Photo Uwe Gielen

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SOME THEMES IN THE ETHOS OF TRADITIONAL BUDDHIST LADAKH

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Tibetan Buddhism, Tibetan folk religion, and the Bon tradition have been studied from a variety of viewpoints both in Tibet itself and in neighboring societies such as Ladakh and Northwest Nepal.

Tucci (1970) and Ekvall (1964) have published valuable overall interpretations of Tibetan religious beliefs, practices, and institutions. Tibet's and Ladakh's religious art, including paintings and sculptures, have been studied from historical, artistic, and technical perspectives (Snellgrove and Skorupsky, 1977; Genoud and Inoue, 1982). Anthropologists such as Aziz (1978), Fürer-Haimendorf (1964), Friedl (1984), Kaplanian (1981), Brauen (1980), Levine (1988), Srinivas (1998), and others have delineated some of the social structures and cultural belief systems within which Tibetan Buddhism and folk religion have developed. However, only a very limited amount of work has been published concerning the psychological aspects of Tibetan and Ladakhi belief systems (Lichter and Epstein, 1983). Perhaps the most important psychological studies of a Tibetan society are the psychoanalytic interpretations of Tibetan Buddhism by Paul (1982) and Ortner (1978). Their interpretations are in large part based on their fieldwork among the Sherpa of Nepal and on Paul's readings of traditional religious literature, such as the well-known biographies of Milarepa and Padmasambhava. While their psychological perspective adds an important dimension to the study of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan societies, it should be kept in mind that their interpretations remain within a traditional Freudian framework. Consistent with such a framework, Paul and Ortner emphasize the prevalence of traditional Freudian themes such as status rivalry, envy, greed, stinginess, fear of pollution, hostile joking, fear of demons and the forces of anarchy and destruction, Oedipal attachments of monks to their mothers, father-son conflict, etc., in the rituals, religious myths, and worldviews of the Sherpa. We may note, however, that the works of Ortner and Paul describe inner psychological preoccupations, impulses, and anxieties that only rarely make their appearance in the attractive and quite typical anthropological portrait of Sherpa life as given to us by Fürer-Haimendorf (1964).

In the following, a psychological study is reported that is based on interviews with 72 Buddhist children, women, and monks from Ladakh. The methods and the theoretical framework of the study derive in the main from cognitive-developmental psychology (Kohlberg, 1984) though a few psychoanalytic terms have also been cautiously introduced. Cognitive-developmental psychology focuses especially on the underlying structures of thought processes, and in this context, the theories of Kohlberg (1984) and Fowler (1981) provide descriptions and explanations concerning the individual's development of moral reasoning and faith. In the present chapter, however, the emphasis is not on individual development, but rather on the content and structures of moral and religious conceptions as they are shared by many Buddhist laypersons and monks from Ladakh.[1] It is assumed that these shared conceptions will have an important influence on the worldviews end personality characteristics of many Ladakhis.

Foreign observers of Ladakh have sometimes commented on the character or psychological traits of Ladakhis. Drew (1875), a representative of the British government in Ladakh, had this to say: "The Ladakhis are cheerful, willing and good-tempered; they are very ready for a laugh; their are not quarrelsome, unless it be when excited by their intoxicating drink, *chang* (*chang*), and if over that they do get to wrangling or fighting, no bad blood remains afterwards. They are by no means ingenious; simplicity and clumsiness are characteristics of them… They are not muddle-headed, however, and much given to truth-telling… The Ladakhis are one of the hardiest of races…" In his dealings with the *chakdzot* (*phyag-mdzot*) ("business managers" of monasteries), he found them to be "men of genial and amiable disposition, of refined and dignified manners" (Drew, 1875: pp. 239-240, 248, 256).

Ramsay (1890), who functioned for several years as Commissioner in Ladakh, claims that "the ordinary Ladakh Buddhists are as nice a race as one could find anywhere, they are a cheery, simple, honest, easy going people, but they must ever remain a subject race, for they are not clever, end they are cowardly and unambitious… Their one desire is to be left in peace to live on the land.

They have no desire to be rich, and so long as they have enough to live upon, they strongly object to earning money by the sweat of their brow... they have no commercial instincts or aptitude... When left to themselves, the Ladakhis were free from religious bigotry" (Ramsay, 1890: pp. 56-57).

Foreign missionaries have also left us their impressions of the very people they attempted to convert to Christianity. Though these missionaries were often good observers of certain behavior patterns and customs found in Ladakh (Friedl, 1984), they were on the whole poor psychologists. Since their missionary activities were frequently unsuccessful, and since their firm Christian convictions set them at variance with the very spirit of the popular Buddhism and folk religion, these missionaries have sometimes given us unsympathetic portraits of Ladakh's inhabitants, and especially so of the monks. In his "novel", the missionary Ribbach (1940) describes a monk of Lamayuru as being utterly greedy, dishonest, superstitious, and given to bouts of indiscriminate drinking. Ribbach and the Hebers (Heber and Heber, 1903/1978) also emphasize that a certain tough, pragmatic, and utilitarian approach to life prevails among many of Ladakh's peasants.

One may object to these impressionistic and seemingly stereotypical descriptions which are not always consistent with each other. In the context of the present essay, we may note above all that the assumed personality traits of Ladakhis are not sufficiently connected to their religious conceptions and their Buddhist faith. Drew and Ramsey give us sketchy descriptions of external behavior patterns, not of inner feelings and mea-

nings. In the following, an attempt will be made to integrate the religious conceptions, worldviews, and thought processes of traditional, Buddhist Ladakhis with various "personality traits". The research is based on interviews conducted in 1980 and 1981.

The interviews focused on social, moral, and religious patterns of reasoning. It was hoped that the interviews would reflect some of the underlying themes that characterize psychological thought processes among Ladakhi laypersons and monks. In the interviews, a respondent was told a series of decision dilemmas in which the interests of various people conflicted with each other. The dilemmas were often simple in nature, since they had to be understood by both children and adults. However, the questions following the dilemmas were adjusted to the reasoning capacities of the interviewee and were often quite challenging in nature. In addition, broad questions about a person's life history, the purpose of life, the importance and meaning of religion, etc. were addressed to a subsample of 38 interviewees. Based on these interviews, themes that were felt to reflect the prevailing ethos of traditional Ladakh were identified. By ethos is meant here the characteristic spirit or "genius" of a people that distinguishes them from other people. This includes characteristic value systems, attitudes, and the overall worldview of a people. In addition, an attempt was made to identify special styles of thinking that became visible in the interviews, but that can also be detected in Ladakh's religious heritage, mythology, folksongs, and poetry.[2]

In the following, I will first discuss the methodology underlying this project. Subsequently, an overview of the worldviews, ethos, style of thinking, and personality characteristics of mature Ladakhis will be presented. There follows a short section pointing out some of the limitations of the present research as well as some afterthought that were formulated 15 years after the initial version of this chapter was published in 1985. A glossary at the end of the essay defines some of the psychological terms used in this essay. Throughout the essay the reader is asked to keep in mind that the interviews mostly focused on ideal moral and religious conceptions. In Ladakh, as everywhere else, ideal conceptions are not always translated into actual behavior.

It may also be noted that the contents of the chapter have been influenced by the spirited and sometimes skeptical discussions that followed the author's presentation of his research at the "Deuxième colloque sur le Ladakh". Especially useful in this context were the comments of Kaplanian (1986).

