

on the administrative divisions and personnel of the government of Tibet.

Appendix I contains brief but interesting information on the contacts between Tibetans in Szechuan and the Chinese Red Army in 1935 during the Long March. At that time the Communists seized food from the Tibetans in the area. They received help from other Tibetans, some of whom were many years later rewarded with positions in the government of the CPR.

On pp. 451–454 is a good selected bibliography of publications on post-1950 Tibet in English, Russian and Chinese. Only a few items, e.g., a 1958 Russian book on the geography of Tibet, are missing.

Of necessity the *Tibetan Sourcebook* is a digest. All the available Communist statements on Tibet will not fit into one volume. Research on contemporary Tibet will still involve digging in unpublished material. However, this book will appreciably lessen the amount of necessary preliminary excavations. It is a useful aid for both beginning and experienced students of Tibet under Chinese domination.

KARL W. RYAVEC.

Religious Observances in Tibet. By ROBERT B. EKVALL. [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964. 313 pp. \$8.50.]

RIGHT up to the Tibetan revolt and the flight of the Dalai Lama in 1959, Tibet was an enclosed inward-looking civilisation, continuing its traditional way of life as heedless as possible of the rest of the world. Tibet seems strange and remote to people of today, but in fact there is very little in Tibetan social and religious life for which we cannot find significant analogies in our own European medieval history. There are also many still earlier civilisations which have likewise been centred on a firm unified religious faith. The Tibetans are only unique perhaps in having persisted in their own particular religious beliefs right up to the present day and in such a total manner that it has been all but impossible to talk of Tibetan *secular* life.

Thousands of Tibetans have come to India as refugees and a few hundreds (mainly in Switzerland) to the West. It is now easy to meet Tibetans of all ranks and of all kinds of occupations, but except to a very few Westerners, no more than twelve or so perhaps, who speak Tibetan well enough, they remain a totally alien people, extolled dotingly by a fervent few for their real or imagined grasp of higher religious truths, but more usually simply disregarded as queer remnants of some strange cultural anachronism.

Robert B. Ekvall is one of the very few Westerners who speaks Tibetan and knows Tibetans well, having lived himself for eight years

among the eastern Tibetans of the provinces of Amdo and Kham. He has wisely conceived this present book in a way that would suit his own first-hand experiences, and presents it as a study of selected practical manifestations of Tibetan religious life. After three introductory chapters, he studies in turn six aspects of religious practice, Faith (Chap. 4), the Recital and Copying of Prayers and Religious Texts (Chap. 5), Religious Offerings (Chap. 6), Salutations (Chap. 7), Circumambulation (Chap. 8) and Divination (Chap. 9). He gives (on p. 50) carefully defined criteria for the choice of these six, but he does not (and in fact he could not) apply them logically. Each of the six, he writes, "should be, in itself, a single simplistic act and not a composite." But clearly the first one "faith" is not just one of a set of six. It underlies and explains all the other five. Divination is an odd one out, as he himself frequently observes (pp. 53–54, 250). It would have been more satisfactory to cover his subject under headings which represented some progress in the religious life. He might usefully have had a separate chapter on the "Acquisition of Merit," which is the intended "fruit" of all the practices described (except divination). This important subject is dealt with in a scattered form, e.g., under *Tibetan Ethics* (on p. 72) and under *Sponsorship* (p. 126). There are not even entries in the index to lead us to these and other passages.

The presence of frameworks *suggesting* order, followed by a jumble of material presented in haphazard order is one of the great weaknesses of this book. On p. 17 he lists seven principal sources of data concerning the pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet. The first category (pp. 17–22) should tell us something of the *Bon* religion of the present. It is in fact a hotch-potch of items taken (with all due acknowledgment) from other writers and referring to *Bon* religion of any period. The third category (pp. 24–30) should refer to Tibetan religious writings. In fact it discusses gods and demons, and Tibetan *bon-po* source material is never mentioned at all.

This chapter on *Bon* (pp. 14–39) is certainly the most disappointing in the whole book. It will mislead the reader in thinking that *Bon* and Buddhism are now two quite distinct religions in Tibet, all the wild and horrific elements being *Bon* and all the gentle religious manifestations being Buddhist. Mr. Ekvall himself knows that this is not so, and this he concedes elsewhere (p. 50). Yet he blandly states (p. 18) that the members of *Bon* monasteries have no interest in amassing "virtue" (a more suitable translation of the Tibetan term here would be "merit"). He gives the impression (p. 29) that it is only the *Bon* monks who use parts of slain animals as religious offerings. Yet I have it on good authority that the Sakya lamas, whose help he acknowledges on p. xii, have arranged sheep's entrails on their altar in Seattle. *Bon* and

Buddhism have in fact absorbed so much of each other that they have long become identical in their forms of practice. The "Temples of the Guardians," which he calls "lord houses" (p. 25), with their horrific images, are as typical of Buddhist monasteries as of *Bon* ones, and likewise all the gentler manifestations of religious faith, as described throughout his Chapter 3 onwards, refer as much to *Bon* laymen and monks as to Buddhist. There is one composite religious culture in Tibet, and it is precisely the survival of this composite yet highly complex culture right up to the present day that makes Tibet so interesting.

