals of the Moravians.

24. Joseph Gergan. About Human mind (*Mi Sems Ten mo Chey*). Kyelang Agbar. July 1934
25. Zodpa Dechen. Lahoul (*Garja*)& Zanskar. Kyelang Agbar. July 1934
26. Priti Chand²⁵⁶. (Title of article not given). Kyelang Agbar. September 1934
27. Joseph Gergan. About Human mind (*Mi sems Tanmo*). Kyelang Agbar. September 1934
28. Zodpa Dechen. About Lahoul (*Garja Yul*). Kyelang Agbar. November 1934
29. Joseph Gergan. About human mind (*Mi Sems Tanmo*). Kyelang Agbar. January 1935
30. Zodpa Dechen. Lahoul (*Garja*). Kyelang Agbar. January 1935
31. Zodpa Dechen. Lahoul (*Garja*). Kyelang Agbar. March 1935

4.2 Editors of the Newspapers

4.2.1 Rev. August H. Francke (1870-1930A.D.)

August H. Francke has been deemed as one of the greatest missionary scholars of the Moravian Church (*Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine*) to work in the Himalayan region of India. He was born on the 5th of November 1870 A.D. in Gnandenfrei, Silesia, Germany. With a formal schooling from a Moravian school in Gnandenfrei and then trained as a Moravian teacher at a training college at Niesky (Oberlausitz); Francke worked as a teacher in a missionary boarding school in Kleinwerda near Bautzen for four years i.e. from 1891 to 1895.(Bray 2008:4-5)

For a year, he studied various languages, like Sanskrit, Greek and Hebrew at the Moravian College, in Fairfield (Derbyshire, England) and in the month of November 1896, it was decided by the Mission Board that he would serve at the Himalayan Mission station in Leh. He arrived at Leh station on the 8th of June 1896. John Bray's paper titled, '*August Hermann Francke's Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906: The Making of a Missionary Scholar*', deals with the life of this scholar in detail and mentions his perilous journey from a missionary to a scholar, linguist and the pioneer of Ladakh Studies as well as the pioneer of the 'Moravian Journalistic Tradition'.

²⁵⁶Probably the King of 'Khangsar Khar' (Khangsar Palace), Jispa in present Himachal Pradesh.

In brief, Francke got married to Anna Theodora Weiz (b.1875- d.1945), who was also called 'Dora', on the 30th March 1897. They lived at Leh station for a year and in February 1899, they moved to Khalatse, en-route to Srinagar from Leh, at the new Mission station. The Moravian Mission built the Kalatse Mission House on the west side of the village. On the 1st of July 1899 Francke and his wife, 'Dora' moved to Kalatse. They had two children, Walter Siegfried *Dondrub*²⁵⁷ (born on 08th of August 1900) and Hilde *Deskyid* (born on 05th January 1903).

According to Bray's paper²⁵⁸ and his bibliography on Francke, Rev. Francke's stay in Khalatse was the most eventful and most productive part of his stay in Ladakh. (Bray 2008:4-5)

His stay in Kalatse, a sub-station in Ladakh, did not curtail him from the furtherance of the work of the Moravians. His keen interest in the people and his indomitable spirit to research led him to become a pioneer in the field of Ladakh Studies, who till this day is referred to for his seminal work on Ladakh and the neighbouring regions like Lahaul-Spiti.

In the same paper, John Bray mentions the difficult phase that Francke and his wife, Dora had to endure in Kalatse. He mentions that they—

...led a difficult and a challenging time in Khalatse as compared to Leh because the permanent inhabitants of Khalatse were Buddhists and they came under the Lamayuru monastery.²⁵⁹ So they could not act in opposition to the monks of Lamayuru even though they were aware that the Moravian mission could bring material as well as spiritual advantages²⁶⁰ main reason being that they were in debt to the monastery. (Bray, 2008:4-5)

Francke and his wife Dora's approach towards the people of this village was to meet them daily and to establish contact, however, this approach did not work and soon they were not valued by the people. Francke's approach eventually changed for the better and—

²⁵⁷ Dondrub is one of the names of the legendary Kesar saga's hero, the national epic.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Earlier villages in Ladakh were affiliated to a monastery. The monastery bore a share of the common land and taxes were paid for the use of lands. The monastery also catered to religious ceremonies.

²⁶⁰ Bray, John. "August Hermann Francke's Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906: The Making of a Missionary Scholar." *The Tibet Journal* XXXIII, No 1.Spring (2008): 28

...the best way to do that was to focus on literary work. Francke had already made some advances in his work of Ladakhi Grammar and with the help of the mission he recruited a local called Ishey Rigdzin (*Ye shes rig' dzin*) to work with him. (Bray 2008:4-5)

He focused on agendas like education, literary work, research and publication of educational books in Tibetan, Urdu, English, Arithmetic, Nature Study, etc. He opened a school in Kalatse which, however was strongly opposed by Lamayuru monastery as they feared the loss of their place in the social hierarchy and power among the villagers, and their campaign forced Francke to close the school on a temporary basis. The school was later opened at Ishey Rigzin's house, instead of the Mission House compound as this helped to attract more students writes Francke in his letter to La Trobe dated 20 April 1900²⁶¹. (Bray 2008: 28)

The other agenda was his literary work. The details of his literary work like papers and reports related to attributes on pre-Buddhist Bon religion, Ladakhi grammar, folklore, Petro glyphs, the epic Kesar Saga, proverbs, history of Ladakh, history on the Dogra war in Ladakh, hymn sung by Dards from Da village etc. The list of his work in English can be found in the book titled, '*A Bibliography of Ladakh*' authored by John Bray and Ngawang Tsering Shakspo, published 1988, Warminster, England and those in German language can be found in the book titled, '*August Hermann Francke und die West Himalaya Mission der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine: Eine Bibliographie mit Standortnachweisen der Tibetischen Drucke*' Mit einem Beitrag von Michael Hann, compiled by Hartmut Walravens and Manfred Taube. It was published in 1992 by Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, Germany and is located at the Fachbibliothak Indologie, University of Wien.

The work done by Francke, by starting the 'Journalistic tradition of the Moravians'²⁶² in the Himalayan belt is of importance, as this was the first time a newspaper that was ever published in the Tibetan language in the entire belt of the Himalayas including Ladakh, Lahoul & Spiti, Tibet, Darjeeling and few other places where Tibetan script was used as a literary language in the early 20th century. Francke used an old lithographic press of the Moravians at Khalatse to produce the newspapers and a detailed study of the first publication (1904-1907

²⁶¹ Bray, John. "August Hermann Francke's Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906: The Making of a Missionary Scholar." *The Tibet Journal* XXXIII, No 1.Spring (2008): p.28

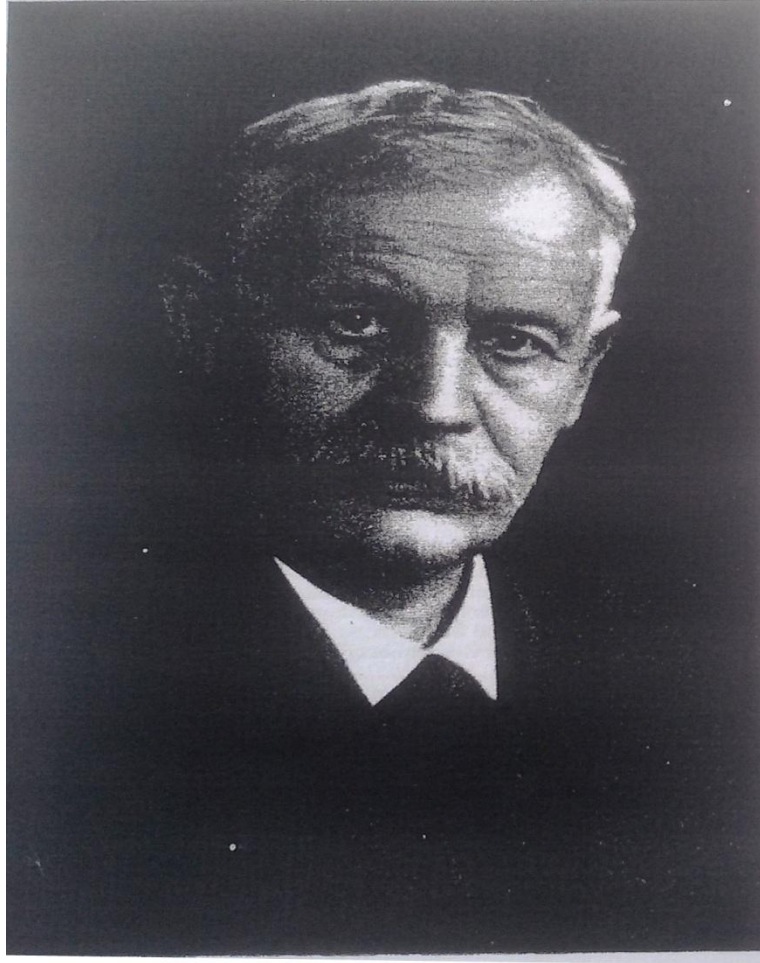
²⁶² Term coined by John Bray.

A.D.) has been done in my M. Phil dissertation titled, “*The First Newspaper of Ladakh and its Impact on Ladakhi English Literature: A Study*” 2013.M.Phil dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Francke as an editor worked very hard and published the newspaper, *Ladvags Kyi Agbar* from 1904 to 1907. In the year 1906, Francke and his wife, left from Ladakh to Kyelang. The newspaper was handed over to the missionaries who took over with the change in the title of the newspaper from *Ladvags Kyi Agbar* to *Ladags Phonya* (Phonya meaning ‘messenger’ in Ladakhi). *Ladags Phonya* was published from the year 1908-1910.

Rev. Francke served in Ladakh region from 1896 to 1906; in Kyelang from 1906-1908 He died at the age of 59 as a professor of Tibetan language in Berlin.

The newspaper stopped for several years and the tradition was revived by Rev. Walter Asboe in 1927, when he started the publication of the newspaper again, but under a different title and a different location, i.e. Kyelang Agbar from Kyelang, Lahaul.



Picture: Rev. August Hermann Francke. Cover Page. *August Hermann Francke und die West Himalaya Mission der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine: Eine Bibliographie mit Standortnachweisen der Tibetischen Drucke*’ Mit einem Beitrag von Michael Hann, compiled by Hartmut Walravens and Manfred Taube. 1992. Verlag Stuttgart, Germany.

4.2.2 Rev. Walter Asboe (b. 1895- d.1965 A.D.)

The Moravian Missionary, Walter Asboe served in Lahaul and Ladakh from 1921 to 1947. He was one of the successors of Francke who revived the journalistic tradition in the year 1927 and started the publication of *Kyelang Agbar* in Kyelang until 1935. He then moved to Leh and continued the publication newspaper publication under the title *Ladakh Phonya* from 1936-47 with the help of other Moravian Missionaries and local writers.

Walter Asboe was born on the 16th of February 1895 at Hopedale, Labrador (in Canada). His father's name was Andreas Jonas Asboe (b 1854). His siblings were Andrew Herman Edwin (b.1890) and Arthur (b. 1895) and brother-in-law of Margaret E (née Jefferys) (b 1888). He married Eleanor Bell Larmor (b 1896) in Bombay on the 27th of September 1924. They had two daughters, Joyce Asboe b. 1926²⁶³ and Enid Asboe born on 15 February 1931²⁶⁴ in Kyelang.

He was educated at the Fulneck Boys' School in Fulneck from 1903-11 and at Mission College Bristol from 1914-15 and from 1919-21. He worked as a draper's apprentice in Belfast from the year 1911-1914. A year later, he joined the war service with the Royal Army Medical Corps World War 1 from the year 1915-19. Walter Asboe was ordained as a deacon by Br. A.S. Ward on 28th August 1921. Few years later, he was ordained as a presbyter by Br S. L.Connor 08th of September 1929.

For his Church services, Rev. Asboe was sent to the West Himalayan Mission in 1921 where he served from 1921 to 1924 and in Kyelang 1925 until 1935 and in Leh from 1936-47. He went as an interim minister on furlough at Tytherton from the year 1945 to June 1946 and returned back to the United Kingdom in 1947. After coming back he served as a Minister at Tytherton in 1948- 1952; Woodford Halse and Eydon in 1952 and Dublin in 1958. Rev. Asboe semi-retired as a minister while serving in Dublin in the year 1962. While at the provincial office, he was 'the Superintendent of Tibet'.

He died at the age of 70 on the 8th of May 1965 in Dublin and was interred at Whitechurch. His grave lies in the brethren's section, 4th row, 6th grave from path together with wife Eleanor Bell Asboe (1990).

His method of imparting Christian faith was a bit different from his predecessors. He used practical measures that he seemed to be of help to the people. He helped in setting up an industrial enterprise of weaving in Leh, by writing a letter to the Prime-Minister of Kashmir to send him modern handlooms as well as accessories and an instructor to teach improved methods

²⁶³ A reference to Joyce is given in a letter by Walter Asboe to Br. Peter, dated May 18th 1932. In that letter it states that their daughter Joyce, who is six years old, has a serious problem of tonsillitis and is advised to undergo an operation. Which means that Joyce was born in the year 1926, and is older than Enid Asboe.