METHOD
Respondents

The sample of 72 respondents included 8 boys and 8 girls, age 10-12, 8 boys and 8 girls, age 14-16, 10 men and 10 women, age 25-73, and 20 monks, age 20-72. All respondents were Buddhists and came from Leh and surrounding villages such as Stok, Sabu, Gonpa, Chanspa, and others. The 20 monks were affiliated with a wide variety of monasteries throughout Ladakh such as Sankar, Spituk, Likir, Lamayuru, Thikse, Hemis, and Phyang. Their educational attainments and ranks within their monastic communities varied considerably, and some of the monks had in the past gone to Tibet for higher religious studies. Four rinpoche (rin-po-che) were included in the sample. A large majority of the interviewees spoke little or no English. They came from a considerable variety of backgrounds and included

farmers, village workers, shopkeepers, small government officials, etc., and their wives and children. Some prominent citizens from Leh were also included in the interviews. The educational levels of the respondents varied from no schooling at all to college education. All in all, the sample included a highly varied cross-section of Ladakhis from Leh and surroundings, but compared to the rest of Ladakh the sample was better educated, had been more influenced by exposure to the "modern world", and included a smaller percentage of farmers.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire included two moral decision stories taken from Colby and Kohlberg (1987) and two social reasoning dilemmas taken from Selman (1979). The author presented to his Ladakhi informant, Mr. Nawang Tsering Shakspo, J & K Cultural Academy, Leh, a selection of moral and social decision stories and asked him to select those stories that appeared to him to be especially appropriate for Ladakhi settings. The stories were translated into Ladakhi, and some of their details were changed. Each of the four stories described a hypothetical dilemma where the actions and expectations of fictitious adults and children clash with each other. The four stories were as follow:

(l) Should desperately poor Stobdan steal *drakzhun* ('*brag-zhun*)[3] from a doctor-druggist in order to save his deathly ill wife? (An adaptation of Kohlberg's story.)

(2) Fourteen-year-old Rinchen works hard and saves money for a camp. Should he give the money to his father, though his father had promised him the money? (Kohlberg's camp story.)

(3) Tondup is a young troublemaker and gets into a flight. Should his sister Angmo (dBang-mo) tell on him to their parents? (Selman's flight story.)

(4) Tsering gives Nawang a new dog as a birthday gift, though Nawang does not want a replacement for his lost old dog (Selman's puppy story.)

The four vignettes were followed by an extensive series of standard questions that attempted to elicit the reasoning behind the interviewee's decisions. The questions were designed to raise (supposedly universal) issues such as the value of life, property, theft, mutual role-taking, interpersonal expectations and duties, punishment, guilt, promise and trust, conceptions of the subjective nature of persons (thoughts, feelings, motives), self-awareness and self-reflection, personality traits, self-esteem, dyadic relationships, anger and friendship. Depending on a person's answers to these questions and issues, numerous additional questions were introduced.

In addition to the decision stories described above, three new dilemmas were constructed with the help of Mr. Wangchuk Shalipa. Sixteen interviews included the three new dilemmas. The three stories described a son who wanted to become a monk against the wishes of his mother, a young couple who got married against the determined opposition of the husband's parents, and a woman who felt heated after buying a shawl from a Kashmiri shopkeeper. Thirty-eight respondents were also exposed to an abbreviated version of Fowler's (1981) faith interview. In this interview, a person was asked about his (or her) life story, about the meaning of his/her life, about the meaning of his/her religious commitments, and about various values and attitudes that constituted the person's faith. The faith interview included a wide variety of broad, open-ended questions that were used to elicit a person's overall outlook on life.

The Interview Situation

The interviews took place in schools, monasteries, the author's guesthouse and hotel or, occasionally, in the fields. They usually lasted between one and a half to three hours and were tape-recorded. The interviews were conducted by the author and by Mrs. Donna Chirico-Rosenberg, a counseling psychologist from New York. Several interpreters were used throughout the research. The interviewees were typically unfamiliar with the whole interview procedure and some among them, especially children, made comments about the difficulty of the questions. Many of the children, particularly the younger girls, proved to be shy, and a few interviews had to be broken off on this account.

Thus a balance had to be struck in the interviews between asking demanding probing questions on the one hand, and respect and consideration for the considerable cognitive end social strains these questions caused for the respondents, on the other hand. In traditional cultures such as Ladakh, older male authority figures are often assumed to possess religious and moral knowledge, and children are rarely asked their detailed opinions about such matters. In addition, respondents sometimes asked whether they had given "the" right answer. They seemingly believed that there existed an objectial moral reality certainly known to *rinpoche*, and perhaps the interviewers and other authority figures. At the end of the interviews, respondents received Polaroid pictures of themselves. In addition, adults received small amounts of money and/or a picture of H. H. Dalai Lama.

As in other Buddhist societies, there exists in Ladakh a major division between the "great" literate tradition of a small group of reflective, highly trained upper-strata monks, and the "small", illiterate or semi-literate traditions of Folk Buddhism. This Folk Buddhism is lived rather then systematically analyzed. The lower ranks of monks are often closer to Ladakh's Folk Buddhism than to the abstract speculations of the trained *geshe* (*dge-bshes*) or *rinpoche*. The division between the great tradition of higher Buddhism and the intuitive tradition of Folk Buddhism was clearly reflected in our interviews. The present paper will focus mostly on interviews with less educated, traditional, mature villagers and lower ranking monks.

RESULTS

Table 1 summarizes some of the themes that were identified in the interviews of traditional, mature Buddhist Ladakhis. The Buddhist religion was almost universally accepted as a guiding light for one's life journey. Older respondents, especially, emphasized that religion showed them the way to a better reincarnation and thus to a better future. Only rarely did the interviews reflect a deliberate, self-conscious, ideological concern with religion; rather, the respondents seemed to live "in" their religion. Religious meaning was considered to exist objectively as an intrinsic aspect of all existence, not as a subjectively chosen worldview. While the large majority of laypersons were not involved in high-level meditation they nevertheless acknowledged that mystic contemplation as practiced by high lamas leads to ultimate truth beyond all conceptualization. However, the exact nature of this truth remained vague and unclear to them. The respondents consistently expressed respect for various religious leaders although in informal discussions, a few of the more educated interviewees criticized some political choices made by some of these leaders. Systematic doubt about the validity of (Vajrayana) Buddhism was almost never expressed, though a few of the younger respondents acknowledged that they lived a carefree life in which religion played only a limited role. A retired farmer and guide expressed some of these themes as follows: "When I was a young man, I enjoyed myself very much and cared about nothing, I was strong and used to go to the high mountains with the horses and the yaks…I never used to pray, but now I realize my situation. Now that I am 72 years old, I am thinking for my future only. For the future I want to pray, for my reincarnation and for all good persons. Only the God and the high lamas are important. HH. Bakula Rinpoche gives me good advice, and I follow the teachings of the God. Without faith there is nothing and our hearts are dead. Without religion a person thinks of himself only, end his heart is dead."

In most interviews, karma, merit and demerit, merit-making, and the importance of avoiding sin were much emphasized. Though respondents often found it difficult to express their conception of karma, they seemed to look upon it as an impersonal, all-pervading, objectively existing system of moral retribution for evil actions. In many interviews, a major emphasis was placed on the avoidance of concrete sins such as killing, stealing, and lying in order to avoid a future subhuman reincarnation or punishment in the Buddhist hell-purgatory. Other respondents discussed more abstract, pure, internalized, and less pragmatic moral conceptions. They emphasized the importance of moral purity in the form of a "clear heart".[4] Moral relativism was absent, while systematic ideological reflection about ethical systems was found only among a few educated persons who had had considerable contact with other cultures and worldviews. No religious fanaticism appeared in the interviews. There was very little indication of anomie as understood by the French sociologist Durkheim. Anomie denotes a state of normlessness in a society. In such a society, social and moral norms are weak and often contradictory, leading to a loss of morel conviction and sense of purpose among many members of that society. In stable, traditional societies, where religion provides a comprehensive framework for understanding one's life, anomie and identity conflicts appear to be rare.

