

**THE FIRST NEWSPAPER OF LADAKH AND ITS IMPACT ON
LADAKHI ENGLISH LITERATURE: A STUDY**

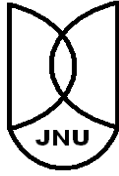
*Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the
Degree of*

Master of Philosophy

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CERTIFICATE

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This dissertation titled “**The First Newspaper of Ladakh and its Impact on Ladakhi English Literature: A Study**” submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of any University or Institution.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my father

And all the 'Ladakhs-pa'

*May knowledge spread its wings and take flight into the vast
and open sky never ceasing to stop.*

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation will try to illustrate the transition phase of literature in the English language in the region of Ladakh, keeping in mind the literary background and the research already done on Ladakh. The publication of the first newspaper of Ladakh called the ‘Lad vags gyi ag bar’ by A.H.Francke¹ (1870A.D. - 1930A.D.), laid the foundation for the emerging writers as well as the range of literatures available in Ladakh in the local language and eventually in the English language. Through this dissertation a study of the development of the print media in the local language in the 1900’s and the eventual efforts of other types of historic, cultural, sociological, anthropological, geographical studies that emerged alongside has also been emphasized on.

With the focus on academic studies in different disciplines by international forums (like IALS in the nineteenth century), the need for preservation and enhancement of the literature in the vernacular was felt, that lead many local authors to write in the local language i.e. Bodiyig and Urdu. While they made contributions towards the field of literature in the local language, modern education changed the phase of writing in Ladakh.

The oral form of expression seemed a thing of the past and a need to write and reserve the culture by preserving the language was the point of focus by many Ladakhi writers. The newspaper brought about many changes in the literary field in due time. Introducing the *bod-yig* script or the Tibetan script in Ladakh was mainly due to the spread of Buddhist religion which spearheaded a literary tradition. Elite group of educated ladakhis used the *bod-yig* script while the illiterate lot used only an oral form of expression. With the coming of the Moravian Missionaries in the late 19th century compilation and documentation of important historical data and collection of folklores became prominent. The Archeological survey of India did their part as well by compiling chronicles on Ladakh.

¹ He was a Moravian missionary stationed in a village called Kalatse in Ladakh.

‘Lad vags gyi ag bar’ was introduced in 1904 and was in print till 1907. It was popularized again in 1936 by Redblob this time with the use of radio. Redblob left Ladakh in 1947 and the paper was revived again five years later by Pierre Vitto and Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog till 1959. Similar newsletter called the Tibet Mirror was published from the year 1925 to 63 and started in Kalimpong by Reverend Gergan Tharchin (1890-76) also popularly known as Tharchin Babu. The Ladakhi newspaper (Lad-vags Pho-nya) revived in 1979 as the title of a government news letter and was edited by Tashi Rabgais. Presently he edits the Voice of the Himalaya, a bilingual newsletter published in Ladakhi and English by the Ladakh Cultural forum. He started publishing books in Ladakhi language including history of Ladakh and a series of folk tales and poems. Along the same time many other Ladakhi authors had also started writing like Gen Konchok Phandey, Abdul Ghani Sheikh, Gen Thupstan Paldan, Ngawang Tsering Shaskpo, Thupstan Shanfan, Chimet Namgyal, Asfander Khan, Sonam Phuntsog Alchinathang, and few more.

Ladakh in 1970’s and 1980’s went through a phase of educational reform which led to the migration of a large number of students to different parts of India and somehow created a gap between the older generation (who were well versed in the bod-yig and the Urdu language) and the younger generation who could speak but not read or write in their mother tongue. Many of the writers feel the need to connect with the modern educated students with the focus on preservation of language and culture and the only way to connect with them was through translation of available literature into the English language. Therefore, using English as a medium they were able to create a wider readership both locally as well as internationally.

The primary source used in the dissertation is Hartmut Walravens (Ed.). *The First Tibetan Serial: August Hermann Francke's La-dvags-kyi-ag-bâr (1904-1907)*. Herrnhut.2010 (Facsimile of a Unique Set in the Archives of the Evangelische Brüderunität, Herrnhut. The publication is the the facsimile of the entire newspaper from 1904 to 1907, which has been recently published in Berlin. The primary source also includes the facsimile of the newspaper la-dvags Pho-nya or Ladakh Herald published from 1936 onwards.

1.1 An Introduction to Ladakh

Geographical: Ladakh is a region in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir between the Kunlun mountain range in the north and the Great Himalayas to the south, with two districts—Leh and Kargil. Historically, the region was called *Ngaris-Khor Sum* or Western Tibet² (the ancient Nyan Zhang Zhung, which was the old name of Ladakh) which comprised a vast region of small states consisting of Guge (part of present Tibet), Spiti, Kinnaur, Lahul(present Himachal Pradesh), Ladakh and extending to Gilgit-Baltistan (Present Pakistan), Turkistan, etc. Contemporary Ladakh borders Tibet to the east, the Lahul and Spiti to the south, the Valley of Kashmir, Jammu and Baltistan regions to the west, and the trans-Kunlun territory of East Turkistan in Central Asia on the other side of the Kunlun range across the Karakoram Pass in the far north. Ladakh is renowned for its remote mountain beauty and culture. It is sometimes called *Little Tibet* as it has been strongly influenced by Tibetan culture³.

An account of the Silk Route trade mentioned in, Fewke's well researched books titled, *Trade and Contemporary Society along the Silk Road: An Ethno-history of Ladak* confirms Leh as "A very Cosmopolitant city" since it was an entrepot for many traders who went through Leh towards Central Asia, South Asia and Tibet. Ladakh gained importance from its strategic location at the crossroads of important trade routes. Since Ladakh was at the epicentre of the commercial intercourse between Tibet, China, Turkestan, Russia, Kashmir and other minor towns of India it became a significant place in producing a blend of people like the Arghons⁴, the Dards of Gilgit, the Mons of northern India and the Mongolian nomads from Tibet. They are said to be the ancestors of the present Ladakhis. The Chinese authorities closed the borders with Tibet and Central Asia in the 1960s and since then international trade has dwindled except for tourism which holds firm ground. In the year 1974 the Indian Government began to encourage tourism in Ladakh although the strong

² In A.H.Franckes's *History of Western Tibet*. Ladakh lies in the western side of the huge Changthang plateau of Tibet therefore it was called Western Tibet by westerners and historians.

³ Also referred to as Tibetanization. Even Baltistan is called Little Tibet and Ladakh called the Great Tibet in Luciano Petech's book *The Kingdom Of Ladakh C 950- 1842 A.D (year of publication 1977)*

⁴ A person of Central Asian descent whose father is considered 'Yarkendi' ethnically and the mother is 'Ladakhi' was called Arghun. Another reference is a person whose father is a 'Kashmiri' and mother a 'Ladakhi' can be called as 'Arghun', but also 'Ladakhi'.

Indian military presence shows that it still remains a disputed territory, between India and Pakistan and India and China.

Religious: The history of Ladakh goes way back before the coming of Buddhism to this region. Since Ladakh had been a centre of early trade routes, the earliest settlement seems to be that of the Mon tribes who migrated through Kullu or Manali to Ladakh. They came hundreds of years before the Christian era. Rev. A.H.Francke⁵ also talks about the *Mons* who were popularly called the Mongol⁶ and they seem to be Buddhists as they had colonies in Zangskar and some parts of Ladakh. Later the *Dards* who were of the Indo- Aryan tribes probably migrated from Afghanistan, Gilgit just after the Mons. They settled down in areas called Dras⁷ and Khalatse⁸. By the end of 5th century A.D. the Dards had their colonies in and around Leh and by that time Ladakh was popularly known as *Darel*. Rev. Francke has discussed many sights and excavations which belong to the Dards in his book *Antiquities of Indian Tibet Volume I*. It is mentioned that around the 3rd century Buddhist missionaries passed through Ladakh to Central Asian countries to propagate Buddhism. Even the Dards seem to have been influenced by the Buddhist missionaries.

Around the 2nd during the reign of Kushana kings Buddhism was flourishing well in Kashmir and neighboring areas; traces of Kushana kings' reign over Ladakh and the introduction of Buddhism can be confirmed because of the presence of many Kharosthi script near Khalatse Bridge.⁹ Bon-Chos¹⁰ had been practiced in Ladakh prior the coming of

⁵ He was a Moravian missionary from Germany who came to Leh in the year 1885. He was a linguist, a scholar and an adventurer.

⁶ According to Francke, "aBrog-pa(Dard) is never used here at Nyoma, nor in Rupshu, to signify the pre-Tibetans inhabitants of the country, I believe the word Mon, which is here always used for them,--for on Sven Hedin's new map I find a district near Ruthog called Monyal, a name which evidently refers to a former colonization by Mon's or Dards."; (Francke, A.H.: Antiquities of Indian Tibet Volume I &II, Low Price Publications., New Delhi; 1914 & 1926 respectively.).

⁷ It is the most westerly portion of the Purik (now Kargil) district and lies along the Valley of Dras River. It is also the coldest place in India.

⁸ It is a village situated around 90 kms away from Leh. It was the most important halting place for traders in the olden days when the bridge of Khalatse was built by the Dogra invaders but now there is an iron bridge and still is a halting place on the road from Srinagar to Leh.

⁹ Khalatse also Khalsi is at a distance of approximately 100 kms.

¹⁰ Bon-Chos is the pre-Buddhist religious practices by Buddhists usually with strong animalistic and shamanistic traditions, also called as 'unorthodox form of Buddhism' but H.H. Dalai Lama recognizes the Bon tradition as the sixth principle spiritual school of Tibet along with Nyingma, Sakya, Kargyu, Gelug and Jonang in Tibet.

Buddhism in Ladakh. In 900 A.D. Skyid-lde-nyi-ma-mgon, direct descendent of the first king of Tibet, Gnya-khri-bstan-po, ruled over Western Tibet including the region of Ladakh. Later his eldest son, dPal-gyi-gon(1000-1025A.D.) became the first king of proper Ladakh while his second son Bkrs-shis-mgon inherited Guge and Purang ; while the youngest son lDe-gtsug-mgon inherited Zangskar. So Ladakh during had been endowed with rulers who had been inclined towards Buddhism and the 10th century onwards Ladakh saw tremendous changes in the Buddhism.

It was not just Buddhism that flourished here, Islam found its way into Ladakh too under the Islamic missionary Mirza Haider and then Aurangzeb. According to Dr. Prem Singh Jina, during the 4th to 5th century many merchants from Samarkand¹¹ came to Western Tibet for trade and frequently visited the higher altitude plains like Tangtse, Rudok, etc. till the end of 10th century. Islam was brought to western Himalayas by Kashmiri Sultans and Ladakh was also affected. Under the holy war—*Jihad*, Baltistan was the first target. Luciano Petech¹² explains:

The conversion of Kashmir to Islam brought a new element of instability to Western Himalayas, because of imperialistic trends of some of the Kashmiri Sultans, under the mantle of the Holy War (*jihad*) against the infidels. Their first target was Baltistan, which the Kashmiris called *Little Tibet*, while Ladakh was called *Great Tibet*. The first Muslim force from Kashmir to cross to Zojila and to invade the country beyond the pass was led by Rai Madari, in the reign of Sikander (1394 - 1416). He conquered Baltistan and under unknown circumstances Baltistan and Purig were converted to Islam. (Petech.1977: 22)

Islamic rulers of Hor (probably Turks from Yarkhand or Kashgar), Kashmir and neighbouring places were not able to propagate Islam very effectively but in later times by marrying Ladakhi Buddhist girls they seem to have increased the number of Muslims¹³. There is also a reference to King Jamyang Namgyal who lost a battle to the Balti army and was taken to Skardo. To propagate Islam he was asked to marry Yabgo Sher Ghaze's daughter rGyal –Khatun. Conditions were laid down for her son to be the next king of Ladakh and Islam to be given proper shelter in Ladakh. The above conditions were accepted

¹¹ Presently, the third largest city in Uzbekistan. Also, the capital of Samarqand Province.

¹² Petech, Luciano: 'The Kingdom Of Ladakh C 950- 1842 A.D.'. Serie Oriental Roma li, 1977.

¹³ Those of the mixed Kashmiri and Ladakhi breeds are called Arghons.

by the king and he was soon released. After his marriage, at the request of the new queen, Balti musicians, Akhons and others were sent from Skardo to perform Muslim rituals and entertainment. They settled down in areas of Phyang, and other regions around the Indus and started propagating Islam.

Script and language: Buddhism was flourishing and each century saw the advent of many gurus who came and taught in Ladakh. With the coming of the Tibetan kings came the art of reading and writing. The Tibetan script which is used in present day Ladakh originally came from Tibet. Prior to Tibet's engagement with Indian Buddhism, Tibet had no alphabet and no literature to speak of.

When Buddhism crossed from India into Tibet in the 7th century, Tibetans wholeheartedly adapted their culture to the Indian Buddhism; so in order to imbibe and digest the dazzling abundance of ideas and practices they started inviting India's great masters to Tibet. But without an alphabet or script of its own and without scholars who could translate from Sanskrit, the vast world of Indian Buddhists literary culture was inaccessible to Tibetans. According to the tradition of the Tibetans, king Srof-btsan sgam-po (Songtsen Gampo 649/650 A.D.) assumed power in the 6th century and in the year 632 A.D. sent T'on-mi or T'ou-mi (Thonmi Sambhota 7th century), the son of A-nu, to India to study Sanskrit and Buddhist literature and to gather materials for the formation of an alphabet adapted to the Tibetan language. On his return to Lhasa he formed two types of Tibetan alphabets, one U-Chan (bdu-Jan) 'with head' and another U-med (dbumed) 'head-less' out of the Wartula characters.

The details of this tradition, vary to some extent in different accounts, but the principal elements of it are identical both in historical and grammatical works. As regards to the time of the introduction of writing, it follows from the Chinese annals that it indeed existed under the reign of king Songtsen Gam-po. It is clear from both the Chinese and Tibetan annals (the latter stating the fact implicitly) that prior to his era there was no writing. The Chinese annals do not impart the date of his accession to the throne: they give us the year 634A.D. as that of his first mission sent to China and 650A.D.as the year of his death. The foundation of

the national system of writing, accordingly, must have taken place between the years 630 A.D. and 648 A.D., since in that year the request for paper and ink manufacturers was submitted to China. The time spent by Thonmi Sambhota in India is variously given.

According to Sarat Chandra Das¹⁴ he should have resided in Magadha from A.D. 630 to 650 doubtless an exaggeration and contradictory to Chinese chronology, according to which king Songtsen Gam-po died in 650 A. D.; and according to the Tibetan accounts he profited from his emissary's instructions and he composed several books. With the reign of the Tibetan kings came the Tibetan script and through the use of the 'Bhoti' script the people of Ladakh have been able to compile and collect so many Buddhist texts; these texts vary from religious texts like the '*Kangyur*' and '*Tangyur*' books to historical texts like '*Ladags Chimed Ster*' (History of Ladakh) Rev. Yoseb Gergan and '*Ladags Gyal Rabs*' (History of Ladakh) by scholar Tashi Rabgyais. The Bhoti script was also used by famous linguists like Alexander Csoma de Koros, Rev. A.H. Francke and the likes to create documents which contribute immensely to the history of the region.

1.2 The First Newspaper of Ladakh

The first journalistic attempt by A.H. Francke a Moravian missionary- settled in the far flung part of Ladakh, i.e. Khalatse, with just one local helper and an old lithographic press of the Moravian Mission brings us in contact with the first monthly newspaper printed in the Tibetan script (locally called the Bod-yig script), which was named the *La dvags kyi agbar* or Ladakh News (1904-1907).

The details of the first newspaper have been mentioned in a journal called the *Tibet Journal* by the author John Bray. He has done extensive research which involves research on Francke's life during his stay in Ladakh. In a paper, presented at the School of Oriental and African Studies, John Bray briefly describes A.H. Francke's *La dvags kyi akh bar*, the first Tibetan monthly newspaper as follows—

¹⁴ Sarat Chandra Das (1849-1917) was born in Chittagong, Eastern Bengal to a hindu family. He was an Indian scholar of Tibetan Language and culture and well known for his two journeys to Tibet in 1879 and in 1881-1882.

The introduction of this paper consists of three main sections out of which the first section consisted of world news from Indian newspapers; the second section consisted of a local Ladakhi text; as well as folk-songs and folk-tales which were included. As an alternative to them a series of extracts were also included from the *La Dvags Gyal Rabs* or the Ladakhi royal chronicles which were first studied by Dr. Karl Marx and then by A.H. Francke. Finally the third part of the paper was specifically evangelistic. Francke made use of Ladakhi proverbs to express Christian messages etc. (Bray, 1988:58-63)

Francke moved from Ladakh to Keylang, Himachal Pradesh, in 1906 handing over the editorship of the paper to his fellow colleagues. In 1907 they changed the name of the newspaper to *La dvags pho nya* or 'Ladakh Herald' but the newspaper was no longer printed next year onwards.

In 1927 we are told about the revival of a similar newspaper called *Keylang gyi agbar* by a fellow Moravian Missionary called Walter Asboe in Keylang, Himachal Pradesh. Hartmut Walravens presents the details of the newspaper in his paper titled *The First Tibetan Serials—*

The paper was not printed rather it was duplicated as the print run was exceedingly small. The format of the paper was similar to Francke's paper and in 1931 a typical issue contained of one Aesop's fables, local news, as article on domestic hygiene and world news. Walter Asboe had also tried to teach the people improved methods of farming, sanitation, personal hygiene and urged peasants to reduce the consumption of their locally brewed beer. (Walravens, 2010: 14)

In the year 1936 when Asboe moved from Keylang station to Leh, he started to publish his newspaper by reviving the name *La dvags pho nya*. A Biblical text under the paper's masthead established its Christian identity but the main part of the contents were devoted to local and international news. Asboe seems to have picked up his information from the press but from 1937 he seems to have been able to monitor international developments by listening to radio broadcasts.

The *La dvags pho nya* temporarily closed down once again when Asboe left Ladakh in 1947 but the Moravian Mission's publishing activities resumed five years later under the

leadership of Peter Vittoz, a Swiss Missionary and Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog¹⁵. Although they tried to experiment with the form of Ladakhi by making the written closer to the spoken language, it was viewed as a subversive attempt by the locals, so the newspaper continued to be written in the classical Tibetan script. In the year 1956 Vittoz left Ladakh and in the year 1959 Tsetan Phuntsog also left and joined Vittoz in Mussoorie. Thus, the newspaper was once again discontinued but the name was briefly revived in 1978 and 1979 and in 1979 the government of India opened a news sheet under the same name. The news sheet was edited by Tashi Rabgias¹⁶. Now he edited the *Voice of the Himalaya* a newsletter published in Ladakhi and English by the Ladakh Cultural Forum.

1.3 The Moravian Missionaries

1.3.1 Traces of early Christians in Ladakh

In his book *Religious History Of Ladakh*, Prem Singh Jina quotes Fr. George Mampillil and writes:

Ladakh usually known as the land of Lamas, mountain passes and freezing high desert in the Trans Himalayan ranges of Kashmir is one of the remotest regions of India in the North. Virtually a land of arid valleys and snow clad mountains with peaks that rise above 20,000 feet, Ladakh is among the highest of the inhabited places in the world. Though remote never isolated, this barren land lies across the numerous cultural and religious influences from the mainland India, Tibet, Central Asia and even Europe. Invariably, Christianity also had its unique role to play in India ever since the arrival of St. Thomas the Apostle in 52 A.D and was able to transform the lives of the people; Ladakh remained a land less trod by the Christian missionaries till the latter half of the nineteenth century. Ever since their arrival in Ladakh the influence and the contribution of Christianity to the educational, social and religious development of the people of the region have been of considerable importance. (Jina.2001: 14)

According to Janet Rizvi¹⁷, the author of "*Ladakh—Crossroads of High Asia*"—

The first Christian missionaries to reach Ladakh were the Jesuits¹⁸ Azevedo, Oliveira and Desideri, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but none of them made

¹⁵ He was a high ranking Ladakhi who had served as a *Tehsildar* but he was also a scholar having studied for two years at Rizong Monastery before he became a Christian.

¹⁶ He is from a village called Sakti. He edited the first newsletter in Ladakh and also written many books on folksongs and poems including a book on history of the kings of Ladakh.

¹⁷ Rizvi, Janet. *Ladakh - Crossroads of High Asia*, Oxford University Press, 1996.

Ladakh the field of their labours, and their short visits left no mark. Much of the same can be said of the Catholic mission established at Leh for a few years around 1900. Christianity as we see it today was brought by German missionaries of the Moravian Church, who established stations at Keylang in Lahul in the 1860's, and were given permission to open another in Leh in 1885.(Rizvi.1983 : 212)

But Prem Singh Jina, the author of "*Religious History of Ladakh*", refers to the presence of Christianity way back in 800 A.D. when Samarkand¹⁹ was a flourishing centre of Nestorian Christians²⁰. Another person who confirms this statement about the Nestorian Christians' appearance in Ladakh during the eighth century was Dominic Thirunilath, who says:

From the fourth to the seventh Century Nestorians and Armanian Mission, penetrated Mongolia, Chinese Turkistan and probably Tibet. The writing of the early Tibetan Missionaries is full of reference to the existence of Christianity in the mystical land of Tibet even prior to the introduction of Buddhism. The religious organization, creed and rituals are there to confirm that St. Thomas the Apostle crossed into that country to preach the Gospel and that the Christian faith was the religion of the people. The early merchants and travelers in their wandering across the plains and uplands of Central Asia witnessed the presence of Christian symbols and ceremonies.²¹

The Christian presence in Ladakh during the 8th century A.D can further be proved by three carved crosses in the Persian style with Syriac inscriptions on a rock in Tangtse. Mar Aprem writes:

Three crosses are seen in Tibet (Western Tibet, or better Known as Ladakh). On the top of the cross there is a Syrian inscription which reads ISHOW. The three crosses on the left hand side of a big rock are of the Persian style usually known as the Nestorian cross. On the right hand side of these three crosses, there are Syrian inscriptions written in vertical lines. (Aprem.1976: 100)

¹⁸ A member of the 'Society of Jesus', a Roman Catholic order founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1533, and sanctioned by Paul IV in 1540. The object of the Society of Jesus was to support the Roman Church in its struggle with the 16th c. Reformers and to propagate the faith among the heathen. Hated and feared by Protestants, the Order, with its authoritarian constitution and its principle of total obedience to papal commands, became suspect to many in Roman Catholic countries too—more especially when Jesuit schools and confessionals came to exercise great influence on rulers and high society. By their enemies, the Jesuits were accused of teaching that the end justifies the means, and the lax principles of casuistry put forward by a few of their moralists were ascribed to the Order as a whole.

