

The Free Thinker

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This issue mainly about Shakespeare and Tibet

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Gothenburg, Sweden, February 24th, 2004.

The Gothenburg Shakespeare Symposium

The Shakespeare case.

1) The "Apology for Shakespeare" by John Bede was given to the audience in English and Swedish. It was considered an emotional product of wishful thinking.

2) The question was raised why Shakespeare retired so early at only 47, producing nothing at all during his last five years, in answer to which

3) the Hammerschmidt-Hummel investigation of the Shakespeare portraits was presented, which established the Chandos and the Flower portraits as genuine while the Droeshout engraving was a copy of the Flower portrait. Professor Hildegard Hammerschmidt-Hummel discovered on both the authentic portraits a swelling on the left eyelid, suggesting a problem with the tear glands, which could have been a sign of a potentially fatal cancer. A small caruncle tumour was found in the inner corner of the left eye, and finally in the Flower portrait (the later one) a lump above the left eyebrow, which a dermatologist diagnosed as a permanent inflammation while a pathologist diagnosed a probable bone tumour. All these signs of cancer problems were accentuated by the same obvious symptoms on the death-mask, once bought in London by a German and brought to Darmstadt in Germany. This would explain Shakespeare's early retirement and death.

4) Mark Twain's Shakespeare biography was presented to the audience in the original English version and in Swedish translation. No comments.

5) The case of John Shakespeare's proved Catholicism was presented including the inconsistency of the anti-Catholic pathos of "The Troublesome Reign of King John" and "King John" - how could a member of a Catholic family rave against the persecuted church of his own family and present that argument on a public stage while he had himself reached an important and affluent social position? The argument was considered weak.

6) The brutal statistics of Pat Dooley was presented, showing ample documentary evidence of the professional authorship of 20 Leading poets of Shakespeare's day but none at all of William Shakespeare. Statistics were shown to be easily manipulated by its manufacturer in whatever direction and for whatever means he would please.

7) Finally Sonnet 23 was presented as perhaps the most personal and self-relieving of them, showing the author to be least of all a central figure commanding the stage and his fellows but rather a timid backstage figure with no capacity for expressing himself except by writing, a man whose love was too great to be capable of being expressed - a sad case of inadequacy, not at all fitting any "Shake-Scene" or successful business man.

8) On the question of who was the first to doubt the authorship of Shakespeare, was presented the case of Rev. James Wilmot, (later half of 18th century) who investigated Warwickshire for materials about Shakespeare for the purpose of writing the first scientifically researched biography and found nothing and finally reached the conclusion that the author of Shakespeare was not at all from Warwickshire. As a result, the Rev. James Wilmot became the first Baconian.

The Bacon case

1) The speaker compared Francis Bacon with the Portuguese author Pessoa, who used a number of pseudonyms to express himself in writing. On his death-bed he revealed his alter egos and so was posthumously recognized. Bacon never revealed his alter egos but took them all with him in his grave. A few of them were suggested as Marlowe, Lyly, Shakespeare, Spenser, some of the works of Ben Jonson, and others.

2) The "Gesta Grayorum", "The Shepherd's Calender", "Colin Clouts" and other famous anonymous works (ascribed to Spenser and others) the speaker attributed to Bacon, whom

he described as conducting a writer's workshop engaging a number of secretaries, like Kyd, Marlowe, Lyly and other servants and agents of the theatre like Shakespeare.

3) "Love's Labour's Lost" with its Navarre settings and court mysteries the speaker attributed to Bacon's years in France, describing the play as an autobiography, especially the love incident in which Jack didn't get his Jill, like Bacon didn't get Marguerite Valois ('The Lady of the Glen'). Also the Ophelia incident could be traced to Bacon's French experiences in his youth, so he was not a homosexual or even bisexual but had had a very unlucky royal love affair. A member of the audience asked about the Holofernes character modelled on Richard Lloyd. The speaker claimed there was evidence of Bacon having been to Navarre but no evidence of any association of his with Richard Lloyd.

4) Bacon was presented as the bastard son of Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex as his half-brother, another bastard son of the Queen, whom Bacon was the first to call 'Gloriana'.