²⁶⁴ The detail of the birth of their daughter is given in letter to Br. Ward, dated May 8th 1931.

of weaving to the people. Asboe, at the end of his unpublished book archived at the Moravian Church House Archive, London that is titled, '*Lamas and Laity of Little Tibet*' states that—

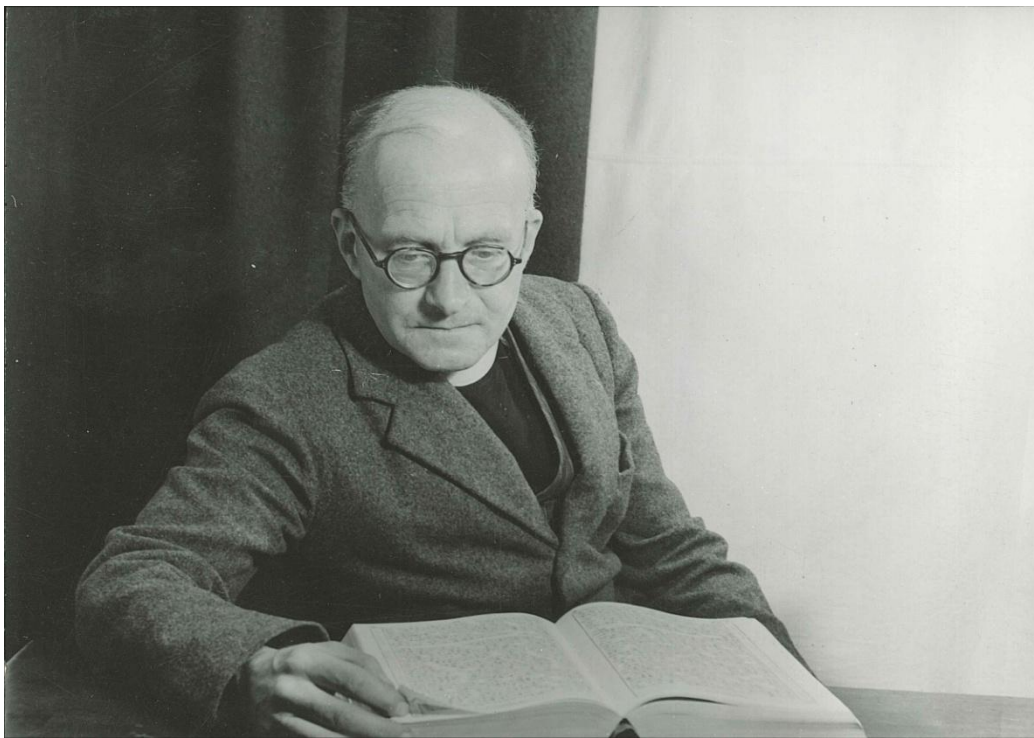
The idea of industrial enterprise however has taken root, and one should be satisfied that the initial steps taken to improve the economic condition of the people has led to greater efforts with more substantial financial resources that I ever had. My main object of making the people more friendly and more ready to hear the Gospel through some practical measures, was achieved. (Asboe. Unpublished: 106)

He focused a lot on health-sanitation, education, Aesop's fables etc. Bray calls him "a man with strong practical interests"²⁶⁵ whose newspaper columns was used—

..to teach the people improved methods of farming, sanitation, personal hygiene and urging the peasants to reduce the consumption of their locally grown barley in the form of beer and conserve the crop for food purposes. (Bray 1988:61)

He was also a translator who helped Yoseb Gergan with this translation entitled '*Understandable Expression of Moral Thoughts*' from Ladakhi to English. This document still survives in typescript in the Moravian Church House library, London. Asboe's translation illustrated Gergan's ideas and style of expression.

²⁶⁵ Bray, John. "A.H.Francke's La dvags kyi agbar: The First Tibetan Newspaper." *Tibet Journal* 13.3 (1988): 61.



Picture: Rev. Walter Asboe (1895 – 1965 A.D.) Source: The Moravian Church and Archives, London.

4.2.3 Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog (b.1908-d.1973):

Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog and Pierre Vittoz were the editors of the *Ladvags Phonya* published from 1952-59. Mr. Pierre Vittoz and his wife Mrs. Vittoz arrived in Leh in 1950. It is unfortunate this set of newspapers have not been archived hence, unavailable for study. It is possible that some copies of those publications are still available with the Vittoz family but so far it has proved impossible to locate them.²⁶⁶

Tsetan Phuntsog was born in 1908 in Sabu, a village near Leh. He was from an aristocratic family and studied at a monastery called Rizong to become a monk. (Bray 1994: 68-80)

²⁶⁶ Information from John Bray. Like the Franckes, the Vittoz family gave Ladakhi names to their children born in Ladakh: Otpal and Tsesal.

He would discuss Christian teachings with Joseph Gergan for hours and in 1934, he got baptized as a Christian and took the name Eliyah. By profession he was a Tehsildar, an administrator under the Kashmir government service. From 1951 onwards, he became a full time mission worker²⁶⁷ and in 1956 he was ordained as Christian minister. In 1959, he moved to Mussoorie to work on the revision of the Tibetan New Testament.

When the Tibet uprising took place in 1959, he got involved in relief work with a group from Amdo. He helped them find a settlement in Clement town, Dehra Dun and in 1963, founded a school for Tibetan refugee children in Rajpur, Dehra Dun. This school later came to be known as the Moravian Institute that still functions as an educational institution for students from various parts of India. Tsetan Phuntsog lived in that school in Rajpur until he passed away in 1973.²⁶⁸

Together with Pierre Vittoz, their publication of the Tibetan-language newspaper's license was withdrawn, because the Kashmir government feared that this newspaper might take on a political and even a separatist role in emphasizing Ladakh's local identity.(Bray 1994:8)

Apart from writing in the newspaper, Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog was also involved in literary works. The most significant being an attempt to codify the Ladaki dialect of Tibetan.

4.3 Writers from Ladakh

4.3.1 Ishey Rigzin

He was a local teacher and a resident of Kalatse village. This was the same place where Francke published the *Ladvags Kyi Agbar*. He was recruited as a teacher for the Khalatse mission school by Francke around 1900. When the Mission school was forcefully closed down,

²⁶⁷Pierre Vittoz also mentions that Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsok joined the mission staff two years previously, i.e. 1951 in 'The West Himalayan Mission Annual Report for 1953' published in the Periodical Accounts of the work of the Moravian Mission 1954, published in London. Pg 18-22.

²⁶⁸ Bray, John. "Towards a Tibetan Christianity? The lives of Joseph Gergan and Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog." Tibetan Studies Vol 1 (1994): 68-80.

due to reason already stated above, a school was opened at Ishey Rigzin's home where students would come to study. Francke offered a financial reward for every pupil who stayed there for longer than a month. He worked for Francke and helped him in his work during his stay in Khalatse and this has been mentioned in Francke's letter as follows—

...the best way to do that was to focus on literary work. Francke had already made some advances in his work of Ladakhi Grammar and with the help of the mission he recruited a local called Ishey Rigdzin (Ye shes rig' dzin) to work with him. (Bray 2008:4-5)

4.3.2 Sonam Tsetan Joseph Gergan (b.1878 - d.1946 A.D.):

Joseph Gergan was one of first two pastors (the other was Dewazung Dana) who were ordained at Leh by Bishop B La Trobe in 1920. In order to choose a Ladakhi word for 'a Christian Minister', Tibetan equivalent like 'zhab stog' (a lifter up of the foot), 'ge shes' (a man who knows virtue) were first chosen. Later the word 'nyenpo' which meant 'helper' or 'friend' was finally chosen to be used before their names²⁶⁹.

Sonam Tsetan Joseph/Yoseb Gergan, one of the first Christian converts from Ladakh who helped the Moravians in translation work that demanded the intervention of a local person. His name is undersigned in most of the *Kyelang Agbar* publications starting from the august 1927 edition until the 1933 edition. The articles he wrote are mostly evangelistic in nature with few political news about the world. He translated Christian tracts into Ladakhi and wrote book on the history of Ladakh called, '*Bla dwags rgyal rabs 'chi med gter*'. published in 1976 by Sterling Publishers in New Delhi.

Joseph Gergan's 'Understandable Expression of Moral Thoughts' that has been written in 11 chapters is a unique approach to write and explain what a religion is. This tract is unique as the reader can clearly see that the relationship between Buddhism and Christianity has been put across in a manner which can be called as 'cultural syncretism'. However the focus of such usage has always been to preach about Christianity.

²⁶⁹ Ward, Bishop. 'Notes by the Way'. *Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work*. October 1920. Vol. XVIII.No.1Pg 75.

The writer brings about unique examples from Buddhist philosophies and explains his discourse on religion by contextualizing his ideas through local Ladakhi as well as Tibetan proverbs. The first chapter introduces the author's ideas of the religion of Christianity and how a human being cannot traverse this earthly life without God. The concept of death in a very Buddhist way has been explained as, that which does not discriminate nor between—

Those who sit on gold and turquoise thrones (kings and queens) and the prisoner in his dungeon; those high and learned in the knowledge of the sciences (note no 1); and the rough and uncultured; those who possess all they could wish for and the beggar who possesses nothing at all; the priest who practices religion and the wicked who rob and kill; the hero who conquers in battle and the one who is too weak to help himself; the prime minister and nobleman, subjects and slave; the comely and attractive, the ugly and black man (note. no. 2) and so forth; death visits all there without regard for rank or circumstances.

It is certain that death like a thief will come suddenly upon you. Incline your mind whilst it is day to view it as an entrance into rest and as an approach to the blessedness of God's salvation. (Gergan)

4.3.3 Zodpa Dechen

He was an evangelist who took care of the Christian community in Kyelang. Just after the First World War, Kyelang was left without a missionary and that is when he took care of the Christian community residing there. There is a scope of knowing more about this evangelist who contributed to the *Kyelang Agbar* and wrote about the *Garja/Garsha* (old name for Kyelang). He could be Zoda Dechen, one of the copyist who from Ladakh who was part of a committee set up to translate the Bible for the Bible Society, London.²⁷⁰

²⁷⁰ "A committee set up in Leh in 1942 that consisted of three Moravian Ministers, Yoseb Gergan, Norman Driver and Walter Asboe, and Harold Avery of the Brethren's Mission wrote to the Bible Society in London requesting the publication of the entire Bible, including Gergan's New Testament revisions." Bray, John. "Language, Tradition and the Tibetan Bible." *Tibet Journal* XVI NO 4 WINTER (1991): 28-58.

Born to parents from Ladakh, who had then settled down in Lahoul, Zodpa Dechen's identity as a Christian evangelist was well known among his fellow Christians in Ladakh as well as Lahoul. His parents came to Lahoul from Ladakh, who for many years managed the mission farm that is located above the mission compound at Kyelang²⁷¹. (La Trobe, Bishop B. November 1909:217)

In Chapter X of *'The Chronicles of Tinan (Lahul)'*, Rev. A. H. Francke, mentions him as his Munshi from Kyelang. The chronicles of Lahoul are written down with Zodpa Dechen's assistance. Francke asks him to copy the family chronicle of the chiefs of the Tin-an (or Gondhla).

This part of the copying and recording the manuscript by Zodpa Dechen has been recorded by Francke as follows—

When stationed at Kye-lan, Lahul, 1906-08, I heard a rumour that the chiefs of Ti-nan (or Gondhla) were in possession of a family chronicle. I did not, however, succeed in getting to see it. I therefore asked Miss Duncan, in 1908, to make efforts to procure it. She actually obtained the MS, from Hīrā-cand, the present chief of Ti-nan. The greater part of the document was copied and translated for her use by Mangal-cand, brother of the reigning Jo of Ko-lon. Mangal-cand did not consider it necessary to copy the latter part of the little book, as it contained only the names of the guests who were present at the death-ceremony of the chief of Ha-ri-ya, in the sixteenth century. As Mangal-cand's translation was not quite literal, I had a new one made in 1908. Miss Duncan had died, too early for Tibetan archeology, in 1909, and her brother's efforts to procure the Tibetan text were in vain. I therefore asked Mr. Hettasch, of Kye-lan, to send my old munshi, Bzod-pa bde-chen, from Kyelan to Ti-nan to copy it once more. After several fruitless attempts to get hold of the MS, the munshi succeeded, and the Tibetan text attached below is based on his copy.on the contrary, Bzod-pa stopped his work a few lines earlier than Mangal-cand. He believed that the chronicle proper ended there, and that the rest of the MS. had nothing to do with history. Bzod-pa's copy closely agrees with the translations

²⁷¹ This piece of information has been gathered from the article, 'Monthly Missionary Review', *'Moravian Mission: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work'*, published by Hazell, Watson and Viney Ltd. London & Aylesbury on November, 1909. Pg 217. The evangelist Ga Phuntsog and his wife are also described in great detail.

made from Miss Duncan's copy of the text. A few names of chiefs, omitted in Bzod-pa's copy through some clerical error, were restored from the translations. (Francke 1926:211)

In the same chronicle, Francke writes that—

The following genealogical tree of the chiefs of Ti-nan was obtained at Ti-nan by my munshi, Bzod-pa-Bde-chen, of Kye-lam, in 1910, when he went to Ti-nan at my request to copy 'The Chronicles of Ti-nan'. By some mistake he got hold of the genealogical tree instead of the chronicles, and in this way this document was unexpectedly discovered. (Francke 1926:216)

Another document titled '*the Geneological Tree of the Chiefs of Bar-hbog, Lahul*' in the same text by Francke, again mentions Zodpa Dechen. Francke has written—

When stationed as a missionary at Kye-lan, in Lahul, in 1906, I was told that a certain family of zamindars at Bar-hbog was descended from an ancient line of chiefs, and that the chiefs of Bar-bog were once the highest among the baronial houses of Lahul. To find out whether the family was still in possession of old documents or a chronicle, I sent my Munshi, Bzod-pa-Bde-chen of Kye-lan, to Bar-hbog, to make inquiries. Bzod-pa was so fortunate to discover a MS. Containing the genealogical tree of the family and two votive documents.....Although I did not succeed in seeing the original MS. of the pedigree, I am convinced that Bzod-pa's copy of it quite trustworthy, as I know him to be a very reliable worker. (Francke 1926:219)

Another important account of the trade between the Kings of Ladakh and Kulu, in the same text mentions the Francke's munshi. It has been stated that—

When stationed at Kye-lan as a missionary (1906-08), I heard that a man was still alive in Kyor (Lahul) who in his younger days had done service in the trade between the kings of Ladakh and Kulu. He was named Brun-drub (Don-grub), of the house of Myon-pa of Kyor. I sent my mushi, Bzod-pa-Bde-chen, to him to write down the tale of the trade according to his dictation. Bzod-pa's MS. consisted of three pages of Bu-nan text written in Tibetan characters. (Francke 1926:221)

During the first World War, due to the “repatriation” order from all the Germans in India, the Moravian Missionaries left Kyelang. It was during this time that Ga Puntsog and Zopda Dechen were entrusted with the spiritual care of the station as well as its sub-stations until a missionary could join them and take charge again.