¹⁹ Around 800 A.D. Samarkand was the seat of a Metropolitan. There were bishops in Khotan and Yarkand. The Zealous Christians under the Bishops and Metropolitanians had undertaken an ambitious Mission to Tangtse near Leh. Mar Aprem 'Nestorian Missions'. Trichur, Mar Narsai Press, 1976.

²⁰ The doctrine of Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople (appointed in 428), by which Christ is asserted to have had distinct human and divine persons.

²¹ Thirunilath, Dominic, 'A Cursory Glance of the Early History of Christianity' In Christianity of Jammu & Kashmir, Vishinath Press,p.10.

So Ladakh does seem to be touched by Christianity during the early days but the proper spread of Christianity took place in the 19th century. The European missionaries who travelled to Central Asia to preach were not allowed to pass through Tibet and that is how they came to Ladakh and decided to stay there and learn the script which was similar to the one in Tibet. With these thoughts the missionaries specially the Moravian Missionaries slowly began their teaching centers in parts of Himachal Pradesh (earlier part of Ladakh) and then at proper Leh.

According to John Bray²², the Moravian Church is better known in Germany as '*Die Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine*'. It was originally founded in Bohemia under the name '*Unitas fraterum*' but was nearly stamped out in the Thirty Years War (World War). In 1722 a group of Protestant refugees from Moravia (*Mähren*) founded the town of Herrnhut on the estate of Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf and the church was renewed under his leadership. Because he was ecumenical in outlook he allowed only a few Moravian settlements to be founded in Europe and North America. He wished the Moravians to cooperate with other churches and not to compete with them. Their distinctiveness did not lie in any unique Moravian doctrine but rather in a tradition of strict spiritual discipline and an emphasis on the value of proactive work, education and scholarship. Above all they were known for their foreign missions. The first Moravian missionaries left Herrnhut for the West Indies in 1732. By 1896, 140 home congregations in Europe and North America supported 400 missionaries scattered all over the world.

The history of the Moravia lies in central Europe which was the centre of a major medieval kingdom known as Great Moravia, before it was incorporated into the kingdom of Bohemia in the 11th century. In the 20th century Moravia became part of the Moravia state of Czechoslovakia. It is bounded from Bohemia on the west and northwest, Silesia on the northeast, Slovakia on the east, and Lower Austria on the south.

²² John, Bray. "A.H.FRANCKE'S LA DVAGS KYI AG BAR The first Tibetan newspaper." *The Tibet Journal* XIII(3) (1988): 58-63.

Moravia was inhabited from the 4th century BC by the Celtic and the Germanic tribes. In the 6th and 7th centuries the Avars dominated the area, which was settled by Slavic tribes by the 8th century. The Slavs, who took the name Moravians from the Morava River, developed a political community that emerged under Prince Mojmir I (reigned 830- 846 A.D.) as a united kingdom that included a part of western Slovakia. Mojmir's successors, Rostislav (reigned 846-870 A. D.) and his nephew Svatopluk (reigned 870- 894 A.D.), extended their territory to include all of Bohemia, the southern part of modern Poland, and the western part of modern Hungary, thereby, creating the state of Great Moravia. Rostislav also invited the Byzantine missionaries Cyril and Methodius (who arrived in 863 A.D.) to spread Christianity in Bohemia and Moravia on the basis of their Slavonic translation of the chief liturgical texts. After Svatopluk died (894 A.D.), however, Great Moravia disintegrated and was finally destroyed by a Magyar attack in 906 A. D.

The territories of Great Moravia were then contested by Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia. In 1029 Moravia (i.e. the western portion of Great Moravia) was incorporated as a distinct province into the Bohemian kingdom, and thereafter it generally remained closely attached to Bohemia. After both regions had come under the rule of the Habsburgs (1526) they were administratively separated from each other, and after the Revolution of 1848, the Habsburg made Moravia a separate crown land.

In 1918 that crown land became a province of the new state of Czechoslovakia, and although it was annexed by Germany just before the outbreak of World War II, it was restored to the reconstituted state of Czechoslovakia after the war. On 1st January in 1949, however, the Czechoslovakia government dissolved Moravia into a number of smaller administrative units. In 1960 another administrative reorganization created the South Moravian (Jihomoravský) and North Moravian (Severomoravský) regions on the territory formerly known as Moravia-Silesia.²³ In the year 1457 in Germany, John Hus, a member of the faculty of Prague raised his voice against selling of indulgences and malpractices of the Church. He was declared a heretic and burnt at stake. His followers known as Hussites rose in revolt. But they were severely prosecuted in the following 40 years. In the course of time

²³“The New Encyclopaedia Britannica”, Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1768 15th edition.

the followers of John Hus found themselves unable to agree on many points and no single leader emerged who could keep the variant fractions together. Finally, a small group broke away and established a fraternity known as Moravia, Germany. This 'Unitas fratrum' later came to be known as the Moravian church.

1.3.2 The Moravian Mission in Ladakh

The first Moravian missionaries to reach Ladakh were Eduard Pagell and Wilhem Heyde. In the summer of 1855 they made a reconnaissance journey through Zanskar to Leh and the Tibetan border. Their ultimate aim was to start a mission to the Mongols but they were turned back from the Tibetan border three times and the Maharaja of Kashmir²⁴ would not allow them to settle in Ladakh. So in 1856 they founded a mission station in Keylang, Lahoul, which is a fortnight's march to the south of Ladakh. In 1856 a second station was started in Poo on the upper Sulej near the Tibetan border.

The Leh mission was not founded until 1885 but in the thirty years before that the Moravians had kept a steady contact with Ladakh. In 1857 the new Superintendent of the mission, Heinrich August Jaeschke, spent three months at Stok near Leh and there began his pioneering research into Tibetan. He already knew fourteen languages and kept a regular diary in seven of them. Later he translated most of the New Testament into Tibetan and produced series of linguistic works culminating in his Tibetan English dictionary published in 1881. However it was not Jaeschke but Heyde who visited Ladakh most often.

On their first visit to Ladakh in 1855 Heyde and Pagell noted that whole villages of up to thirty families were deserted. Their inhabitants had fled to Lahoul because of the high taxes imposed by the Kashmiri government. Among these Ladakhi refugees were the first converts of the mission, Nicodemus Sonam Stobgyas and his son Samuel Joldan, who were baptised in 1856.

²⁴ Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Ladakh was not a part of British India but was under the dominion of the Hindu Maharaja of Kashmir.

Almost all of the early converts were Ladakhi: as late as 1889 there was only one non-Ladakhi congregation. One possible reason for this was that local people were more vulnerable to communal pressures not to become Christians. However, not all Ladakhis wished to live in Keylang. By 1882 two Christian families had already returned to their homeland. The missionaries wished to continue to exercise pastoral care over them and they had long wanted to start a mission in Leh because of its importance as a large trade centre with thousands of merchants passing through every year. In 1884 the Maharaja at last gave them permission to stay in Leh—but only after their request was personally supported by the British Viceroy.

1.3.3 The Moravian Church in Ladakh

We know about the two Moravian missionaries Eduard Pagell and Wilhelm Heyde who, in the summer of 1855 made a journey through Zaskar to Leh and the Tibetan border. Their ultimate aim was to start a mission to the Mongols but they were turned back by Maharaja of Kashmir. But in the year 1885, F. Redslob arrived as the first missionary and was allowed to stay in the former meteorological observatory. A small church called ‘The Moravian Church’²⁵ was built in 1886. Next year in January 1887 Redslob started a small school, now called ‘The Moravian Mission School’²⁶ and in April Dr. Karl Marx²⁷ arrived to take over the hospital and clinic which were partly sponsored by the British government. In the year 1891 it is stated that F. Redslob and Marx died of typhus within a few days of each other. The mission survived with the coming of Becker Shawe, an English Moravian who nearly died of typhus and Julius Weber (a Moravian missionary who came from Poo). In the year 1894 S.H. Ribbach came to Leh from Kyelang and two years later in 1896 A.H. Francke arrived straight from Germany. No suitable doctor was found until 1897 when Dr. Earnest Shawe came. Even his wife died of typhus within a year and he himself in 1907.

²⁵ The Moravian Church is still functional and caters to the spiritual need of the Ladakhi Christians. Another church is located at Shey.

²⁶ The Moravian School caters to the education of the students of Ladakh. The teachers were Dr. Karl Marx, Missionary Schrewe, Yoseb Gergan, Samuel Joldan (then postmaster of Ladakh) and British Joint Commissioner’s Munshi (scribe).

²⁷ A Moravian Missionary doctor.

In the year 1899 a daughter station was started at Kalatse three days journey from Leh (around 90 kms from Leh) on the way to Srinagar. Rev. A.H. Francke led this station and he was assisted by the evangelist Chompel who had been a monk in the great Tibetan monastery of Tashi Lhunpo²⁸.

Due to the outbreak of the World War in 1914, the German Missionaries G. Reichel from Kalatse, Schnabel from Keylang and Francke were interned as enemy. The year 1920 became a turning point in the history of the Moravian Church in Ladakh. In October of the same year, Bishop Arthur Ward of the London Mission Board made a formal visit to Leh from London and with the hope that the Ladakhi church would be soon self-dependent ordained the first two Ladakhi pastors, Joseb Gergan and Dewazung Dana. So with that unlike the mission in Keylang where the converts lapsed back to their old religion, the newly ordained pastors seemed more likely to influence more people through daily contact with the people of Ladakh.

Though the Christians were in minority in the trans- Himalayan region of Kashmir and were living amidst the diverse socio-cultural scenario and age old indigenous religion-philosophical milieu of Buddhism, the Moravian Church's contribution in the field of literature, health care and education are commendable.

1.4 The Introduction of the Evolving Ladakhi English Literature

This chapter lays emphasizes on the literature that has been written in the region of Ladakh. Literature prior to the introduction of the English language focusing on how the language and the script developed. Even though the vernacular developed, it was only around the end of the nineteenth century that English language as a medium of use was introduced and then slowly used and further developed in the region. Many texts that were written by the Ladakhis and then by the authors from outside Ladakh compiled and formed a genre that can be classified as the Ladakhi English literature.

Thus, an attempt to classify the literature of Ladakh in the English language has been made, leaving a room for improvement in future.

²⁸ TashiLhunpo is the monastery founded by the first Dalai Lama, Gendun Drup. It is presently situated in Shigatse, Tibet, People's Republic of China.

1.5 Chapterization

The chapters in the dissertation have been categorized as follows:

1. The Introduction: It gives a glance into the background of the region called Ladakh; the first newspaper of the region; the Moravian Missionaries who made huge contribution to Ladakh in every aspect-- literary, education and medical.
2. General outlook of the monthly newspaper: This chapter provides an analysis of the contents given in the newspaper. With special emphasis on Maxims and proverbs used in the newspaper.
3. The analysis of the newspaper: The chapter has focused on the editor of the newspaper, A.H.Francke, his stay in Leh and Khalatse and also the purpose of writing the newspaper. The chapter also discusses the aspects of the language used in the paper and the viewpoint of the contemporary scholars.
4. The evolving Ladakhi English literature: This chapter introduces the Ladakhi English literature as a genre with a background on the script. The stages in the development of the Ladakhi English literature from the end of the nineteenth century till the present have been discussed as it provides a glance into the new type of literature that has developed lately.
5. Conclusion: The concluding chapter addresses the concluding remarks that have been observed after reading the newspaper. The development of other forms of print media and the focus on the new area of studies of development that can be explored in near future has also been mentioned.

Chapter 2

GENERAL OUTLOOK OF THE MONTHLY NEWSPAPER

This chapter attempts to focus on the relevant and the important news that the editor published in the newspaper. The driving force being the significantly challenging news items that the author has focused on provides us with the impetus to follow what he wanted his readers to read and what he did not. The attempt in the paper is an outcry for the need of changing the mindset of the people of Ladakh in the 1900s and an attempt to stimulate the thinking process that seemed otherwise channelized in one-way: towards the dominant religious liturgy of the region.

2.1 Important Contents of the Newspaper: 1904 to 1907

Priced at one paisa for a copy, *Lad dvags gyi ag bar*, the monthly newspaper was edited by A.H.Francke, a Moravian missionary and written with the help of a Ladakhi scribe named Ishey Rigdzin (Ye shes rig' dzin) a resident of Khalatse. The newspaper was published from the year 1904 until 1907 on a lithographic press²⁹ of the Moravian mission. It has been written in *bod-yig*, the Tibetan script which was used by the people of Ladakh.

The Tibetan script was invented in the 7th century A. D. in Tibet by Thonmi Sambhota, under King Songtsen Gam-po. The newspaper was basically written using *bod-yig*, the Tibetan script but in the Ladakhi language, Francke made sure that it was in the spoken form of Ladakhi (or the colloquial form) as the classical Tibetan script or *bod-yig* was not easily understood by most of the Ladakhis. Typically the Moravian missionaries had published Christian tracts, books, and other printed materials by 1904 which contained the tenets of Christianity.

²⁹ Lithography is a method for printing using a stone or a metal plate with a completely smooth surface. This method was invented in 1796 by German author and actor Alois Snenfelder as a cheap method of publishing theatrical works.

Although, the newspaper started in the month of January 1904, the news in the first edition was from December 1903. The editor made sure that he introduced the newspaper to his readers and provided an outline of the contents of the newspaper. The first page of the newspaper, January 1904, read like this—

People of Ladakh, who are buying this newspaper (*ag-bar*) the main contents, are as follows:

1. News about the world and news about the five elements (earth, water, fire, wind and space) which govern the world.
2. Stories, maxims, idioms, proverbs from in and around the world.
3. Specimens of letter writing to family members in the *bod-yig* script which include the U-chen and U-med styles.
4. Religious news which include teachings about one's life after death.³⁰

This newspaper was going to be available once a month, with four pages in length and at the rate of 1 paisa per paper. The paper could be bought by people who are Tibetan, Ladakhi, Muslim, and Hindu, old or young, rich or poor. One could purchase it from the Moravian Mission and the title of the paper was called 'Ladakh gyi akhbar' or 'Newspaper of Ladakh' or 'Ladakh News'³¹. (Francke)³²

The left side of the newspaper contained the price of the paper which was one paisa for a copy, the middle of the page contained the title of the paper in bold which is 'Ladags gyi ag bar' or newspaper of Ladakh in the U-med (dbu-med)³³ script the one which is the hand written cursive form of *bod-yig*, instead of the U-chen (dbu-can)³⁴ script which is used in formal writing. The extreme right side mentioned the month, day and the year of

³⁰ Lad vags gyi agbar, January 1904 pg 1. From Francke, A.H. Hartmut(Ed), Walravens. *The First Tibetan Serial: August Hermann Francke's La-dvags-kyi- ag-bar(1904-1907)*. Herrnhut: The Archives of the Evangelische Bruderunitat, 2010.

³¹ John Bray equates La dvags gyi agbar as 'Ladakh News', so does Hartmut Walravens in his introduction in *The First Tibetan Serial: August Hermann Francke's La-dvags-kyi ag-bar(1904-1907)*.Herrnhut: The Archives of the Evangelische Bruderunitat, 2010.

³² Francke, A.H. Hartmut(Ed.), Walravens. *The First Tibetan Serial: August Hermann Francke's La-dvags-kyi-ag-bar(1904-1907)*. Herrnhut: The Archives of the Evangelische Bruderunitat, 2010.

³³ U-med(bdu-med) is the informal writing style of the Tibetan alphabet, it means 'without head'.

³⁴ U-chen(bdu-can) is the upright block style of the Tibetan alphabet. It means 'with head' and is the style of the script used for printing and for formal manuscripts in the Bodyig script.

publication. Since the U-med style of writing was more informal and is slightly different from the U-chen style, it gave a non-religious feel to the newspaper thus, urging the readers to see the newspaper as a non-religious form of writing. Although, Francke wanted the paper to be secular in the sense that it empowered the readers and gave them access to array of information other than the ones available in Ladakh already the paper still contained a portion of Christian religious messages in the form of maxims or adages claiming Jesus to be the one and only *lama* (monk) that people should follow.

The format of the newspaper followed that of the German newspapers, with two quarter sized pages, printed on both sides and running along two columns each. In Walravens' paper titled *The first Tibetan serials* he mentioned the details of the editor of *Missionsblatt Brüdergemeine*³⁵ dated March 1904, and that goes as follows—

In front of me I have a small paper in quarto, 4 pages in two columns. The title Ladakh News is printed in bold Tibetan letters at the top. They are the same letters which are used in Buddhist and Christian religious books, and also by the lamas when they write the sacred formula *Om mani padme hum* on stones which are bought by the rural population and are then piled on the mani walls at the entrances of their villages. On page 1 the editor, our brother Francke, explains the goal of the paper. It is intended to offer 1. news from other peoples and countries, 2. short stories, 3. model letters to teach the epistolary style, 4. important quotations from the holy scriptures with explanations. The first number contains 4 articles: 1. The translation of an article from the *Bombay Guardian* on the current policy of England in Tibet, with reference to the advice given to the Dalai Lama by the Nepalese government, to entertain friendly relations with the English. 2. Events in Turkey, regarding the pressure exerted on Macedonian Christians. 3. A moral tale. 4. Application of a proverb to the religious situation in Ladakh: <If the lama is not perfect, how can he help dying people upwards (in transmigration, to a better rebirth, perhaps in the Buddhist paradise, called Thoris? > Conclusion: The true, really sinless great Lama is Jesus Christ. His enemies could not accuse him of a sin. He alone is able to lead to salvation. What he said, taught and did, that can be read in the gospels. – This latest literary publication fills a long kept desire of our brethren. The paper is to be published monthly; an issue costs around 3 penning. The paper is printed in Tibetan letter script on the Leh mission press and may be ordered from the brethren there. We confidently hope that this new product of our Christian press will prove an excellent ally with regard to those

³⁵ The Moravian Mission Journal published in Germany.

whom the paper invites to subscribe, Tibetans, Muslims and Hindus, in the same way as so far penny literature and tracts”.³⁶

So, the German missionaries had kept a record of the works by Francke in their mission journal *Missionsblatt Brüdergemeine* (mission journal brethren in German) making sure that the works done by the missionaries in different parts of the world was shared with each other through the journal.

Most of the news in the year 1904 focused on the great wars that were fought in Tibet, Turkey, Japan and Russia. News from Turkey, Japan and Russia included major events like wars and genocide. The news covered was a month old which meant that for January edition the news from December 1903 was published. Francke has focused most of the news on Tibet. The idea of using news from Tibet might have had a special impact on the readers mind as narrating news from Tibet in an oral fashion had been the way of the Ladakhis for many centuries. Even in the present day Ladakh before telephone was introduced widely, messenger-carriers played an important role in the life of the people. News from a relative or a message to another family was sent either through a note or through the word of mouth especially by a traveller who was both trusted and close. There was also a way of sending money to a relative by stitching the money inside the lining of the clothes, well that is no longer in practice.

A yearly synopsis of the news according to the newspaper from 1904 to 1907 is given below³⁷:

2.2 Tibet News

1904

The news from Tibet included the news on the political history of Tibet and their relation with Nepal, Bhutan and the British. The British expedition to Tibet during 1903 and 1904 has been explained in detail. The invasion of Tibet was done by the British Indian forces whose mission was to establish diplomatic relations and trade between the British Raj and

³⁶ Francke, A.H. Hartmut(Ed), Walravens. *The First Tibetan Serial: August Hermann Francke's La-dvags-kyi-ag-bar(1904-1907)*. Herrnhut: The Archives of the Evangelische Bruderunitat, 2010.pg.7.

³⁷ The news has been translated from Bod-yig to English by the author with the help of Mr.Sonam Dorjee.

Tibet. The expedition was also to make sure that they suppress the Russians as they had been claiming Tibet as theirs. The obvious names in the paper were those of the General O'Connor, Bhutan's Minister Phuntsog Phen and Bhutan's Minister Rinpon Tsophan. Colonel Younghusband was mentioned later in the newspaper, although we know that he was the one whom the Tibetans met and was treated with a sumptuous meal near Lhasa because he leads the expedition to Lhasa in the year 1904.

The main gates near Lhasa were posted with Tibetans who guarded the telephone wires. On January 22, 1904, the British went to Phari where they met two Tibetan wazirs/ministers. The Tibetan ministers agreed to the terms made by the British. Before this meeting, the Russian and the Tibetans had come to sign an agreement with the English but the agreement could not be signed. The term of the Tibetan was that the British should not go beyond their camp in Phari. The British know of the state of their military prowess and did not agree to their terms. Later, the English were able to capture the Phari palace without fighting.

On 25 January, the Tibetans came back to Phari to fight but they did not fight. They had been badly defeated by the British military during the war in 1888 in Sikkim army which was supported by the Tibetans.

