

**TIBET AND LADAKH: CULTURAL AND TRADE
RELATIONS, 1842-1951**

*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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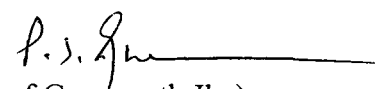
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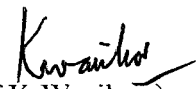
I declare that the dissertation entitled “**Tibet and Ladakh: Cultural and Trade Relations, (1842-1951)**” submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.



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Dedicated
to my
dearest Mother
And to Namgyal

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PREFACE

Tibet and Ladakh are not only geographically and climatically identical but both regions have also maintained close cultural, commercial and religious ties. The influences of Tibet on Ladakh are deep rooted and far reaching. Ladakh has had very close ties with Tibet as compared to its other neighbours. Writers, surveyors, and explorers have described Ladakh as lesser Tibet and Western Tibet.

Ladakh has inherited many things from Tibet including religion, language, literature, art, architecture, and medicines even the mode of living and food habits of Ladakhis and Tibetan are identical. Ladakh's history has remained interwoven with that of Tibet as the relations between the two are as old as early 7th century, which became more prominent in the 10th century, after the establishment of the first Ladakhi dynasty of Tibetan origin by a prince of a Tibetan dynasty Kydie-nimagon. Ladakh's unique cultural heritage has been a unique blend of Tibetan culture, indigenous traditions and influence of the ancient Buddhist philosophy of Kashmir.

The Mahayana form of Buddhism that is practised by majority of the Ladakhis first came to Ladakh through Tibet, as the fine schools of Tibetan Buddhism including the dominant sects of Gelugpa and Kargyutpa came to Ladakh from Tibet at different periods and flourished. The practice of sending young novices to Tibet for higher religious education which started in (About 1300-1325 A.D) and continued till its end in the early 1950's due to the closure of the borders of Tibet and Ladakh after the Communist China took over Tibet brought these two even more together.

Till the mid twentieth century Ladakh functioned as an active and important centre of commercial intercourse with Tibet, Xinjiang, Kashmir, Punjab, Amritsar, Nurpur, the Central Asian countries, and other Himalayan regions as Ladakh occupied a strategic location and had become a transit emporium of trade between India and Central Asia.

The first chapter, **Geographical Setup**, deals with the geography of Tibet and Ladakh, the mountains, lakes, natural divisions, rivers and lake systems are given.

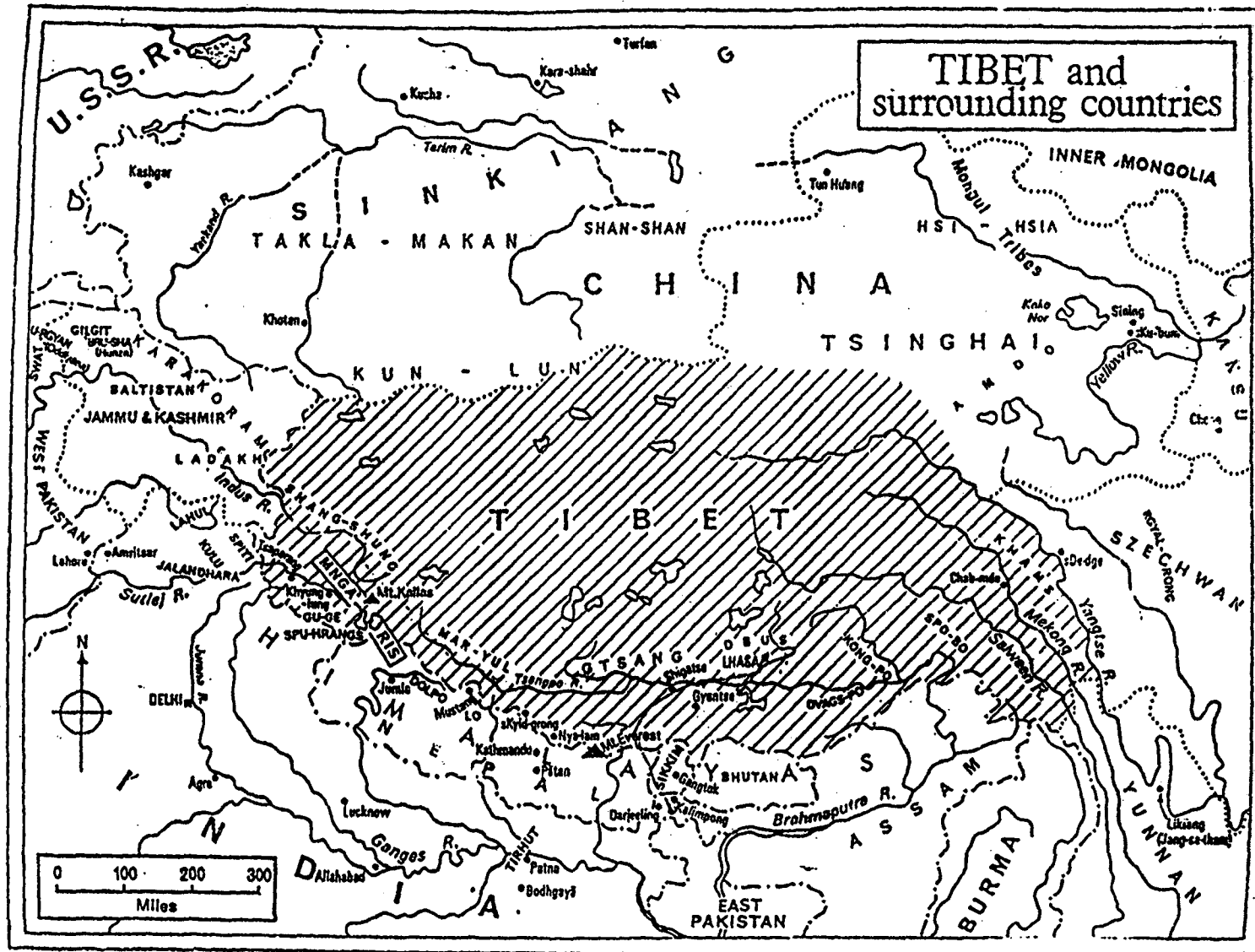
Besides it also mentions briefly the trade routes that link the two. This chapter clearly depicts the geographical proximity and climatic similarity of Tibet and Ladakh.

Chapter two, titled **Historical Perspective**, deals with the history of relations of Tibet and Ladakh, and includes the important treaties of 1684 and 1842, which defined the relations of Tibet and Ladakh. It has also analysed Ladakh's political links with Kashmir, and deals with Dogra General Zorawar's invasion of Ladakh, Baltistan and Tibet. Following these events, there was an increase in British interest in Ladakh, which has been elaborated. A mention is made of the boundary disputes that took place between Ladakh and Tibet and, finally, it has focussed on the Chinese takeover of Tibet and its impact on Ladakh after which the centuries old traditional relationships and cultural ties, as well as active trade and pilgrimage, were terminated. As a result, Ladakh's economy also suffered a set back and they felt isolated.

Chapter three, titled **Cultural Linkages**, deals with the advent of Buddhism in Ladakh, first via Kashmir then Tibet. It states briefly the rise of Islam in Ladakh and highlights on the cultural relations of Tibet and Ladakh, the different sects of Buddhism, the role of the Ladakhi monks going to Lhasa, pilgrimage, the impact of the Dalai Lama on Buddhism in Ladakh, all of which was instrumental in strengthening the cultural linkages between Tibet and Ladakh. The Tibetan influence on Ladakh's social customs has also been dealt with.

Chapter 4, **Trade Relations**, deals exclusively with the trade relations between Tibet and Ladakh. This chapter deals with the trade routes and shows the linkage of Tibet and Ladakh via road and the handicaps in the commerce. It deals with the extent and pattern of trade between Tibet and Ladakh, both at the local and external level and, most importantly, it discusses the state trade missions, Lopchak and Chapa, which were the cornerstone of relations between these two countries, and by the end it deals with the impact of the Chinese takeover Tibet on the local economies of both Tibet and Ladakh.

In the fifth chapter, **Conclusion**, the main conclusions of the foregoing chapters are summarised. It also explores the prospects of reopening of the old traditional overland trade routes between Ladakh and Tibet.



Source: David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson, *A Cultural History On Tibet*, 1968.

CHAPTER-1

GEOGRAPHICAL-SET UP

History and geography are often interrelated, because with the movement of people from one place to another there is an exchange of religious ideas, culture, commodities which results in trade and it also provides insight into the different cultural perspectives across regions, countries and continents. Thus, history and geography are often tied in the cultural life of a region; such is the case of Tibet and Ladakh.

Both Tibet and Ladakh lie in the great Himalayan range. These two Himalayan states are bounded by few of the world's mightiest mountain ranges. The Himalayas have borderland between South and Central Asia and the trans-Himalayas have been a dynamic zone of interaction between cultures, civilisations and nations.

Tibet is an elevated country of Central Asia. It has been called by different names by many explorers. Ancient Historians have variously named this country as 'Tehbat' and 'Taibat' but the famous Arab historian Yagut Hamir, refers to it as 'Tabbat' 'Tibet' and 'Tubbat' although he normally preferred 'Tibet' to the other two nomenclatures (Abu Bakr Amiruddin Nadwi: 2004, 6).

According to Henry Strachey, "Some English writers call it 'Thibet' and French and Germans call it 'Tubet' the true autochthonous name of our Tibet is Bodyul which would be properly rendered into English 'Bodeland' it is also simply called Bod. The Bhot (and Bhotiyas) of the Indians are no doubt derived from this word."¹

Also Bodhi or "Bhodhi-iool or kingdom of 'Bodh' was the most ordinary denomination of Tibet earlier. The Indian name for Tibet is Bhot. Mughal Historians have named Tibet as Tibet-e-Buzrug (Greater Tibet) in their books.

¹ Strachey, Capt. H. (1854), *Physical Geography of Western Tibet*, London, William Clowes and Sons, Stamford Street and Charing Cross, p. 1.

The first Western geographer to mention Tibet was Herodotus, in the fifth century B.C. He told of a Hindu tradition that in northern plain of Tibet, there existed gold digging ants which were later identified as marmots, burrowing animals that throw up heaps of dust which contain gold dust many a times. The first Europeans to bring scientific information about Tibetan geography to the world were two Jesuit missionaries, Johannes Grueber and Albert Dorvill. Another Jesuit who needs special mention is Ippolito Desideri. He wrote the first comprehensive report on the country and it is mentioned by some scholars that he was the first to identify the river Tsangpo, with the Brahmaputra instead of the Irrawaddy. At about the middle of the nineteenth century the Survey of India took active interest in the region north of the Himalayas a host of native surveyors mostly Indians and Sikkimese were sent across the Himalayan passes in disguise some of them were; Nain Singh who went to Tibet (1865-1874) and made several excursions from Nepal to Ladakh. Other names are Sarat Chandra Das (1881) and many more. In the middle of the nineteenth century many Europeans explored Tibet, during that time British and Russia were competing against each other for power The Tibetan plateau lies between the Himalayan range to the South and the Taklamakan plain in the north.

Many Englishmen used Ladakh as the springboard for exploring Tibet, Hamilton Bower in 1891 and Welby in 1896, another famous explorer which needs mention is Sven Hedin who traversed and explored the Trans-Himalaya from 1906-1908 Hedin made about eight crossings at different points on the great divide between northern and southern Tibet and found that it was a connected system of different ranges. Francis Younghusband was another explorer who left for Tibet in 1904 along with other travellers such as Ryder and C.G Rawling.

GEO-PHYSICAL SET-UP

Tibet extends approximately from the 78th to the 103rd degree east longitude and from the 27th to the 37th degree of north latitude. According to Charles Bell, in the earlier part of 20th century "The frontiers, especially on the north and east, are often ill defined, for the country is large and difficult to access" (Charles Bell: 1928, 2).

However, to the east Tibet is bounded by the Chinese provinces of Kansu and Szechuan and China proper (they are called 'Gyami' by the Tibetans). Burma lies in the South-east. The valley of Assam, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal and British India were on the south ('Gyagar' was the Tibetan name for the Indians). To the North- West lies Chinese Turkistan or Sinkiang. To the North is Mongolia, the Tibetans in their language would call them 'Horsok'. On the 'West of Tibet was Kashmir, Afghanistan, Tajikstan and Turkistan.

To the west of Tibet was another important province the 'Western Tibet' or Ladakh, which was also known as 'Ngari' or 'Ngari-Skorsum'. The province of Ngari Khorsum comprises all the land from the frontiers of Ladakh to about 86° 30' east Longitude, a distance of 600 miles. The government is in the hands of two Jongpens at Gartok, the centre of trade. Most of the land lies at too great an elevation for cultivations. According to, Charles. A. Sherring, "Geographically, this portion of Tibet is the nearest to Russian territory, and although it is separated from Russian Turkistan by chains of the mountain ranges, but, its geographical position gives it great political importance. But, above all else it is interesting for its place in religious thought, because it is in this part of Tibet that the Mount Kailas is found". Sherring says this because the province of Ngari's location was of vital importance, and the Mayum Pass¹ was situated in Western Tibet (Charles A. Sherring: 1906, 114).

Also, the holy Kailash Mansarovar region is situated here which is an important place for pilgrimage both for Hindus and Buddhists who worship the Mount Kailash and the Kailash Mansarovar Lake. People from neighbouring areas also came to trade here. Mount Kailash is situated in the south-eastern part of Ngari. Kailash Mansarovar Lake is nearly 200 miles broad from north to south and it is situated in the South-eastern part of Ngari of which Purang is a part (Swami Pranvandana: 1950, 22).

Ngari-Khorsum or Western Tibet originally consisted of three provinces namely Ladakh, Shang-Shung or Guge (west of Mansarovar) and Purang; but in the year 1841 Ladakh was annexed to Kashmir.

¹ Ngari, the territory west of Mayum pass, was the boundary between Ladakh and Tibet. The Mayum Pass, 16,900 ft. where the Brahmaputra River rises.

The geography of Tibet mainly comprises of High Mountains, Lakes and Rivers. It is the loftiest tableland in the world ranging from 12,000 to 16,000. Tibet occupies a high ground and the whole of the Tibetan Plateau is an extensive plain bounded on the south by Great chain of the Himalaya and on the north by the Kunlun Mountains includes the Himalaya and many of the high mountain peaks in the world which will be discussed in detail section wise. Having discussed the boundaries, Tibet now I will focus on its physical division. Physically Tibet has been divided into three broad divisions, Central, Eastern and Western Tibet. Tibet is divided into three parts Eastern Tibet or “Khamyul”, Tibet proper or U Tsang and the North-Western part of Tibet- “Ngari or Nari” and the plains of Changthang.

i) Eastern Tibet or “Khamyul: According to Henry Strachey, “This region has been extended from the Mt Gorge of the Brahmaputra to that of the Indus and it’s probably little more than the half western of all Bodeland; for the Indus region extends to the Western frontier of China, and to a greater breath than the western.”²

The special feature of Kham is that the mountain ranges run from South to North. It is more populous than other parts of Tibet. The City of Mekong and Derge is in this division here also is Amdo. The important rivers of Eastern Tibet are in the South-eastern Tibet is the Yangtse, the Mekong and the Salween which are also one of the largest rivers in Asia .Many routes converge here, the northern and southern routes like the Szechuan across Sinkiang, the route to Yunnan Mekong and the Salween, the route to Chinghai and the route to Lhasa through Kong-Po. However, the southern route to Szechuan is the most popular between China proper and Tibet (Tsong Lien Shen and Shen Chi Liu: 1953, 14).

ii) The Central Tibet is also called U Tsang. U the district of Lhasa is the capital of the whole of Tibet U means “the centre”. The provinces of U and Tsang are often coupled together in Tibetan phraseology and called ‘U-Tsang’ which signifies Central Tibet.

² Henry Strachey, Political Proceedings Foreign Consultations, 1850-59, 12th September, no-153-156, NAI, p. 242.

In Lhasa there are various religious establishments including the Potala palace, which is the residence of the great Lama (Gyel-va-rin-po-che') who was the head of the Gelugpa sect. Many people from the surrounding countries including Ladakh come to worship the lama and the Ladakhis draw religious inspiration from Tibetan religious establishments and monasteries. The capital of Tsang is Shigaste.

This name has been derived from that of the river Tsangpo which flows from Tsang and U from West to East. It was the first place of commerce, government and the residence of the Chinese Ambans in Tibet. Shigatse is the chief town of the Tsang province, which adjoins U on the West and Gyangtse and Lhasa. To this central area converged trade routes from China and India, from Mongolia, Turkistan, and Siberia (S.K Sharma and Usha Sharma: 1997).

Shigatse is important because very close to it is the self-contained religious-political centre of Tashilumpo (Mount of Blessing) it's the third largest monastery in Tibet proper. Other provinces in central Tibet also include 'Hor' and 'Derge' in the east. Central Tibet's geographical location can be summarised in the words of Capt Henry Strachey who states that, "The region behind the Indian Himalaya is a belt of High Mountain Table land narrow compared with its length and subsiding to its North-East border into the plains and sandy deserts of Turkland and 'Khamsook' (a term applied by Strachey to the countries between East Tibet –Turkland and Mongolia). This part of Tibet is called "Bod" i.e. - Tibet proper or Central Tibet. At its East is India and Nari."³

Another division of Tibet is 'Nari-Khorsum' or 'Western Tibet' which has been discussed briefly earlier. Nari is often pronounced as 'Ngari' also." According to Thomas Thomson, "West Tibet includes the whole of the valley of the Indus and its tributaries, down to about 6000 feet above the sea level of the sea, a considerable portion of the upper course of the Sutlej down to between 9000 and 10,000 feet, and small portions of the upper course of the Chenab, of the Ganges (Jahanavi), and of the Gogra" (Thomas Thomson: 1852, 465).

³ Henry Strachey, Political Proceedings Foreign Consultations, 1850-59, 12th September, no. 153-156, NAI, p. 242-243.

The north-western part of Tibet from Tsang to Ladakh is called 'Nari.'⁴ It is a vast but sparsely populated highland in the West bordering Ladakh and Kashmir. It borders India's Ladakh and is reputedly rich in minerals and more specifically gold (A. Reeve and Kathleen M. Heber: 1926). Nari's chief regions were Rudok (at Pangong Lake in the North), Gartok (which was the main administrative centre of Tibet), Purang (is at the south of Lake Mansarovar), and Tho-ding is on the upper course of the Sutlej. Strachey, who in his memoir-Physical Geography of Western Tibet has worked on the physical the geography of Western Tibet ; and he was a part of the Tibetan boundary commission, on the other hand had divided Nari into three different provisions, Mangyul, Khorsum and Maryul (meaning, Low land). According to Henry Strachey, "The line separating Bod (Central Tibet) from Nari (Indian Himalayas) is a continuation of that dividing the East end of Nepal from the British dependency of Demjog (Demchok) which latter is also the demarcation of Indian races front hose of the Tibetan he on the south slope of the Himalaya."⁵

The Tibetan geographers have divided the province of Nari into Rudok, Guge and Purang. The rivers of Indus rise in the heart of Nari. The Indus has its principal sources Sutluj, Indus, Brahmaputra and Gogra rivers are from the north of Mount Kailas which is a snow covered peak overlooking the Lake Mansarovar on the south. Ladakh which was formerly called Maryul is now a part of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir which happened in 1947. The capital of Nari is Gartok and the administration of Western Tibet is carried on by the 'Gharpan, or Viceroys, whose headquarters were at Gartok that is why Gartok was called as the chief administrative centre of Nari-Skorsum and the political centre of Western Tibet, it also the chief trading place in Tibet Fairs use to take place here periodically (at the end of August or end of September) which was principally attended by traders from Ladakh, Kashmir, Yarkand, Lhasa, and Liling or China proper, this annual gathering resulted in trade and business amongst the thousands of people who assembled here.

Rudok lies at the western extremity of Nari and near the most elevated portion of the tableland of Nari, it rested on Ladakh and the Karakorm range on the west, and it

⁴ It is the territory west of Mayum Pass, 16,900 ft high.

⁵ Henry Strachey, Political Proceedings Foreign Consultations, 1850-59, 12th September, no-153-156, NAI, p. 423

touches on the north the deserts of Changthang with the Kuenlun in the background. It is encircled with lakes. It lies along the northern border of Lake Pangong and continues by the valley of Chushul. According to the information collected by Moorcraft, Ladakh was reported to be ten days journey from Gartok (Moorcraft and Trebeck: 1841, 158).

The Guge part of Nari, was to the north of Garhwal and Kumaon which consisted of two valleys. Principal places in Guge are Tsaparang and Tholing (H. Strachey: 1853, 12). Guge was also called 'Zhang chung' earlier. It is encircled by rocks. And the province of Purang is subdivided into four districts, Purang proper, Kangri, Lake Mansarovar, and Mount Kailash. Nari Mangyul is the N.W extremity of all Tibet which includes the provinces of 'Ladakh' and 'Balti'. West Nari is same as Nari Khorsum. Mangyul in Tibetan was earlier known as 'Low land'. Ladakhis are mostly Buddhist by faith and the Baltis are exclusively Muslims. To begin with Ladakh first it is the central district of the valley of Indus with its capital at Leh situated in the middle.

Hanle occupies the south eastern extremity of Ladakh next to Nari-Khorsum. The Pangong Lake in Ladakh adjoins Rudok of Nari. Nubra is the north-western district of Ladakh. And Zaskar is a part in the South-Western quarter. Purig comprises of all Muslim countries at western extremity of Ladakh. Its chief districts being Purig proper, Suru or Suru Kartse and 'Hembaps' is known as Dras now.

The province of Spiti and Lahul were also under Ladakh earlier. The district of Baltistan⁶ was dominated by the Muslims the central districts comprise of the capital town of Skardu. Others were Chorbatla, Khapalu, Kiris and Khartaksho Tolti, Pankuta, Shiyar, Rongyal and more.

There was no marked boundary between Nari Khorsum and Mangyul with an exception of some small parts, the boundaries are not demarcated. But a natural difference does exist in the general characteristics of Nari-Khorsum and Mangyul.

⁶ Baltistan was earlier a part of Ladakh, but after 1947 it's a part of Pakistan occupied Kashmir.

CHANGTHANG: It is the Northern Plains in Tibet, a vast plateau of the Central Tibet occupying 75% of the area. It lies to the East and the South-East of Ladakh and is at an elevation of more than 16 thousand ft above sea level (James Bell: 1836, 145-146). Bounded on the north by the Kuenlun range and the Mongolian steppes of Tsadlam, the Chanthang falls away in the north to the Tsangpo (the great of the southern Tibet). On the East it is bounded by snow clad range running north from the Kailash to Mustang and on the south and the Southwest by the Kailash range. Changthang has many lakes, which have no outlets and their water is salty and unfit for consumption. That's why they are often called "Salt Pits," the water of which is salty and unfit for consumption. Few of the highest lakes in the world are found here like the Nam tso, and Tengri nor. The inhabitants of Changthang are called 'Changpas' there are a mix of Tibetan and Mongol nomads and they wander from place to place in search of pasture. The Changthang plains touch till the Rupshu district of Ladakh and in places like Chushul (in Ladakh) Changpas can still be seen. Vegetation is negligible in Changthang as it is extremely cold here. The southern and western ranges of the great plateau form the water parting of India. The Rivers of Tibet to the east and north of this find their way through Burma Siam, China proper, Mongolia and Chinese Turkistan. It is an important place as it is the chief resort of shawl wool goat and also a good pasture land for sheep, whose wool is a very important article of trade. It is called "the pashm" or Pashmina.⁷

Mountain System of Tibet

The Mountain systems on all sides of Tibet are massed into a series of gigantic walls. The mighty Himalayas numbering in its eastern portion over seventy peaks above 24,000 feet, is the greatest of the Mountain systems in Tibet, even the northern slopes of the worlds highest mountain, Everest runs into Tibet. Trans-Himalaya stretches across Himalaya from West to East for about 1,000 km and its altitude varies from

⁷ The Indian explorers or the Pundits have given an account of the Changpas whom they themselves encountered in the Rupshu district of Ladakh on their journey from Leh to Lhasa. For details see Trotter, Sir Henry (1877), "An Account of Pundits Journey in Great Tibet from Leh in Lad'akh to Lh'asa, and of his return to India via Assam," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. XLVIII. :86-136.

4500 to 6600m above sea level. In this belt, Brahmaputra, Indus and Satluj River are found which originate in Tibet and traverse across the Himalayas. From a total of nearly 2.6 million sq. km. area Trans Himalaya encompasses 186,200 sq. km area in India administered Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh and the regions of Tibetan plateau. Trans-Himalaya houses Zaskar, Ladakh and Karakoram ranges that lie in the rain-shadow region to the north. Several other mountains here are called 'Chomo kang-kar' or The Queen of White Snowy Mountain, the Kang- thon thing Gyalmo or 'the queen of the high blue snowy mountain'. 'Kangri,' which means 'snowy mountains' was the generic name for all mountain system in Tibet (David MacDonald: 1978, 21).

The Kailash and Himalaya ranges of mountains both belong to Tibet, and contain between them the sacred lakes Mansarovar and Rawan's Hrad (W. Hamilton: 1820, 1567). The Kailas, Gurla (means the abode of the highest tutelary deity), Sangdul, Madhata, Surange and Kanglung are the chief mountain ranges in the Kailash Manasa region.

The frontier between Tibet and Chinese Turkistan was marked by the Kuenlun Mountains. The Mountains on the South and the South-west towards India are geographically described to us by the number of travellers and geographers such as Webb, Turner, Colebrooke, and others. The Himalaya chain sprawls along the entire southern frontier. Towards the extreme west, the Ladakh range comes in a southeasterly direction from Baltistan. To the north of the Ladakh range lays another mountain complex which is the Karakoram. Towards the north from here is the Kuenlun range it forms the Northern flank of Tibet, as Himalayas form the southern boundary. The Kuenlun is composed of two ranges the inner one is Astin Tagh and the outer Altin Tagh.

Tibet's mountain system is a long chain of mountains. A small end of the mountain system is attached to the south-eastern corner of the Pamir's at the point where the Kashmir hinterland lies, from the heights of the giant Mustang range, it looks northward over the sources of the rivers of Chinese (or eastern) Turkistan. The Mustang range also lies here, and gradually the range widens out and forms the Little Tibet (Ladakh) which was at that time politically an outlying province of Kashmir.

There are also the border mountain systems of Kuen Lun, Altyn Tagh, Nan Shan, etc., which, followed each other in succession, carried y the northern boundary of Tibet to the province of Kansu of China. To the north of the Altyn Tagh and the Nan Shan ranges was the low-lying region of Chinese Turkestan, and along the edges at the foot of the mountains, and a sand-strewn desert in its midst, were the remains of those cities which had been traversed and explored by the researches of Sven Hedin and Stein. Throughout the Kuen Lun series of mountain systems there was a certain structural similarity.

On the east, the mountains of the Kansu border curve round southward (allowing the head-waters of the Hoang Ho of China to pass through them as they curve), and gradually merge into a fairly well-defined north to south range which figures on the map as Sifan.

Range after range striking outwards from the plateau followed the same curving course from southeast to south. The whole south-eastern world of Tibet is but a succession of mountain waves whose forest-crested summits gradually reach sides as they proceed southwards into Burma. In the south-eastern valleys of Tibet flow the waters of several of the most important rivers of Asia.

It is the contiguity of these intervening ranges, the difficulty presented by a succession of rugged mountain walls, which proved to be the great barrier between Tibet and China on the east. The mountain system continues over the intervening space westwards till it determines the bend of the river Brahmaputra, which changes its direction as it flows from Tibet into Assam, and thus rounds off, as it were, the eastern end of the Himalayas. The irregular trans-Brahmaputra hills, through which runs a part of the southern boundary of Tibet, are drained by one or two minor rivers which join the Brahmaputra from the east.⁸

The structural relationship of the Himalayan ranges on the south of Tibet is very similar to that of the mountains on the north. Throughout their whole length, from the great bend of the Indus (where that river leaves the longitudinal valleys of its upper

⁸ Quoted from H. Trotters, "An account of Pundits journey in Great Tibet from Leh...via Assam" *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol. 47 (1877), :96.

reaches to break transversely across the ridges as it seeks its way to the plains) to the great bend of the Brahmaputra (where that river is forced into a curving deflection from its Tibetan channels), through fifteen hundred miles of mountains, there runs a dominant water-parting, or backbone to the whole system.

Rivers and Lake System

Physically Tibet is divided by two regions, the lake region and the river region. Many of the largest rivers of Asia originate in Tibet few of the important ones are The Indus, The Sutlej , The Tsangpo or (Brahmaputra of India), the Salween, the Takiang, the Mekong, Yangtse-Kiang, the Hwang Ho, Irrawady, the Yellow river, Kiria river, Cherchen Daria, Chumoreri, and many more. I have briefly discussed all of the rivers mentioned above, firstly I will focus on the river Indus which along with Sutlej and Tsangpo rivers derive their sources in the Western Himalayas to be precise, all the three above mentioned rivers rise in the surrounding area, within a few radius of the sacred Mansarovar lake also known as 'Mt Kailas' by the Indians. According to Sven Hedin (who was the first white man to have penetrated to the actual sources of the Indus and Brahmaputra and ascertaining the origin of these two historical rivers, which were the highest of all the mountain systems of the world—the Himalayas), "We passed a memorable evening and a memorable night at this important geographical spot, situated 16,946 feet above sea-level. Here I stood and saw the Indus emerge from the lap of the earth. Here I stood and saw this unpretentious brook wind down the valley, and I thought of all the changes it must undergo before it passes between rocky cliffs, singing its roaring song in ever more powerful crescendo, down to the sea at Karachi, where steamers load and unload their cargoes. I thought of its restless course through western Tibet, through Ladakh and Baltistan, past Skardu, where the apricot trees nod on its banks, through Dardistan and Kohistan, past Peshawar, and across the plains of the western Punjab, until at last it is swallowed up by the salt waves of the ocean, the Nirvana and the refuge of all weary rivers" (Sven Hedin: 1910, 213). By this definition given by Hedin its clear that the Indus emanates from the area surrounding Lake Mansarovar and eventually flows to Pakistan through Ladakh (parts of which are situated along the Indus valley) Western Tibet, Baltistan, Skardu , Dardistan and Khotistan, Peshawar, the plains of Punjab and at last it reaches

Pakistan from where it merges with the ocean. Kailash Mansarovar peak is also known as Kang Rinpoche by the locals as well as the Ladakhis. In Ladakh they are of the belief that the Indus emanates from the mouth of a Lion that's why they call it "Singe-kha-babas" so the Indus which flows from Ladakh is known as "Sindhu" or "Singe-kha-babas." Even Moorcraft who travelled upto the Mansarovar stated that, "The Indus river (the Singe-kha-babs) rises from the Kangri on Kantisi, Tisior, Kailash range, a shorway to the east of Ghertope" (Gartok). Here he highlights the place of the origin of the Indus again which is the Kailash. And by Ghertope he means the province of Gartok (Moorcraft and Trebeck: 1841, 363).

One of the most important and largest rivers in Tibet is the Tsangpo. It is the longest river in Tibet. The Indus and the Sutlej it rises near the sacred Mansarovar lake. Tsangpo is a trans-boundary river and one of the major rivers of Asia it flows eastwards for several hundreds of miles (800 miles approximately) and finally, debouches on the plains of India via Assam first the Dhillong and then it becomes the Brahmaputra.

This river runs undisturbed from West to East through the heart of the southern Tibet. Its sources lie somewhere near the east-flowing and west flowing streams on the western border of Tsang (Tsong Lien Shen and Shen Chi Liu: 1953, 12). The river has several tributaries to name a few they are Chi-Chu and the Nyang Chu. The latter follows a north-westerly course through Gyanste, the economic and cultural centre of Tibet and meets the Tsangpo just northeast of Shigaste, the capital of Tsang.

Lhasa and Shigatse are on the banks of Tsangpo. The river lies to the south and south-east of Tibet. Another similar story of a river which rises from the surroundings of the Lake Mansarovar is the river Sutlej, The Upper stream of the Sutlej has its principal source well east of the Mansarovar. Both Sutlej and Indus rise at the heart of Nari or Western Tibet. This river is the easternmost tributary of the Indus River. Its source is at Lake Rakshastal in Tibet near Mount Kailas, and it flows to the southwest entering India through the Shipki La pass in Himachal Pradesh. Both Indus and Sutlej cut North West from Mansarovar and then south through Punjab it continues southwest into Pakistan to unite with Chenab River and eventually flows into the Indian Ocean. Another river is the Salween which is the three largest rivers of Russia and lies in the

south-eastern Tibet. River Salween runs south through Siam and Burma. The river is 2815 km long; it passes through deep gorges and is often called China's Grand Canyon.

The Mekong River is in the south western Tibet and is one of the three largest rivers in Asia. It is only twenty eight miles from the Yangtse on one side, and even less from the Salween on the other (S.K Sharma and Usha Sharma: 1997, 2). This river empties its waters into the South China Sea, flows its course through Tibet, China and French Indo-China the Mekong. The Hoang Ho (Yellow River) which is also known as the 'Sorrow of China' rises on the eastern fringe of the Dang-la range. It is known as the Ma Chu in Tibetan. From the Tibetan Plateau, the Yellow River flows through China. It is considered the "cradle" of Chinese civilization. The Hoang ho finds its source in the Oring Nor lake (or group of lakes) to the southeast of the great Koko Nor, and curves eastward and northward through the country of the Sifan (the western barbarians of China), and approaches within one hundred miles of the south eastern corner of the Koko Nor, where it takes its way as a full-grown river through northern China to the Pacific.

The sources of the Yellow River raise those next to great river of China, the Yang tsi kiang. The Irrawady is also known as the great rivers of Burma, it rises in eastern Tibet, and flow into the Bay of Bengal. The Yangtse Kiang and the Hwang Ho begin their journey hundred of miles to the east Chinese coast (Macdonald: 1978, 23). The Hwang Ho river and the Yangtse Kiang river flow eastward through China and lie in the eastern part of Tibet. It is believed that the river Yangtse and the Indus contain gold sands as it is noted that Tibet is rich in gold and minerals.

The Changtang or the Northern Plains has several thousands of feet high in its mountain peaks and its ridges. The chief rivers rising from the northern limits are the river Kiria which breaks throughout the Kuenluen to the north-west, flows through Polu and empties itself into the Taklamakan desert (Bell: 1924). And lastly the Cherchen Daria river is three hundred miles further east the Taklamakan desert it rises from the Arka Tagh flows past the Cherchen and loses itself in the marshes of Lob nor. According to Sven Hedin who visited the lake while exploring Tibet the river

was three hundred feet wide and its frozen surface was covered with snow (Hedin: 1998, 278-279).

Lakes in Tibet

Tibet has few of the highest Lakes in the world. Many are over 15,000 feet above sea level (Bell: 1924, 3). Many lakes are studded about the country in great numbers, mostly on Changthang and Southern Tibet. Most of the Chan thang area forms a great basin in which rivers flow and empty themselves into lakes, but never reach the sea as they have no outlet and most of them are salt water lakes. Chanthang comprises of two important lakes the Tengri Nor and the Nam Tso (Sky Lake). 'Tso' in Tibetan means Lake.

The largest Tibetan lake is that of Koko Nor the northeast of the Tibetan plateau and outside the area of the basin. It has an area of 1,630 square miles and is situated approximately four days journey from Lhasa. According to, Swami Pranavananda there are several salt water lakes in Tibet like the Koko Nor and the Tengri Nor and fresh water lakes like Tso Mavang and Langak Tso are also there. He further asserts that the Kokonor is the biggest of the Tibetan lakes (Pranavananda: 1950, 60). According to Charles Bell also the largest lake is Koko Nor on the north-eastern border (Bell: 1924, 4). The direction of the lake Koko nor is in the Northeast of Tibet. According to Purshotm Mehra, "Koko nor along with the Tsadim basins is the second physical subdivision of Tibet." Therefore, Kokonor is the largest lake in Tibet seconded by the Tengri nor. It is also the borderland of Tibet, Mongolia and China (Bell: 1924, 19). Another lake which is counted amongst the largest in Tibet is the Tengri Nor in the heart of Tibet it is about 1,000 square miles in area and many others are more than 100 sq miles. According to the local Tibetans the lake is called Tengri Nor by Mongols and Tengri Cho by Tibetans. It is the largest lake in the interior of Tibet and is only a hundred miles away from Lhasa.

Other important lakes in Tibet are the Kailash Mansarovar lake, Rawan Hrad (Heavenly Lake), Nag-Ch`u-Ka (Mouth of the Black Water) these will be briefly discussed. Some fresh water lakes in Tibet which can be mentioned are Kurgyal-

chhungo, Ding tso, Sham tso, Gouri kund tso, Nyak tso and Tamlung. However I have focussed on the important lakes of Tengri and Kokonor which has already been discussed earlier. Other lakes are the Kailash Mansarovar Lake which is in the Western portion of Tibet which is bounded on the south by the great Himalayan range and on the east by the Kailash ridge and on the north and West by a very high land. Length from east to west is estimated at 15miles, and in breath from north to south about 11 miles. Latitude 31degree, long and 81 degree, E. (Hamilton: 1820, 588).

The first Europeans to explore the holy lakes were William Moorcroft and Hyder Hearsey in 1825 (Sherring: 1906, 263). Captain C.G Rawling who has in his book given a detailed account of his two journeys undertaken in Tibet illustrates the beauty and location of the Kailas Mountain and the Lake Mansarovar. According to him, "Kailas Parbat, or Peak, situated a few miles to the north-west, and Manasarowar are two of the most interesting spots in Tibet, and will in time become to Hindus as important a place of pilgrimage as Mecca is to Mahomedans. Both deserve a fuller description than I can possibly give, for we were only able to reach the lake once, and to examine the mountain from the road, but even then much of interest was revealed. Manasarowar, for so it is known to the natives of India, is called simply Tso Rimpoche (Sacred Lake) by the Tibetans. Within a radius of a few miles rise four of the greatest rivers of India—the Indus, the Brahmaputra, the Sutlej, and the Ganges, the two former of which almost girdle India. Manasarowar has an area of about 100 square miles, is nearly square in shape, and presents a very regular outline. The water is fresh, and in it are many varieties of weeds, and, as is to be expected, innumerable fish. It is fed by numerous small streams running from the Memo and Kailas Peak ranges, but by no river of importance" (C.G Rawling: 1905, 249).

The outlet of the Mansarovar for its surplus water is to the west of the lake, which seperates it from the Rakas Tal, was a narrow isthmus, and it was through the channel at its northern end that the water was said to run. Captain H. Strachey traversed this strip of land in 1846. He was then on his return journey, and declares that he came upon a "large stream 100 feet wide and 3 feet deep, running rapidly from east to west through a well-defined channel ; this was the outlet of Manasarowar" (Strachey: 1853, 42).

Rawan's Hrad Lake is within a short distance west of the Mansarovar it gets its water supply from the melting of the snow, from the west end of this lake flows the Sutlej river. The region between the Dang-la and the Trans-Himalaya has one of the biggest lakes of Tibet between them one such is Nam tso (Heavenly lake) Northeast of the Nam tso is the Nag-Ch`u-Ka (Mouth of the Black Water) (Tsung Lien Shen and Shen Chi Liu: 1953, 16).

Geography of Ladakh

Ladakh is the northernmost and the highest region of the state of Jammu and Kashmir in India. Being the most remote region of India it also has the lowest population and is one of the largest districts in terms of area. Ladakh has very shallow valley the climate is extremely dry, cold and there is very little moisture and oxygen. Its largest extent is from the north-west to southeast (Alexander Cunningham: 1854, 16-17). According to the geographical experts, the district has several other features, which are very unique for instance, Ladakh is the coldest and most elevated inhabited region in the country with altitude ranging from 2300 meters to 5000 meters. Due to its high location annual rainfall is also very low.⁹ Ladakh is divided into two districts Leh and the other is Kargil which is the second most important division of Ladakh.

It has attracted a number of scholars, travellers and explorers especially at the end of the nineteenth century. Ladakh is called by many names some are 'Maryul' 'Marpoyul' (Red land) by the Chinese pilgrims, the well known Chinese traveller 'Fa-Hain called 'Keicha'. It is also known as the 'lowland' to distinguish it from the highlands of the Changthang and Nari (Cunningham: 1854). The name La-davags is mentioned in the Tibetan chronicles after the reign of Kyi-de-nimagon c.900 A.D (who was the founder of the Ladakhi kingdom and the first king of Ladakh of Tibetan origin) (A.H. Francke: 1928, 67). It's called Lad'a in Tibetan and most commonly known as La-tags.

Diogo d' Almeida was the first European who visited Ladakh around about 1600 A.D. His description about Ladakh is rather vague. Antonio Andrade visited Ladakh

⁹ Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Leh, Economic Review for the year 2006-2007, p.1.

and Tsaparang (Western Tibet) during the reign of King Jamyang Namgyal in the 15th Century. He has described Ladakhis as prosperous. Andrade was followed by Father Francisco De Azevedo during the reign of King Singee Namgyal. He arrived at Leh in 1631 along with F. de Oliveria (C.Wessels: 1785).

Another traveller who went through the greater part of the country from Ladakh through Rhutog to Lhasa was Le Pero Hippolyte Desideri a Jesuit who came to Leh in 1716 (Cunningham: 1854, 6). A. H. Francke gives the year of Desideri's visit to Leh as 1715. Even Dereck Waller has mentioned in his book that, "The Jesuits priests Desideri and Freyre, on their way to Lhasa, had been the first Europeans to see the Ladakhi capital of Leh, in 1715, before continuing their journey via Gartok and Lake Mansarovar" (Waller: 1990, 102).

Some other important scholars who travelled extensively in Ladakh and its surrounding areas are William Moorcraft. John Keay, in his book 'When Men and Mountains Meet,' refers to Moorcraft, "Penetrating further into the Western Himalayas than any before him he had discovered and pioneered a possible trade route to Leh" (John Keay: 1977, 34). Moorcraft resided in Leh for a period of two years (1820-1822) and during his stay he travelled extensively to Nubra, Changthang and Dras. He is said to be the first traveller to have come to Leh in the first half of the 19th Century. Alexander Cunningham, who visited Ladakh in 1846, endeavoured to collect historical documents since the 10th century onwards till the 19th Century. He investigated the archaeology and ethnology of Ladakh and gives a very comprehensive and detailed account of all aspects of Ladakh especially history in his book "Ladakh, Physical, Statistical and Historical". Therefore, during the first half of the 19th century Moorcraft, Fraser, Koros and Alexander Cunningham were the famous explorers who visited Ladakh. In the second half of the 19th century G. Knight Leitner, A.H Francke, Hamiton Bower, Younghusband (Both Hamilton and Younghusband also explored Tibet extensively), Robert Shaw, and Hayward (the latter two were even awarded the most coveted explorers trophies for their journeys through Ladakh and Eastern Turkistan). Mention can also be made of Fredric Drew who made a detailed study of the Geography of Ladakh. Finally, from 1900 till about 1945 some important travellers who came to Ladakh were Deasy, C.G Rawling and the famous Swedish traveller Sven Hedin visited Ladakh between 1902 and 1908.

According to Rajiv Rawat, “Hedin perhaps made the greatest modern contribution to Himalayan geography at the turn of the century” (Rajiv Rawat: 2004, 3). Trained as a physical geographer, Hedin travelled extensively throughout Eurasia, crossing into Tibet from the extreme West of Ladakh in 1905 and exploring both the high plateau and the borderlands in the southwest. He made remarkable journey to Ladakh, Tibet and Central Asia his survey work was important for geography scholars, as he contributed greatly to geography study. Giuseppe Tucci is another important traveller who did extensive research work on the religion and culture, he along with Luciano Petesch were the only historians who had done authentic research work on both Ladakh and Tibet. Ladakh was opened to tourists in 1974 when it became a part of Jammu and Kashmir post partition. David Snellgrove and Tadeuz Skorupski were the first scholars to have come to Ladakh after it was opened to tourists. Followed by, Prof. Tokan.D.Sumu and Prof. Masato Oki who wrote books on Ladakh. Thus, Ladakh was visited by hundreds of Europeans travellers and scholars.

Boundaries

In the north Ladakh is divided by the Karakoram and the Kuenlun ranges from Yarkand and Khotan. To the east and southeast are the Chinese districts of Rudok Changthang and Chumurti. To the South lie the districts of Chamba, Kullu and Bishar Lahul, Spiti(The last two are in Himachal Pradesh but in the 19th century they became British dependencies) and Zangskar (Ladakh). To the west lie Kashmir, Baltistan, (Baltistan is separated by the Western Himalayas). Suru, Dras Khurmang, and Chorbat, area of Skardu Wazirat also lie to the West (Cunningham: 1854, 17; Gazzetter of Kashmir and Ladakh: 1974, 531). The Karakoram and the Mustang range forms the northern boundary as far east as the Karakoram pass. Eastward of the pass, however, to past the meridian of 80 degree, the boundary line is uncertain. The country lying between this portion of the Karakoram Range and the Western Kuenlun on the north are blank, uninhabited region. The boundary line from the Eastern Kuenlun, down South to the head of the Changchenmo valley is undefined. Elsewhere the boundaries of Ladakh are well defined (Gazzetter of Kashmir and Ladakh: 1974, 531).

Ladakhs geography is similar to as that of Tibet as both have the same kind of landscape, climate and fauna (E.F Knight: 1905, 104). “Ladak, like Chinese Tibet, is for the most part a desert of bare crags and granite dust, with vast arid table-lands of high elevation—a land where are no forests or pastures, where in places one can march through a long summer's day and never see so much as a blade of grass”. He further asserts that, “There is no natural division between Ladak and Chinese Tibet: the highlands of one are continued into the other, and the same rivers flow through both countries” (Knight: 1905, 103). Here he is referring specially to the Indus which emanates from the area near Kailash Mansarovar in western Tibet. Ladakh is a cloudless region, burning or freezing under the clear blue sky the atmosphere is devoid of moisture that the variations of temperature are extreme, and Thus, Ladakh is arid, barren, extremely cold and moisture deprived region.

Natural Divisions

Ladakh is India's highest plateau with much of it being over 3,000 m (9,800 ft). It spans the Himalayan and Karakoram mountain ranges and the upper Indus River valley. Historical Ladakh includes the fairly populous main Indus valley, the more remote Zangskar (in the south) and Nubra valleys (to the north over Khardung La the almost deserted Aksai Chin and Kargil and Suru Valley areas to the west (Kargil being the second most important town in Ladakh). Before partition, Baltistan (now under Pakistani administration) was a district in Ladakh. Skardu was the winter capital of Ladakh while Leh was the summer capital.

The natural division of Ladakh now comprises of the following Nubra, Leh, Zanskar, Changthang and Kargil. Leh is the capital of Ladakh district and was the nerve centre of active trade in the 19th and early 20th centuries when it use to be the main entre port of trade between India and Central Asia. However, according to Alexander Cunningham, the divisions of the country are as follows, Leh proper on the Indus, Nubra on the Shayok river, Zanskar on the Zanskar river, Rukchu, around the Tsomomo Riri and Tso-Khar, Purik, Suru, Kargil and Dras on the different branches of the Dras river, Spiti on the Spiti river, Lahul on the Chanrabhaga or headwaters of the Chenab (Cunningham: 1854, 18).

However, Cunningham gives this account in accordance with the geopolitical conditions that existed in the early 19th century as after the signing of the Treaty of Amritsar 1846 Lahul and Spiti became British dependencies. Due to the change in the geopolitics of Ladakh many provinces no longer fall into the sphere of Ladakh district's division. Cunningham further in his book asserts that around the 19th century Ladakh was divided between Maharaja Ghulab Singh (the northern districts belonged to him) and the East India Company (two districts of Lahul and Spiti were under them, which at present is under Himachal).

I have briefly focussed on the districts of Ladakh first among them is Indus valley where the capital is situated which is called Leh which is very important as this region is strategically very significant as it formed the meeting ground of China, Russia and Pakistan. This region also accommodates the plateau of Changthang (14,000 to 50,000 ft above sea level) and it extends beyond Ladakh's border into what is the Chinese border now. According to, Melvyn C. Goldstein and Cynthia M. Beall, Changthang is also called 'northern plateau.' Nomadic pastoralism is the way of life in Changthang (Melvyn C. Goldstein and Cynthia M. Beall: 1990, 41).

The Central part of Ladakh consists of the central villages and the entire central Ladakh is situated along the Indus River. According to Moorcraft, "The principal valley in Ladakh is that which follows the course of the river Indus and extends to the southeast to the north-west through the greater part of the country" (Moorcraft and Trebeck: 1841, 260).

Bayard Taylor who visited Leh in the early 1870's gives a similar account according to him, "Leh stands on the north bank, on the eastern side of the upper extremity of a plain, three miles in length, covered with sand and loose stones, and sloping gently down to the bank of the Indus" (Bayard Taylor: 1874, 132).

Another sub-division is the Nubra Valley which is the North western district of Ladakh and is reached by Leh via two routes, one over Khardung La (18,380 ft) and the other over the Digar La (17,900). Nubra Valley consists of the Nubra River which flows from the north-west. The Shyok River forms a waterway between Nubra valley and Khapalu in Baltistan which eventually, pours its waters into the Indus at Keris.

Zaskar: it lies on the branches of the Zaskar River from South east to North West. It is bounded by small districts of Purik, Wanla and the district of Rukchu on the east, Ladakh on the north and Lahul on the south and its southern boundary is formed by the Himalayas.