In the interviews, a considerable number of questions focused on a person's conception of guilt and other moral feelings. As understood in this essay, guilt feelings refer to negative feelings shaped by self-blame and self-condemnation for moral shortcomings. When experiencing guilt, a person compares his/her actions, feelings or thoughts against his/her own moral standards, conscience or ego-ideal and perceives that he falls short of his internalized moral values. In the interviews, Ladakhi respondents rarely mentioned or understood guilt fee1ings, nor did they have a clear understanding of the concept of conscience. However, there probably exists in Ladakh's village societies a strong concern for feelings of shame, though our interviews, unfortunately, did not focus on notions of shame. Shame feelings may be defined as fears caused by imagined or actual disapproval by significant others. They reflect a person's social anxieties and concerns about public self-presentation, whereas guilt feelings are more likely to reflect a person's inner preoccupations with moral inadequacies of the self. In daily living, then, Ladakh's village culture appears to function more as a shame culture than a guilt culture. Women, especially, can be very much concerned about gossip, rumors, *mikha* (*mi-kha* "the mouth of the people") and other manifestations of public opinion (Kaplanian, 1986; Kuhn, 1998).

This conclusion is strengthened by additional information gleaned from the interviews. The interviews reflected little concern for or understanding of, inner psychological processes such as self-esteem or change in the inner structure and nature of the self. When directly asked, respondents were generally unable to give a clear definition of the concept of self-esteem. Instead, they claimed that high self-esteem reflects a person's excessively "big ego", selfishness, or undesirable pride. (It should not be concluded from this that questions of self-esteem are unimportant for an understanding of Ladakhi personality — it is just that Ladakhis are neither preoccupied with questions of self-esteem not do they have a clear understanding of its role in inner psychological processes.) The interviewees found it difficult to provide fluid narratives of their life stories and it soon became clear that most of them were unused to systematic self-reflection. As is common in traditional societies, the respondents entertained clear, unambiguous conceptions of specific role obligations and implicitly defined themselves on the basis of specific status and role criteria based on gender, age, status in the family, religious identity, etc. Some were probably also aware of some kind of "existential self" although they found it very difficult to express such notions except in the form of concrete religious images.

The respondents admired quiet dignity, restraint, serenity, inner quietness, and a certain detachment from one's emotions, from other people, and from the illusions of this world. Interpersonal assertiveness and aggressiveness, impulsivity, inner restlessness, and emotional expressiveness were all considered undesirable (nor are they common in daily village life). Introversion, shyness, and timidity are personality traits fairly commonly encountered among Ladakh's Buddhist inhabitants. The quiet control of inner emotions may be helped by, and sometimes hidden by, a distinct sense of politeness, discretion, privacy, and humor that makes itself felt in daily life. Undesirable emotions such as envy, jealousy, and fear are disowned by the self and projected outwards onto ghosts, spirits, demons, village neighbors, or outgroups such as Kashmiris through gossip, defensive religious rituals designed to ward off visible and invisible threats and negative forces, and other means. At the same time, Ladakhis frequently take a rather relaxed approach to the many local deities and lower-ranking invisible beings: They exist, one should respect and propitiate them, but most of the time they are not all that threatening.

Within the context of interpersonal relationships, respondents stressed concrete reciprocity, obedience, avoidance of violence, and obligations based on role relationships. Relationships between husbands and wives frequently appeared to reflect a similar concern with fulfilling concrete obligations, while romantic love, intimacy, and a sharing of one's self with others were much less emphasized or valued. The possibility that emotions may be ambivalent was almost never recognized by interviewees. (Ambivalent emotions are contradictory feelings such as love and hate that are combined into a new, differentiated, contradictory amalgam of emotions.) Feelings of dependence upon authority figures such as *rinpoche* and other religious leaders were easily expressed, providing the respondent with a sense of security and connectedness. Feelings of deep, inner resentment or impulsive rebelliousness against authority figures were absent, though a quiet sense of humor about human foibles was much in evidence. Respondents in most cases expressed a considerable degree of satisfaction with their lives. Diffuse feelings of depression, "malaise", and discontent with one's achievements were only rarely seen in the interviews, but some respondents, especially women, pointed to concrete sources of unhappiness in their lives. These included unhappy marriages, abandonment by a husband after many years of marriage, death of a parent, or extreme poverty. Women — especially young wives living in their husband's family home — may be the victim of intrafamily tensions and occasionally express these (indirectly) through states of possession (Crook, 1997; Srinivas, 1998).

Interpersonal relationships in Ladakh appear to be characterized by a rather high level of synergy. Synergy refers here to perceptions and feelings by persons or a whole culture that actions helpful to others frequently are also helpful to the self. In such situations, egoism and altruism are to some degree fused with each other. Life is then seen in noncompetitive, holistic terms. In Ladakh, Mahayana Buddhism attempts to create such perceptions. Altruistic actions of compassion help a person to accumulate merit and thus increase a person's chance for a better reincarnation. But the person's desire for merit (and thus for a better reincarnation) can in itself be quite egotistical. It is just this fusion of egotism and altruism, then, that provides some of the glue for interpersonal bonds in Ladakh.

The fusion between egoism and altruism may be seen in the interview of the retired farmer as quoted above. The farmer emphasizes that he prays both for himself and for others ("For the future I want to pray, for my reincarnation, and for all good persons.") He recognizes that Vajrayana Buddhism creates this fusion between selfishness and altruism ("Without religion a person thinks of himself only, and his heart is dead"), and he considers high ranking lamas to be spiritual advisors and even models of perfection ("H. H., Bakula Rinpoche gives me good advice…").

In Ladakh, the synergy between egoism and altruism both creates and reflects a considerable emphasis on cooperation, and yet there exists in the interviews and in daily interactions an undercurrent of envy and occasional "toughness" against others and the self. But at the same time, Ladakhis generally avoid serious sins such as killing, stealing, rape, systematic deception, in part because they are convinced that the inevitable consequences (karma) of such actions will lead them to hell (purgatory) and to inferior forms of reincarnation. In general, Buddhism in Ladakh has been very successful indeed in suppressing the major forms of antisocial behavior. It has succeeded in controlling and channeling some of the basic human drives such as greed and selfishness without, of course, being able to ultimately get rid of them. As has been noted by numerous observers (e.g., Gielen and Chirico-Rosenberg, 1993; Norberg-Hodge, 1991), Buddhist Ladakh was and is an unusually nonviolent society when compared to most surrounding societies and traditional Tibet.

While respondents often emphasized synergistic life goals, they also showed a considerable interest in very concrete, ego oriented life goals and attainments. These goals became sometimes visible in informal discussions and included concrete desires for long life and good health, happiness, reasonable prosperity, acceptance from others, and convivial relationships with others. This emphasis on tangible goals and interpersonally mediated happiness was sometimes, though by no means always, accompanied by a concrete, utilitarian, pragmatic, and occasionally rather "tough" style of thinking. In daily relationships, one sees a considerable emphasis on reciprocity between individuals and

between groups of persons such as families. We may note in this context that in their discussion of Tibetan notions of the good life, Lichter and Epstein (1983) describe a similar emphasis on health, long life, and interpersonally mediated happiness. However, such an emphasis is probably prevalent in a wide variety of societies. The emphasis reflects general human tendencies and not merely an ethos specific to Tibetan societies. Similarly, the emphasis on reciprocity pervading many relationships in Ladakh can also be seen in many other societies including traditional societies based on agriculture.