Zopda has been described as an indispensable assistant to Rev. Francke in collecting the oral histories of the region of Lahoul into Tibetan. From a letter dated, 22nd December, 1915 that has been titled, ‘*West Himalaya: Our native Evangelists at Kyelang in Lahoul*’, by F. E. Peter, the superintendent of Leh, published in the Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work, Vol XIV, 1916; Zopda Dechen and his work in Kyelang has been highly praised. F. E. Peter writes that, Zopda is the younger of the two evangelists at Kyelang, the other being Ga Puntsoog. Zopda has been described as a very intelligent and a better educated among his fellow people. F. E. Peter writes—

He speaks all five of the dialects used in the district and he knows the native modes of thought and life as though he belonged to each group of the inhabitants. This makes him a valuable assistant to our missionary. He has been a teacher and retains an affectionate understanding for the boys and girls. (Peter, April 1916:59-60)

He preaches on Sundays in Tibetan, and he is apt at interpreting into the local dialects, when the missionary desires it. (Peter, April 1916:59-60)

His wife also has a class of women and girls for instruction in knitting. This is popular, and some sixty or seventy give their names, Here, too, Zopda assists by giving addresses in Bunan. (April 1916: 59-60)

Therefore, it can clearly be stated that he was an efficient assistant, translator, an interpreter a teacher, as well as an apt evangelist in Lahaul.



Picture 3. Zodpa Dechen, his wife and lama Dondrub. Source: **Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work.** Hazell, Watson & Viney Ltd. May 1914. London & Aylesbury.

4.3.4 Tarnyed Nasib Ali:

Tarnyed Nasib Ali has an interesting background. He

Although there are limited sources to his background, however, in the article titled, '*From the Lofty Himalayas: Ali, the New teacher at Poo*' by Rev. H. B. Marx, published in the *Moravian Missions*, Ali is described in detail by Rev Marx. He writes—

The new teacher Ali, when he arrived on November 4th of last year²⁷² was the object of many inquisitive glances. (Marx 1912:63-64)

In the words of Rev. Marx, Ali is a Balti who was born at Kargid²⁷³, but was taken to Leh as a boy of eleven. His wife's name is Heda, who is from Kotgur, and her grandfather is said to have been a Chinese. After being instructed for three years in the Koran, he became acquainted with the Christian religion at our mission school, and in 1895, he was baptized by Mr. Weber. The following year, Ali entered Mr. Biscoe's school at Srinagar, and later on lived at Kyelang and Simla as servant to Mr. Fichtner, during which time he also began to teach. From 1905 till last year he was teacher at Kyelang and was then transferred to Poo by the general Mission Conference. Besides being a teacher, he fills in the post of postmaster, and also helps us in the work of evangelization in and around Poo. Every Wednesday afternoon he accompanies Mr. Kunick or Mr. Marx on foot or on horseback to the neighbouring villages. (Marx 1912: 63-64)

Similarly, in the article titled, '*The work of the Native Helpers and the Preaching of the Gospel away from the Stations*' in Periodical Accounts of the Moravian Missionaries, June 1912, Vol. VIII, No.90, published by 'The Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel (S.F.G.)', Ali has again been described him as—

Formerly a Mohamedan by profession, he has for many years lived among the lamaists, and accordingly he knows their religion well, and understands how best to bring the Christian teachings to bear upon their hearts and lives. (1912: 309-310)

In another article, it has been mentioned that—

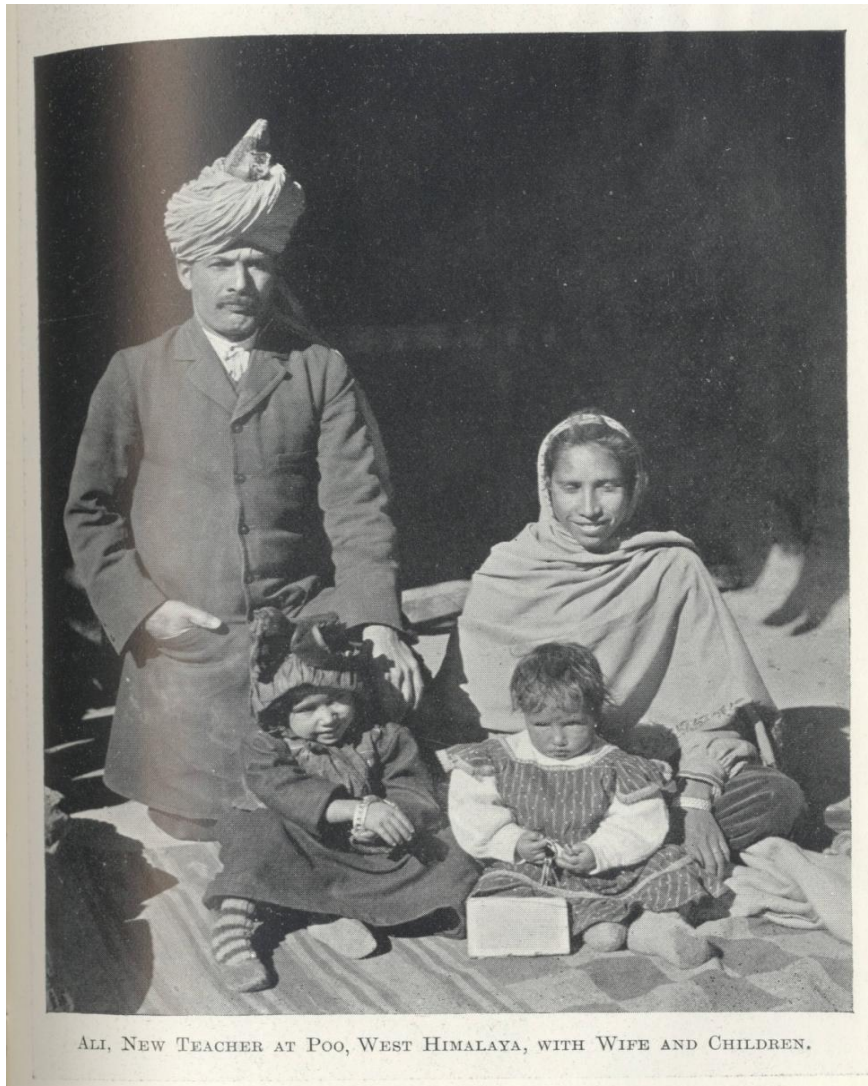
Under Mr. Kunick's management the Boy's School has shewn good results. The new school-master, Ali, also did his best to increase the attendance, which was about 30. The boys liked school as well as gymnastics and games, and they, as well as their parents, showed confidence in their teachers which was a great gain. (1907:759)

Therefore, Ali must be from Kargil and not Kargyid. His full name is mentioned in the newspaper as Tharnyed Nasib Ali, Tharnyed, being the Christian name. His prime occupation, as

²⁷² Last year meaning 1911.

²⁷³ The word 'Kargid' could be a reference to 'Kargil'.

a teacher is useful for the Missionaries, as he is well versed in both Urdu as well as Tibetan. Hence, Ali was a Muslim by parentage but Christian by faith. He provided an indispensable service as a teacher to the students in Poo. He had come to replace the previous teacher, Paulu of Poo at the school. Out of the copies studied during this research we come across an article on Tibet in the July 1928 edition of *Kyelang Agbar* written by him, the article is undersigned with his name.



Picture 4: Tarnyed Nasib Ali. Source: Periodical Accounts Relating to Moravian Missionaries. The Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel (S.F.G.) No.61 Vol. VI 1905.

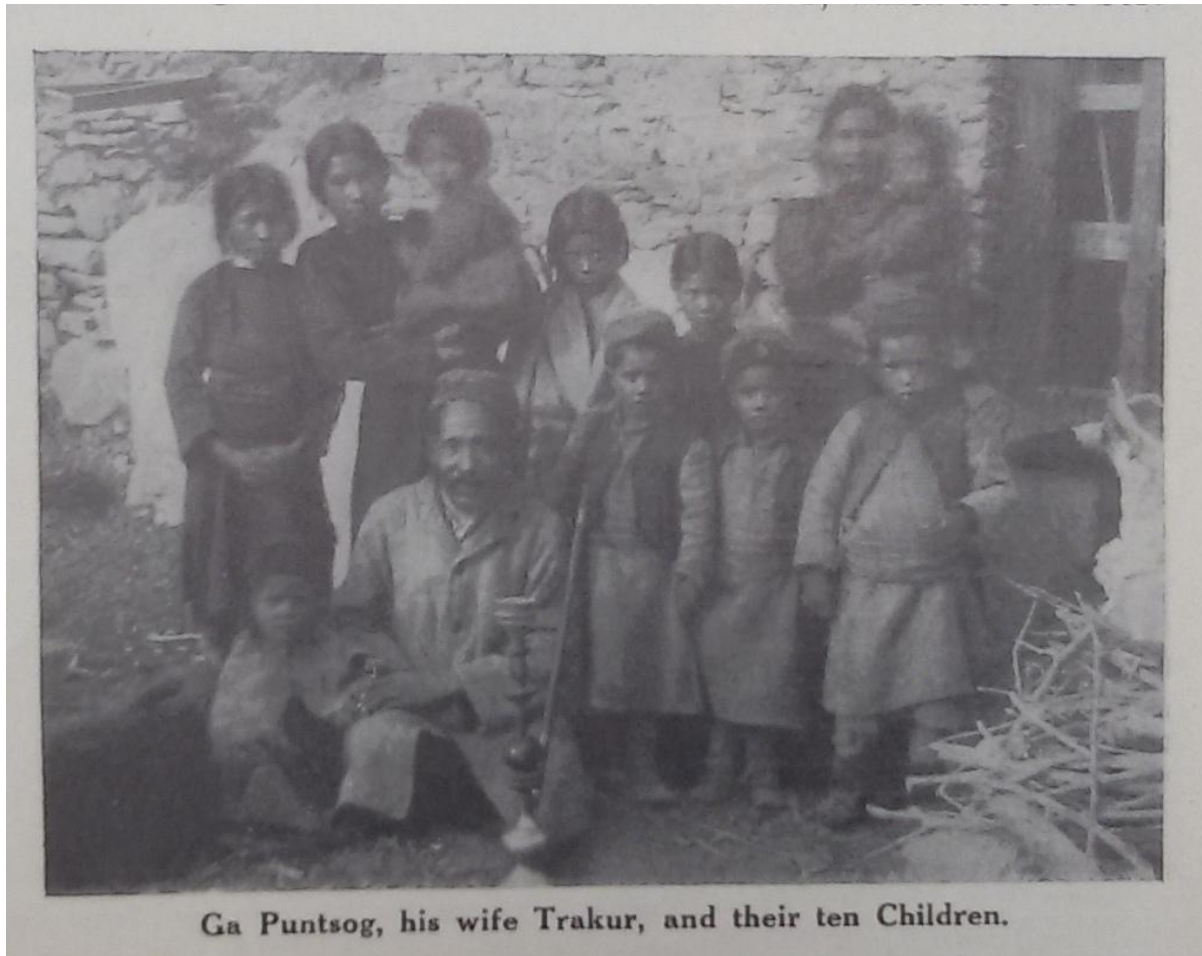
4.3.5 Ga Phuntsog

Ga Phuntsog was from Gya village. He was monk from Hemis monastery. He lived in Chot²⁷⁴, a sub-station and a village that lies 8 miles away from Kyelang. Ga Phuntsog, who came from Ladakh to settled Chot, was given 10 *biga* /20 *Kanal* of land for living by the Moravian Missionaries. He served in Chot from 1904 or 1905 until 1947. His family consisted of his wife, Trakur and their ten children.

According to local sources, on my field work to Kyelang, the villagers informed me that Yakob along with his other children sold the Missionary land on which they lived and left to settle down in Kyelang where their family still live.

In the Monthly Missionary Review of the Moravian Mission: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work' published in February 1909, an article by Bishop B La Trobe, titled, '*A Beautifully-written Tibetan letter*', mentions Ga Puntsog's letter to the correspondent of the Western Himalayan Mission who praises both his classic Tibetan letters and the cursive style that he writes in. In another section, his wife and children have been mentioned. His wife's name is Trakur. Both of them are parents of seven children, a family photograph sent along with the letter mentions their names. The children are called Ribka, Rahel, Jamde, little Silpa, baby Jakob and another daughter whose name is not known. (There should be one more child. Name and gender is not known)

²⁷⁴ In present day the village, Chot, is called Tholang.



Picture: Ga Puntsog and his family. Source: Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work. Hazell, Watson & Viney Ltd. May 1914. London & Aylesbury.