Rukchu or Rupshu is the most elevated district in Ladakh and is the loftiest inhabited regions of the Changthang plateau. According to Federick Drew, "It is bounded on the east by the Chinese districts of Chumurti it is a district at the southeast end of Ladakh and lies between the watershed range and the Indus" (Federick Drew: 1875, 285). This place is inhabited by the nomads called the "Changpas" who live in tents and search for pasture. It is the highest inhabited country in the world, inhabited by nomadic dwellers in tents, as, with the exception of the villages of Hanle (14,276 feet) and Karzok (14,960 feet). According to F.E.S Adair, "Rupshu proper lies to the south of the Indus, and consists of a series of uplands and valleys, which are nowhere lower than 14,000 feet above the sea-level" (F.E.S Adair: 1899, 152).

Kargil is the second district headquarters of the Ladakh district and is mainly dominated by a Muslim population with a very minute Buddhist population. It is situated at the junction of Suru and Pashkyum (also called Wakha) rivers (The Gazzetter of Kashmir and Ladakh: 1974, 439). It is through Kargil that the Leh-Srinagar route passes. It consists of the valleys of the Kanji and Wakha streams of the Suru valley.

Mountain System

In Ladakh there is parallelism of the Mountain ranges and its aridity, which stretch through out it from the southeast to the northwest. The general direction of the chains determines the courses of the rivers, as well as the boundaries of the natural divisions of the country.

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The principal mountains are the Western Himalayas, the Kailas, the Karakoram or Mustagh range and the eastern and western Kuenlun (Gazzetter of Kashmir and Ladakh: 1974, 531).

According to, Federick Drew, "The mountain chains around the plains of Ladakh reach to 20,000 and 21,000 ft, those which make the northern boundary are Eastern Kuenlun Mountains. West of the high plateau is a space occupied by a great range of Mountains which is called "Mustagh" and "Karakoram" and it intervenes between the line of the Shayok Valley and the upper part of the valley of the Yarkand river" (Drew: 1875, 260).

According to Bimla Churn Law, "Ladakh is a lofty range parallel to the greater Himalaya and lies to the east of the Mansarovar Lake. It is separated from the Himalayan range by a valley, some 50 metres wide" (Bimla Churn Law: 1968, 24).

The Karakoram Range lies to the northeast of the Shayok and Nubra valley. Amongst the Ladakh ranges, the highest is the Saser Kangri located between Shyok and Nubra valley again closer to that is the Zaskar range which falls on its south-western side to the Suru and Zaskar valley. Between Leh and eastern Central Asia, there is a triple barrier- Ladakh range, Karakoram Range, and Kunlun.

River System

There are many rivers in Ladakh they are the Indus, Zaskar, Shayok, Suru, Pushkum, and Kartse and Dras. The most important is the river Indus which is called "Singe-Khababs" by the Ladakhis meaning (the river descending out of the mouth of the Lion). According to Cunningham, the authentic source of the river lies to the northwest of the lake Mansarovara Lake and Rawan Hard in western Tibet.

However, Sven Hedin is believed to be the first Englishman to have discovered the true sources of the Brahmaputra, Indus and Sutlej. As he has given in his book, "The source of the Indus might have been located within a narrower circle, though its radius would have measured twenty miles; but no European had tried to reach it".

Hedin further asserts that, "At last in the year 1907, I succeeded in finding my way to the sources of all three rivers. I succeeded because I was determined to find them, and because I did not give myself up to chance like chaff driven before the wind. In the case of the Brahmaputra and Indus I followed the streams upwards, which is the surest method (Hedin: 1910, 3-4).

However, the Indus rises near the Mansarovar and after traversing the country of Chanthang from northeast to southeast enters Ladakh joins the Zaskar river near Nyemo near Leh and at Khaltse (near Leh), it takes a turn to the north and passes through Skardu from where it flows in a north-westerly direction and then turns to the south towards the plains of Hindustan and eventually it drains out in the Arabian Sea. According to, Alexander Cunningham, "According to my information, the true source of the Indus lies to the north-west of the holy lakes of Manasarovara and Rawan Hrad, in the south-western slopes of the Gangri or Kailas mountain, in north latitude $31^{\circ} 20'$, and east longitude $80^{\circ} 30'$, and at an estimated height of 17,000 feet. Its chief tributaries on the left bank are the Hanle, Zaskar river, the Dras and Astor rivers and on the right bank are the shyok, Shigar and the Gilgit rivers" (Cunningham: 1854, 86).

The Shyok River, which is in Nubra, is the principal river that joins Indus on the north. It rises in the northward direction of Leh from the foot of the Karakoram Mountains. The Shayok receives the waters of Nubra and the Chang-chhen-mo. It flows several days journey to the south and then turns to the West from Hunder in Nubra it flows in a direction north-west out of Ladakh, and passes the state of Khapulu in Skardo and further it is incorporated with the Indus and becomes Indus proper. According to Alexander Cunningham, "From Shayok to the junction, the distance is 230 miles, and the fall is 4,500 feet, or 19"6 feet per mile. From its source in the Karakoram to Keris, where it joins the Indus, the whole length of the Shayok is just 400 miles, and the total fall is 10,500 feet, or 264 feet per mile" (Cunningham: 1854, 95).

Vigne's account on his journey through Ladakh where he saw the confluence of the branches of Indus and the Shayok, he states in his account that, "The next morning, we arrived at the place where the two branches of the Indus, one from Ladakh, and the

other, the Shayok, from Nubra and Karakoram, unite to form the main stream” (Bayard Taylor: 1874, 122).

There are several streams that flow into the Indus but are mostly of the nature of the mountain torrents and watercourses one such is the Zanskar River which comes from the south, and joins the Indus junction opposite to Nyemo (a village in Ladakh) and forms a confluence there. This river is also known as ‘Chilling-Chu.

Zanskar River is one of the principal mountain tributaries of the Indus. The Zanskar River is formed of two principal branches, Zanskar proper, and the Sum- Gal. The head-waters of the Zanskar river are the Yunam, the Serchu (or Yellow River), and the Cherpa, all of which rise to the north of the Himalaya range, near the Bara Lacha Pass. Suru River is a tributary of the Dras River which rises in the Himalayas east of the Nun-Kun Peak. Its total length is about 60 miles. Its principal tributaries are the Nakpo-Chu and the Palumba-Chu. It flows to the Rangdum monastery, then west a little above Suru village from there it flows north-north-west and joins the Dras just below Kargil.

Kartse River is the tributary of the Suru River and merges with it from the east and partly in the Suru valley. The Dras River is again a tributary of the Indus and is formed by the united streams of the Dras, Wakha, Suru and Kuksa rivers. It rises in the Zojila, the pass which links Srinagar with Ladakh, and its course is 80 miles. The route from Srinagar to Leh follows the course of this river as far as the junction of the Suru River.

Lakes

Here all the lakes are at a great height, all sheets of water in Ladakh are known by the name of ‘Tso.’ With only few exceptions all the lakes are usually landlocked and salty. The principal are the Pangong Lake, the Tsomoriri Lake and the Tsokur. Besides this there are some extensive salt lakes scattered about the Lingzithang plains. Ladakh is one of the most elevated regions of the world with the lowest valley at an elevation of 9,000 feet. Dereck Waller, in his book “The Pundits (British Exploration

of Tibet and Central Asia),” has mentioned, “The Pangong is on the frontiers of Tibet and Ladakh, the border almost bisecting it. Both Lake Mansarovar and Pangong are part of the extensive lake system which stretch east across Tibet to Lhasa” (Waller: 1990, 99).

The Pangong Lake does not have external drainage. On the other hand the Tsomoriri Lake which lies between the Parang la and Nakpogoding pass in the Rupshu district is a brackish salty lake. It is at an elevation of 14,900 ft. And the Tsokar Lake which is also called the “Tsokar Chomo Lake” is situated at the Thogji Chanmo plain, 30 miles northwest from the Tsomoriri Lake the water here also is brackish (The Gazzetter of Kashmir and Ladakh: 1974, 832).

Routes

Both Tibet and Ladakh were well supplied with overland trade routes and passes, which connected the two areas. Ladakh being “the entre port of Central Asian trade was connected with many routes, from Central Asia, Srinagar, trans-Karakoram route north and east into Chinese Central Asia and many more including routes to Tibet. As far as routes that link Tibet with Ladakh are concerned. There was the route from Srinagar in Cashmere, which went through Leh and up the valley of the Indus to Gartok, and was used by the traders of Cashmere and Chinese Turkistan. Another route which was most frequently used by traders before the 1950’s was the route which started from Leh, from where it followed the course of the Indus upstream, to Demchok and then through Gartok and Lake Mansarovar it entered the valley of Tsangpo and reached Lhasa. This was the south-eastern route. Likewise, from Lhasa also the same route connected Tibet and Ladakh as the road from Gartok to Leh was at a distance of 200 miles, which passed through the district of the Rudok Jongpen, and went via Tashigong and Demchok on the Indus River into Leh Ladakh. The point where the south-eastern route and the two routes mentioned above converged was Thangra from there that is Demchok Lhasa was about nine days march.

Major General Le Marquis De Bourbeh has given distances from Leh to Rudok, in his book “Jammu and Kashmir,” as follows:

Leh to Tangtse.....	62 miles.
Tangtse to Chakar Talao.....	14 miles.
Chakar Talao to Lukhung.....	7Miles-2 Furlongs
Lukhung to Changra.....	8 „
Changra to Charkhang.....	8 „
Charkhang to Spangur Gongma.....	10 6 „
Spangur Gongma to Niagzu.....	1 13 „
Niagzu to Kaisarpo.....	12 00 „
Kaisarpo to Gonu.....	12 00 „
Gonu to Chuzan.....	13 00 „
Chuzan to Pal.....	20 00 „
Pal to Dobo Nagpo.....	8 00 „
Dobo Nagpo to Noh.....	9 00 „
Noh to Rudok.....	20 00 „
Total:	—————
	216— 00
	—————

(Major General Le Marquis De Bourbeh: 1890, 158)

Ladakh and Tibet's boundaries with their neighbours have been separately discussed earlier. However, the boundary between Tibet and Ladakh remains an important issue today as some part of it is undefined and disputed.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The history of Ladakh has remained interwoven with that of Tibet, right from the medieval times, not only has Ladakh geographical, commercial, spiritual, cultural and religious, links with Tibet but Ladakh also owes to Tibet the founding of the first royal dynasty of Ladakh to Tibet. Therefore, it becomes empirical to trace the history of Ladakh, in order to bring out the profound impact Tibet had on this small Himalayan principality.

In dealing with the history of ancient Ladakh there are limited sources. Not until the 7th century did reasonably accurate resources appear. According to, A.H Francke, “the period of 900-1400 A.D., does not contain much besides mere names” (A. H. Francke: 1929, 3).

Ladakh and Kashmir: Political Links

Buddhism came to Ladakh first via Kashmir and then Tibet. It is believed that Buddhism was first introduced by Ashoka during this reign he was a great follower of Buddha and he propagated his new religion with all the zealous ardour in 241 B.C. During the reign of king Ashoka (273-236) numerous missionary teachers were despatched to all the surrounding countries to spread the peaceful doctrines of Sakya Muni Buddha. In the case of Ladakh a missionary called Madyantika came to Ladakh and propagated Buddhism. The missionary propagated Buddhism in the region and it is believed that it was the first major Buddhist influence on Ladakh after which the religion of Ladakh became that of Buddhism.

However, Buddhism was further spread and was introduced widely at the time of Kanishka approximately in the first or second century A.D. Kanishka is believed to have sent missionaries to entire Central Asia which resulted in the spread of Buddhism in this entire region after which Buddhism became a popular religion in Kashmir. At the time under of Kanishka (ca. A.D. 120-162) the Kushan Empire was

at the acme of its glory and his dominions included Baltistan, Ladakh and some parts of Eastern and Western Turkistan (Francke: 1929, 110-111). Petesch lays emphasis on the inscription found on the Khalatse bridge according to him, "In any case, the inscription proves that in the 1st or 2nd century A.D Lower Ladakh was included in the Kushana empire" (Petesch: 1977, 3). It was during this period that Gandhara art was introduced in Ladakh. And also it was during the Kushan period, Buddhism was further strengthened in Ladakh, and from there it was introduced into China about the beginning of the Christian era. The spread of Buddhism in Ladakh was followed by its introduction into China, about the beginning of the Christian era, and into Tibet in the middle of the seventh century. With the decline of the Kushan Empire at the end of the second century A.D till the 7th, not much is known about Ladakh. Many Archaeological evidences point to the facts that Buddhism was introduced in Ladakh during the Kushan period Rev. A. H. Francke, a German missionary wrote that he had found inscriptions on the huge boulder at a place called Khaltse village.¹ This inscription says that King Kanishka's domain was extended upto Khaltse. Many ancient rock inscriptions have also been found in Khartoshi of Kushan of and Gupta periods at Khaltse is dated back to pre Christian era. The existence of Kushana interest in Ladakh is proved by an inscription in the Indian Khartoshi script which they used, found by A. H. Francke² at Khaltse (Francke: 1926, 110-111).

Also a Stupa known as "Kanika" at Sani, Zaskar is attributed to Kanishka ruler. Kanika is a distorted version of Kanishka and important archaeological evidence is the colossal image of Maitriya Buddha is carved out of a huge rock at Mulbekh village on the Leh- Kargil road which dates back between 7th and 8th century. Rock inscriptions, are found in most parts of Drass, Zaskar, and in the Leh tehsils at Shimsha Kharbu, Hanska, Saspol, Nyemo, Daru, Leh and at Spandan areas (F.M.Hassnai: 1998, 68). It seems likely that people of the Indo-European stock known as the Dards, had penetrated the Western Himalayas, and were affected by Buddhist religion. The Rock carvings at Dras of Maitreya, Avalokitesvara, a lotus and a horse man, the impressive statue of Maitreya at Mulbek, and some rock carvings at

¹ A village in Ladakh which is 94 kms from Leh town.

² Francke was one of the first who researched the history of Ladakh. He used inscription and records available to him in Ladakh which was collectively known as the 'Ladakh Chronicle' and was published with English translation in vol II of his "Antiquities of Indian Tibet". It remains a very important source of History of Ladakh for scholars and writers till today.

Changspa near Leh all of which may be dated at sometime between the 7th and the 10th centuries, clearly witnesses to the existence of Buddhist religion in the area before it was finally taken over by the Tibetans” (David Snellgrove and Tavdeuz Skorupski: 1977, 9).

These inscriptions and carvings supply information of historical value. Even in the religious paintings in the Alchi Monastery (built somewhere between the 10th and the 12th centuries A.D) in Ladakh Kashmiri influence is seen clearly as Kashmiri artists were summoned specially to do the job. It is believed that Rinchen Zangpo studied Buddhism in Kashmir and introduced Kashmiri forms of Buddhist Art in Ladakh and the Alchi paintings indicates clear influence of Kashmiri art in Ladakh (Dr. Nawang Tsering. A noted scholar of Buddhism in Ladakh).

All these evidences bear testimony to the age old relations between Ladakh and India and show that Buddhism came to Ladakh from Kashmir. Therefore, these were the Pre Tibet Buddhist influence in Ladakh. According to, a Ladakhi Buddhists scholar, Jamyang Gyaltzan, “We can therefore, come to the conclusion that Buddhism was not introduced in Ladakh before the time of Christ it was brought to Ladakh in the 1st and 2nd century A.D (Gyaltzan Jamyang: 1993). “The spread of Buddhism in Ladak was followed by its introduction into China, about the beginning of the Christian era, and into Great Tibet in the middle of the seventh century” (Cunninghum: 1854, 357).

Ladakh also witnessed maximum raids and encroachment on its territory from its North Western boundary i.e. from Kashmir. Starting from the early 8th century A.D, during the reign of Lalitaditya (724-760 A.D) Ladakh was under the threat of the Muslims. Lalitaditya wanted to expand his empire to Central Asia and send a diplomatic mission to the Chinese emperor (M.L.Kapur: 1976, 2) to induce time to make a common front against the Tibetan menace. But the Chinese did not obliged by sending military assistance, even then Lalitaditya succeeded in defeating not only the Tibetans but also the mountain tribes in the north and North West part of the kingdom; such as Dards, Kambojas and Turks.

In the course of their advance toward west Lalitaditya must have occupied Ladakh also. Rajtarangini tells nothing of the political organization or the topography of the Bhutta territories. However, they were familiar with the terms little and “Great Bhutta

land”, referring to Balistan and Ladakh, which have continued to be known to the present day as little and great Tibet. Or among the Kashmiris as ‘Urkh Butun’ and ‘Bud Butun’ (Butun connected with the ethnic term Bhutta, which is a Kashmiri term for Tibet in general). These terms seem to be of a far older date, as they were found already in the Chinese Annals as ‘Little and Great Police’ (Kalhana: 1979, 435).

Police was a Chinese term for Balistan. From 14th century relation between Ladakh and Kashmir grew closer. King Rinchana of Kashmir (1320-1323) is said to have been a Ladakhi prince. He converted to Islam after usurping the throne of Kashmir and adopted the name of Rinchana Shah. Ain-i-Akbari describes about Rinchana’s rise to power (Abul Fazl: 2001, 381).

Rinchana became the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir. After Rinchana when Kashmir came under the Muslim rule, their raid over Ladakh became quite frequent. Many a times they penetrated deep into its territories. Sultan Shihabu’-d-Din (1354 to 1373) was the son of Ala’u’-d-Din. Shihabu’-d-Din was full of energy and vigour and his ambition was to establish his sway over the neighbouring countries (Mohibbul Hasan: 2002, 76).

According to the Kashmir accounts, Shihabu’-d-Din marched via Baramula and occupied Pakhli and Surat. Next he invaded Multan, Nu’man and Kabul, Ghazni and Qandhar. He then crossed the Hindu Kush and invaded Badakhshan. After conquering it, he retracted his steps towards Gilgit and Dardu which also he annexed. He then advanced to conquer Baltistan and Ladakh. The ruler of Kashgar to whom these provinces belonged at the time, on hearing of Shihabu’-d-Din’s invasion, set out with a large force and offered him Battle in Ladakh. Although the Kashmir army was numerically inferior to that of Kashgar, yet it was victorious and Baltistan and Ladakh were occupied. From Ladakh he marched to Nagarkot (Kangra) and occupied it. He was the first Sultan, who invaded Ladakh.

Immediately after his accession to the throne, Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-1470) led personally an expedition against Tibet. On this occasion Ladakh too was invaded. After securing the allegiance of the Balistan Chief, the Sultan invaded Guge and reached as far as shey, Shey was the capital of Ladakh at that time. It was sacked in

the course of invasion; here the Sultan saved a golden statue of Buddha from the hands of his soldiers (Petesch: 1977, 23). Ladakh acknowledged the suzerainty of Kashmir, however it appears that Zainul Abidin had no intention of permanently occupying these areas and returned after collecting plunder and extorting tribute. Surprisingly, the chronicles of Ladakh never mentioned about Zainul Abidin or any other Kashmiri invasion. They narrate that the Ladakhi king Lo-Tro-Chokden (1440-1470) conquered the whole of Western Tibet and realized a rich booty from Guge regarding which, C.L.Datta agrees with Francke that the king, defeated by the invaders, was forced to join them in their expedition to Guge and then they may have shared the plunder (C.L.Datta: 1973, 50).

It appears that, during the reign of Zainul Abidin, Kashmir maintained its nominal sovereignty over Ladakh and the Ladakh King Lo-Tro-Chokden depended on Kashmiri support for retaining royal power (Mohibbul Hasan: 2002, 113).

In 1483, Ladakh witnessed another raid from Kashmir. Sultan Hasan Shah (1472-1484) sent Jahangir Magre and Sayyid Hasan to invade little and great Tibet. Sayyid Hasan reduced Balistan, and came back to Sri Nagar in Triumph. Jahangir entered Ladakh and was defeated at the hands of Ladakhi forces under its king Lha-Chen-Bhagan (1460-1485).

In 1532, Ladakh suffered one of the most disastrous invasions in the shape of the Mongol onslaught from the North. In 1532, Sultan Abu Sayed of Kashgar set out with his army for a holy war against the infidels of Tibet. One part of his army was placed under Commander Mirza Haider Duglat. Prince Sikander Mirza, the Sultan's second son, also accompanied this contingent. They took the old caravan route over the Karakoram and entered from Nubra, plundered the inhabitants and forced them to embrace Islam. According to the text mentioned in Tarikh-i-Rashidi, "passing through Nubra, where number of people submitted to his (Mirza Haider) Faith, but the Chief was rebellious Bur-kaba, the head of the chief of the infidels, strengthened himself within the castle of Mutader (Hunder) which was the Chief fort of the country. Mirza Haider raided the fort after a siege, deserted it, they fled in confusion and dismay, while mussalman gave them chase as far as possible so that not one of them escaped. Burkapa was slain with his men, their head formed a lofty minasets and the vapour

from the brains of the infidels of that country ascended to the heavens” (Mirza Haider Duglat: 1973, 418). Henceforth there was no resistance.

After defeating the Ladakhi leaders of Nubra, Mirza Haider proceeded to Maryul i.e. the district of Leh and Shey. Here he found that there were two ruler, one called Lata Jughdan and the other Tashikun, they both hastened to wait on him. As the winter set in Mirza Haider did not find it suitable to make Ladakh as the winter capital, so Kashmir was selected for this purpose. The Khan of Kashgar also joined Mirza Haider but the formers health has been impaired by mountain sickness, which he calls Damgiri. The Khan was appraised of the decision of wintering in Kashmir instead of Ladakh, but he was not strong enough to cross the high passes leading into the valley, it was decided that with 1000 men the Khan should proceeded to Baltistan, which could be easily reached without causing much sickness, with the rest of his soldiers, including a number of Ladakhis. Mirza Haider descended into Kashmir and easily put down the feeble resistance offered by the Kashmiris (C.L.Datta: 1973, 52).

In the spring of 1533, the Mongols occupying Nubra was forced to take refuge in ‘Maryul’, Leh where Mirza Haider found them on his return from Kashmir. He put to death one Tashikun for aiding this revolt, who according to Neil Howard (N.Howard 1995, 130), was a Nubra Chief and not the Tashikun of Maryul, who appears latter, as has been accepted by K.N.Kaul (K.N.Kaul: 1998, 47).

Mirza Haider, having arrived at Leh, was deputed by Sultan Khan to sack the idle temple of Ursang (Lhasa) with 2000 Troops. Meanwhile the Sultan set off for Yarkand but Mirza Haider gave up his attempt on Lhasa and returned back because of the intense cold and shortage of food. Back in Ladakh in 1534 he had suffered a heavy toll of his soldiers in Tibetan expedition. Thus Mirza Haider found himself in a disturbed situation, but got a pleasant surprise when he was given every assistance by the people of Ladakh, with whose help he established his winter headquarter at shey, the then capital of Ladakh. He stayed at Ladakh from 1534 to 1536. Ladakhis realizing their inability to drive out the aggressors now offered passive resistance (Mohibbul Hasan: 2002, 204).

With the support of Mughals, he defeated the Kashmiri King Sultan Ismial Shah-II in 1540 and Mirza Haider became 'de facto' ruler of Kashmir (Mohibbul Hasan: 2002, 21).

After establishing himself securely in Kashmir, in 1545 Mirza Haider again invaded Ladakh, but his raid was of no lasting consequence but in his second in 1548 he occupied both Ladakh and Baltistan. He even appointed governors for his new domain, Mulla Qasim for Little Tibet (Baltistan) and Mulla Hasan for 'Great Tibet' (Ladakh) (Mirza Duglat: 1973, 489). However, their rule was very nominal and Kashmiri suzerainty was short lived, for in 1551, after the death of Mirza Haider Kashmir once again came under the head of weak rulers, the Baltis and Ladakhis threw away the Kashmiri Yoke (C.L.Datta: 1973, 30).

The last invasion from Kashmir took place in 1562, when Ghazi Chak sent an expedition under the command of his son Ahmad Khan and Fateh Chak. The latter raided the capital, but retired upon a promise of Tribute. Ahmad Khan tried to repeal this exploit, but was surrounded and his life was saved by the timely arrival of Fateh Khan, who however was slain (Petesch: 1977, 30). At that time Ladakh was under the rule of Tashi Namgyal (1555-75).

Ladakh came in contact with the Mughals after 1586, when Akbar annexed Kashmir. The Akbarnama writes in this context "One of the occurrences of Akbar's campaign to Kashmir was sending of an ambassador to Tibet. When the sound of the world conquering armies reached that country, the ruler there had not the courage to come to personally to sublime court. They remained in bewilderment. As they showed obedience by continually sending presents. M. Beg was sent to Ali Rai, the ruler of little Tibet and Mulla Talib Isyahani and Mihtar Yari to the ruler of Great Tibet. Soothing and encouraging words were written to them (Abul Fazl: 1902, 838).

After submitting to the Mughals, the rules of little Tibet, Ali Mir also offered his daughter in marriage to prince Salim (Simon Digby: 1998, 304). It was with the support and the alliance of the Mughals Rhat Ali Mir led the expedition against Ladakh and was successful in this raid, made its ruler prisoner for some time and

proceeded to his country after gathering abundant booty (Abul Fazl: 1902, 1091-1092).

With the Mughal sway reaching as far as Baltistan, Ladakh's contact with the Mughal became more frequent. This relationship was one of the main problems during the reign of Deldan Namgyal (1654-1675). As per the early agreement with Mughals, Senge Namgyal had promised to pay tribute to the Mughal governor of Kashmir. This tribute was never paid and Ladakh remained for all purposes an independent state. Around this time Ladakh also invaded Baltistan, conquered Khapulu, chorbád in lower shyok valley and assigned them to the local Muslim Chiefs. Hence they came in direct contact with the Mughals since the Chief of Skaedo was a royal subject of Mughals.

All this matter was brought to the notice of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, when he visited Kashmir in 1663. Deldan Namgyal, seeing the impossible task of fighting the Mughals, renewed his father's promises of tribute and loyalty. We sent an embassy to Kashmir with presents. The emperor received the envoys who repeated to him King's pledge of loyalty and tribute promised that a mosque would be built at Leh, Khutba was recited and coins were struck in the name of emperor (N.K.Singh: 2000, 200).

When Aurangzeb left Kashmir, in 1639 Deldan Namgyal once again tried to ignore the Mughal claim. But this time Aurangzeb was much more strict and sterner. Two years later Saif Khan the governor of Kashmir sent an envoy to the King of Ladakh, who is given the title of Zamindar of the Great Tibet. The envoy, Mohammed Shafi, was the bearer of an imperial farman, enjoining on the Ladakhi King to accept Mughal suzerainty and Islam, and threatening with an invasion by the imperial army in case of refusal. They accepted with reverence the imperial documents and compiled forthwith all its requests. Accordingly, the Khutba was read in the name of Aurangzeb, the foundation of a mosque was laid, and the Ladakhi government undertook to diffuse the religion of Islam among the people. The envoy was sent back to Kashmir with great honour and a tribute of 1000 asherfis, 2000 rupees and many other precious objects (Petesch: 1977, 64).

Hence among all, this raid left a significant consequence on the history of Ladakh. Mughal suzerainty was recognized much more firmly, which impaired Ladakh's relation with Dalai Lama and his government and eventually led to the Tibeto Mongol War on Ladakh in 1681.

TIBET AND LADAKH: (Ancient period)

However, Tibetan influence crept in slowly between 7th and the 8th century. During this period till the 10th century there were no significant and political developments between Ladakh and Tibet. It is observed that in about 900 A.D Ladakh was inhabited by Dardi-speaking population, and was not connected politically with Tibet at the most it is said to have maintained trade relations with it. It was between 7th and the 8th that Buddhism was introduced in Central Tibet even after that it had to struggle for centuries for its existence, before the advent Buddhism the religion of Tibet was that of "Bon-Chos". After the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet the King Landgdarma of the Tibetan dynasty at that time who was a staunch supporter of the Bon-chos religion began to persecute Buddhism in Tibet openly (Francke: 1926, 91-92).

It was after his murder that the dynasty began to fragment. This fact can be confirmed by the statement given by Luciano Petesch in his book, where he states that, "The origin of the Ladakhi kingdom is connected with the decline and fall of the Tibetan monarchy. After the murder of Glan-dar-ma the whole structure of the state collapsed and the old aristocracy launched into scramble for power" (Petesch: 1977, 14). It was Langdarma's great grandson Skydie- Nimagon who fled from Tibet to Ngariskorsum³ in Ladakh and founded the first Ladakhi dynasty of Tibetan origin in the 10th Century A.D. According to the Chronicles of Ladakh, "At that time Upper Ladakh was held by the descendants of Ge-sar and Lower Ladakh was split up into small independent principalities" (Francke: 1926, 93).

The "Tibetanization" process apparently proceeded at a rapid pace after a Tibetan dynasty was established in Ladakh. There is enough proof to establish the fact that Skydienimagon was the first king of Ladakh of Tibetan origin as sculptures and image

³ Ngariskorsum usually includes the districts of Rhutog, Guge and Purang.

of the Maitreya at Sheh village, a village in Leh- Ladakh, have been found, which A.H Francke assumes was raised probably by Skydienimagon (Francke: 1926, 63).

According to Fisher, Rose and Huttenback, "There emerged in Ladakh in the early years of the tenth century a new emigre type of dynasty proud of its royal Tibetan origins. A paradoxical result was that Ladakhs political separation from Tibet was accentuated at the same time that it's cultural, religious, and social structure was "Tibetanized" (Fisher, Rose and Huttenback: 1963, 17).

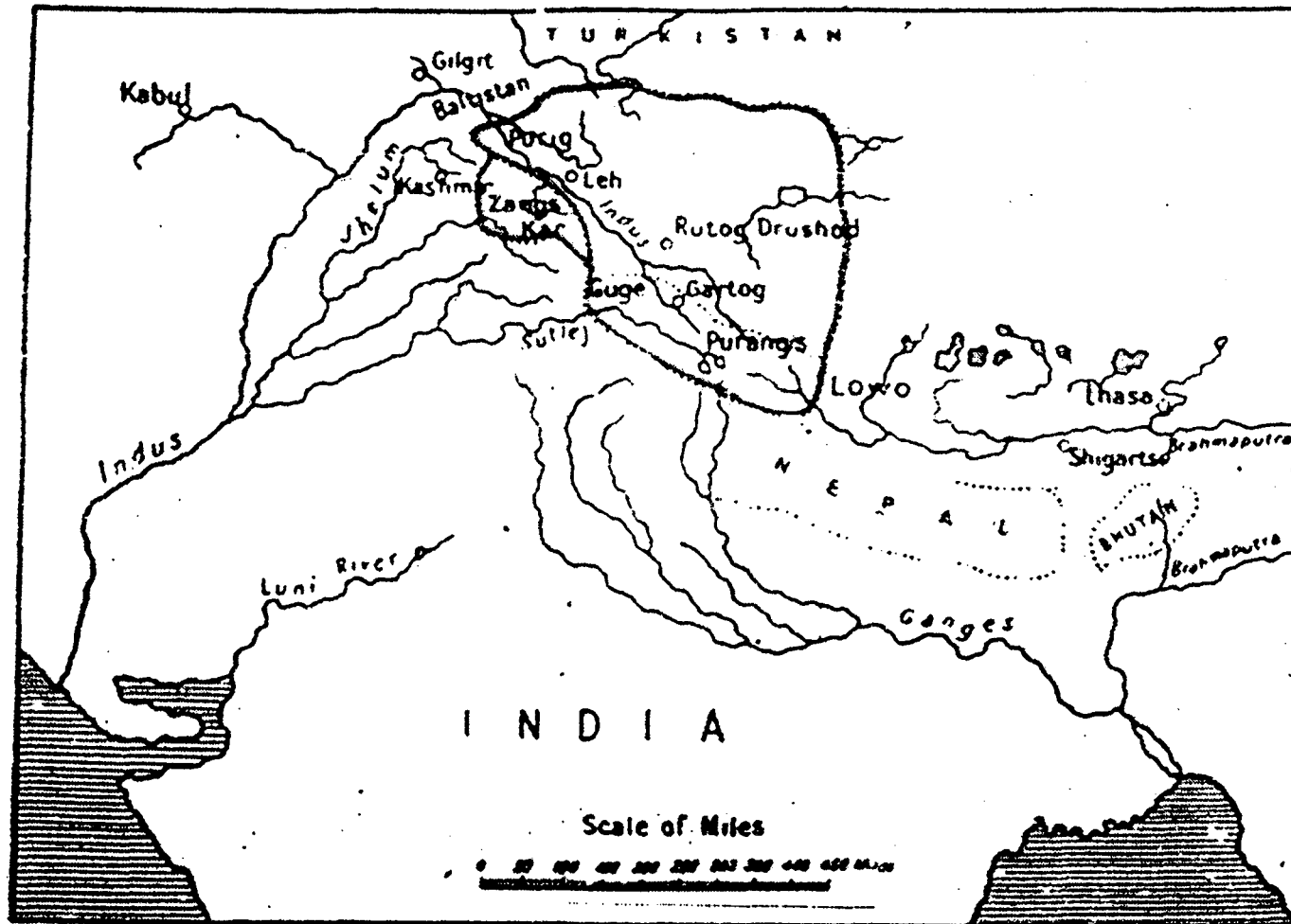
He is said to have conquered not only of West Tibet, but Ladakh to the west, and Zanskar, Spiti, and Lahul south of the Himalaya. With Purang as a base and with the prestige still associated with the name of the ancient Tibetan dynasty, he probably found it relatively easy to expand his domain in the chaotic political situation then prevailing in Ladakh and the surrounding areas.

During the rule of Kyi-de Nyimgon and his descendants over West Tibet, Ladakh, and Zanskar, the evidence appears to indicate that none of these areas was culturally oriented toward central Tibet, even though Lhasa had nominal suzerainty over them for a century or two. According to Petesch, the "earliest tangible tokens" of Tibetan influence in Ladakh are the Alchi inscriptions, dating no earlier than the eleventh or twelfth century (Petesch: 1939, 104).

The extensive kingdom conquered by Kyi-de Nyi-ma-gon did not long survive intact, for around 930, presumably on his death; it was divided among his three sons. The Ladakhi chronicles state that the eldest son, Pal-gyi-gon (Dpal-gyimgon), received Ladakh and the Rudok area; the second son, Tra-shigon (Bkra-shis-mgon), Guge and Purang; while the third son, De-tsuk-gon (Lde-gtsug-mgon), was given Zanskar, Spiti and Lahul (Francke: 1926, 94).

After this there was a succession of Kings from Palgyigon (c.930-60 A.D) to Lhachen Bhagan (c.1470-1500 A.D) who was also the founder of the second dynasty of Ladakh. The Chronicles give the names of about nineteen kings between the period of Palgyigon (c.930-60 A.D) till Lhachen Bhagan's (c.1470-1500 A.D). Around 1400 the account of the history of Ladakh becomes fuller. It is in the folklores that the

MAP-SHOWING THE EMPIRE OF KYDE-NIMAGON WITH ITS THREE DIVISIONS.



Source: - A.H. Francke, "A History of Western Tibet", (1999) Pilgrims, book - pp:63.

names of the first kings of the dynasty have been given including the kings Nyimagon and Jopal. "The first glimpse of the political history is afforded by the famous Khartoshi inscription of Uvima Kavthisa (Wima Kadphises) founded near the Khalatse bridge on the Indus; it is dated in the year 184 or 187 of an unknown era" (Petesch, 1977, 6).

Between these two periods stated above no important developments took place in between Tibet and Ladakh but mention can be made of the reign of Lhachen-grags-bhum-de (c.1400-40 A.D) during which the reformer Tshongkapa came from Tibet and introduced the new sect of Buddhism called the "Yellow Hat sect". The king not only accepted the reformers embassy but also was instrumental in building numbers of temples and images including the famous monastery of Spituk, in Leh which is the first Yellow Hat sect monastery built in Ladakh. Thus, the King acted as a harbinger of religious revivalism in the country (Francke: 1926, 78) and also of the reign of the thirteenth king in this Ladakhi dynasty, Lha-chen Ngo-trup (Lha-chen Dngos-grab, ca. 1290-1320) was notable for important religious development that must have had political connotations as well. Prior to his reign, the Buddhist monastic system in Ladakh had been closely tied to that in Guge, in whose monastic institutions Ladakhi novices were trained. Lha-chen Ngo-trap, however, initiated a system under which novices were sent to monasteries in central Tibet for religious education (Fisher: 1963, 24-25).

Throughout the 11th and 13th centuries, strong cross cultural currents flowed through the Ladakh-Western Tibet area (Thomas A. Marks: 1977, 80). After 1200 Indian cultural influence on Ladakh and Tibet rapidly declined due to the destruction of the Buddhist centres in India. This process was accelerated, by the founding in the first half of the eleventh century of the great Tibetan Buddhist centre at Toling in Guge, and monasteries in Ladakh thereafter. The chronicles and inscriptions indicate that strong cultural crosscurrents flowed through the Ladakh-West Tibet area from the eleventh to the thirteenth century. And by the 14th century entire Ladakh was under the sway of Tibetan culture and traditional relations. It was by the end of the 14th century, Muslim rule had established itself over Kashmir. During the reign of King Zainul Abidin Ladakh suffered two invasions from Kashmir. During the reign of Zainul abiding Ladakh was under the nominal sovereignty of the Kashmiris and the

Ladakhi king at that time Lotrokchen depended on Kashmiri support at that time (C.L Datta: 1973, 50).

However, after the death of Zainul in 1470 A.D., Lotrokchen was deposed and imprisoned by Lhachen Bhagan who was a prince descending from the collateral branch of the ruling family. With the deposition of Lotrokchen ended the first Ladakhi dynasty. It was Lhachen Bhagan's (c.1470-1500 A.D) who founded the second dynasty known as the Namgyal dynasty in Ladakh.

During the 14th century Ladakh was invaded by Zainul Abidin first then in September 1532 suffered a deadly Mongol onslaught from Sultan Abu Syed of Kashmir's commander Mirza Ali Haider. There were two more ill-conceived Kashmiri incursions into Ladakh. The first of these in 1553 was led by King Habib Shah and Haider Chak as a reprisal for Balti and Ladakhi raids on Kashmir. In 1562, Ghazi Shah, who had seized the Kashmiri throne from Habib Shah in 1555, sent his eldest son, Ahmad Khan, and several other generals into Ladakh with a small force (Fisher: 1963, 32). In most of the cases the foreign rulers tried to force Islam on the local population in Baltistan's case it was somewhat successful also Mirza Ali Haider forced the people of Nubra to embrace Islam but Leh proper somewhat retained its old Tibetan form of Buddhism under all these difficult circumstances.

In 1551, Mirza Mohammad Haider Douhghlat died and Kashmir was reverted into the hands of the weak ruler, the Baltis and Ladakhis threw away the Kashmiri yoke. With the disappearance of the Kashmiris from Ladakh the kingdom was united under the rule of Tashi Namgyal who ruled Ladakh from 1532 A.D The Namgyal dynasty started to rule from 1532. But it has to be noted that ever since Nyima gon ruled Ladakh till Ladakh was invaded by the Dogras the same dynasty continued (Ryabgyas Tashi: 2004, 6).

The names of the Ladakhi kings of the Namgyal dynasty are given in the chronicles but however in this study it is essential to give references of only few important Kings such as Singee Namgyal, Delegs Namgyal, Deldan namgyal big empire Shey and Tashi Namgyal Haidar Ali in Sinkiang and Tsepal Namgyal who was the last independent Ladakhi king after which Ladakh was annexed to the Dogras.

In the course of the chapter mention will be made of these kings in relation to the important political developments which took place during their tenure. Tsewang Namgyal (c.1532-60) was the first king of the is Namgyal dynasty, according the Chronicles he conquered all the country from Namrins, which is on the road from Lhasa to Ladakh twenty one marches from Ladakh to Lhasa, in the down to Purang, Guge and Kullu etc. Rhutog and Guge had to pay tributes to the King during his tenure a lot of roads were constructed in Ladakh (Francke: 1926, 105-106). After him his brother Jamyang Namgyal (c.1560-90) took up the reins of the government during his tenure the two chiefs of the Purig area did not agree Jamyang went to the assistance of the Mohammedan chief of Purig called Tsering Mailik of Chigtan. It was actually a trap laid by the Baltis to which the King fell. At the same time when the Ladakhi army had crossed the passes towards Purig the Balti forces under the Duke of Kapulu who had united all the forces of Baltistan attacked Jamyang and his army, the Ladakhis were forced to surrender and the Baltis went overran Ladakh and behaved like a fanatic by burning all the religious texts of the Buddhists and destroying many monasteries and the images of Buddha (Francke: 1926, 106).

The King was Ali Mir's prisoner and gave his daughter Gyal Khatun to Jamyang Namgyal who had to accept him as his wife it is stated by Francke that probably Ali Mirs objective was draw him quietly over to Mohammedanism (Francke: 1926, 93). The boundaries of Ladakh were largely circumsised by Ali Mir. King Jamyang was released soon and he and Gyal Kahtun had two sons the eldest was Singe Namgyal who after succeeding his father on his death rose to power and his period (c.1590-1635) is known as the "golden age" in the history of Ladakh. During his reign the Ladakhi kingdom was considerably extended. At the same time during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the rivalry between the Yellow and older Buddhist sects reinforced by the rivalry of powerful princely patrons and competing channels of trade broke into open violence that greatly weakened Tibet. The remarkable early growth of the Yellow sect had been reversed in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries with the rise to power of a new princely family who were patrons of a Red or Karmapa sect (Fisher: 1963, 34).

After the establishment of New Red monasteries near Lhasa, for a period of twenty years (1498-1518), Lhasa itself was closed to Yellow sect monks. Religious War

broke out between the Yellow and the Red sects in 1537, which resulted in eighteen Yellow monasteries forced to change allegiance (G. Tucci: 1949, 40-44). The Yellow sect lamas, found a new patron in the north the powerful Mongol chieftain, Altan who conferred the title of Dalai Lama on Sonam Gyatso, the gifted Abbot. In southern and western Tibet, however, the situation was very different. There, disorders had so weakened Tibetan authority that the price of continued trade across the borders was cession of territory.

Ladakh was also able to take advantage of the dissensions weakening Tibet in the early seventeenth century. The King Singee made war against Guge and in 1630 defeated the King of Guge and took its king as the prisoner. At the same time he also attacked Rudok and which was a dependency of Guge (C.L. Datta: 1973, 57). According to Petesch, who has highlighted the importance of the success of the Guge conquest, the conquest of Guge brought Ladakh into direct contact with Central Tibet, ruled at that time by the sde-pa gTsan-pa Karma-bstan-skyonf. Singee also invaded and conquered the key-district of Purig, which was lost by Ladakh earlier after the death of Tsewang Namgyal-I (Petesch: 1977, 65). However, because of this development the Mughals with the help of the Baltis attacked Singee's army at Kharboo, a village in Ladakh. According to the chronicles, "The Mughal soldiers were killed and complete victory was gained over the enemy" (Petesch: 1977, 110). But C.L Datta states that after Singee Namgyal conquered Purig he came in conflict with the Mughals and the Ladakhis were defeated at Kharboo. Singee is said to have renounced his claims on Purig and promised to pay a tribute to the Mughals which he never honoured.

Meanwhile in Tibet the Qosot Mongol chieftain (supporter of the Yellow hat sect) Gusri Khan, led a successful invasion of Tibet against the Kings of Tsang province in 1642. Qosot Khan that allowed him in 1642 to assume the title of King of Tibet he since he had defeated the Tsang army he assumed the title of King of Tibet and to set up the fifth Dalai Lama as the supreme religious head of the country.

While the struggle in central Tibet entered its most critical stage, Sen-ge Nam-gyal took advantage of the situation to sweep eastward, he first invaded Purang in 1641

which he conquered and then pushed immediately forward across the Mayum Pass into the Tibetan territory of Tsang (Fisher: 1963, 36).

According to C.L Datta, whose referring to Singee Namgyal in his passage states that, "When his forces were only some ten miles from Sakya monastery, they suffered defeat at the hands of the Tsang forces and withdrew to the Mayum Pass. After which A peace settlement was reached (at Si-ri-dkarmo at the banks of Chaktak-Tsangpo), which confirmed the Ladakhi King in full possession of all Tibetan territory West of the Mayum Pass (C.L Datta: 1973, 59), the boundary between Tibet and Ladakh. The whole of Ngari-skorsum, including the sacred pilgrimage sites of the Kailasa and the Mansarovara was a dependency of the Ladakhi state the border with Central Tibet ran on or about the Maryum-la, the watershed between the Sulej and the Tsangpo-Brahmaputra. Therefore, the peace negotiation recognized all of Tibet west of the Mayum Pass as part of Sen-ge Namgyas Ladakhi Empire. It was on his return from this campaign that he died on his way at Hanle (C.L. Datta: 1973, 59). He was also instrumental in the religious revivalism in Ladakh besides building many monasteries, offering expensive gifts to different monasteries in Ladakh as well as Lhasa ex, Sera, Saskya and Ghaldan monastreis in Central Tibet (Francke: 1926, 108). He also invited a very popular saint known as Stag-stan-ras-chen who is according the Chronicles is also known as the King of Siddhas (Cunninghum: 1854, 32).

Both the lama and Singee Namgyal built four great Lamaseries which were erected at Hemis, Chemre, Trashigang, now in Central Tibet proper, and Hanle (Francke: 1999, 100). A similar account has been given in the chronicles too (The Chronicles of Ladakh, 109). Thus, it is evident that during the reign of this great King with the help of Statgstangraspa 'The law of Buddha made progress' (Francke: 1926, 109).

A. H. Francke has mentioned that a mani wall with an inscription, mentioning Singee Namgyal have been discovered by him at Lingshed (Francke: 1999, 98) and according to him, the large mani walls outside Basgo, a village on the river Indus, about eight miles west of Leh, are said to have been erected by Stagstangraschen he is also said to have built the statue of Maitreya at Basgo (Petesch: 1977, 40).

Sen-ge Nam-gyal's death in 1645 put a temporary end to Ladakhi imperial ambitions. The Chronicles highlight the zenith of his political achievements when it states that, "He reigned from Bu-ran (Purang), Gu-ge (Guge), Zans-dkar (Zanskar), Spyiti (Spiti) and Bu-rig (Purig) as far as the Mar-yum (Mayum Pass) in the east. Ru-thog and the districts as far as the gold- mines were brought under his sway and La-dvags (Ladakh) spread and flourished (Francke: 1926, 110).

He was succeeded by his son Deldan Namgyal (c.1620-65) he carried on the expansionist designs of his father and his empire included Purig, Sod, the lower Shyok valley, Guge, Purang, Rudok, Spiti, Upper Kinnaur, Lahul and Zanskar (C.L. Datta: 1973, 61). Because of his invasion of Khapalu, chorbud and the lower Shyok valley there was forced Mughal intervention in Ladakh as the Kings of Skardo asked for help from their Mughal suzerain (Francke: 1926, 12), as a result of which Deldan Namgyal submitted accepted Mughal suzerainty (after the treaty between 1640-1680) had to promise to pay a tribute to Kashmir (Mughals), a Mosque was to be constructed at Leh and every encouragement to Islam was to be given in Ladakh. Deldan Namgyal was succeeded by Delek Namgyal (c.1640-1680) is the date given in the Chronicles which is doubtful because it does not fit in the chronology of the Tibetan-Ladakhi War which took place in 1681 and it is mentioned in all the sources related to the war that Delegs was the King of Ladakh at the time the war broke out in 1681. However, Petesch in his article gives the period of his reign as (c.1675 -1705) which tally's with the date of the war and therefore, in the context of this study we will accept the period given by Petesch. It was during his reign that for the first time Tibet and Ladakh got involved in a direct military conflict which was dealt a calamitous blow to Ladakh's sovereignty and the territories of Ladakh were largely reduced.

The Tibeto-Mongoloid War on Ladakh, (1681-84 A.D)

It is necessary to review the situation in the late 1680's in both Tibet and Ladakh which is necessary as it forms the background of the Tibeto-Mongoloid War which took place in 1681. In Tibet, the Great Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-82), (who had become the religious head in 1642) backed by his Mongol patrons, was engaged in

consolidating his authority (Fisher: 1963, 37). Gusri Khan had died by then but he had already conquered Tsang and the rest of Central Tibet in 1642 and after his death the Dalai Lama and his son San-rgyas-rgyam-tso were the real rulers of Tibet. According to C.L. Datta while stating in his book one of the reasons why the War took place says that, "For the creation of a powerful state, Ladakhi supremacy was certainly not acceptable to the Dalai Lama. Thus, a conflict between the two powers was bound to arise and it was not long and coming" (C.L. Datta: 1973, 61). However, this could have been one of the reasons for accelerating the differences between the two into a full fledged war but among other reasons the two main reasons which why Tibet chose to go to war against Ladakh were definitely related to the quarrel amongst the two sects Gelugpa and Brugpa (Drugkpa), and the resulting insecurity of the trade routes.

Let us first examine the nature of the religious quarrel between the two. It is with the aid of the Chronicles and the Ladakhi inscriptions we come to know that the Ladakhis were staunch supporters of the Brugpa-Sect (Red Hat Sect) and they were hostile to the Gelugpa Church (Yellow Hat Sect) of Tibet. According to the Chronicles of Ladakh, the Brugpa (Drugkpa) incarnate, who at that time held spiritual and temporal away over Bhutan, had a quarrel with Lhasa and that the Ladakhi King, loyal follower and spiritual disciple of the Brugpa (Drugkpa) sent a letter to Tibet saying that he was prepared to take up his quarrel" (Petesch: 1947, 110).