We come now to the general nature of thinking about people and the self as it is reflected in the interviews and in Ladakh's poetry, literature, and mythology (Brauen, 1980; Francke, 1905/1941). Much of the thinking in the interviews was relatively concrete, action oriented, diffuse, and global. The thinking often reflected an intuitive synthesis of perceptions and thoughts. The perceptions and thoughts were not systematically and logically analyzed and compared to each other. Thus, systematic hypothetical thinking and formal operations as described by the Swiss psychologist Piaget (Glossary: Formal operations) were only infrequently found in the interviews of villagers though these forms of thought made their appearance in the interviews of highly educated laypersons and monks. When asked about unconscious meanings, village respondents almost universally denied that they exist, though higher Buddhism is quite familiar with the concept of the unconscious. Undesirable feelings such as envy, jealousy, or hostility were only rarely attributed to the self. Instead, in an unconscious process of ego-defense such emotions and thoughts were externalized and projected onto demons, ghosts, witches, other people, cultural outsiders, etc.

One of the most interesting psychological aspects of Ladakhi thought patterns concerns the frequent mixture of mythopoeic and primary process thinking with secondary process thinking (Glossary). Mythopoeic thought is based on the inner visions, images, and archetypes of the collective unconscious (Jung, 1968). In Ladakh, intuitive, unconscious or semi-conscious creative images of this type make their appearance in dreams, in the Kesar epos (Francke, 1905), in poetry and wedding songs (Brauen, 1980), in striking religious paintings (Genoud and Inoue, 1982), in religious rituals, *cham* (*'cham*) dances, meditation practices, hagiographies (Evans Wentz, 1969; Paul, 1982; Tucci, 1970); in the *bardo* (*bar-do*) state after death (Freemantle and Trungpa 1975), in states of possession by *lha*, ghosts, and other beings, and in the frequent reliance upon oracles, astrologers (*onpo; dbon-po, (r)tsispa; rtsispa*), omens, etc. Mythopoeic thinking reflects inner truths that lie outside the normal categories of "objective time and space". Frequently, these truths are externalized and expressed in symbolic forms. Secondary process thinking, on the other hand, refers to rational, conscious, logically organized thinking under the control of the ego. It is directed towards the external, tangible world in the service of adaptation to practical tasks. The boundary between the almost dreamlike, symbolic world of mythopoeic thinking and the mundane world of secondary thinking is quite permeable in the minds of many traditional Ladakhis, and more generally, in the traditional Tibetan symbolic world (Paul, 1982). It is just this unique mixture of an archaic, animistic imagination with the moral world of Vajrayana Buddhism and the concrete, action oriented world of everyday adaptation to difficult high-altitude living conditions that gives the ethos of Ladakh its special qualities.

LIMITATIONS

In a brief essay such as this one, it is only possible to highlight a very few aspects of the methods and findings on which this research is based. Consequently, it becomes necessary to point out some of the limitations, assumptions, and problems that are built into the present research project. First, we may note that the emphasis throughout the essay has been mostly on interviews and less so on the observation of behavior patterns in day-to-day living. Inevitably, such an approach tends to paint an excessively positive picture of a culture. Respondents in interviews like to present themselves in a good light and will tend to emphasize ideal rather real life patterns. Second, we may note that this chapter stresses the special ethos of Buddhist Ladakh. This implies an relative emphasis upon all those psychological aspects of Ladakhi thought that make it unique and give it its special character. Universal aspects common to thought in all cultures as well as individual differences within Ladakh have been discussed in a more cursory fashion.

A third problem encountered in this chapter concerns its pioneering character. It is the first study of its kind in Ladakh, and the author was unable to check his observations against the findings of other psychologists or psychological anthropologists. However, the anthropologist Kaplanian (1986 and below) has recently commented on the author's research in Ladakh. He compares the present findings with his own observations and remarks that "le discours que les Ladakhi ont tenu à Uwe Gielen coïncide à 80 % avec le comportement réel tangible tel que j'ai pu l'observer quotidiennement pendant neuf ans. Et ce pourcentage est assez remarquable." (Translation: "The interviews which the Ladakhi held with Uwe Gielen coincide with 80 % of the actual, concrete conduct which I have been able to observe daily over a period of nine years. And this percentage is rather remarkable" Kaplanian 1986: p. 44 and below). So the agreement between his observations and the results of the present interview study is surprisingly good. Nevertheless, there are some discrepancies between his observations of daily behavior in Ladakh and the present findings based as they are on a somewhat artificial interview method. In Kaplanian's view, the Ladakhis are "beaucoup plus possessifs, avides, égoïstes, jaloux qu'ils veulent bien le dire". (Translation: The Ladakhis are "much more possessive, greedy, egotistical, and jealous than they were willing to admit"). Kaplanian emphasizes especially a strong tendency toward envy among the Ladakhis he has observed.

The discrepancies between the author's observations and Kaplanian's observations should perhaps not come as a surprise as they reflect a long-standing debate among anthropologists. The present research centers on selected themes in the ethos of traditional Buddhist Ladakh. These themes frequently possess a distinct religious and moral quality. They may reflect more or less idealized patterns of behavior and thinking that Ladakhis try to strive for. In real life, these ideal patterns must surely be less visible than they are in our interviews. Seen in this light, it is in fact surprising and gratifying that Kaplanian finds an agreement of about 80 % between his own daily observations and the interview data presented here. It suggests that the ethos identified in this essay has considerable guiding power in daily life.

It is of interest to compare this situation to a longstanding, well-known dispute in American cultural anthropology. Benedict (1934), in her famous book "Patterns of Culture", described

America's Pueblo Indians as being mild mannered, cooperative, nonaggressive, ceremonial, and oriented toward happiness. Other anthropologists, though observing the same people, stressed covert tensions, anxiety, and manifestations of suspicion visible in daily life and on projective personality tests (Barnouw, 1985; Bennett, 1946). My own approach, then, is closer to Benedict's "organic" approach with its emphasis on "the integration of the culture with its 'sacred' values and its ideal type of the nonaggressive, cooperative individual" (Barnouw, 1985: p. 66). Kaplanian's Freudian interests lead him to pay much closer attention to id-related themes such as envy, jealousy, greed, and egoism. His approach also agrees well with Foster's (1965) suggestion that in many peasant communities feelings of envy, underhanded competition, pessimism, fatalism, and more or less submerged aggression are rampant.

While I do not believe that such a description properly reflects the prevailing ethos of Buddhist Ladakh, it is nevertheless clear that such feelings sometimes exist in Ladakh's villages as they do in other peasant communities. Still, the typical villager in Ladakh knows quite well that such feelings and desires, though thoroughly human, act like mental poisons and can ultimately send him or her into the realms of hungry ghosts, demons, and other evil beings.[5]

SOME AFTERTHOUGHTS IN THE YEAR 2000

Patrick Kaplanian kindly invited me to update and revise my chapter in light of subsequent developments in Ladakh studies. Rather than reformulating my essay in a substantial way, I decided that it would be better to leave my original conclusions intact and instead to share with the reader my thoughts about their possible validity 15 years after they were written.

It is now 19 years ago that I concluded the interviews on which this research report is based. In the meanwhile, I visited several areas of potential comparative interest to Ladakh researchers: Baltistan, the Hunza Valley, the Kashgar area in China, Tibet, Lahoul, and Spiti. In addition, I revisited Ladakh in the summer of 2000 after an absence of 19 years finding it both remarkably changed yet in other ways much the same. Although I did not undertake any formal research, my subsequent remarks are influenced by my observations during these travels. In addition, and for comparison purposes, I conducted two small-scale studies respectively in Haiti and in Belize (Central America) that are based on the same interview method described in this essay. I also continued to write about Ladakh including further interpretations of the interviews described in this essay (Gielen, 1995, in press-a; and Chirico-Rosenberg, 1993), accounts of gender roles in Ladakh and Tibet (Gielen, 1985, 1993), and a description and interpretation of Ladakhi conceptions and rituals related to death (Gielen, 1997).

