



BOOK NO.

Bhutan

THE HIMALAYAN PARADISE

*With Tourist Guide Map as well as
32 illustrations with photographs
(partly coloured) and free-hand
sketches.*



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Dilip Bhattacharyya

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**Dedicated to His Majesty,
Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the King
and
the People of BHUTAN**

'If I am to pray, I would only say—in the reign of
my son the people of my country be far more
happy and prosperous than what they are today'

—DRUK GYALPO JIGME DORJI WANGCHUCK
His Majesty, the Late King of Bhutan (1952-1972)

A letter of introduction

**from H. R. H. Ashi Deki, sister of His Majesty, Druk
Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, the late King of BHUTAN**

OFFICE
SEAL

**MOTHITHANG PALACE
THIMPHU BHUTAN**

Dated 27th January, 1975

Now, many tourists are coming to this forbidden Kingdom of Bhutan to enjoy the beauty of this land of Himalayan Paradise which is known for its unparalleled art and culture, colourful people, scenic beauty and above all a picturesque land which is not yet so extensively affected by the modern mechanised world.

This book has been written by a senior officer of Bhutan, Mr. Dilip Bhattacharyya who devoted himself to the development of this mountainous country from the very first phase of its first Five Year Plan period. During his stay for more than eight years as head of the Irrigation Wing he had opportunity to travel extensively to the remotest corners of this beautiful country and his colourful artistic mind has picked up very nicely the precious beauties, which he has incorporated in this book with the aid of pen, brush and camera. And it has become most informative to the visitors. As an artist also he is well known in Bhutan and his precious paintings have been exhibited on various occasions and are being still preserved under Royal patronage.

Ashi Deki Yangsom

'Solid rock is not shaken by the gale.
The wise man is not moved by praise or blame'.

'Let one sit alone, sleep alone, act alone and unwearied subdue the self by the self ; he finds
delight being out of the forest of desires'.

—*The Dhammapada*
THE TEACHINGS OF LORD BUDDHĀ

FOREWORD

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December 9, 1974

I have very great pleasure in welcoming this Book on Bhutan by an Indian Engineer who has spent a number of years in this beautiful country—more than eight years, working for the Bhutanese people in the matter of the rehabilitation of the country along modern lines and more than eight years of pure pleasure for himself in studying its people, land and culture. Bhutan has a population of over a million, of whom of pure Bhutanese who speak the *Lho-ke*—a dialect of Tibetan, form a little more than half.

At present the Bhutanese people preserve the best element of Buddhist Tibet and Lamaistic religion with its most elaborate and picturesque rituals and dances, and this forms a noteworthy character of the culture of Bhutan. The outlook of the present ruler of Bhutan, His Majesty Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck (the Official title of the Bhutan King as current in India was "*Deva-rāja*" or God-King in Tibetan "*Lho-Rgyal*") is giving the lead to his people in modernising their outlook in life and in speeding up progress in all the departments of administration. It seems, taking note of the all-round progress of the country, that Bhutan will soon become one of the most progressive states of Asia ; and we hope that Bhutan may be spared all the political and other troubles, which are unfortunately the lot of all nations in the world.

Mr. Dilip Bhattacharyya is not only an efficient Engineer, but he is a genuine artist as the pictures and sketches done by him will show. In a short compass this book "*Bhutan—The Himalayan Paradise*" will give a good account of the country, as it was, as it is and as it is going to be. I hope the book will have a good reception among scholars as well as tourists who are interested in this country.

Suniti Kumar Chatterji

GRATITUDE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I express my deepest gratitude to Her Majesty Ashi Kesang Wangchuck, the Queen Mother, whose motherly appreciation of my various paintings (of the landscape of Bhutan as well as portraits of her son His Majesty the present King of Bhutan and such others), encouraged and inspired me to bring this pictorial book to light. I am very much obliged to H. R. H. Ashi Deki, sister of H. M. Druk Gyalpo, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, the late King, who has kindly enriched this book not only with an introductory note, but also guided me on the lines of Bhutanese theory and thoughts.

I am indebted to the National Professor of India Mr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji a world-famous scholar and Philologist, who has kindly adorned the book with a Foreword and also guided me with his deep knowledge. To my revered teacher, Dr. Sitansu Maitra, M.A., Ph.D; Shakespeare Professor of English and head of the dept. Rabindrabharati University, I am grateful for reading the manuscript and offering suggestions for its improvement. I owe more debts than could be acknowledged here, to many of my Bhutanese and Indian friends who helped in enriching this book with their constructive suggestions and various information.

—Dilip Bhattacharyya B. Sc., B.L.; M.I.E.

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COVER DESIGN :—The figure of Dragon with Bhutanese traditional ornamental border, symbolises the name of the kingdom as '*Druk*'—which means 'Thunder Dragon'. The jewels in the claws represent perfection and prosperity of the kingdom. The central superimposed picture is of '*TASHI-CHHO DZONG*' complex—the central Secretariat at Capital Thimphu.

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GUIDE MAP OF BHUTAN

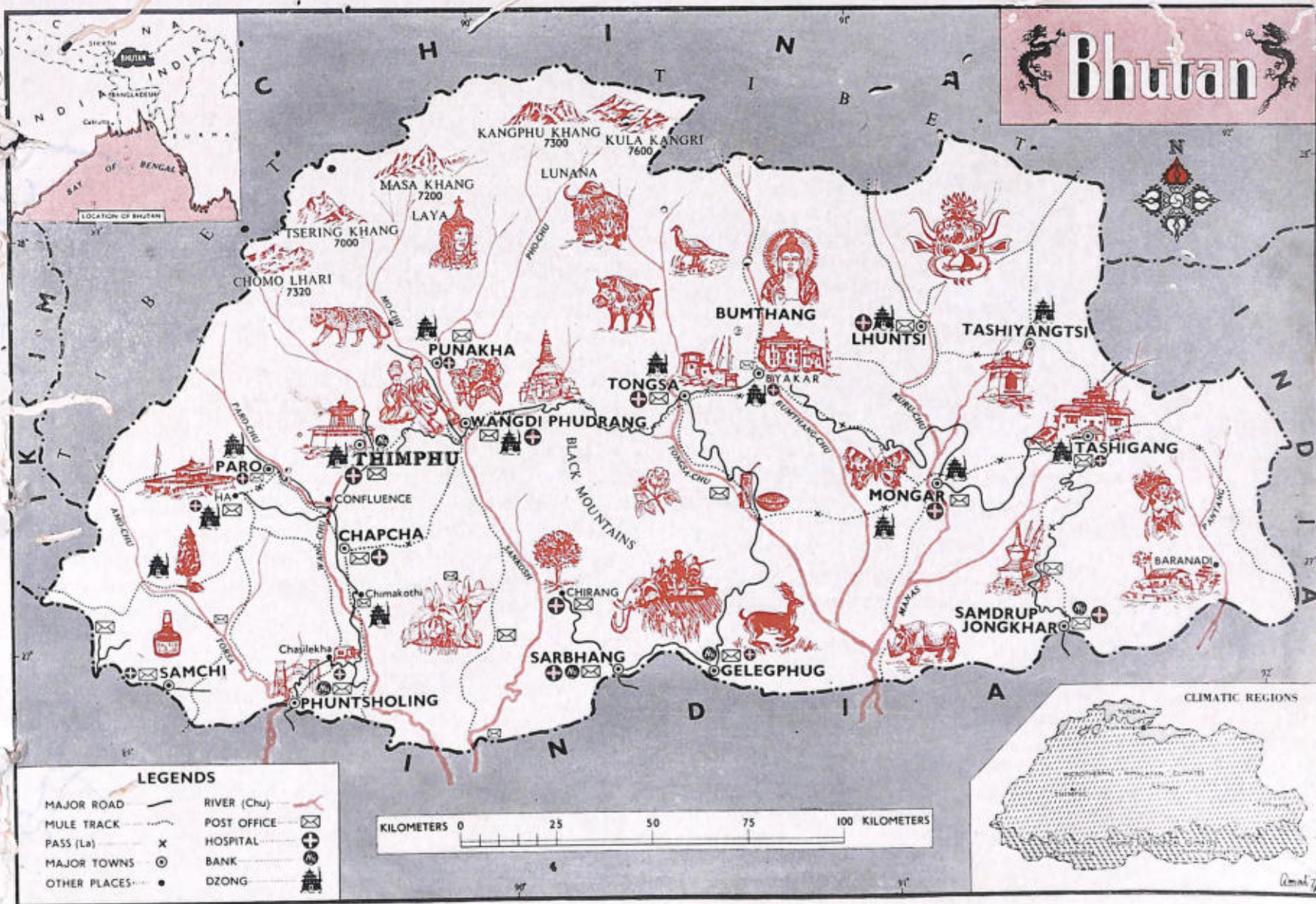
(The guide numbering has been given in clock-wise fashion)

(a) **Illustrations with** (1) Chomolhari—7,320 metres altitude, (2) Tsering Khang—7,000 metres altitude, (3) Masa Khang—7,200 metres altitude, (4) Kangphu Khang—7,300 metres altitude, (5) Kula Kangri—7,600 metres altitude—peaks of Bhutan and (6) 'Bhutan liquor' from Samchi distillery (7) Juniper and pine forest (8) Ha *Dzong*, (9) Leopard, (10) Laya woman with long hair, (11) Yak (12) Munal—a local colourful bird, (13) Religious scroll (*thangka*) with figure of Lord Buddha, (14) Wooden Mask, (15) *Chu-mani*—(shrine on rivulet) from Tashi Yangshu area, (16) Tashigong *Dzong*, (17) Maize harvesting at lower altitude, (18) A cluster— at low altitude, (19) A typical *chorten* with decorated prayer flags, (20) Rhinoceros—in Manas sanctuary (180 sq. km. area), (21) Different types of deer at forests near Galeyphu, (22) A hunting base—with scope of elephant riding, (23) Varieties of orchids—at medium altitude, (24) Vehicles—along the Phuntsholing-Thimphu highway, (25) 'Gateway of Bhutan'—Phuntsholing, (26) Tangu Monastery—near Thimphu, (27) *Lamas* from Punakha area, (28) Rhododendron flowers, (29) Chendebe *Chorten*—at Tongsa, (30) Wild bore, (31) Tiger Fortress—at Tongsa, (32) Kuje *Lakhang*—at Bumthang, (33) Varieties of butterflies—at Mongar, (34) *Palang & Pangchu*—artistic bamboo-fret articles from Kheng area, (35) Wild rose—(*Rosa Webbiana* variety), (36) Orange orchards—at Chirang, (37) Bhutanese design showing North direction.