5) There is only one contemporary detailed illustration to Shakespeare's poem "Venus and Adonis". It was not found in Stratford but in St. Albans, Bacon's home place, not far from his home, a fresco on the wall of the tavern 'The White Hart'.

6) Bacon's strange dress in purple on his wedding was explained. Only royalty were allowed to dress in purple, and if anyone of lesser rank did he would risk his life for that. When James Stuart of Scotland inherited the throne, Bacon offered him a bargain and suggested that he would leave England's 'concealed' poets alone. The implication was that Bacon, as the bastard son of Queen Elizabeth, was willing to relinquish all claims to the throne to James on condition that Bacon would be allowed to continue producing whatever plays in perfect freedom of speech and conscience. James countered with another condition: that Bacon would marry a lady without rank, so that he would never be able to inherit the throne. Bacon accepted the condition - but married in purple.

7) It was well known during his life-time that Bacon produced plays clandestinely under various pen names, which is proved by the title page of "*Cryptomenytices et Cryptographiae*" by Gustavus Selenus 1624.

8) The greatest influence on Shakespeare's Sonnets was exerted by the French poet Étienne Jodelle, who only published one of the six volumes of his works, which volume Bacon studied in France in the 1570s.

9) In Bacon's private notebook "The Promus" not discovered until the 1880s are found a great number of quotations from Shakespeare plays that had not yet been written when the "Promus" was penned down 1594-96.

10) The Ariel character can only have been borrowed from the work "*Steganographiae*" which John Dee, the Queen's astrologer, owned a rare copy of, whom Bacon visited before John Dee's library burned down. Oxford and Derby were also guests of John Dee's but after the fire.

11) Ben Jonson complained about another stealing his ideas before he had had time to fulfil them. At that time Ben Jonson lived in Bacon's house, and no other writer could have stolen Jonson's ideas and fulfilled them than Bacon, for instance "Volpone" and other plays.

12) Two different styles are found in Jonson, one fluent and one crabbed, the fluent one being Bacon's hand and the more laborious being Jonson's own.

13) Ben Jonson testified unofficially that Bacon's writings surpassed all the literature of Greece and Rome.

14) The plot of "King Lear", considerably altered from the original version "King Leir", is built on the case of Sir Brian Annesley, a loyal servant of the crown whom his elder daughters tried to have pronounced publicly mad, which only his youngest daughter tried to counteract. The case of Sir Brian Annesley could only have been known to Bacon among the Shakespeare candidates, since he was the only lawyer of them in London, where the case was tried.

The Oxford case.

1) The chief Oxford authorities are Thomas Looney (pronounced Loney) 1923 and Carlton Ogburn 1984. Thomas Looney, a teacher of Shakespeare and literature in Wales, found the Shakespeare case as presented in the plays incompatible with the known Stratford character, while he only found it compatible with Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, a child prodigy who early produced poems and plays *en masse* and made himself universally acknowledged as a leading poet before 1576, especially in his art of composing sonnets - there are some 30-40 pre-Shakespearian sonnets by him and other poems, among which one of the most notable is "Women", which is an early genuine echo of Shakespeare long before the Shakespeare authorship had started. Gabriel Harvey wrote in a poem to Oxford: "Thy countenance shakes a spear..." The authorship Shakespeare is always spelt with a hyphen, which never had occurred in the Stratford Shakespeare family.

2) The Shakespeare plays represent throughout a very careless attitude to money, while the Stratford man was a perfect business man. Oxford was the opposite: he wasted his inheritance and couldn't have cared less about money. The Queen gave him a life pension taxfree of £1000 a year, which today is almost £270,000, for unknown reasons, maybe just because he was a dramatic poet who pleased her with his dashing romanticism, being also of the oldest nobility in the country.

3) Both Bertram in "*All's Well that Ends Well*" and "*Hamlet*" are obvious autobiographies of Oxford.

4) One Earl of Oxford was a favourite homosexual of King Richard II's, but he is excluded from the play.

5) The Oxford family had good reasons for hard feelings against King Henry VII, so there is no Shakespeare play with that title.

6) Oxford wrote "Romeus and Juliet" already in 1583, the first version of the famous Verona play.