4.3.6 Jor Phuntsog:

Jor Phuntsog was from Ladakh. He was baptized in the year 1894 in Lahaul. Soon after Baptism, within a span of two to three years, he worked at the Mission Press in Kyelang. He was a quite a literary person and translated the Pilgrim's Progress from English into Tibetan. He was also a member of the Committee that was set up for the translation of the Old Testament Bible. He was an active member of the Mission House at Kyelang and in the year 1895 to around 1899, he came back to Ladakh to his village in Leh. He passed away in his late 40's or 50's.

4.4 Writers from Kyelang:

4.4.1 Prithi Chand / Sonam Dawa (b. 1911- d. ?)

Colonel Prithi Chand was born on 01 January 1911, at Khangsar in Lahaul. His father the later Rai Bahadur Thakur Amar Chand, Raees-e-Azam, was then the Wazir of Lahaul. The title of Wazir was bestowed upon the ancestors of the family as a hereditary right with magisterial and administrative powers. This was during the reign of the Rajas of Ladakh and continued under the Rajas of Kulu and later under the British rule. They were three brother, the other were Abhay Chand or Nyima Wangyal (Wazir of Lahoul) and Tehsildar Pratap Chand or Sangey Dawa. Mangal Chand or Tashi Dawa and Amar Chand or Chimet Dawa were brothers and both of them were Prithi Chand's uncle.

During the First World War, Thakur Amar Chand raised a volunteer force of two hundred men from Lahaul for the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force. He himself volunteered to lead the group and was given the honorary rank of Jamadar (now called Naid Subedar). After the War, when they returned to Lahaul, the Government of India conferred the title of Rai Bahadur on Thakur amar Chand, in recognition of his services, during the War. He was also granted 10 murabbas of land (250 acres) in the district of Montgomery in Western Punjab, now in Pakistan. Prithi Chand's father expired in 1921 when he was hardly 10 years old. His mother also died the same year and the eldest brother, Thakur Abhay Chand took over the duties of the Wazir of Lahaul. After passing class 4 in a primary school in Lahaul, Prithi Chand was sent to Kulu government high school where he passed his matric examination in 1929. He then went to Shri Pratap College, Srinagar, for higher education. There he struck friendship with one Sonam Nurbu of Ladakh who was destined to accompany Prithi Chand to save Laakh in 1948. The studies had progressed for just three months, when he received a telegram to return home. On arrival, he found that his eldest brother has lost his mental balance. The middle brother, Thakur Prithi Chand, perforce, had to discontinue his studies to look after the family farms and trade.

Prithi Chand's eldest brother had joined 11 Dogra (TA) of the Territorial Army at Jullundur Cant., and he was granted an Indian Territorial Force commission. (Chibber, 2008:23) Inspired by his brother Prithi Chand also joined this Batallion as a Sepoy and in 1936 was promoted to the rank of Jamadar. Her served in that capacity till 1939, when he was granted a

commission and became an officer. The Territorial Army in those days used to undergo training for three months in a year, and for the rest of the time Prithi Chand would look after the family business and farms in Lahaul.

In 1936, Prithi Chand was elected as the President of Lahaul Wool Traders' Association. The Lahauli's purchased wool and pashminas from Tibetans and sold the same to traders from the plains, including Dhariwal Woollen Mills. With energetic efforts, Prithi Chand was able to raise the price of wool from Rs. 15/- per maund to Rs. 35/- per maund and was, thus, able not only to save the traders from suffering losses, but even to earn some profit instead. Seeing his performance, he was also selected as the Chairman of the Kuth Growers Association. Kuth is a root herb grown in high altitude areas. Its oil was also exported to France for perfumes. The root was also exported to China for its medicinal and aphrodisiac qualities. He continued these activities till 1939 when World War II broke out. (Chibber 2008:24)

In the book, '*Pakistan's Criminal Folly in Kashmir: The Drama of accession and Rescue of Ladakh*' by Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Dr. M. L. Chibber, the story of Col. Prithi Chand has been recorded in his own words. Col. Prithi Chand goes on to describe the origin of his ancestors, as follows:

I wonder how you guessed that I do not belong to a blue blood Lahouli family. I am amazed at your insight. Well, my ancestors, in the old days, belonged to the Pal dynasty of Bengal. Many centuries ago, they migrated from Bengal and settled down in Kangra. They established two principalities of Chhota Bengal and Bada Bengal which still exist not very far from Mandi²⁷⁵. (Chibber,2008: 21)

One of my adventurous ancestors, named Neel Pal, crossed over the Dhaula Dhar range, which separates Lahoul from Kangra, Kullu and Manali. He married the daughter of the Raja of Lahoul and settled down there. The Raja belonged to the family of the great Tibetan Emperor, Tsrong Chem Ganbo, whose domain extended well into China, Mongolia, Ladakh, Lahaul and Spiti.

²⁷⁵ There is a contesting view about the origin of the genealogies of the Thakurs by Mr. Tsering Dorjay from Gyuskar, Lahoul. He stated that the history of the people (interview him and write it down here)

My great grandfather was adopted as legal heir to the kingdom. The family adopted Buddhism when Lahul was under the rule of the Rajas of Ladakh and took on the Ikshwaku caste of Lord Buddha. This caste in Tibet and Ladakh is called '*Guram Shingpa*', meaning sugar-cane. During the period Lahaul was under the Ladakhi kings, our religion was Buddhism. For example, my Hindu name is Prithi Chand and my Tibetan name is Sonam Dawa. In Lahaul, we have a mixed Hindu and Buddhist culture as well as religion. Our gods and goddesses are common and our religious ceremonies are also common. So are our birth, marriage, and death ceremonies. We respect Buddhist Lamas and Hindu saints alike. (Chibber, 2008:22)



Picture: Col. Prithi Chand alias Sonam Dawa. Source: Chibber 2008: (Forward page)

4.5 Articles in the newspaper and their importance

All of them interact and exchange their ideas by learning and then exchanging language usages, interpret, reinterpret and present their works to readers who use those languages and can understand them over a certain period of time. The use and exchange of languages is therefore an interesting experimentation. It was a common thing to teach and in exchange learn different language/s from another person in these parts of the Himalayan area where, without the knowledge of the 'language in use', one would almost feel aloof from the rest of the population. Therefore, learning each others' languages, even if it is remotely intelligible paved way for better communication. The 20th century Himalayan belt was a region where such exchanges were common among the people. Traders used 'pidgins' as a language tool to trade among each other; Ladakhi and Tibetan traders often used signs and measuring instruments to carry on with their transactions.

4.5.1 An Article on the 'Territorial Force'

During the British times, the people of Lahaul, recruited into the army by the Thakurs during the first World War, as Shepherds and Miners, headed by Subedar Thakur Amar Chand, who took part in the WWI in Mesopotamia. There were about 200 persons. They stayed there and only one man was killed and everyone else can back safely.

Subedar Thakur Amar Chand's son, (Thakur Abhay Chand) Nyima Wangyal was of the Lieutenant rank. He started what was called the 'Territorial Force' where men from Garja were recruited and sent to Jalandar for further training during winters. The recruits of this force were not from the regular army. They were used when needed as they were more adapt to the environment. During 1945 or 46 this force was ceased and army recruits were then sent to regular army.

4.5.2 Dozam²⁷⁶ : The trading Centre of Ladak, Zanskar, Tibet, Central Asia²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶Dorjee, Tsering. *Interview about , 'Dozam: A Trade Centre in the Himalayan region bordering Ladakh and Lahaul* '. Rigzin Chodon. 07 May 2017. Ladakhi and English.

This article has been recorded and narrated by Mr. Tsering Dorjee, who is a mountaineer and knows the route towards Central Asia very well, as he undertook many expeditions towards Central Asia in the late 20th century.

To understand the importance of commercial ties among the people of the region of the Himalayan belt, I conducted an interview of Mr. Tsering Dorjee, about the ‘Dozam trade centre’, he narrated the historic importance of this trade centre in the lives of the Himalayan belt. He narrates that—

‘*Doa*’ and ‘*zampa*’ means ‘a bridge made out of stones/big boulders of stones’ that lies in the river and can be jumped over and hence, serves as a bridge on a river. The people from Mandi and Kullu call it ‘*pat seo*’ meaning a bridge of stones.

‘*Tzong ra*’ means a place for barter trade. He narrates that the earliest barter trade place was Phutti runi, an uninhabited area. In Kulluvi, *phuti* means broken and *runi* means boulders. He goes on to state that during winters traders would come through a snow bridge that was formed during winters. Snow bridge would formed due to avalanches and snow bridges were formed in the tributaries of Chandra river called Dokpo Gongma, Dokpo Yogma and Shigri. These snow bridges were used even in summers for traders to traverse upon. Even in the present day, apart from the Shigri snow bridge which is not there, the other two are functionary.

When you come from Ladakh and cross over Baralacha La you reach this side of the upper Chandra valley. Once in this valley, these three rivers are present which have snow bridges over them and these bridges were used to go from one place to another.

(Q:How did *Phutti runi* became important?)

Tod Ngari, Zanskar, and Ladakh traders who are from the cold region reach warm regions and would infected with malaria and die. Those traders from the hot region like Punjab

This interview record is part of the oral tradition narrative about the region that is usually passed on from one generation of trader to another.

²⁷⁷ This place has also been referred to in an article titled, ‘*A Journey in the Himalayas: from Leh to Poo by way of Kyelang*’ by Rev. H. Marx. He describes—“We rode down to Zingzinglear, where a large Indian rode caravan had passed the night. Another five miles brought us to Dosam, where there is a solid bridge across the Bhaga. In Dosam we saw for the first time after a week’s travelling, the first tent village. IT is a trade centre for sheep and wood. Although they are all Buddhists, the people differ from the Ladakhis in dress, mode of life, and language.” (Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work. March 1907:54-57) Another reference of ‘Dozam’ can be found in the Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work. May 1914. In the words, from this article, by Bishop B. La Trobe, “Twice Zoda went up the valley from Kyelang to Dozam, a plain at the foot of the Baralacha Pass. There is no village there, but in summer there is often a considerable concourse of tents. Hundreds of traders and shepherds meet there, and he seized the opportunity for evangelistic work.” (Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work. May 1914:92)

would dread to go to the cold region. Therefore this place, *Phuti Runi* was the perfect area that was located at a geographical location which could be accessible by the traders from both the hot as well as cold regions without getting affected too much by the change in temperature and hence, without any illness.

Traders from Tod Ngari (Western Tibet); Ladakh; Zaskar and probably few Central Asian traders would bring good like salt, livestock, wool, butter and barter it with the other traders Lahul, Kullu, Mandi, Punjab who would bring wheat, barley, rice, molasses (raw sugar), dye, utensils etc.

(Q. Why did it end?)

In 1836, due to which the environment became warmer and warmer due to which a big flood came down in Shigri valley and the snow bridge was swept away. Now due to that the traders were left abandoned on either side. Since salt was an essential commodity for daily existence, the traders would cross the water in the river when the water level would be less. There was a big risk factor, if snow fell, then there was risk of the traders being killed under the snow. In summers, it was not possible to cross that place. Due to this trading was done at a very high risk and only few sturdy men and traders would practice this trade.

In 1848, when the East India Company came, they thought of a solution. It was not possible to build the bridge. Finally, they found a location on the other side of the Bhaga valley which seemed like a suitable place, then the area of Dozam was chosen for trade. There was no good bridge in the Bhaga valley. It took almost 20 years to make road and bridge in this Bhaga valley. In 1872, the first barter trade was held at Dozam. Thus this new site was established.

Before 1956 traders from Tibet would come for barter trade however, after the occupation of Tibet by the Red Army the traders from Tibet ceased to come. After the making of this bridge and bridge road; traders from Amritsar, Hoshiarpur from Punjab used this road frequently to go towards their destination in Central Asia through Lahoul- Baralacha- Ladakh.

In order to make the Central Asian trade road during the British times, Commissioner Jalandar Division (Punjab) Mr. Douglas Forsyth took a lot of interest and worked very hard. His team, few surveyors and Colonels went from Srinagar road through Ladakh over Zojila to

Yarkand. Another team, under the command of Thakur Tara Chand (Karma Dawa) of Garja, went from Leh, met the Commissioner of Jalandar and travelled to Yarkhand together to make that road.

Meaning of the word: Location: Located in an uninhabited Upper Bhaga valley from the last village, Dartsey Sumdo, onwards; towards the region of Ladakh.

Prominence of this location for traders: North India and Western Tibet had *delwa* around the 10th century in trading goods. Records from the 10th century onwards are available because traders from Tod Ngari (Western Tibet) would bring salt, butter, little bit of wool and come to Garja from Chandra valley.

4.6 Analysis of the newspaper contents:

The MM's represented a lot of things. They were foreigners who had come and settled down in the Himalayan belt, first in Lahaul and then in Poo and finally in Ladakh where they were finally able to established themselves as a religious institution with many converts, although the number of converts were less given the stretch of time period that they lived there i.e. from the 1885 till present. Their conversion of people from Buddhism to Christianity in Leh was a success however, in the region of Lahaul, they remained unsuccessful and the same goes for Poo in Upper Kinnaur region. There are many interesting factors which can be analysed further to see what factors responsible for the success as well as failure of Evangelism in these belts of the Himalayan region that during the early 20th century.

Firstly, the region of Lahaul, which was the first station of the Moravian Mission in the Himalayan belt, will be analysed to see what impact they had on the people, their society, their economy, their culture, their language, literature etc.

Then the region of Poo, Upper Kinnaur and finally Leh, Khalatse & Shey in Ladakh were impacted. On a general level there are many factors which can be seen as the cultural exchanges or innovative ideas and exchanges that were brought about by the German Missionaries in the region. However, even with a lot of beneficial factors, they could not penetrate into the society and the belief system of the people who were mostly of the Buddhist religious views.