(b) THE LOCATION OF BHUTAN in the world map and the climatic region maps have been shown separately.

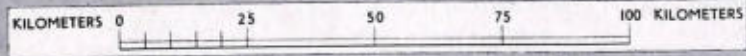
(c) The major roads, mule tracks, passes (*la*), major towns, other important places, rivers (*chu*), Post offices, hospitals, banks, *Dzongs* and other administrative centres have also been shown in the Guide Map (vide legends column).

GUIDE MAP OF BHUTAN
with illustrations



LEGENDS

MAJOR ROAD	RIVER (Chu)	POST OFFICE
MULE TRACK	PASS (La)	HOSPITAL
MAJOR TOWNS	OTHER PLACES	BANK
		DZONG



Note: The delineation of boundaries may not be considered authoritative

INTRODUCTION

BHUTAN—THE HIMALAYAN PARADISE

The picturesque Himalayan Paradise of Bhutan is a vast treasure-house of flora and fauna. It is a country of multicoloured rhododendrons, magnolias, orchids, healing herbs, fern, blue poppy, violet pansy & purple gentians on the base of a colourfully decorated carpet of primula and soft moss. The snow-clad pinnacles of ragged and lofty mountains clothed in rainbow coloured vegetation with terraced cultivation play hide-and-seek in this fairyland with fog and shining clouds floating on the ocean of a cobalt blue sky, which inspires and enchants every visitor and evokes the artist in him. Bhutan, the land of Dragons, could well be called the legendary land of Shangrila with its belief in the existence of the legendary abominable Snowman (*Yeti*).

The inhabitants are greatly influenced by hymns chanted by *Jamas* and *Tantric* saints. The Bhutanese are a deeply religious people. But it is important to realise that their religious symbols have a profound scientific significance. The Cosmic *Mandalas*, for instance, are a colourful representation of the process of evolution in the course of which matter is charged with energy and the absolute manifests itself as infinite power. The State religion is Buddhism, a blending of *Mahayana*, *Hinayana* and *Tantrayana* Schools. Bhutanese Buddhism incorporates innumerable *Shaktis* (Goddesses) along with Lord Buddha and Bodhisattavas leading to the path of salvation and finally taking shape in various mythical forms.

Bhutan is a joyful country of colourful and singing birds such as the laughing thrush, blood pheasant, sunbird, grey peacock, flycatcher, fairy blue bird, minivet, hornbill, myzorin, kalij, red bird, wood-pecker and above all, the 'Himalayan munal'. It is a delightful playground of multicoloured butterflies of various sizes and families. There is also the thrill of big game, such as leopard, tiger, wild elephant, black bear, bison and rhinoceros, with an abundance of different types of deer, golden langur and plenty of trout and other varieties of fish in the dancing hilly rivers and rivulets. These pose a perennial appeal.



BHUTANESE WOMAN resting on the rock stairway leading to Paro Dzong and peering at the fertile valley, where she has her hearth and home.

Even to roam leisurely on the soft carpet of pine-needles or to ride on a Bhutinese pony, in this valley of gods within the encircling forest panorama of pine, larch, fir, juniper, cypress and sandalwood trees, is an entertainment. To feast on the riot of colours of rhododendrons swaying magnificently in the cool scented breeze, with the sweet intoxicating fragrance of primula and wild rose (*Rosa Webbiana*) under the light-and-shade effect of autumn noon and, suddenly, to come across the ever-smiling lovely faces of the Bhutinese-these are indeed joy and enchantment. In this ever soothing and rainbow-coloured paradise one feels younger, more spirited, cheerful, devout and even holy.

Sketching and photography are extra eyes which help us to recapture the sweet memory of the past and this scribe, out of his more than eight years' experience of extensive field trips, has simply tried to share his delight at this hidden treasure of endless beauty with his readers and newcomers.



Sketch on locally available *FLYCATCHER* in the surroundings of 'decorated carpet of primula and soft moss'.

Bhutan, the land of Thunder Dragons, is a sovereign state with an area of about 18,000 square miles or 47,000 square kilometres lying between longitude $88^{\circ}-45'$ to $92^{\circ}-25'$ east and Latitude $26^{\circ}-30'$ to $28^{\circ}-30'$ north. It is set like a precious jewel in the mid-eastern lap of the Himalayas and encircled by Arunachal Pradesh in the east, Assam and Bengal in the south, Sikkim and Tibet in the west and north respectively. Two-thirds of this country is covered with forest and everywhere there are mountains. According to its physiographic orientation Bhutan is divided into three basic sectors; Himalayan foothills (upto 1,500 metres), inner Himalaya with flat valleys (from 1,500 to 4,500 metres), and an alpine region of high mountains (above 4,500 metres). The Black Mountain Range is the demarcation line between western and eastern Bhutan.

The country is drained by four major rivers—the Manas, with its tributaries in the east, the Sankosh (*Tshang-chu*), flowing down on the west of Black Mountain, the Raidak (*Wang-chu*), draining the wide basins of Thimpu and Paro valleys and the Torsa (*Amo-chu*), draining the western portion. In the Bhutanese language '*chu*' means '*river*'. All these rivers are glacier-fed, with immense potential for electricity and irrigation. There are eight major valleys, the Punakha, Thimphu, Ha, Paro, Tongsa, Bumthang, Wangdiphudrang and Tashigong.

Bhutan has the maximum diversity of an exotic climate with a compelling combination of altitude and the sun, wind and rain. It can be better expressed in the language of Professor S. P. Chatterjee who said, 'The intense cold of Siberian winter, the terrific heat of the Sahara desert and the mild pleasant weather of Mediterranean Italy may be experienced in the course of a single day's journey in Bhutan' (vide the Gazetteer of India—1965).

Wang Valley at the ENTRANCE TO THIMPHU TOWNSHIP surrounded by mountains. Thimphu-chu (Wang-chu) is a snow-fed stream which irrigates the fertile terraced fields.



A network of more than 1,000 km. of major roads (with outlets to India) has been constructed across difficult mountain terrain since 1962, when, to go by mule from Phuntsholing, the gateway of Bhutan to the capital Thimpu (179 km.) one used to take seven days. Now, it is only a five-hour drive. At present the *Dzongs* (literal meaning is fortress, but functionally it is the centroid of administration, defence, granary, monastic and ritual assembly) and other administrative centres (which have banking facilities) are connected by wireless and are served by eight telephone exchanges. In turn, the capital Thimphu is connected with the outside world by teleprinter and the Paro valley by airlines. There are forty three post-offices with all postal facilities. Postal-runner and postal-jeep services have been extended to the interior routes of this mountainous country to expedite early postal delivery.

Bhutan is famous for its three-dimensional, steel, silk, sound-recorded and other multi-coloured stamps. The Philatelic Unit of Bhutan won gold medal at the International Philatelic Exhibition of 1969-'70. The various series of colourful and charming stamps on birds, animals, butterflies, insects, flowers, vintage cars, reproduction of world famous sculptures & paintings, steel processing, moon landing, mythological and other religious paintings and such others are really asset to the philatelic world.

Bhutan is famous for its colourful and sturdy and yet simple and people. They have a keen sense of humour and they are a hospitable people. The estimated population is just above one million. The majority of the Bhutanese belong to the Indo-Mongoloid race and are descendants of the original inhabitants of the country and they are known as 'Sharchops'. The second race traces its origin to the Tibetan immigrants and the third sector represents the Hindu-Napalese settlers. The Bhutanese are a physically sound, industrious race with a fair complexion.

Their usual meals comprise rice, meat, egg, turnips, chillies and barley. Their favourite drinks largely are 'Chung' (distillation from barley, millet or rice) and salted butter-tea. The most common way of formal greeting, is to offer betel-nut (*doma*) with lime and betel. Like the Japanese, the Bhutanese custom also demands formal serving of tea. The general custom is that tea should be served not once, but twice or even more. To bend forward as well as to stretch palms towards the ground, is the general way to salute or to pay respects while meeting. On ceremonial occasions scarves (*khada*) are also exchanged.

Menfolk wear a long robe known as *Boku* and womenfolk dress with a long piece of cloth, called *Kira* which is tied at the waist, with a cotton belt known as *keru*. Popular games are archery, *degor* (a stone throwing game) and, in institutions, football.



ROMANCE IN THE AIR, with sweet intoxicating fragrance of wild rose, primula and rhododendron, under the light-and-shade effect of an autumn noon.

The main language as well as the national language, which is derived from classical Tibetan is *Dzong-kha*, spoken mainly in the Western sector. This *Dzong-kha* greatly deviates from Tibetan in pronunciation. The pronunciation of other spoken dialects varies distinctly even from valley to valley (especially when two valleys are separated topographically). Each of Bhutan's fifteen districts has its own dialect. But most of these dialects are only spoken, not written. In central Bhutan, *Bumthang-kha*, in the east, *sarchap-kha*, and in the south the Nepali language are normally used. The spoken *Dzong-kha* is different from its written form, which is in *Uchen* script.

Bhutanese script is similar to Tibetan, but has characteristic differences. The written script of Nepali is *Debnagri*. English and Hindi are also used in offices.



PARO DZONG (RINPUNG DZONG) :—The present *Dzong* was rebuilt by *Paro Penlop* Dawa Penjore on the old foundation of *Rinpung Dzong* originally constructed by *Shabdung Rimpoche*.