A similar account has been given by C.L Datta in his book "Ladakh and Western Himalayan Politics," where he states that, "According to Tibetan sources, the Ladakhis were persecuting the Yellow Hat sect and formenting trouble in the border district of Tsang. On the other hand the Ladakhi Chronicles assert that the Tibetans were persecuting the Red Hat sects and Lhasa was at war with the Red Hat sect who held spiritual and temporal sway over Bhutan. The Ladakhi king declared himself in favour of the Reds and took the quarrel more seriously" (C.L. Datta: 1973, 62). Therefore, it is clear that the religious quarrels between Tibet and Ladakh regarding the Red hat and the Yellow sects and the Ladakhis due to their religious affinity to the Reds who were at that time at war with the Tibetans chose to be in favour of the Reds which worsened the situation between the two and soon both Tibet and Ladakh were pitted against each other in a full scale war.

This along with the complaint of the Tibetans that the Ladakhi Kings subjects at the frontier regions began to harass the inhabitants of the Tibetan districts on the other side of the border. The Dalai Lama and the Mongol chief, Dalas Khan, were in all probability further concerned with hierarchical disputes and the border disturbances that shortened Ladakh-Tibet-Mongol trade also the religious quarrel amongst both the sects concerned above all the Dalai Lama who was the religious head of Tibet. But the resulting insecurity of the trade routes could not leave the Mongol King Dalas Khan, who was the temporal suzerain of Tibet. The result of this double religious and economic motive was a declaration of war by the Dalai Lama against Ladakh (Petesch: 1947, 173). The Dalai Lama entrusted the command of the Tibetan forces to a lama of Tashilonpo monastery called Ga-den-tshe-wang-pal-sang-po (he was the first cousin of the ruler of Tibet Dalas Khan (Petesch: 1947, 174).

According to Francke, "He accordingly turned layman, and, heading the Mongol tribe and a powerful army (of the Tibetans) he soon reached Ladakh" (Francke: 1926, 115). His campaign started with only 250 men and along with them reached the Tsangpo valley, the border was apparently unguarded and he along with his army arrived without meeting any opposition to the Kailash and Mansarovar lake from where he proceeded further in order to arrange for his army a faithful ally he reached an agreement with the Raja Kheri Singh of Bashar according to which the Tibetan government guaranteed unimpeded travel in the Naris territories which was still not conquered, and gave him trade facilities (Petesch: 1977, 72), in return the Raja of Bashar volunteered to join his small army with Ghaldan's forces. At the same time the news of the invasion reached Leh. The Prime Minister of Ladakh then Sakya-rgyam-tso along with the Commander in chief of Ladakhi forces advanced eastwards.

Before this development took place one of the leaders of Ladakh called Nono Bitadsoki advised the Ladakhi ruler to avoid a pitched battle but his appeal fell to deaf ears. The Ladakhi Commander sent a formal challenge to the Gaden, "A savage like you dare to approach in order to insult with his envy our liege lord! Well then, we fight it out, if you win, you may tie your horse to the Lion gate of the palace (of Leh) if we win, we shall tie our horses to the inscription pillar of Lhasa" (C.L. Datta: 1973, 62).

Gaden accepted the challenge with utter contempt and according to the Chronicles; he did indeed tie his horse to the lion gate after his army had won the battle and captured Leh. The stage was set for the upcoming battle. Large reinforcements were sent to Galdan's army by the Tibetan government at that time. When the first military confrontation between Tibet and Ladakh took place it resulted in the Tibetan victory and it decided the campaign in Nari-skorsum in favour of the Tibetans. After he was repulsed on the direct road Tsaparang-leh along the Indus, Galdan decided to make an entrance into Ladakh by the Rhutog way. The Ladakhi army were drawn up at Changla pass. Cunningham states that the battle took place at Byan-la (Changla Pass) and after that the Ladakhis occupied the village of Changla. "In the following year, however, they again invaded Ladak, and having again defeated the Gyalpo's troops, at Balasl-ija, they took possession of the village of Chang-la (Cunningham: 1854, 327). Galdan's forces attacked the Ladakhis who fled. However, throughout the course of the War the King Delegs Namgyal took refuge in the royal palace of Tingmosganga and left his prime minister to cope with the war. From Cunningham's narrative it is known that Galdan advanced till Sakti village in Ladakh, and took possession of the whole of Ladakh till Nyimo, on the right bank of the Indus, about twenty miles below Leh.

A similar account has been given by C.L Datta, where he states that, "After these victories the Tibetans took possession of the whole country as far as Nyimo and besieged Basgo, a large village on the right bank of the Indus, about twenty-four miles below Leh" (C.L. Datta: 1973, 62). Which is exactly what Galdan's forces did when they encamped at Basgo, laid a siege there during which both sides were involved in repeated skirmishes but it was beyond doubt that the Tibetan success had reached its high mark, and the capture of Leh was the peak of Galdan's glory. Cunningham states that the siege of Basgo lasted for a period of six months which was also the turning point of the war because it gave the Ladakhi rulers ample time to plan their next move which was asking the military help from the Mughal ruler at Kashmir. The Ladakhi King Delges Namgyal and his minister requested the help of their Mughal (in those days Kashmir was a province of the general Mughal empire) suzerain.

This statement has been confirmed by the Chronicles of Ladakh which state that, “The King of La-davags, meaning Ladakh, despatched a messenger to the Nawab of Khashul, meaning Kashmir” (Francke: 1926, 115).

However, the Chronicles do not state the reasons why the Mughals accepted to help nor do they throw light on the political implications because of which the Mughals joined the war. It jumps straight to the issue of how the Mughals intervened. According to Petesch, “While Galdan spent his time and wearied his army against Basgo (to conquer the fortress of Basgo) the King and the minister had not been idle. From their refuge in Tingmosgang they sought help from Ibrahim Khan, Moghul Subadar of Kashmir from 1678-1685” (Petesch: 1947, 182).

The important reasons as to why the Moghuls agreed to help the Ladakhis lied in their own interests, and it was due to economic and political insecurities that Ibrahim Khan took up the Ladakhi cause. C.L Datta asserts that, “The Mughal perceived that the Tibetan possession of Ladakh will adversely affect the flow of shawl wool into Kashmir, which was deeply connected with the economy of the valley”. He further states that, “In addition, The Mughals were also bound in honour to protect heir vassal from falling into the hands of the clutches of a power, which on the religious pane was fundamentally hostile to them” (C.L. Datta: 1973, 63). Petesch in his article supports Datta’s claim when he states that, “Besides being bound in honour to help their vassal, the Mughal could not allow the Ladakhi kingdom to be superseded by a far more powerful neighbour, absolutely new to that portion of the Himalayas and fundamentally hostile to them for religious motives. Another reason which was the strongest reason of all was the fear of the control by this new power of the wool trade that could spell the doom for the shawl industry of Kashmir, on which so much of that Kashmir’s welfare depended.

Thus, it is evident that the Mughal ruler felt bound to help his vassal in order to control the flow of shawl wool to any other country, as he was apprehensive of the effect that a Tibetan conquest of Ladakh would have on the lucrative Kashmiri shawl-wool trade, and it did not want the Ladakhi kingdom to secede the Tibetans.

Thus, the request of the Ladakhi king was granted by the Mughals and an expeditionary force was formed in Kashmir; the command was given to Fidai Khan who was the son of Ibrahim Khan. The Mughal forces entered Ladakh through the Zo-jila pass, on the Srinagar- Leh route, crossed the Indus at village Khaltse in Ladakh where they were joined by the Balti forces of the ruler of Skardo, and by the Lower Ladakhis recruited from the districts still not overrun by the Tibetans (Petesch: 1947, 184).

These forces reached Ladakh and the battle took place east or southeast of Basgo. Cunningham states that, "The Musulmans pursued them as far as Pitak, meaning Spituk village on the Indus 4 miles southwest of Leh, and having taken that fort, they put the garrison to death, whilst the main body of the Sokpos, refers to the Tibeto-Mongolid troops, took refuge in the fort of Le, Leh, the capital of Ladakh. In other words, Fidai Khan and his forces put to fight the army of the Qalmaqs (The Tibeto-Mongolid forces) and had subdued Tibet (Francke: 1926, 115). The Tibetans were routed and their rout continued until they reached Dpe-thub, which again means the Spituk village. The Mongol army in its flight eventually reached Bkra-sis-sgan, means Tashigang". The Moghul commander, Fidai Khan, then left the two original adversaries to settle their own problems, stipulating the Tibetans that Ladakh proper be left inviolate in the hands of Ladakh's royal family. Before retiring, however, he exacted a number of concessions from the Ladakh authorities as well (Fisher: 1963, 3).

Both Fisher and C.L Datta agree that Ibrahim Khan left Ladakh after he wrested some concessions from the Ladakhi ruler. But Petesch, in his article has depicted that "on his way back from Kashmir Fidai Khan settled his account with the Ladakhi King for the help given by the Mughals" (Petesch: 1947, 192). This, according to him, took place after the Peace Treaty took place between the Tibetans and the Ladakhis (Petesch: 1947, 178). In his article on the 1681-83 war, Petesch inadvertently left the impression that Ladakh's agreement with the Moghuls followed the treaty with the Tibetans. A careful reading of the chronology indicates that the Ladakh-Moghul Treaty came first. Fidai Khan's engagement with the LadaHiis preceded his withdrawal to Kashmir in 1683, while the Ladait-Tibet Treaty was not concluded until 1684.

However, in this case the account of Fisher, Rose, Robert, A. Huttenback and C.L. Datta seem to be more apt as it is validated by the chronology of events given by A.H. Francke in his book "A History of Western Tibet" where he has given clearly the terms of the agreement accepted between the Kashmir and Ladakh after which "The final Peace Treaty" was signed between the Tibetans and the Ladakhis in 1684. The following statement manifests clearly the above statement made, it says, "How glad was Delegs when the Nawab with his army had left the country! He had just gone when the Tibeto-Mongolians, who had been waiting at the Pangong lake, came out of their stronghold and dictated to Delegs what they wished him to agree to" (Francke: 1999, 112).

However, what is more important to discuss here is the terms of the concessions which the Mughal ruler got from the Ladakhis which was followed by The September 1842 'Peace Treaty' between Tibet and Ladakh which defined the relations between Tibet and Ladakh.

First I have discussed the concessions which the Mughals from the Ladakhis got after the war was over. Ladakh was already a feudatory of the Mughal empire since 1664 in addition to that The Mughal suzerainty was once more affirmed and the tribute to the governor of Kashmir was payable every second year the terms of which was decided in detail. The King Delegs Namgyal, under the Mohammedan title of Aqabat Mahmud Khan accepted Islam (Francke: 1999, 109; Moorcraft: 1841, 192; Petesch: 1947, 192). He was to strike coins on the name of the emperor, to keep in good repair the Mosque at Leh existing since 1666/7 and had to send his youngest son Jigsbal Namgyal as a hostage to Kashmir (Cunningham: 1854, 328; C.L. Datta: 1973, 64). According to Moorcraft, "The son and the successor of the Raja reverted to the national creed, and the apostasy was overlooked at Delhi in consideration of the encouragement given to Mohammedanism in the country, and a small annual present or tribute paid to the governor of Kashmir as the representative of the emperor" (Moorcraft: 1841, 328).

Besides this important trade concessions were made to the Mughals which was of utmost importance for the governors of Kashmir and for the Kashmiris who were involved in shawl manufacturing and exporting for which the shawl wool of The

Tibetan plains of Changthang and that of Ladakh provided raw material for their famous and lucrative pashmina, which is the raw wool; pashmina is the cloth woven from pashm. It is basically the unprocessed wool which comes from the body of the Pashmina goat shawl. According to the agreement, the whole of the wool export and transit trade of Ladakh was made a strict monopoly of Kashmir (Petesch: 1947, 192). This gave Kashmir a monopoly of the purchase of pashm, as well as other kinds of wool. Moorcraft who resided in Leh for two years from September 1820-1822 says that, in his time “about eight hundred loads of wool are annually exported to Kashmir, to which country, by ancient custom and engagements the export is exclusively confined, and all attempts to convey it to other countries are punished by confiscation” (Moorcraft: 1841, 347).

Also four Kashmiri merchants were to be settled in Spituk village at Leh to procure Pashm from the pasture lands of western-Tibet and bring it to Ladakh; no other Kashmiri was admitted to the pashm-producing area (Janet Rizvi: 1999 a, 320). Thus, the pashm trade became an area of mutual dependence between Ladakh and Kashmir, from which outsiders were rigorously excluded. The trade monopoly of the Kashmiris of the Ladakhi trade of shawl wool continued well into the centuries. Thirty years after the Treaty of Tingmosgang was signed the Jesuit priest Ippolito Desideri visit (he visited Ladakh in 1715) gives evidence to the fact that, the wool trade between Kashmir and Ladakh was still in practise strictly according to the Treaty of Tingmosgang 1684 in account he states that, “the wool produced in Ladakh is ‘very white, very long and extraordinarily fine’; the trade in this material he says, ‘is a source of great riches to the Kashmir’. It involved a large number of agents’ kept by the Kashmiri merchants in Ladakh to collect the pashm, paying the primary producers ‘a most miserable price’; as well as thousands of men who in the summer months go from Kashmir to Leh and carry back infinite number of loads of wool.’ This account given by Desideri himself but it is quoted from (Janet Rizvi: 1999 a, 321).

The Peace Treaty of Tingmosgang (1684 A.D)

This, the mortgage to Kashmir of Ladakh's only product of value, was confirmed by the Treaty Tingmosgang which settled future relations between Ladakh and Tibet. However, before the treaty took place during the preliminary rounds of peace the Tibetan government in order to soothe the wounded feelings of the Ladakhis sent a diplomatic agent who had full authority and who was also clergy men of the very sect to which the king belonged (and for which the war had begun) a high Drugkpa diginitary called 'Mipam-dbanpo' to negotiate for peace. According to the Chronicles of Ladakh, "The King of La-dvags had heard that the patron lama of his forefathers had arrived. It further sates that the result of their deliberations were that as in the beginning when King Skyid-de-Nimagon's gave a separate kingdom to each of its sons, the same delimitations should be maintained. They also agreed upon a important point that since Tibet was Buddhist country and the Kashmiri was a non-Buddhist state and that a non- Buddhist and a Buddhist state cannot prosper together as they have nothing in common and are hostile to each other, and according to the Tibetans, if at the frontier The Ladakh does not prosper then, Tibet also cannot enjoy prosperity" (Francke: 1926, 115). The King of Ladakh was hardly in a position to resist the requests of his spiritual superior. The memories of the war were considered a thing of the past and King Delegs was to ensure that in future he will keep a watch at the frontier of the Buddhists and Non Buddhists peoples, and must not allow an army from India to attack Tibet (Francke: 1926, 116).

It becomes important to highlight the role of the Mipa-dbanpo' because the final treaty of peace between Ladakh and Tibet was his work also he in a way united the religious sentiments of Ladakh and Tibet as he explained to the Ladakhis the futility of the religious quarrels as both were Buddhist states and that a Buddhist state (Ladakh) could not prosper religiously under a Muslim state (Kashmir) and patched up the quarrel. Many authors like Petesch term it as 'the diplomatic victory of the Tibetans' but eventually, it led to the Peace treaty between the two which defined the relations between Tibet and Ladakh.

The 1684 Peace Treaty is also known as the 'Treaty of Tingmosgang,' which took place at Tingmosgang village. The details of the treaty have been given in the Appendix I and II.

However, I will briefly state the final results of the treaty signed. The boundaries of Tibet and Ladakh were fixed. Western Tibet i.e territory to the West of Mayum Pass which was conquered by Ladakh in 1640 was ceded to Tibet (C.L Datta: 1973, 64). The boundary of Tibet was fixed at Lhari stream at Demchog. The country of Nari-skorsum was given to the Drukpa lama Miphang-wangpo and in return of that The Dalai Lama was to give to Ladakh king three other districts in Central Tibet. One of the provisions of the treaty of 1684 Treaty lay down that the territory at Minsar near Lake Mansarovar was to be retained by the King of Ladakh.

Along with this there were some commercial stipulations; Ladakh was to act as an intermediary in the goat wool trade between Changthang, Northern Tibet and Kashmir, through the offices of the four Kasahmiri merchants settled at Spituk, a village in Ladakh. For the consumption of Ladakh itself the, wool produce of Ruthog was fixed, and only the court merchants had the right to go there (Petesch: 1947, 191). Also most important was that Ladakh and Tibet agreed to exchange some trade missions on the basis of reciprocity; these missions were commercial and religious in nature. The mission from Lhasa would come with Dalai Lamas personal trader and would bring along with him two hundred loads of Brick Tea for sale in Ladakh annually. This mission was known as the 'Chapa's,' meaning 'Tea Merchants,' or Zhungs-Tong and in return of the 'Chapa' Mission the Ladakhi King in return was to send the "Lopchak" mission which means "yearly salaam" on a biennial basis (Ramsay: 1890, 85-86). Alastair Lamb in his book gives a clear account of the nature of the state trade missions; he states that, "Two missions of special importance linked Leh the capital of Ladakh to Lhasa. The Lapchak Mission went from Leh to Lhasa once every three years. Its object was in part trade and in part diplomacy (Alastair Lamb: 1960, 45-46).

It is also important to take note of the fact that both the state trade missions claimed from each other the matching privilege of free porter age ('Begar' as it is called in India and *Ula* in Tibetan) also known as "free cooliage." The mention of this privilege

has been mentioned in C.L. Datta's book wherein he states that, "The Lapchak mission while in Tibet enjoyed *Ula* and other facilities which the Chapa mission got in Ladakh. These two missions were very lucrative for both Tibetans and Ladakhi traders and monasteries and from the time they were established till about the middle of the 20th century these two missions not only formed the basis of commercial relationship between Leh and Lhasa but cemented the religious relations of both the countries.

According to Petesch, "It is rather surprising, if we think of the upheavals in Tibet during the following century that this suzerainty continued to be exercised and the tribute to be paid nearly till the extinction of the Ladakhi kingdom in 1842" (Petesch: 1947, 191).

However, in practise According to Abdul Ghani Sheikh it continued even after the late 1940's. According to the Scholar, It was Khwaja Wahid Radhu, an Arghon who was from the famous Radhu trading family of Ladakh, who was the last one to conduct the Lapchak mission to Lhasa in 1940s after which it stopped. The Radhu family still exists there in Ladakh.

However, these state trade missions were the clear manifestations of the close relationship existing between Tibet and Ladakh. When Moorcraft during his stay in Ladakh (September 1820-1822.) negotiated a commercial treaty with Ladakh, the King delayed by saying that the advice of the governor of Nari-Skorsum at Gartok and of the Lhasa government was necessary before concluding the treaty. This is the answer the Ladakhi minister gave, "The Khalun stated it was necessary, at least, as an act of courtesy towards the authorities of courtesy towards the authorities of Gardokh, who were the ancient friends and connexions of Ladakh, to communicate with them before coming to any decision" (Moorcraft: 1841, 352).

This clearly shows the permanence and imminence of the commercial relations between Tibet and Ladakh which was cemented after the relations between the two change for the better post the 'Treaty of Peace' of 1684.' However, going back to the terms of the treaty it is important to mention what other parties got as concessions that

had helped Galdan in his initial victory over Ladakh and added further to the Ladakhi kingdoms territorial losses.

A corollary of the peace treaty was that Bashahr got the prize for his effective support to Galdan, in the form of the cession by Ladakh of Upper Kinnaur, which formed the part of Bashahr state from then on. And another cession was made to Raja Bidhi Singh of Kulu (reigned 1672-88) who gave help to the Mughals; Upper Lahul was rewarded to the King which till today remains a part of Kullu. Purig and other principalities conquered by Ladakh at the time of Deldan Namgyal reign were restored to their original rulers.

At the close of the war and after conclusion of the peace treaty, the party that suffered the fate of all countries was Ladakh. It barely escaped political extinction at the hands of the Tibeto-Mongolid army which was thwarted because of the assistance rendered to them by the Mughals without which the kingdom could not have survived. Ladakh was crushed under the impact of the two mighty neighbours, and had to pay for the expenses of both. It was a win situation for the Mughals whose suzerainty on Ladakh was reaffirmed. Ladakh had accepted Mughal suzerainty in 1664. And most importantly the Mughals were successful in monopolising the shawl wool trade of Ladakh to their advantage. The main motives of the Mughals in assisting the Ladakhis during the war was political but more importantly, it was economical which prepared the Mughals to fight for the Ladakhis. Petesch has very precisely, summed up the motives of the Mughals by stating that, "From the Mughal point of view it was a mere secondary operation of a local character, an intervention in order to save from a potential enemy the glacis of the Kashmiri fortress; it bore thus an essentially defensive character, and the motives were political and also, in a high degree, economic" (Petesch: 1947, 193). Besides, ending the three cornered conflict between Ladakh, Tibet, and the Mughals.

The Significance of the Treaty of Tingmosgang (1684)

The importance of the 'Peace treaty of Tingmosgang' lies in the fact that for the first time, before 1904, in history Tibet and Ladakh were involved in a direct military confrontation and the peace treaty defined the relations of the two states for good. The

signing of the Treaty between Tibet and Ladakh points to the fact that the religious aspects played a significant role in developing close relations between Tibet and Ladakh. This statement can be applied in the context of the Lama Mipangdanpo due to whose efforts the Peace Treaty was signed between Tibet and Ladakh.

Although, the War directed a calamitous blow to Ladakh, as it had to do away with many of its territories in Western Tibet which was ceased by the Tibetans and this largely reduced its dominions. But despite of that the treaty did consolidate Ladakh's position as a trading state because it attained the provisions of governing trade. The Ladakhi merchants received exclusive rights to the wool produced in the Rudok district of West Tibet. It is beyond doubt that although the Ladakhis, although ostensibly on the winning side, paid for their victory with some loss of territory. The treaty also cemented the trade relations between Ladakh and Tibet as it was after this treaty that the two state trade missions 'Lopchak' and 'Chapa' were exchanged between Tibet and Ladakh on the basis of reciprocity which continued to be in practise till the 1940's and was an important landmark or a high point in the relations between Tibet and Ladakh. It continued until the Communist China took over Tibet in the early 1960's.

The 1684 treaty is another of the mileposts in Ladakhi-Tibetan history and it has provoked controversy in Sino-Indian relations specially after the Sino-Indian 1962 war in Aksai Chin area of Ladakh related to the border issues as the Chinese have declined to identify the legitimacy of any of the Ladakh-Tibet border agreements, which were made in the 1684 treaty they have attempted to cast doubts on the very existence of the treaty. Whereas, on the other hand in India, the government holds that the Treaty of 1684 which defined the ancient boundaries of Tibet and Ladakh is legitimate and they hold the historical veracity and authenticity of the treaty. No matter what the political implications of the treaty are post 1951 but the treaty was of great significance for both Ladakh and Tibet as it improved their relations and after this treaty the boundaries between them was demarcated clearly, the same boundary was in effect for a long period and there were no further disputes regarding them till the 1950's. After the signing of this treaty, Ladakh and Tibet continued to foster good and cordial religious, political and commercial relations. Although, Ladakh never recovered from the calamitous blow it received after the war ended which remained

till its extinction as an independent state which came into effect after the invasion of Dogras of Jammu in 1842.

Post 1684 treaty, Ladakhi state was in a troubled position of a weak state endured by the two powerful neighbours. After Delegs number there was a succession of weak kings the last king of Ladakh before the Dogra invasion was Tsepal Namgyal, during whose tenure, foreign invasions became very frequent and Ladakh became an easy prey to the conquerors. The king could not do much for the improvement of the state of affairs in Ladakh which was already deteriorating. It is important to discuss the developments taking places around Tibet and Ladakh which influenced the political developments in both the states. As far as Tibet and China were concerned in the first half of the 18th century, there existed a persistent struggle between China and Dsungars, Mongols of the Ili district (in eastern Turkestan), for taking over Tibet. Eventually, in 1720 the Chinese defeated the Dsungars drove them out of Tibet and established a Chinese protectorate over Tibet. After this development had taken place the Chinese took an increasing interest in Ladakh because the latter use to give intelligence about the developments in Dsungar movements in Turkestan to the Chinese through the trading caravans which came to Ladakh and went back to Turkestan. But after the Dsungars were finally trampled by the Ming the Manchus the Chinese had no interests in the affairs of Ladakh. Throughout the eighteenth century, Ladakh was able to maintain its precarious status as an autonomous state owing nominal political allegiance to Kashmir and was enjoying commercial and religious relations with Tibet.

The Sikh and Dogra Acquisition of Ladakh (1819-1842)

In the opening years of the 19th century, the Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh rose to power in Punjab had already conquered Lahore in 1799 and started to expand his conquest to the Hill states in India in which succeeded to a large extent. In the year 1812 Ranjit Singh turned towards Jammu after the suppressing the uprisings in 1809 and 1810 which was instigated against the Sikhs by the bandit chief of Jammu such as Mian Dedo. The Sikhs successfully conquered Jammu in 1808 (C.L. Datta: 1973, 80-81). In 1819, the Sikhs conquered Kashmir soon after which without more ado, Ranjit Singh

sent his envoys to Ladakh and demanded the tribute and customary presents which the King of Ladakh paid earlier to the rulers of Kashmir i.e the Afghans, Ladakh had continued to pay tributes to the Durranis since A.D 1752s and the Mughals. The Gyalpo, therefore, from then onwards paid the tribute to the Maharaja.

In the meantime, Gulab Singh, who was a direct descendant of the Hindu Raja Dhoru Deu who first established the Dogra family as rulers of Jammu, joined hands with the Sikhs. Although he was a staunch opponent of the Sikhs who had invaded his country he realised the futility of fighting them at that moment and thought that it was realistic to detect that just for the moment the Sikhs could not be avoided therefore, he decided to join the services of Ranjit Singh and thus he became a feudatory of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (Robert.A.Huttenbac: 1961, 12).

Ghulab Singh soon proved himself as a loyal and obedient subject to his King for which Raja Ranjit Singh rewarded him generously, he got a *Jagir* of his own, soon he had an army of his own and after he conquered Kishtawar and took over Rajouri for his King Ranjit Singh, he was made the hereditary Raja of Jammu and he got a sum of three lakhs as allowance (Huttenback: 1961, 478). Soon Ghulab Singh was joined by his brothers Dhyana and Suchet Singh who came to Lahore. And together the 'Dogra brothers' with the Sikh army conquered and accomplished a lot. Ranjit Singh gave to both Dhyana and Suchet Singh the jagirs of Bhimbar, Kussal, Ram Nagar and Samba (C.E. Bate: 1873, 123). Ghulab Singh was in command of the Jammu Hills and Kishtawar.

At the same time there was another power, which was expanding rapidly throughout India, this was the British East India Company which had initially come to India for the purpose of trading but soon it carved out an empire for itself. The frontiers of the company had extended up to the banks of Jamuna in the north and westward for about 200 miles, In 1814 there was a Anglo-Nepalese War, The Gurkhas at that time possessed all the Hill States between Nepal and Sutej but after their defeat at the hands of the Britishers and by the Treaty of Sanguli (1816) (C.U Aitchison: 1892, 135-136) the Gurkhas ceded to the Company all the territories between the river Sutej and Kali including Kumaon, Garhwal and Bashar the last was of commercial

advantage to the Britishers and it had also made her boundary with the Lahore durbar at the Sutlej.

The Company kept a close watch at the movements of the Ghulab Singh for they were aware of their expansion and they knew well that after the death of Ranjit Singh the Sikh empire would collapse and they feared Russian or Afghan incursions as Sikh state acted as a 'buffer state'. The Company had already checked the eastward advances of the Sikhs in the plains after signing of the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809 (Huttenback: 1961, 479). However, in case of Ladakh and Western Tibet the interests, of both the Sikhs and the East India Company were primarily restricted chiefly to the commercial potentialities in these areas along with some political motives. This was an important factor and needs to be highlighted here as this led to increased British interest and activities in these areas.

The major source of the wool called 'pashm' or 'pashmina' which is the fleece of the Pashmina sheep of high value and is a raw material for making shawls which were found mainly in "Changthang plains" in Western Tibet and in some parts of Ladakh, the wool flowed to Kashmir via Ladakh from Changthang and Rupshu district in Ladakh. And, thus, both the Sikhs and the Britishers wanted to lay hands on the lucrative trade in shawl wool and divert the flow of shawl wool into their own spheres. These objectives led to the subsequent invasion of Ladakh and Western Tibet by the Dogras later in 1842 and also led to the increase of British interests in Ladakh which has been discussed later in the chapter.

Dogra expansion in Ladakh

This whole operation was led by the able Dogra general of Raja Gulab Singh, called Wazir Zorawar Singh Kahularia with the sanction of Maharaja Ranjit Singh along with his infantrymen.

Before stating the course of events, it is essential to underline the main objectives as to why the invasion took place. As already mentioned above one of the main objectives was to acquire the lucrative wool trade along with that Zorawar Singh

wanted to divert the flow of shawl wool from Ladakh via Kistawar (which was already in their possession by then and which commanded two of the roads into Ladakh, Kistawar borders not only Kashmir and also Zaskar in Ladakh) to Jammu (C.L. Datta: 1973, 93). Another reason was that Gulab Singh wanted to strengthen his means of seizing Kashmir itself and encircle it, for that he thought that holding of Ladakh was essential. Another reason which is the expansion of his principalities cannot be ruled out.

Therefore, with these objectives in mind Wazir Zorawar Singh on behalf of his Raja Ranjit Singh, and his feudatory Gulab Singh attacked Ladakh in July 1834 with 5,000 infantrymen started from Kistawar over the Bhot Khol pass into Purig, initially there was no resistance as the Ladakhis were shell shocked and did not know how to react. According to Basti Rams account, he was one of the principal officers of the Dogra expedition and one of the early Wazirs of Leh. According to Cunningham, his governorship period at Leh lasted from 1847-1861 A.D. His account on the Dogra war is the earliest ever written and it was dictated to Cunningham probably in 1847 as it is given in *The Minor chronicles*, which is in the *antiquities of Indian Tibet* (Francke: 1926, 257-263).

The chief Dogra officers who led the campaign were; Mian Dingh, Mehta Basti Ram, Mirzul Rasul Beg, Rana Zalim Singh, Singhe Mankotia, Mian Tuta, Sirdar Uttam Singh, Wazir Khojah Bhunjah. At Suru valley on 16th August 1834 the Dogras were opposed by the Boti leader Mangal with his army of 5,000 men (Cunningham: 1854, 333; Francke: 1926, 258), but eventually the Dogras routed Mangal and his army at Sanku. After which the Dogras advanced to Suru they not only occupied it but also built a small fort there and occupied it for a month (Francke: 1926, 258). Here Basti Rams account corresponds with that of Alexander Cunningham's. The farmers at Suru placed themselves under Dogra protection. Zorawar imposed taxes of four rupees each on the house and stationed small pickets at different places in order to keep the people in control (Francke: 1926, 251).

Soon after this the Dogras besieged Langkartse and Kartse and they advanced towards Sod and Pashkyum (C.L. Datta: 1973, 107; Francke: 1999: 140). Meanwhile, the news of the Dogra invasion had reached the ears of the Ladakhi King Tsepel Namgyal

he appointed the Minister of Tog as the Commander of his forces and a pitched battle was fought at Pashkyum between the two where the to the disadvantage of the Ladakhis the minister of Tog was killed and they suffered a disastrous blow, the chief of Pashkyum fled to the fort of Sod which was soon captured by Basti Ram with his five hundred men and a large number of Ladakhis both from Pashkyum and Sod were made prisoners. At the time when Zorawar had conquered Suru and Dras, and had advanced into the valley of Paskyum in Ladakh somewhere, towards the end of the year 1834, Dr. Henderson reached Leh, the capital of Ladakh. The Gyalpo or the King as it is called by the Ladakhis offered Ladakh's allegiance to the British government in order to sought for British protection and ward off the Dogra invasion. The draft of the original tender of allegiance which was forwarded by Moorcroft was shown to him.⁴

Since Henderson was not in a position to comply with Gyalpos request as a result of which he was detained in Ladakh by the King. Zorawar Singh on the other hand suspected that the British were supporting the Ladakhis and for the moment stopped further conquests reported the matter to Ghulab Singh and waited for instructions (Cunningham: 1854, 11). Ranjit Singh wrote to the political agent at Ludhiana to find out about these developments the British assured the Maharaja that "they were not of the slightest idea of interfering with Ranjit's plans of extending his conquests northwards" (B.C Hugel: 1985, 101-102).

After this, Henderson was allowed to depart and Zorawar was to carry on with his plans. In the meantime winter had set in, Zorawar Singh initiated to negotiate a peace settlement. He proposed to the Ladakhis that if they paid Rs 15,000, then the Dogras would leave and go back to their own country (C.L. Datta: 1973, 109; Francke: 1999, 142). The Ladakhi leaders who had reached Mulbe by then initially approved of the proposal but it was the King Tsepal's queen 'Zi-Zi' who discouraged the Ladakhis

⁴ In 1821, a tender of allegiance was made to the soon after the company's official on behalf of the English merchants had signed a commercial engagement with the Gyalpo, the Prime Minister and other authorities of Ladakh which took place in May 1821. But the allegiance had been declined by Moorcraft's superiors at Calcutta to whom he forwarded the memorial and he was given further instructions not to unlawfully take part in the political arrangements. William Moorcroft, was in Leh in 1820-21 and negotiated a trade pact acceptable to Ladakh, but the Company officials in Calcutta rejected it. This pact was meant to form the basis for a formal treaty which would have brought Ladakh into the British sphere and led to a serious British-Sikh dispute something Calcutta wished to avoid at that time.

and prohibited the payment of the sum, she was of the opinion that instead the Ladakhi ministers should 'go and get the Wazir's head or loose their own' (Francke: 1926, 128).

This led to renewed strenuous military activity, the King along with his Prime Minister and other important officials gathered an army of about 20,000 men and reached Mulbhe (Cunningham: 1854, 335; Francke: 1926, 144). Moreover, the Dogra envoys that had gone to open negotiations were killed and many made prisoners (Francke: 1926, 259).

In the meantime, Zorawar had retreated to Langkartse. In April 1835 the Ladakhi army under their leader advanced to Langkartse. Dogras delivered an attack on the Ladakhis and the whole Ladakhi force was routed. Some Ladakhis fled and many were taken as prisoners. Eventually, the King of Ladakh and Zorawar Singh met at Basgo, a small town situated at the right bank of the Indus, about 20 miles from Leh. The Gyalpo had sued for peace and it was finally arranged that the Gyalpo would pay an indemnity of 50,000 Rs and an annual tribute of Rs 37,000, the first sum was to be paid at once and the rest were to be paid in installments (Huttenbak: 1961, 280; Francke: 1926, 260) in return of that Zorawar restored the whole kingdom of Ladakh to The king or Gyalpo Tsepel namgyal and reinstalled him on the throne as a 'puppet ruler' after this development the conquest of Ladakh seemed to have been successfully commenced. But even after this Zorawar Singh faced the difficult task of suppressing revolts every now and then.

In one of the instances the chief of Sod revolted by recapturing his fort and killing the Dogra garrison which was installed there (Francke: 1926, 260). Zorawar soon appeared at the Sod and quelled the rebellion (C.L. Datta: 1973, 112). He soon discovered that the rebellion was instigated by Mihan Singh who was the Sikh Governor of Kashmir because he was jealous of the Dogras and was concerned over the diversion of the shawl wool from Ladakh to Jammu and to Punjab via Kistawar which led to the decay of the Kashmir wool industry and supply (Huttenback: 1961, 47). Mihan Singh again engineered a revolt against the Dogras when Zorawar was in Jammu. On the advice of Mihan Singh the Ladakhi King imprisoned and tortured Munshi Daya Ram who was the Dogra representative at Leh. The King also closed all

trade routes. On hearing this Zorawar took a direct route via Zaskar and reached Leh. The Gyalpo again sought the help of the British which the latter declined.⁵

On his return to Leh, Zorawar demanded the unpaid balance of Rs 13,000 which the King had agreed to pay as an indemnity. Tsepal namgyal was deposed and replaced by Moru-pa- Tadsil or 'Lumbu' as he was called (Francke: 1926, 262) as the new puppet ruler of Leh who was to be under the Ghulab Singh government. The heir apparent of Ladakh Prince Chogs-prul escaped to the British protected state of Basahar. Zorawar constructed a fort at Leh, made Dalel Singh the incharge and left for Jammu along with Moru-pa- Tadsil's son (Ngorub-Standzin) and several other Ladakhi authorities who were made prisoners (Huttenback: 1961, 481).

Soon Moru-pa also rebelled and won over to his side influential men of Purig and Kargil against the Dogras. At the same time the people of Purig also rose in revolt under their leader Sukhamir and they murdered the whole Dogra garrison at Purig (Francke: 1926, 252). Morupa had also killed the Dogra Thanadar at Balde, in the Dras-Kargil region. On hearing this news Raja Ghulab Singh in 1836 sent an infantry force under Zorawar Singh to avenge the insult. The infantry of Zorawar Singh reached the country of Balde in September 1837 the Dogras attacked the fort of Chatargarh recaptured it, left a garrison there and marched to Zaskar where everything was again restored to normalcy (S.S. Charak: 1977, 209). The revolt in Paddar, a village in Zaskar, was headed by Kahlon Rahim Khan of Kargil who killed the Dogras at Paddar (C.L. Datta: 1973, 115).

The Dogras also annexed Paddar, built a fort there known as 'Gulabgarh' garrisoned it and marched towards Leh. Sukhamir was punished for instigating the revolt his hand and tongue were cut off (Francke: 1926, 247; M.L.A. Gompertz: 1928, 184). Zorawar then sent Raj Singh and Mian Tota along with 1,000 men towards Leh Morup Tadsil on hearing this news was so frightened that he fled to Spiti but was captured soon at Tabo village in Spiti, taken back to Leh and deposed by the Dogras (Cunningham: 1854, 334). The old King Tsepal Namgyal was reinstated on the throne by Zorawar he was to pay Rs, 23,000 as a tribute along with the expenses of the troop's occupation.

⁵ Foreign Political Consultations, Dec 20, 1837, No. 8. Letter of Hay to the Raja of Ladakh.

Zorawar had returned to Jammu again but again in 1839 on discovering that Moru Tadsa was plotting against King Tsepal along with the Ladakhi nobles, the Kahlons and Ahmad Shah of Baltistan (Cunningham: 1854, 344-45; Francke: 1999, 151-52; Francke: 1926, 252-53). Zorawar on his return reinstated the old Gyalpo Tsepal Namgyal to the throne. This was the last Dogra campaign into Ladakh, which was annexed to Jammu Raj. King Tsepal was pensioned off and was allowed to retain the nominal title and his royal palace (C.L. Datta: 1973, 116-117).

Eventually, Ladakh resistance broke down before the Dogras who were much superior in military techniques and armaments than the Ladakhis who had no standing armies or adequate weaponry. Zorawar reconciled the Ladakhis to their new secondary status and made them co-partners in further Dogra conquests of Baltistan and Western Tibet. From 1842 till 1947, when India gained independence, Ladakh remained under the Dogras.

Zorawar's conquest of Baltistan

Baltistan which is often called as 'The Little Tibet' is situated in the Indus valley west of Ladakh joined by the valley of Shayok and the valley of Shigar combines with united valley of Skardu (Drew: 1875, 360).

This mountainous country was an ancient kingdom with an area of about 12,000 sq miles (G.T Vigne: 1842, 244). Baltistan comprised of small principalities under the hereditary chieftans but they owed their allegiance to Ahmad Shah the powerful ruler of Skardu. During the 1820's and 30's of the 19th century when the Dogras were strengthening their power in Ladakh the principalities of Baltistan kept quarrelling amongst themselves and at times with Ladakh. After the Sikh occupation of Kashmir in 1819 the Ahmad Shah feared the Sikh invasion in order to secure British protection he tried to please the British by sending them gifts etc and also sent a formal request asking for British protection which was denied by the Britishers as the English were still ceded to their policy of non intervention specially where their interests were not involved.

Zorawar had thought about conquering Baltistan much earlier but delayed because he was apprehensive of active hostility of the Sikh Nizam of Kashmir Mihan Singh. The occasional visits by C.M Wade, Dr Falconer, and G.T Vigne an English traveller who visited Baltistan in the late 1830's was also feared by the Dogras. On Vigne's arrival Ahmad Shah had sought to interest the English in his claims over some possessions in Purig and Kashmir through Vigne but although the Britishers were most willing to foster friendly relations but the Governor general in his letter to Wade instructed strictly instructed him not to use any expression which would excite in Ahmad Shah a hope of british interposing on his behalf with any of his neighbours.⁶ Therefore, British also continued its policy of non-interference. But after Ranjit's Singhs death in 1839 things had changed remarkably and Zorwar felt that the time was right now.

The Balti dynasty itself was engaged in a family feud over succession to the throne. Muhammad Shah was the elder son of Ahmad Shah of Baltistan but Ahmad Shah declared that he would be succeeded by his younger son Muhammad Khan (Vigne: 1842, 225-56).

In 1835, Zorawar got a opportunity to intervene in the Balti affairs, when Muhammad Shah the elder and the disinherited son of Ahmad Shah, the ruler of Skardu had sought for shelter in Zorawar's camp at Suru. Zorawar promised him assistance and in the course of time the prince returned to his father but in 1840 Muhammad Shah fled to Leh and sought the protection of the Gyalpo, The Ladakhi authorities were busy in planning a revolt against the dogras and wanted to include ahmad Shah on their side so they allowed the Balti ruler to send a party to seize his son. The party of Skardu troops arrived at Leh and took away the prince (Cunninghum: 1854, 345). When Zorawar learned about this he dispatched a letter to Ahmad Shah demanding Muhammad Shah's release and threatened him with invasion if he failed to do so. Ahmad Shah paid no heed to his letter as he did not reply him (S.S.Charak: 1977, 211; Cunnigham: 1854, 345).

Therefore, in the month of November Zorawar made preparations to invade Baltistan raised an army of 15,000 Dogra men and Ladakhi men under their leader Banka

⁶ Political Consultations, 23 May 1836, Governor-General to Wade F.D.P.C., No. 112.

Kahlon, and advanced towards Baltistan. The old King Tsepal was also to accompany the Dogras in this expedition (Francke: 1926, 131; S.S. Charak: 1977, 211). The army was divided into two columns the first was headed by Mohi-ud-din-Shah a Dogra officer, whose army consisted mainly of Ladakhi men, the second column was headed by Zorawar himself. The chiefs of Khatakchau and Khapalu submitted without any resistance (S.S. Charak: 1977, 211). The former is said to have helped Zorawar against Ahmad Shah who was his rival. The Dogras marched towards Garkon from where they decided to Manol and Kharmang and from there they decided to reach Skardu the capital (C.L. Datta: 1973, 123).

When the news of invasion reached Ahmad Shah he gathered an army under the command of his minister Ghulam Hussain and waited for the enemy at the left side of the Indus at Marol (Cunningham: 1854, 347; Datta: 1973, 124). All the roads were blocked and all the bridges broken by the Baltis to delay of the Dogras, coupled with that the Dogra army ran out of supply and were without food for days, exposed to the severe cold in the winters. Mian Nidhan Singh was instructed to march with his 5000, men to Shigar but they lost their way and only 400 men returned to the camp, many of them died due to the snow and cold. On one occasion the Dogras had an impossible task of passing an impassable river but Basti Ram constructed a bridge along with his men and the task was accomplished but many men died during this endeavour.

Despite of facing so many challenges the Dogras suppressed the baltis army at Gol, a province in Baltistan, ruthlessly and moved towards the Skardu where the climax of the battle took place. By then most of the chiefs of Baltistan, the Wazir of the Raja of Skardu were on Zorawars side. Ahmad Shah shut himself inside the fort of Kharboche which was situated at a height and surrounded by waters on all sides.

This posed difficulties for the Dogras but soon they mounted on the fort and a pitched battle took place near the summit of the fort many Baltis were killed and others made prisoners, Ahmad Shah was taken as a prisoner (C.L. Datta: 1973, 126). Ahmad Shah was deposed and his eldest son Muhammad Shah was installed as the new King, on an annual payment of Rs, 7000. The Dogras built a new fort and a small garrison of trustworthy soldiers were placed there (S.S. Charak: 1977, 211). All treasures were carried off from Skardu to Leh along with the deposed ruler Ahmad Shah and his

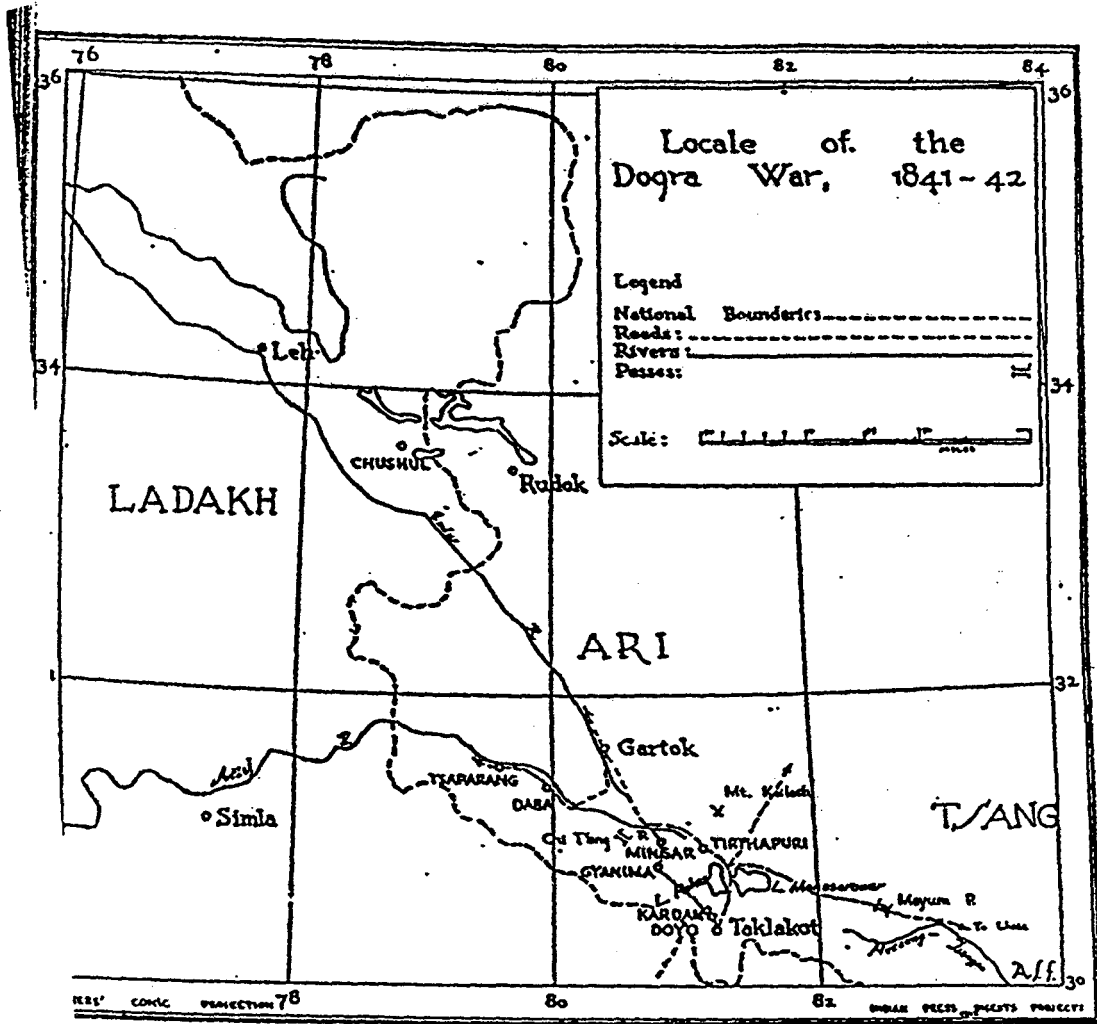
younger son, who were made prisoners (Francke: 1926, 265). On their return from Baltistan to Leh small pox had broken out in the camp which claimed the old King of Ladakh Tsepal Namgyal and Banka Kahlon's as victims and they died on the way. On his arrival at Leh Zorawar installed the grandson of Tsepal Namgyal known as Jigmed Namgyal on the throne as a nominal ruler (Francke: 1926, 131; Cunningham: 1854, 350).

The conquest of Baltistan added to the dominions of Raja Ghulab Singh, a territory larger in extent than Kashmir and extended his dominions north-west of Ladakh after which the ambitious General Zorawar Singh laid his covetous eyes on Western Tibet for fresh conquests.

Ladakh-Tibet War of 1842

By the end of 1840 Zorawar had successfully conquered both Baltistan and Ladakh and the Dogra principality of Jammu had become conterminous with the Central Asian and Chinese empires. Zorawar now had turned his attention to Yarkand and Western Tibet, desired to conquer both and establish an empire in Central Asia but soon gave up his idea of conquering Yarkand and concentrated all his efforts on Western Tibet to the south east of Ladakh. The main objectives which he had in mind while he decided to conquer Western Tibet were firstly, Zorawar was aware of the advantages of controlling the profitable wool trade of Western Tibet, and he wanted to ensure the flow of wool from Western Tibet to Kashmir via Ladakh, which for some time was being diverted to the British protectorate state of Bashar and other areas. (Huttenback: 1961, 482; C.L. Datta: 1965, 116).