The linguistic intervention was one major breakthrough for the Moravians wherever they choose to go to spread Christianity. The Moravian missionaries who went settled in the Himalayan belt first learnt Tibetan (the script), and at the same time the spoken language which was again divided into the common spoken Ladakhi language and the honourable or the respectable language spoken by the aristocratic families of the Ladakh region.

Learning the local language both spoken and written was a great achievement for them as it gave them great potential to reach out to the people. Learning the language was a major task which took tremendous dedication and hard work. The first two missionaries who came to the region learnt Tibetan from their fellow Moravians in Language broke the first barrier in social interaction between the missionaries and the common people which made it easier for them interact. Knowing any culture and the people would have become an easier task for them.

In order to learn the language, preliminary studies were usually undertaken by the Moravian missionaries who were going to be stationed at the West Himalayan Mission in Ladakh or Khyelang. An interesting article on language had been written by Dr. A. Hieber in the *Moravian Missions: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work*. He mentions how Missionary women are far better than the Missionary men in the conversational language. But stresses on how men excel in the *written* language, which is the classical language. He writes that learning Ladakhi is followed by difficulty after difficulty. He gives examples of word formations along with the consonants, he mentions the letters, duple letters, triple letters and silent letters. He writes—

In Ladakhi one word is not separated from the other, but syllables are, and there is no absolutely no means of telling where each word ends, unless experience has taught one. (1914:152)

He goes on to state that—“In this country there are three distinct and separate languages, viz., the written, the colloquial, and the respectful, and a missionary should know all three.”

The Bible however, has been written in the classical Tibetan and therefore Dr. Hieber also mentions in his article—

It has been asked why the Scriptures are not translated into the colloquial instead of the classical, written language. The answer is simple: If it were done, there would have to so many different translations made, owing to the many dialects; but most educated Ladakhis understand the written language, and therefore this should form the basis. Is our grand old Bible going to be the book which will redeem Ladakh from the punishment of Babel? (1914:152-153)

4.6.1 Barter system and the importance of language:

In order to exchange salt and barley, a stone is kept on one of the commodity and if the other trader does not agree then the other person would place another stone along with the first one.

Their language is from the same Tibeto-Burman family of languages and although when spoken, were very different but those languages were mutually intelligible due to the common classical script that was used in Buddhist texts and written in their religious classical (Buddhist) texts.

In order to understand the complexity of the language play of the regions, Ladakh and Lahoul, I would like to give a background to the languages used here. These languages have already been introduced in the introductory chapter of my thesis and their usage during the 20th century forms a very important role to understand the changes that took place among the people due to language use.

Benedict Anderson looks at newspaper as “a cultural product” then, he goes on to state that “newspaper is an extreme form of the book” (Anderson 35) in his book, *Imagined Communities*. The same thing can also be stated for the way the newspapers were functioning in the Himalayan belt of Lahoul and Kyelang. The intervention by A. H. Francke in 1904 in Khalatse, Ladakh to produce a medium of writing that was non-confirmative and new changed the perspectives of the people reading them.

The newspaper, Ladvags Kyi Agbar published in 1904-07 and again from 1908-10 A.D. that seem to have been started with the aim of reaching out to the masses of the region, Ladakh in order to propagate Christianity to the people of the region, by using the colloquial form of

Ladakhi language, can be seen as an attempt quite similar to that of the use of vernacular languages in spite of Latin in writing or reaching out to the common readers in 16th century Europe. (Anderson 39)

Although the attempt made by the vernacularization in Europe started with the purpose of peddling cheaper editions of publications in the vernacular. Which therein, changed many aspects of language itself, the impact of such publications had a direct relation to the idea of an ‘imagined community’ that Anderson proposes throughout his text. Mass publication of texts had direct influence on the way people thought and reacted. Such was the case of Martin Luther, who in 1517—

.. nailed his theses to the chapel-door in Wittenberg, they were printed up in German translation, and ‘within 15 days [had been] seen in every part of the country. (Anderson 39)

Publication on a mass scale always brought about more number of readership compared to the access one had to a limited number of books (religious or non-religious) in a given region.

Therefore, the case of printing newspapers in these regions were not at all related to a capital bound enterprise or a market. The publications had only one purpose to serve which was—evangelical. Evangelistic tradition discussed in chapter one focuses on the new methodology that Rev. A. H. Francke used i.e. using newspapers instead of books to propagate Christianity. This method can be seen as a way of connecting not just the people of Ladakh but also those in Lahoul through the use of a common script i.e. Ladakhi language written in the Tibetan script.

Chapter 5

NATION IN THE MAKING

The term ‘nation’ was very modern for the people of Ladakh and Khyelang in the early 20th century. The creation of the idea of a nation, if there were any, can be set in the context of the social and political changes that were taking place in Ladakh during the early 20th century.

Literature available on the history of the region in English draws on scholars like Alexander Cunningham, the major who was commissioned by the British government to lay down the ancient boundary between Ladakh and Tibet, whose book, *Ladak* first published in 1854, clearly put Ladakh and Lahaul in the context of their division in the region.

He stated that there are different districts of Ladakh which are named according to their relative geographical positions. These positions are called, *Nub-ra*, the western district (or Wessex), and *Lho-yul*, the southern country (or Suffolk). To the south-east of *Ladak*, but to the north of *Ngari*, lies the extensive province of *Chang Thang*, or the “northern plains.”²⁷⁸

Cunningham categorizes the districts of Ladak as follows—the surrounding districts consisted of *Nubra*, or the north-western district of Ladakh, that included all the countries drained by the Nubra and the Shayok rivers. *Ladak*, the central and most populous district. It was called ‘*Mang-yul*’ or the ‘district of many people’. Zaskar, included the countries lying along the two great branches of the Zaskar river in the direction from the south-east to north-west. He says that Zaskar is bounded by Ladak on the north, by Rukchu (Rupshu) on the east and Lahul on the south and by the small districts of Purik and Wanla on the east. The next district is the most elevated in Ladakh, it is called Rukchu (present Rupshu). This lofty inhabited place is bounded on the north by Ladakh Proper, on the east by the Chinese district of Chumurti, on the south by Lahul and Spiti and on the west by Zaskar. Purik, Suru and Dras are enlisted as three small districts to the west of Zaskar on the high road between Kashmir and Leh. Dras, also known as *hem-babs* (snow-fed or snow descended) is mentioned as the most snowy district of Ladak. The

²⁷⁸ Cunningham, Alexander. *Ladak*. New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 2010. English.

next place is Spiti, which is bounded on the north by Rukchu (Rupshu), on the west by Lahul and Kullu, on the south by Kanawar, and on the east by the Chinese district of Chumurti. Lahul (or *Lho-yul*, the “southern district”) is bounded on the north by Zanskar and Rukchu, on the west by Kashtwar, on the south by Chamba and Kullu, and on the east by Spiti. The Chandra and Bhaga rivers meet at Tandi, their confluence and form the Chenab river forming another valley towards Chamba. These three valleys are the main valleys of Lahaul.²⁷⁹ The last region was Spiti that lay next to Lahaul.

To sum up, the districts that formed Ladakh during the 1850’s were—Nubra, Ladakh, Zanskar, Rukchu (Rupshu), Purik, Suru and Dras (together they are part of Kargil), Lahul (Lahaul) and Spiti.

The ‘countries’, according to Cunningham, of Lahaul and Spiti were under the British governance and Nubra, Ladakh, Zanskar, Rukchu (Rupshu), Purik-Suru-Dras (now Kargil which has many other villages under the district), under the Maharaja Gulab Singh.²⁸⁰

Historically, Lahaul was part of Ladakh until 1846 A.D. after which it fell under the British rule under Article 1 of the Treaty of Amritsar, signed on March 16, 1846, between the Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu and British Government. The political division after these events about Ladakh and Lahaul are as follows—

‘Ladák is divided politically between Maharaja Gulab Singh and the East-India Company. To the former belong all the northern districts, to the latter only the two southern districts of Lahul and Spiti.’(Cunningham 2010:18)

The description given by Cunningham fits well to the description of Ladakh—an amalgamation of smaller regions that have their own history. Oral histories of the region from older generations confirm this view that central part of Leh was referred as Ladakh and the rest of the regions like Nubra, Zanskar, Rupshu, Purik-Suru-Dras, Lahul and Spiti as distinct from each other. So in that sense, the idea of a unified nation, “Ladakh” (like in the present political sense) did not exist in the late 19th century. The Himalayan region, sandwiched between Tibet and China on one side

²⁷⁹ Cunningham, Alexander. *Ladak* . New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 2010. English.Pg 23-24

²⁸⁰ Cunningham, Alexander. *Ladak* . New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 2010. English.Pg 25

and the British India on the other. Until the Independence of India in 1947, Ladakh as a region of Kashmir was distinct from 'India' and distinct from 'Tibet' in the sense of a 'Nationhood'. The development of *Hindustan* into a nation did not affect the development of sentiments of present Ladakh, Lahaul & Spiti as a separate nation. The feeling of nationalism among the people can be argued to be more regions bound than seeing Ladakh as one nation.

The connection with Tibet on historical and religious background provides the region with a close affinity towards them. However, the identity of the people who lay in the Ladakh districts was different from the people in Tibet proper. This argument can be dealt with the fact that the Moravians always looked at Ladakh as 'Little Tibet'. 'Greater Tibet' was Tibet Proper with its capital at Lhasa, the closed land or the mystic land, where foreigners were not allowed to enter.

The people of Ladakh and Lahoul are constantly represented as 'Tibetans' by the Moravians in their publications in English published in London. This debate on the representation of people from Ladakh and Lahaul as Tibetans has been discussed later on in this chapter.

The Cultural and religious affinity of Ladakh (as a combination of different smaller regions) towards Tibet reflects in their works.

Bray states that the overall political history and structure of Ladakh is one of the loose political structures and widespread fragmentation. He states that in other parts of the Himalayan region, pre-modern political structures centred on personal *allegiances*²⁸¹ to ruling families rather than on *nations* defined by clearly marked boundaries.²⁸²

To ascertain the relationship that Ladakh as a region had with Tibet, I would like to highlight few important events that framed this allegiance of Ladakh towards Tibet. The first was the 1684 Treaty of Tingmosgang—

The Treaty of Tingmosgang of 1684, mediated between Ladakh and Tibet, by the sixth 'Brug-chen Rin-po-che, Mi-pham-dbang-po' (1641A.D. -1717 A.D.) laid down the

²⁸¹ Edt. Bray John. *Locating Ladakhi Histories*. Dharamsala:Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 2011. Pg.7

²⁸² Edt. Bray John. *Locating Ladakhi Histories*. Dharamsala:Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 2011. Pg.7

conditions that include—the Kashmiri wool merchants’ monopoly over the wool trade; Ladakh would cede Rudok, Guge and Purang to the Lhasa government except for an estate at Minsar near Mount Kailash and a triennial *Lo-phyag* mission be sent to Lhasa with a prescribed set of offerings for the Tibetan authorities. (Petech 1977:78)

This treaty defined the basis of Ladakh’s relationship with Kashmir and Tibet for the rest of the kingdom’s independent existence until the invasion of the kingdom by the Dogra rulers. Apart from this treaty, Tibet was always home for higher Buddhist religious study. Bray posits that—

The tradition of Ladakhi monks pursuing higher training by travelling to Central Tibet started in the 13th century with the *Bri-gung-pa* and *Brug-pa dKa’-brgyud-pa* schools which exercised an important role.(Bray 2011:9)

Therefore, in the past, the kings of Ladakh and their spiritual *allegiance* towards Tibetan Buddhism ensured that they remained more inclined towards Tibet more than towards Kashmir.²⁸³

Cunningham reports in his book, *Ladák* that—

The few questions of foreign polity that the government of Ladák had to deal with were simple and easy. They were chiefly confined to political relations with Balti and Rudok; to commercial ties with Yarkhand and Kashmir; and to the religious connection with Lhasa. The last was a national bond of union between two people speaking the same language, and holding the same faith; and the presents which were annually sent to Lhasa²⁸⁴, by the *Gyalpo* of Ladák, were a humble offering to the Dalai Láma, as the head of the Buddhist religion, and not an extorted tribute to the Emperor of China as lord paramount.²⁸⁵

²⁸³ Edt. Bray John. *Locating Ladakhi Histories*. Dharamsala:Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 2011. Pg.13

²⁸⁴ This could also refer to the *Lo-phyag* mission mentioned earlier which was drawn according to the ‘Treaty of Tingmosgang’ in 1684.

²⁸⁵ Cunningham, Alexander. *Ladák : Physical, Statistical and Historical*. New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, Reprint 2010.Pg.261

His book defined the idea of the nation as ‘national bond of union between two people, (from Ladakh and Tibet) speaking the same language, holding the same faith. Cunningham’s book is important for reference as he wrote the book in 1850’s.

According to Cunningham, the three factors i.e. *political relations, commercial ties* and a *religious connection* defined the dealings of the Ladakhi people with its neighbouring countries and their people. Before the boundaries were settled by the commissioners of the British government the relations of the people of Ladakh as a unified *nation* does not seem to exist. Instead, the idea of a *national bond of union* which was sealed with the important aspect of *faith* and the *same language* seems to bind them. Therefore, the two major factors—religion (Buddhism here) and the language (use of the Tibetan script, *Bod-yig*, for the languages that feel under the Tibeto-Burman languages and also used for the religious liturgy) were the reasons that Ladakh and Tibet had such close connections. Hence, historians have called Ladakh, ‘the Little Tibet’ due to such closeness.