In the following, I will briefly comment on some possible criticism of the conclusions contained in this essay in the light of later developments in Ladakh studies, discuss the impact of modernization on Ladakh's traditional ethos, and compare Ladakh to Baltistan and Haiti.

Is it Possible to Construct a Unitary Ethos?

Postmodern researchers in fields such as cultural anthropology (Srinivas, 1998) may be skeptical about the broad and sometimes sweeping conclusions contained in this essay. In this context, I remember vividly some of the discussions taking place at the 7th Colloquium of the International Association for

Ladakh Studies in Sankt Augustin, Germany. Guided by a postmodern framework, some participants emphasized the importance of local differences in ritual practices between, for instance, the Nubra Valley and other regions in Ladakh. They showed a noticeable reluctance to explore possible similarities and shared value systems throughout Buddhist Ladakh. In a similar vein, postmodern social scientists have generally argued that gender, social class, ethnic, and other differences inevitably lead to competing identities, interests, customs, worldviews, values, and attitudes within any given society. Seen in this perspective, it must appear misleading to attempt to construct an overall, relatively uniform account of the ethos of a complex society such as Ladakh. In contrast to such a viewpoint, I believe that the postmodern perspective tends to lead its adherents to focus excessively on "individual trees" rather than the "overall forest": By looking at too many differences and too many details they are apt to miss the big picture. A narrow focus on local variations in belief systems and customs, for instance, makes it difficult for a researcher to understand a given culture as a dynamic, yet differentiated whole. Postmodern researchers also tend to project, in an ethnocentric way, their own preoccupations (such as feminism) onto respondents from other cultures.

I wish to add in this context that the present account of Ladakh's special Buddhist ethos is compatible with a considerable amount of individual and group differentiation. I found, for instance, that some individuals demonstrated both in their interviews and in their daily lives a distinct concern for utilitarian and pragmatic considerations while others were more guided by cooperative or altruistic concerns. This difference did not at all coincide with the dividing line between laypersons and monks. Two prominent monks, for instance, exhibited a surprising degree of utilitarianism whereas some of the older (and seemingly more religious!) laypersons were much more interested in prosocial feelings, thoughts, and actions. At the same time, the four *rinpoche* I interviewed exhibited not only quite distinct personalities but also advanced surprisingly different religious justifications in the moral dilemmas as well as arriving at different decisions for the fictive actors in the decision stories. Thus, no uniform Buddhist view of how to decide the moral dilemmas emerged in the interviews with the highest ranking Buddhist "moral experts". In spite of these and other variations, however, I believe that a distinct and coherent spiritual ethos governed Buddhist Ladakh at the time of the interviews and to a considerable extent does so today. The forces of modernization are now transforming this ethos, but they are not destroying it.

How Does the Present Research Compare to Other, More Recent Studies?

A perusal of the scientific literature on Ladakh indicates that no psychologist other than Crook has undertaken systematic psychological research in Ladakh or Zanskar (Zangskar) since 1981. For the present purposes, the most important scientific literature pertaining to social psychological questions includes the observations made by Crook (1994a, 1995b) in Zanskar, an important anthropological study conducted by Srinivas (1998) in the Nubra Valley, two extremely positive interpretations of Ladakh's Buddhist society by Norberg-Hodge (1991; Norberg and Russel, 1994), some excellent studies of Ladakhi shamans (*lha-pa, lha-mo*) (Schenk, 1994) and other healers (Kuhn, 1988), several studies of gender roles and women (e.g., Gielen,

1993; Hay, 1999), and various other contributions. Crook and Osmaston's (1994) volume on life in Zanskar contains some useful chapters describing Zanskari childrearing practices, attitudes in daily life, conceptions of identity, religious beliefs, and yogins (see especially Ch. 15-17, 22, 24).

Let me now briefly comment on some of the aforementioned studies. Norberg-Hodge and Russel (1994) report a study of Zanskari birth and childrearing practices that was concluded in 1980 prior to the opening of the road connecting Kargil with Padum. They conducted formal interviews with twenty-five women, informal interviews with others, observed mother-child interactions in family settings, and translated some pertinent passages from two ancient Tibetan medical textbooks. These four approaches "provided remarkably consistent information" (Norberg-Hodge, 1994: p. 519).

In their study, the Zanskari parents generally took a patient, relaxed, good-humored, loving approach to the tasks of childrearing. The young children were only very rarely pressured or punished, nor were many restraints placed upon them. Having reached the age of five or six, the children were then introduced step by step to household tasks, and they were also expected to take care of younger siblings. In general, the authors paint a very positive picture of Zanskari childhood, a picture that with some qualifications and modifications matches that found in other Buddhist communities located in Ladakh and Western Himalayas (for summary of such research, see Gielen, 1993).

In the same book that contains the results of Norberg-Hodge and Russell's research, we can also find Crook's observations on "Social Organization and Personal Identity in Zanskar" and "Zangskari Attitudes" (Crook, 1994a, 1994b). The chapters describe Zanskari attitudes toward oneself, family members, *phaspun* members, religion, merit-making, tensions within and between families, and other topics. Crook relied in his research on an informal type of participant observation.

Much of what he has to say in his chapters appears to agree with the conclusions contained in the present essay. Unlike Norberg-Hodge's extremely favorable conclusions (which are also mirrored in her more extensive 1991 publication), Crook recognizes that especially within extended families, considerable tensions may exist. At the same time, Zanskaris are said to have developed quite effective means to "replace aggression with good temper, to mediate when necessary, to assume positive attitudes of mind, to collaborate and reciprocate" (Cook, 1994b: p. 544). In a somewhat similar vein, Kuhn's (1998) study reports the existence of various tensions in the village of Thikse both within and between families although this is not the central focus of her study.

It may prove useful to arrange the few available social psychological/ anthropological studies conducted in Ladakh and Zanskar on a continuum ranging from the most "positive" to the more "mixed" reports: At one end we may place Norberg-Hodge, who paints a most attractive picture and, in my opinion, sometimes romanticizes what she has experienced in Ladakh. On the other end of the continuum, we may position Kaplanian (1981, 1986) and Srinivas (1998). Somewhere in-between these two poles can be located the works of Crook (1994a, 1994b) and myself. Could it be that this position points to a certain balance in the latter studies?

Buddhist Ladakh and Modernization

Ladakh has undergone trenchant economic, political, sociocul-tural, and psychological changes during the last 20 years. The change agents include rapid economic development, a much greater local visibility of the Indian government, the massive presence of the Indian Army, population increases, political unrest and dramatic political changes in and around Ladakh, the widespread introduction of modern schooling, the influence of the mass media, a rapid decrease in the practice of polyandry, and the culturally often disruptive effects of tourism.

The influence of these and other change agents has been massive in the Leh area, but to a lesser degree it can also be felt in other areas of Ladakh. It is not difficult to surmise how such changes may have influenced Ladakh's ethos as described in this essay. In 1980-1981, traditional Ladakhis were "embedded" in collectivistic social structures and worldviews that asked the individual to give priority to family and village interests and to cooperate in collective institutions and activities. In contrast, processes of modernization and conflict tend to "disembed" the individual thereby both liberating and alienating him or her from networks of social support and constraint. Young men especially, may grow to be more assertive, self-oriented, individualistic, and even impulsive. Such processes are supported by the employment of young men in the Indian Army, by joining support services offered to the tourists, by availing oneself of new job opportunities in the Leh area, etc. By taking men (and some women) temporarily or permanently away from their original villages, such economic opportunities inevitably lead to a new kind of individualism. They further a person's self-consciousness and awareness of cultural differences, increase the likelihood of involvement in ideologically driven political-religious movements, and make at least some traditional cultural practices more problematic. This ongoing process has also supported the rise of religious "identity politics" that intensified during the late 1980s and 1990s.