On 25 February, Bhutan minister Phuntsok Phen reached Phari to check on the situations between the Tibetans and the British. He met the Tibetans to persuade them not to fight. The Tibetans were told that the British were only interested in opening a trading post in Lhasa. However, the Tibetans instigated the British by stealing their cattle. So, on 1st April the British attacked the Tibetans killing 300 and capturing 200 out of a total army of 900. 9 of the British were injured in the battle. The British move forward and reached a monastery in Gyantse on 27 April. They found that all the monks had gone away to war as soldiers. So they levied tax on the monastery instead. Phuntsok Phen came back to initiate a truce between the Tibetan and the British. But the Tibetans accused Phuntsok of being a friend of the British and did not agree to the truce. The British were also not willing to call a truce at that stage.

Another battle that was reported in newspaper took place on the mountain surrounding Gyantse in the month of June. The British heavily shelled the mountain where the Tibetans were hiding and killed two hundred of them. Three British soldiers also died in the battle and nine of them got injured. After three or four days the Tibetans regroup themselves and attack the British camp. The British waited till the Tibetans came close to the camp within the range of their guns and cannons. Hundred Tibetans were killed in the battle while the remaining fled. None of the British were killed or injured.

The newspaper reported that fleeing Tibetans took refuge in a house which was a mile and a half away from the British camp. Around 300 British soldiers attacked the house where 3 British soldiers were injured. The Tibetans managed to flee with only a few weapons and left behind a lot of weapons and ammunitions. The house was converted to a post office. Around 100 British soldiers were stationed there to guard the post office and a postman.

On 19 June, the British came across a heavily fortified house in which the Tibetans were hiding. The British use their cannons to destroy the walls and a small fight ensued. Twelve British soldiers died and a British officer named O'Connor was injured in the shoulder during the fight. Many Tibetans were killed and thirty seven were captured and sent to Darjeeling. A medical camp was set up there to treat the injured.

The British soldiers stationed in Gyantse sourced their drinking water from a natural spring nearby. The Tibetans knew about this spring and poisoned it by using toxic flowers from the mountains. Subsequently five of the soldiers got sick and one later died. A doctor was called to examine the spring and found out that it was poisoned.

There was one final obstacle on the way to Lhasa in the form of a well protected Gyantse Dzong monastery which was strategically placed on top of a mountain that overlooks the valley. The monastery held well armed Tibetans and artillery weapons. The British were helped by the Gurkhas in storming the monastery. The Gurkhas were known for their mountain climbing abilities and were effective in attacking from a higher ground behind the monastery. The British attacked from the front. The Gurkhas were able to destroy a portion

of an exterior wall and forced the Tibetans further inside the monastery. In the heat of the battle, a British soldier dug a hole near a wall and even after being severely wounded managed to plant a casket of gunpowder. The exploding casket brought the wall down and killed many Tibetans. The British used this breach in the wall to enter the monastery. They were finally able to capture the monastery. During the assault, one British Captain and five soldiers were killed.

1905

The paper narrated that H.H. the thirteenth Dalai Lama reached *Urga*, the capital of Outer Mongolia. The Chinese government had arranged his stay there at a monastery. Few British men led by Captain Roland Sahib were coming this way, they wanted to make a road map of Tibet from the west side and according to them the road of Khunu would reach Shimla. Captain Roland who is accompanied by three generals travelled from Gyantse to the west of Tibet which lies on the road to Gyartok on 25 December, 1904 and reached Poo, a village in Kinnaur. Colonel Younghusband left Lhasa, reached London on the 11 December 1904 and according to him the agreement³⁸ between Lhasa and British would become significant later. To oversee the agreement between British and Tibet, a Chinese government official called 'Thong' went towards Lhasa. Although it has been few months since the agreement, many traders are unwilling to go to Lhasa to trade. Earlier, when they went to trade they were sent back therefore they could not believe that they would be allowed to go and trade. The Ladakh Commissioner asked the Ladakhi traders to go to Tibet for trading but even they were unwilling to go.

1906

The Prince of England has reached India, so has the Tibetan Panchen Rinpochey who came to India especially to visit the prince. Panchen Rinpochey is delighted as he gets the chance to visit Buddhist stupas as well. Initially the Indian government appointed an Indian babu as the guide but now the British sahib called O'Connor has been appointed to escort Panchen Rinpochey. The Prince of England and Panchen Rinpochey meet in Rawalpindi and discuss

³⁸ Anglo-Tibetan Agreement of 1904.

their state affairs. Panchen Rinpochey travels to Calcutta to meet the Viceroy of India³⁹ at his residence where both the parties exchanged gifts and discussed diplomatic affairs.

Panchen Rinpochey returns to Tibet and the Chinese are not happy with his diplomatic meetings with the British and therefore they dismiss him from his title and another person is appointed in his position. The British try to persuade the Chinese making it clear that they only want to strengthen the trade relations with Tibet. But the Chinese government is convinced that the British has some interest with Tibet and therefore they make an exchange asking them for arms and ammunitions, in return they would provide the British with 20,000 to 30,000 Chinese soldiers who would be stationed in Tibet.

This month there was no news about His Holiness Dalai Lama. Panchen Rinpochey who has been dismissed from his post is in India with British officer O'Connor and they are visiting damaged 'chorten' sites in India. He did not want to return to Tibet until the Chinese government resolves the matter about his position.

Five years earlier Babu Sarat Chandra Das from India and Padre Nedie Sahib, who preached in Keylang, published a tri-lingual dictionary which was written in Tibetan, Sanskrit and English. Most of the work was done by Sarat Chandra Das who visited Tibet, got many Tibetan texts, studied them and then compiled the dictionary. The dictionary costs forty five rupees. The Russians have the dictionary and the Russian king has invited Sarat Chandra Das to Russia to appoint him in the respectable position of a professor. No one in India had this opportunity to become a professor in Russia.

The news about His Holiness the thirteenth Dalai Lama fleeing to the place called Urga was mentioned in a Chinese newspaper. In the month of January he was staying in Urga which lies on the border of China and Russia. The Russian Czar sent a diplomatic letter of friendship to His Holiness the thirteenth Dalai Lama, who did not get time to go to Russia and therefore stayed back in a Chinese village to construct a monastery. The authority of the Chinese government is increasing day by day due to the activities of Panchen Rinpochey

³⁹ Lord Minto had been appointed the Viceroy of India starting 18 November 1905.

who an ally with the English in India and similarly His Holiness the thirteenth Dalai Lama who is travelling within China and is ally with the Russians.

The Chinese had few disagreements with the English but that has been resolved and therefore Panchen Rinpochey has returned back to Tibet. A Tibetan minister has been summoned in Calcutta by the British to inquire about the war indemnity that they owed them; with the assurance of the minister the British officials are happy and satisfied.

The relation between the Chinese government and the British has improved. The British officials have appointed a *Munshi* (a writer or secretary) in Gyantse and Gar, Tibet. The road between India, Gyantse and Gar has been increased in width, telephone wires connected and a postman stationed. The details of the traders who would travel through Gyantse and Gar will be recorded by the *Munshi*. The *Munshi* travelled through Khunu ⁴⁰ to reach Gar where he was posted by the British.

A sahib called Sven Hedin is planning to go to Tibet with a caravan consisting of 150 horses, 25 servants and a caravan *bashi* or caravan leader Mohammad Isa from Tangtse towards Tibet.

1907

The Tibetan people and the traders have cordial relationship. Roadways construction has been completed and the road widened in Gyantse and also from Phari to Khangmar. Many *sarais* or rest houses have been built at beautiful locations for the traders to rest.

The British official O'Connor has been given the title of a Major due to his position as a translator and a guide to both Colonel Younghusband, during his expedition to Tibet and Panchen Rinpochey, the head of Tashi Lunpu monatery, during his visit to India. He was also appointed as Commissioner at Gyantse and provided with a motor car.

⁴⁰ Khunu was the name for the present Lahoul in Himachal Pradesh, India.

The sahib Sven Hedin, who left from Ladakh for Tibet has reached Tashi Lunpu monastery safely. Last year he travelled from Leh towards Horyul, reached Aksai Chin and after going south reached Tibet. His caravan has reached safely except for many ponies that died on the way. The Sahib was happy with his servants who treated him well and while he stays in Tibet his next destination is not known.

An English lady called Miss Annie Thelore stayed at a place called Yutung. The citizens named their place after her and called it 'Yutung Annie'. She is old now and has returned back to Europe.

2.3 Turkey News

One of the main events from the history of Turkey has been described in the newspaper without giving too much of implicit details.

In the year 1904, the people of Turkey revolted against their Sultan who was a Musullamaan or a Muslim. The Christians in Turkey have been killed because they revolted against the Sultan. Even in a place called Sedon many Christians have been murdered. Russia and Australia have commissioned a foreign commissioner in Turkey to keep a check on the Sultan and therefore his power has decreased.

2.4 Japan News

There are three major news that have been mentioned about Japan in the newspaper, the first is the war between Russia and Japan also called the Russo-Japanese war of 1904 at Port Arthur, the second is the war between Japan and Korea of 1905 and the last important news is about the famine in Japan in 1905. The news is as follows—

1904

On the 8th of February the Japanese fleet destroyed Russian ships on the Port of Arthur. In order to protect the Russian battle ship, 'Shah hig van', the Russians Tsan sa Pa (present day Incheon in South Korea). It was presumed that the Japanese won because of better warships that were built in England and were manned by mercenary British sailors who were paid well by the Japanese. The Russian have many soldiers stationed on land therefore an

outcome of a battle on land cannot be predicted. The Japanese destroyed nine battle ships earlier. The war between Japan and Russia is not easy to understand because the Japanese cannot make strategies to fight Russia on land whereas they used Korean coastline and planned attacks on Russia. They try to destroy the Russian railway lines but are not successful because the Russians have good guards stationed there. On the 6th march 1904, Japanese battleship aimed for Vladivostok. They fired at the Russians when their cannon balls were over. In total ammunitions worth Rs. 1, 50, 000 were used up.

The Russians have got four new battleships; nine ships which had been destroyed are repaired and fifteen new cruisers have been deployed and now the Russians are moving outwards from Port Arthur into the sea. The Japanese made an attempt to block the entry to Port Arthur by sealing the Russian fleet inside with old ships, so that they do not move towards Japan. But the Russians have understood their strategy and destroyed all the old ships that were in their way. Since the entrance into the sea was open now, the Russian fleet went towards East of Korea but then again the Japanese reached there and fought the Russians who made way into the Japanese camp. The Japanese infantry fought the Russian cavalry but the Russian warrior group called the Cossacks has killed fifty Japanese men. Right now the Japanese infantry are trapped in the middle of the Russian Cossacks, one from the east and the other from the west side.

In the month of February, the Russians repaired their old ships. They set out to fight the Japanese from Port Arthur. They attacked the Japanese fleet but in the meantime the Japanese sent four destroyers close to the harbor and mined the entrance to the harbor. As soon as the Russians returned back their port, their battleship blasted and exploded, fifty men out of the eight hundred who could swim were saved but the rest of them who were on the ship drowned and killed.

On the 20th may the Russians got torpedo destroyers which were used during the war. The Russians had 350 battleships and the Japanese had 750, but those were destroyed by the Russians thus nine hundred men died in the blast while two hundred were saved.

On the 27th of June the Japanese brought in many ships and mercenaries. Both the Russians as well as Japanese met and fought a war. The war ended with Japan's victory with 3,050 casualties from their side and 500 casualties from the Japanese side. The Japanese looted large number of Russian cannons as well. The reason they won was because of their ships were British made and the cannons used were of good quality while the Russians technology did not seem to be advance.

On 15th June, the Japanese seized Port Arthur and tso-lak (?) The Japanese made sure the Russians were out of food supply when they raged a war again on land and thus occupied another Russian station on the land. The Japanese attended to medical need of the Russians. On 8th of July the Japanese decided to occupy a district of Russia⁴¹. Both Russia and Japan fought and predicting the Japanese to win.

1905

The Japanese and the Russian have not been at war for some time. The Queen of Portugal has gone to visit the King and Queen of England.

ON 30th November, a Russian district was occupied by Japan.

The Battle of Mugden was fought from 20 Feb to 10 March 1905 between Russian forces led by General Kuropatkin and Japanese army led by General Oyama. The Japanese captured the Thaling Pass which made it easier for the Japanese to move their troops from Port Arthur to Mukden.

On 1st March 1905 a great battle took place near Mukden. The Japanese surrounded the Russians from all side except for a small area which allowed the Russians to escape. The Russians were badly defeated in this battle where more than 20,000 Russians died. The Russian general was also captured by the Japanese. This battle was definitive for Japanese as it was the biggest won by Japan and ultimately led to the defeat of the Russians.) 40,000 Russians have died since the beginning of the war in 1904.

⁴¹ Battle of 203 Meter Hill

The Russian warships that have been sent from Russia on the way to Vladivostok have reached China without any attacks from the Japanese Navy. However, it is possible that a war would break out again if the warships of both the countries met in the sea. The people of Russia are happy to have an agreement with Japan but the Tsar still do not want the agreement.

From 27-29 May 1905, the Russian fleet which was on the way to Vladivostok was attacked by the Japanese navy near the Tsushima strait. The Russian badly lost the battle both in terms of the ships destroyed and men killed. Twenty four ships including three battleships were destroyed in the battle. Only few ships managed to escape. 1500 Russians died in this battle while 6000 were captured and 3000 men escaped. None of the Japanese ships were harmed in the battle. The entire Russian fleet was nearly wiped out in this battle and because of which the rule of the Tsar began to decline. Around this time the Russians and Japanese were showing signs that a talk could happen that would end the war.

Internal conflicts in Russia had increased. The workers were paid less wages by the Tsar and so the workers attacked the palace. There were few instances of judges and army officers being killed by the people. There were fights between the army and the civilians which led to a loss of many lives.

Russia and Japan finally signed an agreement called Treaty of Portsmouth in 5th September 1905 in America. The agreement benefitted China the most. Korea was given to the Chinese. Korea who had earlier maintained good relation with the Russians was later captured by Japan. The Japanese were not happy with the emperor for giving away Japan. But the emperor convinced his subjects of the futility of another war where thousands more would die.

The treaty was ratified on 14th October 1905 between the Tsar Nicholas II and the emperor of Japan. The British and Japan became ally.

1906

There was a great famine in the northern province of Japan where six lakh people died. Since the British and Japanese were allies, the British collected Rs 75,000 as aid for Japan.

The famine continued till April, the British, Australia and many other countries send aid to Japan. There was a danger of around 30 lakh people dying.

2.5 Gyal Rabs: History of the Kings of Ladakh

Gyal, a derivation of the word *gyapo* means king and *rabs* means history so *Gyal rabs* means the history of kings. The title of this section in the newspaper has been chosen with utmost care by the editor as he wanted to introduce the history of the kings who ruled Ladakh and make the laymen aware of their historical background. In the preface of his own book titled *The History of Western Tibet* published in 1907, Francke mentions that the principal source of his own work was based on the *La dvags rgyal rabs*, the book ‘Book of the Kings of Ladakh’ that had been translated by Dr. Karl Marx (the German Moravian missionary), not ignoring the fact that he was also well versed with Alexander Cunningham’s 1854 book titled *Ladakh* which gave a general outlook on the genealogy of the rulers of Ladakh. Cunningham agrees with Moorcroft’s opinion that—

The earlier history of Ladakh is that of Tibet as it formed one 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 Lhasa.⁴²

The newspaper mentions the history of the kings for the first time in the month of November 1905. The issues of September and October are not very clear but it starts with the history of King Langdarma, who was the eighth king in the line of succession from King Sron-tsan gam-po, the ruler of Tibet in the ninth century. He was a supporter of Bon-chos⁴³ or Bon religion and did whatever he could to root out Buddhism from Tibet.

⁴² Moorcroft, William. Travels, pg336.

⁴³ Bo-chos or Bo-religion was a syncretic religion that rose in Tibet during the 10th and 11th centuries with strong Shamanistic and animistic traditions.

The first Tibetan ruler of the Ladakh region according to books by Ladakhi authors was king dPal-gyi-mgon who ruled Ladakh from 1000 to 1025.⁴⁴ However the lineage given by Frankce in the newspaper is the same except that the dates of their rule is not mentioned, thus giving a vague idea of the rulers, although the exact dates of the kings are still not registered by the people until the time when Tashi Rabgais wrote his book on the history of Ladakh in 1983. The rulers mentioned in the newspaper are as follows⁴⁵—

King Lha-chen Naglug had two palaces, one in Wanla and the other in Khalatse. The genealogy of the kings is as follows—

1. Lha-chen Nag-lug had two sons one was Lha-chen Ge-Phel and Lha-chen Gebun.
2. Lhachen Ge-Phel's son was Lha-chen Jodor.
3. His son was Lha-chen Tashi-shi-Gon.
4. His son was Lha-chen Lhargyal.
5. His son was Lha-chen Jod-pal (He was a worldly yet a spiritual king. He was a very good ruler).
6. His son was Lha-chen Ngu-dup.
7. His son was Lha-chen Gyalbu Rinchen.
8. His son was Lha-chen Shesrab.
9. His son was Lha-chen Tri-Tsung-de (During his time chorten or stupas which were 108 in number were built).

⁴⁴ As mentioned in Shakspo, Nawang, Tsering. *A Cultural History of Ladakh*. New Delhi: Centre for Research on Ladakh, 2012.pg272.

⁴⁵ The history of the kings of Ladakh has been translated from Bod-yig to English by the author with the help of Mr.Sonam Dorjee.

10. His son was Takpa Bum-de and Takpa Bum (younger son). Lha-chen Takpa Bum-de, the 11th in the line had three *Lha-khangs* (prayer house or monastery) one in Leh, one in Tholing and one in Rudok. The king got a statue of *gyawa chamba* (Maitreya Buddha) the size of which, was as big as an eight year old child.⁴⁶ There was a small yellow coloured mountain which was believed to be harmful for the villages nearby so the king built a chorten like house which had many *lha-khangs*, to ward off evil forces and that chorten was named ‘Tashi Odh’⁴⁷. Reference is made to a mountain which was in the shape of an elephant at the end of a village in Leh.

During the time of Lha-chen Takpa Bum-de, Je Tzhong kha-pa, the great scholar of Buddhism was in Tibet. He had given a statue of *Tsepak-met* or the Red Buddha to two *cha-tals* (it referred to a person who did not have anything, literal meaning is *cha*-material and *tal* - without). The statue was of the size of a grown person’s little finger. Je Tzhong kha-pa had asked the *cha-tals* to present the statue to a person with the name ‘Tak-pa’ or ‘Bum-de’. When Tak-pa Bum-de was at his palace at Nubra, two of the disciples went to meet the king, but they were left unattended to. When the king went back to his Leh capital, he asked his men to allow his subjects, be it *beda*, or *mon*⁴⁸ or anyone else who wishes to meet him, inside the palace.

That day the two disciples were lucky, so they met the king and presented him the statue of *Tse-pak met* or the Red Buddha. After the two disciples presented the statue to the king built the Spituk monastery.

11. Lhachen Takpa Bum-de’s son was Gyalpo Lotus Choldan and Lhachen Bum’s son was Lhachen Bara. Lha-chen Bum-de’s son Gyalpo Lotus Choldan had bought protective armour, called *Ngu-thap Zinpa* from Guge. Another armour called *ma-mo ey mun-dips*, *Thap-chu*, *karu*, and *Lha-thab karmo* were also bought. They got eighteen more armours which could be worn. Even swords were brought and each

⁴⁶ There was no standard measurement system therefore things were measured in ways like this.

⁴⁷ Present Ti-Suru near Changspa village, Leh.

⁴⁸ Beda and Mon were the musicians who were considered to be of the lower class.

sword had their own names which were *Nam-kha thak-dak*, Dongtse-king, *Log-lar*, *Neytzod* etc. Another set of 15 daggers named *Duk-tdhe Nakpo*, *Ham tdhe Zung* etc. were brought. The king got 15 more swords; precious stones called *Lha yu Ot-dan*, *Lha yu Kar-po*; 20 saddles called *gama chi thi dhing*, *tashi ol-den*; 50 light chrome (*nang-ta*) coloured horses, 20 black (*ol-wa*) horses, 30 grey (*tha-go*) horses; 20 female yak (*Di-mo*) named *Zalmo*; 20 male camel coloured yaks called *kham-pa*; similarly many more cattle like sheep etc. were also bought.

The king Gyalpo Choldan bought these many items because now he was the ruler of Ngari-khor-tsum which included the region of Rudok, Purang and Khor chik (present Ladakh, Zangskar and Himachal Pradesh) after his father Lhachen Takpa Bum-de gave him those regions to rule.

12. Lha-chen Bara's son was Lha-chen Bagan (an infamous name given to him).

13. Lha-chen Bagan's son was Lhawang Namgyal and Tashi Namgyal (Tashi Namgyal gorged out his brother's eyes and ruled over Ladakh instead).

14. Tashi Namgyal did not have an heir so he got his elder brother married and he had three children who were Tsewang Namgyal, Namgyal Gonbo and Jamyang Namgyal. The three children had extraordinary growth and they would grow very fast, they were even stronger than his predecessors. Tashi Namgyal waged a war and he captured Purang under his rule he built the Leh palace and settled down in a place called Chubi. Many Hor rulers (from Yarkhand) invaded but they were killed and their bodies buried in a graveyard nearby. A great monk called Khyu jhe Dama was invited by Drikyung Kargyu and the monk erected a monastery at a village called Phyang. The name of the monastery was Dey-nyun Tashi Chonzong gonpa which resulted in enrollment of many young children as monks in the monastery. The monastery also penalized thieves, liars, murderers etc. Buddha's teachings were translated.