7) In 1594-1604, during which period all the greatest Shakespeare works were written, Oxford lived in almost total seclusion, which was a prerequisite for these plays to be concentrated on and written with such a consummate dramatic intensity, while the Stratman at the same time worked as an actor all day and only could have written plays by candlelight at night, which would have been a very slow and troublesome work indeed, especially after long hard days of stressful work on the stage. Writing the Shakespeare works must have demanded total liberty and leisure, which was least of all available to the Stratman.

The Derby case.

1) There are evident elements of the Northern Dialect, as spoken in Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cheshire, in the Shakespeare plays. About 85% of Shakespeare's dialectal words and expressions pertain to the Northern Dialect, and about 10% more can be traced to even more northern dialects in for instance Scotland, while only very few of Shakespeare's dialectal expressions come from the Midlands, like Warwickshire, and the south of England. Derby was the only one of the Shakespeare candidates to come from the north of England. He was the son-in-law of the Earl of Oxford and like him an ardent theatre enthusiast. Also like Oxford, he had Catholic inclinations and was politically involved with the Catholic party, since they wanted him to be their candidate for the throne - he was a no more distant relative of the Queen's than King James of Scotland. His elder brother Ferdinando, the fifth Earl of Derby, was probably poisoned by Catholics in April 1594 for refusing to take any part in their political intrigues against Queen Elizabeth. This means, that William Stanley, the 6th Earl of Derby, had extreme motives to keep a low profile and avoid a public name. Among the three candidates Bacon, Oxford and Derby, the last had the most pregnant motives to conceal an authorship like Shakespeare's.

2) "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" was written and produced for the Earl of Derby's wedding January 26th 1595, and no one was more motivated to write it than himself. Theseus is a portrait of himself, and the astronomical particulars of the play binds the play to his wedding.

3) In "Love's Labour's Lost" the character Holofernes is modelled on Richard Lloyd, Derby's tutor and chaperon on his grand European tour through also France and Navarre. No one was more motivated to ridicule Richard Lloyd as Holofernes than the young Derby, who suffered from this tedious pedant's over-protection.

4) Derby travelled through all the countries and places described in the plays with geographic expert local knowledge. Only Oxford also nearly visited all those places.

5) The first night of "Hamlet" took place at Elsinore June 13th 1585, and the first version was written in German by an Englishman. Present at the performance were among others the actors Kemp, Bryan and Pope, the kernel of all the Shakespeare theatre companies, from Lord Strange's men to the Lord Chamberlain's Men, which produced nearly all the plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare. The "Ur-Hamlet" demonstrates perfect intimate knowledge of Danish procedures at court in 1585, so it must have been written on the spot for the occasion of the inauguration of the Kronborg Castle at Elsinore. Oxford, Bacon and Shakespeare were all in England at the time, Marlowe was possibly at Rheims, while Derby was in Germany and could have visited Denmark for that period.

6) The constantly more noble character of the Shakespeare plays demonstrate ostensibly that their author must have been a nobleman. In "Richard III" one earl of Derby offers the crown to the Earl of Richmond, later Henry VII. There is no record of this in history. Only Oxford was equal in nobility with the Earl of Derby.

7) The poem "The Phoenix and the Turtle" written not later than 1591 is about members of the Derby family, namely William's half-sister Ursula Halsall and her husband Sir John Salusbury of Llewenni in Denbighshire, a poet and patron of other poets like Jonson and Chapman. The poem could have been composed already 1586 for their wedding.

8) There are no Shakespeare, Marlowe, Oxford or Bacon connections with Lancashire. There is a theory that Shakesperare was sent up there as a youth under the name of William Shakeshafte to protect him against Catholic persecutions in Warwickshire, but there is no evidence whatsoever for this. It's just a convulsive effort to explain Shakespeare's Lancashire dialectal idiosyncracies.

9) The poet explicitly states in sonnet 136: "my name is Will". Only Will Stanley (W.S.) had that name among the candidates except Shakespeare.

10) When William Stanley, the 6th Earl of Derby died, all theatres of England were closed, and the civil war broke out, which swept away all that remained of the glorious Elizabethan period with its unsurpassed theatre culture.