Culture change frequently leads to differences in worldview between the generations, a tendency that is furthered by the introduction of modern schools that mostly teach knowledge created in the outside world rather than in the local society. In this context, some younger Ladakhis may be tempted to reject some of the beliefs and customs of the older generation by perceiving them as outdated and even superstitious. Others may learn to look down on traditional agricultural activities, perhaps seeing them as a form of drudgery, as confining, and as non-lucrative by comparison with the seemingly more exciting opportunities presented by various newly created or expanded institutions.

Modern individualism has also supported the rapid decline of the practice of polyandry. The practice of polyandry was originally driven by the desire not to divide up a family's land between the children. It demanded emotional sacrifices especially from younger brothers who were asked to set aside their chances for independence and some of their interests in the service of family welfare and family unity. The system began to decline as new economic opportunities arose especially for the younger men but, at the same time, the practice of polyandry is also at variance with newer attitudes asking for more free choice and for less sacrifice and submission to collective family interests.

The forces of modernization, then, may be expected to lead to an increase of individualistic attitudes, a greater self-awareness, additional awareness of Ladakh's difficult position within its political and cultural surroundings, a more systematic concious-

ness of one's religious and sociopolitical identity, a decline in mythopoeic thinking and imagination, less belief in some of the more animistic aspects of folk religion, an increase in attitudinal and belief system differences between the generations, a greater exposure of the younger generation to India's youth culture (which, in turn, is influenced by international trends), and rising economic expectations and desires. These changes are transforming Ladakh's Buddhist ethos as described in this essay by weakening some of its more diffuse and traditional manifestations, but at the same time the transformed ethos continues to exert a powerful influence on Ladakh's Buddhist inhabitants. This influence becomes especially salient if we compare Ladakh to its Muslim neighbors and to some other developing societies.

Buddhist Ladakh in Cross-Cultural Perspective

I was originally attracted to a psychological study of Ladakh's Buddhist ethos because my travels in other areas of Asia (especially Hindu India and some Islamic countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, and Iran) had convinced me that by comparison, there was something truly unique about the religious and cultural worldview and values I had encountered during my first, brief visit to Ladakh in 1977. My subsequent visits to Pakistan, China, Taiwan, Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, and other Asian countries have only reinforced this conviction. Of special interest in this context is Pakistan's region of Baltistan. Baltistan shares a similar ecology with Ladakh, as well as many historical contacts and considerable linguistic similarities. Indeed, the Baltis were converted from a Tibetan form of Buddhism to Islam only a few centuries ago. But whereas the ecological and early historical circumstances were rather similar for the Baltis and the Ladakhis, their modern psychological, religious, and cultural adaptations differ considerably from each other. The often dour but emotional Shias of Baltistan (and the Suru Valley in Ladakh) tend to distrust strangers, see themselves as victims of the outside world, assign an inferior place to women, look upon life as a mostly harsh experience, and preach an emotional and puritanical form of religion that is directed against drinking, dancing, and having fun. All this stands in contrast to the more cheerful, easygoing tolerance and geniality seen in much of Buddhist life in Ladakh. The Baltis' passions are more easily aroused than those of the Buddhist Ladakhis, resulting in their greater readiness for violent action. By comparison, the situations in Baltistan and in (Buddhist) Ladakh almost resemble those of a natural historical experiment: Whereas the historical starting points for the two societies were similar, they nowadays differ sharply in their prevailing ethos.

I have also been asked whether many of the conclusions contained in this essay may not just as well apply to other, traditional farming and peasant societies. To answer this question, I conducted 28 lengthy interviews with farmers and farmhands living in a small village in Haiti. More than 80 % of the interviewees were illiterate or semi-illiterate. The questionnaires used in this study were substantially the same as those employed in Ladakh except for some local adaptations.

In their interviews, the Haitians demonstrated quite different self-conceptions and personality traits when compared to those found in most Ladakh interviews. They consistently emphasized the importance of self-respect for one's psychological well-being, were more self-conscious, found it much easier to pre-

sent systematic narratives of their lives, exhibited a surprising degree of emotional volatility and ambivalence, were often deeply unhappy about their life situation, were more distrustful of each other and of strangers, and were more secretive, tense, and fickle than the more easy going Ladakhis. Utilitarian considerations played a crucial role in their answers to the moral decision dilemmas. It seemed obvious that the utilitarianism and general unhappiness pervading many of the interviews reflected in part the respondents' general poverty and their ensuing sense of hopelessness.

Based on my experiences and interview data, then, it appears that Ladakh's ethos and certain personality characteristics of its inhabitants do indeed differ considerably from those to be found either in Baltistan or in Haiti. Compared to Ladakh, different ideals and different emotional atmospheres prevail in the latter two societies.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I would like to state that some 19 years after my initial experiences in Ladakh, the main themes of the present essay still seem valid to me — especially for Ladakh as it existed then. At the same time I very much hope that some other psychologists will be prepared to conduct future research in Ladakh to verify, qualify, or refute some of the ideas presented here.

It should not be forgotten that at present, we do not have a single representative survey assessing some of the basic attitudes, values, and beliefs to be found among Ladakhis of various backgrounds. In the same vein, we have almost no systematic observational studies of socialization practices, psychopathological manifestations, or attitudes about matters of daily life. From the point of view of psychology at least, we continue to know very little about Ladakh's people. The available social anthropological research based on participant observation is certainly useful, but it cannot replace the more systematic research approach preferred by most psychologists.

I would like to conclude my chapter on a personal note. I first visited Ladakh for a few days in 1977 and sensed then that Ladakh radiated a special quality. My research constitutes a preliminary attempt to grasp just what this special quality might be. I am grateful for having had the opportunity to visit Ladakh four times, and would like to express my special thanks to Mr. Wangchuk Shalipa, Mrs. Donna Chirico-Rosenberg, Mr. Nawang Tsering Shakspo, Mr. Dilli Rigzin, Mr. Tashi Rabgyas, my sister, Mrs. Odina Diephaus, and many others for their help and support throughout my stays there. Given Ladakh's difficult political and military situation, I very much hope that the coming years will bring peace and prosperity to the region.

KEYWORDS

Buddhist Ladakh, Ethos, Morality, Faith, Karma, Detachment, Mythopoeic Thinking, Restraint, Synergy, Non-assertiveness, Shame.

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TABLE I
WORLDVIEWS, ETHOS, AND PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF TRADITIONAL MATURE LADAKHIS

Ultimate meaning of life and role of religion in providing meaning:
Religion universally accepted — There are no coincidences or chance events; everything is meaningful and ruled by karma — Life means suffering, but is only a kind of dream — Death is relative, not final — Not harming others leads to good reincarnation — Meaning exists objectively and has been revealed. Why questions and doubt are rare — Mystic contemplation leads to ultimate truth beyond all conceptualization, but only some religious specialists practice systematic meditation.

Nature of morality:
Morality is an objective reality, facts, and rules revealed to *rinpoche*, saints, etc. — It is part of an impersonal system of retribution (karma) and reincarnation and is embedded in religion — Central emphasis on not causing people and animals to suffer — Moral relativism, self-consciousness, ideological reflection on ethical systems are rare (the latter is now increasing because of political-religious "competition").

Guilt and shame feelings:
Unclear conception of guilt feeling — Guilt feelings rare or deeply submerged — Limited self-blame — Strong feelings of shame and "moral fear" when breaking interpersonal norms or especially religious prescriptions — Considerable tolerance for other people and worldviews.