15. Jamyang Namgyal's son was Sengey Namgyal.

2.6 Stories in the Newspaper

The stories in the newspaper⁴⁹ have been used to make the newspaper more interesting and therefore have more readerships. The author of the newspaper has incorporated local story telling technique, (using 'once upon a time there was a ...') along with elements from the local tradition which clearly shows the situation of the people during those days. One of the stories includes local belief in deities *lhas*, who possess supernatural power or position in the lives of the people and also those spirits who are given pre-dominant importance in the daily practices of the people of Ladakh. For example the deity, *lha* of a village, or one of the mountains, or a river or the lake etc. those spirits which possess a particular area are always treated with respect lest they harm you or cause a disturbance in the daily life. This idea of being superstitious, as a European would look at it, has been tried to be resolved on the basis of logically dealing with a situation. One of the stories is about a cobra that embodies itself into a beautiful woman and then lures the king into marrying her. Stories about snakes might have been famous as the Kashmiris were called the children of nagas and there are also references to the nagas in the Buddhist religious mythology.

2.6.1 Story 1

Once there was a huge land /country area of a king. When the king went for hunting there was a snake called 'Ajgar' who lived in the forest for a long time. The snake came to know that the king is out in the forest for a hunt. The snake changed/transformed into a beautiful girl. The king fell in love and asked the girl if she wanted to marry him. After the marriage there were lots of problems in his country. Children were missing and soon almost all the children and the cattle vanished.

The ministers and the noblemen of the country had a meeting. They found no reason as to why such unusual things were happening in their land. One of the ministers told them that since the day their king had got his wife from the mountains, the girl who could be a daughter of a '*lha*'(God) or a '*dut*'(a demon); since then all bad things have been taking

⁴⁹ The stories has been translated from Bod-yig to English by the author with the help of Mr.Sonam Dorjee.

place. So one day the minister and few men without letting the Queen know went to meet the king. They said they have a request and the king asked what request they had. They asked if the king would not get angry. They made their request because if they did not make the request soon then no one would remain alive. The king then said that if you (villagers) will not remain then what use am I as a king. They said that earlier they were happy but since the day the king got his wife from the mountains many bad things had been happening like their children and the animals have vanished. They said maybe it's the Queens fault. What should they do?....

“Do not be angry. Try and act as if you are asleep and see what happens at night”, said the wazir (minister). So the king did as the minister had said. At night the Queen turned into a snake. The head of the snake crawls from the bed and goes out of the upper window. Astonished, the king gets scared but he looks carefully at the tail of the snake.

As it was dawn the snake was back in the king's bed and again transformed into a beautiful girl and the king was astonished again. He said, “Chocho lay today I have to go to another country” and lied to his wife and went to meet the minister. They decided to kill the Queen. How should they kill her is the question. Amongst them there was a minister who said that we have to make a plan and then asked everyone to listen. He asked them to get lots of coal and a blacksmith. Make an iron cage bedroom/house. When the iron cage was being made in the king's house the Queen asked the king why this house was being made. The king said that there were lots of bugs and insects that came at night, so when this iron house is made the insects won't come. They even made a lock. So they slept in the cage like iron house. Later at night the king said he was going to the toilet and left the Queen in the iron cage.

With the use of a *butpa*, an instrument to blow air into a fire, they set fire in the cage. The Queen screamed and her screams were so loud that it was louder than three times the sound of the thunder. The iron cage was red because of the hot fire. Since that day onwards the people of that land were happy. Children and animals prospered. With this the first story ends.

2.6.2 Story 2

In a big land a king had two princes. The brothers had become the kings of the land. The elder brother became king of their land and the younger brother became king of another place. The distance between both their countries was a lot. The elder brother sent many letters to the younger brother but the younger brother did not go to visit his elder brother. The reason being the younger brother had a beautiful wife and he could not leave her sight. He was scared that his wife might get another husband. Again his elder brother sent him a letter asking whether he wanted to meet him. Their parents had already passed away and so the elder brother wrote to him whether he wanted to meet when they were alive in this human form. The younger brother read the letter and the letter was well written. After reading the letter he thought for a long time. He wrote back to his elder brother. He ordered his wazir and his subjects to carry things to visit his brother. On his way they stayed over at a place. He wanted to make sure that he would be with his wife when he gets back.

He goes back to be with his wife to the palace without telling his wazir. When he gets back he sees two heads in his bed. He gets angry to see another man's head in his wife's bed. He kills the man in the bed without letting his wife know. He goes back to the place where his army is stationed for the night and is very angry. The wazir and his courtiers are scared and did not ask why he was angry.

Finally he meets his elder brother. His brother sees his younger brothers' anger and wonders what his problem was. He thought whether it was the journey or whether he lost his riches. He could not ask. The elder brother thinks that his brother has a problem and is angry as well as sad. He sends a letter to another place to ensure his visit to another country. He asks his younger brother to accompany him. The brother says he does not want to go. So the elder brother and his attendants leave for that place. After his brother left he sees that his brother has five wives and wanted to see how they were...*(Rest of the story remains incomplete as the print of the newspaper is not readable).*

2.7 Maxims in the Newspaper

The following maxims or idioms are from the newspaper⁵⁰ and have been written down here to illustrate the common ones used by the people. Some of the idioms are also religious sayings which meant that they have been used to propagate religious views to the readers.

Maxim 1.

*Lam thal na log te yong ngyen,
Tam thal na chang cho mi ngyen.*

English translation:

If a way is crossed, one can return back,
And if one's speech is crossed nothing can be done.

Maxim 2.

*Chit baat tus la, mabat na,
Ton do tus la gyotpa yong.*

English translation:

If a work is not done on time,
Then later you will regret later.

Maxim 3.

*Zotpa tabuaey Geva met,
Zhe dang Ta buey digpa met,
Pay tewa yeshu –e chos na thun-o.*

English translation:

Without tolerance there is no blessing,
No negative Karma,

⁵⁰ The maxims has been translated from Bod-yig to English by the author with the help of Mr.Sonam Dorjee.

If you have

People who can be tolerant when bad words are spoken to them and companion men/women. Compassion can be seen in people tolerant to angry words by other men. A tolerant man will be blessed and do good deeds and not bad deeds. Good deeds like not stealing neighbours riches, not lying, would not harm other people. Likewise, with a compassionate heart good deeds are done easily. All teachings go hand in hand with the preaching of Christ.

Maxim 4.

*Sa jampay chu kok,
Mi jampay mi kol.*

English translation:

Smooth soil blocks the water,
A good hearted man will make people work.

Like the way if there is a good man, people will count him as a good person. So whatever a good person says the listener will try and practice or follow what he says. Likewise, nowadays the English government though their wang/rule and power is huge. However big their rule and power, ask each man and whatever they can they try to bring peace and good health to the public. That is the thinking of the English. [People of India and China with a good heart convert into Christianity, you Tibetans why can't/ don't /aren't you practicing the teachings of Jesus. If you believe in him one will reach heaven.] The person who has a good heart with love and compassion is Jesus Christ. For people to be happy and peaceful He scarified even his body. In Jesus each year people of Indian and China are converting into Christian. Why aren't you –Tibetans still not changing /following Christ?

Maxim 5.

Rang kyon phat kar bor tay, Mee kyon gyay la thel.

Even if your fault which is huge and your neighbours fault which is very small, you dig that. Since men are bad even if one does bad deeds we need praise if others do a small bad deed we criticize them. It's not done. If one does that then one will not get salvation. Therefore, Jesus has preached that in my stead one needs to follow my teachings and one will get salvation.

Maxim 6.

*Mi nan tang tok na, na ray tang tho ray,
Mi zangpo tang tok na, Paray tang thon ray.*

English translation:

If you stay with a good man, the good man will keep teaching good things.
If you stay with a bad man, bad things will you learn.

Christ went to the bad people and preached, some said that Christ stayed with bad people and would become bad. He said that is not the case, I stay with them to preach and teach them the bible here. Similarly, anyone who follows Christianity and even though he reaches bad people, he/she would teach good to them and try and convert them to good people. So with each talk one would receive good teachings.

Maxim 7.

*Tam-nyan met pay,
Mee Gyagspa,
Zhon-nyan met pay,
Tah Gyagspa.*

English Translation:

Without any bad intentions,
Man is healthy.
Without being ridden,

A horse is healthy.

The above idiom means that:

A person who does not think sensibly, even his health is of no importance just like a horse that cannot be ridden, even though it is healthy, is not useful.

Maxim 8.

Skas-pay thama ney, chiva in,

Sags-pay thama ney zat-pa in.

English translation:

When one is born and one has to die,

When one hoards, it has to finish.

Maxim 9.

Bu kha-mi-nyen, daey saang thu,

Dah kha-la nyena, bu-ey sang skes.

English translation:

If a child is disobedient, he is worst than an enemy,

If an enemy is obedient, he is more worthy than one's own child.

Maxim 10.

Mee zangpo tang tok-na,

Teeh rey tang toh rey.

Mee nyanpa tang tok na,

Na-re dang tho rey.

English translation:

If a good person guides/counsels/advice you,

Good examples and meaning follows.

If a bad person leads you,
You will have to swear by holy books.

Maxim 11.

*Darak chukpo cha na mee mithong,
Chukpo darak cha na nam mithong.*

English translation:

If a beggar becomes rich, he can only look at the sky,
But if a rich becomes poor, he cannot look at the sky.

Maxim 12

*Tangpo-ey tenba ney chu-ey mi kher
Mey yang mee tsik.*

English translation:

A truthful person's nature cannot be flown away by water,
Nor can it be burnt by fire.

Maxim 13.

*Chumik ran-jin ney makam na,
Sa-ey nan-par ka-la nur.*

English translation:

If a spring doesn't dry up by itself,
Covering it by soil will not help.

Maxim 14.

Rang dhong mathong te,
Mee dongh la tad-mo.

English translation:

Mocking others without first looking at your self.

Maxim 16.

Akuta tching men,

Lowa chaa men,

Drogpa mee men.

English translation:

Akhuta is not wood,

Lung is not meat,

And Drokpas are not men.

Chapter 3

THE ANALYSIS OF THE NEWSPAPER

3.1 The Making of the Newspaper

La dvags ky agbar or ‘The Newspaper of Ladakh’ or ‘Ladakh News’ (Walravens, Bray) begins and ends with the missionary Rev. August Hermann Francke. August H. Francke has been deemed as one of the greatest missionary scholars of the Moravian Church (*Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine*) to work in the Himalyan region of India. He was born on 05.11.1870 in Gnandenfrei, Silesia, Germany. After finishing his formal schooling with Moravian educational background in Gnandenfrei and then in the Moravian teacher training college in Niesky (Oberlausitz); Francke worked as a teacher in a missionary boarding school in Kleinwerda near Bautzen for four years i.e. from 1891 to 1895⁵¹(Bray).

3.1.1 A.H. Francke in Ladakh: 1886-1889

In early 1895 he left Kleinwelka and spent eight months at the Moravian College in Fairfield (Derbyshire, England) and there he learnt Sanskrit using Fick’s grammar. His studies also included Greek and Hebrew. In November 1896, Francke was called to mission service in India. In March 1896 he was ordained deacon and in the following month he set out for India and took up his work at Leh. On 8th June 1896, Francke arrived in Leh, the capital of Ladakh. According to the Moravian Mission⁵² rules a missionary had to learn the language of the place where they were sent. Even Francke adopted that practice and he had learnt both the Classical Tibetan and the Ladakhi dialect. He was also looking forward to his marriage which is mentioned in Bray’s paper titled *August Hermann Francke’s Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906: The Making of a Missionary Scholar*. In one of the letters to Br Buchner of the Mission Board in September 1896 he wrote:

⁵¹ Bray, John. "August Hermann Francke's Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906 The Making of a Missionary Scholar." *The Tibet Journal* XXXIII, No 1. Spring (2008): pg.4-5.

⁵⁰*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1768 15th edition.

The latest post brought me an important piece of news by means of a letter from my dear bride, namely that you as well as the Mission Department wish to allow her to travel with a lady too India as soon as January.

Francke's fiancée's name was Anna Theodora Weiz (1875-1945) but she was known as 'Dora'. She was the daughter of a missionary in South Africa.⁵³

Francke's marriage to Dora was planned by the Mission Board; it was a standard practice for the Mission Board to influence the choice of missionaries' marriage partners and to decide when and where a wedding would take place. On 26 January 1897 Francke wrote to Bishop Benjamin La Trobe, his main correspondent in the Mission Board, stating that he would be setting out on 1 March to meet Dora in Amritsar. Since the postal runners made their journey regularly through the Zojila Pass during the month of March, Francke decided to make the journey but his journey proved to be much more difficult than he had expected. His journey is described in an article in *Herrnhut* magazine (Bray). Finally with laborious effort and with much difficulty he safely reached Amritsar on 25 March 1897 and the wedding took place in the Church Missionary Society (CMS) five days later. Francke took Dora back to Ladakh and by the 6th of April they had reached Baramullah in Kashmir. They did not reach Leh until the 28th of May as the perilous journey took toll of Dora's health although Francke himself did not suffer any ill health. They had to travel 60 miles on foot as the snow was too deep for the horses.

Francke named his children were Walter Siegfried *Dondrub*⁵⁴(08 August 1900) and Hilde *Deskyid*(05 January 1903), the last name being Ladakhi names.

Francke worked with the mission at Leh and his duties included: preaching every Sunday while his colleague Samuel Ribbach was sick; leading the regular hymn-singing session and reading the *Litany* once a fortnight; teaching the English language and taking arithmetic classes twice a week; taking reading classes twice a week; and visiting non-Christians in

⁵³ Bray, John. "August Hermann Francke's Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906: The Making of a Missionary Scholar." *The Tibet Journal* XXXIII, No 1.Spring (2008): p.28

⁵⁴ Dondrub is one of the names of the legendary Kesar saga's hero, the national epic.

their houses three times a week (Bray)⁵⁵. Apart from the mission work he supervised meteorological observations for the British government and managed the mission's purchases of wood for fuel. On the other hand he was also busy with the translation of the Bible stories into the Ladakhi dialect with the help of local assistants. He was also collecting stories for a reader and preparing a Ladakhi grammar which was originally intended as an appendix for H.A. Jaeschke's *Tibetan Grammar* (1883).

3.1.2 A.H. Francke in Khalatse: 1899-1906

In the month of February 1899 Francke moved to Khalatse (now called Khalsi) to start his own Mission station. Khalatse was three days march on the main route from Leh to Srinagar. It is about thousand feet lower than Leh and thus much warmer moreover Francke thought that it would be much healthier for his family. The mission built a house on the west side of Khalatse, and he moved with his family on 01st of July 1899; now it is part of the Moravian Academy school compound. According to Bray's paper⁵⁶ and his bibliography Francke's stay in Khalatse was the most eventful and productive part of his stay in Ladakh. Francke led Sunday services in Ladakhi, the most difficult part being the preparation of the Ladakhi sermons and that was his regular routine. He led a difficult and a challenging time in Khalatse as compared to Leh because the permanent inhabitants of Khalatse were Buddhists and they came under the Lamayuru monastery.⁵⁷ So they could not act in opposition to the monks of Lamayuru even though they were aware that the Moravian mission could bring material as well as spiritual advantages⁵⁸ main reason being that they were in debt to the monastery.

Francke and his wife Dora often visited the villagers' houses in order to establish contact on the grounds of daily business hoping that eventually they could get an opportunity to talk about Christianity. At first they were welcomed but eventually they thought Francke and his

⁵⁵ Bray, John. "August Hermann Francke's Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906 The Making of a Missionary Scholar." *The Tibet Journal* XXXIII, No 1.Spring (2008): pg.4-5.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Earlier villages in Ladakh were affiliated to a monastery. The monastery bore a share of the common land and taxes were paid for the use of lands. The monastery also catered to religious ceremonies.

⁵⁸ Bray, John. "August Hermann Francke's Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906: The Making of a Missionary Scholar." *The Tibet Journal* XXXIII, No 1.Spring (2008): 28

wife had nothing better to do. So this event led to the turning point in Francke's decision to change his approach and the best way to do that was to focus on literary work. Francke had already made some advances in his work of Ladakhi Grammar and with the help of the mission he recruited a local called Ishey Rigdzin (Ye shes rig' dzin) to work with him. Educating the villagers became the first target, at first the villagers did not appreciate the advantages of education and even the Lamayuru monastery opposed him fearing that the mission would undermine their influence. In 1900 Francke reported to the mission that the campaign by the monks had forced him to close the school temporarily but he reopened the school in Ishey Ridgzin's house in the village, and the fact that it was no longer in the mission compound may have helped attract pupils, writes Francke in his letter to La Trobe dated 20 April 1900⁵⁹. The School was mainly attended by men whose age ranged from six years to sixty. Dora Francke organized her own school for the women and taught them how to knit. During his stay in Khalatse he wrote many papers and reports on Kesar saga, marriage songs, proverbs, his personal travel accounts, on currency of Ladakh, attributes on pre-Buddhist Bon religion, Ladakhi Grammar, folk stories, rock carvings, stone implements, drinking songs, history of the Dogra war in Ladakh, on hymn sung by Dards from Da village etc.⁶⁰

Since the Moravian missionaries were not very successful in converting the local population, they resorted to publications which included educational books on Tibetan, Urdu, English, Geography, Arithmetic, Nature Study; they also made sure that religious tracts, Christian hymns, Bible translations were also printed on the mission's old lithographic press. Those papers can be read in the Moravian journal *Missionsblatt der Brüdergemeine*. The Moravians played a pivotal role in educating the locals as they set up the first school⁶¹ called the Moravian Mission School in October 1899 as there were no government schools and

⁵⁹ Bray, John. "August Hermann Francke's Letters from Ladakh 1896-1906: The Making of a Missionary Scholar." *The Tibet Journal* XXXIII, No 1. Spring (2008): p.28

⁶⁰ Bray, John with Shakspe, Nawang Tsering. *A Bibliography of Ladakh*. England: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1988.

⁶¹ Francke, A.H. Translated and Introduced by Gabriele Reifenberg. "Schools In Leh." Bray, John. *Ladakh Histories*. Dharamsala: The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 2011 First pub. 2005. 281-292.

under the edict issued by the then Kashmiri Governor Radha Krishan, that every family with more than one child was to send a pupil to the mission school.⁶²

3.1.3 Purpose of Writing the Newspaper

In the year 1904 Francke had the idea of using the mission's old lithographic press to publish a monthly newspaper which was called the *La dvags gyi agbar* or 'Ladakh News' and thus a fresh attempt to start a news medium in the Tibetan language that tried to match the success of newspapers in China and Japan was made by Francke. Since Francke had already learnt the Classical Tibetan and the local Ladakhi dialect, so his motive was to use the best medium to express the Christian teachings to the local population. A solid material in print that probably matched the religious texts or *pechas* especially the Buddhist texts, *Kangyur* and *Stangyur* and the Muslim text, *Quran* could have generated some interest in the Ladakhi population. One of the main problems that the missionaries faced was being unsuccessful in preaching home-to-home and therefore using a print media seemed more favourable as well as viable, as the locals were more interested in concrete materials that were being distributed for free by the Missionaries. According to Bray⁶³, Francke intended the newspaper to be educational in the broadest sense in that he hoped it would popularize an unfamiliar concept of secular, or at least non-Buddhist writing. He noticed that while Europe had a whole range of novels and other non-religious literature, most of the books available in Ladakh during that time were associated with the dominant religious liturgy of the area. The monks in the monasteries had been reading the texts called the *Kangyur*⁶⁴ and the *Stangyur* for religious purposes and Bray also reiterates Francke's view that a common Ladakhi would also read the religious texts in order to gain 'merit' without taking a close interest in their contents.

⁶² Bray, John. "The Moravian church in Ladakh : The first forty years 1885- 1925." Recent Research on Ladakh -History, Culture, Sociology, Ecology. Proceedings of a Conference held at Universitat Konstanz, 23-26 November 1981. Munchen,Koln,London: Weltforum Verlag, 1983. 81-92.

⁶³ John, Bray. "A.H.FRANCKE'S LA DVAGS KYI AG BAR The first Tibetan newspaper." The Tibet Journal VOL XIII NO.3 (1988): 58-63.

⁶⁴ The Kangyur consists of 108 books from the teachings of Buddha and Stangyur 220 books.

During the 1900's the group of people who could read and write in Bodyig could have been the monks of the monasteries, the amchis (Tibetan traditional doctors), onpos (astrologers), the wazirs (ministers), and the gentries from the royal families. In all, the general population of Ladakh might not have been able to read and write in the Bodyig script⁶⁵. Therefore, as per Francke's calculation he might have wanted to introduce a new type of text that would generate curiosity and interest into what was 'unknown' and new to the people of that area. The missionaries had come to spread their religion but in the process most of them learnt the local language and the script.

Judging from A. H. Francke's later life as a professor in Tibetan in the University of Berlin, we can infer how much the language must have had an impact on his personal life. He did extensive research on this area as a missionary who had been reporting back to his supervisors in Germany or as the historian who worked for the Archeological Survey of India and also as researcher or an enthusiast who was so enchanted with the oral tradition of the people of this region which he chose to call the Western Tibet, that he wrote books on them. It is really interesting to know that he left so much more for the people and though his works are being researched upon a century later he was able to carve out an identity for the people of this region.

The knowledge of Buddhism or Buddhist philosophy might have also drawn the Christian missionaries towards the regions of Tibet or towards Ladakh to know more about the religion and the philosophies propounded by the Buddhist tradition/ teachers. There are many references to their knowledge of Buddhism through texts that they have given their own interpretation of Buddhist philosophies. Even though they seem to have come to this region to propagate their religion, they have also been affected by the religion of the region, thus, acknowledging that through their need to go and be in such a place which serves as a challenge to know better about themselves and their religion.

⁶⁵ In a personal interview with Mr. Sonam Dorjay, Leh, Ladakh.