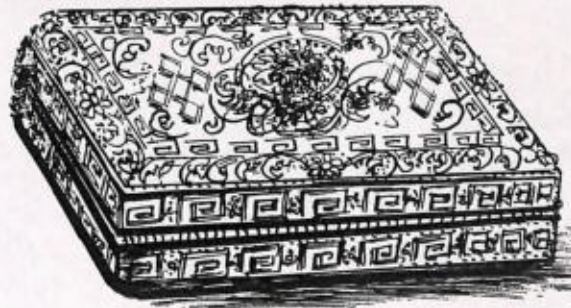


The Bhutanese are known as excellent painters and builders in the Himalayan Kingdom and their cultural heritage is still evident in their everyday life. During festive celebrations the colourful archery displays amidst coloured flags and multi-coloured hand-woven national dresses ('Boku'—for male and 'Kira'—for female) and rhythmic folk dances by the women, are beautiful to witness. Bhutanese painters are famous for their paintings of such subjects as Cosmic *Mandala*, frescoes, abstract forms of sex-symbols depicting religious philosophy, legends of Buddha's life and events in the lives of saints such as *Shabdrung Rimpoche Dorje Tralo* and *Siddha Lutsoka's nirvana* (a Brahmin from Bengal) and such others. The technique of applying colours and line drawing is derived from the basic principle of the Ajanta school and consequently of Buddhist *Mahayana* art. They are famous for beautiful artistic embroidery works

THANKA WITH 'WHEEL OF EXISTENCE': The God of Death holding the 'Wheel of existence' (which is a visual synopsis of the Buddhist instructions) in his claws. The wheel signifies that true salvation can only be achieved by liberation from temporality. It is only possible by the liquidation of the three basic evils from one's life. The small inner circle is the sphere of urges (the 'Hog' represents ignorance, the 'Cock' passion and the 'Snake' hatred). The six segments of bigger circle represent the six worlds of existence.

on a gigantic scale as well as miniature *Thankas* (religious scrolls), robes of gods and goddesses, dance dresses, Royal clothings and screen altars. The craftsmen of Bhutan also excel in gold, brass, bronze, iron as well as in the workmanship of silver gilt such as the '*chakar*' (betel-nut container), '*trimi*' (lime case), tea-pot, bell, sword and many others. The monastic art of moulding massive religious statues in the medium of clay with artistic gilding, calligraphy and painting has been extensively cultivated in this Himalayan country. Most of the Bhutanese are born artists and their artistic expressions in the medium of painting, carving or moulding are nothing but a homage to the Almighty and a path to salvation.

The Bhutanese are also good weavers. Weaving is the national industry enjoying royal patronage and is practised in every house. Each valley has its own handicraft pattern with religious symbols such as the *Dorje Jadram* (crossed thunder bolts), *Phurba* (magic dagger) *Tshering* (the long life sign) and many others. Most of the ritual and domestic articles are decorated with eight auspicious signs (*Tashi Tagye*), in the lines of the basic thoughts of Buddhism. The sacred signs are (1) Golden Fish, (2) Parasol of Authority, (3) Conch Shell,



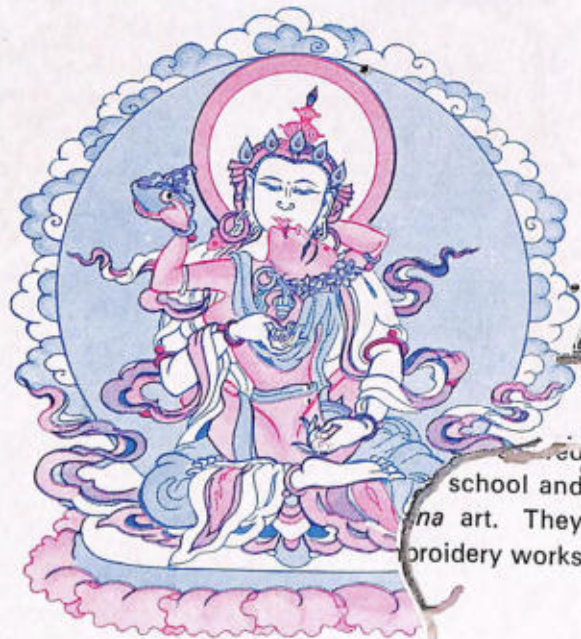
CHUKAR (betel and betel-nut container). The Craftsmen of Bhutan excel in gold and silver workmanship with picturesque designs in yellow and white colours. *Chukar* and *trimi* (lime-case) is most commonly used by the Bhutanese.




Bhutanese FLORAL DESIGN usually engraved on jewellery cases and *trimi* (lime-cases) and other articles.

(4) Victory Banner, (5) Lotus Flower, (6) Vase of Immortality, (7) Dharma Chakra and (8) Lucky Net. The signs of *Tashi-Tagye* has also been used in Bhutan coins—*tikchung* and such others. The cloth is mostly woven on the ancient type of looms operated by tension against a leather belt. Men wear knee high boots with embroidery work of golden thread and women wear coral necklace and silver amulets with gold and precious turquoise or eye-stone along with colourful dresses during national festivals. There they display traditional folk art, handicrafts and traditional culture blended with martial spirit through folklore and dances. Ritualistic dances based on religion, trace their origin to the dawn of the history of Bhutan.

During the 7th century, Tibetan culture and architecture, through Buddhist missionaries, flowed into Bhutan. They built *Gumpa*, *Chorten*, *Stupa* and *Moni-walls* at Bumthang, Kurte, Paro and other inhabited valleys. On the other hand, the Duars and Southern foothills were influenced by a culture based on Indian Hinduism. In the 8th century, (750 A.D.) *Guru Rimpoche* (Padma Sambhava) from Nalanda (Bihar) was invited to Tibet to preach the *Tantric* Buddhism of the *Mahayana* sect. He also visited central Bhutan. The carefully-rejuvenated *Kuje-Ihakhang* at Bumthang valley (where the late King Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck was cremated), *Tak-shang* in paro and *Singe-Dzong* in Kurte demonstrate the characteristics of age old, religion based Bhutanese architecture and art. Similarly, the eye-stupas of *chorten-kora* at Tashi-yangshi, *Chendebi-chorten* at Tongsa and another *Kuru-chorten* near Mongar are examples of the Indian



YAB-YUM:—(*Vairochana*—the mediative Lord Buddha with his consort known as '*Sakti*' or '*Manjusri*'). Yab-yum is the physical symbolisation of spiritual form—two in mystic unity.



style of architecture of the Ashoka period. Later on, in 1617, architectural monuments of *Dzongs* and *Gumpas* were constructed by *Shabdung I (Dharma Raja)* on commanding sites of settlement centroids. Every *Dzong* (centroid of administration and monasteries which are also architectural monuments) is a treasure-house of traditional monastic art and culture which is displayed through the medium of massive clay statuary, rhino-horn carvings, decorated carpentry, ornamental stone work, metal castings, religious frescoes, multicoloured *torma* (offerings made of rice and butter) *thankas*, *lama* dances with decorated dress and orchestras played by monks, varieties of masks, bamboo fret-work, slate carving, screened altars with bronze-craft, traditional arms, antique armour, jewellery, warrior dresses with colourful rhino-shields and iron helmets, to name only a few.



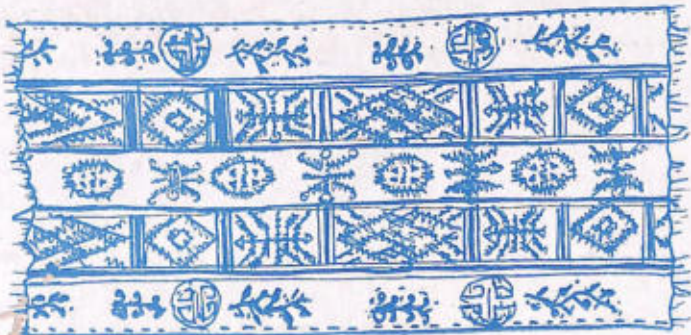
MASKED *LAMA* DANCERS with big drums (*gna*) performing rhythmic dramatic rituals. All evil spirits expelled with the sound of drums and trampled by the thunderbolt steps of *lamas*. (Note the background of new Thimphu Township).



RITUAL ARTICLES are mostly engraved with figures of dragon or the eight auspicious signs, known as *Tashi-Tagye*.



Patterns of BHUTANESE JEWELLERY.



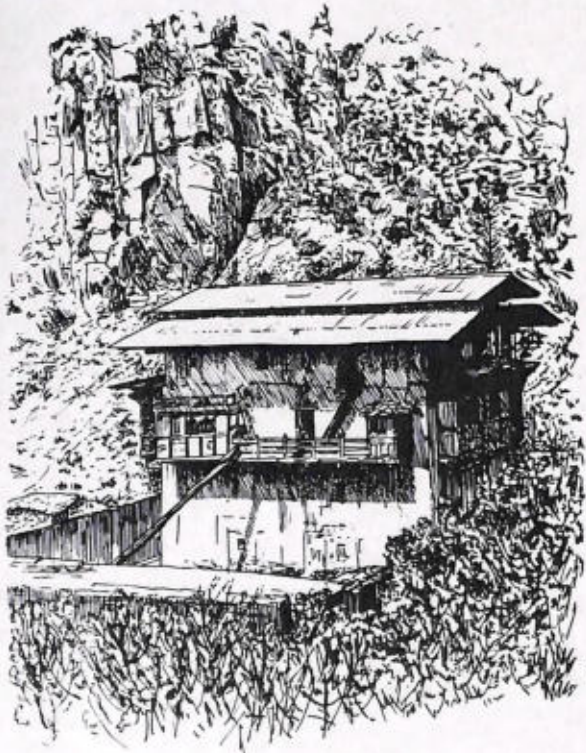
Sketch of a BHUTANESE TEXTILE DESIGN, mostly decorated with religious symbols, such as the *Dorje Jadram* (crossed thunderbolts), *Purba* (magic dagger), *Tshering* (the long life sign) and such others.

SETTLEMENTS

The lay-out of Bhutanese settlements and its architecture are governed by the topography of this mountainous country, the availability of indigenous materials, influence of religion as well as economic set-up. Bhutanese houses are oriented to undulation of the land. But there is a tendency to have dwellings on the commanding hillside above the land used for cultivation. Mostly, the Bhutanese live in rural-settlement clusters and thus each such cluster is a village. The individual houses and agricultural plots are protected by stone-and-mud-fenced walls. The dwellings cluster together because of limited agricultural land and water supply available in the vicinity.

In central and inner Bhutan the architecture of construction is influenced by Tibetan culture, while the southern area resembles that of the adjacent Duars Plain. In high-altitude regions the peasants have two sets of farms and pasture grounds to cope with the climate and their needs during winter and summer.