J.H. Bateson makes a clear distinction between the region of Ladakh and Tibet in his article, titled, ‘*A Visitor’s impression of our Work in Western Tibet*’, in the ‘*Moravian Mission: An Illustrated Record of Missionary Work*’ published in 1908 writes that—

When the Moravians determined to carry the Gospel of Jesus into Tibet, they found the gates closed—closed, that is to say, so far as Eastern, or Chinese, Tibet was concerned. But Western Tibet was open, its last King, Tsepal, having been conquered by the Dogras, and the country has become a dependency of Kashmir, under British suzerainty. So here Missionaries, Pagell and Heyde commenced work. Their first station was in the village of Kyeland, in Lahoul, the “Southern Province” of Western Tibet. That was more than fifty years ago. Other mission stations have been opened, Leh, Khalatse, and Poo, but the gates of Eastern Tibet seem more firmly closed than ever.

There is little difference between Eastern and Western Tibet. Buddhism, is the religion and the Lama is the priest, and Tibetan is the language in both countries. Each neighbouring has its *gompas* or monasteries; chorten, containing the ashes of a deceased lama, abound; *mani* walls, covered with the stones engraved with the mystic words “*om mane padme ong*” line the approach to each village. The only difference is in the suzerain

power. But there is all the difference between being governed from Lhasa, at the dictates of China and from Srinagar by a British feudatory.” (Bateson 1908:27)

That brings us to the debate about the **language used** in this region (which will be discussed later in the next section) and how that can be seen as a medium to incorporate the national bond among the Tibetan speaking people of Ladakh and its neighbouring regions like Lahaul and Spiti.

5.1 Language:

The Moravian Missionaries and their tryst with language started with learning the language of the people at their field missions. In this case, it was Ladakh and Lahaul. They underwent major work and as mentioned earlier the language of Ladakh mentioned as literary, spoken and respectful language in areas near Leh. They also started with translation work with the focus on translating the Bible into Ladakhi. While they did that, it was clear that they would face a lot of problems in choosing a language for translating the Gospel. Bray emphasises on this same problem and states that—

The translation work first started with the use of the Classical Tibetan, *chos skad* in the hope that this would ultimately be of use throughout the Tibetan-speaking world. (Bray 1991:47)

But the Moravian Missionaries soon realised that—

...from the missionary point of view, *chos skad* suffered from the disadvantage that Christian teachings in an elevated literary style were less likely to have an immediate impact on less-educated listeners. (Bray 1991:47)

Therefore, they also started experimenting with *phal skad* or the spoken/colloquial language.

In the case of Lahaul, the region with a diverse linguistic background comprising of Tinan, Bunan and Manchand languages, trade and migration of Ladakhis to Lahaul facilitated the use of Ladakhi language. Bray gives another reason for the dominant use of Ladakhi by the Moravians in Lahaul. He states—

‘Ladakhi *phal skad*’ was used and always seen as more important than the languages of Lahoul because although the first Mission House was set up in Kyelang in Lahaul, the few converts had come from Ladakh therefore Ladakhi *phal skad* was used. (Bray 1991:47)

There are few debates among the Moravians related to the language to be used for Bible translations. There was a distinction between the spoken language and the classical written language, i.e., Tibetan also called as ‘Lamaistic Tibetan’ by the Moravians. An interesting observation about using the Roman script to write the language is stated as follows—

Dr Karl Marx, a mission doctor who came to Leh in 1886 strongly believed in the translations into the spoken languages than ‘lamaistic Tibetan’. Marx argued that it would be better to prepare Ladakhi texts using the Roman script because, as has been seen, although the complex spelling rules of written Tibetan are standardized throughout Tibet, the pronunciation of the spoken word differs widely according to the region. He argued that the use of Roman script would make it easier to introduce an acceptable phonetic spelling. The missionaries considered this proposal at a regional conference in 1890 but decided that the time was not ripe.” (Bray 1991:48)

Ladakhi minister, Joseph Gergan and his work in translating the Bible is also worth mentioning to understand the complexities that language of the Himalayan region in Ladakh posed to the Moravians. Bray, states that—

The 1908 version of the Gospel of St. Mark prepared by Francke, published by the Bible Society in Calcutta was revised by Yoseb Gergan and published by the Bible Society in Lahore in the year 1918. Gergan pointed out the difference between spoken Ladakhi and literary Tibetan and explained the rules of spelling and grammar that he had used in that particular translation.²⁸⁶ (Bray 1991:48)

Bray states that according to Pierre and Catherine Vittoz, the translated publications were not popular with the Ladakhi intelligentsia²⁸⁷. The attempt to change the rules of written Tibetan- the

²⁸⁶In the Preface.

²⁸⁷ Who were these ‘Ladakhi intelligentsia’ during the 20th century Ladakh? This is a question that needs to be further investigated upon.

language of the Buddhist scriptures- was seen as a form of religious subversion. Criticisms were made, in the case of the same attempt by Eliyah Tsetan Phunstog, who in 1950's tried to simplify Ladakhi spelling which was intended to be used for secular rather than religious purposes. This remarkable criticism was taken a step further when the Jammu and Kashmir authorities also saw this step with suspicion—

...because they thought it might be linked to the emergence of a politically *subversive Ladakhi nationalism*. Phuntsog's spelling reforms never achieved wide currency because of this double religious and political opposition. (Bray 1991:48)

Francke, was a key figure in this experimentation because, during his stay in Kyelang in Lahaul from 1906-08, he produced the Gospel of St. Mark in Bunan, Manchand and Tinan languages of Lahaul with the help of a local assistant. Bray states that—

In his discussion of his translation work in Lahul, Francke remarked that a degree of 'national consciousness' was needed for the development of a new literary language and he commented that the Lahulis did not possess this: they had no interest in their mother tongues but valued classical Tibetan or Urdu much more. These languages had a much higher status because they were respectively the languages of the dominant religion and the language of the lower levels of the state administration. It is unlikely that speakers of the Lahuli languages will ever develop a '**national consciousness**' in Francke's sense. (Bray 1991:48)

It is interesting to note that while these linguistic interventions were taking place, with the Tibetan literary traditions in the backdrop; other languages used in Ladakh like Urdu, used by the Ladakhi Muslims and the state administration was never part of this controversy. Hence, they do not included in the debate about the Ladakhi identity or Ladakhi national consciousness.

It is also interesting to note that politically, after Indian independence, to assert the Indian identity in Ladakh, the Indian authorities were keen to distinguish Ladakhi culture from Tibetan and therefore from China. In this regard the use of Tibetan in school post independence, the

written Ladakhi or Tibetan language taught in school is referred to as ‘*Bodhi*’ rather than ‘Tibetan’.²⁸⁸

On the one hand, we have the missionaries experimenting with the *chos skat* and the *phal skat*, and on the other, the languages of Ladakh and Kyelang in use seem to be creating a hierarchy of dominant language in use because of the Buddhist religious affirmations on the script in use.

The Moravians seem to be trying to assert on the idea of nationalism that probably existed among the people of Ladakh but which they, especially Francke, felt had to be expressed in the context of a new form and secular form i.e. through the newspaper and especially in the written form instead of the already existing religious, literary writings. So, the development of the ‘national consciousness’ that Francke states, through language was, in fact, less among the Lahoulis and that needed to be developed. They had no interest in their own mother tongue, instead regarded Ladakhi and Urdu as more valuable to know. These languages were more dominantly in use, and hence the minority language appears to have been sidelined according to its use. From Bray’s argument, it can be stated that Francke thought that the national consciousness among the Ladakhis already existed who identified with the larger Tibetan literary tradition that was very Buddhist religion oriented. He further asserts that—

....the Ladakhi Muslims who spoke Ladakhi but wrote in Urdu is not even part of this argument. This is an area which can be studied further. (Bray 1991:)

The *Kyelang Agbar* and *Ladvags Phonya* demonstrates this problem, as they contain few articles written in Urdu, by the school teacher, Tharnyed Nasib Ali, who had followed the Muslim faith during his childhood before getting baptised to become a Christian.

5.2Politics

Moving on from the 19th century to the early 20th century, Independence of India, brought about changes in the way the Himalayan related to India as a whole. Although unaffected from the Indian revolutionary politics for a very long time, Ladakh as a region when under the rule of the Dogra ruler, changes were taking place within Ladakh to reassert their identity as a separate

²⁸⁸ Although etymologically ‘Bod-yig’ meant ‘Tibet (an) - script’ in Ladakhi. Whereas, ‘Bodhi’ in Sanskrit means ‘Awakening’.

nation. In 1934, Ladakh Buddhist Education Society (LBES) and in 1938, Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA)²⁸⁹ was formed with the help of the neo-Buddhists scholars from Kashmir like S. N. Kaul who among few others greatly influenced and thinking of the Ladakhi intelligentsia.²⁹⁰ Thereby, making a clear distinction between the Ladakhi 'Buddhist identity' among the people although, the Ladakhi Muslim identity seemed neglected for quite a long time.

This distinction of Ladakh as a Buddhist nation or the Ladakhi Buddhist identity is often contested.

A recent study by the author Shruti interrogates the foundation myths of the Ladakhi ethnonational identity and the various justifications that accompany them, in the light of historical events. It also explores the dominant patterns of intra-regional conflicts, to examine its relationships with the way Ladakhi identity has been conceptualised, with its demarcations and exclusions in her paper titled, '*Interrogating the foundation myths of Ladakhi identity: Identity articulation and communal conflict in Ladakh*' published in December 2013.

She argues that the claims of '**nationhood**' for Ladakh should be seen as a device and strategy to attain a political goal, rather than representing a ground reality.²⁹¹(Shruti 2013:4) She also states that—

The idea of "nation" was discreetly abandoned by the Ladakhi leadership as it attempted to engage with the Indian state. Perhaps, they recognised the uneasiness of the Indian leaders with the idea of a "nation" within Indian state immediately after independence and also their openness to "accommodation of differences". This may have led them to change their stance to claim Ladakh as an integral part of India.'(Shruti 2013:8)

²⁸⁹ This organization has now evolved and called the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA).

²⁹⁰ Kaul, Shridhar and S.N Kaul. *Ladakh through the ages : Towards a New Identity*, New delhi: Indus Publishing Company, 1992.

²⁹¹ Shruti. "Interrogating the foundation myths of Ladakhi identity: Identity articulation and communal conflict in Ladakh." *Ladakh Studies* 30 (2013): 4-15.

She strongly asserts the distinct conceptualization of Ladakhi identity to have begun during the 1930s when neo-Buddhists from the Kashmir valley started to identify with the cause of Ladakh and its Buddhist traditions.²⁹² However, she also reiterates that—

....the idea of a distinct identity in the local elite can be said to have taken roots in the 1940s, which coincided with the emergence of India as a nation state.(Shruti 2013:4)

She supports this argument by giving the example of the memorandum presented by the president of the Young men's Buddhist Association in 1949, Rigzin Namgyal Kalon to Jawaharlal Nehru. The memorandum states that —

We are a separate nation by all tests—race, language, religion, culture—determining common ruler. If the Indian National Congress could persuade itself to recognise the Muslims of India as a separate nation although they had so much in common with the other elements of the India population the government of India should have no hesitation in recognising what is patent and incontrovertible fact in our case. (Shruti 2014:4-15)

Early in the 1950's the people of Ladakh were complaining how they were neglected by the J&K government. In the 1970's the demand for a Union Territory status started taking hold in the politics of the region. That meant that Ladakh would directly be administered from New Delhi instead of the Jammu and Kashmir. There was a rapid change in the reassertion of the identity of the Ladakhis against the people of Jammu and Kashmir State.

The term nation then seems to have taken ground with the need to induce the reassertion of their identity within Jammu and Kashmir State after the independence of India in 1947 and the need to associate with the neo-Buddhists, who were scholars from Kashmir, who greatly influenced the politics of the region post independence.

Therefore, by analyzing the context of the history and polity of Ladakh, in the early 20th century , it can clearly be stated that the mere idea of a *unified nation* was very contemporary i.e. in the

²⁹² Bertelsen, K.B. "Our Communalised Future: Sustainable Development, social Identification and Politics of Representation in Ladakh." Ph.D. Thesis. Aarhus University, 1996.

40's and came about in order to reassert their demand for a separate territory under the sovereignty of the Indian state.

The feeling of nationalism among the people of Lahaul and Spiti, the regions of British India, were not so affected by the Independence of India.

According to the Periodical Account of the Work of the Moravian Mission, 1954, the author, Pierre Vittoz shares information about the effects of the political change after the change of government in the region of the "West Himalaya", Ladakh. He states that—

Worldly life is normal. The sudden change of Government that occurred in Kashmir in August did not affect this lonely province, and no agitation of any kind stirred the population. The government recently decided to alleviate the taxes paid by landowners, as well as to sanction important development schemes that had been under construction for some time. An imposing High School building was completed this summer under the supervision of one of our brethren, and a hospital is to be built in Leh. Unfortunately, the lull in trade across Central Asia (Leh was one of the main trade centres between India, Tibet, Sinkiang and Afghanistan) is impoverishing the country and has little if any hope of being revived. Indeed the political situation that closed so many borders only hastened the ruin of a millenary work that modern progress was slowly but surely dismantling: the caravan barter trade across the Asian deserts. (Vittoz 1954: 18-19)

Vittoz also mentions that—

For some years now the Ladak population has been repeatedly asking for more autonomy in the management of local affairs. In November (1953) the Kashmir Government agreed to this claim and appointed the head lama of one of the local Buddhist monasteries to the charge of Deputy Minister for Ladak Affairs. We fervently hope that, far from sharpening the contrasts between members of the various religious communities, the appointment may bring Ladakis to a fuller co-operation in the spheres of politics and country uplift. (Vittoz 1954: 18-19)

Therefore towards the close of the 20th Century, people of Ladakh asserted their identity and demanded for a separate Union Territory, due to the differences of the region ethnically,

linguistically and religion wise from the rest of the region ruled by the Kashmir state. Bakula Rinpochey, the head lama of Spitug monastery was appointed as the Deputy Minister for Ladakh Affairs.