3.2. The Language used in the Newspaper

In the aftermath of research done on the language of the people of the Ladakh region, we can delve into the debate of what the language of the region 'Ladakh' called? Are the Ladakhis speaking a language called Ladakhi? Or is it confused with the understanding that they are speaking a dialect of Tibetan? What systems do they work under to legitimize their language and thus legitimate their identity through their language? All these questions seem pretty vague without the proof of their linguistic background.

3.2.1 The Ladakhi Language and the *Bodyig* Script

Let us understand and see what language means to this society. In general terms 'language' would mean 'a systematic means of communicating by the use of sounds or conventional symbols', it also means 'communication by word of mouth', yet going further it would mean 'a system of words used in a particular discipline' and lastly it would mean 'the cognitive processes involved in producing and understanding linguistic communication'.⁶⁶

Alexander Cunningham's 1854 book titled *Ladak: Physical, Statistical and Historical* does have a few speculations about the language in the region. Ladakh during that time comprised of Nubra on the Shayok river, Ladakh proper on the Indus river, Zaskar on the Zaskar river, Rukchu (present Rupshu) around the lakes of Tshomo Riri and Tsho-Kar and Purik, Suru and Dras, on different branches of the Dras river and Spiti on the Spiti river and lastly the Lahul, on the Chandra and Bhaga or head-waters of the Chenab. These were the actual division of Ladakh, along with the political division between the Maharaja Ghulab Singh and the East India Company. To the former belonged all the northern districts and to the latter only the two southern districts of Lahul and Spiti.

Cunningham writes and I quote:

Ladak is inhabited by a peculiar race of people, who call themselves *Bot-pa*, who speak a peculiar language called Tibetan, and who profess the religion of Buddha, under a peculiar hierarchy of monks called Lamas.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Oxford Dictionary,

⁶⁷ Cunningham, Alexander. Ladak Physical, Statistical And Historical. New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1854 (Reprint2010).p.19

Cunningham's also mentions that—

.. the people of this 'country' or the region are familiar with the word 'Bot' but the name 'Tibet' is unknown to the people here.⁶⁸

Buddhism was flourishing and each century saw the advent of many gurus who came and taught in Ladakh. With the coming of the Tibetan kings came the art of reading and writing. The Tibetan script which is used in present day Ladakh originally came from Tibet. Prior to Tibet's engagement with Indian Buddhism, Tibet had no alphabet and no literature to speak of.

When Buddhism crossed from India into Tibet in the 7th century, Tibetans wholeheartedly adapted their culture to the Indian Buddhism; so in order to imbibe and digest the dazzling abundance of ideas and practices they started inviting India's great masters to Tibet. But without an alphabet or script of their own and without scholars who could translate from Sanskrit, the vast world of Indian Buddhists literary culture was inaccessible to Tibetans.

According to the tradition of the Tibetans, king Srof-btsan sgam-po (Songtsen Gampo 649/650 C E) assumed power in the 6th century and in the year 632 A.D sent T'on-mi or T'ou-mi (Thonmi Sambhota 7th century), the son of Anu, to India to study Sanskrit and Buddhist literature and to gather materials for the formation of an alphabet adapted to the Tibetan language. On his return to Lhasa he formed two Tibetan alphabets, one U-Chan (bdu-Jan) 'with head' out of the Ldficd script and another U-Med (dbumed) head-less' out of the Wartula characters. The details of this tradition, vary to some extent in different accounts, but the principal elements of it are identical both in historical and grammatical works.

As regards the time of the introduction of writing, it follows from the Chinese annals that it indeed existed under the reign of king Songtsen Gam-po. It is clear from both the Chinese and Tibetan annals (the latter stating the fact implicitly) that prior to his era there was no writing. The Chinese annals do not impart the date of his accession to the throne: they give us the year 634 as that of his first mission sent to China and 650 as the year of his death. The

⁶⁸ Ibid.

foundation of the national system of writing, accordingly, must have taken place between the years 630 and 648, since in that year the request for paper and ink manufacturers was submitted to China. The time spent by Thonmi Sambhota in India is variously given.

It was not just Buddhism that flourished here, Islam found its way into Ladakh too under the Islamic missionary Mirza Haider and then Aurangzeb. According to Dr. Prem Singh Jina, during the 4th to 5th century many merchants from Samarkand⁶⁹ came to Western Tibet for trade and frequently visited the higher altitude plains like Tangtse, Rudok, etc till the end of 10th century. Islam was brought to western Himalayas by Kashmiri Sultans and Ladakh was also affected. Under the holy war—*Jihad*, Baltistan was the first target. Luciano Petech⁷⁰ explains: The conversion of Kashmir to Islam brought a new element of instability to Western Himalayas, because of imperialistic trends of some of the Kashmiri Sultans, under the mantle of the Holy War (*jihad*) against the infidels. Their first target was Baltistan, which the Kashmiris called ‘Little Tibet’, while Ladakh was called Great Tibet.

The first Muslim force from Kashmir to cross to Zoji-la and to invade the country beyond the pass was led by Rai Madari, in the reign of Sikander (1394 - 1416). He conquered Baltistan and under unknown circumstances Baltistan and Purig were converted to Islam. Islamic rulers of Hor (probably Turks from Yarkhand or Kashgar), Kashmir and neighboring places were not able to propagate Islam very effectively but in later times by marrying Ladakhi Buddhist girls they seem to have increased the number of Muslims. There is also a reference to King Jamyang Namgyal who lost a battle to the Balti army and was taken to Skardo. To propagate Islam he was asked to marry Yabgo Sher Ghaze’s daughter rGyal –Khatun. Conditions were laid down for her son to be the next king of Ladakh and Islam be given proper shelter in Ladakh. The above conditions were accepted by the king and he was soon released. After his marriage, at the request of the new queen, Balti musicians, Akhons and others were sent from Skardo to perform Muslim rituals and entertainment. They settled down in areas of Phyang, and other regions around the Indus and started propagating Islam. (Jina, p.88)

3.2.2 The Contemporary Scholars and their Viewpoint on the Language of Ladakh

According to Sanyukta Koshal, ‘Ladakhi is a language belonging to the Sino-Tibetan group of the Chinese family of languages. It is spoken in Leh, Nyuma and Nubra Tehsils of the

⁶⁹ Presently, the third largest city in Uzbekistan. Also, the capital of Samarqand Province.

⁷⁰ Petech, Luciano: ‘The Kingdom Of Ladakh C 950- 1842 A.D.’. Serie Oriental Roma li, 1977.

Ladakh districts and in Zangskar Tehsils of Kargil district of the present State of Jammu and Kashmir. The present name of ‘Ladakh’ is derived from the Ladakhi word (‘lā’ meaning ‘pass’, ‘dāks’ means ‘many’). It has also been called by different names at different times in the past like *mān yu-yul lā-dāks* ‘Republican Ladakh’ (lit. Ladakh of many villages), *mār-yul lā-dāks* ‘Ladakh of (or having) red villages’, *khā-cān lā-dāks* ‘snowy ladakh’ etc. The language of the area is named *lā-dāks-si-skāt* ‘the voice (speech) of ladakh’. The total number of mother-tongue speakers of Ladakhi, according to the 1971 Census is 60,272⁷¹. Ladakhi speakers are spread mainly in rural areas (54,439) and those living in urban areas are only 5,838. The bulk of Ladakhi speakers are in the Jammu and Kashmir state (59,823) and the rest, i.e. 449 are spread in the rest of the country.

There are five regional varieties of Ladakhi—Zangskar Ladakhi, Nubra Ladakhi, Upper Ladakhi or Stotpa, Lower Ladakhi or Shamma and Central Ladakhi (also called Le Ladakhi). Upper Ladakhi (Stotpa) is spoken in the higher altitude regions, i.e. in the east of Leh—Upshi, Sakti, Chushul etc. and its boundaries extend upto the Tibetan border. This variety shows a marked influence of Tibetan on its phonology. Lower Ladakhi (Shamma) is spoken on the north-west of Leh, in places like Khaltse, Timizgam etc. Nubra variety is spoken in the north of Leh, mostly in Nubra Tehsil. Nubra variety also attests differences between its upper sub-variety and lower sub-variety. The lower sub-variety is more akin to Shamma variety than to any other form of Ladakhi. The upper sub-variety is close to Leh variety. Zangskar variety is spoken in the west of Leh and is spread all over the Zangskar Tehsil. Upper Ladakhi and lower Ladakhi are much closer to the Leh variety than Zangskar and Nubra varieties. The Central Ladakhi spoken in Leh and in neighbouring areas is accepted as the standard form and is hence considered prestigious. These regional varieties differ phonologically, grammatically as well as lexically.

A connection between the views on the basis of religious identity and therefore the way language is used has also been an area of concern for many scholars as well as linguists who are studying the Ladakhi language and grammar. Many of them have classified Ladakhi

⁷¹ <http://censusindia.gov.in/> accessed on 4 may 2012.

speakers predominantly as Buddhists whereas they have kept the Muslims and the Christians at bay. This cannot be completely true because the language that is spoken has nothing to do with the script that is used by the different religious population. If you speak Ladakhi language with a Muslim, Buddhist or a Christian Ladakhi, you might find small variation due to the areas they come from but not in the language. Another basis of classifying the Ladakhi language has been on the basis of region that a Ladakhi is from. Now this distinction is understandable because a person from the upper region of Ladakh can understand a person from the central or the lower part of Ladakh. Similarly, a person from Nubra and a person from Kargil can also understand each other but they would all have their distinct talking patterns as well as vocabulary but still are mutually understandable, which is why the varied styles of speaking can be put together as Ladakhi language.

Ladakhi cultural tradition is heavily influenced by Tibetan. The Ladakhi language as such is historically derived from Tibetan. All along the history Ladakhis have looked up to Tibet for cultural, religious and literary inspiration and knowledge. Tibetan language has been accepted as the language of knowledge, education and literary expression by Ladakhis and they have not used their own variety for such purposes because they considered Tibetan to be the suitable medium. Even when their language was to be introduced in the school system in Ladakh it was the Classical Tibetan which was accepted. This language is known as Bodhi in Ladakh.

In the fifties, the political situation changed drastically in Tibet. This has given rise to the emergence of the separate Ladakhi identity. The emergence of this identity consciousness has also been facilitated by the policies of the independent India, which not only recognizes the individuality of the smaller cultural groups and languages but also actively promotes their languages and cultural heritages. Due to these factors the Ladakhi language has come of its own in terms of its use in various spheres of life resulting in a fairly complex language situation in Ladakh which is akin to diagglossia. Ladakhis on one hand, still want to hold on to Classical Tibetan but, on the other hand, they also do not want to deny their own language the status that it can now be given in radio-news and other regional programme and also in various public spheres of language use. This form of language does borrow from Tibetan in

its lexicon and grammar off and on and the quantum of borrowing and influence depends upon various factors like age, amount of education, social class etc. of the user(s). Furthermore, as the colloquial Ladakhi was never analysed earlier and was also not reduced to writing, there is a certain amount of hesitancy on the part of those who use it in writing and the language also exhibits variation and lack of consistency with respect to various aspects of language-grammar, lexicon, spelling system etc. while it is in the process of developing into a standard written language. Tibetan had been analyzed much earlier and had developed a written tradition. The only linguistic analysis that has been made of Ladakhi is that of Francke in the beginning of the twentieth century. It was followed by a short outline of Ladakhi grammar by Grierson in his Linguistic Survey of India wherein he has given short grammatical accounts of all such languages and dialects. Both the descriptions are not only very elementary and brief but they also lack in scientificity and are based on fragmentary data samples. The Ladakhi grammar of the present author published last year can claim to be the first comprehensive and scientific account of how the Ladakhi language works.

3.2.3 Arguments on the Ladakhi Language and Script

The question of whether ‘Ladakhi’ is a language with its own script or whether ‘Ladakhi’ is a language without its own script is crucial for our understanding. Before we go further, the spoken languages of Ladakh include the dialects from Central Leh, Changthang (Upper region of present Ladakh), Sham (Lower Ladakh), Zaskar, Kargil, Da-Hanu and Nubra. In general most of the Ladakhi Buddhist as well as Ladakhi Muslims speak Ladakhi and when Baltistan was part of Ladakh, the Balti language was spoken by the Muslim population. In an attempt to categorize the general language that is understood by most of the Ladakhis, I have classified Ladakhi into the ‘Spoken Ladakhi language’ and the ‘Written Ladakhi language’ with the Bod-yig script as the basis of the generalization. Earlier Bod-yig (Tibetan script) was used by the Ladakhi population in Baltistan as well, however, they seem to have abandoned Bod-yig (Tibetan script) when Islam religion took over Ladakh in the early 15th century. Since Islamic religious writing was in Persian or Arabic the Bod-yig (Tibetan script) seemed to be associated with Buddhism and hence had no relevance to Islamic religion and culture. Even today the Muslim population converse in the Balti (also known as

Balti-skat) or the Purigi (thought to have been derived from Bod-rigs- the Tibetan race). The orally transmitted Ladakhi that a child learns from his/her parents as one grows up can be classified as spoken Ladakhi language. While the second category is when the use of the script (Tibetan script) transposes the spoken into the written form, creating a written form of Ladakhi language. The Ladakhi language has a unique set of grammar (Phandey 2007) making the spoken as well as written language unique in itself. Many linguists who have studied the Ladakhi grammar, starting with A. H. Francke, have been able to categorize the language according to the use in different parts of Ladakh. As mentioned above, Francke compiled his first batch of words and meanings in the Ladakhi language with the help of local language as well as folk songs and folktales in the beginning of his mission stay in Ladakh from 1886-89 he found a difference in the local dialects as well as the classical language and script of the Ladakhis. Therefore, he chose to write in the vernacular, i.e. the spoken Ladakhi than the classical Ladakhi which was the Bod yig (Tibetan script), a classical form of Ladakhi.

The written form of Ladakhi is debated to be the one which forms part of the Buddhist canonical literature which is written in the Tibetan script. So the question of the link between the Tibetan script and the Ladakhi language is highlighted here, bringing us to the point where we need to separate the spoken Ladakhi on one hand and the classical Tibetan script on the other hand. A distinction between the language and the script is almost ignored by most of wherein Tibetan is taken as a standard form of Ladakhi language. Thus, we have to clearly state the difference in the language that is spoken and the script that is used in Ladakh.

Few Ladakhi scholars have made categories that fit well and establish Ladakhi as a language which is different from the Tibetan language. Even today a Ladakhi language speaker might not be able to understand the Tibetan language speaker very well, although few root words are traceable, it still does not make a conversation easy. Let us analyze Ngawang Tsering Shaskpo's view on comparing language. He compares the pronunciation of the spoken languages of Central Tibet, Ladakh and Baltistan with the written Tibetan script. He states

that Balti language is close to the written form of Tibetan and many prefixes which are ‘silent’ in contemporary spoken Tibetan are still pronounced in Balti.

Let us check the table—

English	Central Tibet	Ladakhi pronunciation	Balti pronunciation	Written Tibetan(script)
Rice	D´e	Das	Abras	Bras
Knife	Di	Ti	gi-ri	Gri
Sand	Che-ma	Pe-ma	Bye-a-ma	Bye-ma
Write	De	Dis	Abris	Bri
Religion	Chö	Chos	Chos	chos
Salutation	Chag	Chag	Phyi-yag	Phyag
Hen	Cha	Cha	bi-ya	Bya
Four	Shi	Shi	Bshi	Gshi
Six	Tug	Tug	Trug	Drug
Hundred	Rgya	Rgya	Bar-rgya	Brgya

(Shakspo, 2012: 126)

Therefore, from the above table we can deduce how the written form of Bodyig(Tibetan script) is pronounced differently making it clear that the same script that is written in one way, is pronounced differently by the Tibetans, the Ladakhis (and by the Baltis, who were earlier part of Ladakh but now part of Baltistan, Pakistan).

In Bettina Zeisler’s paper titled ‘On the position of Ladakhi and Balti on the Tibetan Language Family’, languages are seen as vehicles of identification, and hence she sees their classification is always culturally and politically sensitive. Her focus lies on the position of the *Ladakhi* and the *Balti* languages within the Tibetan language family from both linguistic and historical perspectives. She draws our attention to how Ladakhi and Balti are often said to come closest to the ‘original’ Tibetan Language, but on the other hand, one may come across the idea that the spoken language or ‘phalskat’ is but a deviation of the ‘original’ language, lacking any grammar and thus not worthy to be written down. The ‘original’

language is generally understood to be the language of the religious books or ‘choskat’ (i.e. Classical Tibetan). She has provided documents and discussed the origins of the Tibetan art of writing (Zeisler, 2011: 27-32).

Nawang Tsering Shakspo’s chapter, A note on Pod-yig, the Ladakhi Script⁷² describes the spoken languages of Ladakh and Baltistan. They belong to the western branches of the Tibetan family of languages, together with ‘Purik’ and ‘Zangskari’ and have some characteristics in common with the dialects of Amdo in north-east Tibet. In his book titled, *A Cultural History of Ladakh*, the author reviews the common origins of the spoken language of the two regions, discusses contemporary initiatives to promote the use of the Tibetan script (yi-ge) when writing Balti.

It is interesting to note the terminology that different authors/scholars have used to describe the language and the script of the Ladakhis. Bettina Zeisler’s view on that can be well understood in her paper— Why Ladakhi must not be Written: Being part of the Great Tradition: As Another kind of Global Thinking. There she writes—“One has to take into account that Buddhist scholars usually do not differentiate between language and script, and that the Tibetan script is in a way inseparable from its use for the Buddhist scriptures.” (Zeisler2006: 175-194) That leads the reader into a complicated position.

On one hand a linguist like Zeisler is critiquing the very fact of Ladakhis themselves not understanding the difference between the ‘language’ and the ‘script’ leading the common reader into a misunderstanding of what comprises the ‘Ladakhi language’; but on the other hand, a Ladakhi scholar Khanpo Konchok Phandey has different viewpoints and arguments about the language and the script. Konchok Phandey’s book *Comment on Thon-mi’s Grammar and Clarification of Language* clearly states the difference between the language and the script. He begins with an invocation to Guru Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom to bestow light upon those who are wrapped by darkness of innate ignorance and states that language and script are distinct and they shouldn’t be confused as most people tend to do.

⁷² Shakspo, Nawang, Tsering. *A Cultural History of Ladakh*. New Delhi: Centre for Research on Ladakh, 2012.

He emphasizes on how several languages can be written in the same script; just like the way English, German, French, Danish, Italian and even African Swahili are written in the same Roman script though they are totally different languages.

He asserts that,

“We write Ladakhi in the Tibetan script, but it is not Tibetan language.”(Phandey, p.200)

He explains the situation of the diverse form of language in Tibet by saying that—

A tree grows into several branches from its root. Similarly the language of people living in the vast region from Skardo in the west to Amdo in the East developed from the root of the Tibetan language. However, different words and grammatical words developed in the different regions due to time and distance and they became so different that people of different region cannot understand one another today.” (Phandey,2007:200)

He argues that just like the way forty-seven scholars wrote essays, compiled and published a 700 page book at Beijing published by the National Publishing House in China in 1999 in order to find a consensus on a general spoken language within all regions of Tibet, but failed in their endeavours; similarly to find one common language that can be understood in the Himalayan regions (including Ladakh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and) is not plausible. The Tibetan script Bod-yig that is used in the Buddhist prayer books, religious liturgical books is the Classical Tibetan script has been used to impart religious teachings in the past as part of monastic education has changed in serving the same model as it used to do in the past. Now that the same script is being taught in the schools of Ladakh as part of learning Ladakhi language, has changed the pattern. The Ladakhis can read the script and I quote from Khanpo Konchok Phandey’s text,

The majority of Ladakhis can sound out the Tibetan script but they cannot understand things written in Tibetan language. (Phandey,2007 :200)

One has to learn the Tibetan language to understand the contents of the Buddhist liturgical texts and cannon. An interesting categorization of the Ladakhi language has been done by the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore. In an attempt to study the vulnerability of the *Bhoti language* and more importantly the planning of recognition and development of the same in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India; a case study done by the CIIL presents a plethora of ideas about the language itself.

What is Bhoti language? First, a reference is made to Charles Ferguson's term and concept, *Diglossia* (1959, Word) wherein the term is defined as –‘ ... a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any section of the community for ordinary conversation.’ The article by Charles Ferguson indicates that within the speech community two distinct varieties can be found, one is the prestigious highly codified High forms, which need formal instruction or schooling, whereas the other is the Low variety which is acquired naturally as one's mother tongue. Accordingly, Bhoti with its Indic script and large respected body of written literature is the High variety whereas the mother tongues—Ladakhi, Bhutiya/Bhotiya, Sikkamese, Sherpa, Monpa, Lahauli, (S)piti, Kinnauri, Tibetan (etc) are considered the Low varieties.

Now the question that arises is the question of the use of the word or the term ‘Bothi’. In context to language that is spoken in Ladakh, Ladakhi language is used with the ‘Bod-yig script’. Now the interesting fact is that when we try to write down the English equivalent of the script it turns out to be ‘Bod-yig’ which means ‘Tibet’ and ‘letter’, which can also be written as Tibetan letter or Tibetan script. Here the discrepancy in understanding the difference between the script and the language starts. The introduction (CIIL, 2012) mentions that ‘Bhoti, the Indian twin of Tibetan may provide the strength and commence the healing touch.’ In the above sentence we can clearly see that Tibetan and Bhoti have been matched together as twins. There is also a reference made to the ‘Bodic’ by Robert Shafer in his *Studies in the Morphology of Bodic Verbs*.