In central Bhutan most of the houses are two to three storeyed high containing several rooms with decorated, sliding windows and a few projecting wooden balconies. The ground floor is for the live-stock, the first floor for living plus a chapel, and the top floor (attic room) is used for firewood, meat drying and grain storage. The insides of the village houses are mostly grim and dark due to continuous smoke from resinous wood. Usually, a wooden ladder cut from a single piece, is provided for reaching the different floors. But in well-to-do houses, there are decorated wooden staircases and the inside walls are pasted with cloth and painted artistically thereon. The houses are oblong in shape and built substantially sound with a defensive outlook, with blocks of granite, limestone and other locally available rocks and mud.



A TYPICAL THREE-STOREYED HOUSE of Central Bhutan.

The flooring and roofing are of pine wood usually. The doors are very artistically carved and pivoted without using any nails or iron hinges. The windows are painted with earth-colour paints with floral designs and are of the sliding type. Simple villagers are acquainted with carpentry skill and their way of constructing frame structures is quite a technical affair. The roof is generally made of pine shingles with a mild slope and are kept in position with stones and strings made of wild creepers and tendrils. Larger settlements have monasteries, *chorten*, *mani*-wall, prayer water-wheels and the usual longitudinal prayer flags on house tops and ridges.

In southern Bhutan, because of the need for compact settlements the dwellings are rectangular with timber walling or major walls of piled stone with mud mortar. The dwellings are generally built on high land for protection against wild animals and floods. In Nepalese-settlement areas, the outer walls are mud plastered and painted with earth-colour. The isolated poor people of this southern zone practise a shifting agriculture known as '*Jhum*' cultivation. This method of shifting cultivation is also practised in eastern Bhutan where the fertility of the soil is, on an average, poor.



GURU PADMASAMBHAVA (Guru *Rimpoche*)—An Indian Buddhist monk with dynamic power visited Bhutan and Tibet in the 8th century from Nalanda (Bihar) for preaching *Tantric* Buddhism of *Mahayana* Sect.



ON WEEKLY MARKET DAY in the charming atmosphere of the riotous colour of brightly dressed hillfolk around Chirang (central Bhutan).

The Bhutanese people generally encourage the joint family system which is principally based on agriculture. Since early times it has been the women who are usually in charge of agriculture as well as household affairs. The male members are generally engaged in Government work, business, the army, construction of buildings, bridges and other such occupations.

The prevalent form of Bhutanese marriage is monogamy although, as usual, the social stratification is based on the economic set-up. The practice of polygamy is rare and is exercised by the wealthier class, where the consent of the first wife is necessary. Although the social set-up permits divorce, the party desirous of separation has to pay compensation, as per social law, to the other but consent of both the parties is necessary. There was also a system of polyandry (report of Paul Grim—'New York Times' June 15, 1960) but it was restricted by the late king.

The Bhutanese marriage ceremony is very simple and on marriage the bride need not always leave her house. For the bride or bridegroom, to leave her or his house depends, on the availability of family members for cultivation. The right of inheritance is shared equally by all issues, as per the latest law, but formerly only the eldest son or daughter had the right.

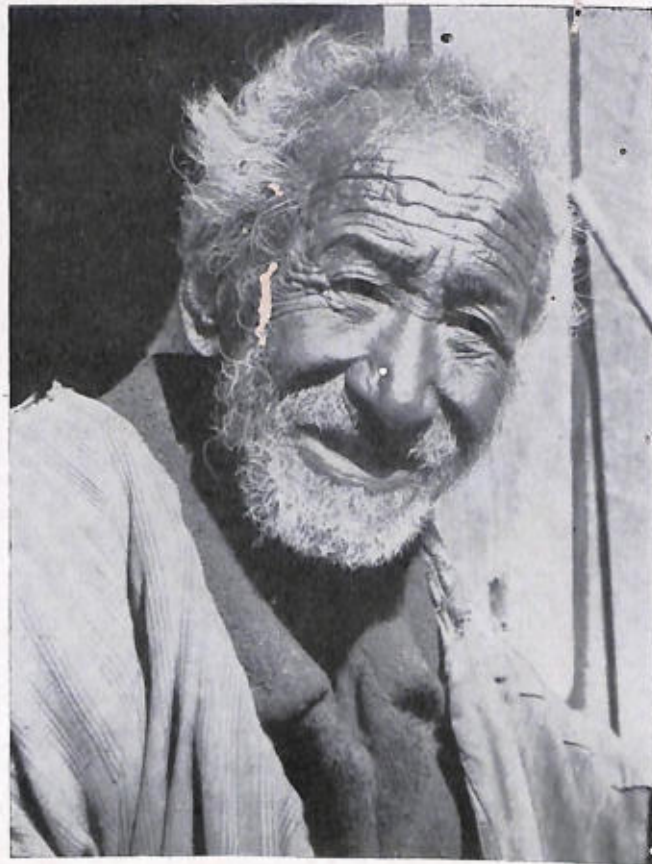
In the southern belt where the Nepalese settlers are, they practise the usual caste system and obey the social law as it is enforced in Nepal and India.

The social customs are more rigid and rigorous when a person dies than at the time of his marriage or birth. The dead body is kept in the house for days, the number of which depends on the social status of the deceased. The usual custom is to offer delicious food in homage to the body, as long as the body is retained and *lamas* are invited to perform the rituals.

The body of the late saintly King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck was preserved in ritual state for ninety-nine days, before it was cremated on the auspicious day of 28th. October 1972, at *Kuje*



A typical way of BUCK-WHEAT THRESHING (Note the background rock of *Tak-Sang* monastery)—PARO.



With Buddhist devotion he chants—"OM MANI PADME HUM".
(means "God *Avalokiteshwara* on the lotus").

Lakhang. The body was embalmed and delicious food and drinks were offered every day in homage to the beloved late King of Bhutan.

During this period the *lamas* were entertained with good food, drinks and gifts. There is also the custom of offering food, incense sticks, butter lamps to the village monastery and auspicious prayer-flags are installed on the hill ridges as well as the house tops.

Usually the body is cremated but if a person dies during an epidemic, the body is first buried for a few days and then cremated. The Nepalese settlers observe the usual Hindu way of cremation. The people in general are superstitious and believe in good and bad omens.

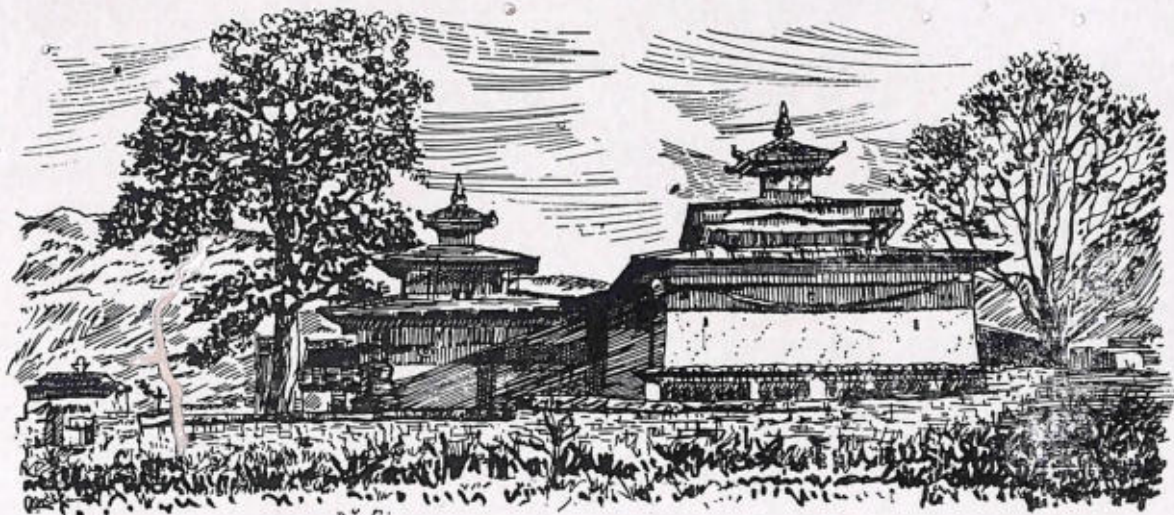


MASKED DANCER with decorated drum and crooked drum-stick.

Sketch of locally available RHODODENDRON of an Arboreum variety. The flowering Rhododendron paint the landscape of Bhutan with a contrasting combination of colours.



A BHUTANESE BABY with heavenly smile.



Freehand sketch on *Kyichu Lakhang* the oldest monastery of Paro. This sacred monastery was built in 659 A.D. by the King of Tibet Songten Gampo to promulgate Buddhism.



AN ARCHERY COMPETITION (national game) amongst the Bhutanese high officials and others—THIMPHU

HISTORY

The early history of this landlocked Himalayan country, Bhutan, is obscure, as most of official annals were destroyed by fire, earthquake and floods. Its past history is largely a matter of conjecture supplemented by recovered historical documents and reports from different tourists. Till 600 A.D. Bhutan was a mere geographical entity by the side of Kamarupa (now known as Assam) and during the political instability in north-eastern India, Tibetan influence was extended there. The great Indian saint, Guru Padma Sambhava, a dynamic personality, came to Bhutan in 750 A.D. Then a series of *lamas* from Tibet visited Bhutan as missionaries between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries and among them the visit of *Shabdung I (Dharma Raja)*.

CHAPTER VIII

Ngawang Namgyel, in 1617, is memorable for his leadership in reorganising the spiritual and temporal orders. At this time political missions from Nepal, Cooch-Bihar and Sikkim also came to Bhutan. In 1627 Portuguese Jesuit Missionaries (S. Cacella and J. Cabral) visited Bhutan to propagate their religion.

In 1651 Jampel Dorji succeeded *Shabdrung* Ngawang Namgyel and from then till the end of the seventeenth century, there were power struggles between different sectorial heads which adversely affected the relations of Bhutan with the outside world. Taking advantage of the turmoil, Lhazang Khan (1697-1717), the ruler of Tibet, attempted an invasion in 1710, which was repulsed by Bhutan. In 1730 again, there was an invasion from the Drugyel *Dzong* (Paro) side, culminating in a trade agreement (*Lochak*), which lasted till the Chinese captured Tibet in 1951.