Also another objective in Zorawar's mind was to possess the riches, gold, silver, the relics in the monasteries of Western Tibet and to also possess the gold mines which were at many places in Western Tibet. According to A.H Francke, "the main reason for Zorawar's new plan of Tibet conquest was to give employment to his masters many new subjects in Ladakh and Baltistan and in this way to keep their thoughts away from revolutionary ideas (Francke: 1999, 161). However, a more important reason could be to conquer more territories for his Maharaja in Jammu. But one of the



MAP SHOWING THE LOCALE OF THE DOGRA WAR WITH TIBET (1841-1849)

Source: "Margot Fisher, Leo E. Rose and Robert E. Huttenback (1963) Frederick Payer. London.

main reasons behind this hazardous military campaign was a much graver one. In 1801, the British had established their protectorate on The Amirs of Sind. And due to the Treaty of Saguli 1816 which was discussed earlier the British placed a wedge between Nepal and Lahore Durbar and had occupied Kumaon, Garhwal, and Simla Hill States to prevent further alliance between the Lahore Durbar and Nepal (C.L. Datta: 1965, 117-118). The Dogras even wanted to break through the British policy of encirclement of the Lahore kingdom which after Ranjits Singhs death in 1839 became even tighter. Therefore, the Dogras wanted to offset the British Policy of encirclement, end isolation it felt.

The Nepal-Sikh Alliance was not possible to achieve then because the Britisher territories lay between the territories of the Lahore Durbar and Nepal. In order to achieve this Zorawar aimed to conquer the intervening territory of Western Tibet, which lay between Nepal and the Dogra Empire. According to C.L. Datta, 'When Ghulab Singh first annexed, Ladakh it had been rumoured that is one of object was to establish a direct territorial link between the Punjab and Nepal.' He further states that, "it was believed that by annexing Western Tibet, Zorawar Singh wanted to build a chain of forts from Ladakh to the borders of Nepal on the other side of the Himalayas" (C.L. Datta: 1973, 130).

With these objectives in mind Zorawar Singh Khaulria started his campaign to conquer Western Tibet. His first move was to revive the old claims of Ladakh over the Tibetan territory west of Mayum pass.⁷ Zorawar asserted the claim to the Mayum pass because during 1834 due to political unrest in both Ladakh and Baltistan trade in shawl wool of Kashmir with Western Tibet and Ladakh was hit severely and the supply of shawl wool started flowing into other channels such as the British protected state of Bashar and other hill states under the British which was a matter of grave concern to the Dogras (C.L. Datta: 1970, 190).

Zorawar even wrote to the Garpon, the Tibetan Local Governor of Rudok, to 'restrain from supplying Pashmina wool to any other areas except for Ladakh' and also

⁷ Narikhorsum area having important districts of Rudok, Gartok and Purang which was previously under the Ladakhi Kings but was ceded to Tibet during the rule of the Ladakhi King Delegs Namgyal in 1684.

demanded tribute from him. The Garpon, in return, sent him only five horses and five mules.⁸ Zorawar started his invasion of Western Tibet soon after this incident took place.

According to Alexander Cunningham, “the strength of Zorawar’s army was about 5000, which mainly comprised of mainly Ladakhi, Balti soldiers and there were some Dogra soldiers of Kishtawar also” (Cunningham: 1854, 357). Majority of the men in Zorawar’s army during this expedition were Ladakhis and Baltis. Zorawar also took along some important dignitaries from Baltistan and Ladakh such as Nono Sunnam (brother of former Ladakhi Raja) Ghulam Khan (son-in-law of Rahim Khan, who was the incharge of Spiti district), Gonpo or the steward of the Hemis monastery (Francke: 1926, 133).

Zorawar’s attack was three pronged, he divided his army into three contingents, the first was of about 3,000 soldiers placed under Ghulam Khan which moved through Rupshu and passed through Hanle, the district headquarters of Rupshu district of Ladakh, into Western Tibet. There they overran the Tibetans at Churit, Chumurty, Tsaparang, Tholing and Daba which was along the border of Kullu and Bashar. Initially the Tibetans resisted the Ghulam Khans and his men but were easily defeated. During the course of the war Ghtlam Khan indulged in massive plundering of Buddhist monasteries and destroyed religious relics and texts (Cunningham: 1854, 352; Francke: 1999, 162-163) for which he payed heavily later.

Nono Sunnam who was incharge of the second contingent led his army upstream Indus and conquered successfully Tashigong and places around it (C.L. Datta: 1973, 133; C.L. Datta: 1965, 117). The third column was led by Zorawar Singh along with his 3,000 Dogra soldiers, he advanced along the road of Pangong Lake invaded Rudok, took the Garpon as a prisoner and finally, conquered it on June 8 1851. After Rudok Zorawar conquered the military post at Gartok, the district headquarters of Western Tibet. The Garpon of Gartok in the meantime fled to Taklakot since the place was evacuated by the Tibetans it was conquered without much difficulty all the three contingents of Zorawar’s army united at Taklakot and the Dogras then stormed the

⁸ For details see Foreign Department Proceedings, S.C. 21st June 1841, no-15.

fort of Taklakot on September 1841. The Tibetan Commander pulled behind the Mayum Pass, Zorawar constructed a fort there and by then he had already conquered almost all of Tibet to the west of Mayum Pass (C.L. Datta: 1965, 118).

Meanwhile the British who had followed a policy of non-interference in the matters regarding the Sikh conquests till the 1840's became had a new reason to be worried now. The Dogra invasion of Western Tibet had threatened their interests. The British felt threatened for two main reasons firstly, they feared the possibility of a Sikh Nepal alliance and the second with Zorawar's invasion of Western Tibet the shawl wool trade of British was hampered severely. Zorawar had issued an order or 'farman' prohibiting the export of shawl wool, Tea, and Borax from Western Tibet.⁹

The British reaction after Zorawar's conquest was no doubt hostile, and the former grew more and more suspicious of the of the Sikhs. Clerk The British officer had addressed the Lahore Durbar a number of times asking in formation regarding Zorawar singh's objectives and movements in Western Tibet. The Sikhs replied that "the sikh government had not received any intelligence from that quarter."¹⁰ In the years 1839 and 1837, there were exchange of missions between the Dogras and the King of Nepal. There was an instance when a Nepali delegation was received by Raja Ghulab Singh. These developments added to the tensions of the British East India Company, they were already feeling that, the Dogras were trying to obstruct their trade.¹¹ The fear of the Sikh Nepalase alliance, the steep fall in the imports of shawl wool in the british territories and the sufferings and maltreatment of the basher merchants at the hands of the Dogras, mounted the tensions of the british who decided to act quickly and soon J.D Cunningham, Assistant to the Political Agent, North Western Frontier, was sent to Western Tibet to watch the movements of the Dogras there. The British started pressurising the Lahore Durbar to recall Zorawar Singh back to Ladakh within a specified date. The British set a deadline to the Sikhs to call back Zorawar and troops, Zorawar was asked to pull out from Western Tibet by the 10th of

⁹ For details see Foreign Department Secret Consultations, S.C, 25th Oct 1841, No. 23.

¹⁰ For details see Foreign Departments Secret Consultations, S.C 18th October 1841, No. 67.

¹¹ Foreign Department Secret Consultations, S. C, 6th September, 1841 Nos. 42-44.

December 1842 beyond which the British instructed that the Sikh or the Jammu rulers should not retain Zorawar Singh or any of his troops.¹²

Zorawar had by now, constructed forts at strategic locations in western Tibet and had made adequate arrangements to ensure the supply of shawl wool from Western Tibet to Ladakh. Which in turn affected the British trade as the imports of shawl wool into Bashar suffered that year and was drastically low as compared years. Zorawar had in the meantime marched to Taklakot. The Tibetan authorities got news of the Dogras and despatched general Pishi with a small forces but soon he pulled out behind the Mayum Pass, seeing the futility of facing a strong army he then demanded heavy reinforcements from Lhasa (Fisher: 1963, 157-158).

The Dogras were soon successful in taking possession of Taklakot. On the 6th September 1841, they constructed a fort there Zorawar stationed a garrison of 300 soldiers under Colonel Basti Ram (C.L. Datta: 1973, 134) and proceeded towards Mansarovar.¹³ In this letter Lushington “had further given orders to authorities to report Sikh movements in that area, and about any communications taking place between Zorawar Singh and the Nepal Empire.”

This confirms British fear of Sikh-Nepal alliance. Soon General Pishi was supplied with inforcements and he collected an army of 10,000 men and they were dispatched to oust the ‘Shenpas’ (‘Sikh people,’ Shenpas was the term used by the Ladakhis and the Tibetans to refer to both the Sikhs and Dogras). J.D Cunningham gave details of the war to the British Indian Government as he observed, “From what I hear, I infer that all the troops are provincial and the Vazeer (Surkhang) is himself a native of Lahasa.”¹⁴ Therefore, this rules out any direct Chinese involvement although Tibet at that time was a Chinese protectorate.

¹² Foreign Department Secret Consultations, S.C, 8th proceedings, November 1841, file no. 45. In the Letter to the Lieutenant J.D Cunningham Assistant Agent Governor General from Governor General of the North West Frontier (George Clerk) dated 20th October 1841 in which Cunningham was given instructions to monitor Sikh movements and to see that the Sikhs withdrew Zorawar Singh who would by then relinquish his recent conquests in Tibet.

¹³ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, S.C, Lushington to Secretary North West Province, 19th November 1841, No. 57.

¹⁴ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, 30th March 1842, no. 101.

The Tibetan army leader was Kalon Surkhang. When the Tibetan army under him reached near Mansarovar Lake, Zorawar was taken by surprise as winter had set in and all the passes including the Maryum pass was closed by heavy snow. The Tibetans had discovered a direct by pass and had come fully equipped to face the enemy. Zorawar sent two detachments, one under Nono Sunnam and the second under Ghulam Khan to check the advance of the Tibetan army but both the columns were put to death and their leaders Nono Sunnam and Ghulam Khan were taken as prisoners.¹⁵ At that time Basti Ram was at Taklakot and Zorawar was wintering at Tirathpuri near Mansarovar. The Dogras were in a critical position winter being their biggest enemy which had closed all the passes and the deadly cold left the soldiers handicapped.

It was also reported that Zorawar Singh's army was suffering from scarcity of provisions. Zorawar lost all hope of receiving help from either Jammu or Lahore. Nau Nihal Singh had died in 1840, and the new Maharaja Sher Singh was a weak ruler and the Lahore Durbar was in a political mess. Ghulam Singh was busy in quelling rebellion at Hazara and Peshawar and helping British in their war against the Afghans. Zorawar's soldiers stationed at Leh also could not reach the battlefield as snow had closed all the passes. Zorawar realised that retreat was not practical and the opponent was three times the strength of his own troops (C.L Datta: 1973, 138-139).

He moved to Tirathpuri perhaps to join Basti Ram but was unsuccessful as all the passes were blocked by the Tibetans. Therefore, Zorawar chose to face the enemy and a full scale battle took place on 10th December 1842 near Toyu between the Dogras and the Tibetans which lasted for three days. On the 12th December, Zorawar was slain to death by a Tibetan warrior.¹⁶

The remnants of the Dogra army gave up after Zorawar's death, many fled the Ladakhi and the balti soldiers who were in Zorawar's army earlier joined hands with the Tibetans. Zorawar Singh's second in command Ahmad Shah, Nono Sunnam,

¹⁵ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, Letter from R.M Hamilton to T.H Maddock (Secretary to the Government of India) 13th Dec 1842, Nos. 25-27:C.L. Datta (1965), "Invasion of Western Tibet," p. 120; Cunningham: 1854, 352; Francke: 1926, 163.

¹⁶ Himalayan Battleground pp-165, S.C Cunningham to Clerk, 7th February 1842, No. 75.

Basgo Kahlon and Ghulam Khan and about 800 Dogras were taken as prisoners of war.¹⁷ With this the Dogra invasion of Western Tibet came to an end. It was a mere coincidence that the British deadline that was 10th December 1842 was nearly met although in a most unexpected manner (Huttenback: 1961, 485; Fisher: 1963, 53).

The Tibetans recaptured all the forts and drove the invaders out from Tibet. Thankfully for the British, there had been no Dogra Nepal alliance which the British had feared. The death of Zorawar Singh aroused in the Ladakhis a new hope of freedom from the Dogra yoke. The Steward of the Hemis Monastery 'Gumbo' who was taken as a prisoner of war and was released soon after sent a letter to Ladakh informing the Ladakhis about Zorawar Singh's death and initiated that the Ladakhis should prepare for war, another letter was dispatched by him to J.D Cunningham.¹⁸ Cunningham wrote back to Gumbo stating that, "Ladakh should belong to the Sikhs." Therefore, British chose not to meddle with the affairs of the Ladakhis and the Sikhs and once more the Ladakhis were refused British assistance. Soon, Nono Sunnam, Gumboo and Ahmad Shah the deposed ruler of Baltistan rose in revolt to dispel the Dogras from their lands. In the meantime young prince Jigmed Namgyal was declared as the sovereign ruler of Ladakh.¹⁹ The Ladakhi revolt was soon crushed by the Dogra commanders Magna Ram and Pehlwan Singh.

Soon, a Tibetan detachment under the command of General Pishi advanced into Leh with 3,000 men in April 1842 invaded Ladakh and laid siege to Leh (Cunningham: 1854, 354; C.L. Datta: 1973, 145). When Raja Ghulab Singh became aware of the death of Zorawar Singh and the revolts in Ladakh he sent a relief expedition, which comprised of Raja Dhayan Singh, Dewan Hari Chand and Wazir Ratnau with about 5000 soldiers and the new Sikh governor of Kashmir Gulam Mohi-ud-Din with his men, were sent to Leh (Huttenback: 1961, 485). The Dogra army reached Leh in May 1842.²⁰ War took place between the two.

¹⁷ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, Letter from Cunningham to Clerk, 22nd June 1842, No. 24.

¹⁸ Who was the agent of Governor General at that time. Foreign Political Secret Consultations, S.C Consultations, July 6th, 1842, Nos. 40-44.

¹⁹ For details see Foreign Political Secret Consultations, Cunningham to Clerk 6th July 1842, no. 41.

²⁰ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, Letter of Clerk to the Government of India, SC. 22nd June 1842, No. 20.

The Tibetans were chased out of the fort of Leh where they had laid siege and they retreated and halted at Chimri, forty miles from Leh. Jigmed Namgayal and the Gompo also fled with the Tibetans. After some time, wazir Ratnau and Dewan Hari Chand traced their enemy and a pitched battle was fought between the Dogras and the Tibetans. The Tibetans suffered greatly and their force was defeated soon they retreated towards Pangong lake and camped near Chushul soon the fighting started again and the Dogras succeeded in damming up a channel and flooding the Tibetan camp (Francke: 1926, 136). The Tibetan leader Kahlon Surkhang decided to negotiate with the Dogras the latter demanded the surrender of the Ladakhi King, Gonpo and Ahmad Shah which was complied with but again a pitched battle was fought between the Tibetans and dogras which resulted in the death of many of the Tibetans and many fled after this incident the Tibetans seem to have given up the cause of the ladakhi ruler as they had realised the futility of carrying a unprofitable war. The Dogras too wanted to give up war and all they wanted was to continue the old reciprocal commercial concessions with the Tibetans.

According to C.L Datta, "Surkhang, Pishi, two Khalons and many other Tibetan officers were made prisoners and brought to Leh" (C.L. Datta: 1973, 149). Finally, both parties decided to come in terms of peace. The Tibetan government approached for a 'Peace Treaty' which eventually was signed on the 17th September, 1842 at Leh.

The importance of the 1842 Peace Treaty

The importance of the treaty lies in the fact that through this treaty the lasting friendship of the Tibetans and the Ladakhis was made certain. The treaty re-established the old frontiers between Tibet and Ladakh the Tibetans guaranteed that "they will have nothing to do or interfere at all with the boundaries of Ladakh and its surroundings as fixed from ancient times" (C.U Aitchison: 1892, 15) and ensured the continuation of Ladakh as the trade route of shawl wool and Tea from Tibet through Ladakh to Kashmir. The Tibetan document, guaranteed that there would be no restriction would be laid on the mutual export and import of commodities and trading would be allowed according to the old customs, the periodical state trade missions, 'Lapchak' and 'Chaba' based on reciprocal obligations were to continue like before.

The Tibetan document also required Ladakh to provide 'begar'- free cooliage or free transportation and accommodation to the Tibetan traders who came to Ladakh and Ladakhi traders were to enjoy similar concessions when they went to Tibet. The Chronicles of Ladakh agrees well with the Persian and Tibetan versions of the treaty summarised above. Therefore, the peace treaty had been mutually satisfactory to both the Dogra Raja of Jammu and Kalon Surkhang of Tibet. Ladakh's political occupation to Jammu, and through Jammu to Lahore, was made clear, the Dogras were accepted by the Tibetans as the legitimate authority in Ladakh, while Gulab Singh surrendered all claims to West Tibet. Trade relations between Leh and Lhasa, were reinstated and the ancient boundaries were confirmed again. (The detailed clauses of the Treaty are given in the Appendix).

The 1842 Treaty was soon supplemented with another Treaty which was signed on the 17th October 1842 between the Governor of Kashmir, representing the Lahore Durbar and Lhasa officials on behalf of China. English translation of the treaty was sent to the Governor General by J.C Erskire, his Political Agent at Sabathu. The Treaty contained the following clauses:

Article I: That the boundaries of Ladakh and Lhasa shall be constituted as formerly, the contracting parties engaging to confine themselves within their respective boundaries, and each one of them to refrain from any act of aggression on the other.

Article II: That in conformity with ancient usage, tea and Pushum shawl-wool shall be transmitted by Ludak road.

Article III: Such persons as may in future proceed from China to Ludak or from Ludak to China, not to be obstructed on the road.

Article IV: That no renewal of the war between the Chiefs of Raja Gulab Singh and those of the Viceroy of the Lhasa shall take place.

Article V: That the above mentioned conditions shall remain in force without interruption, and whatever customs formerly existed, shall not be removed and continue to prevail.

Article VI: It is understood that in the signing of the above treaty, the contracting parties are bound to a true and faithful observance of all the provisions thereof, by the solemn obligations attached to the Holy place called "Gangri" to the lake of Shanta Lari and to the temple of Kojoon Cha on China.

(C.L. Datta (2003), "The Sino-Sikh Treaty (1842): In a Historical Perspective," in Singh Fauja and Arora A.C (eds.) (2003), *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*, p. 105).

The chronicles of Ladakh completely authenticate the above account of the Treaty. According to the Chronicles, "Conquered Ladakh" with the frontiers it had during the time of the Ladakhi Kings, was annexed by the "high government" (Maharaja Sher Singh's empire) (Francke: 1926, 137). Thus, this supplementary Peace Treaty restored status quo ante: Lahore Durbar's subjugation of Ladakh was made very apparent. Also, the trade relations between Tibet and Ladakh were reinstated and the ancient boundaries were reinstated.

British Interest in Ladakh

During the 19th Century the Sikhs, the Dogras and the British became interested in the commercial potentialities of Ladakh and Western Tibet. Trade in shawl wool influenced the politics of Western Himalayan region in the late 30's and early 40's of the 19th Century, Maharaja Ranjit Singh after his conquest of Kashmir in 1819 demanded the same tribute and trade concessions from the Ladakhis which the earlier rulers of Kashmir had enjoyed. The old trade customs and tributes were revived.²¹

And soon Ranjits Singh's government started to enjoy the monopoly of shawl wool trade and tributes like the previous Kashmiri rulers did. Regarding Ladakh the British East India Company was primarily concerned with its trade specially of that of Pashmina wool which was the most lucrative article of trade in those times found mainly in the high pasture lands of Changthang in Western Tibet and also in some parts of Ladakh. The Dogras and the British both were tempted to divert the flow of shawl wool into their respective spheres. The major bulk of the shawl wool which mainly came from Western Tibet and Ladakh deeply interlinked with the economies

²¹ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, Letter to Maddock (Secretary to the Government of India) from Clerk (Agent Governor General), 13th May 1841, no. 72.

of Ladakh, Kashmir and Changthang (was the most important shawl producing area from where the came the best pashm) (H.Lee Shuttleworth: 1922, 552; Janet Rizvi: 1999 a, 317-318). Under the Peace treaty concluded in 1684 after the Tibeto-Mongolid-Ladakhi War, the Tibetan authorities undertook to supply the entire wool of its regions to Ladaakh, and the Ladakhis further took to supply the entire wool along with its indigenous produce to Kashmir (Petesch: 1977, 70-75).

According to Alastair Lamb, "This practice continued throughout the 18th century well into the 19th Century" (Alastair Lamb: 1960, 47). The economy and prosperity of the Kashmiris was dependant on the shawl industry for which it got the raw material from Ladakh and Western Tibet, On the other hand shawl wool was an important article in the import exports of Ladakh it being the great thoroughfare from where the wool passed from Western Tibetan areas to Kashmir. Therefore, Ladakh maintained a well guarded monopoly on the shawl wool produced in Western Tibet. The shawl wool trade attracted the notice of the British, they made several attempts to penetrate Western Tibet but there attempts were foiled by the manufacturing coalition who were dead set against the Britishers. In 1810, a British merchant sent an agent to collect specimens of the shawl to Gartok. On hearing the news of the arrival of a British agent at Gartok the Ladakhis got alarmed they protested to the Governor or Garpon of Gartok, who soon issued an edict forbidding the sale of shawl wool to any but Ladakhis on pain of death.

In 1812, William Moorcraft visited Gartok his motive was to open to Great Britain the means of obtaining the materials of the fine woollen fabric. He did not come here for an official mission and although he did manage to buy some small amount of wool and strongly advocated the possibilities of the wool trade to the British government. His incursion into Western Tibet aroused resentment amongst the Tibetans and anxiety of the Ladakhis and the Kashmiris (Moorcraft: 1841, 349).

In the year 1815, Bashar had become a British protectorate (Alastair Lamb: 1960, 47) and they had also taken possession of Kotgarh from where there was a road to Kinnaur, the north-eastern part which was conterminous with Ladakh and Tibet and facilitated the flow of shawl wool from Western Tibet to Bashar. Also, the states of Kumaon and Garhwal that was acquired by the Britishers after the Anglo-Nepalese

War of 1814-16 from the Gurkhas gave the British territory a common frontier with Tibet.

In other words, the British had an advantage of these territories now, therefore, they were able to tap the Tibet trade. According to Dereck Waller, "Wool was carried from Gartok through Spiti to Rampur, the capital of the hill state of Bashahr. Bashahr itself, a British-protected state, lay between Lahul and Spiti to the north, the Garhwal to the South most of the goods crossing the Himalayas into Western Tibet were carried either by the Bashahris or by the Bhotias of Garhwal" (Dereck Waller: 1990, 102).

There were also reports of Pashm smuggling direct from Western Tibet across Spiti and Garhwal and down to the plains of North India (Janet Rizvi: 1999 a, 168). Along with this, many skilled labourers and weavers fled from Kashmir and took shelter mainly in the plains of Ludhiana, Numpur and Amritsar soon after the Sikh conquest of Kashmir and the ensuing famine. This led to Rampur the capital of Bashahr into developing into a shawl wool trading centre, as new demands started coming from the plains. Rampur started getting its shawl wool supply from Western Tibet this proved to be very lucrative for the British India Shawl producing areas and became an important aspect in the economy of the hill states (Moorcraft and Trebeck: 1841, 168).

Therefore, by then Bashahr had become an important mart of trade in Tibetan wool. It was very clear that Zorwar Singh's expedition into Ladakh was undertaken in order to influence the shawl wool trade in western Tibet and divert it to Jammu. During the Dogra conquest and the political unrest that followed in Ladakh in the 1840's the long established commercial framework of this area, the trade of Ladakh and Kashmir was neglected and the supply of shawl wool started flowing into other channels. There was a spurt in trade between Western Tibet and the Indian plains. In Rampur, by 1837, the shawl wool exports seem to have risen rapidly. And it was noted earlier that the value of pashm sold here rose to Rs 98,807 in 1840 (Janet Rizvi: 1999 a, 329; C.L. Datta: 1973, 131). Earlier, when Zorawar Singh conquered Ladakh and Baltistan the British policy was that of 'non interference,' but with Zorawar Singh's invasion of Western Tibet the British policy vis-à-vis the Dogras changed. The reason being that, with the arrival of Dogras in western Tibet, the commercial benefits of the British were soon

disappearing and the flow of shawl wool and other commodities dwindled. A sharp drop in the amount of pashm arriving at Rampur was reported which amounted to a value of only Rs 17,766 (Janet Rizvi: 1999 a, 329), which was a huge contrast to the figures of 1840 which was at Rs 98,807. The British Political Agent at Subhatu reported that the 'Sikhs were determined to stop all trade between Western Tibet and Bashar.'²² It was also reported that the all the export of shawl wool, Tea, and Borax from Western Tibet to Bashar was prohibited after Zorawar Singh issued a "farman" or order prohibiting the export of these commodities.²³ The British became apprehensive due to Zorawar's movements in Western Tibet, they felt that the Dogras had intervened and upset the pattern of British trade in Western Tibet and that the British trade in shawl wool had been neglected.²⁴

The British were also upset over the maltreatment of the Bashar traders at the hands of the Dogra officers. Apart from commercial losses the British feared the Dogra occupation of the trans Sutlej territories and a much greater fear which lurked in the mind of the Britishers was the prospect of the 'Anti British-Dogra-Sikh alliance' specially after the Dogras had established themselves close to the frontier of Nepal.²⁵ British also dreaded to a large extent, the Chinese intervention in the war. Since Tibet at that time was a British protectorate the British feared that the Chinese might misunderstand and regard that the Dogra attack on Tibet was prompted by the Britishers. They feared that the Chinese might instigate Nepal to make an attack on the British of the Trans Sutlej territories. All these factors made it indispensable for the British to restrain the Dogra movements in Western Tibet. Therefore, the British brought heavy pressure on the Sikh Maharaja Sher Singh to recall the Dogra General and his troops back to Ladakh and gave the 10th December 1842 as the deadline for withdrawal of the Sikh forces from Western Tibet.²⁶ The British also appointed J. D. Cunningham in the North Kumaon for the purpose of watching and reporting the proceedings of the Sikhs.²⁷

²² Foreign Political Secret Consultations, S.C, Erskine to Hodgson (Resident In Nepal) 23rd August 1841, no. 65.

²³ For details see Foreign Political Secret Consultations, S.C, 27th December, 1841, No. 23.

²⁴ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, S.C, 6th September 1841, file No. 42-44.

²⁵ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, S.C, 6th December 1841, No. 54.

²⁶ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, F.S.C, 18th November 1841, No. 45.

²⁷ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, S.C, 27th September 1841, File No. 44, Copy no. 155.

Maharaja Sher Singh later convinced the British that he would comply with the British instructions, but even before the orders could reach Zorwar Singh he was killed and his army defeated at the battle of Toyu on December 12th 1842.

The British thus, overcame their fears, and left the Tibetans and the Sikhs to settle their matters post the commencement of the war. They reverted to their old policy of 'Non interference' and soon got busy with the Anglo-Afghan War. But even after this, the British kept a close watch at the developments and for this purpose J.D Cunningham was reappointed.²⁸

Post the Dogra Tibetan war the Ladakhis again sought for British intervention in order to free Ladakh of the Dogra rule but the British like earlier occasions declined and chose not to interfere for now, its main objective was to keep a check on the Sikhs and its enemies at the border, and immediately it was concerned with consolidating its empire. Therefore, we can conclude that the British policy in Ladakh was largely determined by strategic considerations and they were interested mainly in the trade of Ladakh and to check the Russian advancement.

GREAT GAME

It was from the early nineteenth century onwards after Britain and Russia emerged as one of the most powerful states in Asia that both got engaged in a struggle for power this period is known as the Anglo-Russian rivalry because by the 1820's both Britain and Russia had emerged as two of the most powerful states in Eurasia and both contested with each other for power the outcome of this rivalry was to be a decisive factor in Central Asian politics it was a part of the 'Great Game' between these two powers. This led the British to guard the frontier outposts of its empire, one of them was Ladakh in order to check Russian advancement further into their territories for this the British tightened its control over Ladakh. There was no direct military confrontation but both were engaged in expanding their areas of influence especially along the borders of their respective countries. Britain had assumed power in India at

²⁸ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, S.C, 24th January 1842. No. 62.

that time and Russia too was consolidating its power in Central Asia. The British India soon realised the strategic importance of Kashmir and Leh for the extension of British influence in Central Asia (K. Warikoo: 1989, 136). Leh during those times was a great enter port of trade between Central Asia and India so in order to check the Russian advance in India the Britishers stationed British officers in Leh on the pretext that the officer was to maintain, regulate and inquire into the state of trade between India and central Asia but their actual motives were to monitor Russian movements at Leh where the Russian merchants would come incognito posed as traders. It was for this purpose Moorcraft was stationed at Leh and resided there and travelled extensively in and around that area. British policy on the frontier area was generally determined by their attitude toward Russia.

Post the 1842 Peace treaty, Ghulab Singh turned his attention to the developments in the Jammu. The First Anglo Sikh war broke out in 1845 and there were in all five battles fought between the two forces. The British captured Lahore and compelled the Sikhs to sign the Treaty of Lahore in 1846 (Appendix III) (Cunningham: 1955). Under Article XII of The Treaty of Lahore, which was signed on the 9th March 1846, Raja Ghulab Singh was recognised as an independent ruler by both the Lahore Durbar and the British Government. The Treaty sealed the fate of Sikh monarchy and made Punjab a British dependency.

The long cherished dream of Ghulab Singh was realised because the Sikh government was unable to to pay 10 million as indemnity. Under Article IV of the Treaty of Lahore, the Sikhs were forced to cede to the British government the Sikh territories between the Beas and the Indus River including the province of Hazara and Kashmir. Few days later on the 16th of March 1846, Raja Ghulab Singh signed the "Treaty of Amritsar" with the British. Under this treaty Ghulab Singh and his heirs were granted all the hilly or mountaneous country with its dependencies, situated to the eastward of the river Indus and the westward of the River including Chamba and excluding Lahoul" (C.U Aitchiston: 1892, 353).

In other words, Ghulab Singh had become the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh were made over to him in lieu of which, Ghulab Singh was to recognise the supremacy of the British government. The British kept Kulu and

Mandi. Districts which the British kept under their own possession, and Ghulab Singh was to allow the boundaries of his state with the Chinese empire to be determined by a joint commission he was to pay a small tribute to the British and the latter were to help and protect the Maharaja from external aggression (CU Aitchiston: 1892, 21-22).

Thus, British became a paramount power vis-à-vis the Dogras. But British still feared the renewal of Ghulab Singh's ambition in West Tibet (Cunningham: 1955, 12). The Britishers realized that if something like this would happen then it would not only bring the wool trade to a complete stop but it would also entangle the Company in dispute with China. Therefore, the British government realised that in order to avoid such circumstances, the question of an unsettled boundary should be settled. Which they thought was the most common cause of all disputes.

After the treaty of Amritsar, the two southern districts of Ladakh, Lahul and Spiti were cut off from Ladakh and added to the British possessions of Kangra, Kullu and Mandi. After which it became essential for the Britishers to define the northern boundaries of these districts with other districts of Ladakh. For this purpose the Britishers in July 1846, appointed two boundary commissioners to proceed to Ladakh with the prime objective of ascertaining the ancient boundaries between the newly acquired British territories by the treaty of Lahore which previously constituted the Southern districts of Ladakh with the districts belonging to Gulab Singh²⁹ (Cunningham: 1955, 13; Lamb: 1960, 58).

The Boundary commissioners were Captain Alexander Cunningham and Mr. Vans Agnew who were specially instructed to demarcate the boundaries first in terms of territory.³⁰ Secondly, the Commissioners were advised to draw the boundary line in the east to such points of territory which were further than the Ghulab Singh's influence,³¹ because from the Spiti side the British wanted to prevent the access to Jammu troops and traders. To facilitate matters, the Maharaja of Kashmir was asked to aid the British party. This boundary mission was very crucial for the

²⁹ The Commissioners were to first demarcate a boundary between British territory (Lahul and Spiti) on the south and Ghulab Singh's territory on the North and set up clearly the points at which the two meet with the Tibetan frontier. They were also to establish clearly a boundary between Ladakh and Tibet.

³⁰ Foreign Department Direct Secret Consultations, 23rd July 1846, No. 1332.

³¹ Foreign Department Secret Consultations, Letter from H.M Lawrence to Vans Agnew and Cunningham, 31st July 1846, FDSC, No. 1335.

Britishers to gain the cooperation of the Tibetans and the Chinese officials. The Bashar Raja was prevailed upon to send a letter to the Tibetan Governor at Gartok. This letter was addressed to the chief of Lhasa intimating the wish of the British government that "the clause in the treaty of the Chinese with Ghulab Singh granted the latter a monopoly of the shawl wool trade should be set aside, only then all restrictions on the traders of Bashar should for buying shawl wool from West Tibet would be removed."³² Just after that Lord Hardinge, the then Governor General addressed a letter to the Vizeer of Lassa-Gartope.

At the same time the Britishers approached the Chinese Viceroy. Initially Sir John Davis was confident that the Chinese would agree not only to the joint demarcation of Ladakh Tibet border but also to the reassessment of Chinese trade policies towards India. But the Chinese officials were unwilling to cooperate and demarcate the border.³³ Therefore, as the Britishers had thought the Chinese officials did not cooperate with the British Commission regarding the demarcation of the boundary. The Commissioners were instructed to proceed with the inquiry on existing boundaries on their own initiative. The result as was clearly manifested on the map prepared by one of the Commissioners conformed essentially with what is presently claimed by the government of India as the boundary between Ladakh and Tibet from the Lanak pass to the Southern most tip of the border (Fisher: 1963, 63).

The attitude of the Dogras towards the Commission was not very cooperative because Maharaja Ghulab Singh was afraid of trade settlement between the British and the Tibetans which was likely to affect his monopoly of shawl wool trade with Western Tibet so his two agents Colonel Basti Ram and Mian Jawahar Singh joined their British counterparts near Leh.³⁴ But they were not anxious to demarcate the Eastern boundary of Ladakh. Cunningham believed that the absence of the Maharajas Commissioner on the frontier was deliberate and designed to delay as long as possible if not absolutely to thwart altogether the final settlement of the boundary (C.L. Datta: 1973, 195).

³² Foreign Department Secret Consultations, J.C Erskine (Superintendent of the Hill States) to Government. 28th August 1847, No. 159.

³³ Foreign Department Secret Consultations, Davis to Hardinge, FDSC, 28th August 1847, No. 139.

³⁴ Foreign Department Secret Consultations, Cunningham to Lawrence, 27th September 1847, No. 136.

Ladakh Tibet Border Incidents

Under these circumstances the British Commissioners (Alexander Cunningham, Thomson Thomas and Henry Strachey) were left with no alternative, except to carry on explorations individually. From Bashars frontier with Tibet they wanted to reach Hanle, district headquarters of Rupshu district in Ladakh, by the direct route which passed through Western Tibet. But the Tibetans did not allow them to enter into their territory so they followed the other route through Spiti, due to the non cooperation of the Tibetan authorities, Dogra rulers, and the Ladakhi King on Ladakh and Tibet border the mission of the boundary commissioners remained unaccomplished (C.L. Datta: 1973, 196). The British government was now fully convinced of the futility of making further attempts to communicate with the Chinese authorities. They decided to wind up the boundary commission. Thus, the second boundary Commission could not demarcate the Ladakh Tibet boundary.

Nineteenth century was a period of comparative stability and amicability in Ladakh's relation with Tibet virtually devoid of complications over boundaries or trade. There was some trouble in 1851, centred largely on the 'Chaba' mission from Lhasa to Leh when the Ladakhis complained that Kelzang Gyurme, a Tibetan government trader, was not able to bring a full quota of brick tea into Ladakh the Lhasa traders the other hand complained that there was inadequate supply of transportation on behalf of the Ladakhis which they were supposed to provide to the Tibetan traders who came to Ladakh along with other privileges two Tibetan stewards of the Gartok Governor met with representatives of Ladakh, Bisram Sahib and Kalon Rigzin, and a mediator, Yeshe Wangyal, and concluded an agreement which guaranteed that the Tibetan government trade agents who came to Ladakh were to be provided by kitchen boys and grooms for their horses, Tibetan traders who brought tea to Gartok and Ladakhi traders who brought cloth to Gartok would trade only with each other, and not with any third party. The boundary between Ladakh and Tibet would be maintained according to the established custom and Salt, wool and tsamba (barley flour) brought from Rudok (in Western Tibet) to Ladakh would not be turned back. And grain taken from Ladakh to Rudok should not be restricted. The prices of commodities and custom duties were not to be raised on both sides and those Tibetan

traders and Ladakhi traders carrying a permit were exempted from custom to the authorities. Traders without permit would have to pay a two per cent custom duty. Both parties agreed to provide free transport and accommodations to special agents travelling in emergencies. Tibetan and Ladakhi traders were allowed to freely graze their pack-animals at any place in both territories on the condition that they do not bring domestic animals with them. Further cooperation was to continue between the two. The matter was settled by a trade agreement signed in 1853 (Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa: 1993, 328-329) (Details are given in Appendix IV), and a reaffirmation that long established rules and customs were to be observed in all particulars and that 'the boundary between Ladakh and Tibet, will remain same as before'. In the 20th Century there was no hint that Ladakh Tibet border was ever a subject of the extensive discussion between the British and the Tibetan representatives. In 1914, Simla Conference a map signed by the Chinese representative depicted the Sinkiang-Ladakh boundary as lying along the Kunlun range, in conformity with the present Indian claim (Fisher: 1963, 67). But there was a minor dispute over the ownership of pasture land in the border area north of Pangong lake which occurred in 1917 and joint investigations were held. No final settlement was made, but apparently, the Tibetans allowed their claim to lapse after 1927. At least the subject was not raised again until 1947, when Tibet attempted to take advantage of the change in the international situation resulting from civil war in China and the withdrawal of British from the Indian soil. This offered a statement of their most extreme territorial claims to both governments. But the pasture lands north of the Pangong Lake continued to fall within the confines of the Kashmir administrative system. It was only with the Chinese encroachment in 1959, this situation changed. This was the minor dispute or the only incident of any significance marring the good relations between Ladakh and Tibet (Fisher: 1963, 77).

Chinese takeover of Tibet and its impact on Ladakh

When India attained independence from the British in 1947, it was beset with the suffering of the partition of India. However, the case of Jammu and Kashmir and therefore of Ladakh was all the more complexed because a Hindu ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh ruled a Muslim majority. Post partition of India Maharaja Hari Singh signed the

Instrument of Accession to India after which Jammu and Kashmir became part of India. After three years in 1950 the Peoples Republic of China brought Tibet and Xinjiang under its control. The actual invasion of Tibet by the Chinese was launched on October 7th 1950 at several points along Tibet's western border and soon China managed to seize control of the major eastern passes into Tibet.

The Chinese penetration into Tibet started into the northwest of Tibet first and the Armed Chinese units which had been operating in Sinkiang made use of the Aksai Chin route which is in Ladakh and overpowered Tibetan defenses completely. Tibet appealed to the United Nations but when this final recourse proved unadvantageous the Dalai Lama who was the spiritual and temporal head of Tibet fled from there to Yutang on the Sikkim border into India.

An agreement establishing Chinese suzerainty over Tibet and also containing provisions that purported to guarantee Tibetan regional autonomy and religious freedom was signed at Peking on May 23, 1951 after which Tibet became a part of China with limited regional autonomy. The Chinese takeover Tibet had serious repercussions on the Ladakhi society, the first was that the age old trade relations between Central Asia and Ladakh was terminated. Formally the trade with Tibet came to an end in 1960 and trade between Ladakh and Sinkiang had virtually ceased after 1949. After the Chinese occupied Tibet they sealed all the borders and trade between Ladakh and Tibet came to a standstill. The outcomes of traditional relationships between which had continued for hundreds of years between Ladakh and Tibet were felt in almost every Ladakhi village which helped in developing traditional and cultural ties between the two, such a lengthy period of active trade and pilgrimage was stopped abruptly after the 1950's and it was bound to have affected the Ladakhis on the other side of the border as they suddenly felt cut off from Tibet and a sense of isolation crept in amongst the Ladakhis. Also, Ladakh had extensive and active trade relations with Tibet which ended soon after Tibet was taken over the Chinese the situation worsened when the border crisis deteriorated in the 1960's and the Indian Government imposed a strict ban on the export of strategic goods to Tibet.

Ladakh's economy was largely dependant on trade but with the stoppage of trade with Tibet its economy was also affected to a large extent as hundreds of Ladakhis who

had depended, directly or indirectly on this commerce were now unemployed. Another setback to Ladakh's economy came with the termination of the *Lapchak* missions from Leh to Lhasa that for nearly three centuries had played such an important role in the trade between Ladakh and Tibet. Many families of the old generation of Ladakhis have reminiscences of Tibet where they had gone for trading or studying purposes. The Muslims of Ladakh also have some nostalgic feelings for Tibet many of them had houses at Rudok in West Tibet. One of these families led the triennial Lopchak (*lo-phyag*) mission from Ladakh to Lhasa for many years. Haji Ghulam Muhammad, a Ladakhi Muslim whose family was settled in Lhasa is one such family which led a five member committee of Ladakhi and Kashmiri Muslims settled at Lhasa and Shigatse.

The severance of relations with Tibet was a great setback for especially for the Buddhists of Ladakh who had always looked towards Lhasa for spiritual guidance and inspiration; many monks from Ladakh went to different monasteries in Central Tibet for religious instructions and training thousands of them had to come back to Ladakh because of the political unrest in Tibet at that time.

The close consistent cultural relationship between Ladakh and Tibet for centuries came to an unexpected halt and the Ladakhis felt devoid of religious and cultural inspiration which they had for centuries derived from Tibet. The political situation in Ladakh was unpredictable for a few years after independence. On May 1949 the Ladakh Buddhist Association submitted a memorandum to the Indian Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in which they wrote:

“Tibet is a cultural daughter of India. We seek the bosom of the gracious mother to receive more nutrient for growth our full stature in every way. She has given us what we prize above all other things –our religion our culture– and it is the experience of having been the recipients of such precious gifts, which encourages us to ask for more.”³⁵

In 1949, the President of the Ladakh Buddhist Association, Tsewang Rigzin implied to the Acting Minister for External Affairs that Ladakh was prepared to merge with Tibet if India did not keep Jammu and Kashmir. The Ladakhi leader Kushok Bakula

³⁵ Quoted from Sheikh, Abdul Ghani (2007), “Ladakh and its neighbours,” in John Bray and Shaksपो Tsering Nawang, “*Recent Reaserach in Ladakh*,” p, 20.

also hinted that “Ladakh would seek to join Tibet if Jammu and Kashmir were alienated from India”, but eventually, because of the political developments during that time Ladakh decided to unite with India. However, the statement given above by the Ladakhis clearly manifests that in the times when the sovereignty of their state was threatened they choose to be with Tibet because they could identify with it religiously and culturally such were the relations between the two. No doubt, after 1950 a new pattern of inter regional relations in Central Asia emerged specially after the Communist China took over Tibet and it was bound to have a direct impact upon Ladakh because the deep cultural, religious and commercial ties between Ladakh and Tibet were snapped which in turn had serious ramifications on Ladakhi society.

Ladakh no longer has direct cultural and religious links with Tibet but the Ladakhi Buddhists continue to derive strength and from the supreme religious Tibetan lamas and spiritual leaders who are now in India and Nepal.

CHAPTER 3

CULTURAL LINKAGES

INTRODUCTION OF BUDDHISM IN LADAKH via KASHMIR

Ladakh has not only geographical similarity to Tibet but far more pronounced is the affinity in culture, language, literature and philosophy, rituals, social customs, and religion. Besides, Tibetan influence is manifested clearly on the Ladakhi costumes, food habits, architecture, astrology and the Thangka paintings.¹ Widespread traces of cultural impacts of Tibetan Buddhism and arts form of the tenth and eleventh centuries have been found throughout Ladakh. Institutional links had been forged between the monasteries of Ladakh and those of Central Tibet, more significantly, the Ladakhis started sending young monks to Tibet for advanced monastic training. Their links were further strengthened when Buddhist scholars of Ladakh started going to central Tibetan Missionaries for religious instructions. After the 15th century all new monasteries in Ladakh were founded as representatives of one Tibetan monastic order or another. Ladakh kept close contacts with Tibet and looked towards Tibet for spiritual guidance.

Ladakh has always had close spiritual and socio-historical contacts with Tibet because both Ladakh and Tibet are inhabited by the people belonging to the same race. Cultural and spiritual interaction has been going on between these two areas for centuries. Tibetan form of Mahayana Buddhism, culture and tradition has been adopted by the Ladakhi Buddhists and thus, the Tibetan traditional influence on Ladakhi has been predominant.

Due to such close ties between Tibet and Ladakh, one is led to believe that the Buddhist religion was first introduced in Ladakh by Tibetan sources, but such was not the case. Although Tibet plays a predominant role in the religion and culture of

¹ Religious paintings on silk scrolls.

Ladakh and the current religious practises in Ladakh region show primacy of Tibetan form of Buddhism but Buddhism came to Ladakh first via Kashmir and then Tibet.

According to Cunningham, "This religion had already introduced in Ladakh and Turkistan during the reign of Asoka" (Cunningham: 1854, 356). The first Buddhist influence in Ladakh is said to have come during the reign of the Emperor Ashoka (273-236 B.C.). Kashmir, at that time, was under Ashoka's empire. Buddhism received a new impetus during the reign of Asoka the third Buddhist council despatched missionaries under the leadership of different Buddhist scholars to disseminate Buddhism in various parts of Asoka's empire. Buddhism came to Ladakh through a missionary called Madyantika which came into Ladakh. Many stupas were constructed in Sumda and Tiri villages of Ladakh.

However, Buddhism was further spread at the time of Kanishka in second century A.D. It was during this period that Kanishka sent missionaries to entire Central Asia and it was under his rule that Buddhism became a popular religion in Kashmir. At that time under Kanishka (c. A.D. 120-162) the Kushan Empire was at the acme of its glory and his dominions included Baltistan, Ladakh and some parts of Eastern and Western Turkistan (Francke: 1926, 110-111; Petesch: 1977, 7), emphasis on the inscription found on the Khalatse bridge according to him, "In any case, the inscription proves that in the 1st or 2nd century A.D Lower Ladakh was included in the Kushana empire." It was during this period that Gandhara art was introduced in Ladakh. And also it was during the Kushan period, Buddhism was further strengthened in Ladakh, and from there it was introduced into China about the beginning of the Christian era. Many Archaeological evidences point to the facts that Buddhism was introduced in Ladakh during the Kushan period. Rev. A.H Francke, a German missionary, wrote that he had found inscriptions on the huge boulder at a place called Khaltse village² in his inscription says that King Kanishka's domain was extended upto Khaltse.

Many ancient rock inscriptions have also been found in Khartoshi of Kushan of and Gupta periods at Khaltse is dated back to pre Christian era. The existence of Kushanana interest in Ladakh is depicted by an inscription in the Indian Khartoshi

² A village in Ladakh which is 94 kms, from Leh town.

script which they used, found by A.H Francke,³ at Khaltse (Snellgrove: 1977, 6). Also a Stupa known as “Kanika” at Sani, Zanskar is attributed to Kanishka ruler. Kanika is a distorted version of Kanishka and important archaeological evidence is the colossal image of Maitriya Buddha is carved out of a huge rock at Mulbekh village on the Leh-Kargil road which dates back between 7th and 8th century.

Even many Chinese travellers, like Fahein and Huen Tsang, have talked about the Buddhism that flourished in Ladakh in their times.

During the 4th century A.D China also had many Buddhist centres like India. The cultural and spiritual between the two countries was fruitful, Buddhists scholars of both countries visited India and vice versa under this relationship Fa-Hein, a Chinese monk and Buddhist scholar visited India in approximately the fifth century A.D on his way to Kashmir when he crossed Ladakh he gave an account of the Maitreya images in wood in the Sumda village in Ladakh. According to the Chinese traveller Fa-Hein, Buddhism flourished in Ladakh in 400 A.D. He states that the doctrine of Hinayana form or lesser vehicle of Buddhism prevailed in Ladakh (Cunningham: 1854, 360). This he observed during his travel through Ladakh which means it came to Ladakh much before it reached Tibet in the 8th century.

Another Chinese pilgrim who came to India in 630 A.D called ‘Darel’ which he refers to as Ladakh as in olden days Ladakh was known by this name. He observed that, “to the city north of the city Mungoli, crossing many mountains and defiles, he came to the valley of Ta-li-lo or Darel, identical with the old capital of Li-chang-na i.e Udyana. In this valley is a large Sanngaranama by the side of which is carved wooden statue of Maitreya Buddhisattva, of golden colour and majestically appearance” (C.S Upasak: 1986, 20-21). It is believed that Buddhism came to Ladakh before Tibet. This fact can be ascertained from Huacho’s (A Korean Pilgrim) statement who visited Ladakh in 727 AD. He had noticed monasteries and monks in

³ who was one of the first who researched the history of Ladakh he used inscription and records available to him in Ladakh which was collectively known as the ‘Ladakh Chronicle’ and was published with English translation in vol. II of his “Antiquities of Indian Tibet”. It remains a very important source of History of Ladakh for scholars and writers till today.

the region. According to him, “then Buddhism had not reached Tibet”. His statement indicates that Buddhism had reached Ladakh several centuries before it reached Tibet. Abdul Ghani Sheikh⁴, agrees that Huacho’s statement is correct. Rock inscriptions, are found in most parts of Drass, Zanskar, and in the Leh tehsils at Shimsha Kharbu, Hanska, Saspol, Nyemo, Daru, Leh and at Spandan areas (F.M. Hassnain: 1998, 68).