The Tibeto-Burman group of Sino- Tibetan family has a sub group of Bodish languages some of which are also labeled as Tibetan Dialects and spoken in few places. Bhoti, therefore, may be understood as an umbrella term that seeks to connect that plethora of related names and categories of both written and spoken forms of language, across space and time. (CIIL, 2012)

Chapter 4

EVOLVING LADAKHI ENGLISH LITERATURE

4.1 Ladakhi Literature prior to the Introduction of the English Language

Ladakh has been known by many names like ‘La-dwags’ (bLa-dwags), ‘Mar-yul’ (dMar-yul), Mang-yul’ (Mang-yul), and ‘Ngaris’ (mNga-ris). These names of Ladakh changed with time as the region began to be explored and studied. Among the other names western scholars have called Ladakh as “the moon land”, “the land of lamas and gonpas” (the land of monks and monasteries), “Little Tibet”, “Indian Tibet” and “Western Tibet”. The region was explored and due to the similarities with Tibet and, since Tibet was inaccessible, Ladakh became the destination for learning Tibetan Buddhism and its literature. Ladakh has a rich background of literature, art, architecture, trade, language and culture which was brought into limelight by the westerners who compiled historical as well as literary books on Ladakh with a readership outside. The language of Ladakh has been explored into and has been known by several names like ‘Bodyig’, ‘Tibetan’ or ‘Pot-yik’, ‘Bothi’, ‘Ladakhi’, and ‘Bodhi’.

4.1.1 Political Regime and Development of the Literature in Ladakh

The literature of Ladakh dates back to the rulers of Tibet who ruled Ladakh, present Himachal Pradesh and present Baltistan. In time there was development in accumulating religious scriptures especially Buddhist scriptures called the Kangyur and the Stangyur. Those texts upheld the religious beliefs and norms to be strictly followed.

When the ruler of Tibet, King Srongstan Gampo (Srong-bstan sGampo) assumed power in the 6th century and in the year 632 A. D., he sent Thonmi Sambhota the inventor of the Tibetan script (or more popularly known as the Bod-yig script in Ladakh), to Kashmir for his studies along with other sixteen able Tibetans students. According to a popular Ladakhi oral tradition, Rigpachan (Rig-pa chan) the able minister of King Srongstan Gampo (Srong-

bstan sGampo) of the 7th century, was a Shergol-born Ladakhi. It is recorded that during this period, the minister was very active and had a big role in sending Thonmi Sambhota to Kashmir. Ladakhi scholars were very active in the 10th century as well. Some of the prominent scholars of Ladakh were Zanskar Lotsawa Phakspa Sherab (Zangs-dkar Lo-tsa-ba Phags-pa Shes-rab) and his pupil Balti Lotsawa (sBalti Lo-tsa-ba). Balti Lotsawa is said to have been born in a poor village called Bulmik, Skardu, and Baltistan. For a very long time the present Baltistan was undivided until 1947 when it became part of Pakistan. On the political grounds, Ladakh had many conflicts with Baltistan until the Dogra rule in 1834, when the kingdom of Ladakh was invaded by the forces of Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu under the leadership of General Zorawar Singh in 1834. After the conquest of the Dogras, Ladakh came directly under the princely state of Jammu and became part of Maharaja's state of Jammu and Kashmir.

We can trace the development of the literature especially the script in Ladakh according to the various kings who ruled Ladakh. With the advent of the Tibetan kings in Ladakh, the art of writing also evolved. In his translation of *The Chronicles of Ladakh* (1914), Francke mentions one of the kings of Tibet—

His son was Sron-bstan sgam-po (Chinese date 600-50 A. D.), an incarnation of the Bodhisatva Spyan-ras-gzigs (Avalotika). During the lifetime of this king all the kingdoms on the frontier were united under his rule, and every one of the little kings sent presents and letters. Although this king issued innumerable documents signed with his seal, there were no characters in Tibet to send replies to the letters from [various] quarters. And, as [the books of] the famous sanctuary of his ancestor Tho-tho-ri-snen-bsal remained a mystery, [since they were written] in Indian characters, he thought, 'We must translate then so as to be I Tibetan writing.' Therefore sent Thon-mi, the son of H-nu, with a *hbre* (a measure) of gold, and sixteen fellow-students to Kashmir to learn the characters. They learned the characters from the Brahman Li-byin; Pandit Sen-ge-sgra (Simhanada) taught them (Pandit Sen-ge taught them the language). Bringing them into agreement with the Tibetan language, they make twenty-four Gsal-byed [consonants] and six Rins [altogether] thirty [characters]. Besides they made them to agree in form with the Nagara characters of Kashmir. (Francke, 1907: 82)

The Tibetan king Sron-bstan sgam-po was born in 617 A. D. He sent one of the most brilliant scholars of his court, Thonmi Sambhota, to study Indian epigraphy, phonetics and grammar in Kashmir under the tutelage of Pandit Senge; who then invented an alphabetic script for the Tibetan language called it the ‘Sum cu pa’ (the thirty consonants) and ‘Rtags kyi jug pa’, and established its grammatical structure. With the invention of the script came the task of translating and writing treatises for the king and that also led to the first translations of certain Sanskrit Buddhist works into the Tibetan script. Few of his works include the Stangyur (Bstan-hgyur), Mdo, vol. cxxiii, Sku-gzugs-kyi-mtshan-nid, by ‘A-nui-bu’; vol. cxxiv, Sgrah-bstan-bcos-sum-cu-pa, a grammar; Lun-du-ston-pa-stags-kyi-hjug-pa, by Thon-mi-A-nu (a grammar).

According the Francke’s translated version of the Ladags gyal rabs or *The Ladakh Chronicles*—

Thon-mi Sambhota’s grammar is practically the same as the one which is printed in the Darjeeling School Series (Tibetan Primer Series, No. iv, where it is stated on p.1 that the book is an extract from Thon-mi-legs-bsad-sum-cu-pa). It is evident that this grammar was written in very ancient days; for it treats of the drag, a final suffix which has long disappeared even from the classical language. It treats also of the Tibetan system of tones, and is therefore more than a mere repetition of Indian grammars. (Francke, 1907: 84)

The reason why Thonmi Sambhota’s script ‘Sum cu pa’ and ‘Rtags kyi jug pa’ is so important in the context of Ladakh is because the Ladakhi language has been written down in the Thonmi’s script called *bod-yig* by the locals, where ‘bod’ means ‘Tibet’ and ‘yig’ means ‘letter/script’. Most of the Buddhist canonical texts have been written in the *bod-yig* script and when Ladakh had been under the rule of the Tibetan kings, Ladakh developed its religion and literature. The most important aspect was the term given to the kings i.e. ‘Chos-gyal’ which also means ‘Dharma-king’, which meant that they had the responsibility of ruling Ladakh with an added responsibility of spreading Buddhism.

In 900 AD, Skyid-lde-nyi-ma-mgon, a direct descendent of the first king of Ladakh called Gnya-khri-bstan-po, ruled over the western part of Tibet including the region of Ladakh. He divided the regions of Mar-yul (Ladakh), Guge & Purang and Zangskar between three of his

sons. His first son was Dpal-gyi-gon (1000-1025 A. D.) who became the first king of Ladakh, then the second son who was Bkra-shis-mgon who inherited Guge and Purang and the youngest and the third son was lde-gtsug-mgon who inherited Zangskar.

The author Nawang Tsering Shaskpo has mentioned a popular song about their lineage in his book as follows—

*The race Gnya-khri-bstan-po,
Is like a wish fulfilling tree,
Whose branches and,
Leaves have spread to the vast land (Shakspo,2012.).*

The lineage of the Tibetan kings in Ladakh starts with Dpal-gyi-gon and thereafter till the end of the 19th century, Ladakh had been under the rulers especially the ‘Gon’ and the ‘Namgyal’ dynasty. Thus making it evidently clear that with the advent of rulers from Tibet the Ladakhis were able to use the script which was handed down to them as part of the religious liturgy but then eventually the script i.e., *Bodyig* played a major role in shaping the literary works of the people. In accordance with the views of the older generation of people who have folk stories to narrate and with their ideas of how to classify the literature of Ladakh, the first classification of literature was definitely reserved for the religious and liturgical books. These books include not just the obvious Buddhist canonical texts that are used in the monasteries by monks for learning the teachings of Buddha but also include the Islamic religious texts that have been used and are part of the daily lives of the Ladakhi Muslims. The Christian who are in minority have religious books that might be a just a century old but is heavily used by the Ladakhi Christians for religious purposes.

The older generation who gave their oral insight into the history of the region also emphasize that apart from the written literature that they use; there is also a category of literature that has not been put down in words, the one that is called the ‘oral-literature’ that is transmitted from one generation to the other through the word of mouth.

Oral literature is what we learnt from our parents and grandparents and similarly what they learnt from their parents and grandparents. The oral tradition includes not just folk stories/tales the likes of fables and stories

tinged with supernatural elements but also stories about religious figures, medical systems, astrology, topography etc.⁷³

The moral of oral stories come in handy in everyday use by both the listeners as well as the orators. Oral stories can generally be categorised into two major groups, one based on their usage in daily life and secondly those based on the legends and myths that have become like oral historical facts that people still believe in.

Few illustrations of the moral stories or what were called the 'marchens' by the Germans is traceable in many of the old stories that have been narrated in Ladakh. Most of the stories fall in the category of fables, bed time stories; and most of them narrated during the winters when there is enough leisure time to narrate them. By summer time telling stories loses its significance until the next winter when the legends and stories about witches, invisible dwarfs, demons, ghouls like creatures and legendary Kesar saga come alive.

Thus those stories that have been spoken for decades by the older generations but have never been preserved have now started to be preserved by the new generation of people. Here the ruling factor would be that the more concerned compilers of the traditional folk stories or lore are the ones who were alien to the Ladakhi culture and literature at first. But with attempts to understand the meanings of folklore by writing them down and translating them became an important part in their preservation. Nawang Tsering Shaskpo, a Ladakhi author who has relevantly points the importance of oral literature writes in his book *Insights into Ladakh* (1993) that –

...the introduction of writing could have a revolutionary social impact and the folk tradition degenerated as a result. (Shakspo.1993)

He also reiterates that –

An educated elite then emerged in Tibet and the fields of religious writing, philosophy, logic and literature flourished. The introduction of writing could have had a revolutionary social impact, and the folk tradition degenerated as a result. However, since the majority of people did not have the opportunity to become educated, they still clung to their heritage of folk songs which remained a major source of popular entertainment. Thus the folk tradition persisted in spite of the various setbacks it suffered in the course of its historical development.(Shakspo.p.)

⁷³ In an interview with Mrs. Padma Angmo, a 72year old lady from village Kairy, Leh, Ladakh.

The Ladakhi author has focused on ‘writing’ in the *Bodyig* script amongst the Ladakhis specifying on the preservation of the language and the script.

With these writings, there was already an idea of a tradition of a secular literature i.e., of the oral tradition where people might have looked at Tibet for an example. Therefore there was already a secular type of oral (literature) tradition which the people of Ladakh followed. Since everyone could not write, leisure times (usually winters) were used by the Ladakhis to create songs, stories, etc. which can be termed as ‘secular’ as opposed to the religious ‘Buddhist’ or ‘Muslim’ tenets or teachings. These songs which have now been recorded have more of historical references as well as references to the daily way of livelihood apart from religious references to the teachings of Buddha or the saints/gurus. They have been highly affected by the religion, but they do have a secular non-religious and creative style of narration which have later been composed and published in English. For instance, Francke started translating folk songs into the English as well as German languages. Most of his stories are in one way or the other a result of the folk tales that he collected. We can agree that before the missionaries came, the Ladakhis could not read or write in the English language and therefore, were unaware of the European writers and the vast literature that was present in Europe in that era (1900s).

With the introduction and propagation of Buddhism which began in a purposeful manner in the 7th century in Tibet, the Tibetan language was given a script and a standardized grammar. Subsequently Tibetans and the Tibetan speaking people such as the Ladakhis, undertook the monumental task of translating hundreds of volumes from other languages into their own tongue.

Thus, creating a canonical Buddhist literature that eventually spread from Tibet to India and now is part of Tibetan Buddhism that is practiced by Buddhists in India.

4.2. Development of Ladakhi English Literature

4.2.1 Early English literature: 1800-1900

One of the early nineteenth century visitors William Moorcroft, who originally was in the search of horses for East India Company of which he was a superintendent, spent two years from 1820-1822 with his companion George Trebeck in Ladakh. They wrote the famous *Travels in the Himalyan Provinces of Hindustan and the Panjab, in Ladakh and Kashmir, in Peshwar, Kabul, Kunduz and Bokhara*, in 1837. Moorcroft was a veterinary surgeon in the service of the East India Company.

Further, one of the pioneering works on Ladakh with the use of English language has been done by the Alexander Csoma de Koros, the famous Hungarian scholar. He was born in a Transylvanian village called Koros, Hungary (now a part of Romania) in the year 1784. He studied at the Gabor Bethlem College of Nagyenyed and at Gottingen University at Hanover, Germany. After twenty years of laborious study and with a command many different languages, at the age of 35 he decided to go in search of the ancient homeland of the Hungarian race, which he believed to be Yarkhand, a city in the Xinjiang province of China. Alexander had an incredible talent for learning languages, he learnt 15 languages: Latin, Greek, German, French, English, Russian, Serbian, Croatian, Hebrew, Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Tibetan, Sanskrit and Hindi. He ran into Moorcroft in Dras where the latter suggested him about the place where he could embark on a study in Tibetan language and culture, i.e. in Ladakh. As a result Csoma spent eight years under the guidance of scholar lamas in Zanskar, at Zang-la and Phutgal, where he lived between A.D.1820 and 1830 and his engagement with the Tibetan language got so intense that his original quest was left undone and leading him to lay foundations in the field of Tibetan Studies and thus he was called the father of modern Tibetology.⁷⁴

He compiled the first Tibetan-English Dictionary after rigorous study in the remote monastery of Zangla,, Zangskar. He read 320 Tibetan scientific books and collected 40,000

⁷⁴ Francke, A.H. Translated and Introduced by Gabriele Reifenberg. "Schools In Leh." Bray, John. Ladakh Histories. Dharamsala: The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 2011 First pub. 2005.p.

Tibetan words. He also wrote *The Grammar of Tibetan Language in English* and *The life and Teaching of Buddha*. After working in Ladakh he continued his works in Calcutta where he became the Librarian of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. He made an attempt to go to Lhasa in 1842 to study there but on his way he got infected with malaria and he passed away due to this fatal disease in April, in Darjeeling, India.

Through him, the first European scholar who studied the language of Ladakh (which has constantly been referred to as Tibet), this land was opened up to others. He has referred to the Ladakhis as Tibetans; it could be because of the similarities that the Ladakhis shared with the Tibetans. The literate Ladakhis during Csoma's time were the monks who studied in the monasteries and then were sent to Tibet for higher studies. Records of such learning procedures are available first hand from the *Amchis* of Ladakh. According to one of the leading scholars of Ladakh, Gen. Konchok Phandey –

The education system in Ladakh was not an organized one. If interested parents wanted their children to learn the bodyig script, the elders who could read and write would teach them. Most of the monastic education system was also an informal one as the young monks would learn reading and writing by observing the senior monks. One could hardly find one literate person in a village; this was the state till the beginning of the present education system.⁷⁵

So from a monastic study of language the education system improved and towards the end of the nineteenth century Moravian missionaries came to the rescue of the people of Ladakh when they started teaching subjects like mathematics, English, social studies and voluntary Bible studies. The first formal school in Ladakh was established by the Moravian missionaries in October 1899⁷⁶ and it was called the Moravian Mission School. The school still caters to the needs of education in Leh and has been very successful.

The region of Ladakh had been a transit for many traders along the Silk Road⁷⁷ route of Central Asia. The trading practices brought in different types of traders with different

⁷⁵ From a questionnaire through email with Gen. Konchok Phandey.

⁷⁶ Francke, A.H. Translated and Introduced by Gabriele Reifenberg. "Schools In Leh." Bray, John. Ladakh Histories. Dharamsala: The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 2011 First pub. 2005. 281-292.

⁷⁷ German geographer Ferdinand Von Richthofen (1883-1905) coined the term "Silk Route" to describe the network of travel routes stretching between China and Eastern Europe, with branches that extended in north-south directions.

languages at hand. Fewkes in her book *Trade and Contemporary Society along the Silk Road, An Ethno-History of Ladakh* mentions the Khan Archives, which is the primary source of her book, a passage on the documents inform us that the archives contain—

..... approximately one thousand pages of documents including personal memos, personal and business letters, registered letter envelopes, money order receipts, export permits, telegrams, account books and telegram receipts. These documents include correspondence with a number of areas linked to Leh and Kargil, with addresses on envelopes, telegrams and receipts from areas in present day China, England, India and Pakistan. A majority of the correspondence was between towns in North India and Leh, particularly with Hshiarpur (Punjab), Amritsar (Punjab), and Srinagar (Jammu and Kashmir). The documents also represent trading networks that extend much farther than these areas as letters, receipts, memos, and account books refer to goods and traders coming from areas in present day Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Germany, Japan, and the United States.⁷⁸

A majority of all the documents from these archives date from between 1900-48 in the Gregorian calendar⁷⁹.

Fewkes book is extensively studied and well researched upon. She has brought out so many inferences that show how the English language started being used in the Ladakh. Through the compilation of the Khan Archives she has focused on the languages that were used for transactions in Ladakh in the early nineteenth century. She also mentions that a majority of the archival papers were written in Urdu; some documents were also partially or wholly in Bodiyig⁸⁰, English, Uighur, and Persian. Most of the descendants of Central Asian traders in Leh could fluently read and write Urdu; however the Urdu of these documents was difficult for modern readers as it was written in what some informants called '*patawar*' type writing, a traditional style of Urdu.

While Urdu was not the official language used by ministers of state, even English was used and although the informant, in Fewkes book, would like to blame the decline of the use of Urdu standards on the modern use of English, he acknowledges towards the end of this section that English was also being used in official settings in pre-partition Ladakh. The

⁷⁸ Fawkes, Jacqueline, H. *Trade and Contemporary Society along the Silk Road. An Ethno-History of Ladakh*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2009.

⁷⁹ The Western calendar or the Christian calendar.

⁸⁰ The Ladakhi language written in Tibetan script.

popularity of other languages in education and the modern use of English in business and government settings are often referred to by Ladakhi individuals as proof that education in Urdu had declined since the establishment of an Independent India. While Fewkes focuses on the trading documents, there were many other sources which show how the English language started to be used in many other contexts.

4.2.2 English Literary Works by the Moravian Missionaries: 1900 Onwards

The Missionaries tried to reinforce the spoken word by producing wide variety of written literature. They studied the language and to interest the local people who could read only Ladakhi began publishing tracts, hymns, and works that the Moravian church printed on their own lithographic press at Keylang and Leh.

Heinrich August Jaeschke⁸¹ started translating the Bible. He translated New Testament except the chapter of Hebrews. He even compiled the *Tibetan-English Dictionary* in the 1881. In the preface of his dictionary Jaeschke writes that,

We had to take primarily into account the needs of missionaries entering upon new regions, and then of those who might hereafter follow into the same field of enterprise. The chief motive of all our exertions lay always in the desire to facilitate and to hasten the spread of the Christian religion and of the Christian civilization, among the millions of Buddhists, who inhabit Central Asia, and who speak and read in Tibetan idioms. (Jaeschke, 1881: iii-ix)

It is very interesting as the above lines come from a missionary who is looking forward to spread the 'Christian civilization' throughout the world especially in Central Asia and the only way to do that was to learn the language of that place and then propagate Christianity. The use of language and production of literature is important because not only were the missionaries paving their own way but they were also paving the way for the people of Ladakh to strengthen their historical background. Later, in the preface Jaeschke says that,

For it seemed to me that, if Buddhist readers were to be brought into contact with the Biblical and Christian ideas, the introduction to so foreign and strange a train of thought, and one making the largest demands upon the character and imagination, had best be made through the medium of a phraseology and diction as simple, as clear, and as popular as possible. My instrument must be,

⁸¹ A Moravian missionary stationed at Keylang, British Lahoul.

as in the case of every successful translator of the Bible, so to say, not a technical but the vulgar tongue. (Jaschke, 1881: iii-ix)

So, it looks like one of the pioneering Moravian missionary learnt the language and even compiled texts, which have been used by scholars and people with interest in the language, certifying their presence by creating literary evidence and then placing their motives on a platter so that it is consumed happily with a reverence towards the Christian community. However, the literature (in any language but mostly in German, English or Tibetan language) produced by the 19th century missionaries actually led to the beginning of Tibetology⁸² and Ladakh studies.

Later Redslob with the help of two high-ranking Tibetan brothers started the work of translation. The brothers—Nathaniel Zodpa Gyaltzen was baptised by Pagell in 1872, the elder brother- Gergan Sonam Wangyal, was the teacher of the Panchen Lama, according to family tradition, but fled to Nubra following a political intrigue in Lhasa. He was never baptised but moved to Leh to help Redslob in his translation work and to teach in the mission school. From 1898 to 1902 William Heyde worked on revision of the Tibetan New Testament with a team of scholars in Darjeeling. Meanwhile in Leh a committee of Europeans and Ladakhis continued to work on the Old Testament.

Among them was Rev. A.H. Francke who also produced versions of St. Mark's Gospel in Ladakhi and in the Lahouli dialects of Bunan, Tinan and Monchad. In 1919 Joseb (Yoseb) Gergan began his translation, a task which became his life's work. The complete Tibetan bible was not finally published until nearly thirty years later in 1948.

Dr. Karl Marx, a fully trained missionary doctor by profession was also the first Moravian to collect manuscripts of the history of Ladakh in Ladakhi. He published what is called *The Three Documents relating to the History of Ladakh*; it is also called the 'Three Ladakhi Chronicles'. His work was published in the *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal (JASB)* in

⁸² Alexander Csoma De Koros was called the father of Tibetology because of his extensive work on the Tibetan script.

the year 1891, 1894 and 1902. He served the people of Ladakh for sometime before he died of typhoid in Leh in the year 1891.