On the 25th of April, 1774, during the period of Warren Hastings, the then Governor General in India, there was a peace treaty between Bhutan and the East India Company. The representatives of the Company, Alexander Hamilton and George Bogle, were deputed to explore trade feasibilities with Bhutan. British missions under the leadership of Samuel Turner (1783), R. B. Pemberton (1837), and Ashley Eden (1863), were sent to Bhutan to settle the Assam-Duar dispute. (Bhutan also gave sympathetic support to the uprising in India during the *Sepoy* Mutiny in 1857 and revolutionaries took shelter in western Bhutan). But the final effort of these agreements came to nothing and ultimately on November, 28th, 1864, the British Government declared war. The Bhutanese fought bravely and the battle ended in a ten-article peace treaty on the 11th of November, 1865, in Sinchula.

The history of Bhutan entered on a new chapter of hereditary monarchy with the crowning of Uggen Wangchuck (the great grandfather of the present King and son of the Tongsa *Penlop*, Jigme Namgyel) on the 17th of December, 1907. Druk Gyalpo Uggen Wangchuck so confidently established himself that since then there has been no significant political or civil unrest. He was the pioneer in the history of Bhutan who led his country on the path of modernisation. He died on the 21st of August, 1926, and his eldest son, Jigme Wangchuck, succeeded. In 1948

Druk Gyalpo Jigme Wangchuck sent a delegation to New Delhi to discuss relations with independent India and this was followed by a renewal of the past treaty on August 8th, 1949.

The third king in the dynasty, Jigme Dorje Wangchuck, succeeded his father on October 28th, 1952. The late Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, with his daughter Mrs. Indira Gandhi, visited Bhutan in September, 1958 and emphasized the need for developing road communications along with other socio-economic planned developments. During the twenty year rule (1952-72) of this saintly King, Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorje Wangchuck, Bhutan progressed in every sphere and gave up its traditional policy of isolationism. He was universally loved and respected by his people. He was the most liberal and enlightened ruler who, with his continuous endeavour, invited his subjects to participate in the Government administration. He is also called the 'most democratic King in the world.'

Thus an age-old absolute monarchy became a constitutional democracy in 1967, although the entire sovereign power of the state is vested in the Druk Gyalpo His Majesty, the King of Bhutan. The late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, who is called the architect of the modern Bhutan, was very democratic and to promote free public opinion in Government administration, he set up the National Assembly in 1953. In 1956 he introduced Land Reforms, freed 5,000 serfs, set up an Advisory Council of Ministers and a High Court in 1968. Bhutan joined the Colombo Plan in 1962, the Universal Postal Union in 1969, and above all, the United Nations in 1971.


The new King, His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan, is the youngest king in the world and is fourth in the dynasty founded by late Ugyen Wangchuck in 1907. He succeeded to the golden throne on the sudden death of his father in July, 1972. The king has been educated in England and Bhutan. He is a good sportsman and his favourite games are football and fishing. His ideal is his great father, the Late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck and the coronation of the present King was held at Thimphu on the 2nd of June, 1974.

TONGSA DZONG :—The gigantic architectural fortress is the ancestral seat of the Royal family of Bhutan and the *lama* centre with twenty temples surrounded with a moat.





"TASHI-CHHO DZONG"—meaning 'good luck *Dzong*'. This fortress at Thimphu originally constructed by *Shabdung Ngawal Namgyel* in 1641 on the site of *Dongyon Dzong* constructed by the holy *lama Lhakpa*. Late His Majesty *Jigme Dorji Wangchuck* rebuilt the new *Dzong* building (1961-65) with modern amenities.



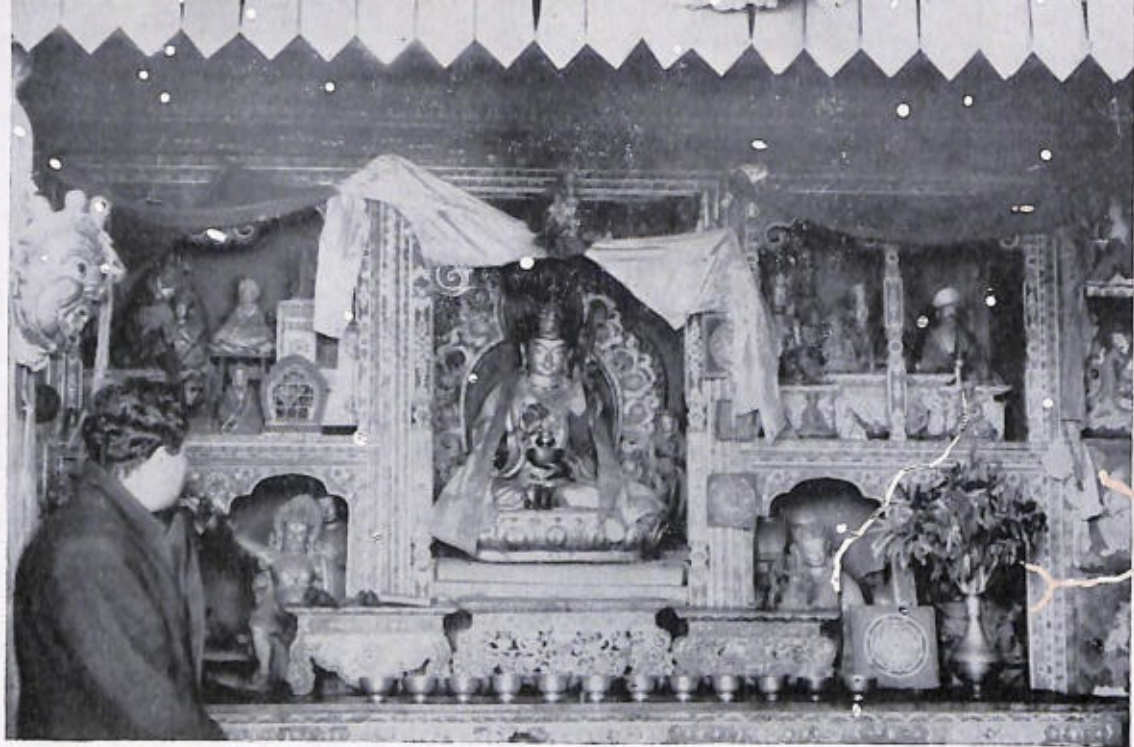
SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER IX

In the past, along the lines of its spiritual home, Tibet, the system of Government of Bhutan was theocratic under the authority of *Dharma Raja* (A king who is head of Church also and rules according to religious law). Then the *Dharma Rajas* began to exercise both spiritual as well as temporal power. Owing to the influence of Buddhist philosophy *Dharma Rajas* subsequently confined themselves to only spiritual matters and the ministers known as *Deb-Rajas* exercised temporal power. Due to the impact of events, in the course of history, the concept of dual authority developed. One is *Dharma-Raja*, supreme in spiritual power and the other *Deb-Raja*, supreme in temporal authority. With the birth of hereditary monarchy in 1907, when Tongsa *Penlop* Uggen Wangchuck was unanimously elected King of Bhutan by both the monks as well as the political chiefs, the sovereign power of the state was vested in the king only.

The first council of state (*Lhengye Tshok*) was established by Ngawang Namgyel in the seventeenth century. The council of Ministers proper was established by the late King Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck on the 16th of May, 1968. The National Assembly (*Tsongdu*) was established also by him in 1953. The members of the National Assembly have complete freedom of speech and can advise the Government on all matters of national importance. The number of members is now 150, out of which 10 are representatives of the monasteries, 40 nominated by the Government, and the remaining 100 are elected by the people. The National Assembly meets twice each year, usually once in April-May and again from October to November. When the Assembly is not in session, the Royal Advisory Council, known as *Lardo Tshagde*, formed by the elected members of the National Assembly is authorised to advise the King as well as the Ministers. This Royal Advisory Council consists of eight members, out of which two are representatives of the monasteries, one nominated by the King and the remaining five are the representatives of the people.

On administration out-line Bhutan is divided into fifteen districts. The civil administrator in each district is called *Dzongda*, whereas the magistrate is called *Thrimpon*. The second officer is known as *Ramjam*. Senior *Ramjams* usually act independently regarding administration of small *Dzongs*, whereas junior *Ramjams* function as assistant to respective *Dzongdas* or



DECORATED ALTER inside a monastery with the statue of Guru Padma Sambhava, noble Bodhisattavas (Lama karmapa, Sheepton Thuchen and others) and other protective deities—WANGDIPHUDRONG.

Trimpon. The village headman is called *Gap* (or *Mondal*), who is elected for a fixed term. These headmen are appointed by the Government. The Representatives of the People as mentioned above, who comprise two-thirds of the total strength of the Assembly are elected by these Village headmen for a term of three years.

The official status of Government personnel is indicated by the colours of shawls, very much as uniforms and symbols do elsewhere. These sartorial rules are made by the state. The fashion of wearing shawls during ceremonial occasions is more or less like the Bengalee-way in India. The King and the head abbot, *Je Khempo* wear yellow shawl. The light orange shawl is used by the Ministers and the colour of the shawl worn by the Deputy Ministers is deep orange. Other top ranking Government Officers, for example *Dzongda*, *Thrimpon* and such others (locally known as '*Dasho*') are authorised to wear red shawl and the Members of the Royal Advisory Council wear blue. The status of this red and blue shawl officers is more or less the same. The *Ramjams* are authorised to wear white shawl with red stripes at the middle. The village headmen wear a similar type of shawl, but the stripes are at both edges instead of at the middle. All other non-designated officials and others can wear white shawl. This harmony of colours in this picturesque colourful Kingdom also adds to its beauty and grandeur.



YAK grazing—at Lunana valley

• Bhutan has a charm and attraction for tourists all over the world, for its picturesque natural beauty and peaceful surroundings, which have not yet been contaminated by the ills and evils of the modern mechanised world. Here inspired by the teachings of Lord Buddha, one may be induced to explore the depths of one's ownself.

With the *Dzong* as nucleus the largest part of the population has settled at Thimphu, Paro, Wangdiphudrang, Punakha, Chapcha, Ha, Tongsa, Byaker, Shemgong, Tashigong, Tasm, Jangsi (Samchi, Phutsholing, Sarbhang, Samdrup-Jongkhar). Concentration of population has taken place at the capital Thimphu, with 20,000 heads. The corresponding figures are Paro 10,000, Base Towns at Samchi 7,000, Phuntsholing 15,000, Sarbhang 12,000 and Samdrup-Jongkhar 10,000. The tourist seasons in the hills of Bhutan are from March to June and September to November. Some of the places of interest are as follows (Vide also the guide map):—

(a) *THIMPHU (2,430 Metres)*: This new capital township of Bhutan is on the bank of the *Wang-chu*.