According to David Snellgrove and Tadeuz Skorupski, “It seems likely that the Dards, a people of the Indo-European stock who had penetrated the Western Himalayas, were affected by Buddhist religion. The Rock carvings at Dras of Maitreya, Avalokitesvara, a lotus and a horse man, the impressive statue of Maitreya at Mulbek, and some rock carvings at Changspa near Leh all of which may be dated at sometime between the 7th and the 10th centuries, clearly witnesses to the existence of Buddhist religion in the area before it was finally taken over by the Tibetans” (Snellgrove and Skorupski: 1977, 9).

These inscriptions and carvings supply information of historical value. Even in the religious paintings in the Alchi Monastery (built somewhere between the 10th and the 12th centuries A.D) in Ladakh Kashmiri influence is seen clearly as Kashmiri artists were summoned specially to do the job. It is believed that Rinchen Zangpo studied Buddhism in Kashmir and introduced Kashmiri forms of Buddhist Art in Ladakh and the Alchi paintings indicates clear influence of Kashmiri art in Ladakh.. Dr. Nawang Tsering.⁵

All these evidences bear testimony to the age old relations between Ladakh and India and show that Buddhism came to Ladakh from Kashmir. According to, Jamyang Gyaltsan, “We can therefore, come to the conclusion that Buddhism was not introduced in Ladakh before the time of Christ it was brought to Ladakh in the 1st and 2nd century A.D (Gyaltsan Jamyang: 1993).

The spread of Buddhism in Ladakh was followed by its introduction into China, about the beginning of the Christian era, Central Asia and into Great Tibet in the middle of

⁴ A noted social activist and writer of Ladakh, whom I personally interviewed

⁵ A noted Ladakhi scholar on Buddhism.

Ladakh in 1532, 1545 and 1548. However, the situation was quite different in Baltistan and Purig where Shia Islam and Nurbakshi sect continued to flourish.

The chiefs of Baltistan and Purig occasionally invited Muslim scholars and this practice continued until Zorawar Singh's invasion of Ladakh in 1834. The Muslim scholars were granted land to settle down in the local villages and often married daughters of the chiefs. After their conversion to Islam, the chief of Purig area styled themselves "Sultan" and claimed to be independent from the king of Ladakh.

In the beginning of 17th century, Islam began to take root in Leh area after King Jamyang Namgyal was defeated in a war with Baltistan. Jamyang Namgyal was taken prisoner and Ali Sher Khan, the Muslim ruler of Skardu, offered his daughter Ghyal Khatun to him in marriage. Ali Sher Khan sent off a bevy of Muslim maids, a host of male servants and a band of Balti musicians back to Ladakh with marriage party. Ghyal Khatun retained her religion until her death and private mosque were built for her and her servants in Leh and Shey. Later Muslim queens of Ladakh used to offer prayer in these mosques. The Muslim musicians settled in Leh and their status was elevated to "Kharmon or Royal Musicians" (Zain-ul-Aabedin Aebedi: 2009, 34).

Several hundred Balti Muslims are thought to have migrated from Baltistan and Purig to Shey and Chhushot (Villages in Ladakh), during the reign of Jamyang Namgyal. According to oral tradition, the king also granted land to Kashmiri Muslim traders to settle permanently in Leh. These traders were called Kharchongpa or royal traders. They received special trade privileges in return for some service to royal family. The Tibeto- Mongolian invasion in 1681 strengthened the position of Muslim in Ladakh. The invading army advanced to Leh and Basgo. Failing to repulse the enemy, Shakya Gyasto, the prime minister of Ladakh, went down to Kashmir to seek assistance from the Mughal Emperor Aurengjeb. In 1684, a large army under the command of Nawab Khan was sent to Ladakh and combined Tibeto- Mongolian forces were routed and fled to Tibet. In return for his assistance, the Mughal Emperor placed severe condition on Delegs Namgyal, the King of Ladakh. The King had to issue currency in the name of Emperor and he himself had to become a Muslim with the name of 'Aqbat Mohmud Khan.' He also had to introduce Khutba or the mention of the Emperor in

the seventh century .With the decline of the Kushan empire at the end of the second century A.D till the 7th, not much is known about Ladakh (C.L. Datta: 1980, 229).

Rise of Islam in Kashmir and its Extension to Ladakh

By the end of 14th century, Muslim Rule was established over Kashmir, this brought a new element of instability to the Western Himalayan region because of the imperialistic trends of some of the Kashmiri Sultans, under the mantle of Holy war (jihad) against the infidels (Petesch: 1939, 22).

Their first target was Baltistan and in 1405, King Sikander of Kashmir (1394-1416 A.D.) conquered Baltistan and converted its Buddhist population into Muslim (Zain-ul-Aabedin Aebedi: 2009, 5). Mir Syed Ali Hamdani was the first to make Muslim converts in Ladakh after his second visit to Kashmir, when he passed through Ladakh in 1394 A.D. when he was on his way to Kashgar, and Chinese Turkestan. He is often described as the founder of the Islamic faith in Kashmir and, according to local tradition, built several mosques in Ladakh including Padum (Zanskar) and one in Shey, which was the capital of Ladakh at that time.

Syed Ali Hamdani was followed by his principal disciple, Syed Mohammed Noor Baksh, who visited Purig, Baltistan and Ladakh. The reference to Baltistan is significant because Baltistan and Ladakhi are closely related ethnologically and their culture, language and mode of living are by and large identical.

In his youth, Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin of Kashmir is reported to have ordered the expulsion of the Mystic Sheikh Zain Shahivalli for showing disrespect to him. The Sheikh went to Ladakh and converted many people to Islam. In 1505 Shamsud Din Iraqi, a noted Shia Scholar, Visited Baltistan and Purig. He was responsible for spreading Shia cult in Kashmir and converted the overwhelming population of Muslims in Baltistan to his school of thought.

According to Abdul Ghani Sheikh, the propagation of Islam in the Leh area appears to have suffered a setback in the 16th century, for we find no reference to mosques, Muslims or their culture in Tarikh-i- Rashidi who invaded and briefly conquered

Friday sermon in the mosque. Prince Jigsdol was taken to Kashmir as a hostage to make sure that the King stuck to his commitment.

After the final conquest of Ladakh by the Dogra army in 1842, some Muslim soldiers remained in Leh and settle down there permanently. Many Muslims of Kashmir or Turki origin (from Xinjiang) married Ladakhi Buddhist women. Their offsprings are known as "Arghon". In the late 19th century and early 20th century, the Arghon produced several distinguished adventures and enterprising travellers who accompanied Expedition to Central Asia and Tibet as caravan leader, interpreters, guilds and porters. Galwan Rasul, Mohammed Isa and Qalam Rasul were the most famous of these. There were occasional conflict between the rulers of Ladakh and those of Skardu and Purig but these did not leave any lasting legacy of bitterness among the warring groups and there were long period of co-existence and friendship.

Tibetan influence on Ladakh's religion

Tibetan influence crept in slowly between 7th and the 8th century. During the mid seventh century, at the time of the reign of King *Songstan Gampo* of Central Tibet, the Tibetan nomads of Changthang probably intermarried with the Mon- Dard population (Ladakhis) and allowed a trading or bartering system to develop (Siddiq Wahid: 1981, 15). But the form of Buddhism which is known as Mahayana Buddhism came from Tibet to Ladakh by the great Buddhist saint *Padmasambhava* who came in the eight century, along with Bhikshu Santaraksta, firmly established Buddhism during the reign of the Tibetan emperor Trisong Detsen (Shakspo Nawang Tsering: 1990, 276). According to Luciano Petesch, "In the 8th century Ladakh was involved in a clash between Tibetan expansion pressing from the East and Chinese influence exerted from Central Asia" (Petesch: 1977, 9). But due to clear reference of Ladakh in any of the chronicles the fate of Ladakh cannot be ascertained during the 7th, 8th and 9th centuries, but it is apparent that due to its geographical situation it could never keep aloof. Lucaino Petesch further states that, "During the second half and the first half of the 9th century Ladakh must have remained under the loose suzerainty of Tibet" (Petesch: 1977, 12).

However, it is important to note that Ladakh was not under the Tibetan control at this time and Tibet's control over Ladakh was quite nominal and it did not fall under the territory controlled by the Tibetan army (Petesch: 1939, 189). Before the advent of Buddhism the religion in Tibet was that of 'Bon chos' or 'Bon religion'. Different scholars vary on the exact period when Buddhism entered Tibet. According to David Macdonald, "The earliest form of worship in Tibet was known as Bon, which flourished all the country until the introduction of Buddhism in the eighth century" (David Macdonald: 1997, 1). Tibet received Buddhism at a much later date (7th century A.D) under the impact of Indian culture and religion. Tibet became a stronghold of Buddhism after it disappeared in its last Indian centres in Kashmir, Bihar and Bengal. However, the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet is assumed to be between the 7th and the 8th century (including Snellgrove and Skorupski). In case of Tibet it was *Strongstang-gyampo's* descendant *Thri-sron-de-stan* who persuaded the Guru *Padmasabhava* or Guru *Rinpoche* as called by the Buddhist to visit Tibet and it was under him that Buddhism flourished in Tibet, he founded monasteries all over Tibet, translated many Sanskrit works into Tibetan. Regarding *Padma Sambhava* Major Gompertz, M.L.A writes in his book that, "Thereafter he installed Buddha's image in the middle of the monasteries he founded, converted the local priests into monks-lamas, as they are called in Tibet and lo, behold! Tibet became a Buddhist country" (Major Gompertz: 1928, 91).

Under the Tibetan King *Strongsten-Gampo* the faith became the State religion of Tibet in about A.D 650. Tibetan form of Buddhism first came to Tibet and then to Ladakh. Charles. A. Sherring summarises in one paragraph how Tibetan Buddhism reached Ladakh, according to him, "King *Sron Tsan Gampo* sent a messenger from Tibet to India who, in 650 A.D approximately, returned and converted the land to Buddhism of the Indian type, and introduced an alphabet modelled on the Hindi characters of that period, and published the first literature of the Tibetan language. These efforts were supplemented a century later by the reigning monarch of that time, who called from India the famous Guru *Padma-Sambhava*, who forthwith on his arrival stopped human sacrifice and cannibalism amongst the *Bonpas* and introduced what is now known as Lamaism, and this teacher has since been deified and receives in many quarters even greater worship than Buddha himself" (Charles. A. Sherring: 1905: 81).

The initial phase of spreading of Buddhism in Tibet came to an end when King Lang-Dar-ma (836-842, ascended the throne in Tibet, he was dead set against destroying Buddhism and he did till some extent but eventually in 842 he was assassinated and after that Tibet broke up into small principalities (The Chronicles of Ladakh, 1926, 113.)

It was not until the eleventh century that the influence of Buddhism began to increase again in Tibet. New translations of the scriptures, especially tantras, were produced, and new schools formed based on tantric lineages from India. This is known as the second transmission of Buddhism into Tibet. The most important of the new schools were the *Sakya*, the *Kagyü* and the *Geluk*, while those who adhered to the lineages of the older lineages were known as *Nyingma*, “the old ones.” Prior to the tenth century, references to Ladakh in inscriptions are rather rare. However, it was only in the first half of the tenth century when a prince of Tibetan origin called *Skid-de- Nyi-ma-mgon* founded the first Ladakhi dynasty of Tibetan origin that the process of ‘Tibetanisation’ became swift. *Kyi-de Nyi-ma-gon* was the ruler of not only West Tibet, but also of Ladakh to the west and of Zanskar, Spiti, and Lahul south of the Himalaya. When *Nimagon* founded the western Tibetan kingdom and became the ruler of Ladakh he did not find any trace of Tibetan rule in Ladakh (C.L. Dutta: 1971, 117).

At the same time, it appears that Indian cultural and political influences on Ladakh and Tibet declined rapidly after 1300, due to the wholesale destruction of Buddhist religious centres in India. Buddhism virtually disappeared from the subcontinent except in parts of the sub-Himalayan hill area.

“The royal dynasty of Ladakhi monarchs started with King *Skid-de-Nyi-ma-mgon* (c.900-930 A.D). He had three sons and gave each of them a separate territory to rule over, to the eldest *Pal-de Rig-pa Maryul- Ladakh*, to the second *bKra-shis-mGon* Guge and Purang and to the youngest *IDe-gtzug mGon* he gave Zanskar including Spiti and Spiti-Igcos” (Dr. Nawang Tsering: 1979, 8). From then on, Ladakh began to look increasingly towards central Tibet, and monarchy remained an institution for the government which protected the state religion Buddhism. The rulers of Guge had close relations with Ladakh from the 10th Century onwards.

Buddhists Sects (Kargyudpa and Gelugpa)

In order to evaluate the cultural influence of Tibet over Ladakh, it becomes necessary to discuss the different sects in Tibet which were later incorporated in Ladakh also. During the tenth and eleventh century Lamaism in Tibet received great impetus. Consequently, there was a fundamental transformation in cultural orientation from Indian to Tibetan. The *Nyingmapa* is the oldest sect in Tibet which is directly based on the teachings of *Padmasambhava* who introduced Buddhism in Tibet in the eighth century A.D, and is also called *Guru Rinpoche* by the Tibetans, then comes the *Gelugpa*.

“The Tibetan school of Buddhism *Gelugpa* was founded in the 14th Century by *Tshongkapa* (1357-1419). It spread rapidly from its original monastery at Ganden (founded in 1409 by *Tsongkapa*) near Lhasa, to become widespread and politically powerful institution that had ‘brought over’ monasteries throughout Tibet and surrounding areas” (Martin A. Mills: 2003, 20). The Kargyu-pa Sect is said to have been founded in 1050 by a Tibetan lama Marpa, then there is the Sakya pa sect which was very popular in the 13th century but declined gradually. All the four sects of Buddhism in Tibet mentioned above are represented in Ladakh also. However, it is important to take note of the different sects of Buddhism in Ladakh. The Ladakhis follow the Mahayana form of Tibetan Buddhism. The four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism are *Nyingma-pa*, *Kar-gyud-pa*, *Sakya-pa* and *Gelug-pa*. The oldest sect is the *Ningma-pa*. The *Kar-gyu-pa* sect or school of Oral Tradition is said to have been founded in AD 1050 by the Tibetan lama *Marpa*, Another sect *Saskya-pa* or *Skaya-pa* was founded in AD 1701.

“The *Kar-gyud-pa* sect considered the Dharama Raja of Bhutan to be their head and controlled a majority of Ladakhi monasteries” (Thomas A. Marks: 1977, 54). These sects are known as the ‘Red Hat’ Sects. Generally the Kings of Ladakh were the patrons of the *Kar-gyud-pa* sect. A number of important monasteries are founded by this sect the most important being the famous and influential Hemis monastery and the fourth sect is the *Gelugpa* sect called the ‘Yellow Hat sect’ which was founded in Tibet by *Tsong Khapa* in the fourteenth century.

According to Jamyang Gyaltsan, “he started the great prayer festival at Lhasa and built the monastery of Ganden in Lhasa. The monasteries of Sera, Drepung, and Tashi Lhonpo in Tibet were built by his disciples and they all fall under the Yellow Hat sect” (Jamyang Gyaltsan: 1993). Tsongkapa sent a religious mission to Ladakh through two ascetics who arrived in Ladakh. Jamyang Gyaltsan further tells us that the ascetics were, “Carrying with them religious statues to be given to the Ladakhi King at that time *Trak-bum-de* (1400-1410) who accepted the statue and indicated the importance of propagating the *Gelug* sect traditions in Ladakh. He therefore patronised a Lama *Lhawang Lodoe* who built the monasteries in Nubra, Zaskar and the main monastery of the Gelugpa at Spituk (Jamyang Gyaltsan: 1993). “In Tibet he built the temple of Gahldan, and was the first great abbot, who occupied the Gahldan chair, which has been filled by a succession of abbots down to the present day (Cunningham: 1854, 368).

It is speculated that it was the result of this mission that the King adopted the doctrines of the reformed sect and issued the Mulbe edict aiming at abolishing the ritualistic practices of the Dards specially the animal sacrifices (Francke: 1906, 75-76). The followers of this sect began to look to the Dalai Lama as their spiritual head and were ordained to live a life of celibacy and asceticism. It is given in (Pettesch: 1947, 219), that, “the last King of the first Ladakhi dynasty is also said to have sent rich presents to the first Dalai Lama. Therefore, there existed in Ladakh many sects of Buddhism which mainly came from Tibet but the two prominent sects were the “Yellow” or “Gelug-pa” sect who looked up upon Dalai Lama as their spiritual head. And the second was “Kar-gyud-pa” or “Red hat” sect who considered the Dharama Raja of Bhutan to be their head.

It is called yellow and red hat sects, respectively, because each monk from each sect wears the yellow or red colour robes according to their sects. The differences between the two sects are more of form than substance. It was the difference between the two sects which led to religious quarrels between the two and this along with some political problems which led to the Tibeto-Mongoloid War in 1681-84 between Tibet and Ladakh when the former attacked Ladakhis at Basgo village in Ladakh along with the Mongol troops.

Even *the Chronicles of Ladakh* states that one of the causes of the Tibetan- Ladakhi- Mughal war of 1681-84 in which Ladakh lost all its territory West of Mayum Pass was religion (C.L.Datta: 1971, 86).

Many monks from Ladakh desirous of obtaining the degrees of Lamaist philosophy flocked the monasteries of Ganden, Sera, Tashilonpo, Samye, Sakya, Samding, Mindoling etc to name a few (Martin A. Mills: 2003, 4). Many Tibetan missionaries came to Ladakh and it was between ninth and the mid-fifteenth century that the first text on Tibetan Buddhism were copied in Ladakh most famous among those instrumental in this process was scholar- monk *Lotsawa* (Tibetan Translators) *Rinchen Zangpo* from Tibet, he built many monuments, temples and Stupas many of which still can be seen in Ladakh. Buddhism spread throughout Ladakh and took hold of the area especially in the 10th century. Thupstan Paldan (A noted Ladakhi scholar on Ladakhi religion and history).

Luciano Petesch in his book, "The Kingdom of Ladakh C.950-1842 A.D", validates Thupastan Paldan's (a noted scholar on Buddhism) statement when he asserts, "Indeed, the penetration of Buddhism into Ladakh is closely connected with the famous *Lotsawa Rin-c`-en-bzan-gpo* (958-1055). He founded many temples in Guge and Spiti; also in Ladakh popular tradition attributes to him several shrines". These religious missionaries were instrumental in spreading Mahayana form of Buddhism throughout Ladakh and they also constructed many monasteries in and around Ladakh.

This King *Sron Tsan Gampo* sent a messenger from Tibet to India who, in 650 A.D, returned and converted the land to Buddhism of the Indian type, and introduced an alphabet modelled on the Hindi characters of that period, and published the first literature of the Tibetan language. These efforts were supplemented a century later by the reigning monarch of that time, who called from India the famous *Guru Padma-Sambhava*, who forthwith on his arrival stopped human sacrifice and Cannibalism amongst the Bonpas and introduced what is now known as Lamaism, and this teacher has since been deified and receives in many quarters even greater worship than Buddha himself.

However, by the 12th Century Buddhism disappeared from Kashmir and with that cultural flow from Kashmir also ceased for ever and the Ladakhi's began to look increasingly towards Tibet for religious inspiration. The Himalayan Kingdom of Ladakh came under the influence of Toling. Guge's great religious centre (L. A. Waddell: 1934, 143).

With the decline in Buddhist influence from India as well as Kashmir, Ladakh came increasingly under the religious and cultural orbit of Central Tibet in the late twelfth and the thirteen centuries. In West Tibet and Ladakh, where cultural, social, and religious patterns from central Tibet became ever more dominant after the thirteenth century. By the fourteenth century, the area had been effectively "Tibetanized," and the traditional relations with India and Kashmir had been drastically circumscribed (Fisher: 1963, 23).

By far the greatest Tibetan influence introduced in Ladakh has been that of Tibetan Buddhism. Ladakh also advocates Tibetan Buddhism and some *Khu-shog* (*sKu-shongs*), or Head Lamas of Ladakh, trace their genealogical tree to Yu-thong Yon-tan Gonpo the Tibetan medical genius (K. Dhondup: 1977, 73).

Many travellers who travelled from Srinagar Leh to Tibet and other Central Asian countries in their way when they passed Leh encountered a predominant Tibetan Buddhist influence on Ladakh religion on their art, literature, scriptures buildings places of worship and they also came across Tibetan monuments and stone inscriptions carved out in Tibetan language. For example, E.F Knight on his journey to Leh states in his book, "The most interesting object in the place was a library of Thibetian. These books, together with a number of rudely-printed papers, of the nature of tracts, one of which I carried away, containing some of the characters similar to that on the inscribed stones, appear to have been printed at Lassa, the capital of Thibet Proper, and from there, the head-quarters of the religion in these parts, all the musical instruments and other paraphernalia belonging to the temples are also sent" (Knight: 1905, 134).

Ladakhi Monks going to Lhasa

From the 13th Century, the Kings and Gompas of Ladakh started sending novices to Tibet to study Tibetan religious texts and to receive higher qualifications in theology (Abdul Ghani Sheikh). Even Sven Hedin gives a brief account of the Ladakhi monks whom he encountered when he travelled to Lhasa in the monastery of Tashilunpo he states in his book that, “One of the houses was inhabited by student monks from the environs of Leh, Spittok, and Tikze, and we went into the small dark cubicles, hardly larger than my tent” (Hedin: 1909, 358). After the 15th century all new *gompas* (Monasteries) in Ladakh were founded as representatives of one Tibetan monastic order or another.

From here starts the importance of the Tibetan missionaries who gave impetus to the spread of Mahayana Buddhism in the region and the role of Ladakhi monks who went for higher monastic training to Tibet. Similarly, (Petesch: 1977, 166), validates Ghani Sheikh’s statement and asserts that “It was perhaps the missionary zeal of the ‘Bri-gun-pa (sect of *Kargyud-pa*). Their main centres being in Lamayuru, a village in Ladakh, that persuaded the King at that time *dNos-Grub-mgon* to lay down for the first time the rule that Ladakhi novices should go to *dBus* and *gTsan* (Both in Tibet) for higher studies and ordinations. Regarding the period when Ladakhi lamas went to Tibet for higher monastic training the Chronicles of Ladakh also mentions that, it started during the reign of King *dNos-Grub-mgon*” (Francke: 1926, 36). The reign of the thirteenth king in this Ladakhi dynasty, *Lha-chen Ngo-trup* (Lha-chen Dngos-grab, ca. 1290-1320), was notable for one important religious development that must have had political connotations as well. Prior to his reign, the Buddhist monastic system in Ladakh had been closely tied to that in Guge, in whose monastic institutions Ladakhi novices were trained. Lha-chen Ngo-trap, however, initiated a system under which novices were sent to monasteries in central Tibet for religious education.

Tibetan Buddhist monasteries were the cornerstone of Tibetan religion, culture, education and knowledge. Ladakhi monks from various monasteries went to Tibet for monastic training there was no record as to how many of them went to Tibet for

education except those sent by the royal house which were recorded. Lamas as well as Monasteries played an important role in Ladakhi society as stated by, according to C.L Datta, "Monasteries played an important part in society, and their influence pervaded in every phase of a Buddhist Ladakhis life" (C.L. Datta: 1973, 25).

According to Cunningham's estimate of the revenue of Ladakh before the Dogra conquest 4,000 households out of the total of 24,000 were assigned to the monasteries (Cunningham: 1854, 270). Some monasteries like Hemis, the monastery of the royal house, held extensive properties (Hedin: 1913, 110; Knight: 1893, 193).

It is important to highlight the importance of Ladakhi lamas in Ladakhi society here because after the Chinese takeover Tibet in 1962, the Ladakhi lamas returned back to their homeland and it was them who played an instrumental role in spreading Mahayana Buddhism in Ladakh. According to, Janet Rizvi, "Four months journey notwithstanding, there was constant exchange of personnel between the monasteries of Tibet and Ladakh. The Tibetan monks bringing the dogmas and traditions received at the centre of this religious empire, and Ladakhi ones travelling to the centre to absorb them" (Janet Rizvi: 1983, 136).

Monasteries were so influential in both Tibet and Ladakh that they even owned lands and property, of the villagers many of the monasteries were involved in petty trade which took place when monks went to Tibet for training monasteries engaged in trade by sending articles for trade with the monks to Tibet. According to E.F. Knight, "These working monks attended to the temporal interests of the community; they cultivated land, carried trade, collected rent from the tenants of the monastery, travelled through the villages to beg for alms for the brotherhood" (Knight: 1893, 129). Nevertheless, it is true that monasteries were important economic centres. The monastery system played its central role in the economy of Lamaist areas. The abler monks and laymen alike could derive material benefit along with corresponding religious merit. In practice, this monastic economy fostered trading relations both within and across Tibetan borders.

Few of the several monasteries in Ladakh from where monks went to Tibet to study Buddhism were Lamayuru, Rigzong, Likir, Phyang, Spituk, Thiksey and Disket in Nubra the majority of monks were from the Gelugpa sect. Dr. Nawang Tsering

mentions that, "At that time, it was a necessary condition for every monk to go to Tibet for higher education in order to attain a degree in Buddhist philosophy" (Nawang Tsering: 1979, 22). Some of the important Monasteries in Tibet which were important centres of Mahayana Buddhist centres were Samye (Founded by Guru *Padmasambhava*) is also the oldest monastery in Tibet, Reting, Sakya, Dikung, Ganden, Drepung, Sera, and one of the most important places which was the religious centre was Tashilhunpo situated near the bank of the river Tsang-po. This great monastery along with Sera, Ganden and Drepung belong to the Gelugpa Sect of Mahayana Buddhism and is the seat of the *Panchen Lama*⁶ (Nawang Tsering: 1979, 18).

It is also noted that the abbot of Hemis Monastery in Ladakh, though a follower of the Red Sect, many times visited Lhasa and Tashilonpo in connection with receiving ordination for a batch of young novices (C.L Datta: 1972, 88). The early system of novices being sent to monasteries in central Tibet for training lasted till 1962 and must have been the most effective of the various channels through which Tibet's religious culture was transmitted to Ladakh.

Indeed it was true as the Ladakhi monks were sent to various religious establishments and Monasteries in Tibet where they received higher monastic training. This tradition of Ladakhi monks going to various monastic institutions in Tibet continued for over hundred years and resulted in the development of many monasteries in Ladakh and it was eventually stopped when Communist China took over Tibet in 1962 and borders were closed down.

This development could have had a drastic impact on the standard of monastic education in Ladakh, but fortunately some important developments took place such as the monks who returned to Ladakh from Tibet after the 1950's played a major role in educating young monks in Ladakh as a result of which in 1959 a Buddhist philosophy school known as the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies was founded at Leh by *Bakula Rinpoche* (the Head lama of Ladakh), which was initially run by the monks, but it was later taken over by the government of India. Many major monasteries in Ladakh set up their own schools in their monasteries to educate the young pupils.

⁶ The Panchen Lama is the second most senior lama in the hierarchy of Tibetan Buddhism first being the Dalai Lama.

Therefore, it is beyond doubt that the monastic organizations and monastic education played an important role in the development of close relationship between Ladakh and Buddhist Tibet. It is also important to note here that it was due to the extensive and immeasurable cultural and religious ties which existed between Ladakh and Buddhist Tibet and the involvement of Monks and monasteries in petty trade at both sides, that the trade between the two country's gained momentum, which initially started at a slow pace but gained momentum in the late 1680's after which trade between the two became an important activity.

Ladakh maintained and sustained to strengthen its cultural and religious ties with Tibet and due to this fact Ladakh continued to have mutually beneficial trade links with Tibet. Later in the early 1680's as a result of the Tibeto- Mongoloid War trade missions started to go to Tibet known as the *Lopchak* mission which was carried on third year to pay respect to the Dalai Lama in Tibet and the Tibetans sent in return of the mission another mission to Ladakh known as the *Chapa* mission which was sent to Ladakh by the Tibetans it consisted mainly of 'Brick Tea' which was brought to Ladakh for sale. These two missions were the clear manifestations of close relationship between Tibet and Ladakh. Although these missions were commercial in nature the *Lopchak* was considered by the Tibetan Government as a tribute bearing embassy to the Dalai Lama.

According to Margaret W. Fisher, Leo E. Rose, and Robert A. Huttenback, the "tribute" was not paid to the civil authority in but to the Dalai Lama, and what it symbolized was Ladakh's recognition of the Dalai Lama's spiritual and hierarchical authority as well as the supremacy of the Yellow sect over all other Tibetan Buddhist sects (Fisher: 1963, 41). There were many instances when Monks when were appointed as the head of the *Lopchak* mission and sent to Tibet. For example, in 1881 the head lama of a large monastery in Leh was appointed as the *Lopchak*.⁷

The spiritual supremacy of the Dalai Lama at times influenced the policies of its neighbour Ladakh. Both Ladakh and Bhutan on some occasions, appealed to Lhasa for the settlement of their ruler's succession. We also find members of the royal family of Ladakh, performing the funeral rites of the kings at Lhasa. Although,

⁷ Foreign Department Political Consultations A, From Hennery (Officer Special Duty) in Kashmir to AC Layll, Secy, Govt of India. Feb.1881, Nos. 136-144,

religion played a very important role in the in Ladakh in the daily and social life of the people but in political affairs, it did not assume the same importance as it did in Tibet. Even though the high lamas often participated in the affairs of the state, yet all officials of the government were laymen or Kings. This was unlike Tibet, where the administration was run by the monk officials. A very prominent example is the Dalai Lama of Tibet, who was an incarnate Lama and the supreme controller of spiritual and temporal affairs, whereas in Ladakh the supreme ruler was the King.

Pilgrimage and Local Economy

Pilgrimage as a devotional exercise and had always been an important aspect of Tibetan culture, there were many places where natural energy were thought to enrich the pilgrims *Karma(deeds)* and mountains and monasteries and caves were the places where pilgrims would proceed for the attainment of peace. Near these places sprang up brisk trade carried on by a host of monks and itinerant traders. According to the religious calendar trade fairs was arranged and the place would develop into a seasonal market place characterized by a harmonious blend of commercial enterprise and spiritual devotion.

“What makes pilgrimage relevant in this context of study is its close relation to economic activity, in particular trade. It cannot be denied that the large flow of pilgrims generated by Lhasa and a few other centres contributed to the growth of a network of international exchange, spanning the length and breath of Central Asia (K. Dowman: 1988, 32).

Lhasa being the supreme focus of pilgrimage in the Tibetan Buddhist world, attracted pilgrims from all over and Buddhists in large numbers use to reach Lhasa partly because of pilgrimage and trade simultaneously and to pay homage to Tibet’s highest reincarnation the Dalai Lama. Ladakhis would specially go there during major festivals such as the great *Monlam prayer* and the *Losar (New Year Celebrations)*,

which is celebrated both in Tibet and Ladakh according to the Tibetan calendar⁸ (Walter Abose: 1938, 378).

Also, as already mentioned earlier that the monasteries were also involved in petty trade and traders from the monasteries went to Tibet along with the lamas who regularly proceeded to Tibet in large numbers for higher education all these facts point to the conclusion that the deep religious and cultural proximity and the exchange of culture and customs between Tibet and Ladakh gave impetus to trade between the two. Tashilonpo monastery (the seat of the Panchen Lama near Shigatse), also drew tens and hundreds of pilgrims from Ladakh. Thousands of pilgrims from Ladakh and other places came to places such as the sacred mountains of *Kailash*, *Kawakarpo*, and *Takpa Siri*.

Charles A. Sherring gives a vivid account of the pilgrims that thronged in Western Tibet on the occasions of different fairs, he states that the pilgrims come from the most outlying parts of Central Asia to Tibet on the occasion of '*Kumb Mela*' which takes place twelfth year. The pilgrims start from their home with their cattle which comprises mainly of Yaks, sheeps and Goats and they also load merchandise on them in order to barter them with the goods of other pilgrims who join them in Tibet. The pilgrims used this opportunity to trade their local goods with that of other states who joined them in this endeavour. These pilgrims also constantly faced the wrath of the dacoits on their way to Tibet as their goods were often looted by them. Sherring states how on one occasion he met pilgrims from Kham (east of Lhasa), Mongolia, Lhasa, Ladakh and from different places. The markets of Gyanema and Taklakot at that time were full of pilgrims and devotees who successfully combined religion with little business, the numbers of these traders influenced trade as they exchanged goods with each other along with fulfilling their duties as pilgrims and devotees (Charles A Sherring: 1906, 284).

⁸ Originally the Ladakhis celebrated their New Year in the 12th month of their calendar as is the custom in other parts of Tibet, but in 1841-42 when the Dogras invaded Western Tibet and subjugated it, the Ladakhis decided to celebrate their new year in the 10th month so as to enable them to fight the invader. It is said that a large number of the Ladakhis having determined to take their wives and children along with them to the war, they were finally induced to forgo fighting altogether rather than expose their families to the dangers and rigours of war. The Ladakhi New Year has therefore been observed in the 10th month ever since.

Thus, it is obvious that pilgrimage not only gave impetus to religious and cultural exchange but it also led to the development of petty trade between the religious devotees who came primarily for the purpose of pilgrimage and to pay homage to their gods. Therefore, it is eminent that local trade and pilgrimage went hand in hand.

Dalai Lama's influence on Tibet and Ladakh

The 14th Dalai Lama is the political leader of Tibet and the spiritual head of both Tibet as well as Ladakh. When the Chinese took over Tibet the Dalai Lama came to India in 1959 and was followed by thousands of Tibet who came along with him. Pandit Nehru welcomed the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan people who fled from Tibet and gave the Tibetans lands to live in and re-establish themselves. Since 1959 till today the Dalai Lama is living in exile in India thousands of Tibetans have settled down in Ladakh itself. It will not be wrong to say that the Dalai Lama is the “Dharmic Head” of the Buddhist Ladakhis. The Dalai Lama visits Ladakh every year and travels to places like Nubra, Changthang, Bodh Kharbu, Zaskar and Leh. He delivers sermons and preaches the teachings of Buddha in these villages of Ladakh where people turn up in large numbers from every nook and corner of Ladakh to attend to the Dalai Lamas sermons. The Dalai Lamas birthday is celebrated every year on the 6th of July in Ladakh where around 12,000 Ladakhi Buddhists assemble at his residence in Choglamsar village and offer prayers which is followed by Dalai Lamas sermon. All this has contributed to cultural development in the Ladakh area. Dalai Lama's preaching's broadcasted through local television and radio. Compact discs of his lectures and teachings are also available everywhere. A large number of Buddhist Ladakhis as well as the Tibetans go to Bodhgaya yearly for the “Kalchakra ceremony” where thousands of Buddhist devotees come together from all over the world to listen to the preaching's of the Dalai Lama and enrich there religious culture. There is no doubt that Dalai Lama holds a very important position in terms of a religious leader for the Tibetans as well as the Ladakhis and the Buddhists all over the world.

Tibetan Influence on the Social Customs of Ladakh

Tibet has a very considerable influence on the social customs of the Ladakhis which is clearly manifested in the day to day activities of the Ladakhis even today. Fraternal Polyandry was actively practised in Ladakh until the early 1940's. In Tibet the custom of polyandry, was largely, though not universally practised (Hamilton Bower: 1893, 402). The religious mask dances, folk songs, including the Gesar saga of Tibet are extremely popular in Ladakh (K. Dhondup: 1977, 69). The religious dance and music of Ladakh is inspired from the Tibetan one and is identical to that on one of Tibet so is the Mask dance which is famous in Ladakh and is performed mostly on special religious occasions is same as that of the Tibetans.

Other things which are in common are the death rites, the religious buildings such as Gompas, The *Khang* (God houses), Chorten (A Pyramid erected in the honour of Buddha or Bodhisattavas), Mani is a low stone wall in the middle of the road, a few feet to a mile in length, the Stupa's and mention can also be made of the butter lamps or *Chodmey*, as they are called in Ladakh which are lamps offered to the gods all these things are identical with the Tibetan religion. Even the Ladakhi dress which is known as *goncha* is an adaptation of the Tibetan dress which is *Chuba*. Both Tibet and Ladakh also share some common festivals like the birthday of the Buddha and the *Losar* or 'New Year Celebrations. The Ladakhis count their years according to the Tibetan Calendar which is followed by many Ladakhis even today. Not only the dress and customs there is similarity in the food habits also the alcoholic beverage called "Chang" is drunk by people in both Ladakh as well as Tibet. From minute things like this to the similarity and homogeneity in culture and religion Tibet and Ladakh share very ties. Ladakhi language, text and script are purely Tibetan (K. Dhondup: 1977, 71). Cunningham states that the origin of the Tibetan language was introduced into Tibet from Kashmir by Thumbi Sambhota (Minister of Strongstan Gampo, ruler of Tibet), between 549 and 649 (Cunningham: 1854, 359).

The original language of Ladakh, especially of the strategically important town of Leh, was Tibetan and even today Zanskar, Spiti, Khunnu (Bushahar), Mayul Ladakh, Purig and Baltistan are known as Western Tibetan speaking areas". Although with the

course of time, the local Tibetan dialect did assimilate non Tibetan words, obscuring the Tibetan words but originally from centuries the Ladakhi dialect is that of the Tibetan form. The literary Tibetan style has remained dominant in Ladakh. The languages of the Balti people of Ladakh who are Muslims is also a shared heritage of an early stage of Tibetan language.

Ladakhi and Balti are often closest to the 'original' Tibetan language (this opinion has been given by Thupstan Paldan) but on the other hand, one may also come across the idea that the spoken language or "phalskat" (spoken Ladakhi language) is but a deviation of the 'original language', which is generally understood to be the religious books language or "choskat" (Classical Tibetan) (Bettina Zeisler: 2005, 41).

John Bray, in his article looks at the linguistic evidence for Ladakh's links with Tibet and eventually, draws a conclusion that Ladakhi spoken Language has its origin in the early stage of the Tibetan language from which Amdo Tibetan or old Tibetan developed (Bray: 2005, 3). Alexander Cunningham asserts that, "It was a national bond of union between two people speaking the same language, and holding the same faith" (Cunningham: 1854, 261). He refers here to the Tibetans and the Ladakhis. According to Abdul Ghani Shiekh, the Tibetan and Ladakhi scripts are modified versions of *devangri* which was introduced by Thonmi Samghota, the talented minister of *Strongs-tan-Gyampo* the great King of Tibet. The Tibetan culture has provided Ladakh with the Western Tibetan dialect which is still spoken today by Ladakhi Muslims as much as the Buddhists. So profound, is the effect of Tibetan influence on Ladakh that it is clearly visible on Art and architecture of Ladakh.

The architecture of Ladakh contains Tibetan and Indian influences, and reflects a deeply Buddhist approach. The arts of Tibet are mainly confined to paintings, sculptures, architecture and music. The theme of the art is mostly religious (David Macdonald: 1981, 25). All these form of Tibetan arts are reflected in the Ladakhi art and architecture and also in their day to day life. The houses, monasteries and *Dukhangs* (The main prayer room) all of them reflect Tibetan architecture and style. The finest example is the Leh palace which stands tall over the Leh city and is typically inspired from the Potala palace at Lhasa in Tibet and it clearly belongs to the same architectural tradition as that of the Potala.

According to, Janet Rizvi, “With the exception of whatever paintings and images remain in the earliest monasteries –those of *Rin-chen zang-po*’s time, of which *Alchi* is the prime example all the works of art in the *gompas* of Ladakh reflect the Tibetan style, and this is as true of work being done today as it is of past centuries” (Janet Rizvi: 1983, 135). Here Rizvi clearly reflects on the influence of Tibetan art on the monasteries of Ladakh except for that of Alchi monastery which has a predominant Kashmiri influence. She further goes on to say there is sameness in the murals in *gompas* of Tibet and Ladakh. The *Thangkas* (which are the devotional paintings on cloth) in Ladakh have similar style of art and is of the same tradition like those of the Tibetans.

According to Ghani Sheikh, “Central Asian art has had an impact on Ladakhi murals. The ancient Khotan School of arts in Central Asia was very famous. It was adopted by the Tibetans and later reached Ladakh” (Abdul Ghani Sheikh: 2002, 111). It was the Trans-Himalayas highway which gave identical culture to two isolated places Tibet and Ladakh, their cultures were related by a common ideology and economic system. The social structure of both centres was conditioned by Buddhist institutions. The entire region shared a common history shaped by Chinese, Turks and Tibetan peoples moved across the vast and formidable landscapes as merchants, missionaries and military men. This shows clearly that trade, religion and culture played a predominant role in increasing ties between Tibet and Ladakh.

According to Janet Rizvi, “The population of central and eastern Ladakh is preponderantly Tibetan racial stock, and the Ladakhi language is a dialect of the Tibetan.” She further asserts that even the architecture of Ladakh’s *gompas* and the Leh palace belong to the same architectural tradition as the Potala palace in Tibet (Janet Rizvi: 1983). Tibet has overwhelming influence on Ladakh’s religion and culture. Many foreign conquerors frequently attempted to force their subjects in Ladakh to convert from Buddhism for instance in 1405 King Sikander of Kashmir (1394-1416) conquered Baltistan and forcefully converted the Buddhist population into Islam which is still dominant there. But besides this many rulers came and conquered Ladakh and tried to convert the religion of Ladakh sometimes managed to force the Kings to convert the Gyalpos or the rulers into Islam. Although, this did

happen as in the case of Delegs Namgyal,⁹ but it did not last long and through all this Ladakh retained its identity as a Tibetan form of Mahayana Buddhist state, in most of the areas where Buddhist population was settled.

The history of Ladakh is also interwoven with that of the Tibetans. According to Moorcraft, "The earlier history of Ladakh is that of Tibet in general, as it originally formed one of the provinces of that kingdom, governed as to temporal matters by an independent prince, and in spiritual affairs by the Guru Lama, or chief pontiff of Lassa. Subsequently the Chinese extended their authority over Tibet, and appointed the temporal ruler, but Ladakh seems to have retained its own princes" (Moorcraft: 1841, 336). The state of government affairs in Ladakh was originally formed as one of the provinces of the Tibetan kingdom by a Tibetan prince (Skide- Nima-gon) but after the Chinese gained authority over Tibet in their governmental affairs and later completely occupied Tibet completely in 1959 throughout all these developments Ladakh remained first a monarchy, then under the Dogras, until finally after 1947 it became a part of the Indian territory of Jammu and Kashmir. But in cultural, spiritual and religious affairs no country has had a more profound and extreme impact than its eastern neighbour Tibet.

However, it is important to note that in case of Ladakh although extensive this 'tibetanisation' was and the extraordinary influence it had on Ladakh's culture, society and religion but it must be pointed out that the tibetanisation of Ladakh did not go to the extent of mirroring the Tibetan system of governing nor did it reflect in its politics. From the beginning of the tenth century up-to the last quarter of the seventeenth, the history of Ladakh remained interwoven with that of Western Tibet. During this period, Ladakh and Western Tibet remained were politically independent of Lhasa, though there was an identity in language and religion among the three (C.L Dutta: 1971). Ladakhi Buddhists have always looked up to Tibet for spiritual guidance and knowledge. Ladakh has had greater contact with Tibet than any other country besides India and the religion and culture which has had the maximum impact on Ladakh was that of Tibet. Although Tibetan religion and culture have elements of

⁹ After his defeat in the 1684 War, he was forced by the Mughal suzerain to accept Islam under the title of Aqbat Muhammad Khan.

both Indian and Chinese influence, the Tibetan religio-cultural influence which established itself in Ladakh was purely Tibetan.

All of Ladakh, Zaskar and parts of Lahoul and Zaskar were at one time or the other under the religious sway of Lhasa, and are still under the influence of Tibet which is reflected in their in religion, dress, language manner and temperament.

Thus, we can conclude that the introduction and consolidation of the Mahayana Buddhism into Tibet and its surrounding areas especially Ladakh besides cementing the cultural and religious ties between the two states eventually, produced a set of religious reforms and institutions which were unique in Asia. Also the development of a form of mass monasticism in Tibet and Ladakh channelled and utilised large sections of both the regions economy and its populace, with as much as 10-20% of the adult male population taking to monastic orders and getting involved in trade and barter.

I have already highlighted the role of the lamas who were engaged in petty trade and how pilgrimage and most importantly, the exchange of two state trade missions, *Lapchak* and *Chapa* played an important role in forging and deepening of the commercial relations between the two Himalayan principalities. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that the extensive and deep spiritual, cultural and religious bond between the two states determined the trade relations between the two or at least led to the carrying forward and continuation of the commercial relations between the two.

CHAPTER 4

TRADE RELATIONS

Historical trade routes across Asia brought about the union of people and shaped markets that were multinational areas of intercultural contact, which resulted in the travelling of commercial goods from one region to another often even beyond the individuals from that region itself, therefore, cultural contact between these regions came in the form of exchanged commodities rather than person-to-person interaction. Such was the case of Tibet and Ladakh. The Trans Himalayas formed the crossroads of many cultures and religious tradition.

The mountains surrounding Ladakh and passes through these mountains served as conduits for trade. As a result, the towns of Ladakh became marketplaces where trade South and Central Asia mingled and Ladakh became one of the lines of travels between south and central Asia, both its neighbour Tibet and Ladakh itself, were well supplied with many trade routes which facilitated trade between the two, on one hand and with other countries and provinces of India on the other hand. The geneses of trade in Ladakh are undocumented but certain stray references indicate to its well established existence in the early sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and it can be assumed on the basis that the petition of the people of Nubra to the King Tsewang Namgyal in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, to refrain from undertaking a campaign in Central Asia, was prompted by the concern that the trade on which their living depended should not be put at stake. The King Tsewang saw the point and he made war to the east, west and south, but he spared the north (Petesch: 1977, 32).

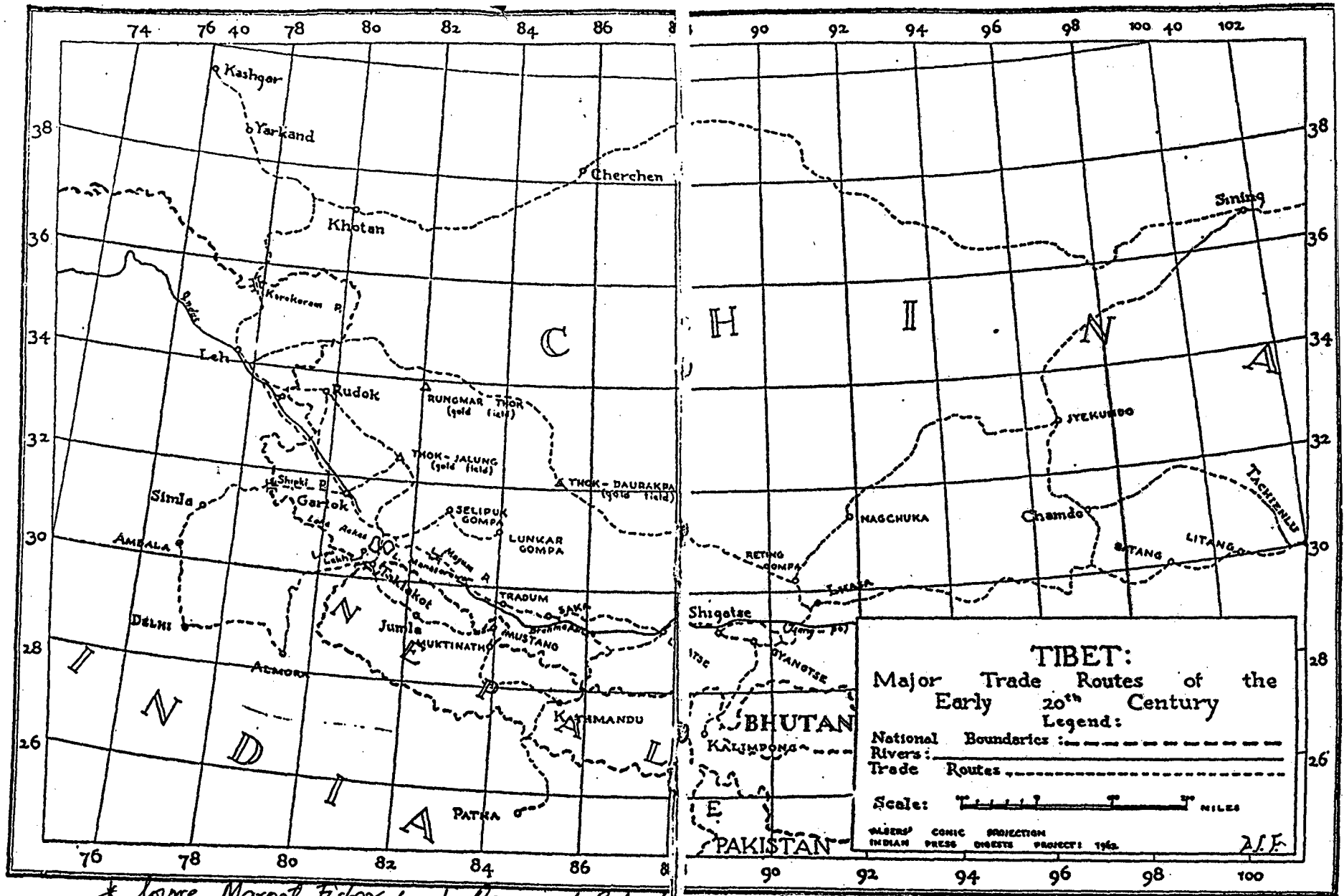
Trade Routes between Tibet and Ladakh

Before the 1950's both Tibet and Ladakh were involved in active trade and pilgrimage with each other. Ladakh being the famous transit emporium of trade between India and Central Asia had occupied the centre stage where traders and merchants from different countries and provinces like Yarkand (which was the nearest

big trading centre of Central Asia) Tibet, Central Asia, Khotan, Persia, China, Sinkinag and Russia and from the plains of India came with their caravans and assembled at Leh market and carried on trade and barter with each other. Ladakh was the 'transit emporium' through which trade was carried on from Central Asia to India. This was possible because Ladakh occupied a strategic geographic location and formed a meeting ground for Russia, India and China. Trade was an economic endeavour but along with that trade also resulted in the intermingling of people from different culture, religion, traditions and continents from time to time which further resulted in exchange of cultural and religious ideas along with the exchange of commodities and products. As Ladakh occupied for centuries an important staging post on a network of regional and international routes which linked Central Asia, Tibet and India. On the other hand the Tibetans too were active traders and were well supplied with trade routes. Both Tibet and Ladakh were connected by various trade routes which made trade and cross culture exchange feasible. Trade was a fundamental activity in the societies of both Ladakh and Tibet, as the economy of the major portion of the population on both sides sustained on trade.