Conscience and sense of responsibility:
Unclear or no conception of conscience — Correctly analyzed actions rather than conscience are emphasized — Strong but not rigid sense of moral responsibility.

Ideal though remote model of perfection:
Compassionate saint who has conquered his selfish passions (greed, envy, anger, hate, lust) and fears. Such figures are known through hagiographies, Milarepa's biography, jakata stories of the former lives of the Buddha, etc.

Drives:
Expression of drives is muted — Greed, selfishness, lust, ignorance are seen as basic causes of suffering and as leading to bad reincarnations — Conflict between id and superego fairly low.

Emotionality, assertiveness, defensiveness:
Generally low levels — Emphasis on quiet dignity, detachment, serenity, inner quietness and "emptiness" — Impatience and driveness rare — Assertiveness, aggressiveness, impulsivity, inner restlessness, emotional expressivity all considered undesirable and uncommon — introversion, shyness, timidity fairly common.

Intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts — cooperation:
Avoidance of conflicts generally favored — Little interpersonal violence — Interpersonal conflicts not very common although some intrafamily and other tensions exist — Emphasis on cooperation but undercurrent of envy and occasional "toughness" against others and self — When conflict occurs high status mediators volunteer to help solve them — Distinct sense of privacy and discretion with correlative lack of emotional intrusiveness — Fear of gossip and *mikha* especially among some women — Women may act out intrafamily conflicts through states of possession.

Concrete life goals:
Long life, health, reasonable prosperity, happiness, acceptance from and convivial relationships with others, reciprocity in human relationships, good future reincarnation.

Synergy (maslow):
High level of synergy: Altruism is seen as leading to accumulation of merit and better reincarnation (counteracted by pragmatic concern for immediate self-interest).

Anomie and deviance:
Levels of anomie and deviance are very low; sense of meaninglessness is rare.

Self and self-esteem:
Little focus on self — Self-esteem seen as selfishness and undesirable pride — Self embedded in society — Self defined by concrete roles dependent on age, gender, social status, family position, religious status, etc. — Few basic identity conflicts — Limited awareness of inner feelings and inner conflicts — Little awareness of inner personality change.

Individual choice:
Not emphasized but increasingly available.

Interpersonal relationships — romantic love — dependence feelings and relationship to authority:
Emphasis on concrete reciprocity and obedience — Emotional ambivalence rare or not recognized — Little emphasis on intimacy, romantic love, or deep sharing of self in husband-wife relationships — Dependence on religious leaders easily expressed with non-hostile belief in authority.

Happiness and sense of psychological well-being:
Frequent feelings of well-being, although life is hard — Feelings of diffuse depression and tragedy uncommon but some negative feelings about concrete sources of unhappiness (e.g., poverty).

Faith, trust, truthfulness:
Very strong faith, considerable interpersonal trust — "Naive" honesty and "innocence" combined with inability to systematically manipulate others.

General nature of thinking about people and self:
Concrete, action oriented, diffuse, global, stationary, non experimental — Ambivalence, multiplicity of motives, unconscious meanings not recognized — Concrete operations (Piaget) or early formal operations — Limited imagination.

Boundary between primary process (mythopoeic) and secondary process thinking:
Permeable boundary between mythopoeic and secondary process thinking — Reliance on dreams, omens, augury, myth, possession by *lha*, etc. — Projection of anxieties and hostile impulses onto ghosts, spirits, witches, etc. — External reality may be experienced as somewhat dreamlike — Inner thoughts projected outwards and sensed as concrete, often invisible beings and energies in the surrounding world.

GLOSSARY

Ambivalence of feelings:
Contradictory feelings are combined into a new, differentiated amalgam of emotions, found for instance in love-hate relationships.

Anomie (durkheim):
State of normlessness in a society. Social and moral norms are weak and frequently contradictory, leading to a loss of moral conviction and sense of purpose among many members of that society.

Ethos:
The characteristic spirit or genius of a people that distinguishes them from other people. Includes characteristic attitudes and value systems.

Formal operations (piaget):
Ability to systematically reflect on one's own thoughts; construction of systems of thought including the ability to see the possible implications and interrelationships between the concepts of thought systems, systematic, hypothetical thinking.

Global, diffuse thinking:
Intuitive synthesis of perceptions and thoughts. Perceptions and thoughts are not systematically and logically analyzed and compared to each other.

Guilt feelings:
Negative feelings based on self-condemnation for immoral actions feelings or thoughts. The self compares itself against its own moral standards and finds itself wanting.

Id (freud):
Unconscious, unsocialized basic drives, especially uncontrolled sexual and aggressive impulses.

Intrapersonal conflicts:
Conflicts, especially of an emotional nature, within the self. People are often only partially aware of such conflicts.

Mythopoeic thinking (jung):
Intuitive, unconscious or semiconscious, creative, mythological, poetic thinking based on the inner images, visions, and archetypes of the collective unconscious and outside normal time and space. The concept is related to Freud's concept of primary process thinking which stresses the wishfulfillment oriented, irrational, disconnected, primitive id and body oriented quality of some mythopoeic thinking. The opposite of secondary process thinking.

Projection (freud):
Repression of undesirable feelings such as hostility, envy, jealousy. In an unconscious process of ego defense, these feelings and thoughts are externalized and then attributed to other people or beings (demons, witches, Kashmiris, etc.). The concept of projection fits well into traditional Buddhist psychology, which assumes that our conceptions of the world and of ourselves are mostly delusional in character and governed by egocentric distortions and motives.

Secondary process thinking (freud):
Rational, logical, conscious, organized thinking under the control of the ego and directed toward the external, tangible world; opposite of primary process thinking.

Shame feelings:
Negative feelings about the self caused by imagined or actual disapproval by significant others.

Superego (freud):
Mostly unconscious, relatively fixed, ego-alien judgmental structure of the mind. Includes the ego-ideal, conscience, judgments of self-blame, and aggressive feelings directed against the self. These are subjectively experienced as guilt and inferiority feelings.

Synergy (maslow, benedict):
High synergy refers to perceptions by persons or whole cultures that actions helpful to others frequently are also helpful to the self. Egoism and altruism are fused with each other. Life is seen in non-competitive, holistic terms. Low synergy refers to perceptions that self-interest and the interests of others compete with each other and are mutually exclusive. Found in competitive societies that promote dog-eat-dog worldviews.

NOTES

1 The theories of Kohlberg, Fowler, and Selman attempt to construct universal structural stages of moral reasoning, social reasoning, and faith. In this chapter, no attempt is made to establish the presence or absence or such stages in the interview material.

2 Studies of « national character » or « modal personality » have been much criticized in recent years by psychological anthropologists and cross-cultural psychologists (Barnouw, 1985). Critics contend that such studies mistakenly assume that only a very limited range of personality types may be found in a given culture. However, the present research focuses on selected themes in the ethos of traditional Ladakh. Such a focus on ethos does not rule out the possibility that a considerable variety of personality types or personality structures may coexist with the predominant ways of thinking, believing, feeling, and behaving.

3 *Drakzhun* refers to a kind of bitumen or tarlike substance that is secreted by rocks. *Drakzhun* is found only high up in the mountains and difficult to obtain.

4 Our interviews tended to reflect different levels or stages in the understanding of moral and religious concepts, norms, and principles. These stages of understanding appeared to agree well with the stages of reasoning as proposed by Kohlberg, Selman, Oser, and Fowler. This finding appears to be roughly in agreement with Buddhist teachings. These teachings have traditionally assumed that the understanding of moral and religious truths varies widely from person to person, and that there are higher and lower levels of understanding.