Interesting Spots:—*Tashi-chho-Dzong* (houses of the king with gilded throne and central Secretariat), Royal cottage, Royal Palace at Dechencholing, National Memorial *chorten* in memory of the late King, rose gardens, High Court, Simtokha *Dzong*—8 km. from Thimphu (old Bhutanese fort built in 1627 A.D. and now accommodating Ringney Institute for Monastic studies and having a collection of the Prettiest images of eight Bodhisattavas and beautiful frescoes and carvings), Handicraft Emporium with art Collection and Craft centre, Pho-Ju-Ding nunnery and Dongtsho-*la*, Tangu monastery (at one day's march), Dechen-Phuk monastery (6 km. from Thimphu), Palaces of Members of the Royal family, Assembly hall, Royal guest house, Banquet hall, Public School, Herbarium, luxurious hotels, Agriculture, horticulture and live-stock farms, shopping centres (Thimphu market), Tibetan handicraft, Head quarters of the Boarder Roads Organisation and army, recreation and fishing centres, golf ground, area around

Dochu-la (the 5,791 metres high pass renowned for its scenic beauty with a grand view of the snows and a matchless collection of flowers and herbs).



MANI-WALL AT DOCHU-LA:—

This pass is at an altitude of 5791 metres. The highway from Thimphu to Wangdi-phudrang is aligned by the side of this *Mani*-wall decorated with slate carvings and multicoloured prayer-flags, encircled with colourful rhododendron forest.

(b) *PARO (2,290 metres)*: It is the most attractive valley offering a panoramic view of scenic beauty at an altitude of 2,290 metres with artistically decorated Rimpung *Dzong* (original structure built in 900 A.D. and the *Dzong* built in 1646).

Interesting spots:—Royal Palace, weeping willow avenue, medieval wooden bridge, Ugen Pelri, Ta *Dzong* housing the National Museum, Kyichu monastery (built in 659 A.D. by the King of Tibet Sougten Gampo to spread Buddhism), Drukgyel *Dzong* (at 2,316 metres)—15 km. from Paro, *Tak-sang* (means Tiger's nest) monastery clinging at 2,896 metres on mountain cliff, Panoramic view of Chomolhari peak (7,300 metres), Paro air field, Chhumphu monastery (which contains the footmark of Guru Padma Samvhava) Sang-tog Peri monastery, Sangnah chhokher and Dense Docholing monastery, hydel project, agricultural farm, *Dungchi-Lhakhang* (constructed by the famous old architect Thamgthong Gyalpo) art and craft centres, places of trout fishing

(both rainbow and brown) and hunting, Olathang guest house complex, game and picnic spots, shopping centres, offering artistic gold and silver-wares and decorated mythological masks, (In between Paro and Thimphu, the sight seeing spots are :- Confluence of Paro and Thimphu *chu*, hydel power project, Tibetan settlements, and stretches of scenic beautifultures; the Wang-*chu* and Paro-*chu*).

(c) **PUNAKHA (1,463 metres)**: Punakha is the old capital where early kings lived and ruled. It has a tropical climate. Punakha *Dzong* built by Nawang Namgyel in 1637, at the confluence of *Mo-chu* and *Pho-chu*, is the winter residence of the head *Lama* (chief abbot) *Jey Khempo*. This wide valley is famous for its agriculture and fishing, fruit gardens, suspension bridges and irrigation complex. Punakha is a treasure-house of religious manuscripts, sacred scrolls, vivid murals and icons of various sizes.

Interesting spots:—Way to Tsephu *Gumpa* (rock carving and painting), *Logona* (with live-stock farm), Gasa, Lingshi, Laya, Sonagasa (Royal winter Palace), view of Tsering Khang (7,000 metres), Masa khang (7,200 metres) and many others.

(d) **PHUNTSOLING (229 metres)**: This modern foothill township is the gateway to Bhutan, as well as the Southern terminus of the Indo-Bhutan Roadways network. Capital Thimphu is 179 kilometres from here.

Interesting Spots:—Government office complex, industrial units, business centre, Royal guest houses. *Gumpa* of the Royal Mother and Technical School at Kharbandi, Bhutan bank, hospital, recreation centres, orange gardens, fishing spots along Torsa river and its tributaries. Games in nearby jungles are its main attractions. This is where roads to Samchi, Kalikhola and other foothill stations start from (vide the enclosed guide map).

(e) **WANGDIPHUDRANG (1,402 metres)**: Wangdi-*Dzong* (built in 1638-39 by Nawang Namgyel) on a rocky promontory at the confluence of Tang-*chu* and Sonkosh. The mighty river Sonkosh offers boating facilities. Wangdiphudrang has agriculture and fishing centres, irrigation schemes, Kuchula and Kyungdu monasteries, view of snow-clad mountains, shopping centres. This district is famous for its bamboo fret-work, slate and stone carvings.

(f) **TONGSA (2,286 metres)**: This is the ancestral residence of the Royal family. The largest structure of Tongsa *Dzong* above Tongsa river, strategically constructed by *Shabdung I*, encircles twenty *gumpas*. The *Dzong* has the most priceless collection of rhino-horn sculptures.

Interesting Spots:—House of *Lama*, Tiger Fortress, Chendebi-*Chorten* (at Chendebi village) and this valley known for *lama* dance, archery, & weaving—a centre of slate and stone carving.

(g) **BUMTHANG (2,408 metres)**: It is a wide valley at a high altitude and famous for its *thanka* (religious scroll), wooden and woven articles, blanket and above all rare flowers.

Interesting Spots:—Byaker *Dzong* (built in 1676 by *Deb Raja* Gese Tansing Rabgye) on the bank of Bumthang-*chu*—a beautiful architectural monument, Wangdicholing palace of H.R.H. Aji Chuki (sister of the Late King), *Kuje Lakhang*, *Jampe Lakhang* (built in 640 A.D.), *Lama* monastery, Nunnery, *Ngang Lakhang*, Ura monastery (at Ura—3,231 metres), fishing spots and hunting base.

(h) **MONGAR (1,372 metres)**: This is the second largest town of eastern Bhutan. To the west of Mongar is *Kura-chorten*, the sacred shrine, on the bank of *Kura-chu*; Mongar *Dzong* (new *Dzong* built in 1930) with images of *Shabdung Rimpoche*, Guru Padma Sambhava and Amitayush. Mongar is famous for silver ware, woven & cane articles and its birds and butterflies.

Interesting Spots:—The live-stock farm at Lingmithang, bridges with traditional designs, fishing facilities at *Kura-chu* & other streams, water-falls (at Rollong).

(i) **TASHIGANG (1,067 metres)**: Famous for Tashigang *Dzong* built in 1667 by *Chhogyal* Minijur Tempa, the third *Deb Raja*, on the precipitous spur above Manas river. This valley is known for its colourful handloom cloth (both woollen & cotton) bamboo fret-work and cane products.

Interesting Spots:—Yumphula *Gumpa* and Public School (at Kanglung), fishing and big



Sketch of THE LAMA DANCER whirling with big drum (called 'gna') and symbolically driving out all the evil spirits.

games, at Khaling—sheep breeding centre, way to border areas passing through beautiful villages, such as Khini, salu and many others.

(j) **SAMDRUP-JONGKHAR** (305 metres): Known for its foothill town with Darranga market (for orange and milk products). From here the highway leads to Tashigang, Mongar and other regions of eastern Bhutan (vide guide map). There is a distillery. Deothang township (with the Head Quarters of Border Roads Organisation) is only 18 km. from here.

(k) **LHUNTSI** (1,827 metres): It is situated on the bank of Kura-chu between Mongar and Singhi Dzong in Eastern Bhutan. Its dilapidated Dzong is still famous for its beautiful frescoes. Lhunsi is known for handloom, bamboo-fret-work, blanket and woven fabrics. The Bhutanese admire the Luntsi girls as real beauties.

(l) **MANAS** (244 metres): This famous wild life sanctuary is the home of the rhinoceros, the leopard, the tiger, the black bear, the bison, the wild elephant, the wild boar, the goral, langur and different types of deer and birds.

(m) **HA** (2,774 metres): This wide beautiful valley close to Chumby accommodates military training centre at Ha-Dzong. This valley is known for hunting, fishing and picnic spots.

(n) **SAMCHI** (457 metres): The Nepali speaking foothill town at the north-west extremity has some orchards, distillery and fruit-preservation factory. Samchi accommodates the headquarters of Geological Survey of India for Bhutan works and forest department. Tourists may enjoy the panoramic view of the setting sun from this foothill town.

(o) **SARBHANG** (229 metres): Nepali speaking foothill town of southern Bhutan is known for its market of orange and milk products. The fertile Chirang Valley is 40 kilometres (Or 25 miles) from Sarbhang. Sarbhang is also close to another border town Galeyphug (Hatisar) from where the highway leads to Tongsa and Bumthang districts of Central Bhutan (vide enclosed guide map).

(p) *LUNANA (3,658 metres)*: It is a high hill settlement, famous for its woollen handloom, orchids and alpine vegetation (for example Himalayan Rhubarb). It offers a beautiful snow-view. Tourists can also enjoy here yak rides.

(q) *TATO-PANI (487 metres)*: Hot spring spot with nice arrangements for bathing. Fishing and hunting in nearby areas are also its attractions.

(r) *Dochu-la (5,791 metres)* ('la' means 'pass'), *Pele-la*, *Yoto-la*, *Rodu-la*, *Po-la*, *Me-la*, *Toma-la*, *Yeb-la*, *Sele-la*, Thimphu & Paro valleys, Kurtey, Mongar & Laya command vistas of multicoloured flowers, orchids and flowering plants and trees across the lovely hill surface. The forests encircling these passes glow with red, yellow, pink, orange and mauve colours of rhododendron and snow white magnolia.