In the case of Ladakh it is important to notice that main trade of Ladakh was through it not with it, although there were considerable amount of local made products in which the Ladakhis traded with other countries and had close trade relations with it's neighbour Tibet. But the bulk of the trade came to Tibet through other countries via Ladakh as Ladakh served as a conduit of trade in those days. Nevertheless, trade played a very significant role in the Ladakhi society and determined its close relations with Tibet which carried on till centuries which was possible because of the numerous trade routes which connected the two. Francis Younghusband describes Leh as, "The meeting place of caravans from Lhasa and Central Asia (Younghusband: 1970, 61).

However, Ladakh being 'the entre port' of Central Asian trade was connected with many routes, in the early 20th century, three main trade routes passed through Ladakh, the Tibetan route east to the city of Lhasa, the South Asian route south through Kashmir, and the trans-Karakoram route north and east into Chinese Central Asia. Most of these routes were only open for brief periods in the summer, when the snows had melted in the mountains and travellers could traverse the high passes between valleys. Because of the rough terrain, pack-carrying livestock—usually yaks,



* Source, Margel, Fisher, Leo E. Rose and Robert E. Hullenback (1963) "Himalayan Battleground"
 Pub: Frederick A. Praeger London: pp: 70, 71

donkeys, ponies, *dzo* (crossbred offspring of yaks and cows), and sometimes camels—were the primary mode of transportation. At the intersection of these trade routes, Ladakh's main towns of Leh and Kargil housed busy bazaars (market areas), the sites of intense commercial activity where commodities were transported, traded, and taxed.

Both Ladakh and Tibet have lots of passes, the word 'La' in 'Ladakh' means Passes. The route which connected Tibet with Leh from the Tibetan side was the route which went westwards from Tibet via Shigatse to Leh in Ladakh (David MacDonald: 1978, 30). Different travellers and geographers as well as the explorers have given accounts of the overland routes that linked Tibet and Ladakh.

According to Sir Charles Bell, "From Srinagar (Capital of Kashmir) a route runs to Leh the capital of Ladakh and from there it goes through southern Tibet to Shigatse and Lhasa" (Charles Bell: 1924, 4). Purshotam Mehta in his book, "The Younghusband Expedition (an Interpretation)," mentions that, "Along Tibet's southern border over a distance of over 1,500 miles and stretching from Ladakh in the west to the North East Frontier Agency in the east, Tibet neighbours India" (Mehta: 1968). Although in this statement he mentions about Tibet's boundary with India but it is important to note here that from Tibet Ladakh was accessible through the western route as asserted by Macdonald, and also Bell. It is clear that from Tibet the route which went westwards connected it with Leh and from Leh the road which connected it with Tibet was the south-eastern route. This route starts from Leh, from where it follows the course of the Indus upstream, then through Gartok and Lake Mansarovar it entered the valley of Tsangpo and reached Lhasa (C.L Dutta: 1973, 12).

The route between Tibet and Ladakh has been given in the *Report on the Trade and Resources of the Countries on the North Western boundary of British India*. It is given in the report that, "The Caravan which goes once in a year from Leh to Lhasa passes through Gartok. The whole distance from Leh to Lhasa is about 1,359 miles, a journey of four months and a half" (pp. 33-34). (See Appendix VI, VII, VIII, for Routes of Leh and Lhasa).

The Leh to Gartok route is even highlighted by Charles. A. Sherring. He states clearly the details of the route most frequented by the traders from Tibet to Leh and Back. "The road from Gartok to Leh, a distance of 200 miles, passes through the district of the Rudok Jongpen, going via Tashigong and Demchok on the Indus River, and does not present any very great difficulties. The Tibetans do a considerable trade with the inhabitants of Leh, with whom they are on excellent terms" (Sherring: 1906, 157).

Sven Hedin (the Swedish explorer who went to Tibet), in his book 'Transhimalayas' Vol. 1, also mentions about 'the great road to Lhasa along the Indus and to Gartok' (Hedin: 1909, 278-279).

The Tibetans were traders and were supplied with many trade routes which ran To India in the South, to China in the east and to Mongolia in the north. From Lhasa itself one trade route lead to the South via Gyangtse, Pharijong and the Chumbi valley entered Indian Territory at the frontier trade mart of Kalimpong. Two routes lead to China, one at Ta-Chien Lu, the other to Sining-Fu. Another route crossed to the Mongolian frontier. In Eastern Tibet near the two chief commercial towns of Lhasa, Gyantse and Shigatse converged the trade routes from Turkistan, Siberia, Mongolia, China and India. Another route from Lhasa traversed the plateau westwards via Shigatse to Leh in Ladakh.

According to Charles A. Sherring, "The Central Asian Caravans after making a stopover at Leh passed to the towns of Tibet Noh and Rudok and continued their journey to Lhasa after passing the goldfields of Thok Jalung (16,200 ft.) or through Gartok which led to the Tibetan capital of Lhasa and was also the most frequented trade route in Tibet. He gives the distance from Gartok to Rudok as eight to ten days. Regarding the road from Gartok to Leh he states that there is a distance of 200 miles, and it passes through the district of Rudok, Jongpen, through Tashigong and then into Demchok on the Indus River from the Tibetan side. He has also very precisely highlighted the trade of Central Asia and Tibet with that of Ladakh and has given an account of the routes taken by these traders. He further states that, it was at Leh that the roads which were directed from Russian Turkistan, Kashgaria and Yarkand, and also joined by the Khotan caravan route, met. Ladakh was connected by the capital of Tibet, Lhasa by the trade route, which passed around the edge of the northern slopes

of the Himalayas, and trailed the valleys of the Brahmaputra and the Indus. According to him, "These were the chief routes leading from a foreign territory into Ladakh." He highlights the importance of such routes went from Leh to Lhasa which facilitated long distance trade and cultural exchanges of Ladakh with its close neighbour Tibet (Sherring: 1906, 156-158).

Alexander Cunningham states that, "The main route that is between Lhasa and Ladakh is via Garo" (Cunningham: 1854, 117). It is stated by him that it was the South-eastern route which connected Ladakh to Lhasa. From Lhasa it moved upwards the Tsangpo River, past Tashilonpo and Galdan rivers to its source on the eastern face of the Kailash Mountains. From the Mansarovar Lake to Garo the road had been crossed by Moorcraft. The distance from Garo to Leh is not less than 350 miles a journey of four month and a half. The principal places on this route were the Tashilonpo (Which was the residence of the Grand Lama) Galdan, and Garo, which was the important trade mart for exchange of goods between India and China.

There were two other routes to reach Gartok from Leh. One went straight up the Indus through Upshi and Chumatang and the other was over the Changla to Tangtse, Chushul and cut over to the Indus valley via Tsakala. Sven Hedin followed this route in 1906 from Leh to Lhasa (Sven Hedin: 1910, 64-70). The point where the south-eastern route and the two routes mentioned above converged was Thangra from there that is Demchok Lhasa was about nine days march. Therefore, the main routes that connected Ladakh with Tibet are:

First, the Leh- Lhasa- Gartok route which starts from Chushot (10,500 ft) in Leh, goes through Marsalang (12,200), then Upshi, to Gya (13,500 ft) all the villages mentioned here are situated on the left bank of Indus fro there it goes to Debring, between Gya and Debring the Taglangla (18,042) pass is crossed and the road went to Thugji (14,900 ft) from there Puga (15,200 ft) then to Mahiye (13,800 ft) then comes few small villages at the bank of the Indus and further the road reaches to Tashigong in Tibet and eventually, reaches Gar which is about 265 miles from Leh (The Gazzetter of Kashmir and Ladakh: 1974, 963-965). Second, the Leh to Demchok route which was one of the main trade-routes between Leh and Tibet, the junction of the Rudok and Gartok routes was at Shushal. It depended on the opening of the Changla Pass.

From Demchok it is 5 marches, about 90 miles to Gartok. The first stage is the village of Ranbirpur (in Leh) from there the road goes to Chimre, then to Zingral, then comes Tsultak followed by Tankse (a village in Ladakh) Yokma, Kungma, Shushal, Gya, Debring, Pongo Nagu, Polakonka La, Puga, Nima Rap, Loma, Rasirma-le, Gangra-le and then comes Fukche, then Lagankhel and finally the route reaches Ladakh border at Demchok (Major Kenneth Mason: 1929, 170). There is also another route from Leh to Demchok via Debring, Puga and Indus Valley but it was less used than that via Tankse and Shushal.

The route which connected Tibet with Leh from the Tibetan side was the route which went westwards from Tibet via Shigatse to Leh in Ladakh. There is also another route which is taken from the village of Rudok a few miles into West Tibet, and from there across the Pangong Lake up to the length of the lake up to Tangtse,¹ and after passing from the Changla pass it reaches to the Indus and then down to Leh the main town.

¹ Headquarters of the tehsil of Durbuk in Ladakh and 130 kms away from Leh.

ROUTE FROM LEH TO GAR* IN TIBET:

(20 Marches: 254 miles).

Stage	No	Height above the sea in feet	Miles from Last stage.
Leh.....	0		10
Chushot.....	1	11,500	12
Marstelang.....	2		23
Gya.....	3		16
Debring.....	4		14
Thugji.....	5	13,500	12
Camp.....	6		13
Puga.....	7		13
Maiya.....	8	14,900	12
Nimu.....	9		17
Camp.....	10		17
Camp.....	11		10
Dora.....	12		55
Tashigong.....	13		30
Gar.....	14		
			254
		13,800	

*Lower Gar, the Winter station (Source- Frederic Drew: 1971, 543)

Besides the south eastern road along the Indus to Gartok mention can also be made of some routes which are frequently used they are:

- 1) Leh-Nyoma (4207 m)-Dumchulle (4412 m)-Rudok on the south bank of Nyak Tso, which is a continuation of Ladakh's Pangong Tso, Leh-Nyoma-Demchok

(4322 m)-Tashigong and along the Indus to the east to Thok Yalung gold fields (16330') in Tibet's Changthang or High Plateau.

- 2) Leh-Nyoma-Tiggar-Kyun la (or via Hanle too)-Chumar on the Pare chu river which flows into Tibet from here (this leads to an extremely isolated & backward corner of Tibet for which getting supplies from India will be most convenient.)- Chagla Sumdo.
- 3) Leh-Nyoma- Tcahaga- (and also via Chang la-Chushul to)- Tchaga la (5060 m)- Rudok.

Therefore, both Tibet and Ladakh are were well supplied with trade routes which connect both the places before the 1960's prior to the Communist Chinas takeover Tibet after many of the ancient trade route were closed down leaving very few routes which connect both Ladakh and Tibet.

The central Asian trade pushed south to north across the craft of the great Himalayas and Karakoram ranges and finally reached the Central Asian desert trading oasis of Kashghar, Yarkand. Onward it filtered to the ancient silk route which was the commercial and cultural artery of Central Asia and India trade.

Trade routes: Two main routes;

- a) The one from Tsangpo valley Holy Kailash Mansarovar and reached Gartok on the tributary of the upper Indus from where they followed the river (Indus) down to Leh.
- b) By taking from the village of Rudok a few miles into western Tibet and from there across to the Pangong (tso) lake upto the length of the lake to Tangtse and then passing the Changla pass it reaches to the Indus and then down to Leh (the main town).

Difficulties and Handicaps in Commerce

The trading pattern of Tibet and Ladakh were almost similar, as both engaged in local as well as external trade which consisted of exchange of daily necessities, and of locally or regionally produced goods amongst traders who were generally farmers in

their home areas and which was comparatively less challenging and less cumbersome as compared to the long distance trade in which both Tibet and Ladakh engaged from time to time. The long distance trade which is that form of commercial activity which involves the crossing of boundaries, penetrating into a non-familiar culture or society had many handicaps as well as advantages. However, the traders faced difficulty and handicap in commerce, they faced numerous difficulties and obstacles on their way, whether it be the bad conditions of the road, the long journeys carried on foot, or the onslaught of the harsh weather, the impassable rivers and passes, the scarcity of food, supplies and water on the way the traders remained undaunted in their spirit and with great difficulties overcame these impediments in order to reach their final destination.

As mentioned above the road that connected Ladakh with Lhasa was the south-eastern road from Ladakh along the Indus river, no doubt that trade took place between the two on a regular basis but the traders faced numerous problems on their way. Ladakh is at a very high altitude and has a very rough terrain, this posed problems for the traders as they had to endure the repercussions of the severe weather which often left their men and mules in a precarious conditions. The road from Ladakh was closed for many months in winters but in other seasons the whole route was navigated by laden animals, such as mules, donkeys, horses, yaks, *dzo*, occasionally goats and camels along with their cattle the traders would have to bear the inhospitable wilderness of the passes and glaciers, as on several occasions especially in the summer months the glacier waters blocked the passes and the valleys making it difficult for the traders and their mules to cross it which resulted in delay and often required them to make a temporary stopover nearby for days until the situation was favourable to them . The traders would have to make long journeys on foot, as the possibility of using wheeled transport on these roads did not arise, on the barren and uninhabited terrain. The roads were in bad conditions and there was inadequate supply of rest houses for the safety of the travellers their mules and their commodities. Many of the men suffered severely from the effects of the great altitude. This "mountain-sickness " is a peculiar disease, which affects The common symptoms of which are severe headache, particularly affecting the back of the skull, giddiness, vomiting and great exhaustion. Although the road conditions improved considerably under the rule of Zorawar Singh in the 1840's which was aimed to divert the shawl wool from Western Tibet to Kashmir via Ladakh.

The travellers as well as the traders faced some major physical obstacles on their way to Lhasa from Leh which was detrimental to the commercial interests of the traders and the pony men. The peasant traders of lower Ladakh or the 'Shammas' from the 'Sham' area were involved in local trade with the Changpa nomads of Tibet, and every year they also took a journey to Rudok, via Changla from where they crossed over the pasturelands of westernmost Tibet and reached as far as Gertse, which is over 500 kilometres from the border. The traders of Leh who followed the route along the Indus to Gartok accomplished their journey in a comparatively lesser time than the peasant traders of lower Ladakh who went on a long and arduous journey far as Gertse into Western Tibet which took them around three months to reach there. The Shammas supplied food grains and other necessary items of daily use to the 'Changpas,' inhabitants of Changthang with whom they had a personal relationship, in return of which they got Pashm, wool, and salt (Janet Rizvi: 1999 b, 39).

The Ladakhi 'Shamma' traders faced many difficulties on their way According to, Nicky Grist, "they took along with them donkeys, sheep's etc loaded with merchandise and travelled mostly in the summer months, in the course of the journey they rested by the day to avoid the burning dry heat and walked in the nights. Although most of the times the traders did not have to pay taxes, but they faced a great danger of being caught for informal 'tax' levied by the bandits on the road. There were many instances when the traders were robbed by the bandits or had to pay merchandise in order to get rid of them. In such cases the Tibetan commander (dson-gspon) at Rudok or Gartok was most willing to send their soldiers with the Ladakhis to regain goods. She further states that "the Ladakhis exchanged all their goods with their goods with the nomads for wool, pashmina and salt" (Nicky Grist: 1985, 3). Therefore, we can ascertain the fact that the Shammas were involved at trade at local level, the basic patterns of which had continued for many years, but the journey was long, tiring, and very time consuming. Therefore, the Shamma traders faced numerous problems in their commercial enterprise with Tibetans which hampered the steady flow of trade between them. A great deal of insecurity was felt by the traders traversing the trade routes. However in the case of the traders who to Gartok via road along the Indus through the Leh Lhasa road faced lesser challenges as the distance to be covered from Leh to Lhasa was comparatively lesser than that of the distance the Shammas covered from their area to Western Tibet. The routes to Lhasa also faced

some challenges immediately beyond Leh the traveller had to cope with a tough mountain barrier and had to put up with the difficulties of a snow-bound pass at the very start of his travels. The physical difficulties encountered were intense cold, want of water, and general desolation, in the country was laid obstruction in travelling. The Chang la had, however, never presented such physical obstacles to advance, once over the Chang the Pangong Lake opened out into a long south-easterly plain, with the Tibetan market town of Rudok at its south-eastern limit (Sir Thomas Holdich: 1980, 328).

On the other hand, the Changpas who set out from their encampments of Rupshu on their annual trips to Zaskar to barter food salt for food grains had to face similar challenges of bad conditions of the road, the long journeys carried on foot, or the onslaught of the harsh weather, the impassable rivers and passes etc coupled with that route was tangled in no fewer than 108 river crossings which had to be passed in order to get to Zaskar also in winters the rivers and lakes of Zaskar froze and the traders had no option at times but to walk through the frozen Zaskar river in order to reach Zaskar which was very risky as there was a high possibility of the breaking of the ice sheet. At the beginning of the nineteenth century many Europeans traversed the Western Himalayas and the Karakoram Range and described their horrors of the routes. According to William Moorcraft, "The main problem on the passes was the daily cycle of melting and freezing on their perennially snowbound northern faces, particularly in the summer when the frozen crust on the surface was in places very thin, and gave way under the weight of the cattle, which were left floundering in the soft sub-surface snow" (Moorcraft: 1841, 411). Moorcraft further states about the obstacles of the trade routes that, "Passes were only one obstacle faced by travellers over these difficult routes. The valley bottoms were occupied by rivers, the crossing of which required the greatest vigilance to prevent the loss of goods carried on the horses back" (Moorcraft: 1841, 195). This had happened on many occasions with the traders who were attempting to wade through the rivers and this often resulted in the loss and damage of the commodities of the traders. Janet Rizvi, in her book, gives a brief description of the account given by Abdul Wahid Radhu from his book, "Caravane Tibetaine." Abdul Wahid, a Muslim trader of Leh, used to conduct the Lopchak mission which left for Lhasa. He states about the hardships of the journey from Leh to Lhasa according to him, even seasoned traders would suffer severely

from altitude sickness and breathlessness because of the high altitude of the passes and the places the traders had to cross in order to reach their destination. He narrates a incident when he and his caravan were on their way to Lhasa way they had to get through several trails, which left his men, him and the mules totally exhausted, on their way they faced sandstorm and wind, and other obstructions but eventually they, made it to reached Tsangpo and then Lhasa (Rizvi Janet: 1999 b, 179-181).

Another major obstruction in trade for the traders was the autocratic attitude of the high officials, for instance it is believed that in Ladakh, Basti Ram the Thanedar stationed at Leh by Gulab Singh use to obtain from the traders whatever goods that he considered was desirable or beneficial for himself and his master at prices that suited himself and often forced back on the trader the goods which he had acquired from his somewhere else. The traders as well as the Ladakhis were oppressed by his high handedness.²

There were instances when many traders became the victims of the malfunctioning of the Dogra officials at Leh were faced by both Ladakhis and the other trades likewise, they were asked to pay bribes, and compelled to pay extra money to adopt the trade route of their choices, extra taxes on customs duties were levied on them, there were many complaints against Basti Ram, Naib Wazir Ganga Singh, and the treasurer. The Superintendent of Hill states got complaints of undue exactions by Basti Ram by some Yarkandi merchants who sought for an appointment of a British officer at Ladakh for the protection of their commercial interests (Warikoo: 1989, 137).

Therefore, the difficulties of the routes, the inaccessibility of the roads in the winter months, the long journeys carried on foot, or the onslaught of the unsympathetic weather, the impassable rivers and passes, the insufficiency of resources and water on the route coupled with the fear of bandits , the high handedness of the trade officials who imposed heavy taxes on goods which were brought to their country, high

² Report from P.S Melvill Esquire, Officiating Commissioner and Superintendent Trans-Sutlej States, to the Secretary to the Government Punjab, No 118, dated 31st July 1861. From the Report of the Trade and Resources of the Countries on the North Western Boundary of British India, 1862, Government Press, Lahore, p. 21.

altitude sickness and other physical obstacles hampered the traders in many diverse ways which became a serious commercial handicap which in turn affected and delayed the flow of commerce from one place to another. No proper channels of communication, between the traders was another hindrance the swelling of the rivers led to the destruction of the bridges which were either washed down or destroyed. Capt Godfrey³ states in his report that, "Here I heard that the rafts on the Shyok at Sati, on the north of Leh, had been washed down the river and wrecked, and that the caravans, which had arrived on the right bank, were blocked there" (F.E.S Adair: 1899, 268).

Extent and Pattern of Trade: (Imports and Export)

Tibet and Ladakh were actively engaged in trade and their role as 'a trading state' can be analysed Besides having a trading relationship with each other both Tibet and Ladakh were engaged in large scale trade with other countries and between their own states. Therefore the nature of the trading system was 'local' as well as 'external'. As far as Tibet is concerned, Lhasa and Shigatse were the chief centres of trade in Central Tibet, and in Eastern Tibet; Cham-do, Jye-kun-do, Der-ge, and Tachienlu (Ta-tsendo) were the important centres (Charles Bell: 1928, 112). In Western Tibet, Gartok, the district seat of Rudok was the main trade mart of wool trade (Dereck Waller: 1990, 101). The largest entre port of the Indo Tibetan trade was Kalimpong (now in Darjeeling district) seconded by Almora. Half of the entire Indo Tibet trade passed through Kalimpong. The route from Kalimpong to Lhasa passed through south-eastern Sikkim and crossed the frontier into Tibet via the Dze-pla pass, The Nathu-la pass which is on the way is to Gangtok four miles to the northwest of this pass .Tibet was well equipped with trade routes which went to China on the east, Mongolia on the north and to India on the south and West. According to Wim Van Spengen, "hundreds of foreign traders to Lhasa of whom Kashmiri, Newari, and Chinese were the most important" (Spengen: 1995, 56). This clearly illustrates that Tibet was an important traders for traders. According to Charles A. Sherring, "The Tibetans exported to other countries wool, pashm, musk, salt, precious stones and tea, while the imports, valued at £5000 annually, are dried apricots (for which Cashmere is famous), European

³ Capt. Godfrey was the British Joint Commissioner.

woollen and silk piece-goods, grain, sugar, tea and precious stones” (Sherring: 1906, 311).

Whereas, on the other hand, Ladakh role as ‘trading state’ was very important as trans-Himalayan commerce of India was conducted through Leh. K. Warikoo has rightly termed Ladakh “as India’s gateway to Central Asia” in his article. The nature of trans Himalayan commerce of India was such that, caravans of ponies, mules loaded with goods came annually to Ladakh from the plains of Punjab, Rawal Pindi during the spring time, these caravans came by the Kullu and Kashmir routes and brought along with them cotton, goods tea etc. (For details of the routes see Appendix IX). The Caravans were time in such a way that they reached Leh by early autumn. In the meantime the central Asian traders also set out from Yarkand, Kashghar, Khotan and Lhasa and reached Leh around the same time when the Indian caravans reached Leh. And both the caravans central Asia and India met at Leh and transacted their commercial business (F.E.S Adair: 1899, 277). Many European travellers on their visits to Leh have documented the trade in Leh market with their own eyes. One example can be given of E.F Knight who visited Leh in the early 1890’s gives a vivid description of the market in Leh during the trading season.⁴

Therefore, Leh occupied a central position as far as the trans-Karakorum trade was concerned. After their brief stopover at Leh the traders left back to their respective hometowns before the passes were blocked by snow. The traders usually bartered goods amongst each other There were however some trade transactions, coins were

⁴ “Leh, conveniently situated as it is about half-way between the markets of India and those of Central Asia, has become the terminus for the caravans from both regions. In the summer, traders arrive at Leh from every part of India, and from Turkestan, Tibet, Siberia, and the remotest districts of Central Asia. Here the goods and produce of the south are exchanged for those of the north. It is seldom that a caravan from India goes north of Leh, or that one from Central Asia proceeds south of it. The merchants, who have been travelling for months along the difficult roads from either direction, meet here and dispose of their loads, to a great extent by barter; but before they commence the long, weary homeward journey, they rest here for a month or two, so that the bazaar and the environs of the city are thronged with the camels, yaks, and other beasts of burden, as well as with men from all corners of Asia. At this time there is such a motley collection of and various costumes, and such a babel of different languages, as it would not be easy to find elsewhere. Savage Tartars in sheepskins, and other outlandish men, jostle with the elegant Hindoo merchant from the cities of Central India, and the turbulent Mussulman Pathan scowls at the imperturbable idolaters from the Celestial Empire. Leh in September is, indeed, one of the busiest and most crowded of cities, and the storekeepers and farmers who have to supply this multitude must make a very good profit for the time. Leh is therefore a very cosmopolitan city, even in the dead season; for there are resident merchants and others of various races and creeds”. Knight.E.F (1893), *Where Three Empires Meet*, London, Longman’s Green and Co. pp. 177 -178.

used for trading purposes some of them were, the native coin of India was the silver 'Jau' which was worth one quarter of the rupees. Gold coins were called 'Ser-jau'. Silver ingots from China were used which the Tibetans called "Datsat" or "Shilka" by the Turkis (Janet Rizvi: 1999 b, 234). The ratio between the rouble and the Tael (Chinese Silver currency) was the most important factor of Ladakhs trade with Yarakand.⁵ The currency of many countries was to be found in the market at Leh including Silver coins, gold pieces of Bukhara and Khokand of Central Asia, and Rupiya of the Mughal government. According to Alexander Cunningham, "All merchandise is called Tshong, and the merchant or dealers Tshong-pa; as Bal-Tshong, a wool-merchant. The chief, or head merchant, is Tshong-pon (Cunningham: 1854, 253).

The majority of Indian trade with the Central Asian towns of Yarkand, Kashghar and Khotan was carried through Kashmir and Ladakh. The Central Asian exports to India consisted of Animals for sale, Cotton, Charas, Hides and Skins, Carpets, Wool Pashm (produced in Yarkand, Kashghar, Turfan,) Yarns, Gold dust (from the mines of Khotan), Russian gold and rouble coins, silver, hemp, drug, felts, tea, Chinese tea cups, leather ware, raw silk, coarse cotton cloths etc. Out of these items shawl wool and cannabis (Charas) comprised of the major imports⁶ (Warikoo: 2009, 5).

IMPORTS FROM YARKAND

Shawl-wool.....	Rs. 28,000
Tea.....	Rs. 48,000
Charas.....	Rs 24,000
Tobacco	Rs 64,000
	164,000
Add ponies, sugar-candy, drugs, skins,	16,000

⁵ Foreign Department Proceedings, Report of trade of Ladakh (31st March 1911) For.Deptt. Fronteir B, Oct 1911, Nos 57-59 (with Notes).

⁶ For details on trade see NAI Report of trade of Ladakh (31st March 1911) For.Deptt. Fronteir B, Oct 1911, Nos 57-59 (with Notes) in Appendix V.

ponies, sugar-candy, drugs, skins,	_____
turquoises	180,000
Exports to Yarkand	216,000
Excess of Exports	Rs 36,000

* Source Alexander Cunningham, p. 253.

The trade of Chinese Turkistan or “Little Bokhara” as it was called was considerable and the imports of goods from India to Chinese Turkistan consisted of Cotton, Manufactured piece goods, Mulls White (English made) Dhotis, Animals, English made cloth, manufactured goods, (Indian) Lungis from Hoshiarpur, and Chadars from Ahemdbad, Manufactured piece goods foreign (Germany, US), Indian Drugs and Medicines, Dyeing Material –Indigo, Leather and Skins, Italian Coral jewellery, Silk manufactured in Europe, Silk manufactured in India (Surat Brocades), Tea- Palampur Tea, Black Green tea, Assam Tea etc, also Wool manufactured in India (Shawls from Kashmir), Tobacco (Cheap American Cigarettes and Indian cigars).⁷ Therefore, trade between India and Central Asia which had their passage through Leh was flourishing in that period. The Central Asian trade route soon closed down.

It is important to notice that the extent and pattern of trade of Central Asia changed whenever there was a political upheaval in Central Asia. In other words trade was dependant on the political situations in Central Asia and India from time to time.

Extent and Pattern of Trade both at the Local and External Level between Tibet and Ladakh

The Treaty which defined the relations between Ladakh and Tibet was the 1684, ‘Treaty of Tingmosgang’ which signified the end of the Tibeto-Mongolid-Ladakh War of 1681. The Treaty not only established a border between Tibet and Ladakh it

⁷ For details see Foreign Department Consultations, Report of trade of Ladakh (31st March 1911). Fronteir B, Oct 1911, Nos 57-59 (with Notes).

also regulated the trade between the two, as Ladakh got a monopoly of the shawl wool trade produced in Tibet, and the Tibetans acquired the exclusive brick tea trade with Ladakh and made certain stipulations about the trade in wool and Pashm (Janet Rizvi: 1999 b, 159). According to John Bray and Tsering.D. Gonkastang, “The treaty defined the basis of the relationship between Tibet and Ladakh for the next 160 years and arguably even longer” (Bray and Gonkastang: 1980, 89).

One clause of the treaty, set up the triennial “Lopchak” mission which left from Leh to Lhasa as a homage and tribute to the Tibet’s religious leader the Dalai Lama timed in such a manner that it arrived on the occasion of Losar (new year). In return of the Lopchak the Tibetans were to send the Cha-pa or “Tea man mission” which was to visit Ladkh every year. The participants of the mission were to obtain free carriage or ‘Ula’ as it is called which was based on the basis of reciprocity as the Ladakhi traders who visited Lhasa enjoyed the same privileges. The importance of this treaty lies in the fact that through this treaty the trade relations between Tibet and Ladakh was regulated and soon these missions acquired a commercial character. After the Dogra invasion in 1831 and his conquest of Ladakh, the Dogra and Tibetan war of 1841, took place in which Zorawar lost his life. However, the Dogras signed a Peace Treaty with the Tibetans in 1842, which reinforced the trade ties between Ladakh and Tibet (Warikoo: 2009, 5) and after the final annexation of Ladakh by the Dogras in 1842 the religious character of the Lopchak mission somewhat diminished although it was still carried on till the 1940’s but now it was often led by a Arghon merchant from Leh who were professional traders and this mission brought them huge profits.

The trade relations between Tibet and Ladakh was an old one dating back to 1684 and it carried on for decades until the Communist China’s take over Tibet which resulted in subsequent closing of borders and brought about the abrupt end to the historical trade links between the two.

Local Trade of Ladakh with Tibet

One of the most important articles of trade between Tibet and Ladakh was the trade of the Pashmina wool which flourished both at the local as well as the foreign trade

level. The most important area for Ladakhi traders was 'Sham' or lower Ladakh from where the Ladakhi traders dominated the pashmina trade of Chanhthang. The village of Tingmosgang was the centre of trade from where mostly traders would set out on the long journey to Changthang. They had established a personal trading relationship with the Changpas. The Treaty of Tingmosgang which specifically prohibited any but the Kashmiri merchants from going to Tibet western provinces to procure Pashm, made no reference to the local traders, or to the question of how the Changpa were to be supplied with food grains or other necessitates (Francke: 1926, 16).

The Ladakhi traders from Sham would go to Changthang with their loads and their local produce consisting of food grains and dried apricots. The Ladakhis exchanged all their goods with the nomads for wool, pashmina and salt. The Ladakhis would leave their homes and travel to Rudok, via Changla from where they crossed over the pasturelands of westernmost Tibet and reached as far as Gertse. According to Sven Hedin, who reported meeting the traders in 1907, "Smaller traders from Ladak resort to Gartok with dried apricots and raisins, which they transport on asses, and barter for sheep's wool" (Hedin: 1913, 34).

According to Janet Rizvi, Moorcraft had witnessed the trade on his return from Pangong Lake, he had seen then 40,000 loaded sheep belonging to the province of Chang-Thang which carried Salt, Sheeps wool to Leh, Nubra and Chushot and returned with Barley for exchange (Janet Rizvi, 1999 b, 71). Besides the local trade with the people there was also annual markets where fairs were held every autumn for Salt s and Sheep wool brought by the Changapa nomads of Tibet farmers from Spituk and Chushot villages of Ladakh would buy Sheeps from the Changpas. Salt was obtained by the Ladakhis from Rudok in exchange of Barley for the purpose of bartering Salt with grains the Rudok people would visit Ladakh and the Ladakhis would visits Rudok. This trade of Salt was of considerable importance.⁸ The Ladakhi trades would return from Chanthatng around autumn to Leh with their loads and would sell the Pashmina to Kashmiri traders for Silver or money or to the Ladakhis who took the wool to Srinagar and earn a reasonable profit (Nicky Grist: 1985, 5).

⁸ For details see NAI Foreign Fronteir A, Feb 1900, 17-18, Kennion to Resident, Kashmir 8th November 1899.

Another article of trade was salt which was an important article of trade not only for the local consumption but also for the local traders specially, the Ladakhi traders who came from Shamm, Rupshu and Zanskar and use to take salt to different villages of Ladakh in exchange of which the Changpa Tibetans took barley, apricots etc. and earned profits. Salt came largely from the lakes and springs of Changthang. Most of the Ladakhis consumed the salt as it was used in the preparation of 'butter salt tea' which is famous in Ladakh till now and the rest of the salt was re-exported to hill states (Moorcraft: 1841, 356).

Dry Fruits specially apricots from Ladakh and imported from Baltistan were another important articles of trade, these apricots were partly produced in Sham but the quality of Baltistan apricots were better. The local trades specially Shammias exchanged apricots for various goods. Dry Apricots was one of the chief products of Ladakh. It was exported to many countries including Tibet and India (Moorcraft: 1841, 297).

In 1870, a total of 490 maunds of dried apricots and 50 maunds of Currents were exported to Lhasa and Shimla.⁹ The Ladakhis and the Tibetans would often exchange their local produce during trade fairs. According to Alexander Cunningham, "Any regular gathering of merchants, such as annual meeting at Garo, is called Tshoug-dus, a fair ; and the friendly glass, which is partaken together after the completion of a bargain, is named Tshong-chhang, "the mercantile glass" (Cunningham: 1854, 253).

Besides this there were no significant items of trade besides butter, cup and plates etc. The Ladakhis would make blankets and coarse woollens mainly for home consumption and black mohain tents which was at times purchased by the nomads of Tibet. Sven Hedin has given an account on the local trade of the Tibetans with Ladakhis and other Indian states.¹⁰

⁹ For details see NAI Foreign, Political A Branch, no's 560-597, Consultations June 1871.

¹⁰ According to him, "Well, you see, some nomads shear their sheep themselves in Gertse, and carry the wool on yaks thirteen days' journey to Tok-jalung, whither merchants from Ladak and Hindustan come to market. Others let the sheep carry their wool to market, and the purchasers do the shearing. But those nomads do best who break salt out of the beds of dried-up lakes, pack the lumps of salt on their sheep, and tramp in midsummer all the way to market at Gyanima and to the shore of Tso-mavang, where the sheep are shorn, for they make a profit on the salt as well as on the wool. And when they travel home again their sheep are laden with barley, which they have obtained by barter. Such a

External Trade of Ladakh with Tibet

As stated earlier Ladakh's trade relations with Tibet were regulated by the Treaty of Tingmosgang. And hence trade shawl wool had become a strict government monopoly, the old treaties were still in force including the state trade mission *Lopchak* and *Chapa* which was very lucrative and carried on for a long time but besides this some merchants from Leh often indulged in private trade with Lhasa and the goods which came from other countries such as Central Asia, Chinese Turkistan, and the Indian plains were brought to Lhasa and the trade marts in Gartok by the Ladakhi merchants and traders. Assistant to the Resident in Kashmir for Leh and Ladakh documented the trade between Ladakh and Lhasa. According to him "On my return from Hemis, I encountered large numbers of the Kargil and Balti people returning from Changthang grazing grounds with loads of Tibetan wool which they had bartered for barley, dried fruits and Tea. Considerable amount of Charas came in from Yarkand but low prices continued to prevail on the Leh exchange averaging about 40 per mound. Exports from India were plentiful especially coral, indigo and Surat and Gujrat brocades. During the last week the triennial trade mission to Lhasa set out in charge of Muhammad Sadiq, son of Nasser Shah, the Chief resident merchant in Leh. His wares included coral, at the value of Rs 20,000 pearls Rs 5000 and "kinkab" 6000 besides other miscellaneous goods."¹¹

The chief imports from Leh to Lhasa were Gold, China Silk, Silver Ingots (Yambus), glassware, coral, silver coins, cotton cloths, and coarse cotton goods received from Chinese Turkistan, Chintzes, goat skins, brocades, jades beads, felt rugs, Russian woollen materials and furs imported from British India, European goods saffron and rice from Kashmir and Apricots from Ladakh and Baltistan. Lhasa's import to Ladakh consisted of pashm wool, coarse wool, Brick tea, Zangcha tea from U-Tsang, Silver, gold, Chinese tea cups, musk, paper, incense, carpets, Namboo cloth, turquoises (Warikoo: 2009, 4-5) (Rizvi: 1999 b, 178).

journey, outwards and homewards, occupies the greater part of the summer". Sven Hedin *Transhiamalayas*, Vol 3, p. 5.

¹¹ This extract has been taken from the Leh Ladakh Diaries between June 1902-to June 1903. Foreign Political Consultations, Fronteir-B August 1903, nos 490-502. From the Assistant resident in Kashmir for Leh. Dated 3RD Oct 1902.

Sven Hedin, in 1907, talked in some detail to the merchant of Leh, Gulam Razul who told him about the nature of the trade with Lhasa. According to Sven Hedin, "His caravans bring beads, coral, and turquoise, English cotton goods and other wares to the markets in Gartok and Gyanima and to Lhasa. Carpets, felt rugs, Russian woollen materials, silk fabrics, and nephrite are purchased in Eastern Turkestan, and are transported over the Karakorum to Leh and Tibet. From Lhasa he imports brick -tea, Tibetan wool manufactures, Lamaist drugs, and other goods into Ladakh. In Tok-jalung he buys gold-dust, which is subsequently sold again in Leh and Lhasa. During the fairs in Gartok and Gyanima, which are held in the three summer months, Gulam Razul sells goods to the value of 25,000 rupees. His exports to Lhasa amount to 40,000 rupees, and his imports from there to 35,000. Gulam Razul's family holds the Lopchak monopoly, a privilege of trade between Kashmir and Lhasa, in which is included free transport on Tibetan territory. The Tibetans enjoy a similar monopoly in the opposite direction. The distance from Leh to Gartok is reckoned at twenty - two caravan day's marches, from Gartok to Shigatse forty-five, and thence to Lhasa" (Hedin: 1913, 33-34).

The goat wool or pashm was the most important article of trade between Ladakh, Tibet, Kashmir and Yarkand. The route which skirted from the eastern frontier of Ladakh was significant because the most important product of the country that is the "shawl wool" was brought via this route which connected Ladakh with Nari-Khorsum provinces in Western Tibet, which was the region where there was the main sources of the shawl wool (Knight: 1893; Rizvi: 1999 b, 51; Lee Shuttleworth: 1922, 552). It was the trade in pashm which formed the most substantial link between Tibet, Ladakh and Kashmir for centuries which was political as well as commercial. The wool was of two types 'Lena' which was used to make shawls by the Kashmiri weavers and 'Bal' which was used for making blankets etc. After the signing of the Treaty of Tingmosgang in 1684, which had certain commercial stipulations, because of which the shawl wool became an arena of mutual dependence between Tibet, Ladakh and Kashmir. By the ancient engagements and customs the export of shawl wool was confined to Kashmir via Ladakh, and no third party was involved if any other country tried to intervene it was punished by confiscation. The trade in shawl wool was allowed only through Ladakh and it was considered illegal in Rudok and Changthang

to allow trade in shawl wool to any other country except for Ladakh (Report on Trade and Resources, 30).

Many travellers in the 17th and 18th centuries have reported about this shawl wool trade of Tibet, Ladakh and Kashmir including Ippolito Desideri, William Moorcraft and so on. Alexander Cunningham witnessed the continuation of the shawl wool trade when he visited Ladakh on 1867-47. He reported that during the period export of shawl wool produced in the country amounted to 2,400 small mounds or 76,800lbs a year (Cunningham: 1854, 239).

The trade in shawl wool between Tibet and Ladakh survived even after the political developments that were taking place in Ladakh and Tibet altered the course of the trade at times, the Dogra invasion and the subsequent take over of Ladakh by them upset this commercial framework for a while when the wool started flowing to the British territories but all in all it continued as before, after Zorawar and the Dogra army's defeat in 1842, and the treaty of 1842, also the trade in shawl wool from Ladakh to Kashmir continued as before, as the treaty confirmed the ancient usage of shawl wool and tea which was transmitted through the Ladakh road (Datta: 1973, 15).

In 1870, when a commercial treaty was signed between British government and the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir although the entry of the Ladakhis who were agents of the Kashmir government was restricted but the system of trade with both central Tibet and the adjoining areas of western Tibet continued as it had done from the time of the Gyalpos (Rizvi: 1999 a, 333).

Another article of importance, next to the shawl wool, was Tea which was very popular in Ladakh. A considerable quantity of tea was imported from Lhasa to Leh both for home consumption and export to other areas. According to the report on trade, "Brick tea in square lumps of 8lbs, weight is brought by the caravans from Lhasa" (Report on Trade and Resources, p. 34). Besides this, large quantities of tea, was brought by the *Chapa mission* to Leh for sale. According to the treaty of Tingmosgang, of 1684, the Tibetan government sent in return of the Lopachak an annual mission with two hundreds loads of Chinese brick tea to Leh known as the 'Chapa' or Zungstong (Francke: 1926, 42). In Ladakh, the brick tea is known as the

name of 'Chapak'. The chief import of U-Tsang in Tibet was a black tea called the 'Zangcha.' Tea formed one of the largest article imported to Ladakh via Tibet both in bulk and value.

Other article of trade was Borax and Sulphur, which were found in Puga. A place in south east of Leh and the annual export production of borax from Ladakh was 500 maunds or 16,000lb (Cunningham: 1854, 239). The total export of borax from Ladakh was the total production plus the imports of Changthang. The goods in exchange of the borax were chiefly taken by the people of Rupshu to Gartok and these were exchanged for wool and other articles and thus considerable trade was kept up. Trade in Salt and Dry Fruits also constituted as important articles in the trade between Tibet and Ladakh and they fell under the local economy.

Carpets and Namdas which were imported into Ladakh from Central Asia were exported to different countries including Tibet.¹² Precious metals, stones came from Leh to Lhasa for trade along with huge quantities of gold dust, and coins. Lhasa was very popular for its trade in precious stones specially Turquoises and Coral which were imported into Ladakh from Lhasa and then exported to different places. Ladakhis themselves used a good deal of these precious stones as Ladakhi women used it in their ornaments. Saffron from Kashmir was imported into Ladakh and then exported to Lhasa. Saffron was imported via Ladakh from Kashmir to Lhasa. The chief market of Saffron was in Lhasa mostly the lamas used it in their religious ceremonies. Coarse cloths such as Garkha and Chakman were brought moderately in Baltistan but the chief market was in Lhasa.

Besides above mentioned articles of import to Lhasa from Leh consisted of Russian leather, Jade stone, Chinese cutlery, boots, velvets, copper tinned vessels, Iron, Combs and vessels from Kulu and other articles of daily use were sent to Lhasa. From Changthang to Leh came paper and coarse cloths.¹³ Ladakh's commercial connections shows silver ingots from Yarkand as the principal export from Leh to Lhasa and a century later, the Radhu were carrying Jade, and carpets from Yarakand in their Leh-Lhasa caravan, it is said that at the same time gold from Yarakand, available for Rs

¹² Foreign Political Consultations, July 1894, Sec.F nos-613-619.

¹³ Foreign Department Political A Branch, Consultation May. 1870, Nos 286-291.

12 per tola in Leh fetched double of that in Lhasa. The only commodity from Lhasa that regularly found its way in the opposite direction across the Karakoram to Yarakand seems to have been brick tea, this infact was a major part of the Radhus commercial operation (Janet Rizvi: 1999 b, 174-175).

Thus, traders from Tibet as well as Ladakh exchanged their goods with each other and were involved in active trade for decades until the invasion of Tibet by China took place in the 1950's and borders were closed and trade between the two neighbours came to a final standstill. However before the 1950's the trade between Tibet and Ladakh survived the political changes that occurred from time to time and trade was not affected to such a large degree as it was after the communist takeover Tibet. Regarding the trade relations of Tibet and Ladakh in pre-1950's period, Alastair Lamb has very rightly remarked that, "The trade between Tibet and Ladakh was largely based on a system of traditional relationships which could hardly failed to be disturbed by the conquest of an power alien in culture and religion" (Lamb Alastair: 1960, 65). For details on the trade of Ladakh, and Tibet (see Appendix X and XI).

The following table shows the quantity and value of exports of Ladakh to Tibet (Central Asia):

Exports from Ladakh to Tibet (Central Asia).	Quantity	Value	Total
Ghee.....	10	32	
Other Kinds.....	14	270	
Oil.....	18	18	
Petroleum.....	25	1,434	
Other Kinds.....	341	1,073	
Silk.....	3 kilos	127	
a) Piece Goods of European.....	....	.....
b) Goods Indian Pieces.....		616	

c) Goods Foreign Pieces.....		65	
Spices.....	30	693	
Stationery.....	4	3,392	
Sugar.....		901	
a) Refined.....			
b) Unrefined.....	25	724	
Tea.....		3,554	
a) Indian Tea.....	21		
b) China Tea.....		778	
c) Lhasa Tea.....	39		
Tobacco.....			
Wool.....			
a) Piece Goods European.....	Yds 312	870	
b) Indian.....			
	" 548	63,232	
c) Shawls.....			
All other Articles.....			
Unmanufactured.....	41	550	
Manufactured.....	Mds	85	
Total			
	Mds 2	2,400	
Treasure.....			
a) Gold and Gold Dust.....			
b) Silver.....			
c) Silver Yambus.....		64,348	
d) Russian Gold Coins.....	Tolas 25		
e) Silver Coins.....	Seer 2		
f) Miscellaneous.....		67,383	
Total.....	Seer 24		
Grand Total.....		1,30,615	

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(The National Archives of India, Trade Report of 1911 31st March. However, here only the exports and imports of Tibet and Ladakh are highlighted).

State Trade Missions: ‘Lopchak’ and ‘Chapa’

The treaty that defined the basis of Tibet and Ladakhs relation was the 1684, Treaty of Tingmosgang which was concluded after the Ladakh-Tibet-Mughal war. Among the provisions of the treaty was the setting up of a triennial mission from Ladakh to Lhasa known as the *lochag* is the how the Central Tibetans, Ladakhis or the Lopchak reflects its Ladakhi pronunciation and it is rendered the name Lapchak in English accounts (Ramsays and Kennion’s account: 1900). However, in this study, I have referred to this mission as “Lopchak” mission which was timed to arrive in Lhasa at the time of the Tibetan new year, and it had to bring along with it certain gifts to the Treasurer of the office of the government headed by the Dalai Lama who was the chief religious pontiff of Tibet at that time (John Bray: 1990, 78). The gifts to the Dalai Lama was specified in some detail the offerings which was to be given to the Dalai lama were, ten *thur-zhos* (tolas) of gold, ten *srang* (ounces) of perfume; six rolls of *Hor* (Mongol cloth), one roll of *bab-sta* (cloth) (John Bray: 1990, 78; Rizvi: 1999 b, 160). The mission on its return from Lhasa was allowed to carry 200 animal loads of goods, 25 riding horses and ten men of lower rank for the kitchen and the camp.

During its long journey from Leh, Demchok and then to Lhasa the Tibetan government undertook to make all facilities available to the mission, which consisted of arrangement of free transport for the Lopchak under the compulsory labour system

called 'u-lag' or 'ula'.¹⁴ At the same time many Ladakhi monks travelling to Tibet for higher studies also accompanied the mission along with some traders. Thus, it seems that from the very beginning of the mission the Lopchak tendered to the Ladakhis an opportunity to combine trade with the ceremonial duty. Therefore, the Lopchak mission had many different roles all rolled into one they were religious, diplomatic and commercial. According to John Bray, "This mission served as a rich, multilayered vehicle of communication between two countries, with many different nuances. Some of these nuances are still contested, notably the question whether the lophyang (Lopchak) offerings amounted to 'tribute' or part of a ritual exchange between the two independent states" (Bray and Tsering: 1980, 105). This statement was contested by the Chinese government and it impinged on high politics after and before the 1962 Sino border conflict when China laid its claims on Ladakh stating that it was a part of Tibet and China laid emphasis on the validity of the *Lopchak* mission which according to China was a tribute bearing embassy and it manifested clearly the subservient status of Ladakh. But the Indian ministry at that time put across the point that in return of the *Lopchak* mission Lhasa sent the *Chapa* mission to Leh. Therefore, these missions were based on reciprocity and in no way did it show that Ladakh owed political allegiance to Tibet and that it was subservient to it. Through my study I have observed that the Lopchak mission was religious and commercial in nature in fact it was the most substantial link between Tibet and Ladakh.