From a scholarly standpoint there are numerous errors and misstatements that could be listed at great length. The *Bon* equivalent of the "thunderbolt" is not the "swastika" (which in fact is common to *Bon* and Buddhism having been introduced from India), but the "magic dart" (*phur-pa*). The "saint" progressing towards enlightenment is known in Buddhism as an "Enlightenment Being" and in *Bon* as a "Swastika Being." On p. 23 Mr. Ekvall gets these and other equivalents quite wrong. "There is considerable evidence," he writes, "that the word *gShen* may best be translated as 'shaman'" (p. 20) and a footnote refers to a work of H. Hoffmann. In fact neither Hoffmann nor anyone else has produced any evidence of this. It remains just an idea of his.

His curious literal translations of terms will be quite misleading to readers who do not know Tibetan. He tells us this is an experiment (p. vii), but there is no need for experiments of this kind in so well produced a book. It would be enough to ask a few qualified friends before one goes into print. Why write "religious express," when one means "verbal expression of religion." On p. 44 a short quotation in French from Bacot is cut short, so that this distinguished French scholar of Tibetan appears to state something which he never in fact stated. Simple French is spelt ungrammatically.

Having warned the reader of its many defects in detail, we can nevertheless commend this extraordinary work for the overall impression which it gives of the nature of Tibetan religious practice. There are long passages, particularly in the later chapters, e.g., pp. 40-41, pp. 70-77, which make good and useful reading. There is a great deal of interesting information scattered here and there, and some quite pertinent observations. Mr. Ekvall could well claim to understand the motivations of Tibetan religious life, as few other people understand it. Some of his definitions (e.g., that of the vital term *chos* "religion") hit the mark in a happy-go-lucky way (p. 67). If he had written this book entirely within his own special competence (as an intelligent understanding observer of the outward manifestations of Tibetan culture), it could have been very good indeed. As it is, he wanders continually into scholarly fields, where he just lacks the necessary

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technical knowledge. He has certainly produced an interesting book for the general intelligent reader, who will just read over technicalities, whether they are right or wrong. But Tibetan scholars are bound to criticise his work severely, and I would ask serious students of Tibetan religion and anthropology to read very warily indeed.

DAVID L. SNELLGROVE.

CHINA AND THE WORLD

The Chinese View of Their Place in the World. (Chatham House Essays.) By C. P. FITZGERALD. [London: Oxford University Press, 1964. 78 pp. 6s.]

PROFESSOR FITZGERALD has written a taut, concise review of the single chief element in the Chinese view, not only of their place in the world, but of the world itself. Although it is intended for the non-specialist, even the specialist will find a useful goad to memory in this pamphlet, which occasionally approaches the threshold of brilliance, but always modestly withdraws.

After chastising the West for a traditional attitude which is still prevalent, the tendency to regard China as a nation remote both in space and in importance, Dr. Fitzgerald states the heart of his own thesis on page 2: "That tradition, which makes China the centre of the world, is, of course, equally false in geographical terms, but for a very long period it had a practical reality for the Chinese people. They did indeed live in a closed world of which fertile China was the centre; to the north the barren steppe, to the east the endless sea, to the west the highest mountain system in the world, southward tropical jungles."

Perhaps overstating somewhat the imperviousness of the Chinese mind to outside influences during the nearly 2,200 years that have passed since the establishment of the Han Dynasty, Dr. Fitzgerald makes it clear that the present Chinese conviction of superiority is based upon long centuries when the Chinese never saw an equal, much less a nation that could claim to excel China. He finds in this phenomenon a tool for interpreting the attitudes and the actions of the present Chinese government.

Neither Dr. Fitzgerald's thesis nor his evidence is new, but he, himself, would make no claim that this short pamphlet makes a fresh contribution. Instead, it is a most useful summary, which, it is to be hoped, will have the wide circulation its publication in paper-back form apparently seeks.

Since he makes no claim to originality, one cannot properly object to Dr. Fitzgerald's failure to provide fresh insights, any more than one can do more than regret his failure to treat of other elements beside their