It is interesting to look at the way the people of Ladakh and Lahoul were represented as part of Tibet and called 'Tibetans' in many of the articles that were written on/about them in journals published in English in western countries.

In the early 20th century the articles written by the Moravian Missionaries were published in the Moravian Mission journals that were published from London and Aylesbury. It is interesting to note that given the descriptions in the articles about the Missionary works done in Kyelang, Lahaul (the first mission station), Leh, these regions have constantly been mentioned as 'Tibet'. Therefore, giving the reader an impression that the Moravian Missionaries were in fact in the region of Tibet. This has been articulated in an article by Dr. Ernest Shawe, titled, '*Western Himalayas: Ladak*'. He writes—

The Moravian Church began work in **Tibet** about fifty years ago. In 1853, Edward Pagell and Augustus Heyde landed in Calcutta, and, three years later, founded the first mission station in the Himalayas,. Land was secured near Kyelang, in Lahul, 10,000 feet above the sea, and a mission house erected. Henry Jaeschke, a professor from Niesky, soon joined them. (Moravian Missions 1903:42)

In the above paragraph, the names of the first missionaries who travelled to India for the Mission to Mongolia or Mongolia mission is incorrect. It was Eduard Pagell & Wilhelm Heyde who started the first Mission house in Kyelang. Heinrich August Jäeschke's name is also incorrect and also the fact that 'land is secured near Kyelang, in Lahul', in fact, it was in Kyelang where the land was secured to build the mission house and land was also secured in the upper region of Kyelang. Her reference to 'Lahaul' and 'Ladak' as 'Tibet' is an important statement which gives the impression to its readers that in fact a station was opened in proper Tibet. However , these two regions were bordering Tibet and were not politically part of Tibet during that period.

In another article for the same year, Christopher South in the article titled, 'A Page for the Young Folks: In the Himalayas' writes—

Our Mission in Tibet was commenced in 1853. The most famous missionary was called Jäeschke. He really was a great man; He learned all the languages he met in Europe, picked up Hindustani and Urdu in no time ... (rest of the paragraph is unclear) (1903:)

Hence, the word Tibet used again for the regions of Ladakh and Lahaul.

It does however, look like that the Moravian Missionaries were well aware of where the region of Tibet lay. Tibet had always been called, 'the great closed land' or 'the land of Mystery' as they were not allowed to enter the region due to the orders from the Dalai Lama in Lhasa. However, one of the missionaries, travelled to a village called Shipke, one of the provinces of Tibet, close to the 'Hindustan-Tibet Road' with the motive to help the villagers with vaccination.

In an article titled, 'The Position and Influence of the lamas among the Tibetans in Leh', by Rev. H. Marx of Leh, the hierarchy among the people is observable. It is stated that the monks who play the music during a 'devil-dance' come right after the King whereas the village musicians belong to a very low caste. The hierarchy represented through the monasteries and the head lama, Skuschok among the people is also represented..

People of Lahoul and Ladakh:

The identity of the people who wrote in the newspaper especially that of the local people of the region of Ladakh and Kyelang remain ambiguous about how they have been represented in the texts of the European writers.

In the first scenario, the very nature of who a European is can be contested. Whether he or she, who stays away for a very long time, stays a European by definition or not, is another question. How can one be sure of whether or not they, in the process of teaching a native has himself been taught by the native people? There could be a possible study of traditional knowledge systems between the Moravian missionaries and the people of Ladakh or Lahoul. Hence, the exchange of knowledge-systems can be a research area for future scholars of Lahaul.

The question that has usually not been given a lot of thought on. Its relevance in the field of literature seems to bring about a new outlook, especially if one looks at the same subject from the other side of the prism.

What I want to focus on is the relevance put on the study of the people of the region broadly classified as ‘Tibetan’. The term ‘Tibet’ was a term used to denote the people who were the ‘Bhots’ by the Mongolians. The Mongolians used the term ‘Thi-bet’ for the Bhot people and eventually with time from ‘Thi-bet’ the term became ‘Tibet’. The sources of the terminology cannot be traced.

Kyelang is also introduced as a ‘Tibetan village’ that –

Lies on the Southern slope of the principal chain of the Western Himalayas, in Northern India about 32° 30'N latitude and 77° E longitude... (Recheler 227)

Kyelang lies in the province of Lahoul, also known as *Garsha* among the locals. Lahaul is one of the two Tibetan provinces under the British rule. The other province is Spiti. Other provinces situated to the North of Lahoul were under the rule of the Maharaja of Kashmir and in the north of the territory under the Sultan of Yarkand.

It is interesting to note that the area called ‘Tibet’ has been classified broadly as ‘Little Tibet’ include Zanskar, Ladakh and Rupshu, whereas the main region called Tibet (present in the 21st region Tibet in the People's Republic of China) is denoted as Chinese Tibet. An overall classification of Lahaul, Zanskar, Ladakh, Rupshu and Tibet, all come under one title—Tibetan, during the period of a 19th century and early 20th century.

Scholars of Tibetan and Himalayan studies have now been able to show through their academic writings how Tibet got represented among the western imagination in the 19th and early 20th Century.

A critique of the chapter, ‘Nineteenth and Early Twentieth- Century Missionary Images of Tibet’ from the text, *Imagining Tibet: Perceptions, Projections & Fantasies* by Thierry Dodin and Heinz Raether, by John Bray resonates the reflection of Tibet as follows—

The period from 1850 to 1950 was the heyday of Western Missions to Asia, Africa, the Americas and the Pacific.

No mission society was able to establish a lasting base in Central Tibet, but several set up stations along Tibet’s southern borders in Ladakh, Lahoul, Kinnaur and Kalimpong, and

in the Tibetan/ Chinese border regions adjoining Kham and Amdo. All these missions saw themselves as part of a missionary advance guard, preparing for the day when Tibet proper would finally be open to them.

That day never came but – perhaps- paradoxically- Tibet’s closure added to its mystique....

However, there were many missionaries who made it to Tibet as well as China, where they established Churches as well as baptised many. Bray, on the other hand, talks about how there was never any one ‘missionary image of Tibet’. He argues that –

Individual missionaries differed in their nationality, educational background, theology, the length of time spent in the region, and- above all- personality. (Bray 21-22)

A common theme could be identified from their writings.

First of all, missionaries had their own romantic vision of Tibet, these ideas were very different from the myth of Shangrila, and no missionary was prepared to accept that myth. They would also not accept that Tibet was a serene repository of ancient wisdom.

Contrary to that, the missionaries emphasised on the darker aspects of Tibetan culture because these ideas highlighted the country’s need for Christian enlightenment. Romance lay not in the original culture of Tibet but rather in the heroic nature of the missionary struggle in an exile environment. (Bray 22)

5.3 Identity

Bray goes on to argue that other regions which also belong to the Tibetan literary tradition are developing a greater sense of social and linguistic distinctiveness like in the case of Bhutan. The Bhutan government has been successful in promoting a written version of the local Dzongkha dialect, as opposed to Tibetan, as a means to foster a separate national identity. (Bray 1991:50)

The situation of Bhutan and their distinct identity can be studied by reading an article by Mark Mancall in a recent journal called ‘*The Druk Journal*’ where he argues that—

...in the modern period, that is up to the beginning of what we now call “globalisation”, there were four primary constituent factors of a nation: language, territory, a common economic life and a narrative. (Mancall 2015:3)

He reiterates on these four factors and argues how a nation is often characterized by sharing or wanting to share a common **language** while at the same time talks of how—

there is no objective congruence between a particular language and a particular nation. It may just as easily be an instrument for the creation of a nation as it is a form of national existence. (Mancall 2015:4)

While he describes the possession of a common territory as another characteristic of a nation, he states that—it may be neither necessary nor sufficient for the development of a national identity. (Mancall 2015:3)

He also states how—

...there is no necessary correlation between the existence of an ethnic or national identity on the one hand and the possession of a common territory on the other. (Mancall 2015:4)

The third constituent that he focuses on is the development of the common economic life. He sees language as a significant factor in the development of a ‘national market’ that is closely connected to the creation of the “nation-state”.

Common spoken language facilitates trade. Merchants naturally found it more convenient to trade with those with whom a shared language made the conclusion of contracts less ambiguous and simpler. (Mancall 2015:5)

Finally, he focuses on the possession of a narrative accepted by those who claim identity through the nation as part of their common heritage. The content of the narrative is of importance according to the author. The most important factor is the definition of a nation –

...through the possession of an historical memory that is shared by its members. (Mancall 2015:5)

A common memory of that history, which can be a historical memory of a conquest or a religious conversion. By looking at this factor, the historical and religious memory of the people of Ladakh and Lahaul (the Buddhist population) and their memory of the past encapsulated their memory with religion, which was mainly Buddhism. Mancall sums up his observations as follows—

The national narrative is deeply rooted in national institutions, such as the educational system, the media, and in many cases religious institutions which maintain the narrative as a foundation of historical definition but which also, in healthy societies, project the national narrative into the future, so that the narrative not only provides a basis for the community's historical continuity but also for its sense of a shared future. (Mancall 2015:6-7)

Here, I would like to argue that the two newspapers might have acted as a reflection of the national narrative (although introduced by a foreign agency i.e. Moravian Missionaries) that was the first kind of medium for the masses in the secular sense. The newspapers brought together the local, national as well as international news along with fables, folklore, pictures, prices of items for sale in the market etc. that were reflective of the much-needed narrative that foregrounded the mood of the society which was a new change and hence a new reflection.

The Moravians, especially, Rev. Francke used this medium to put across the idea of propagating Christianity by creating a medium, which he tried to keep at par with Buddhist literary texts, a source of legitimate written record and therefore much revered in the Buddhist religious beliefs and the practice of chanting from texts.

The medium of print was a very new and an unusual form of “text” for the people of both Ladakh and Kyelang. These newspapers created a common ground for expression when there was a dire need for people to connect with one another for a reason like political, social, literary or religious. In spite of any pieces of evidence on the reaction of the readers of the newspaper, the impact of the Moravian journalistic tradition of newspaper publication can probably be seen in the case of the publication of the newsletter, ‘*Yul phyogs so so'i gsar rgyur Me long*’ or ‘News Mirror from various regions’, also called the ‘Tibet Mirror’ published by Babu Tharchin from Poo, Kinnaur but settled in Kalimpong.

He started his publication from Kalimpong, in the year 1925 with the above title. It was also written in *U-chen* style of writing Tibetan (the script) and published until late 1963 when it was finally closed. The interesting thing about this newsletter is that this newspaper has been seen as very riveting piece of mass media publication that has been described as a epitome for writers across the Himalayan belt, who used the Tibetan script to express their ideas and thoughts especially about the cultural representation of the Tibetan people. Dorje Tharchin (1890-1976), popularly known as Babu Tharchin, although a Kinnauri by birth, has been called a ‘true Tibetan son’ for his contribution towards the Tibetan cause since the exile of His Holiness Dalai Lama from Tibet in 1959, when the Chinese took over Tibet.

Thus the term *allegiance* could be an appropriate term for use in this region in the early 19th century instead of nationalism in Ladakh and Khyelang region. And slowly the assertion of Ladakh as a ‘nation’ by the leaders of Ladakh in an early 20th century can be witnessed through the influence of neo-Buddhist pundits from Kashmir like H.N. Kaul, who greatly influenced the politics of the region of Ladakh. The same is however not true about Lahaul. Lahaul never participated in the regional politics with Ladakh as they were not governed by the Kashmir government before India’s independence. Lahaul always lay in the area next to China and had diverse religious communities in the three valleys even though many were Buddhist and had a close affinity towards Tibet in the religious sense. Therefore, in the context of Ladakh and Lahaul in the debate of development of a ‘nation’ in the context of ‘language, politics and identity’ is engaging and can be further looked into in future.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

Set in 20th century Ladakh and Lahaul, the newspapers published by the Moravian Missionaries created a niche for writers from both the regions to write and produce literature that is paramount to the regions' study today. One must observe that the writers in the newspapers were mostly local Christian converts who were well versed in Tibetan.

To conclude my study of the publications, I would like to highlight some of the aspects that have already been discussed in my thesis.

6.1 The Chapters

I have introduced the newspapers used for the study in the first chapter of this thesis. The editor, A. H. Francke, started the first newspaper and I explained his contribution in creating this new genre of writing among the people who could read and write the Tibetan script. This newspaper has already studied as part of my M. Phil dissertation (2012). I then gave a detailed examination of the second and the third batches of newspapers, *Kyelang Agbar* and *La dvags Phonya* published by Rev. Walter Asboe. The writers from both Ladakh and Kyelang have also mentioned with a brief detail of their work. Their contributions and their articles in the newspaper are of significance because they express themselves through a new medium i.e. newspaper in a traditional language and script i.e. the Tibetan script.

The setting of the two regions, Ladakh and Lahoul, is introduced through different aspects like geographical, historical, linguistic as well as from a religious background to give the reader an understanding of the locations. A brief introduction to the history of the *Unitas Fratrum* or the Moravian Church was essential to understand the position of the Moravian Church and their mission. Therefore, details of how the establishment of the church, its religious views, along with the important contribution of Count Zinzendorf in the establishment of this fraternity discussed.