According to Janet Rizvi, "The Lopchak mission would seem to fit neatly into a pattern of ceremonial- cum- commercial intercourse" (Rizvi, 1999 b, 160). According to the treaty of Tingmosgang of 1684, in return of the Lopchak the Tibetans were to send a reciprocal mission to Ladakh from Lhasa known as the 'Chapa' which means 'tea man' mission in Ladakhi and Tibetan it also has another name known as the "*La dvags gzhung tshong*" or the *Zhunstong* which was to travel to Ladakh every year from Lhasa and bring along with it tea mostly Brick-tea and other trade goods same as the *Lopchak* the *Chapa* mission also had to time its arrival in such a manner that it

¹⁴ Under this system, the local people had to provide animals for travelling officials. The system of ula is a Tibetan institution. It works, on the whole, smoothly enough in Lhasa where its use is limited to official personages travelling on business of both coming and going not just for the mission but for also as many as 200 loads of goods.

coincided with the Ladakhi new year 'Losar' which took place two months before the Tibetan Losar. The *gzhung tshong* was had to offer to the king of Ladakh twenty mule loads of tea, one bolt of brocade, two bolts of Tibetan wool, *khaptags* and sacred pills etc from the senior Tibetan lamas (Rabgyas Tashi: 1984, 254).

The Chapa mission was to avail the same privilege of free carriage or 'ula' in Ladakh as the *Lopchak* had in Tibet. On their return the mission often took to Lhasa saffron, apricots and sugar. From the time of the establishment of the two state trade missions *Lopchak* and Chapa till the middle of the twentieth century these two missions formed the basis of commercial relationship between Lhasa and Leh. The *Lopchak* and Chapa missions gave birth to a number of lesser missions, as it was noticed on many occasions that the representatives of the former ruling Ladakhi families sent some missions to Tibet and so did some monasteries like Hemis, which were mostly directed to His Holiness the Dalai lama, thus the Ladakhi's communicated in this way with the Central Tibetans.

By the mid 19th century political developments had taken place in both Tibet and Ladakh. The Tibetans had come under the Manchu emperors in the 18th century and Ladakh was in the 80's invaded by the Dogra's conquered by Zorawar Singh in 1832 who lost was soon killed in 1842 during the invasion of Western Tibet, Ladakhi's had rebelled against the Dogras after Zorawar Singh's death but the Dogras had successfully suppressed the Ladakhi uprising in 1842 after which a Peace treaty had been signed between the Dogras and the Tibetans which had confirmed the Dogra sovereignty over Ladakh and also stipulated that the customary relationship between Ladakh and Tibet was to continue as before including the *Lopchak* and the *Chapa* missions (Petesch: 1977, 151). The Kashmir Durbar had now taken over from the deposed Namgyal dynasty of Ladakh the obligation to send the items to the Dalia lama every third New Year. The *Lopchak* mission had in a way lost its religious character. And by 1842, Ladakh had become independent from the fiefdom of the Dogra rulers and had become a part of Jammu and Kashmir which was although a princely state but was within the British Indian Empire and the year 1842 therefore, marked the final extinction of Ladakh's status as an independent kingdom. Although, the treaty of 1842, had in a way reinforced the *Lopchak* and *Chapa* missions as it

provided for their continuation of the *Lopchak* and *Chapa* (C.U Aitchiston, Vol. XIV: 1892, 15).

For the Ladakhi's, the Treaty was a turning point because by this treaty the Ladakhi's lost their independence, and the boundary between Ladakh and Tibet was reaffirmed also it guaranteed the continuation of the present trade arrangements between Tibet and Ladakh But from then on the Dogra's replaced the Ladakhi kings as the main financial and political sponsors of the *Lopchak* mission but this was hardly recognised by the Tibetans and they continued to treat the King of Ladakh as the conductor of this state trade mission.

In 1846, another development took place after the signing of the Treaty of Amritsar the British installed Gulab Singh as the first Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir he only enjoyed internal autonomy but the Britisher's from 1846 onwards established indirect control over Ladakh and the territories of Lahul and Spiti which was formerly under Ladakh became British dependencies along with Ladakh. Through all these years the state trade missions continued uninterruptedly but in between 1852-1853 a minor dispute occurred between the Tibetan government and the Ladakhi's regarding the *Chapa* mission. It was reported that the Ladakhi's had refused to provide free transport to a Tibetan trader known as Kelsang Gyurme who was carrying brick tea into Ladakh on the other hand claimed that there was an insufficient quantity of tea transported to Leh Kelzang this had caused misunderstanding, and soon two Tibetan stewards of the Gartok Governor met with representatives of Ladakh, Bisram Sahib and Kalon Rigzin, and a mediator, Yeshe Wangyal, and concluded this agreement over future procedures (Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa: 1853, 327).

This agreement again confirmed the existing boundaries between Ladakh and Tibet and the traditional arrangements for providing horses for Tibetan government traders and free porter age to Ladakhi traders was also reaffirmed along with this the Ladakhis took an oath) that they would not intrigue or create new troubles in Tibetan territory. The post of the *Lopchak* leader was an important one because the expedition was highly profitable. Dried apricots, saffron, kottzchin, currents and textile fabrics from Europe and India consisted of the articles that were sent from Ladakh to Lhasa through the *Lopchak* mission. On return from Lhasa the *Lopchak* brought with it

shawls, wool and tea which were also the main articles of import from Lhasa to Leh. Complimentary letters were addressed and sent to the Dalai Lama and his ministers and also to certain heads of the monasteries by the Wazir of Ladakh. The Tibetan government sent the Chapa mission to Ladakh three times as often as the *Lopchak* went to Lhasa (Bray and Tsering: 1980, 98). By the late 1870`s, the Kashmir Durbar had taken over from the King of Ladakh the duty of providing the basic capital for the *Lopchak* expedition. The year 1885 was the year when Captain Henry Lushington Ramsay was appointed the British Joint Commissioner in Ladakh one of his key concerns was uphold the dignity of the British government as the paramount power, and he was eager to ensure that no local traditions for example the annual presents by Ladakh to other states or by Spiti to the Ladakhi kings should not continue or survive as according to him to undermined the power of the Britishers as the continuation of such missions would undermine the status of their dependencies i.e Ladakh and Spiti which in turn would affect the British hegemony.

Therefore, in 1889, Captain Ramsay obtained some papers related to the *Lopchak* and other missions of semi political and semi commercial character from the Kashmiri Wazir after studying the reports in detail Captain Ramsay reported his findings in a lengthy memorandum. Wherein he stated the nature of the *Lopchak* mission, before its commencement from Leh to Lhasa, the leader of the party was given certain murasilahs or complimentary letters addressed to the chief men in Lhasa and each letter was accompanied by customary gifts of small value (Rizvi: 1999 b, 169-170).

The leader of the mission was also given a set of complimentary presents as well as a *lam yig*, a 'passport,' which entitled the bearer to transport labour from the villages en route by the Wazir (Satish Saxena: 2006, 248; Bray: 1990, 85). The *Lophyag* then visited the ex king of Ladakh who resided in the village of Stok near Leh and the king issued a *lam yig* of his own and the mission then went from there to Matho, the residence of the Kings uncle before setting out for Tibet. It travelled via Shigatse, where it paid its respects to the Panchen Lama, and arrived to Lhasa in the month of January or February. The mission returned to Lhasa September and under the Ula system the villagers en route had to take turn and supply the mission with yaks, grain, grass, food and tents all the way to Lhasa. The mission on reaching Lhasa presented

its gifts to the treasurer of the Deva Jung who issued a formal receipt (Bray and Tsering: 1980, 113).

Ramsay's suspicion that the Tibetans recognised the king's passport in accordance with tradition, and not the Wazirs in who was currently more politically powerful and had more authority than the deposed king was true. Captain Ramsay was of the view that the *Lopchak* mission was a 'tribute bearing embassy' to Lhasa he supported this argument with the support of the documents that he had acquired from the Wazir in Kashmir and also the letters he got from Lhasa to the Ladakhi Wazir and King. Ramsay was of the assumption that in the letters he got from the Deva Jung or the Dalai Lama to the ex Raja of Ladakh was evidently addressed by a superior to an inferior. Therefore Ramsay came to certain conclusions that the *Lopchak* mission was gave expression to a political, religious and religious hierarchy and that Lhasa considered itself higher in hierarchy than the Ladakhis. Ramsay felt that the status of Ladakh was a tribute bearing embassy who was politically subordinate to Tibet was unacceptable to the British whose dependency was Ladakh in other words he feared the political implications of the *Lopchak* mission, as he had witnessed that the Tibetans did not recognise letters of authority written by the Wazir in Ladakh, and only the *lam yig* or passport that was issued by the King under his seal was regarded as authentic by the Tibetans he also assumed that the Wazir and the government were entitled the revenue of Ladakh but did not possess the territory of Ladakh, he was of the opinion that the exchange of complimentary letters and letters between the authorities of the deposed Ladakhi king and the Tibetan authorities was certainly political and all in all he was apprehensive as the Tibetans did not fully accept the suzerainty of the British power over Ladakh he also found the practise of free carriage very inhuman therefore he recommended that the mission should be abolished and the Ladakhi king pensioned off and sent into exile in some other state. He sent his report to the British Resident at Kashmir. Although Ramsay's report was passed on to the foreign department of Simla but no action was taken and soon Ramsay left Leh because of some disagreements with his superiors.

However, Ramsay's assessments of the *Lopchak* mission highlighted certain important traits of the relationship between Ladakh and Tibet. Firstly the two missions had brought the two states very close, because of the religious similarity and

continued exchange of religious missions, secondly, the traditional relations between Tibet and Ladakh were so strong that it remained unaffected by the British or Lahore Durabars political supremacy of Ladakh as the Tibetans still paid respect and held in high esteem the ex ruler of Ladakh the 'Gyalpo' more than the British and his administrative officials like the wazir. It also brought under speculation amongst the Britishers the question whether the *Lopchak* was a tribute bearing embassy or not? And if it was, did it undermine Ladakh's status and made it inferior to the Tibetans?

After this the Lapchak and Chapa trade was investigated by another British joint commissioner who was the British joint commissioner in 1899 and 1900. But his grounds of the objection of the *Lopchak* mission were social and economic rather than political but he was of Ramsay's view that the *Lopchak* should be abolished. The Britisher's speculated on the possibility of the abolition of the mission between Tibet and Ladakh they feared that the abandonment of the triennial custom would be regarded by the Dalai Lama and the Grand council as the breach of the treaty by the Kashmir State, and they would doubtless retaliate and feared that the form of retaliation Tibet might take, was that she would close the trade with Ladakh.

Sometime in the 1920's the *Lopchak* was discontinued by the Jammu and Kashmir government, But at the instance of the Tibetan government it was reestablished again in 1938 on a biennial basis (Rizvi: 1999 b, 162).¹⁵

The mission was held up for sometime in 1904, after 1899, which was the last departure of the *Lapchak* to Lhasa.¹⁶ There was trouble again as the Britisher's wanted to abolish the *begar* or free transport they were of the view that the *begar* should no longer be supplied to the Lapchak mission by Kashmir State out of the resources of the villagers on the route, but that the expense should be borne by the Darbar itself and the power of the state to call out labour or to demand free transport when necessary should be maintained.¹⁷

¹⁵ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, from the Resident in Kashmir, to E.H.S. Clarke, No. 1353, 18TH March 1904. Proceedings Dec 1904, Nos. 37-46.

¹⁶ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, from W.L. Cambell to the resident in Kashmir, no-1369 E. 28th April 1904. : Foreign Political Secret Consultations, Sec- E. Proceedings Dec 1904, Nos. 37-46.

¹⁷ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, Resident of Kashmir, No. 4005 dated 23rd Nov. 1904. Foreign Department Sec- E. Proceedings Dec 1904, Nos. 37-46.

Kennion himself undertook to travel up to Gartok to discuss the abolition of the *Lopchak* mission he made attempts to forward his letter to the Lhasa government but all in vain as the Garpons of Gartok returned the unopened letters back to the Britisher's as they feared to forward the letters to Lhasa lest they were accused of treachery by their government for dealing with the British. Therefore, the lack of Tibetan cooperation and fear of Russian intervention led British intervention in the form of Younghusband expedition in 1904. The Britishers by then had established the fact that the Tibetans did not attach any political significance to the *Lopchak* mission and it was more of a religious and diplomatic mission. By 1904, the government of India decided that the Government of India had decided to continue the *Lopchak* and Chapa missions and that the terms of the Treaty of 1842 between Ladakh and Tibet would continue to be observed as far as the concern of the free carriage in Kashmir territories, were concerned it was decided that free transport should be continued to provided by the Kashmir Durbar for 260 loads btw Leh and Gartok on the journey, out to Lhasa and between Chushul and Leh on the return journey otherwise it was possible that the mission might be discontinued, an occurrence which the Government of India desired to prevent at the time.¹⁸

Therefore, the *Lopchak* continued to travel as before and continued to do so for the next forty years. The traditional trade relations of Tibet and Ladakh and their state trade missions survived from extinction and continued uninterruptedly from then on the consistency and the commercial value of these trade missions sustained the *Lapchak* and Chapa missions, which was not a political mission and these missions were no doubt the most important trade relations between the two. The Chapa mission brought to the Ladakhi's brick tea and other items but of all the brick tea or 'Chapak' as they call in Ladakhi was the most important one. Regarding the Chapa mission the Chronicle of Ladakh mentions that if the Tibetan government fails to come every year the stipulations of the treaty will be no more binding; as it is pointed out:

*“Pod nas gzyung Tsong khal ma ney bgyai cha tang
chas yong Gry tang/ cha pak du jee di Ladags ma*

¹⁸ Foreign Political Secret Consultations, 23rd Nov 1904. From- C.Somers Cocks, Esq., Assistant sec to the GOI in Foreign Deptt. No 4005 E.B.: Foreign Department, Sec-E. Proceedings Dec 1904, To- E.G Colvin Esq., Resident in Kashmir Year 1904 Nos. 37-46.

thogs/ gdzan mtha la gdong mi chog/ gzyung-tsong
lo tar ma tong chey/ Ngar gi chad don la mi gnas pa chas”

[Translation: From Tibet the government traders shall come with two hundred loads of tea and the rectangular brick-tea will be brought only to Ladakh. Should the *Zhungstong* fail to come annually, then the agreement shall no more be binding.]
(Francke: 1926, 12)

When Moorcroft was at Leh, he himself witnessed the arrival of the Chapa mission from Lhasa to Leh. In his account he states that , “In the course of October, a caravan of Chabbas, as they are termed , traders from Lassa, arrived, with many yaks laden with tea, also a caravan from Yarkand, of twenty-five horses, with shawl-wool, felts, tea, and silks” (Moorcroft: 1841, 252). Therefore, the Chapa mission was an important one for the Ladakhis who waited for their arrival on their New Year or *Losar*.

These state trade missions involved the traders as well as some of the prominent authorities from the religious establishments. In Ladakh the *Lopchak* was headed by Muslim trading families mainly *Arghons*, to name a few prominent ones they were, Haji Nazer Shah, Nasir Shah and Abdul Wahid Radhu of the Radhu family all were merchants in Leh who had trading families in some parts of Lhasa such as Shigatse in case of Abdul Wahid Radhu where they had homes and business. Mainly after 1842, *Lopchak* trade was managed by the professional traders which were these Arghon families, these merchants huge profits from their transactions at Lhasa (Warikoo: 2009, 44). The Tibetans possessed a small Muslim community known as ‘Kache.’ They were of Bihari and Nepali origin as well as Ladakhi’s and Kashmiri’s, and their presence was recorded in Tibet at several occasions. Many of the *kache* were of Kashmiri origin but with their marriage to the local Tibetans they had become totally assimilated in their society there was also a subgroup called the ‘*Lada-kache*’ which were mostly Muslims of Ladakhi origin settled in Tibet. For generations the Kache people had figured prominently in Tibet’s commerce and economy and acted as ‘middlemen’ with other traders from different countries. The bazaars of Lhasa and Shigatse used to have separate *Kache* quarters from where they carried on trade. The Arghon merchants at Leh who also led the *Lopchak* from time to time were wealthy.

Sven Hedin happened to visit one of the Ladakhi Muslim merchants, According to Sven Hedin, "One day Captain Patterson proposed that I should go with him to call on the wealthy merchant Hajji Nazer Shah. In a large room on the first floor, with a large window looking over the Indus valley, the old man sat by the wall, on soft cushions, with his sons and grandsons around him. All about stood chests full of silver and gold-dust, turquoise and coral, materials and goods which would be sold in Tibet. Hedin further states Hajji Nazer Shah's commercial house, which is managed entirely by himself and his large family. This consists of about a hundred members, and the various branches of the house in Lhasa, Shigatse, Gartok, Yarkand, and Srinagar are all under the control of his sons" (Hedin: 1913, 55-56).

There is no doubt that the real source of their wealth of the Muslim trading family was called *Lopchak* mission, of which they possessed a monopoly. But up to the last few *Lopchak* missions in the late 1930's till the 1940's whenever the *Lopchak* was conducted by a Muslim it would be accompanied by a Buddhist from Leh as a titular head to handle the formal ceremonial and to present the gifts to the Dalia Lama. The political changes of the late 1940's brought an end to the *Lopchak* mission and brought to end the tradition of 260 years. According to Ghani Sheikh, the last *Lopchak* mission left for Lhasa on the 19th September 1942 headed by Khwaja Abdul Aziz from the Radhu family and reached Lhasa on 10th January 1943.¹⁹ And the last *Lopchak* set out from Lhasa back to Leh in 1944 after which it was stopped (Bray: 1990, 93). Other prominent Muslim traders who on different occasions headed the *Lopchak* trade were Ghulam Rassul Hazi, and Mohammed Sidiq, Ghulam's brother. Therefore, such a long period of exchange of religious and diplomatic missions continued for a very lengthy period. Therefore, the importance of the state trade missions *Lopchak* and *Chapa* lies on the fact that they were the clear manifestations of the close relations existing between the two and formed the basis of commercial relationship between the two besides promoting and consolidating religious affinity these missions also cemented the age old relationships between Tibet and Ladakh. It is also important to highlight that despite of the change in the political scenario in both Tibet and Ladakh and the attempts of the British India in Ladakh to curb the missions the two state missions survived all these political changes and survived its original character as a mission of religious, diplomatic and commercial in nature. It is

¹⁹ This is the account given by a close relative of the Radhu to the scholar.

also eminent that the Lopchak had no political significance for the Tibetans and Ladakhi's and the Ladakhi's were in no way subservient to the Tibetans to whom they sent the *Lopchak* mission as the Tibetans themselves in return of the *Lopchak* sent the Chapa mission from Lhasa to Leh which clearly showed that the mission was based on reciprocity and that both the mission had the same significance, Therefore none was politically subservient to the other.²⁰

Impact of trade on the local economy of both Tibet and Ladakh

It is evident that in Tibet and Ladakh trade was a fundamental activity, the Leh- Lhasa trade and the local subsistence trades attached Lhasa and Leh firmly in the commercial system of the Himalaya and the trans-Himalaya. Trade became a way of life in Tibet and Ladakh on which the people of these countries depended largely.

In the case of Ladakh, the main beneficiaries of the Central Asian trade were the merchants and horse owners of Ladakh because very few of the Ladakhis carried out external trade they were engaged in either local trade or were employed in menial jobs as pony drivers, porters, and suppliers of pack animals. The only Ladakhis who were involved in mainstream trade were the Ladakhi Muslims known as Arghuns (half-castes, usually the offspring of mixed Yarkandi and Ladaki, or Yarkandi and Kashmiri marriages). Some Ladakhi's from the aristocratic classes and the Kashmiris were comparatively well off than the rest of the section of the population. In both Leh and Kargil the kin-group bonds of the major Ladakh based trading networks reached over regional and international boundaries. For instance Bahauddin Khan, who was a caravan trader in Leh, had originally come from Khotan in Central Asia and was stationed in Ladakh to establish business here (Fewkes and Khan:2005, 325). The Buddhist 'Skutags' were generally involved in domestic trade. At the local level too trade had a tremendous impact on the economy as well as the society of Ladakh. Although the importance of the trans- Karakoram trade to Ladakh was not in the profits it brought to the Ladakhi's as they benefitted only partially from this trade

²⁰ Chinese and Indian governments have put different constructions on the 1842 agreements. Chou En-Lai at one time implied that his government did not recognize the validity of the 1842 peace treaty because of lack of Chinese participation.

because there were very few merchants involved in direct trade except for the Ladakhi Muslim traders mentioned above most of them, the Ladakhi's didn't even consume most of the goods which arrived there, most of the Ladakhi's were engaged in transport and services which gave them subsistence and employment. But it is beyond doubt that the benefit of the Trans- Karakoram trade on the Ladakhi economy was manifold. Many Ladakhi's were engaged in the transportation business the Ladakhis mainly from Kargil and Dras and also around Leh and Nubra areas would earn considerable money for transporting goods from Leh to different places (E. Joldan: 1985 ,78; Rizvi: 1999 b, 241; Nicky Grist: 1985, 7).

These transporters were professional porters and pony men on the mountain and desert trails all over Asia. According to Janet Rizvi, "These people were called as the *kirayakash*, which is derived from the Urdu word *Kiraya*-meaning fee, fare, hire this must have been the feature of the Ladakh scene as long as trade goods were being carried over the Karakoram" (Rizvi, 1999 b, 241). Often the *kirayakash* would engage in long expeditions both private and officially sponsored by the Europeans, as the period between the 1870's to the 1930's many European travellers went for expeditions which took off from Leh to Tibet and the Karakoram. Through the travelogues and books written by these travellers and the British officials who went on these expeditions we come to know about some of these Ladakhi *kirayash* who were employed by them. For instance Sven Hedin, the famous Swedish traveller mentions in his book, 'The Transhimalayas' Vol. 1, about Mohammad Isa who was a Ladakhi Muslim caravan leader, who agreed to go with Hedin on agreement that he got forty rupees a month, and an advance of two hundred rupees in the beginning (Hedin: 1909, 48). He had also accompanied Younghusband on his famous march over the Mustagh Pass (1887), and had been his caravan leader in the campaign to Lhasa (1903-1904). Another Ladakhi Muslim was Ghulam Rassul Galwan, who was amongst the ponymen taken by Lord Dunmore for his expedition to the Pamirs in 1890 which was a four month journey and for which he was paid merely 10 Rupees a month he also accompanied Captain Young husband to Yarkand and also with some English travellers called E.L Phelps and P.W. Church to a trip to central Asia. The fact that the ponymen were dependent for their income can be gauged by the statement given in Galwan's book, "Servant of Sahibs," in which he states that "on hearing the news of their employment from the Wazir who said: You people are

servants of these sahibs (referring to Phelps and Church) from today”. We said: “Yes Sir”. And was much glad to hear the news” (Ghulam Rassul Ghalwan; 1923: pp-84).

The *kirayakash*, therefore, acted as transporters of goods and sources for hiring livestock for transport purposes. The major income of the Ladakhi's came from hiring out animals for carriage. This was precisely important source of the income along the Leh-Srinagar road via the Zojila pass and Purig (Kargil) where they hired out horses, mules, and donkeys. According to Nicky Grist, “In Nubra, Leh and Sakti Yaks (and in Nubra even some camels) were kept for transport. In the 1890 there was said to be 250 horses, lots of donkeys and 1000 Yak for carriage in Central Ladakh and 600 horses in Dras and Kargil” (Grist: 1985, 7). Therefore, these numbers of cattle manifest clearly that the majority of the local population were engaged in the occupation as a *kirayakash*.

Many Ladakhi were also engaged as coolies and they carried the load of the people on their backs and covered the distance on foot for which they were paid reasonably. Those farmers who possessed Yaks would transport a considerable number of loads from Panamik to Leh vice versa on payment.

According to Capt Godfrey, British Joint Commissioner of Ladakh, “On a call by the British Joint Commissioner the Ladakhi's, who are practically dependent for their livelihood on the traffic and carrying trade of the country, will assemble immediately and work night and day to repair a broken bridge or road provided the British Joint Commissioner is present” (Godfrey: 1899, 258). Thus, it is evident that this occupation of the Ladakhi's in those days was largely dependant on trade which in turn gave them employment as well as subsistence.

The farmers who were possession of fields which fell on the course along the trade routes benefitted for the caravan Bash would purchase the standing fields and take horses to graze there. According to K. Warikoo, “the agriculturalists profited by leasing out their grass fields to traders and pony drivers to feed their grass on” (Warikoo: 2009, 10).

The Ladakhi's got an extended market to sell their local produce during the summer months when the traders assembled at Leh it was at the same time of the year that merchants from different countries would come there and barter their goods with the Ladakhi's for their local produce, this trade also resulted in trade within different areas for instance, the merchants from the Indian plains would come to Leh via the Kullu-Keylang route over the Rohtang pass and Para-latse. They would exchange their goods and carry Yarkandi goods and then go back. The Tibetans and the *Shammas* (The traders from Lower Ladakh, Sham area) were actively engaged in trade and carried on trade in Pashm, Salt, Barley, from a very long time which led to the development of traditional relationship between the Tibetans and the Shammas. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century new patterns had emerged as traders began to deal in modern goods from British India. The British had already by their expanded their activities in Ladakh partly due to, the fear of Russian advancement and to monitor the trade relations between Ladakh and Turkestan. Therefore, from 1867 onwards a British Joint Commissioner was appointed in Ladakh who spent the summer months in Leh the capital of Ladakh and his principal duty was to supervise the Central Asian trade routes which passed through Ladakh.

Although, in doing so, the Britishers were driven by their own interest but the British activities in Ladakh in many ways proved to be a boon for the Ladakhi's as far as development was concerned, the British in order to, promote trade in the region repaired the roads, passes and bridges in and around Ladakh from where the passage of traders took place, caravan serais were built in order to house the traders who came after months of travelling, the cattle of the traders were also taken care of, better shops were made and old ones repaired, better facilities were provided to the traders which led to the development of Leh as a commercial entrepot and gradually owing to the exposure of the Ladakhi's to different cultures and societies it became more socially alert, and economically well off as compared to before. Therefore, trade had manifold benefits on the Ladakhi's and their economy.

As far as the impact of trade on the local economy of Tibet is concerned, trade and commerce became a way of life for the Tibetans who were dependant on it. For the trade provided them with subsistence and boosted the local economy of the Tibetans specially the trade in shawl wool and "pashm" which had been a product of high value

both for the local and external trade. Besides the trade also provided livelihood to the nomads of Tibet who engaged in local trade with the Shammas of Ladakh and it enabled the nomad Tibetans to trade with different places and traders, as the chief economic wealth of the Tibet was its nomadic cattle breeding districts (Wim Van Spengen: 1995, 20).

People from all classes whether it be the Lamas, nomads, the peasants or the merchant class were committed traders. The Lamas utilised portions of the huge wealth of their monasteries for trading purposes, many private traders did business on the behalf of the lamas and the monasteries (A. Hoise: 1919, 244). This shows the active involvement of the lamas in trade. The peasants contributed huge amounts of their local produce in trade as they bartered their local produce amongst themselves and with the surrounding areas of Tibet. Trade was intertwined with the economy of the Tibetans this we can assume because of the fact that the pashmina wool and the Tea of Tibet was in very popular demand by many countries and there was a huge demand for these commodities specially wool, besides that Tibet was also very rich in minerals and possessed many gold mines including the one at Thok Jalung where gold dust was available. Tibet was also a trading destination for many adventurous traders who travelled from far flung areas to the trading marts of Tibet to make profits and obtain the very sought for 'Pashmina' wool. Indeed it was the wool production that made a viable enterprise out of the high altitude Tibetan economy at large.

In the second half of the nineteenth century wool trade of north-eastern Tibet had two important developments. Firstly, the importance of the few wool collecting market towns and monasteries along Amdo's Kansu frontier grew by leaps and bounds and secondly, the growing number of Hui (Chinese Muslims) ventured into the Tibetan nomads land to buy the wool of the Tibetans. As a result of this a Tibetan frontier town to the west of Sining, developed into a wool collecting centre (O. Coaels: 1919, 242). And the great monastic towns of Kumbum and Labrang also, due to the development of their neighbouring trade villages provided the necessary infrastructure for the growing trade of wool.

At the local level the exchange of animal products of the nomads for the grain of the Ladakhis had become a continuous process. The nomads would barter their wool,

skins, meat, milk, and butter and barter it with the villagers to obtain barley and other commodities of daily use. According to Captain Bower, in his, 'Across Thibet', "Amongst all classes' officials, Llamas, peasants, and nomads a taste for trading is strongly developed, and all are ever ready to seize an opportunity for making money. The higher officials more particularly devote themselves to commerce, as the emoluments appertaining to their offices are exceedingly small, but the position gives them ample opportunities to trade with advantage, and these opportunities none fail to avail themselves of. The Lamas utilised portions of the great wealth their monasteries contain for trading purposes, the peasants nearly all devote a certain amount of attention to commerce, and the nomads are ever ready to dispose of wool and hides" (Bower: 1893, 282). The Tibetans were heavily dependant on the income that they earned through trade this fact can be gauged from the fact that the Changpa nomads of Tibet were entirely dependant on their trade with other countries as well as their local trade for their substance. According to F.E.S. Adair, "The Chang-Pa's only worldly wealth seems to lie in their flocks of thousands of sheep and goats, of which they sell the "pushm," or under-coat of wool, with which Nature endows all animals at these elevations to protect them against the severity of the cold. This wool trade, with the transport which they supply to travellers and merchants between China and Leh, seems to be their only source of income" (Adair: 1899, 161). Therefore, we can safely assume Tibet trade was closely related with the economy of Tibet. As far as the local, external and long distance trade was concerned trade remained an important activity for the Tibetans in all these spheres for a very long time.

Implications of Chinese Takeover Tibet on Trade

In August 1947, Ladakh became part of Independent India. Followed by Tibet's invasion by Communist China again and complete takeover in 1951. Formally the trade with Tibet came to an end in 1960. A lengthy period of active trade and pilgrimage was stopped abruptly between Tibet and Ladakh after the 1950's and it was bound to have affected the Ladakhi's on the other side of the border as they suddenly felt cut off from Tibet and a sense of isolation crept in amongst the Ladakhis. One immediate effect was a decrease in Ladakh's commerce with Tibet. Trade with Sinkiang had already stopped when Xianjiang became a part of

Communist China in 1949 which was followed by the closure of the borders (Warikoo: 2009, 11). Also, Ladakh had extensive and active trade relations with Tibet both at the local and external level, which ended soon after Tibet was taken over the Chinese the situation worsened when the border crisis became worse in the 1960's and the Indian Government imposed a strict ban on the export of strategic goods to Tibet. Ladakh's economy was largely dependant on trade but with the stoppage of trade with Tibet its economy was also affected to a large extent as hundreds of Ladakhi's who had depended, directly or indirectly on this commerce and were now unemployed.

According to Fisher, "Another setback to Ladakh's economy came with the termination, in 1951, of the *Lopchak* missions from Leh to Lhasa that for nearly three centuries had played such an important role in the trade between Ladakh and Tibet" (Fisher: 1963, 85). The last *Lopchak* that went to Lhasa was in 1944, but perhaps the eventual termination of this state trade mission took place in 1951. The termination of these missions seems to have occurred on the initiative of the Government of India, presumably to avert any possibility that Peking might misinterpret the significance of these missions and use them as a pretext for political claims on Ladakh. Another trade sector which very hard hit was the Shawl wool industry, as after the border between Ladakh and Western Tibet had been closed there was no legal import of pashm from Western Tibet not only were the Ladakhi's affected by it but it also wreaked havoc on the shawl industries of Srinagar who were mainly dependant on the shawl wool from western Tibet for the raw material of their pashmina shawl this trade in shawl wool staggered to an end in the 1950's and now they had to be contended with whatever pashm that was produced in Ladakh alone. Today there are no Shammas or Arghons acting as middlemen between the Tibetan traders in shawl wool and the Ladakhi traders and Ladakhi's involved in this trade are agents of the government. In Ladakh, there is now an All Changthang Pashmina Growers Co-operative Marketing Society, which was established in 1995, at the moment there is no border trade and smuggling of goods along the border takes place. With the stoppage of the trade between Ladakh and Tibet post 1951 the traditional links between the two were disrupted along with the age old trade relations. Another disagreement between India and China centred on the border of Ladakh with Tibet as the Chinese in 1958, publicly asserted their claim

to the Aksai Chin area of Ladakh, near the Ladakh-Tibet border. This border dispute later escalated into a full fledged war between India and china in 1962.

Following Dalia Lama's departure to India in 1959, about one hundred thousand Tibetans had migrated to India and other countries the relation between India and China became worse. While trade issues with China were distressing to numerous individual Ladakhis and other Indian traders, public interest in India and elsewhere has centred primarily on the border dispute. But however, the Tibetans and Ladakhis have come closer and know each others psyche, as many Tibetans have assimilated in the Ladakhi society as a few thousand of Tibetans settled down in Ladakh. The supreme heads of all the Tibetan schools visited Ladakh delivered sermons and they have created awareness and consciousness amongst the Ladakhi Buddhists and have broadened their vision. The Central Institute of Buddhist Studies was established in 1959 where Tibetan Buddhism was taught to students by the much learned scholars who had completed their studies in Buddhist religion from Tibet and thus this development filled the gap which had been created after the 1950's when the monks were no longer allowed to go for further studies to Tibet. These events are the landmark in the context of Tibet and Ladakh's relations in post-independence Ladakh. Many families of the old generation of Ladakhis have reminiscences of Tibet where they had gone for trading or studying purposes. The Muslims Ladakh also has many nostalgic feelings for Tibet many of them had houses at Rudok, in West Tibet, Shigatse and Lhasa.

Many Muslim families led the triennial Lopchak (*lo-phyag*) mission from Ladakh to Lhasa for many years. Haji Ghulam Muhammad, a Ladakhi Muslim whose family was settled in Lhasa is one such family which led a five member committee of Ladakhi and Kashmiri Muslims settled at Lhasa and Shigatse. Another prominent trading family was that of Abdul Wahid Radhu who had family ties with the Tibetans. Therefore, the Chinese takeover Tibet was strictly hated by the Tibetans who were the victims of their aggression and event the Ladakhi did not welcome this new development which took place in the early 1950's.

CHAPTER-5

CONCLUSION

After Communist China took over Tibet, not only did it cause unrest and instability in Tibet region but it also affected Ladakh in many ways. Consequently, the age old trade relations between Tibet and Ladakh were terminated. This development affected not only trade but it also drastically affected the cultural and religious exchanges between Ladakh and Tibet. Ladakhi's felt isolated because for centuries they had drawn religious and cultural inspiration from Tibet and now with the abrupt closing of borders, the channel of communication was closed for good.

The closing of the borders eventually snapped all ties between Tibet and Ladakh. The trading caravans disappeared altogether after Chinese occupation of Tibet. Ladakh's trade with Xinjiang also virtually stopped after the occupation of Xinjiang by the Chinese in 1949. The possibility of a religious pilgrimage to Tibet which the Ladakhis took from time to time also finished. The tradition of Ladakhi monks going to Tibet for higher religious studies to Tibet virtually stopped and it adversely impacted upon the standard of monastic educational levels in Ladakh.

Following Dalia Lama's flight to India in 1959, about one hundred thousand Tibetans have migrated to India and other countries. And thousands of Tibetans migrated and settled down in Ladakh. The Tibetans and Ladakhi's who had family ties on both sides of the borders were affected. For instance, the Kashmiri Muslims traders of Ladakh were asked to leave Tibet and were compelled by the Chinese to leave behind their Tibetan wives and their families. Later, the Chinese claims to parts of Ladakh's areas in the Aksai Chin led to tensions between India and China which escalated into a full fledged war in 1962 (the Sino-Indian war of 1962). This caused a chasm in the Sino-Indian relations and the boundary between China and India in the disputed area of the Aksai Chin region remains unresolved till today. Post 1950's developments hampered not only Tibet and Ladakh but also severed relations between India and China.

However, with the opening of the border trade along the eastern stretch of rugged Himalayan border between Sikkim and Tibet and the recent opening of the Srinagar – Muzzafarabad (POK) route again has created a new hope for the Ladakhi's. Because the reopening of the Nathula pass in Sikkim by India and China and the reopening Srinagar –Muzzafarabad (POK) route has led to the reestablishment of trade through these channels, the Ladakhi's and, therefore, under these changed circumstances the Ladakhi's are quite hopeful and optimistic about the reopening of the old trade route of Demchok on the Ladakhi side and Tashigong on the Tibetan side. The reopening of this overland trade route is beneficial for both Tibet and Ladakh, as it will benefit the local economies on both side of the border. Local trade between Tibet and Ladakh can be resumed once more. It will also promote tourism and pilgrimage to the Kailash Mansarovar and the Mansarovar Lake in Tibet which are holy places for both the Hindus and the Buddhists alike and draws thousands of pilgrims to these places yearly. The current route to the Kailash Mansarovar and the Mansarovar Lake in Tibet is a very long and hazardous as pilgrims have to take a twenty days hazardous, trek to reach here from Uttarakhand and there is no direct motorable road to the Mansarovar area from here. Besides the pilgrims have to face treacherous climatic conditions and endure the rough terrain to complete their journey. This route is billed as the toughest route in the country.

The new road that India has proposed from the picturesque Hanle area in Eastern Ladakh bordering Himachal Pradesh's Kinnaur region as an addition to the traditional pilgrim route across the Lipulekh Pass in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand is less cumbersome, less hazardous than the route taken by the pilgrims at present. One of the important advantages of the route is that there is a motorable road on both sides of the border of China and Ladakh and one can drive up all the way to Mount Kailash. This will not only reduce the numerous difficulties faced by the travellers every year but also save time of the pilgrims as it takes only seven days from Demchok to reach Mansarovar.

This alternative route to the Mansarovar will also lead to, economic development of the region as of now the present route is only used for pilgrimage and does not have any impact upon the local economy. The hope for the Ladakhis is the restoration of normal border trade and cultural relations between Tibet and Ladakh. The opening of

the old overland trade routes will not only help trade in the region but also promote pilgrimage and tourism.

If both India and China continue to raise the quality of their relations and find an early and final solution to the boundary dispute, Ladakh could become New Delhi's 'gateway to Central Asia.' India is quite conscious of Ladakh's geopolitical location, being at the heart of the trans-Himalayan and trans-Karakoram trade routes road links to India. Ladakh has always been well connected geographically to Tibet, Xinjiang and Central Asia. Also by developing an all-weather road network to Leh and reopening the historic trade routes between Ladakh and China, India can gain reliable access to Inner Asia.

By connecting Demchok in south-eastern Ladakh on the Indian side to Tashigang about 40 km into the Chinese territory, there is a strong possibility that India will also be able to access the Tibet-Xinjiang highway. However, in achieving these objectives there have been lots of hindrances. Although the governments on both sides of the border, China and India have maintained close economic and diplomatic ties the border issues still remain very sensitive. However, India's proposal to reopen the old overland route via Demchok to Tashigang on the Tibetan (presently the Chinese) side has not met with any concrete results.

The Indian diplomats and politicians have from time to time proposed the reopening of this route, but China has not responded to India's request to reopen this route. In the year 2000 China virtually turned down India's request for opening new and safer pilgrimage route to Kailash Mansarovar in Tibet and it urged New Delhi to improve road conditions on its side so as to meet the needs of the pilgrims.

The Chinese spokesperson stated that "We express our understanding to India's request to open a new pilgrimage route. But the route mentioned by the Indian side is far from Kailash Mansarovar and the climate and road conditions are quite poor" (see the Daily Excelsior, dated 5-6-2000). The Chinese further stated that they hoped that both sides continued to utilise the existing route of the Qiangla Mountain Pass and that they thought it was not advisable to open the new and safer pilgrimage route to Kailash Mansarovar at the moment.

In 2000, L.K Advani, the then Home Minister of India tried to persuade China to allow the use of Ladakh route for annual Kailash Mansarovar Yatra but without success. However, the efforts to reopen the overland trade route between Tibet and Ladakh are still being pursued. The local politicians of Ladakh have been appealing to the government of Jammu and Kashmir to also exert pressure on the central government to hold talks with the Chinese government regarding the issue of reopening the Leh-Demchok-Gartok-Lhasa route. The Ladakhis want this development to take place as it will benefit them in many ways. Such is the clamour for the use of this alternative path that regional political parties in Ladakh have turned it into a poll plank. They are demanding the route to be made operational as it may bring more prosperity to the remote region of Ladakh. Since age old relationships and routes already exist, the governments on both sides the proposal of the Jammu and Kashmir government to open the Leh-Demchok route to Tibet needs to be pursued as well as accepted by the Chinese government.

Appendix- I

II. TIBETAN LETTER OF AGREEMENT, 1842.

The following is a translation of the original Tibetan letter:

This agreement is made in the interests of the friendship between the Lhasa authorities and Shri Maharaja Sahib and Maharaja Gulab Singh. On the thirteenth day of the eighth month of the Water-Tiger year (September 17, 1842), the Lhasa representative Kalon Surkhang, investigator Dapon Peshi, Shri Raja Sahib Dewan Hari Chand and Wazir Ratun Sahib, the representative of Shri Maharajah Sahib, sat together amicably with Kunchok (God) as witness. This document has been drawn up to ensure the lasting friendship of the Tibetans and the Ladakhis. We have agreed not to harm each other in any way, and to look after the interests of our own territories. We agree to continue trading in tea and cloth on the same terms as in the past, and will not harm Ladakhi traders coming into Tibet. If any of our subjects stray into your country, they should not be protected. We will forget past differences between the Lhasa authority and Shri Maharajah. The agreement arrived at today will remain firmly established forever. Kunchok (God), Mount Kailash, Manasarowar, and Khochag Jowo have been called as witness to this treaty.

Sealed by Kalon Surkhang

and Dapon Peshi.

Appendix-II.

I. LADAKHI LETTER OF AGREEMENT, 1842.

The following is the translation of the original letter written in Tibetan:

Shri Khalsaji Apsarani Shri Maharaja; Lhasa representative Kalon Surkhang; investigator Dapon Peshi, commander of forces; Balana, the representative of Ghulam Kahandin; and the interpreter Amir Shah, have written this letter after sitting together. We have agreed that we have no ill feelings because of past war. The two Kings will henceforth remain friends forever. The relationship between Maharaja Ghulab Singh of Kashmir and the Lama Guru of Lhasa (Dalai Lama) is now established. The Maharaja Sahib, with God (Kunchok) as his witness promises to recognise the ancient boundaries, which should be looked after by each side without resorting to warfare. When the descendants of the early kings, who fled from Ladakh to Tibet, now return, they will be restored to their former stations. The annual envoy from Ladakh to Lhasa will not be stopped by Shri Maharajh. Trade between Ladakh and Tibet will continue as usual. Tibetan government traders coming to Ladakh will receive free transport and accommodations as before, and the Ladakhi envoy will, in turn, will receive the same facilities in Lhasa. The Ladakhis take an oath before the God (Kunchok) that they will not intrigue or create new troubles in Tibetan territory. We have agreed with God as witness that Shri Maharajah Sahib and the Lama Guru of Lhasa (Dalai Lama) will live together as members of the same household. We have written the above on the second of Assura, Sambhat 1899 (September 17, 1842).

*Sealed by the Wazir, Dewan,
Balana, and Amir Shah.*

Source- *Tibet- 'A Political History' by Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa
Pg 327. New Have London, Yale University Press.

APPENDIX-III.

No. CLXII.

TREATY between the **BRITISH GOVERNMENT** on the one part and **MAHARAJAH GOLAB SING** of **JUMMOO** on the other, concluded on the part of the **BRITISH GOVERNMENT** by **FREDERICK CURRIE, ESQUIRE**, and **BREVET MAJOR HENRY MONTGOMERY LAWRENCE**, acting under the orders of the **RIGHT HONORABLE SIR HENRY HARDINGE, G.C.B.**, one of **HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S MOST HONORABLE PRIVY COUNCIL**, **GOVERNOR-GENERAL**, appointed by the **HONORABLE COMPANY** to direct and control all their affairs in the **EAST INDIES**, and by **MAHARAJAH GOLAB SING** in person.—1846.

ARTICLE 1.

The British Government transfers and makes over for ever, in independent possession, to Maharajah Golab Sing and the heirs male of his body, all the hilly or mountainous country, with its dependencies, situated to the eastward of the river Indus and westward of the river Ravee, including Chumba, and excluding Labul, being part of the territories ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State, according to the provisions of Article IV, of the Treaty of Lahore, dated 9th March 1846.

ARTICLE 2.

The eastern boundary of the tract transferred by the foregoing Article to Maharajah Golab Sing shall be laid down by Commissioners appointed by the British Government and Maharajah Golab Sing respectively for that purpose, and shall be defined in a separate Engagement after survey.

ARTICLE 3.

In consideration of the transfer made to him and his heirs by the provisions of the foregoing Articles, Maharajah Golab Sing will pay to the British Government the sum of seventy-five lakhs of Rupees (Naukshabee), fifty lakhs to be paid on ratification of this Treaty, and twenty-five lakhs on or before the first October of the current year, A.D. 1846.

ARTICLE 4.

The limits of the territories of Maharajah Golab Sing shall not be at any time changed without the concurrence of the British Government.

G.O.B., Governor-General, on the part of the British Government, and by Maharajah Goleb Sing in person; and the said Treaty has been this day ratified by the seal of the Right Honorable Sir Henry Hardinge, G.C.B., Governor-General.

Done at Umritsur, the sixteenth day of March, in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty-six, corresponding with the seventeenth day of Rubbee-ool-awul 1262 Hijree.

(Sd.) H. HARDINGE.

Seal

(Sd.) F. CURRIE.

(,,) H. M. LAWRENCE.

By order of the Right Honorable the Governor-General of India.

(Sd.) F. CURRIE,

*Secretary to the Government of India,
with the Governor-General.*

N. CLXIII

* Sources. Treaties and Sanads Pp-353-355

ARTICLE 5.

Maharajah Golab Singh will refer to the arbitration of the British Government any disputes or questions that may arise between himself and the Government of Lahore or any other neighbouring State, and will abide by the decision of the British Government.

ARTICLE 6.

Maharajah Golab Sing engages for himself and heirs to join, with the whole of his Military Force, the British troops, when employed within the hills, or in the territories adjoining his possessions.

ARTICLE 7.

Maharajah Golab Sing engages never to take, or retain in his service, any British subject, nor the subject of any European or American State, without the consent of the British Government.

ARTICLE 8.

Maharajah Golab Sing engages to respect, in regard to the territory transferred to him, the provisions of Articles V, VI, and VII, of the separate Engagement between the British Government and the Lahore Durbar, dated March 11th, 1846.

ARTICLE 9.

The British Government will give its aid to Maharajah Golab Sing in protecting his territories from external enemies.

ARTICLE 10.

Maharajah Golab Sing acknowledges the supremacy of the British Government, and will in token of such supremacy present annually to the British Government one horse, twelve perfect shawl goats * of approved breed (six male and six female), and three pairs of Cashmere shawls.

This Treaty, consisting of ten articles, has been this day settled by Frederick Currie, Esquire, and Brevet-Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence, acting under the directions of the Right Honorable Sir Henry Hardinge,

* In March 1846 it was arranged by mutual consent that in future the Maharajah should present, instead of 12 goats, 10 lbs. of pashm in its natural state as brought from Kashmir to Leb, 4 lbs. of picked and assorted black wool, 4 lbs. ditto ditto grey wool, 4 lbs. ditto ditto white wool, and 1 lb of each of the three best qualities of white yarn.

Appendix-IV

TIBET-LADAKH TRADE AGREEMENT, 1853

The following is a translation of the Tibetan original:

During the last year, Kelzang Gyurme, a Tibetan government trader, has not been able to bring a full quota of brick tea into Ladakh.

Usually the Ladakhis provide a certain number of horses to transport

The tea, but this year, they did not provide any, claiming that there was an insufficient quantity of tea to be transported. Kelzang

Gyurme on the other hand, claims that it is not the question of the

Quantity of tea brought in; but, of the number of horses that are

supposed to be supplied. As this has caused misunderstanding, two

two Tibetan stewards of the Gartok Governor met with representatives

of Ladakh, Bisram Sahib and Kalon Rigzin, and a mediator, Yeshe

Wangyal, and concluded this agreement over future procedures.

It was agreed that the Ladakhis would supply horses to the Tibetan

trade agencies according to the limit previously agreed upon.

It was further agreed by the two Governors at Gartok that

They would recommend to the Lhasa government that in the future

More capable trade agents should be sent to Ladakh; the Ladakhis

agreed to send better envoys to Tibet to pay the annual oath of

allegiance.

Whenever Tibetan government trade agents arrive at Ladakh, they

Are to be provided by kitchen boys and grooms for their horses,

as in the past. Tibetan traders bringing tea to Gartok and Ladakhi

traders bringing cloth to Gartok should trade only with each other,

and not with any third party. The boundary between Ladakh and

Tibet will be maintained according to the established custom.

Salt and wool carried from Rudok (a district in Western Tibet) to

Ladakh should not be turned back. Similarly, tsamba (barley flour)

And grain taken from Ladakh to Rudok should not be restricted. The prices of commodities and custom duties must not be raised by the traders on either side; they must be maintained at the previous level. Tibetan traders carrying a permit from the Gartok Governor and Ladakhi traders carrying a similar permit from the Thanedar are exempted from custom duties and need only make a token offering to the authorities. Traders without permit will have to pay a two per cent custom duty.

Both parties agree that the local inhabitants of the two countries will provide free transport and accommodations to special agents travelling in emergencies. These agents will carry letters of authority. Tibetan and Ladakhi traders may freely graze their pack-animals at any place in both territories, on the condition that they do not bring domestic animals with them.