Rev. A.H. Francke reached Leh in 1896 stayed there for three years. He then went to Khalatse where he stayed for the next 7 years i.e., from 1899 to 1906. After Dr. Karl Marx, he contributed a lot towards the literature of Ladakh. His work as a historian and writer of folklore is commendable. He wrote over sixty learned articles on Ladakhi language, legends, songs, rock carvings and archaeology. He copied the story of the Gesar of Ling from *Meme Dondrub Tashi* of *rGya tsho* and *Meme Yeshe Rigzin* of *Sabipa*. In the year 1909 Francke conducted a tour of the borders of the Western Tibet, the regions lying along the Tibetan border between Kinnaur and Ladakh on behalf of the Archaeological Survey of India, Government of India, proposing to study the archaeological aspects of the area. The results of his labour are published in his work, *Antiquities of Indian Tibet I & II (Chronicles of Ladakh) (1914)*, in two volumes. His works have also been published in various journals in India and Germany in English and German languages. In the first volume Francke narrates his journey which includes the descriptions of the places, important monuments, documents, objects, his observations and comments on them. The second volume covers mainly the *Ladags-rgyal-rab* (year)(History of the kings of Ladak) in original and its English translation. Genealogies and other minor documents regarding various smaller states surrounding Ladakh together with their English rendering and commentaries were also added.

Francke was the first scholar to edit the chronicles of Ladakh in full and render its translation into English. The work on the chronicles had already been started by Emil von Schlagintweit and in 1866 he translated a version of *Ladags-rgyal-rab*. Francke supposed that a copy of *Ladags-rgyal-rab*, very similar to Emil von Schlagintweit, must have been in the hands of Rev. H.A. Jaeschke when he made his collections of Tibetan words for his Tibetan dictionary. Jaeschke and Schlagintweit's translation differed and that led to the discovery of two manuscripts in Leh (by Dr. Karl Marx) which contained fuller accounts of the times subsequent to A.D.1620. Dr. Marx took help from a Ladakhi nobleman Munshi Palgyas (rPal-rgyas) to write the chronicle of the Dogra war; as such an account did not

exist. With the help of new records he decided to edit the history of Ladakh in three parts and thus *The Three Documents relating to the History of Ladakh* came in being. Francke obtained the manuscripts of the second part of Dr. Marx's documents from the period covering 1620 – 1834 and the story of the Dogra war from Rev. G. Reichel of Leh. He translated it into German and thus began the work of the fuller version of the history of Ladakh.

Francke also published the first Tibetan language newspaper in 1904 and called it the *La dvags gyi ag bar* (Ladakh News). From the very beginning the missionaries ran their own publishing operation by using lithographic press. Their first Tibetan- language publication, a collection of Old Testament stories were translated by H.A. Jaeschke and published as early as 1858. Bible extracts and textbooks for the local students of different subjects were also published. Francke intended the newspaper to be educational in regard with the local books which were mostly associated with Buddhism. He pointed out how there was a whole range of novels and other non-religious literature that one could choose from. In his view, people often read books for ritual purposes in order to gain 'merit' without taking a close interest in their contents. He opined that once people had become accustomed to the newspaper they might prove more receptive to the Christian publications but *La dvags kyi ag bar* did not receive popularity as expected.

The monthly newspaper consisted of well structured sections: the first section covered the world news picked from Indian papers such as the Bombay Guardian, it also covered local Ladakhi news but news about Tibet was of considerable interest to the readers. The second section consisted of local Ladakhi texts like folk-songs and folk-tales. It also included series of extracts from the *La dags rgyal rabs* and the Ladakhis seemed to enjoy the series. The last section was used well by Francke, as it was most specifically evangelistic. Once he used a Ladakhi proverb to express a Christian message. It said, 'If the Lama is himself not perfect, how can he guide the dying [to a better re-birth]?', and the newspaper went on to explain that the only true sinless great Lama was Jesus Christ. After two years Francke moved from Ladakh to Keylang, Lahoul in 1906 and handed over the editorship to his

colleagues in Leh; they changed the name to *La dvags pho nya* or Ladakh herald but a year later the publication of the paper stopped.

In the year 1927, Walter Asboe from the Keylang station revived the journalistic tradition of the Moravians by publishing a monthly paper called the *Keylang kyi ag bar* or the 'Keylang News'. The format of the paper remained the same but Asboe tried to use his columns to teach people about new methods of farming, sanitation, etc. Thereafter, he moved back to Leh and in 1936 continued to publish his newspaper under the new name i.e. *La dvags pho nya*. A biblical text under the paper's masthead established its Christian identity. Just like Francke's paper he devoted the main part to local and international news but he also included illustrations like simple sketch of a Ladakhi woman spinning, or other illustrations like a drawing of a German soldier in uniform, a caricature of Hitler's face etc. which brought in a little more interest in readership. In 1947, Asboe left Ladakh and the paper closed down temporarily but five years later the publishing activities resumed under the leadership of Pierre Vittoz, a Swiss missionary and Eliyah Tsetan Phuntsog⁸³. Initially E.T. Phuntsog tried to experiment with the written language by revising the form of Ladakhi spelling to make the written form closer to the spoken but it was interpreted as an attempt to subvert the classical language of the scriptures; so they continued in the classical form. In 1956, Vittoz left Ladakh and went to Mussoorie, Uttaranchal and after three years E.T. Phuntsog joined Vittoz and there was no one to continue the paper but the name *La dags pho nya* was revived again in 1978 and 1979 as the title of a government news sheet edited by the renowned Ladakhi scholar, Tashi Rabgais. Thus, A.H. Francke's journalistic venture that started in 1904 gradually led to the beginning of local publishing activities, annual and quarterly periodicals. The use of lithographic press proved very useful and probably this led to the emergence of Ladakhi writers to the foreground.

Out of many Ladakhis who helped the Missionaries with the translations, was Yoseb Gergan, a scholar who was well read and highly knowledgeable. He assisted the Moravian scholars in their investigations in the fields of language, history, archaeology, social

⁸³ Tsetan Phuntsog was a high ranking Ladakhi who had served as Tehsildar, was also a scholar after having studied at Rizong monastery for two years before he became a Christian.

customs, etc. His full name was bSod-nams tshe-brtan yoseb ger-gan (Sonam Tsetan Yoseb Gergan). He is considered to be the only Ladakhi who could write in pure Bhoti language, but he could not study Buddhist philosophy since he was converted into Christianity since childhood. Yoseb Gergan wrote a valuable book in Bhoti, on the history of Ladakh entitled, *Ladags Rgyalrabs Chhimed gTer* which was published by his son S. S. Gergan (Sonam Skyabsdan Gergan) posthumously in 1976.

Marco Pallis in his book, *Peaks and Lamas* has appreciated Joseph Gergan's works and has said that,

..in spite of his change of religion, Gergan never attempted to be like a European, as was the case with other converts. He was a man who truly deserved the name of a Christian; for never have I come across anyone in whom the love of Christ and the imitation of His life were more manifest.⁸⁴

By 1925, the Christian community as a whole in the entire Himalayan province numbered to 133 locally born Christians. One reason was the sparse population in Ladakh compared to the plains of India. But the main challenge was the principal rival religion, Buddhism: the people were highly critical of change in faith especially to Christianity.

Christianity might not have been a favourable religious practice for most of the Buddhist as well as the Muslim Ladakhis as the heritage of Tibetan Buddhism seems to have overshadowed the new and foreign religion, but the missionaries brought about significant changes in the field of education, through their literary practices. Thus, scholarly fellowship gave rise to the awareness of modern education and in-depth study of the history of Ladakh and therefore creating a niche for the Ladakhis to try and write about their culture, literature etc.

4.3. Evolving Contemporary English Literature in Ladakh: 2000 till Present

The contemporary English literature on Ladakh can be divided into –

⁸⁴ Pallis, Marco, "Peaks and Lamas", London, 1939.

4.3.1 Religious Literature

Buddhist: The Buddhist literature in English consists of various types of teachings on Astrology, Astronomy, Medicine, etc. Translation of various religious books into the English literature in order to deliver a wider audience to the basic teachings of Buddha and the philosophies of the Buddhist teachers are being published. Books translated by the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives have found a good readership among the young Ladakhi students who are eager to learn about Buddhism and find English as a good medium to start with.

Islam: One of the important books on Islam written in the English language is title *Emergence of Islam in Ladakh (2009)* by Zain-ul-Aabedin Aabedi. The book covers the major aspects on the propagation and emergence of Islam in Ladakh starting the 15th to the 19th century. Eminent figure that helped in the spread of Islam in the region have been mentioned although not in great detail. Pictures of important historical monuments in and around Ladakh are also shown alongside the great travelers and adventurers who have an important role in shaping the culture of the Ladakhi Muslims. Although not many books have been written on the Ladakhi muslims, the religion has been mentioned in many texts. Abdul Ghani Sheikh another renowned author has focused more on the cultural and fictional books based on Ladakh.

Christianity: The bible had been translated from German or English into the Ladakhi language in the early 19th century by the Moravians. Even today the Bible written in Bodyig or Tibetan script is used in the Moravian Church, Leh along with many hymns and songs which are also in Ladakhi. With modern education there is no need to translate the already available English Christian books.

4.3.2 Historical Literature

Starting with the *Ladakh Gyal Rabs* (History of the kings of Ladakh, author anonymous) a book in Leh that contained the names of the kings who successively reigned in Ladakh was mentioned in Alexander Csoma de Koros'⁸⁵ note on Tibetan Kings (Prinsep's Useful Tables

⁸⁵ He lived in Zangskar and Upper Kunawar between A.D. 1820 and 1830.

p.132). Unfortunately, he was not able to see that book. With the existence of that historical narrative Sir Alexander Cunningham who visited Ladakh in A.D. 1846- 47 mentions that from dPal-gyi-mgon (10th C) till the end of 16th century, no historical records existed. He explains this as —

During the invasion of Ladakh by Ali Mir, the Mohammedan chief of Skardo (16th C), all temples and monasteries of the country are said to have been destroyed, and their libraries thrown in the Indus.⁸⁶

However he managed to see historical books containing the history of Ladakh from c A.D 1580 down to the Dogra Wars (A.D.1834). They were translated for him into Urdu and he wrote it down in English which he mentions here—

During my stay in Ladak I had a copy of the existing history of the country transcribed for me in the original Tibetan. The historical portion of this work is brief, as the greater part of the volume consists of Lamaic ideas of cosmology and theogony. When in Ladakh I had principal historical parts read and explained to me, of which I made notes at the time; and I had also an abstract prepared by a Munshi in Urdu. From these I have now arranged the only interesting parts of the history extending over a century and a half, during which period Ladakh was conquered three different times.⁸⁷

The first person to take a copy of such an original document to Europe was Hermann V Sohlagintweit who visited Leh in 1856. It was a copy prepared for him especially by three lamas (monks), but not until valuable presents were given to the ex-king *Hjigs-med nam-rgyal* (Jigmet Namgyal). This copy was published with a German translation in *Abhandlungen der kgl. Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Vol X 1866. The compilation of historical literature during the time of the British Raj in the 19th century like Francke's *Chronicles Of Ladakh in Antiquities of Western Tibet I & II (1914,1926)* that he compiled for the Archeological Survey of India under the British patronage.

4.3.3 Cultural Literature

Post 1970's when Ladakh was open to tourist again by the Indian government, many adventurers, travelers, researchers, thronged Ladakh. Janet Rizvi chooses to call the

⁸⁶ Cunningham, Alexander. *Ladak Physical, Statistical And Historical*. New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1854 (Reprint2010).pg.317.

⁸⁷ Ibid. pg.318.

Ladakhis ‘The Native Genius’⁸⁸ as she talks about the culture of the Ladakhi people and how the culture is a mixture of intriguing Tibetan and Non-Tibetan elements. She distinguishes how Ladakhis and the Tibetans differ and that is majorly because Ladakh has so much more to offer than the similarities in religious views. In her book *Ladakh: Crossroads of high Asia (2011)*, she discussed the glorious past of the region and the significant present of the place bringing in every minute detail of the lifestyle of the people, who were living in harmony with the environment and also with themselves. The book appealed every reader with its subtle shift from one topic to another. It is written with great caution and style. One can be in agreement with this line that the book has been ‘.....written with warmth, understanding and feeling for the land and the people’ Times of India (Back cover of the book).

She has brought into light the past of the place with descriptions of the landscape, the people, the old kingdom of Ladakh, the adventurous yet the hazardous trails of the mountains, the social customs, and their marriage ceremonies, important people of Ladakh who worked for the development of the place and the religion focusing on the how the Buddhists, Muslims and the Christians live in tune with each other. The author’s introduction of the book introduces the reader to the real Ladakh which has been otherwise has been projected as the last *Shangri-la*, a land of deep spiritual values where traditionally contented peasantry pursued a sustainable agriculture based on self regulating systems organized in such a way as to regulating to minimize social and individual stress. She introduces the real Ladakh which otherwise is showcased as the best tourist destination in numerous travel books that shows only the brighter side of the place. Literature and culture of Ladakh has been put into limelight by many writers and scholars.

The establishment of the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages in the year 1969 for the promotion of the Ladakhi language and culture played a major role in the lives of the Ladakhis. In the year 1963-64 for the first time Ladakhi text books from

⁸⁸ Aabedi, Zain-ul-Aabedin. *Emergence of Islam in Ladakh*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors (p) Ltd., 2009.

class 1 primary to the 8th standard was brought out and as pledged in the constitution, the government established the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages. In the year 1970, the Academy brought out a volume of the first *Ladakhi Folk Songs*, compiled by Tashi Rabgais as its first independent literary work in Ladakhi. Since then they have printed books on folk literature, folk songs, folk tales and folk dances, and biographies of famous Ladakhi personalities. Many Ladakhis have written books in the local language like Urdu and *Bodyig* or sometimes in both to ensure the upliftment of the vanishing oral traditions.

Nawang Tsering Shaskspo, a Ladakhi Author has focused most of his works on the culture of Ladakh. He has written extensively on culture, folk songs, folk dance of the region. He believes that through his works the younger generation of Ladakhis would carry forward the old cultural values and adhere to the traditional inner harmony inherent to the Ladakhi culture. Popular Ladakhi folk songs have not been studied in the past; most of them have neither been published nor researched upon except Francke's work which is quite notable. The compilation of the volume of Ladakhi Folk Song by Tashi Rabgias introduces us to the important songs sung at social and cultural events such as births, marriages and festivals. Regional variations of such songs can be found in different part of Ladakh such as Shan, Stod, Nubra and Zangskar. The authors of the Ladakhi folk songs are unknown and the songs not written down. The folk songs also changes with the flow of time.

With the introduction and propagation of Buddhism which began in a purposeful manner in the 7th Century, the Tibetan language was given a script and a standardized grammar. The Tibetan speaking people such as the Ladakhis undertook the monumental task of translating hundreds of volumes from other languages into their own. An educated elite emerged in the field of religious writing, philosophy, logic and thus literature flourished. Since the majority of the people of Ladakh were uneducated, they clung to their heritage of folk songs and folk tales which remained a popular source of entertainment during the harsh winter season. The Ladakhi kings seem to have given their wholehearted support to its development as numerous songs are dedicated to them. The most notable occasion was the king's annual prayer ceremony or *Dosmochey* festival held in the month of January at the palace in Leh.

Such royal procession which was presided over by the king encouraged the sustenance of the folk songs and traditional Mon musicians.⁸⁹ Folk songs were composed in honour of rulers, head lamas and leaders. Frequent references to the famous cultural heroes and heroines from the epics, especially Gesar and Druguma, are depicted.

Leh the capital of Ladakh is known for its former reputation as one of the great trading centers of Central Asia. People gathered here with their merchandise, especially in summer. The town became a focus for cultural exchange. Interestingly this is reflected in many of the folk songs with numerous descriptions of Tibet, Baltistan, Lahoul and Spiti. Such songs proved very useful in understanding the ties of the old Ladakhi kingdom with the neighbouring kingdoms. During the old trading days, journeys were long and arduous; and description of such journey can be found in many travelling song.

Ladakhi songs given below have been classified below as the main songs of Ladakh by Ngawang Tsering Shaskpo. The first classification was made by Thinlas Dorje who classified them into eight major songs, each with eight sub-types. The songs are described according to the occasions they are sung at. Even other scholars such as Tashi Rabgais and Phuntsog Tsering have identified the songs into eleven major categories. Ideally, songs are sung by the elders of a village also called the *gner-pon* or *glu-pon* which means a song expert. Ceremonies with dance include many *gNya-wo-pa*'s who are headed by a *gner-pon*. The *nati-pa* or the *tashis-pa* sings only the auspicious lines which bring a ceremony to an end.

There are various other kinds of songs like work songs which are sung during agricultural tasks. These are no more than few words or lines and are given a tune and repeated over and over again, making sure that the rhythm setting is in pace for a particular work to be done. For example, '*Hem Lhamo Hem*' which means 'Buck Up Lhamo buck up'.

⁸⁹ Mon musicians are believed to have come from Himachal Pradesh. They were the first to introduce musical instruments in Ladakh.

The tunes used for the songs can be grouped into ‘families’ or ‘*glu-tsangs*’ by virtue of sharing the same rhythm or drum beat. The instruments used are *daman* and *surna* (harip), a pair of kettledrums and a flageolet.

Shakspo has categorized the popular songs of Ladakh into eleven types⁹⁰. They are:

Religious songs or Chos-glu: Such songs are composed on a religious theme in honour of a great monk or a famous monastery by the people.

1. Congregational songs or Gjung-glu: They were composed in honour of the kings of the royal dynasty, famous monks and other distinguished people. They provide information on the historical and religious background of Ladakh.
2. Heroic songs or Gying-glu: These songs are sung especially in winters and are based on the famous cultural heroes and heroines like the epic of Gesar of Ling who went to the kingdom of Hor to rescue his wife.
3. Love songs or Togs-glu: Love songs are popular but not sung in public or formal occasions. Such songs give an image of the lover singing alone in the field while remembering his/her beloved.
4. Sarcastic songs or Tshig-glu: A very popular form but again not sung in formal occasions. Their meaning is often obscured by complex metaphors, but the songs are sung in a mocking fashion between friends when they indulge in verbal fights and counter attack.
5. Marriage songs or Bagston-gi-glu: These songs are elaborate and a singer called gner-pon is engaged to lead the ceremony. The songs are sung by the best singers of a village who leads offering songs to the protective deities of the house and the village. Most of the songs express the community’s good wishes for the new couple.
6. Tashispa songs: These songs are sung during every important social and cultural events. It is traditionally sung with chorus and all the participants take part in

⁹⁰ The Songs are form : Shakspo, Nawang, Tsering. A Cultural History of Ladakh. New Delhi: Centre for Research on Ladakh, 2012.pp 26-72.

dancing as well. The tashispa songs are led by a younger man of an auspicious nature.

7. Drinking songs or Chang-glu: These songs describe how the ‘chang’ or the local beer is made. They can be accompanied by fiddlers and also accompanied by dance. They are often sung to make sure that the people do not fight over petty issues when they are drunk. They are typical in central Ladakh.
8. Jabro : The name of these songs come from the dance which is called ‘Jabro’. They are popular in the Changthang region, the upper region of Ladakh. Where both men and women participate rhythmically moving hands and feet to the music of sgra-snan (an instrument similar to a *ribab*). Its origin is Tibetan.
9. Shon-glu : The song is sung on the occasion of harvest festival which is held annually in Shey on the tenth day of the seventh month of the Tibetan calendar. The song along with a dance is performed in the honour of their protective deity, *Lha Dorje Chenmo*.
10. Bal-glu—Songs sung by the Ladakhi Shia Muslims of Kargil who have their own tradition and culture. Most of their songs are similar to those found in other parts of Ladakh but their songs are a mixture of Ladakhi and Urdu dialects.

Some illustrations of the typologies are given below:

Religious song (Chos-glu)

In the midst of the brown trees,
Stands a gonpa like an ornament of gold.

In the midst of the brown trees,
Stands Hemis gonpa like an ornament of gold.

On the golden throne of the gonpa,
The precious one is seated.

On the golden throne of the gonpa,
Ven. Stag-tshan-ras-pa is seated.

The precious Lama's blessings,
Not bestowed in other parts,
Stag-tshan-ras-pa's blessings,
Not bestowed elsewhere in the land.

May the precious lama's blessings
Be given to the native people.
May Stag-tshan-raspa's blessings
Be given to the people of Ladakh.

The lamas of the related gonpas,
Are the hundred beads of the golden rosary.
The lamas of Hemis and Chemdey,
Are the hundred beads of the golden rosary.

The center binding of the rosary

Is the precious Head Lama;
The center connection of the rosary,
The Ven. Stag-tshan-ras-pa.

Congregational songs (Gjung-glu)

The stupa of white glass at Ti-se,
Is the centre of Jambudipa,
Inside reside holy objects,
Which eliminate the darkness of ignorance.

The Dharnakaya-Amitaba,
Removes all darkness of ignorance,
The turquoise blue lake at Ti-se,
Is the abode of the Naga king.

The whole kingdom,
Is filled with the storehouse of grain.
All the valleys of the Purang kingdom
Are bestowed with piles of barley.
The snowy land of Purang,
Bestowed with piles of barley,
In the land of snow,
Happiness and prosperity prevails.

Heroic song (Gying-glu)

The dream of the night was a wonderful dream,
The dream of the auspicious day, a dream of hope fulfilled.

At the nine-storey gLing-sgar palace, I saw rising three suns,
At the nine-storey gLing-sgar palace, I saw rising three moons.

The great Lion King of gLing, I saw assuming the golden throne,
The warrior gLing Kesar, I saw assuming the golden throne.