5 This raises the question whether the present findings can be reconciled with traditional Buddhist philosophy and psychology. In my opinion, there are many interesting parallels between modern depth psychology and the Buddhist conceptions of human nature as they are reflected, for instance, in the traditional Buddhist « wheel of life. » The « wheel of life » can be found next to the entrance of many Ladakhi monasteries and is well-known to many Ladakhi villagers. The wheel is « turned » by mental poisons such as greed for life, hostility and aggressivity, ignorance, envy, and jealousy. These « poisons » may also be found in Freud's conception of the id as the primary sources of psychic energy. The id contains the forces of Eros or libido (sexualized greed for life), Thanatos (aggressive and self-destructive tendencies), and repression (ignorance). Unlike Freud, however, Tibetan Buddhism teaches that greed, sexuality, aggressiveness, etc. can through disciplined meditation be transformed into positive tendencies and forces.

RESUMÉ : L'auteur a interrogé soixante-douze Ladakhi boud-dhistes — enfants, femmes, hommes, laïcs aussi bien que moines. Les interviews étaient basés sur deux "dilemmes de raisonnement moral" de Kohlberg et sur deux "dilemmes de raisonnement social" de Selman. Trente-huit interviewés ont répondu à une forme abrégée du "questionnaire de foi religieuse" de Fowler, et seize autres ont été soumis à trois "dilemmes moraux" mis au point par l'auteur avec l'aide d'un Ladakhi.

Cette étude se base sur l'analyse de ces questionnaires mais aussi sur l'observation directe de certains comportements (participation aux fêtes religieuses, aux rites, etc.). Dans les interviews les Ladakhi interrogés mettent l'accent sur leur foi bouddhiste, sur l'importance qu'ils accordent aux notions de karma, de mérite et de démérite, et sur leur désir d'une "bonne" réincarnation. Ils admirent les attitudes réservées, la sérénité, le détachement, et la dignité et rejettent la libre expression des émotions. Les senti-ments de honte aident à maintenir la cohésion de la société villa-geoise; les sentiments de culpabilité sont par contre rarement compris et encore moins montrés. Le respect de soi est appré-hendé comme de l'égoïsme ou de l'orgueil. La réciprocité (des ser-vices, des obligations, des droits et des devoirs) et la soumission à la hiérarchie prennent le pas sur l'amour romantique ou les rela-tions intimes. Parmi des buts concrets pour sa vie sont la bonne santé, une longue vie, le bonheur, la prospérité raisonnable et des parentés cordiaux avec autrui.

Dans les communautés villageoises, alors que les conflits de per-sonnes ne sont pas montés en épingle et que les crimes graves sont très rares, la coopération et la confiance entre les personnes jouent un rôle important mais sont quelquefois abîmées par des sentiments d'envie. Le moi est immergé dans un réseau d'obliga-tions interpersonnelles évidentes pour tous. Les sentiments de joie, de jalousie et de peur sont désavoués et projetés sur les autres ou sur les démons toujours présents.

Les croyances religieuses ladakhi constituent un amalgame d'ani-misme — avec la croyance en toute une série d'entités surnatu-relles, démons et autres — de chamanisme centre-asiatique et de bouddhisme vajrayana — avec son idéal moral de compassion et ses tendances mystiques, reposant sur le modèle du Bouddha his-torique; le tout dans un contexte d'adaptation, voire de survie, au sein d'un désert de très haute montagne.

SUMMARY: Seventy-two Buddhist children, women, men, and monks were interviewed in Ladakh. The interviews included Kohlberg's "moral reasoning dilemmas" and two of Selman's "social reasoning vignettes". Thirty-eight interviewees also responded to an abbreviated form of Fowler's "faith interview" and 16 interviewees were exposed to three "moral dilemmas" jointly developed by a Ladakhi and the author. The chapter is based on these interviews as well as participation in religious festivals, rituals, daily interactions, etc. In the interviews, respondents emphasize faith in their Buddhist religion, karma, merit and deme-rit, and the desire for a good reincarnation. Restraint, serenity, detachment, and quiet dignity rather than the free expression of emotions are admired. Feelings of shame provide some of the moral glue that keeps Ladakhi village society together, but guilt feelings are rarely shown or understood.

Self-esteem is interpreted as selfishness or undesirable pride. Concrete reciprocity and obedience take precedence over intima-cy or romantic love in close relationships. Concrete goals for one's life include good health and long life, happiness, reasonable pros-perity, and convivial relationships with others. In Ladakh's village community conflicts between people are de-emphasized and capi-tal crimes are very rare. Cooperation, interpersonal trust, and reci-procity in relationships are stressed, but are sometimes undermin-ned by feelings of envy. The self is submerged in a network of interpersonal obligations that are clear to everybody. Feelings of envy, jealousy, and fear are disowned by the self and projected onto others or the ever-present demons. Ladakhi religious and moral beliefs reflect a unique amalgam of indigenous, animistic, demon-ridden Central Asian shamanism, the mystic, compassio-nate moral ideals of Vajrayana Buddhism, the relentless logic of the historical Buddha, and hard, pragmatic, adaptive strategies so necessary for survival in the high altitude mountain desert of Ladakh.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG: Es wurden 72 buddhistische Kinder, Frauen, Männer und Mönche in Ladakh interviewt. Die Interviews umfassten Kohlbers "Moraldilemmas" und zwei "Dilemmas" von Selman. 38 der Befragten beantworteten ausserdem Fowlers Interview nach dem religiösen Glauben und l6 der Befragten nah-men Stellung zu drei moralischen Dilemmas, die vom Author und von Wangchuk Shalipa neu entwickelt wurden. Der Artikel stützt sich ausserdem auf Beobachtungen bei religiösen Ritualen, Tänzen, usw. Die Befragten betonten in ihren Interviews ihren Glauben an ihre buddhistische Religion, ihr Karma, Verdienst und Nicht-Verdienst. und ihren Wunsch nach einer guten Wiedergeburt. Bewundert werden Eigenschaften wie Zurückhaltung, innere Ruhe, Ausgeglichenheit, Würde, gleichmütige Nichtgebundenheit, jedoch nicht starke Gefühle oder Gefühlsäusserungen.

Das Gefühl der Scham ist ein starkes, moralisches Bindemittel in der Dorfgemeinschaft der Ladakhis. Schuldgefühle jedoch werden nur selten gezeigt oder verstanden. Selbstwertgefühle werden als Egoismus oder Stolz interpretiert und abgelehnt. Persönliche Beziehungen beruhen auf konkreter Gegenseitigkeit und Gehorsam und nicht so sehr auf romantischer Liebe oder Intimität. Konkrete Lebensziele beziehen sich auf gute Gesundheit und langes Leben, Zufriedenheit, heitere Beziehungen zu anderen Menschen und annehmbare wirtschaftliche Verhältnisse. In Ladakhs Dorfgemeinschaften wird auf Kooperation und zwischen-menschliches Vertrauen Wert gelegt wenn auch manchmal Neidgefühle dieses Vertrauen zu untergraben drohen. Konflikte kommen relativ, Kapitalverbrechen ässerst selten vor. Das Selbst ist in ein Netz gegenseitiger Verpflichtungen verwoben die allge-mein bekannt sind. Neidgefühle, Eifersuchtsgefühle und Angst werden aus der Definition des Selbst ausgeklammert und auf Nachbarn oder die allgegenwärtigen Dämonen projiziert. In der Glaubenswelt der Ladakhis vermischen sich in einzigartiger Weise der altüberlieferte, animistische Dämonenglaube und Schamanismus Zentralasiens mit den mystischen, Mitleid beto-nenden moralischen Idealen des Vajrayana Buddhismus, der kla-ren Logik des historischen Buddha Shakyamuni und pragmati-schen, harten Anpassungsstrategien, die das Uberleben in der hoch gelegenen Bergwüste Ladakh überhaupt erst möglich machen.