Local officials will cooperate with each other in implementing this agreement.

*Signed and sealed by Thanedar Bisram
and Kalon Rigzin of Ladakh,
and the two stewards of the
Tibetan Governor at Gartok.
Witnessed by Yeshe Wangyal.*

APPENDIX-V

S.No	Name of article	A Import is from Central Asia into Ladakh						B Import is from Ladakh into Central Asia	
		Chinese Turkistan			Tibet		Total	Kullu	
		Qty	Vol (Rs)	Qty	Vol (Rs)	Qty	Vol (Rs)	Qty	Vol (Rs)
1	Animals livings and Sale								
1.a	Horses, Ponies mules etc..... head	635	33,375	2	75	637	33450	38	3000
B	Cattle .....head	....	....	4	100	4	100	...	....
C	Sheep and Goat .....head	....	....	2319	6312	2139	6312	775	2325
2.	Apparel .....No.	888	4518	6	240	894	4758	25	104
3.	Borax .....Mds	....	....	530	5295	530	5295	526	5260
4.	Cotton								
A	Piece goods, European	...	...	..	...	....	...	...	...
B	Piece goods, Indian	...	...	..	...	....	...	...	...
C	Piece goods, foreign	5	4571	...	...	5	4571	..	...
5	Drugs								
A	Charas	1942	228575			1942	2281575	11691	40533
B	Other kinds of medicine	2	1088		880	2	1968	3	100
6	Dyeing material Indigo.....Mds								
7.	Fruits and Vegetables .....Mds	3	50			3	50	25	5033
8.	Grains Rice Hushed & Grains .....Mds								
9.	Hides and Skins								
A	Hides of Cattle....Pcs	219	1327			219	1327		
B	Skins of Sheep & Goats.....Pcs			814	273	814	273		
10.	Jewellery & Precious Stones								
A	Jewellery .....heads	698	905			698	905		
B	Turquoise.....heads			2336	7040				

				0					
11	Leather								
A	Un manufactured ..			4	246	4	246		
B	Manufactured .. pairs	182	388			182	388		
12	Metals & Manufacture of Metals								
A	Brass and Copper ...Mds								
B	Iron.....Mds								
C	Home Shoes...Mds								
13.	Musle.....Pods			30	600	30	600		
14.	Numdas and Carpets								
A	Numdas .....Pcs	1368	36153			13658	36153	296	740
B	Carpets .....Pcs	432	6705			432	6705	130	1975
15.	Oil								
A	Petroleum								
16	Ghee			35	1348	35	1348		
17	Salt Tibetan			4338	13108	4338	13108	3490	10470
18	Silk								
A	Raw	1226	587008			1226	587008	120	57744
B	Piece good European								
C	No. Indian..... Pcs								
D	No. Foreign..... Pcs	2024	8969	619	906	2643	9815		
19	Spices								
20	Stationary	1	40	16	630	17	670		
21.	Sugar.....Maunds Refined								
22.	Tea..... Maunds								
.a	Indian .....Maunds								
B	Lhasa brick tea..."			126	20164	126	20164		
23.	Tobacco....."								
24.	Wool.....								
A	Raw including.....Pashm	565	23945	31850	106259	4415	130204	3599	70855
B	Piece goods European .....Maunds								
C	Piece goods Indian.."							80	640
D	Shawls							11	275
E	Piece goods Foreign	588	36,159	.....	450	588	36,609		
25.	Yak Tails .....No.								
26	All other articles of Merchandise								
A	Unmanufactured	15	1220			15	122		
B	Manufactured ,...No.	2	2765		545	2	0		

		793		790		1583	3310		
Tota l			978005		16447 1		142476		

*Source- TRADE REPORT 31ST MAY 1911

SHOWING EXPORTS FROM LADAKH TO CENTRAL ASIA. AND FROM LADAKH TO TIBET

APPENDIX-VI

Route 80 LEH to DEMCHOK, via TANKSE, SHUSHAL, and Upper INDUS-193 miles

This is a main trade route between Leh and Tibet, the junction of the Rudok and Gartok routes being at Shushal. It is dependent on the opening of the Chgang La; except for the crossing of this pass it is less exposed and its climate milder than the Debring route (Route 82) From Demchok it is 5 marches, about 90miles, to Gratok. Transport and supplies (including fuel) should be pre arranged at Sakti, for the march to tankse; beyond this place no supplies can be expected. The Chang La is easy from July to October. Stages 2 & 3 may be omitted and one halt made at Sakti instead; but in this case the march over the Chang la is long and tiring, and it is not recommended unless the pass is well open, and the going good. At Zingral a track leads over the Ke (Kay) la to Tankse, fit for coolies only. From Tankse there is another but longer road to Shushal, via Muglib and Pankong Taso (see route 81)

NUMBER OF STAGES	NAME OF STAGES	MAP REFERENCE S	INTER-MILES/ TOTAL MILES	HEIGHT ABOVE SEA LEVEL	REMARKS AND NATURE OF CUNTRY TO NEXT STAGE
	Leh RH.,C.,E., PO., TO.,	52F	..	11500	See route 50 First 5 miles gentle slope downhill over heavy sand. Then easy going and level up Indus level
1	Ranbirpur, C., E.	52F	14/14	11000	Large village; C. good. S.T. F.. G.W. abundant About 9 miles level along Indus valley. Then up Chirme valley. Laden ponies , 6 hrs
2	Chirme C., E.	52G	13/27	11890	Large village & monastery. S.T. F.G.W. available. Easy going up cultivated valley to

					descent
8	Shushal R.H., C., E.	52K	15/105	14200	Village RH. Very dirty S.T. (yaks); F.G.W. available
9	Dachung Yoma, E.	52K	15/120	..	No village S.T. nil ; F.G.W. available Easy road; gentle rise to Taska la, mile 5. descent steeper but easy
10	Thangra E.	52 K	20/140	..	No village S.T. nil ; F.G.W. available Ford Indus ; then up l. bank. Road very fair up board Indus valley. Pass occasional Changpa camps
11	Gangra-le,	52O	17/157	..	S.T.nil ; F.G.W. available Road fair up broad Indus valley
12	Fuk-che, E.	52P	12/169	..	S.T.nil ; F.G.W. available Road fair up broad Indus valley.
13	Lagankhel(La Gankial) E.	52P	8/177	..	S.T.nil ; F.G.W. available Road fair up broad Indus valley
14	Demchok, E.	52P	16/193	..	At ladakh-Tibet boundary S.T. nil F.G.W. available

Route 82 LEH to DEMCHOK, via DEBRENG, PUGA, and INDUS valley – 198 mile

This route to Demchok is less used by caravans for Gartok than that via Tankse and Shushal, describes in route 80

The first three marches via Tikse and Ugu are alternative to those on the left bank of the Indus described in route 55. The second stage, Ugu is marked Arpa on the old map.

From Mahiya (or Mya) a track leads over the Kaksang La and Shushal (Route 85)

The Indus is generally fordable in winter at Mahiya, Nima Rap and below Rasirma le. Theses ford are rarely passable before September, but shin rafts can be obtained at Nima village. Rafts

cannot cross in a high wind. The old quarter inch reconnaissance maps are available to the Ladakh boundary at Demchok, whence it is 5 marches, or 90 miles to Gartok.

NUMBER OF STAGES	NAME OF STAGES	MAP REFERENCES	INTER-MILES/TOTAL MILES	HEIGHT ABOVE SEA LEVEL	REMARKS AND NATURE OF CUNTRY TO NEXT STAGE
	Leh RH.,C.,E., PO., TO., Dispensary	52F	..	11500	See route 50 and 80
1	Tikse, E.	52F	12/12	11000	Large village, monastery. S.T. F.G.W. Available Upper r.bank Indus river; easy going
2	Ugu, E.	52G	15/27	..	Village (Arpa on map) S.T.F.G.W. Available. Cross Indus bridge below camp
3	Gya, C. E.	52G	21/48	13500	Village and monastery. Small granary, otherwise G. nil ; S.T. F. W. available Steady stony ascent by easy road past Tiarank, mile 6, getting steeper towards Tagalaung La, 17500 ft, mile 11. steep descent of about 4 miles
4	Debring, E.	52G	15/63	15780	Site of Changpa camp variable S.T. F scanty .G.W.

					variable Easy track down the broad valley
5	Pongo Nagu, E.	52G	12/75	..	No village S.T. nil F.G. available. Good W. for small spring Level easy track across tsokr Chumo Maidan. Pass Thugie (spring , mile 5 . thence gentle rise with no water up Polakonka Fu to pass
6	Polakonka La, E.	52K	17/92	16600	E. om pass S.T. nil; G. scarce F. W. available Easy track down Puga valley. W. very scanty, sulphurous and bad
7	Puga, E.	52K	11/103	..	No village S.T. nil; F.G. very scanty W. much impregnated with sulphur Continue down Puga R. to Indus opposite Mahiya(Mya), mile 8.(see Route83) then up 1 bank Indus. Track good
8	Nima Rap, E.	52K	20/123	..	Small village and Indus ford, passable between September and May. S. nil; T. F.G. W.

					available Ford Tagalaung stream , mile 10, and Hanle R. at end of March Track mostly over sand .
9	Loma E.	52K	16/139	..	E. on r , bank Hanle R. No village S.T. nil; F.G.W.available Track over the sand valley widens out at end of march
10	Rasirma-le E.	52K	10/310	..	S.T. nil F.G.W.available
11	Gangre-le E.	52O	13/162	..	See Route 80
12	Fuk-che E.	52P	12/174	..	See Route 80
13	Lagankhel(La Gankial) E	52P	8/182	..	See Route 80
14	Demchok E.	52P	16/198	..	See Route 80

Route LEH to DEMCHOK, via DEBRING, HANLE and the PHOTI LA -211 miles

Either bank of the Indus may be followed to Upshi, between Ugu and Gya (See routes 55 and 82).

The grass along the Hanle R. between the Sangpoche la and Hanle swarms with mosquitoes in July and August; these are most aggressive and troublesome by day, but disappear at night.

Hanle can also be reached by taking route 57 to the northern end of the Tso Moriri(lake) and then crossing the mountains to the east via the Kyun Tso; From Tso Moriri to Hanle in 3 marches.

A third route to Hanle is from Narbu Sumdo, of Route 57, via Dangari and the Lenak La, a distance of 3 marches or 55 miles.

The route beyond Hanle across the Photi la not recently been revised and few details are available.

* Source- **Kenneth Mason, M.C, (1929) "Routes in the Western Himalaya, Kashmir, Punch, & Ladakh"**
Calcutta. Govt of India Press.

APPENDIX - VII

S.No.	Routes	References	Dues levied by the Tibet	
1	<p>Kashmir</p> <p>From Ladakh , via Rudok, Mansarovar Lakes, Maunanila, and Sluglase, to Lhasa</p>	<p>Report on Tibet by Capt CO'conor page 50 map of Hundes or Narilkhorsum and Monyul</p>	<p>Ten percent duties levied by the Tibet on goods crossing by these routes except from a Musalmans of leh and Bashahris. Leaving stations are Tashigon , Chaleang and Rudok (Vide pg 27 and 28 in sec E June 1907,mes 375-389</p>	
2	<p>From Srinagar via Leh, Ladakh, Tashigang and Indus valley to Gartok</p>	<p>Report on the Gartok expedition by Capt Rawling pg.2 and map of Hundes or Narilkhorsum and Monyul</p>	<p>Ten percent duties levied by the Tibet on goods crossing by these routes except from a Musalmans of leh and Bashahris . Leaving stations are Tashigon , Chakang and Rudok (Vide pg 27 and 28 in sec E June 1907,mes</p>	

			375-389	
3	Punjab From Kullu, via Shangrang La and Chumurti to Gartok	Report on the Gartok expedition by Capt Rawling pg.2 and map of Hundes or Narilkhorsum and Monyul	Ten percent duties levied by the Tibet on goods crossing by these routes except from a Musalmans of Leh and Bashahris . Levaing stations are Tashigon , Chakang and Rudok (Vide pg 27 and 28 in sec E June 1907,mes 375-389	
4	From Shimla via Shipki La to Gartok	Report on the Gartok expedition by Capt Rawling pg.2 and map of Hundes or Narilkhorsum and Monyul	i) Amount levied cannot be exactly stated , but dues are taken by the longpon or Chaprang (vide pg 27 and 28 on sec	

			E , June 1907 , nos 375 -359 vide also pg 5 in sec e , Aug 1906 no 40- 43 a land	
5	United Provinces From Tehri Garhwal via, Nialong to Gartok		i) The inhabitants of Niang may rs 70 per annum as land revenue at Changparang hey amy no Trade due ii) the other resident of Tehri states may one pair of saddle	

			<p>bags of grain on linenty</p> <p>iii) the basharis and the other tradesr by a pol;l tax of 8 annas a land</p> <p>iv) the Bhotias pay also a small tax in kind on imported goods (vide annual report on the tangiri trade of the United provinces and the year ending 31st march 1907 ,sec e</p>	
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			Jan 1908 No115 -132)	
6	From Badrinath (Br Garhwal) via Mane La & Tolug (Totlingmath) To Gartok		<p>i) I pan of saddle bags in every ten is taken by the Jongpon of Toling</p> <p>ii) Rupees 44 Ckachal is taken as land revenue from the people of Mna</p> <p>iii) Rs 5 is taken as duty on the Br coin passing into Tibet vide annual non the F.T of the Up for the</p>	

			year ending 31 st March 1907 , sec e Jan 1908 , Nos 115 -132	
7	United Provinces contd... From Almora , via Jashimath and Nitila to Gartok	Report on the G ex	i) each trade pays about 20 lbs of grain to the SAngron of Dub on the 1 st visit each year and half the amount each subsequent visit ii) each trader has to pay 60x of brick tea from the Jongpon at	

			<p>on exorbitant rate</p> <p>iii) there one to toll levying 6 1/2 anas each on every 100 laden goats and sheep</p> <p>iv) a duty of 2 seers levied on at daba</p> <p>v) a door tax of 6 1/2 anas per door levied from trades having houses or godowns @ daba vide annual r on the f-tof up</p>	
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			<p>for year 31st march 10907 sec e , jan 10908 no- 115-132 and pg 16-20 in sec E feb 1908 no 98- 109</p>	
8	From Almora via Milam & Uttadhana to Gartok		<p>Taxes levied under the toll heading</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) tal (the Usual Tax)] 2) lal tal (for crossing the pass) 3) go tal (poll tax) 4) 10% tax on the goods of every kind (but the amount was valuable) 	

			5) Sangpon of Daba levies r 45 from trades sing the uttadhaura (vide annual report on F-7 of United provonces for the year ending 31 st march 10907 , sec -E jan 1908 no 115 - 132	
9	Fromk Almora via Daina or Neo pan & Gyanema to Gartok	Western Tibet and the Br bonduland “ by Mr C Arheing pg 393		
10	From Almora and Lankpya Leh and Gyanema	Western Tibet and the Br bonduland “ by Mr C Arheing pg 393		
11	From Almora via Lepu Lekh and Purang (???????) to Gartok	Report on the Gartok expedition by Capt rauling pg.2 and map of	Pass under control of the Sangpon of Tahalot	

		hundes or Narilkhorsum and Monyul		
12	Nepal From KTM via kirung and Tingri to Slugatse and Gyantse			
13	Bengal From Siliguri via Kalupong , Jelep La and Chumbi to Gyantse			
14	From Siliguri via Gangtok Nathu la, and Chumbi to Gyantse			
15	From Siliguri , via lichen and Lachung valley in Sikkim to Khanuba Tong, Gyantse and Singtse			
16	Assam From Odalgam via Taklung and Dhirung la Via Bhutan Tawang and Tse Tand ((Chetang to lahas)			
17	From Sadiya , via Rung to Lahasa	Page 4 in sec E any 1906 , nos 5 and 7 – 55 and Map of @ the end of the ???	Nil	

** Source- 1908, Foreign Department Consultations, Branch Sec.E, March 1908, Nos-441-444.*

APPENDIX –VIII.

ROUTE NO. 35: LEH TO NOH (BY TANKSE).

Stage of or Halting –place	Distance in Miles		Description,& c
	Intermediate	Total	
To CHAGRA (15090ft)	.....	84	See route No. 39
9. CHARKANG	60	90	A ruined rest house at the foot of the Lankar or Marsemik La; road good , up stream all the way ; grass and burtsi at camp
10.PANGUR GONGMA (17670ft)	90	99	The road cross the range which separates the lake Lukong grainage from that of the Chang Chenno river by the Marsemil Pass, 1842 ft, and instead of the following the Yarkand route to the Chang Chemmo valley, the road passes over elevated ground to the east of the pass into the head of another valley which drains into the Pangong Lake ; then crosses by the Kinla , a big spur from the main range ,and descend

			to camp. In July there was snow lying on the surrounding hills, but none on the pass itself
11. NINGRI ORRONGNAK (15390 ft)	50	104	Road follows down a large stream which flows to Pangong Lake and in summers is difficult to cross ; grass and burtsi at camp
12. NIAGZU OR ROWANG YOKMA	80	112	Road passes for 8 miles down stream to mandal, and then truns up a branch valley(Tsokik) containing abundance of grass and jungle wood. The camp is at the junction of three streams, and is on the frontier between Ladakh and Tibet
13. KAISARPO (1600ft)	120	124	Good road along Tsokiok stream. Three tents of Noh shepherds at camp
14. GONU	60	130	Roads continues up valley, near the head of which two passes (17300ft and 17700ft high respectively) have to be crossed ; a frontier guard stationed here

****Source- Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh. (Compiled under the direction of the Quarter Master General in India in the intelligence branch) 1992. Manas Publication Delhi. Pp:965.***

APPENDIX-IX ROUTES

LIST of the Table of Routes.

No. of Route.	From	To	By what places.	REMARKS.
I	Umritsur, ...	Lehin Ludakh,	Viâ Noorpoor and Sooltanpoor in Koolloo, ...	By Major Montgomerie, G. T. S.
IA	Leh, ...	Yarkund, ...	1. The Zumistanee route by the valley of the Shayook river and the chou-kee of Kokiar, ... 2. The Tabistanee route by the valley of the Noobra river and the chou-kee of Kilian, ...	Compiled from information furnished by Moommud Umeen of Yarkund, guide of the Schlagent-weits.
II	Umritsur, ...	Rampoor in Bishehr, and thence to Leh, ...	Viâ Spitee, ... Viâ Chhomoreeree Lake, ...	Taken from "Cunningham's Ladakh."
III	Jummoo, ...	Leh, ...	Viâ Sooroo, ...	From native information.
IV	Rampoor, ...	Garo in Chathan, Eastern Thibet (Chinese territory)	By Shalkhur, a frontier town of Bishehr on the Chinese boundary,	Taken from a vernacular work on the Bishehr chiefship by Extra Assistant Commissioner Sham Lal.
IV A	Mundee, ...	Garo, ...	By Koolloo, Rampoor and Shipkee,	IV A. B. D. By Major Montgomerie, G. T. Survey of India.
IV B	Ditto	Ditto	By Koolloo, Rampoor, the Kiobrunng Pass and Chuprunng, (Tsap-rang,) ...	
IV C	Simla, ...	Shipkee, ...	Along the left bank of the Sutluj. By Dr. Gerard, ...	
IV D	Mundee, ...	Rudokh, in Eastern Thibet (Chinese territory,)	Viâ Koolloo, Lahool and Spitee, ...	

List of Routes—Concluded.

No. of Route	From	To	By what places.	REMARKS.
IV ^a	Mundee, ...	Garó, ...	Viá Tashigong, ...	} By Major Montgomerie, G. T. S.
IV ^b	Ditto	Rudokh, ...	Viá Cheenee and Kuri, ...	
V	Sreenugur,...	Leh, ...	By Drás, ...	
VI	Leh, ...	Chathan, (Garó), ...	Viá Sakhtee in Ludakh, ...	Compiled from native information.
VII	Umritsur, ...	Sreenugur, (Kashmeer),	By Junamoo and Banihal, ...	} Taken from the Punjab Route Book. No. VIII com- piled chiefly from native informa- tion.
VIII	Goojrat, ...	Sreenugur,	By Bhimbhur and the Peer Punjal range, ...	
IX	Umritsur, ...	Ditto	By Ukhnoor, ...	} Taken from the Route Map of Major Montgomerie, G. T. S. of India.
	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	
X	Peshawur,...	Ditto	By Hureepoor, in Huzara, Moozufur- abad and Bara- moola, ...	Taken from the Punjab Route Book.
XI	Rawulpindee,	Murree, and thence to Sreenugur,	By the Gohalun Ferry, Chukar and Ooree, and Bara- moola, ...	By Major Mont- gomerie, G. T. S.

* Source- "Report on The Trade And Resources Of The Countries Of The Countries On The North-Western Boundary of British India". In the Appendix XXIV. PP: ccxlii-ccxliiii.

APPENDIX-X

THE TRADE OF LADAKH WITH CHINA AND THIBET.

BY

CAPT. S. H. GODFREY

(LATE BRITISH JOINT COMMISSIONER OF LADAKH).

APPENDIX- X



THE TRADE OF LADAKH WITH CHINA AND THIBET.

The town of Leh is the great emporium of the trade which passes between India, Western China, and Thibet. The roads which lead from Russian Turkistan, Kashgaria and Yarkand, are joined by the Khutan caravan route, and meet in Leh. Lhassa, the sacred capital of Thibet, is connected with Ladakh by the trade route, which skirts the northern slopes of the Himalayas, and follows the valleys of the Brahmaputra and the Indus. These are the chief routes leading from foreign territory into Ladakh.

Two roads diverge from Leh, linking up India with Asia. The Srinagar road leaves Leh in a westerly direction, and joins the Indian railway system at Rawal Pindi. The southern route, by the fertile Kullu Valley, runs down into two large commercial towns of India Amritsar and Hushiarpur and connects them with the markets of Central Asia. Under a commercial Treaty concluded with the father of the present Maharajah of Kashmir, a British Commissioner is deputed to Ladakh to regulate and control the traders and the traffic, conjointly with an official appointed by the Kashmir State. These are the Joint Commissioners of Ladakh. The Kashmir official has to attend to the details of the interior administration of the province. The responsibility for the trade route practically devolves upon the British Joint Commissioner, who resides in Leh during the trading season of each year, returning to India for the winter shortly before the passes are closed by snow. The pressure of foreign competition upon British commerce is felt even in these remote parts.

Every market, however small, which is capable of development in British interests, is now a matter of concern. I shall therefore give a brief description of how the trans-Himalayan commerce of India is conducted in Leh, and attempt to show how far

the Thibetan trade might, in expert opinion, be expanded and attracted to British markets. The trade of Western Thibet and Chinese Turkistan is at present conducted in the following manner. Caravans, consisting chiefly of ponies and mules, make their annual start for Ladakh from the plains of the Punjab and the railway at Rawal Pindi in the summer. These carriers take up to Leh, by the Kullu and Kashmir routes, cotton goods, tea, and other merchandise, so timed that the convoy shall be delivered in Leh by the early autumn. Meanwhile the Central Asian traders will have set out from Lhassa, Khutan, Kashgar and Yarkand, to meet the Indian caravans at Leh, where both arrive in the autumn. Long-booted merchants of Russian Turkistan and the Chinese New Dominions exchange in the Leh markets, by barter and sale, their gold, silver and "charas," for the coral, cotton goods, and tea of the Indian traders. The Leh bazaar, thronged with men in the costume of many countries, and the native Ladakhi women, wearing their turquoise-studded peyraks, forms a picturesque scene, whose bizarre effect is heightened by the Buddhist forms of architecture and ornamentation in the Rajah's palace, which overhangs the town. After a brief sojourn the strangers depart, east and west and south and north, before the great Himalayan passes are closed to traffic by the snow. The town then resumes the normal quiescence from which it has been temporarily aroused by the commerce. The alterations made in the road and the increase in the facilities for travelling, have lately induced the Central Asian merchants to pass through Leh and proceed to the Punjab to affect their purchases there, in the same way that the Siberian traders of to-day leave Nizhni-Novgorod, in Russia, to deal direct with St. Petersburg and Moscow. The great bulk of the business will continue for many years yet to be conducted after the old fashion in Ladakh, for changes take place very slowly in the East. The trans-frontier trade through Leh has been steadily increasing since I assumed charge of the administration of the trade route as British Joint Commissioner of Ladakh.

In 1893 the value of the trade rose from thirty-three lakhs of rupees to thirty-nine. The year I was in Ladakh it had reached sixty lakhs. A table will be found at the end of this chapter, which represents the value of the trade for the past ten years. It is clear that if the present rate of increase observable in the statistics of the past few years can be maintained, the trade of Thibet and Chinese Turkistan will become an important item in our Indian commerce. The existing system is capable of coping with a reasonable development of trade without increasing expenditure extravagantly, or

incurring any political danger. At first sight it would seem as though elaborate machinery would be necessary to preserve order in the Leh bazaars among the heterogeneous assemblage of polyglot merchants from Russia, India, China and Thibet. As a matter of fact trade disputes seldom occur, and, when they do, are generally settled by a system of arbitration in the serais. No caravan could get far from Leh without the necessary passport from the British Joint Commissioner. Eastward it would be stopped by the guard over the bridge at Khalsi, and northward in the Nubra Valley. Without supplies it would be helpless. Only men of substance, too, visit the country for trading purposes. There is practically, therefore, no serious crime in the country. The Ladakhis are peace-loving and law abiding, and no proletariat exists in the town. The Battery and Infantry Regiment of Kashmir troops which are quartered in the fort below the town of Leh, would be more than sufficient to overawe any mob that could collect in the wide bazaar, which is the principal market-place. The system of road administration is curiously patriarchal. The trade route is maintained entirely at the expense of the Kashmir State, which under the treaty I have alluded to before, pays some few thousand rupees yearly to the Joint Commissioners for the upkeep of the road. The distance from the Zojila to the Karakoram is over three hundred miles. The distance from Leh to the Ladakh- Lahoul frontier is over a hundred. The total length of mountain road under the charge of the Joint Commissioners is not less than four hundred and fifty miles. The sum of a few hundred pounds would be manifestly inadequate for the maintenance of such a road over some of the highest passes in the world were it not for the assistance rendered to the Commissioners by the people of the country. On a call by the British Joint Commissioner the Ladakhis, who are practically dependent for their livelihood on the traffic and carrying trade of the country, will assemble immediately and work night and day to repair a broken bridge or road provided the British Joint Commissioner is present.

At the conclusion of the work they willingly accept whatever remuneration the Commissioners may be able to vote to them out of the limited means placed at their disposal, and there is an end of the matter. The problem of the further development of this trade centre is an interesting one. Russian competition may or may not drive British commerce out of Chinese Turkistan, as it has done in Asia Minor, in the north of Persia, in Central Asia, and threatens to do in the northern provinces of China. In

Thibet this competition has not yet been felt, and may yet be averted by securing the priority of entry. The trade of Lhasa with Ladakh and India seems capable of a large expansion. Captain Bower, in his interesting book, 'Across Thibet' (Chapter XVI., p. 282), says : " Amongst all classes officials, Llamas, peasants, and nomads a taste for trading is strongly developed, and all are ever ready to seize an opportunity for making money. The higher officials more particularly devote themselves to commerce, as the emoluments appertaining to their offices are exceedingly small, but the position gives them ample opportunities to trade with advantage, and these opportunities none fail to avail themselves of. The Llamas utilise portions of the great wealth their monasteries contain for trading purposes, the peasants nearly all devote a certain amount of attention to commerce, and the nomads are ever ready to dispose of wool and hides. As regards the prospects of trade with India should the country ever be open to commerce, of all articles in which we can hope to do a profitable trade, tea easily ranks first. At one time it was a Government monopoly, and even now I believe it is compulsorily sold to the people in some parts, the pressure being put on by members of the Government engaged in the trade. The population of Thibet, that is to say of Thibet proper, has been estimated at four millions. If they drank as much tea per head as is drunk in England, viz. five pounds, the annual consumption would be twenty million pounds, and even taking the consumption per head at the low figure of 3, that would give a total of twelve million pounds. 44 Besides tea, other articles that would find a market, are sugar, tobacco, rice, crockery, tinted spectacles, red and yellow broadcloth, brass buttons, brightly stamped cotton, cloth, and coral. "Amongst the articles that Thibet can export, wool takes the foremost place. The capabilities of the country as regards the amount that could be supplied are practically unlimited. There is evidently a great accumulation of the precious metals in the country. "The possibilities of Thibet as a future market are indisputable. The people would take tea and manufactured goods, and return raw material and the precious metals." So much for the tea trade. Captain Bower's views on the trade are practically confirmed by the opinion recorded in my last Trade Report from Leh, though this is expressed in more guarded and general terms. "With regard to the future, it will be no rash prediction to state that as long as the interest of the British Authority in it lasts, so long there will be every possibility of improvement in the trade; when this is withdrawn the trade will drop in proportion. The Residency has done what it can under the present conditions and with existing materials. The question of securing to the traders from our side

equal rights in Chinese Turkistan with Russian subjects is one in which only the Government of India and the Peking Embassy can move. Such security would undoubtedly add to the traffic, and from a purely commercial point of view would appear very desirable."

The method in which the upkeep of the trade route is managed has been explained. Some account of the manner in which the work is done may prove of interest. The adventures of my camp during the "flood-year" will illustrate this. Ladakh is shown in Ramsay's 'Western Thibetan Dictionary' as a rainless tract. In past years this was clearly the case. Increase of cultivation may be responsible for the climatic change. In the beginning of July a steady rain began in Kashmir and Ladakh, which worked havoc among the roads and bridges in both countries. The Indus, the Jhelum, and the rivers between Srinagar and Leh rose in flood, and communications between the two towns were completely cut off. The news of the destruction of the bridge at Kargil was telegraphed to me. By the time I had arrived there was no bridge left over the Sooroo, and the rivers which unite at Kargil were impassable. The place where the break had occurred was one hundred and twenty miles from the nearest town. Telegrams had to be despatched for wire and other material necessary, and the villagers were collected from the southern glens to fell the tall poplars at the Kargil fort, prepare planks, and forge rough nails which would be of use until supplies should arrive from Kashmir. The principal difficulty lay in the question of how to convey orders over a river across which the voice could not travel, and in which no boat or raft could hope to live. Ladakhis who had attempted to cross the river higher up had been drowned. The officers who were camped on the right bank of the river, unable to return to India, signalled that they were willing to do all in their power to help. A Ladakh warrior was discovered who possessed a bow and arrow dating from the time when the country was ruled by its own Gyalpos or Kings. Orders summoning a road official from Leh were affixed to the shaft. It fell short and was lost. The next carried the message. By the same means plans and drawings were passed backwards and forwards. At this time the officers encamped opposite had a narrow escape. Their tents were pitched in some fields near the village of Chalaskot, beneath a range of snow-capped mountains towering many thousand feet precipitously above them. About midday a dull report was heard and a great piece of the mountain side appeared

to be moving. A large area had become detached by the bursting of a subterranean lake, and was descending like a stream of lava upon the devoted camp. Work had fortunately been closed for the midday rest, so the camp was not deserted. Figures could be made out with the glasses striking the tents and moving horses and household goods and chattels. They were just in time. Everything had been got out of the way as the mud stream swept past the village, carrying away trees, walls, fields and the very land on which the camp had stood down into the swollen and discoloured river. A lively exchange of arrows conveyed the assurance that all was well, and congratulations that the debacle had not occurred at night. On the completion of the bridge heads an iron arrow connected them by a fishing line. Along this a rope was passed, and the mails were put across. A telegraph wire was next placed in position, and within three weeks from this time a combined cantilever and suspension bridge, one span of "which was one hundred and twenty-five feet across, was ready, to carry the traffic. The road was then diverted to pass along this route until the main bridge at Kargil should be reconstructed. The four broken bridges of the Lamayuru Nalah were next rebuilt, establishing free caravan communications with Leh.

The whole of the difficulties were not yet overcome. The Shyok River to the north of Leh on the further side of the Khardeny Pass was in full flood. The rafts had been wrecked and the caravans from Yarkand were blocked in the Nubra Valley. The Ladakhis and Baltis at Kargil and Leh stated that the trade was at a standstill for the present year at least. My arrival at Leh caused a change in public opinion. The deputation which met the party below the town were assured that every endeavour would be made to re-open the road. Planks and material were hurried over the Khardong, a pass 17,500 feet high leading into the Shyok valley. The river at Sati was indeed found to be impracticable, but further down the valley there is a village where in former days a bridge was said to have existed, built in the time of a native governor of Ladakh, Mehtar Mangal. The remains of one pier are still visible. At this point two rafts were constructed, and an attempt made to connect the two banks by a hawser suspended from the high rocks on the right bank. The idea was that the rafts were to ply on the hawser. The experiment proved a dangerous one. The rapidly uncoiling ropes caught me by the foot while attending to the navigation of the first boat. I was thrown down immediately and dragged to the side of the raft. Happily the hawser parted at an unobserved flaw. Communications were, however, established, and three

days afterwards the party had set out for the Karawul Dawan. All danger to the Central Asian trade was now over. The Karawul Dawan Pass is merely a steep hillside, very wearying to tired ponies, but never impassable. It might have been thought that the great altitude of the Sasser Pass, over 18,000 feet, would have rendered it impossible for regular traffic to cross it. This is not altogether so. The road is very rough, and marvellous wastes of ice and snow meet on the Sasser glacier. They present those difficulties to the traveller on the Pass, which must be inherent in the Arctic desolation of the place, where there is no sign of human habitation except the little stone huts of the goat-herds who pasture their flocks below the Pass in summer. The rise to the glacier is gradual, crossing a moraine where patches of grass in July are studded with edelweiss and Alpine flowers. The glacier itself is a broad sheet of ice deeply covered with hard frozen snow and shut in on either hand by splintered crags glistening with snow and ice. The eternal silence is only broken by the passage of the caravans. Provided that the road is not blocked by fallen fragments of ice, the negotiation of the Sasser is less wearying to animals than the ascent of the comparatively low Zojila. Here the work of my party ceased. They might well claim to have done yeoman's service for the Empire. Within two months a broken mountain road of two hundred miles, crossing three large rivers and three passes of over 17,000 feet, had been put into a condition to carry the Central Asian trade without further hitch and was in thorough order from end to end. The officers who had started with me, simply to shoot and travel, and had remained with me throughout the whole of our difficult and trying task, were thanked in the name of the State by the Kashmir Wazir Wazarat, who gave a dinner in their honour at Leh on their safe return and on the reopening of the Central Asian road. Much has been written lately about the necessity for pushing British trade. Many appear to be of opinion that it should be left to private enterprise to extend our commerce. In Central Asia it is impossible for private enterprise to succeed unless the State can show that the road is open and the markets are not closed by foreign fiscal regulations. When diplomatic action has secured the right of entry for our merchandise into Thibet on conditions not less favourable than those accorded to other countries, and Indian merchants are allowed to pass freely to and fro in the southern and western provinces of the Chinese Empire, the Thibetan markets should provide no inconsiderable outlet for British manufactures and the products of our Indian Empire. The Indian Government do not appear to view with disfavour the prospect of an increase in our trans- Himalayan trade, but a certain

amount of active support is necessary if its development is to proceed as satisfactorily as might be desired. If a small portion only of the large frontier military expenditure could be diverted to a more peaceful purpose, it would bring a livelihood, if not wealth, to many, and enable the nomad Thibetans to dispose of produce which is useless to them unless they can sell their surplus or exchange it for the produce of more favoured climates or more civilised countries. The Government which shall accomplish this will have done a public service greater than the acquisition of districts whose revenue cannot pay the cost of administration. No policy of aggression or annexation is desirable, nor would it be profitable to the end in view.

SCHEDULE OF THE TRADE STATISTICS SHOWN BY THE
BRITISH JOINT COMMISSIONER'S
OFFICE AT LADAKH.



Year	Import	Export	Total
1885	Rs 1,831,501	Rs 1,569,321	Rs 3,400,822
1886-87	1,652,413	1,232,229	2,884,642
1887-88	1,716,245	1,712,328	3,428,573
1888-89	1,353,845	1,212,030	2,565,875
1889-90	1,600,580	1,513,626	3,114,206
1890-91	1,525,483	1,440,906	2,966,389
1891-92	1,565,278	1,447,840	3,013,118
1892-93	1,795,141	1,591,544	3,386,685
1893-94	2,154,252	1,837,37	3,991,627
1894-95	3,165,218	2,850,101	6,015,321
TOTAL	18,359,956	16,407,301	33,766,258
AVERAGE	1,835,995	1,640,730	3,376,625

SCHEDULE OF THE STATISTICS OF TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND
TURKISTAN, AND THIBET, FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BRITISH JOINT
COMMISSIONER.

Year		India	Turkistan	Changthang	Total
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Imports from	1893-94.	1,284,162	7,57,112	112,978	2,154,252
	1894-95.	1,731,680	1,274,700	158,837	3,165,218
Exports from	1893-94.	7,63,837	1,017,029	56,509	1,837,375
	1894-95.	1,314,143	1,440,599	95,360	2,850,102

The road into Thibet should be opened to native traders of India, and they should be allowed to compete on equal terms with all comers along a highway free and open to all. In the opinion of men qualified to judge, our trans-Himalayan trade would then rapidly assume proportions which would attract more general attention than it receives at present, and would develop a most useful and profitable market for both Great Britain and India. The suggestion to increase the expenditure on the Ladakh office seems to be a question which should be discussed and decided on its merits, with a view to ascertaining whether or no any public benefit, or the reverse, might accrue if the proposal were to meet with approval. Perhaps the best means of explaining this will be, while abstaining from personal opinion, to make a plain statement of fact of what occurred in Ladakh in 1894, and the measures taken to meet the emergency, and then contrast the results obtained with what would have happened had those measures not been taken. On or about July 5th, while awaiting the orders of the Government of India, at Gulmarg, on certain proposals contained in the Ladakh Trade Report of 1893-94, I received a telegram that postal and all other communications from Leh and Central Asia had been completely cut off by the destruction of the Kargil bridge. The telegraph line is only laid as far as Kargil on the Leh road, so that nothing could be ascertained of what had happened beyond Kargil. The Ladakh diary will show that on July 6th I left Gulmarg, and, proceeding by double marches, reached Kargil on the loth. On arrival there I found that not only were no traces of the Kargil bridge, except the remnants of the two end piers, left, but every bridge on the Sooroo had been destroyed by the floods, and there was absolutely no means of communicating with the right bank. Fifteen miles up the Sooroo I found Colonel Ward vainly endeavouring to get the Baltis, at Chalaskat, to bring in material to try and bridge the river there. The fact is alluded to show that the presence of the British Joint Commissioner on the spot is absolutely necessary on a crisis of this description occurring. The villagers at that time stated that bridges could only be built at low water in winter, and that it was hopeless to try and place timber in position over an impassable river from one bank only, especially as the central pier had gone. Such materials as were available at Kargil, and several hundred labourers, were collected at once. Two days afterwards an urgent message was shot over the river, wrapped round the shaft of an arrow, empowering two officers, delayed on the opposite bank, to take any requisite measures to compel the inhabitants to work, and a second was sent to summon the road darogha from Ladakh. The roar of the river

prevented verbal communication, but a heavy headed arrow took a fishing-line across, and so connected the pier-heads now under construction. Along this a double rope, capable of carrying a manual weight across the river, was formed into an endless chain at the bridge heads, and the mails were safely passed from side to side.

I now knew the extent of the damage done, and that every day was of the greatest importance. The inhabitants worked with a will, the whole of my Staff and several officers with my camp being busy from daybreak to dark. On July 23rd the cantilevers were successfully connected, and I crossed on the two poles to place in position the third on which the strength and utility of the structure depended. Next day this was got over, and an officer, who had been detained on the right bank, proceeded down to India. On July 26th the bridge was opened to the traffic awaiting its completion on both banks. Two photographs of the Sooroo bridge are attached. The central span is one hundred and twenty-five feet between perpendiculars. The photographs give little idea of the pace and volume of the water, which were the chief causes of the difficulties. The importance of the work to the Central Asian trade was evinced by the fact that every merchant delayed at Chalaskat worked without remuneration, as a coolie, many of these merchants being men of very considerable wealth and position. The smaller bridges caused little delay, the new structure over the Indus having fortunately withstood the flood. I therefore reached Leh on August 3rd. Here I heard that the rafts on the Shyok at Sati, on the north of Leh, had been washed down the river and wrecked, and that the caravans, which had arrived on the right bank, were blocked there. The planks, ordered the previous year, were therefore hurried over the Khardang Pass, and on August 11th was in camp by the side of the Shyok river. The Ladakh diaries of that and succeeding days will show that on the 13th one of the rafts was moving, and that my camp had moved up to the Karawul Dawan and Sasser passes to restore broken communication there, and that I was in camp till August 21st. By this time the Khardang Pass and valley, the Shyok rafts and road, the Nubra Valley, and Karawul Dawan and Sasser passes had been put into a passable condition for regular pack traffic, and all danger to the through traffic was over. During these moves I paid for all transport at full rates as far as my personal camp and baggage were concerned, only Durbar engineering stores and material being carried at cheap rates, in agreement with the villagers, whose income from the transport of the trade absolutely depended on the re-opening of the road, and who gave some months work

practically gratis. For the camp at the Sooroo Colonel Barr allowed ten days halting allowance to my office establishment on the understanding that I would not ask for it myself. This I volunteered myself in order to prevent that small concession being refused to men who had done more than their ordinary work and been put to heavy expense when camped at fifteen miles away from the nearest village on the barren bank of a river where wood and water only were locally procurable. In the Nubra and beyond I took no one I could do without, and so reduced office expenses; but the travelling allowance given, Rs. 1 10 per mensem or Rs. 4 per diem roughly, did not cover cost of transport alone, and could not have come well within Rs. 100 per mensem of what was spent by me privately in connection with my movements? But it will not, I think, be difficult to understand that I had little time for private accounts. At Chalaskat a merchant's caravan of stores had to be bought up to keep the camp going. In the Nubra stores had to be sent out from Leh. Nothing could have saved the communications in 1894 had not the year before a road been run under my supervision along the right bank of the Shergol gorge. Of the eight bridges by which the old road passed backwards and forwards in 1892 no traces of seven had been left by the floods of 1894. That was the main work of those years. After my return from Nubra in August of that year, I had to make several tours to watch work under construction. Without the superintendence of some one with some slight knowledge of engineering, this work could not possibly have been completed in time. It is needless to say that more than the travelling allowance of Rs. no per mensem had been spent long before the Nubra was reached, apart from the cost of the wear and tear of property involved by long and rapid moves over a broken line of communications. The distance from Srinagar to Leh being 250 miles, from Leh to the Sasser no, I had to travel over 700 miles, exclusive of occasional flying visits of thirty to fifty miles a day. In 1894 alone the following major works were completed. The Sooroo bridge, of which a photograph is given.

The figures on the bridge will show on a rough scale the size of the work which had to be completed in a limited space of time. The new Kargil bridge, a more solid and considerably larger structure than that over the Sooroo, was constructed later. The main bridge over the Indus was designed, aligned and begun in 1893, but completed by the early summer of 1894. The Kardang pass and road. The new rafts in the Shyok and the Koyak ferry. The Karawul Dawan approach and pass. The Sasser pass and road

and shelters on the last two passes. These works were in hand at these points simultaneously, and had to be inspected occasionally. The whole was completed without the expenditure of any of the Government of India money on the works. The extra expenditure incurred by me in connection with my camp was paid by me. The head men of the country were mostly rewarded by seats in Durbar and my written thanks. We might now consider what would have been the result of the non-completion of any of the main works, the bridge at the Sooroo, that over the Indus, or the rafts of the Shyok river. Had the first not been constructed, the whole of the India caravans would have been blocked at Kargil. Unable to obtain provisions or transport from that half of Kargil town and the villages which lie on the right bank of the river, these caravans must have returned to Kashmir for the winter, for we knew when postal communication had been re-established that the country north of Leh was impassable.

Had I remained at Leh instead of continuing my journey towards Central Asia, the Yarkand caravans would have had to return from the Shyok before winter overtook them, since the Nubra valley alone could not have supported them. The trade, therefore, which had risen from thirty-three to thirty-nine lakhs in 1893, in 1894, instead of again rising to sixty lakhs, would have fallen to something not far removed from nil, and the growing reputation of the Ladakh trade route would have suffered a blow from which it would not easily have recovered. It appears from this that the British Joint Commissioner must be on the move on an emergency arising. And at present, it is a fact that he cannot do this without spending private money. Such floods as those of 1894 may possibly, of course, not recur for years to come, and the main bridges now finished will probably stand for many years. But any heavy break, even in the road, will still have serious effects if not promptly put right. It is not only in the year under note that heavy work had to be, and was, done. I have written this note at perhaps tedious length, because the Government of India will naturally not at present agree to any increase of expenditure without good reason being shown, and in order to demonstrate that this increase is necessary, *if it be an object to secure and increase the Central Asian trade*. The expenditure proposed amounts to some hundreds of rupees per annum only, while the trade is worth some lakhs. The question merits full consideration whether this trade cannot be developed to an extent which will benefit more than local commerce despite what I have said above. If, therefore, I may offer an

opinion which seems unbiased and which is based on some three years' experience of Ladakh, I would suggest that the question of whether it is not worth while to incur a small definite expenditure to secure a not inconsiderable influx and efflux of commerce from and to India is a matter which would seem to merit full consideration.

S. H. GODFREY.

NOTE ON TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND
LADAKH.

[NOTE. Official figures for the trade of Ladakh with the neighbouring states other than India are not obtainable in this country for a later date than 1895. As we may now expect to have more intimate relations than heretofore with Thibet, and a marked improvement in the whole trans-frontier traffic, it might be advantageous to British merchants to have the detailed reports of the Commissioners in the Frontier-States transmitted regularly from Simla. The following table, taken from the latest 'India Land Trade Accounts,' brings the statistics for Ladakh up to the 31st of March, 1898 (pp. 210-211) :-

	1895-96	1896-97	1897-98
Import (Rupees).....	421,633	5,71,880	5,26,616
Export (Rupees).....	3,93,578	5,80,853	407,248
(Total).....	815,211	1,512,733	9,33,364
(15 Rs=£ I)	£ 54,347	£ 74,849	£62,257

Neither the importation nor the exportation of treasure is included in these figures. According to the 'Statistical Abstracts' (1897), the treasure account stands for the years mentioned. (p-218):-

	1895-96	1896-97
Imports (tens of rupees).....	960	320
Exports “ “.....	4,226	6,500
Total	5,816	6,820

In his ' Review of the Trade of India for 1897-8 (p. 69),Mr. T. A. Robertson takes the first table substantially as it stands, though he expresses his results in tens of rupees. He makes the following comments on the general trade situation: "The trade with countries across the Indian Frontier remained practically stationary. The trade with Kabul and Kandahar is dwindling owing to the fiscal restrictions placed upon it by the Amir, and last year further contraction was caused by the closing of the Khyber Pass and the military operations on the frontier. The effect of the fighting in the Swat is noticeable in a set-back to the expanding trade of Bajaur, while the requisition for the frontier campaign of all available transport affected the trade of Kashmir and Ladakh. The most important trade on the frontier is with Nepal, and this shows a marked increase, as does also the trade with Thibet "(P- 4).

*Source- Appendix on Central Asian Trade by Capt.S.H.Godfrey. (Late British Joint Commissioner at Leh) in F.E.S.Adair, (1899) "*A Summer in High Asia*" London, W. Thacker and Company.

**APPENDIX-XI-LADAKH TRADE REPORT ON THE YEAR ENDING THE 31ST
MARCH 1901.SHOWING TRADE BETWEEN TIBET (CHANGTHANG) AND
LADAKH.**

S.NO	ARTICLES	IMPORTS FROM CHANGTHANG.	
		QUANTITY.	VALUE
			Rs. a.p
1)	Cotton Manufacture.		
a)	European.....		
b)	Indian.....		
2)	Drugs and Medicine		
a)	Charas.....		
b)	Miscellaneous.....	Mds 2-5.	
3)	Dyeing Material		
a)	Indigo.....		
b)	Miscellaneous.....		
4)	Hides and Skins.		
a)	Other Skins.....		
b)	Miscellaneous.....	Pieces 8,204	5,127 80
5)	Leather....		
a)	Unmanufactured...	Pieces 10	250 00
b)	Manufactured....		
6)	Carpets & Namdas.		
a)	Carpet.....		
7)	Precious Metals...		
a)	Gold.....		
b)	Gold Dust.....	Tolas 838	17, 598 00
c)	Silver Coin.....	Tolas.....	36, 650 00
d)	Silver Yambus.....		
e)	Russian Gold coin..		
f)	Russian Notes.....		
g)	Miscellaneous...	Mds 8	2400 0
8)	Opium.....		

9)	Salt Petre.....		
10)	Satin.....	Pieces 20	1, 530 00
11)	Turquoise & Precious Stones.	15, 100	15,100 00
12)	Lhasa Brick Tea.	Mds.....282	25, 662 00
13)	Wool.....	Mds.....1,943	27, 202 00
a)	Unmanufactured.		
b)	Manufactured.....		
14)	Shawl and Shawl Stuffs.	Yds....7,462	3. 731 00
a)	Pashm.		
b)	Pashmina.	Mds....1019	35,665 00
15)	Miscellaneous.	Mds....769	6,152 00
	Total :	.....	1,75, 006 80

R.L Kennion Captain.

- **Source-Government of India (1902) Foreign Department. Frontier-A - Proceedings. January 1902, No 24-30.**

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