(s) Bhutan is dotted with innumerable *Dzongs*, monasteries, *chortens*, *lhakhangs* (temples), decorated prayer-wheel structures, *moni*-walls and varieties of religious structures, which are counted as monuments of its age-old art and architecture. For the ready reference to visitors a few may be mentioned here:—

(i) *Dzong* (means fortress, which also accommodates monasteries, administration offices as well as district head quarters, monks and seat of judgement):—

(1) *Tashi-chho Dzong*—Thimphu. (2) *Rimpung Dzong*—Paro. (3) *Punakha Dzong*. (4) *Wangdiphudrang Dzong*. (5) *Tongsa Dzong*. (6) *Byakar Dzong*—Bumthang. (7) *Mongar Dzong*. (8) *Shemgong Dzong*. (9) *Tashigang Dzong*. (10) *Ha Dzong*. (11) *Drukgyel Dzong*. (12) *Simtokha Dzong*. (13) *Lhunsi Dzong*—at north-east Bhutan. (14) *Singhi Dzong*—at northern Bhutan. (15) *Tashi-Yangshi Dzong*—eastern Bhutan. (16) *Lingshe Dzong*—at north-west Bhutan. (17) *Gasa Dzong*—at north-west Bhutan.

(ii) *MONASTERY*: (or *Gumpa*—an abbey):—

(1) *Kyichu Monastery*—Paro. (2) *Tak-Sang Monastery*—Paro. (3) *Chhumphu*—Paro.

(4) Sangna Chhockar—Paro. (5) Densa Docholing—Paro. (6) Sang-Tog Peri—Paro. (7) Tangu—Thimphu. (8) Pho-ju-Ding—Thimphu. (9) Dechen Phuk—Thimphu. (10) Key-Damer Tsekpa—Bumthang. (11) Ura monastery—(Ura) Bumthang. (12) Yumphula *Gumpa*—Tashi-gong. (13) Kharbandi *Gumpa*—Phuntsholing.

(iii) *CHORTEN*: (solid religious structure built as cenotaphs in memory of Lord Buddha and other saints):—

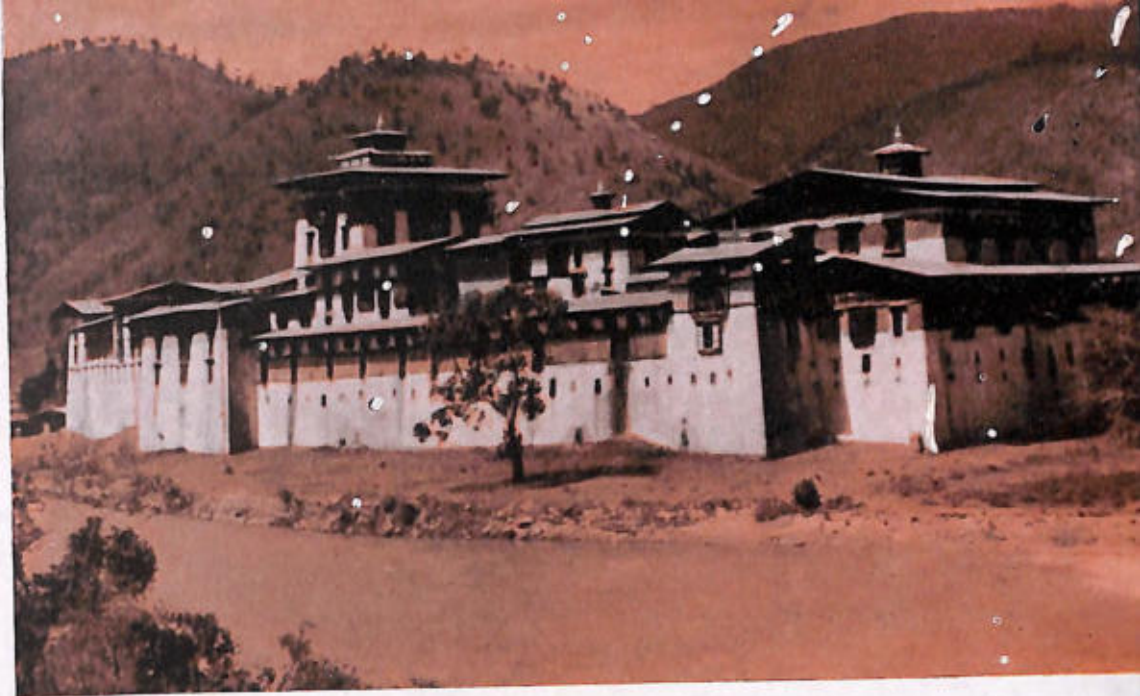
(1) Chendebe *Chorten*—Tongsa. (2) Kura *Chorten*—Mongar. (3) *Chorten-Kora*—Tashi-yangshi. (4) National Memorial *Chorten*—Thimphu.

(iv) *LAKHANG* (or Temple):

(1) *Kuje Lakhang*—Bumthang. (2) *Jampe Lakhang*—Bumthang. (3) *Dungchi Lakhang*—Paro. (4) *Ngang Lakhang*—Bumthang.

(t) Bhutan offers scope for Himalayan expeditions to several peaks out of which most are still virgin. Informations to those who are keen on mountaineering:—

Chomolhari (7,320 metres), Kula Kangri (7,600 metres), Tsering Khang (7,000 metres), Masa-Khang (7,200 metres), Kangphu-khang (7,300 metres), Black-mountain (4,938 metres), Lunana (3,658 metres), Laya (3,475 metres) and other numerous hills and hill-tops.



PUNAKHA DZONG:—The most inaccessible and sacred fortress at the confluence of *Mo-chu* and *Pho-chu*. Punakha was the winter capital until 1966.

Notes on journey to Bhutan :—

(1) By Air:—Calcutta to Bagdogra by Indian Air Lines Corporation (1 hour). Bagdogra to the base foothill town of Bhutan, Phuntsholing by car or taxi (3 hrs.). From Phuntsholing onward 5 hours by taxi, bus, etc.

(2) By Train:—To New Jalpaiguri or Siliguri Railway Station from Calcutta, Delhi or other points on Indian Railways. From New Jalpaiguri or Siliguri by Bhutan State Transport Service to Phuntsholing.

(3) By Road:—To Siliguri along National Highways and off from National Highway leading to Assam, turning to Phuntsholing after about 100 kilometres from Siliguri.

(4) Government Guest houses are located at (i) Samchi, (ii) Phuntsholing, (iii) Kalikhola, (iv) Sarbhang, (v) Samdrup-Jongkhar, (vi) Paro, (vii) Thimphu, (viii) Wangdiphudrang, (ix) Puna-kha, (x) Tongsa, (xi) Bumthang, (xii) Shemgong, (xiii) Mongar (xvi) Tashigang and on the Thimphu-Phuntshong highway, (xv) Chimakoti and (xvi) Chasilekha etc. Besides these there are hotels at Thimphu, Paro, Phuntsholing, Sarbhang, Samchi, Samdrup-Jongkhar and such others.

(5) Application for entry formalities (visa and Indian transit permits) may be made to the following addresses:—

- | | |
|---|--|
| (A) The Department of Tourism,
Royal Government of Bhutan,
<i>Tashi-chho Dzong,</i>
Thimphu (BHUTAN). | (C) Permanent Mission of Bhutan to the
U.N., 266, Second Avenue,
NEW YORK CITY, N.Y.—10017, U.S.A. |
| (B) State Trading Corporation of Bhutan,
52, Trivoli Court,
1A, Ballygunge Circular Road,
CALCUTTA—700019. | (D) Mission of Royal Government of Bhutan,
1/21, Santiniketan,
NEW DELHI—110021. |



CHENDEBI CHORTEN (at Chendebi village—TONGSA) :—A massive monument with hemispherical top and crowned with a spire, erected in the style of Indian architecture. Four sides of the steeple painted with Mystic Buddha eyes peering at the four horizons.

Just to help the tourist, a few examples of the vocabulary of *Dzong-kha* (in Roman alphabets) are given below with respective English renderings.

(A) GREETING AND ADDRESSING

English	<i>Dzong-kha</i> (Spoken Bhutanese language)
Greeting address	.. <i>Ya-la</i>
Happy New Year to you	.. <i>Losar Tashi Delek</i>
Thank you (Sir)	.. <i>Kading-che (La)</i>
Please be seated (Madam)	.. <i>Sho-la (Am)</i>
Please come in	.. <i>Nana joen</i>
Many many thanks	.. <i>Name same kading-che</i>
What is your name?	.. <i>Choch-gi ming gha-chi mo?</i>
How do you do?	.. <i>Kuje Jamgpo?</i>
Sing a song	.. <i>Lu chi thouen</i>
Excuse me	.. <i>Gom mathere</i>
How many children do you have?	.. <i>Coch alu kadi-chi yoe?</i>
I am too happy to meet you	.. <i>Nga Choh-da jhedi-gi name-same semgai.</i>
It is very kind of you	.. <i>Chhagi kadi name same yoe.</i>
Where do you come from?	.. <i>Chhoch ghatele yuom-mo?</i>
I am from Calcutta	.. <i>Nga Calcutta lean</i>
What can I do for you?	.. <i>Nga-gi chhagi dhoen-lay gha-chi beni-mo?</i>
Give me some food please	.. <i>Nga-la shago achi-chi-na.</i>
The food is delicious	.. <i>Shego Shimtoto du.</i>
Please have your food	.. <i>Seo Shey.</i>
Please give a cup of tea	.. <i>Nga-lu ja phop gha-na.</i>

English

Will you smoke? ◦
How long would you stay?
I shall stay for two months
I like Bhutan very much
Bhutan is just like my country
Good luck!
Good-bye!

Dzongkha (Spoken Bhutanese language)

.. *Chhoch-tanklue Shemi-ena?*
.. *Chhoeh nalu ghade-chi shoeni-^g?*
.. *Nga nalu dau-ni doen.*
.. *Drulu gaw name same yoe.*
.. *Drulu gye eychock theb yoe.*
.. *Tashi delek!*
.. *Lo zeghe!*

(B) GENERAL CONVERSATION.

Bhutan is a beautiful country
Bhutan mountains are very beautiful
Summer is very pleasant here
In Bhutan there are varieties of flowers

.. *Drulum yeul ghato-to chi-een.*
.. *Drulum-gi ghanagh-isu ghato-to yoe.*
.. *Bjalu nya ghato-to yoe.*
.. *Drulum nalu metok chhiri-natso yoe.*



Sketch of Orchid from
Central Bhutan.