The great Queen of gLing Druguma assumes the turquoise throne.
The eighteen relatives of the father I saw seated on the right row.

The forty five relatives of the mother I saw seated on the left row.
The great father and mother assume the first seat of each row.

A dwarf stands up, and prepares rows of seats.
Similarly, Balmo Tholzoms stand up, pours Chang in the cup,
Such happiness is not possible to find in the world of gods,
Such happiness is not possible to find in the land of the (*under world*) Nagas.

Love song (Togs-glu)

In a colourful silky garden, a licky lotus flower blossomed.

It was not a lucky lotus flower, but was the beautiful Salam Khatoon.

In the capital town of Skardu, a hundred and one streams flow.

Though such streams flow, yet our beloved chief feels it as muddy water.

If our beloved feels the water as muddy, may Salam Khatoon become a mountain stream,

If dNos-grup bstan-hdsin feels the water as muddy, may I become a mountain stream.

On the sands of the sandy plain, the feet of dNos-grup bstan-hdsin are burning.

On the sands of the sandy plain, the head of dNos grup bstan-hdsin is burning.

If the head of my chief is burning, may I become a parasol.

If the head of dNos grup bstan-hdsin is burning, may Salam Khatoon become a parasol.

The Chief relaxes in the balcony of the Eastern Palace.

Another example of love is as follows—

Have you seen my companion, the companion Tsering Skit?

I know not your companion, the companion Tsering Skit,

A woman of long braids has just passed by this way.

Have you seen my companion, the companion Tsering Skit?

I know not your companion, the companion Tsering Skit,

A woman of forehead like a full moon has just passed by this way.

Have you seen my companion, the companion Tsering Skit?

I know not your companion, the companion Tsering Skit,

A woman of eyebrow shaped vowel has just passed by this way.

Have you seen my companion, the companion Tsering Skit?
I know not your companion, the companion Tsering Skit,
Who has a nose like a copper pipe, has just passed this way.

Sarcastic songs (Tshig-glu)

May fortune and good luck prevail, all good hopes are fulfilled.
Good fortune and hopes never go apart.

You are the peacock of India, and I, the saffron of Kashmir.
Though we hail from different fatherlands
We get together in the vase Nagail Pumpa.

The Mango is sweet outerly, the walnut is sweet within
And the sugarcane is sweet inside out.

Though the camel's neck is long.
It cannot reach the grass of the far bank.
But the hare whose legs are short,
Can easily cross the mountain pass.

The trunk of a single willow tree
Is thronged with hosts of birds.
I myself won't crowd it more,
Will return to the top of a tree in the east.

To the high golden mountain,
White-tailed eagle is the companion.
The white-tailed eagle has placed all its faith
Entirely in the golden mountain.

The pleasure of tobacco smoke,
Is not a food of good taste.
Yet, travelling in the desert land Changthang,
Its preciousness surpasses that of mother and father.

Marriage songs (Bagston-gi-glu)

Om, may all have good fortune,
All have good fortune and become prosperous.

On this auspicious day,
Stars appear in the sky,
On this auspicious day,
The sun shines on the earth.

On this auspicious day,
The king looks great,
On this auspicious day,
The king looks great.
On this auspicious day,
The Lama's teaching prevails.

On this auspicious day,
The minister is in full vigour.
On this auspicious day,
The people are in good health.

In the lofty sky is the nest of the vulture,
The nest is built of twigs of golden colour.

May the nest of twigs remain stable,
May the nest of twigs remain unchanged.

On the lofty mountain, is the nest of the hawk.
On the lofty rock, is the nest of a white hawk.

The nest is attended by a bird of silver white.
May you, the bird, remain unchanged.

Upon the high crevasse, is a pigeon's nest.
Upon the high crevasse, is turquoise pigeon's nest.

May you, the bird, remain unchanged.
The unchanged bird, may you remain unchanged.

Tashispa song

May happiness prevail.
If the blue sky remains unchanged,
May happiness prevail.Om, may all have good fortune,
All have good fortune and become prosperous.

On this auspicious day,
Stars appear in the sky,
On this auspicious day,
The sun shines on the earth.

On this auspicious day,
The king looks great,
On this auspicious day,
The king looks great.
On this auspicious day,
The Lama's teaching prevails.

On this auspicious day,
The minister is in full vigour.

On this auspicious day,
The people are in good health.

In the lofty sky is the nest of the vulture,
The nest is built of twigs of golden colour.

May the nest of twigs remain stable,
May the nest of twigs remain unchanged.

On the lofty mountain, is the nest of the hawk.
On the lofty rock, is the nest of a white hawk.

The nest is attended by a bird of silver white.
May you, the bird, remain unchanged.

Upon the high crevasse, is a pigeon's nest.
Upon the high crevasse, is turquoise pigeon's nest.

May you, the bird, remain unchanged.
The unchanged bird, may you remain unchanged.

Tashispa song

May happiness prevail.
If the blue sky remains unchanged,
May happiness prevail.

May the peace come from the East, O peace of full prosperity.
May the mother's daughter lead the Shon dance.
May Skalzang Doma lead the Shon dance.

May peace come from the South, O peace of full prosperity.

May the mother's daughter lead the Shon dance.

May Skalzang Doma lead the Shon dance.

May peace come from the West, O peace of full prosperity.

May the mother's daughter lead the Shin dance.

May Skalzang Dolma lead the Shon dance.

May peace come from the North, O peace of full prosperity.

May the mother's daughter lead the Shon dance.

May Skalzang Doma lead the Shon dance.

May favourable causes and factors assemble. May the sun of happiness shine.

Chang-Glu or Drinking Songs

Drinking songs describe the way 'chang' or the local beer is made and can be accompanied by fiddler and also accompanied by dance. They are typical in the central part of Ladakh.

Jabro

O Friend! We shall go to the top of the secluded country,

The country is decorated with flags and umbrellas.

O Friend! The flags are flying as if touching the sky,

O Friend! We shall go to the centre of the country.

O Friend! At the center there is a rock, which is beautiful and strong as a thunderbolt.

O Friend! At the rock resides the great eagle.

O Friend! We shall go to the bottom of the country.

The bottom is surrounded by a blue lake.

O Friend! The bottom is surrounded by a blue lake,
The fishes are the ornaments of the lake.

Shon-glu

By wearing the golden headdress, O mother,
We come to salute Mother Dorje Chenmo.

We the villagers Shey dance shon, O Mother,
We dance the happy Shon dance, O Mother,
By holding the woolen scarves, O Mother.
We come to salute Mother Dorje Chenmo,
We come to salute Goddess Dorje Chenmo.

We the villagers of Shey dance shon, O Mother,
We dance the happy shon dance, O Mother.
Wearing brocade of soft fabric,
We come to salute Mother Dorje Chenmo.

We the villagers of Shey dance shon, O Mother,
We dance the happy shon dance, O Mother.
Wearing belt made of silk,
We come to salute Mother Dorje Chenmo.

We the villagers of Shey dance shon, O Mother,
We dance the happy shon dance, O Mother.
By wearing the shoes kosamassi, O Mother,
We come to salute Mother Dorje Chenmo,
We come to salute Mother Dorje Chenmo.

We the villagers of Shey dance shon, O Mother,

We dance the happy shon dance, O Mother.

Bal-glu

The world was formed in the beginning

On three heads of a pigeon.

From the first head of a pigeon, the heavenly damsel came into being.

From the head of the pigeon, the goddess Idthrok Lhamo emerged.

From the second head of a pigeon, the Naga damsel of the underworld emerged.

From the head of the pigeon, the Nagin Matos Zichan emerged.

From the third head of a pigeon, the prince of the spirit world emerged.

From the third head of the pigeon, the Prince Norzang of spirit's world emerged.

When the Prince went to heaven, a pledge was made between Prince and Goddess. While going to the heavenly abode, a pledge was made between Norzang and Idthok.

He promised to bring a bunch of pearls,
But Prince Norzang was a liar,
Who promised to bring a bunch of pearls.

When the Prince went to the land of the Nagas,
A pledge was made between the prince and the damsel.
When they went to the land of the Nagas,
A pledge was made between Norzang and Zilcham.

But Prince Norzang was a liar,
Who promised to bring a slab of turquoise.

When the Prince went to the spirit world,

A pledge was made between prince and goddess,
When the Prince went to the spirit world,
A pledge was made between them.

He promised to bring a handful of coral.
But Prince Norzang was a liar
Who promised to bring a handful of coral,
Gyalbu Norzang , you are a liar.

The song which when written down constructs the oral tradition of music and culture into poetry of an unusual literary form, giving each type of songs a different structure and form making it a unique set of ballad which can be further studied in great detail. Other forms of literature has evolved with authors like Chimet Namgyal experimenting with the form of poetry, drama, short stories and prose writing, therefore constructing for the first time fictional novels in *Bodyig* which he plans to translate soon into the English language. He is also the editor of a bi-monthly newspaper called the *Ladags-Sargyur* the only newspaper presently written in the Ladakhi language. His novel *Ya-pezh* written in Bodhi is famous among others poetical publications that include *Dzesme Stodpa Yitog Skyolhu*, *kashad Lhui Lhabchan Dangsti Chud Ldan*, *Skyo Lhu Kangshar Yidtok* and *Lhu Sar Rnawe Rgaston* and plays known as *Medna Lagmir Sdod*. He also translates articles from English and Urdu into Ladakhi.

Famous Ladakhi Urdu writer Mr. Abdul Ghani Sheikh has many works to his credit like *Forsaking Paradise*; *Zojila ke Aar Paar*, 1975 (collection of short stories); *Doraha* 1994(Short stories); *Woh Zamana* 1977 (Novel in Urdu); *Dil Hi Toh Hai* 1978 (Novel); *Sonam Nurboo* 1981(Biography on Sonam Nurboo); *Reflections on Ladakh, Tibet and Central Asia* 2010 and many more articles, papers have also been written by the author.

4.3.4 Travel Literature

One can find several coffee table books or travel books in English on Ladakh which might indulge a readers mind into visiting the Ladakh as a holiday destination. Photographic books

are also attractive. Travelogue literature started as an attempt to identify oneself with the place.

One of the intriguing books written by a Ladakhi is Ghulam Rassull Galwan's *Servant of Sahibs* (1923). His book reflects the need for an aksakal, an overseer to learn English and therefore carve his own identity among his people. His account has been called one of the secular auto-biographical accounts written by a Ladakhi and published in the West. Another author Abdul Wahid Radhu's *Caravane Tibetaine* (1981, English translation published in 1997) is also an interesting account. One of the first writers in English language was a muslim Ladakhi and his book reflects his dire need to learn the language in order to write in the language of his masters. The nature of Ladakhis who love to tell tales filled with adventure and suspense gives us an idea of how the people loved narrating stories.

Other types of travel literature are by the army who traversed the harsh life of Ladakh like M.L.A.Gompertz who wrote *Magic Ladakh* from the perspective of an army personnel. Andrew Harvey's book *A journey in Ladakh* (published in 1984) talks about his experience during his journey into the Himalayas and the land beyond Kashmir Valley, Ladakh, whom he calls as one of the last places on earth where a Tibetan Buddhist community survives. Harvey is able to plug into the society and bring out the soul of the place through poems that he has used in his book. One of the songs that he has written down reads like this—

I had a dream last night,
I had a beautiful dream
I had a dream
In which all my hopes were fulfilled
I saw a great iron bridge
Being built over the sea
I saw a garland of jewels
Floating in the water

Taking up your sleeves my friends
Turn gently to the right

Winding your woolen shawls
Turn gently to the left

May the young men of the village
Grow strong as the tigers
May the men of Tsangra village
Live free and strong as tigers

May the young women of the village
Grow like corn in summers
May the women of Tsangra village
Grow shining in the sun like corn.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

The first chapter focuses on national as well as international news alongside the history of the kings of Ladakh and interesting stories as well as adages that mostly deals with the religious compositions that have been published in the newspaper. An analysis of the newspaper leads the study towards a conclusion that in the long run, the newspaper indeed had a direct impact on the development of literature be it in the regional language or in the English language. The publication of the newspaper was a pioneering work in the region of Ladakh and it laid a foundation in the course of publications of literary works in the English language which are in the progress of identification or recognition as a genre. Firstly a study of the language along with the study of religion then the culture and its people finally led to serious academic studies on the demography, art, architecture, politics etc. Interest from different scholars, especially western scholars, propounded a sense of recognition of one's own culture and identity. Thus leading the ladakhi intelligentsia to further develop and present themselves through literature.

Popular cultural activities of Ladakh like festivals, religious ceremonial festivals, sports, music, cinema, etc. have been enjoyed not only by the locals but also by the outsiders who travel to Ladakh to participate and voluntarily become a coherent part of the mainstream Ladakhi population. Therefore, the presence of the outsiders who somehow become absorbed as a part of the community ultimately defines the identity of Ladakh as a unique yet diversely engaged society. Their presence and their interest in Ladakh have changed the outlook of the Ladakhis themselves. The Ladakhis today are more aware of their position on the map; they have started participating in many events that has developed them in every sphere not just on the national front but also internationally. Thereafter, the literature of the place has developed with emphasis on preservation of one's own language and culture. The effect of western education on the people has been immense. The introduction of the English language alongside other important subjects like science, mathematics, social science, history as well as geography, not forgetting the local language i.e. Ladakhi in the Bod-yig

script, has driven the people of Ladakh towards understanding and preservation of their own language.

Tibetan Buddhism and other schools of Buddhism have flourished in Ladakh so have Islam and Christianity in their own span of time. Ladakh is usually seen as Buddhist centric but Muslim population is almost equal to the Buddhist population. Here, religion had played an important role in asserting the lingua franca of the people. In the 21st century English language has found a strong hold in the education system and the need to re learn the Ladakhi as well as Urdu languages by the students has been focused on by the religious groups of the region.

The effects of modern education can be viewed in the works done by the younger generations of the Ladakhi population. Many students who had been given education outside Ladakh (around 1960's and 70's) are comfortable expressing themselves in the English or the Hindi language whereas Ladakhi or Urdu language is seen as a challenge. They feel comfortable writing on blogs, social networking sites or expressing themselves through short stories and student magazines that are published on a yearly basis. Expressing themselves through a new medium has proved beneficial and empowering too. Religious books that have now been translated into the English language have acquired great number of readership inside as well as outside Ladakh. Prospects of learning have increased tremendously with the use of the new medium i.e. the English language.

The first newspaper had created a wave in understanding the secular forms of literature even though an oral tradition of expression was already present and used well. But with the second publication of the newspaper from 1936 to 1947 under the title *La dvags pho nya* by missionary Walter Asboe, many new issues were addressed like improved methods of farming, sanitation, personal hygiene, education which eventually helped the readers to improvise their style of living. Though they set an example but not everything they wrote in the paper was followed. Francke journalistic venture proved to be a success in the end and even hundred years later his newspaper is not forgotten and is remembered as the first newspaper in the Tibetan script in the whole of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Ladakhi writers began writing starting with few Christian converts who were given western education and they helped the Moravian missionaries with Bible translations, historical translations, developing colloquial form of Ladakhi language and also with the publication of the newspaper.

Post 1947 Ladakh was free from the rule of Maharaja of Jammu and Ladakh became a part of Jammu and Kashmir. Around the year 1933, Rahul Sankritiyan visited Ladakh and was in touch with two Ladakhi scholars, Joseph Gergan the compiler of *bla-dwags rgyal-rabs 'chi-med gter* and Munshi Tsetan Phuntsok. At that time Joseph Gergan was 60 years old but Munshi Tsetan Phuntsok was young. Around the year 1935 - 40 the Young Men's Buddhist Association was formed to propagate the language of the region. The association used drama to involve the audience with

Munshi Tsetan Phuntsog made significant contribution by bringing out text books in bod-yig for Ladakhi schools from fifth standard onwards. The textbooks became very popular and they remained in use even after independence in the year 1947. Post independence, Ladakhi was enlisted as one of the state languages. In the year 1953, Kushok Bakula Rinpochey was made a minister and since then he worked hard to give Ladakhi its due position and status as an important regional language. In the year 1963-64, Ladakhi text books from class 1 to class 8th was brought out. In the year 1969, a branch of the State Academy was established in Leh for the promotion and the preservation of the language.

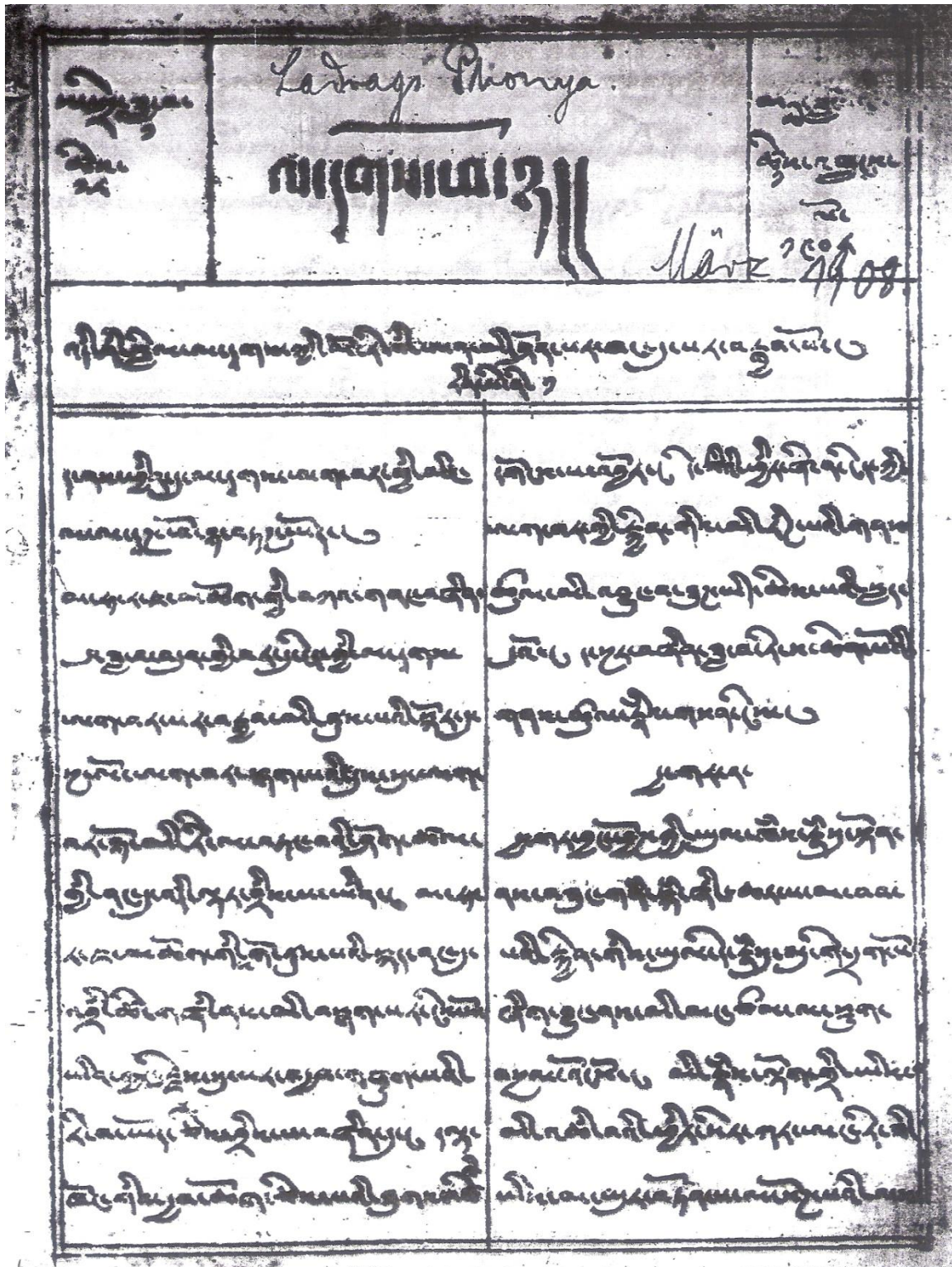
Since then many books have been published on a monthly as well as yearly basis by established Ladakhi writers who published the first *lo 'khor gyi deb* or *Annual Book* in 1976. In that book the writings of Geshe Eshey Tondup, Kachen Lobzang Zodpa, Gelong Lobzang Jamspal, Tahshi Rabgais, Tashi Phuntsog, Tsering Norbu, Rinchen Tondup, Thinlas Dorje, Tsering Wngdus, Gelong Thupstan Paldan, Tashi Tsomo and Thubstan Janfen were published. Those attempts to help in promoting the writers and later many writers have developed their individual style of writing.

Writing of poetry started much earlier than that of prose. But most of the poems are in the Ladakhi language; even though the number of poets are large, writing English poetry is in its nascent stage. In 1951 Munshi Tsetan Phuntsog published a book of modern Ladakhi songs. Geshe Eshey Tondup, Tashi Phuntsog and Tashi Rabgais also wrote poems and became very popular among the people of Ladakh. In modern Ladakh there is no scarcity of poetry as the cultural Academy and the Radio at Leh give opportunities to practice their budding poetry recital skills therefore encouraging more and more modern Ladakhi writers and poets to write and recite their poems.

The novel, in the modern sense, is again in a nascent stage and a recent development in Ladakhi literature. Samuel Ribbach's personal account of life in traditional Ladakh is depicted in his novel *Drokpa Namgyal: Ein Tibeterleben*, published in the year 1940 and translated into English (1985) by John Bray. The characters are fictional but the setting is based in a real village called Khalatse which still exists.

Thus, Ladakhi literature in English is evolving and building up every year and soon many new literatures will create a category of new literature in the English language. The challenge here is to see whether the English as a medium will develop or the main language—Ladakhi will develop.

Appendix 2. Facsimile of *La dvags Phonya* (Hartmut, W., 2010)



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