The West Himalayan Mission of the Moravian Church, and the story of their original plans to travel to Mongolia, and their eventual destinations like Kyelang, Leh, Khalatse, Poo, Chini, Chot and Simla, have been stressed. This chapter concludes with the details of the scope of the study, the hypothesis of my research project, along with the research methodology and short statements about each chapter.

The second chapter provides a detailed study of the ‘Moravian Journalistic tradition’ of Rev. Francke which was then carried forward by other missionaries like Rev. Walter Asboe, Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog and Pierre Vittoz. First of all, the West Himalayan Mission of the Moravian Church at various stations like Kyelang, Poo, Leh, Khalatse, along with their sub-stations like Simla, Chot and Chini have been located with an emphasis on each station and the work carried on there by the Moravians. The establishment and locations of these Mission stations on the trade routes from India towards Central Asia were a key factor in linking roads with people and the people with Gospel preaching. In these sparsely populated regions, local transport routes provided a means for the Moravian Missionaries to evangelise and spread their message in the Himalayan belt.

Finally, the focus of the Moravian missionaries on the local language and the use of the Tibetan script to write their religious liturgy discussed. Their work help to understand the background of linguistic study in these two regions. The use of the local languages by the Moravians shows their method of involvement amongst the local people and their use of the Tibetan script as a standard way of translating and writing the Bible points to their adaptability and creation of new religious literature. The debate on the use of classical versus the colloquial forms of spoken and written Tibetan has reviewed to understand the choices that they made.

The third chapter is solely devoted to an analysis of the contents of *Kyelang Agbar*. An introduction, as well as the classification of the news content, has been made to provide the reader with a perspective of what got published in the newspaper. A selective study of a sample of six editions per year translated from Ladakhi into English yields a plethora of interesting articles. Broadly classified into—local news; national news; international news; evangelical messages (maxims, proverbs, etc. that have a Christian moral teaching to them); contemporary news (News about new farming technology, diseases, countries, international wars, that are new

for the people of the Himalayan belt) and miscellaneous news articles (like secular stories, poetry, history of Ladakh, school in Spiti).

The fourth chapter is also solely devoted to the contents of *Ladvags Phonya*. The classification of the newspaper into similar categories, but with a different content indicates the shift in the publication matter. A sample of six editions, per year of *Ladvags Phonya* 1937-44 A.D. studied and classified to understand the content matter better. Broadly categorised under the headings of—News from Ladakh; News from India; World News; Evangelical News (in the form of articles, proverbs and a quiz of ten questions with answers); Letter writing; World War II; Dogra War; Moral and Social Ethical responsibilities and Miscellaneous News. These categories make it easier to understand the approach adopted in the newspaper.

The fifth chapter of the thesis focusses on the editors and authors of the newspaper. The pioneer editor, Rev. A.H. Francke; Rev, Walter Asboe, his successor; Elijah Tsetan Phuntsog and Pierre Vittoz and their role in creating news have been discussed, with special emphasis on the background of their lives and their contributions to the newspaper

I, then turn to the writers from Ladakh & Kyelang like Ishey Rigzin, Joseph Gergan, Zodpa Dechen, Ga Phuntsog, Jor Phuntsog, Tharnyed Nasib Ali, Prithi Chand, Barong Lotus Namgyal, most of whom are Christians have written articles for the *Kyelang Agbar*²⁹³ under the editorship of Rev. Walter Asboe. The contributors of the newspapers and their humble backgrounds are discussed; their attempt at writing and publishing strengthens and gives a certain amount of authenticity to the newspaper contents (in *Kyelang Agbar*). Important articles from the perspective of the people of Kyelang that are of historical value have come to light in the *Kyelang Agbar* newspaper. Modern scholars from Kyelang, like Tsering Dorjee, state that the newspaper is an important source of their history. They value the contribution of the Moravian Missionaries in their lives by providing them with amenities like irrigation canals (first constructed by Rev. Wilhelm Heyde); heating stoves (commonly known as ‘*tandoor*’ are now very famous in the Himalayan belt like Kullu, Manali, Lahoul, Spiti, Ladakh etc.); socks (German knitting taught by the female missionaries); Potatoes along with other cash crops,

²⁹³ Ishey Rigzin wrote for the first newspaper, *Ladvags Kyi Agbar* under Rev. Francke. Apart from him, the above mentioned writers wrote for *Kyelang Agbar* and that is authenticated due to their signatures under their article. *Ladvags Phonya* does not follow the same pattern of undersigning the names of the writers. That is a bit pitiful as it could have opened up our understanding of possible writers from Ladakh.

including a herb called ‘*Koot*’ (in Hindi and ‘*Ruta*’ in Tibetan) etc., contributed towards improving the lifestyle of the people of Lahaul.

This chapter is of relevance as it demonstrates how the missionaries and the newspaper contributors interacted with each other due to a common link i.e. their Christian religion. Their common link—Christianity and the literary writing associated with the religion – led to many interesting religious books written by Ladakhis like Joseph Gergan’s book, ‘*Navey Chut Len*’ or ‘*Moral Understanding of the Human Mind*²⁹⁴’, written in Tibetan but with the purpose of imparting moral ethics from a Christian point of view. This book has been published in parts in *Kyelang Agbar*. The author, Joseph Gergan uses Buddhist terminologies or concepts to impart Christian teachings; hence a process of acculturation of writing religious texts in the Tibetan script has been analysed through this study.

The last chapter analyzes the idea of ‘nation’ on the people of the Himalayan belt in Ladakh and Lahaul. Three main factors have discussed are the language, politics and identity of the people of both the region. The political background of the region with an emphasis on the mid-20th century Ladakh and Lahaul points to the connections that both the region had in their past. Tibet, a spiritual home for Buddhists from both the regions, provided the target for the Moravian missionaries. The need to evangelise heathens from these regions, their initial target being the Buddhists from Mongolia, proved a failure in many instances, with no more than a limited number of converts.

The language was the key factor that brought them close to these Himalayan regions since the use of a literary language of the Buddhists—Tibetan— was used throughout the regions bordering on Tibet. Along with language, an emphasis has been made on the identity of the people of Ladakh and Lahaul. Although Lahaul is linguistically diverse, one of its religions, Buddhism, used the same literary language—Tibetan.

²⁹⁴ Gergan, Jospeh, “Navey Chutlen (Moral Understanding of the Human Mind).” *Ladvags Phonya* (1940-1944). Tibetan script.

Therefore, the Moravians' representation of the people of both regions as 'Tibetan' has been questioned and analysed. The representations of the region in the 20th century by Moravian writers in their mission journals published in London give an idea of how the people of the Himalayan belt were perceived. The perspectives shown through Mission journals in English indicate a distinct idea of who the people were and how they were represented in this particular Western mindset. Therefore, the three major aspects, which are language, politics and identity, have been discussed in this chapter to evaluate an understanding of the notion of 'nation' and the extent to which there was an idea of a community' among the people.

6.2 Importance of this study

The study of the newspapers opens up avenues to understand the literary and religious writing of the Moravian missionaries in the Himalayan belt. As a cross-cultural, cross-religious product, the newspaper opens up a new means of expression that also includes secular writings in the form of poetry, folklore, health & hygiene, economically viable solutions for the local people.

The missionaries' presence in this region opened up the space for linguistic, historic, literary archaeological, ethnographic, geographical, political and religious research that were conducted in the milieu of their focused field of evangelisation.

Rev. Francke shaped the foundation of Ladakh Studies through his linguistic research in Ladakh (in Leh, Tangtse, Khalatse, among the Brokpas [*Brog-pa*]), as well as in Lahaul (Manchad valley, Tinan valley, Bunan valley) and his historical studies of Ladakh and Lahaul, and his archaeological work.

Both *Kyelang Agbar* and *Ladvags Phonya* newspaper reflect his legacy through its articles, some of which are on the history of the genealogy of kings of Ladakh and the Dogra War; maxims or proverbs that are common in both the region of Ladakh and Lahaul.

This newspaper brings to life the writers of both the regions of study, and credits them for their contribution in writing therefore, demonstrating that literacy rate among the people of both the regions were on the rise, through their endeavours of opening up schools in Kyelang, Leh, Khalatse etc. The newspaper also highlights one of the most important factors, which is the history and culture of the region of Lahaul. The newspaper's discussion of the history of the

origin of the people of Lahaul is innovative as there are few written records of the oral narratives of the origin of Lahaul.

Therefore, both, *Kyelang Agbar* and *Ladvags Phonya* act as a medium through which the period between 1930's and 1950's Lahaul and Ladakh can be analysed; oral narratives about history, commerce, folklore, culture revisited; and the history of both the regions in during the short period of Christian missionaries in the Himalayas enjoyed.

The newspapers help in identifying the shift in the traditional and modern knowledge systems for the local people of Ladakh and Lahaul. Their exchanges with the Moravian missionaries also created an opportunity for the people in the Himalayan belt to form new ideas and innovations. An appendix attached to this thesis showcases a compilation of interesting pictorial representations of modern innovations that were drawn on the first page of each newspaper in both *Kyelang Agbar* and *Ladvags Phonya*.

Kyelang Agbar carries many sketches of maps of various countries; the solar system; an old model of an aeroplane, a race car; a diver suit, an Italian gondola with a ship in the background, an incubator for chickens, drilling machines, a ship, a sledge, an igloo, a lighthouse, a falconer with his falcon, a farrier, a Japanese printing house, along with many other sketches of flora and fauna.

Sketches of women, men, monks in their traditional attire; traditional Ladakhi kitchen; Ladakhi musicians playing musical instruments like *surna* (musical instrument, *Shenai* in Hindi); a caravan going for trade; three men circumambulating a *chorten* (a Buddhist Stupa); an *amchi* (Tibetan doctor); a shepherd; a Ladakh bride wearing a *perak* (a headgear made out of turquoise); a Ladakhi groom wearing a *ser thod* (golden colour headgear) with *nyo pas* (a groom's companions who sing marriage songs) following him in a dance; a wandering Buddhist yogi; a teacher teaching four students; men farming on a farm; a man harvesting on their fields; people threshing their crops, Moravian Church Inn built in Ladakhi style and other miscellaneous sketches are drawn in *Ladvags Phonya*.

6.3 Possible Areas for Further Research

There is still a lot of scope for research on the newspapers. The complete set of the newspaper has not been read and translated in its entirety, since the editions of the publication runs for full 17 years with twelve editions per year (except for the World War II editions which came down to two or four editions per year due to the scarcity of paper for printing).

One significant omission is that the newspaper does not have a single article written by a woman. Even the women Moravian Missionaries and their scholarly work are not published here. A diary of a Moravian missionary's wife of everyday life in the 19th century Lahaul has been studied by Frank Seeliger. In his literary writings Rev. Francke acknowledged his wife Theodora Francke, alias 'Dora', for being equally active in literary works in Khalatse. Another female missionary writer, Kathleen M. Heber, co-authored *In Himalayan Tibet and Ladakh* (first published in 1927) together with her husband, and this gives an account of their stay in the region of Ladakh during the early years of the 20th century. However, there was not even a single article in the newspaper (out of the ones studied) that demonstrated that a woman wrote it. There is a reference to a woman teacher named Deskyid who taught in the Leh Girls School in the Moravian Missions journal. Missionary wives and their work amongst the womenfolk of Ladakh and Lahaul through Zenana Mission, healthcare, Knitting School (in Lahaul as well as Leh), girls school are mentioned in the newspapers, and their work was seen as commendable. However, they seem almost invisible to the readers of the newspapers as far as their literary contributions were concerned. Therefore, the role of women and their literary endeavours could be a possible area of future research to understand the position of the intelligentsia in the Himalayan belt in the context of the invisible or unacknowledged women writers, if there were any.

My original research hypothesis was that the newspapers contributed to the creation of a new and in part subversive Ladakhi or a Lahauli identity through the development of a fresh literary genre using the Tibetan script. In the event I found little to support this hypothesis. However, the thesis does look into the idea of a community of Christians from both regions who make use of the Tibetan script to write and express their literary endeavours, some secular and mostly religious in nature.

The newspapers were also a vehicle for cultural exchange. The Moravian missionaries used the common script to evangelise the masses in neighbouring regions through the circulation of the newspaper into Tibet through traders who came from there. The sketches in the newspaper must

have been interesting for those who could not even read the script. Although limited information is available about the readers, the few records of the number of circulation numbers are provided in the Moravian Mission journals like the circulation of the newspaper to the thirteenth Dalai Lama in Lhasa; the circulation to Bodleian library in Oxford also mentioned. Interestingly, the names of the subscribers who owed money to the Moravians for the newspaper are also mentioned in *Ladvags Phonya*.

The 'journalistic tradition' of the Moravians was stopped around 1959 due to the interference of the Kashmir government. The speculation was that—the newspaper, *Ladvags Phonya* was used as a medium to propagate sentiments against them, however this speculation cannot be confirmed as the 1952-1959 editions of *Ladvags Phonya* has not been located for study so far.

To sum up the thesis, the meticulous study of the newspaper and its contents showcases the literary work done by the Moravians in Lahaul and Ladakh. The newspapers are among many literary works of the Moravians, including Bible translations; religious tracts; dictionaries in Tibetan & other languages; Ladakhi grammar; Lahauli language (Tinan, Bunan and Manchad languages), folklore, transcriptions of oral narratives and history. However, they are distinctive in that they focus primarily on the social affairs of the two regions in relation to the rest of the world, as they unfolded from month to month, and in a period where historical records are limited. Taken together, the articles in the newspapers provide a unique historical testimony that is not available from any other source.

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