English

In Bhutan there are many wild animals
 Let us go to *Dzong*
 Where is the road?
 This road leads to Thimphu
 Let us go to the hills
 We need three porters
 We shall start at nine O'clock
 Shall I ride this yak?
 When are you going to Tongsa?
 I like to go to-morrow
 To-morrow is holiday
 Where are you going?
 Let us go for fishing to-morrow
 Have you seen *Kuje-Lakhang*
 What is the day to-day?
 Let us play the game of archery
 What is time now?
 Where is your residence?
 This picture is very nice
 This is a picture of *Tak-sang*
 I want to buy a *baku* and a picture

I want to buy stamps of Bhutan
 I want to buy this mask
 The '*Kuensel*' magazine of Bhutan is nice

I have met him in Paris
 My family is at London

Dzongkha (Spoken Rhotanese language)

.. *Drulum nalu natsena-gi semchi lesa yoe.*
 .. *Nga-chi Dzong joge.*
 .. *Lam ghate-mo?*
 .. *Lam the Thimphu lu jou-en.*
 .. *Nga-chi la thigu joge.*
 .. *Nga-chhe-lu whulap sum gnoni-een.*
 .. *Naa-chhe nale chutse gu-lu joge.*
 .. *Nga Ya the shoen-ga?*
 .. *Chhoch Tongsa-name joni-mo?*
 .. *Nga naba jogo non-en.*
 .. *Naba Nyeso een.*
 .. *Khati juni la?*
 .. *Naba Nga-che gna zuma joge.*
 .. *Chhoen Kuje-Lakhang tho-Chi-ga?*
 .. *Dhari za gha-chi-mo?*
 .. *Dha chap-ba joge.*
 .. *Dhato Chutse ghate?*
 .. *Cho-lu chim ghate-mo?*
 .. *Pa-the lezim chi eme.*
 .. *Tak-sang-gi pachi eme.*
 .. *Nga Baku-da pa gnoni-een (Baku is the Bhutanese dress for male).*
 .. *Nga Drulum ticket gnoni-een.*
 .. *Nga lachi the gnoni-een.*
 .. *The Drulun nalu 'Kuensel' gotson-khang lezim chi-eme.*
 .. *Nga khoh do Paris phechi.*
 .. *Nga-gi nyet-shang London lu yoe.*

C) ALPHABETIC
GIST GUIDE

A:—

A = *Chi* | Alcohol = *Chhang* | Age = *Lo* | Axe = *Tari* | Archery = *Dha-chapni*.

B:—

Book = *Pechha* | Big = *Bom* | Bread = *Khule* | Bridge = *Zam* | Beautiful = *Zhe*.

C:—

Cat = *Shimi* | Cuckoo = *Aku* | Comb = *Gushe* | Chilli = *Ema* | City = *Throm*.

D:—

Dog = *Rochi* | Door = *Go* | Dinner = *Tsho* | Drink = *Thugni* | Diamond = *Eu*.

E:—

Eye = *Migtok* | Egg = *Gundo* | Elephant = *Lampche* | Earth = *Sa* | East = *Sha*.

F:—

Fire = *Mih* | Father = *Apa* | Food = *Dropchi* | Flower = *Mitok* | Field = *Shing*.

G:—

God = *Lamkuen-chosum* | Gold = *Ser* | Good = *Leszim* | Ginger = *Saga* | Girl = *Bhum*.

H:—

House = *Chim* | Head = *Guto* | Highway = *Shung-lam* | Hot = *Tshatom* | Hair = *Cha*.

I:—

I = *Nga* | In = *Nana* | Ink = *Natsi* | Iron = *Cha* | Idle = *Zongé*.

J:—

Jackal = *Wham* | Jungle = *Natshe* | Jack fruit = *Dhramtsi*.

K:—

King = *Galmo* | Key = *Demig* | Knee = *Pumo* | Knife = *Ghi* | Kit = *Makche*.

L:—

Lock = *Dimi* | Lamp = *Lawa* | Lotus = *Pema* | Lunch = *Tsho* | Language = *Kha*.

M:—

Mother = *Aai* | Meat = *Sha* | Match-box = *Mitte-dom* | Month = *Dau* | Mule = *Dhreen*.

N:—
 Nose = *Lhapa* / Needle = *Khap* / Newspaper = *Sarju* / North = *Jhang*.

O:—^E
 Orange = *Chelu* / Onion = *Gap* / Oil = *Maku* / Old = *Agey* / Oven = *Thap*.

P:—
 Pen = *Niku* / Pass = *La* / Prince = *Sey* / Paper = *Shoku* / Picture = *Pa*.

Q:—
 Queen = *Gyalmo* / Quick = *Juba* / Question = *Drini* / Quarrel = *Jaani*.

R:—
 Rice = *Chum* / Road = *Lam* / Rain = *Chhap* / Red = *Map* / Roof = *Chimto* / Rupee = *Tiru*.

S:—
 Scarf = *Khada* / Sugar = *Koram* / Snow = *Khou* / Spoon = *Thum* / Small = *Chunku* / Stone = *Dau*.

T:—
 Tree = *Shing* / Tiger = *Ta* / Teacher = *Lopon* / Tooth = *So* / Turnip = *Eudo*.

U:—
 Universe = *Jombaling* / Up = *Ya* / Uncle = *Aku* / Ugly = *Ngeta*.

V:—
 Vest = *Ganji* / Vegetable = *Tshosi* / Victory = *Gheykha* / Village = *Yeul*.

W:—
 Water = *Chu* / Wife = *Nem* / Window = *Go-che* / Winter = *Guin* / White = *Kap* / Worship = *Thuen*.

X:—
 (Ox = *Lang*.)

Y:—
 Yak = *Ya* / Young = *Shoem* / Younger brother = *Nochu* / Yellow = *Sep* / Younger sister = *Sim*.

Z:—
 Zero = *Lekor* / (Day = *Za*) / (Table = *Zathi*) / (Leopard = *Zee*).

D) NUMERICALS

English

Dzongkha

0	<i>Lekor</i>
1	<i>Chi</i>
2	<i>Ni</i>
3	<i>Sum</i>
4	<i>Shi</i>
5	<i>Nga</i>
6	<i>Dru</i>
7	<i>Duen</i>
8	<i>Gye</i>
9	<i>Gu</i>
10	<i>Chutham</i>
11	<i>Chu-chi</i>
12	<i>Chu-ni</i>
20	<i>Nishu</i>
30	<i>Sum-chu</i>
40	<i>Ship-chu</i>
50	<i>Ngap-chu</i>
60	<i>Druk-chu</i>
70	<i>Duen-chu</i>
80	<i>Gyep-chu</i>
90	<i>Gup-chu</i>
100	<i>Chig-ja</i>
1000	<i>Tontrah-chi</i>

(E) TIME :—

Today = *Tari*
Yesterday = *Khacha*
To-morrow = *Naba*
Day after to-morrow = *Nagtshe*
Day = *Za* | Month = *Dau* | Year = *Loh*
Week = *Duntrah* | Time = *Dhue*
Morning = *Drobha* | Noon = *Ningu*
Evening = *Phiru* | Night = *Numu*

I beauty
e modern
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—D. B.

(F) WEEK-DAYS :—

Sunday = *Nima*
Monday = *Dawa*
Tuesday = *Migma*
Wednesday = *Lhakpa*
Thursday = *Pharpu*
Friday = *Pasang*
Saturday = *Pempa*

(G) CURRENCY :—

Ngultrum = equivalent to the Indian rupee.
Chetrum = equivalent to the Indian paisa.
100 *Chetrums* = 1 *Ngultrum*.

PRONOUNS :-

I = *Nga*
You = *Chhoeh*
He = *Kl:oh*
She = *Mo*

We = *Ngache*
You all = *Che-chha Chap*
They = *Kho-chha Chap*
Them = *Khongi*

My = *Ngegi*
His = *Khongi*
Her = *Mogi*
Their = *Khongi*

(I) VERBS :-

To read = *Pecha-tani*
To go = *Joni*
To lift = *Thuni*
To buy = *Nioni*
To do = *Beni*
To ask = *Thrini*
To drink = *Thung*

To write = *Ekhu throni*
To ride = *Shoni*
To take = *Leni*
To call = *Boni*
To speak/tell = *Lapni*
To send = *Ketani*
To give = *Zini*

To see = *Thogni*
To sit = *Doani*
To cut = *Toni*
To come = *Woni*
To laugh = *Gani*
To eat = *Zani*
To sleep = *Niluni*

CONCLUDING NOTE

Bhutan has a charm and attraction for tourists all over the world, for its picturesque natural beauty and peaceful surroundings, which have not yet been contaminated by the ills and evils of the modern mechanised world. Here inspired by the teachings of Lord Buddha one may be induced to explore the depths of one's ownself.

—D. B.

NOTE ON THE AUTHOR

MR. DILIP BHATTACHARYYA, born to an Engineer father, also graduated in Engineering as well as in Science. He came to this earthly paradise, Bhutan, in April 1965, when Bhutan was gearing its wheel of development programme along the path of its First Five-Year Plan. He was posted there as senior Class I Government Officer for more than eight years. During his tenure of office as head of the Irrigation Wing in Bhutan for several years he trekked the remotest and most inaccessible places of this country on foot and horse back, from east to west and north to south. This has very rarely been explored so far by travellers.

Sketching and photography provide the second eye with the help of which one re-lives the experiences of the past and this author has tried his best to share his delight at this hidden treasure of endless beauty with new comers.

An engineer though, he is also a genuine artist and his paintings have been exhibited in Bhutan as well as at different places of India. His fine sketches etc. have also been published by the Govt. of Bhutan in their official books. His colourful landscape and portraits in oil etc. are still with the members of the Royal family. They are valued and collected by art lovers abroad. His paintings on different subjects of Bhutan had also been recently exhibited for a month in the Academy of Fine Arts, Calcutta, during the All India Annual Art Exhibition (1974-75).

He is also a master photographer who has already won prizes in photographic competitions. He is married and his wife Mrs. Subha Bhattacharyya who also has a master's degree in arts and has specialised in Buddhist culture, inspired him day by day in collecting these treasures from this ever beautiful country.

A blending of all these in a single person who has loved Bhutan as his own motherland, made this book so attractive, informative and interesting.

—Publisher