The Marlowe case.

The third and last day was dedicated entirely to Marlowe. The first lecture concerned the mystery and phenomenon of Monsieur Le Doulx, one of the agents of Anthony Bacon, Francis Bacon's brother and in charge of the national intelligence service. In the Lambeth Palace Archives have been found the Anthony Bacon papers, a vast and intact collection of historical documents that once belonged to Anthony Bacon. Among these were found the documents of the agent Le Doulx, which among other items contained a startling bill for the purchase of books. These books were language books, religious books and historical books, which on closer scrutiny proved to constitute the basis for most of Shakespeare's plays. Among them were the original stories for Othello, Cymbeline, Macbeth, Measure for Measure, All's Well That Ends Well, The Tempest, King Lear, Hamlet, Coriolanus, Titus Andronicus, Julius Caesar, Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI, Richard III, Love's Labour's Lost, The Comedy of Errors, Much Ado About Nothing, A Midsummer-Night's Dream, The

Taming of the Shrew, The Merchant of Venice, Twelfth Night, The Merry Wives of Windsor, The Winter's Tale, Timon of Athens, Troilus and Cressida, Antony and Cleopatra, that is all except King John, Richard II, Henry VIII, Two Gentlemen of Verona, As You Like It, Romeo and Juliet and Pericles, or perhaps they were there also. Included in this purchased library were also the original stories for Venus and Adonis, The Jew of Malta, Tamburlaine the Great, and even Edward III, plays attributed to Marlowe or Shakespeare. In brief, the books procured by Monsieur Le Doulx were practically all the sources for the plays and poems of both Shakespeare and Marlowe. This could be regarded as a definite evidence of that Marlowe and Shakespeare were the same author and that he acted under the code name of Le Doulx.

We know that Marlowe in the 1580s worked as a confidential agent for the government and had been skilful and rewarded as such. On May 30th 1593 he was officially done away with under very suspicious circumstances, which lends credence to the story that it was a set-up to let him escape his arrest and trial by the Star Chamber, the English inquisition, which already had tortured and destroyed the life of Thomas Kyd. He would then have left England on a ship from Deptford, the scene of the "Marlowe murder", and continued his activities as agent and playwright from the continent, particularly from Italy.

In supporting evidence of that Le Doulx was Marlowe were demonstrated samples of Marlowe's and Le Doulx' handwritings. The two examples had been enlarged considerably and were shown together on a transparency, so that the audience could see and decide about likenesses and differences. Some letters were found to correspond, like g, y and h, while there was a difference in the leaning and character of the Le Doulx hand from Marlowe's: the handwriting of Le Doulx demonstrated a more definite leaning to the right and stronger elements of self-confidence than the Marlowe hand. No definite identification with the two handwritings as one of the same could be certified. A person's handwriting changes with time, and between these two handwritings were 3-4 years.

The second lecture was an exposition of the Marlowe case and story as reconstructed and demonstrated by Calvin Hoffman and A.D.Wraight in her book "*The Story that the Sonnets Tell*", illustrated by those Shakespeare sonnets dealing with exile and moods of death. The lecture was delivered with considerable empathy and excellent configuration so as to convince anyone of the human pathos of the drama, and was considered the best lecture of the whole symposium.

After that there was nothing more to add for the moment, and the symposium was concluded after three days of sessions of altogether 17 hours. The lecturers were C. Lanciani (host), Anders Ekman (for Bacon), Don Mahan, Massachusetts (for Oxford) and Peter & Frieda Barker (England) for Marlowe. Other authorities used for the occasion were John Bede from Northern Ireland, Laila Roth (England) and Carl Nordling (Stockholm) for Derby and various other writers from literature and from the Internet.

The chief objection against Shakespeare were all the items and arguments brought up by Mark Twain in his 'Shakespeare biography', that is Shakespeare's businessman's life and complete lack of any education.

Against Bacon's authority were brought as witnesses the cases of Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Henry Wriothesley. Bacon helped King James in ruining and committing the judicial murder of Raleigh without any justifiable reason; while no documents could be produced in support of the statement that Henry Wriothesley was the chief architect in the prosecution against Bacon in 1621, which ruined his career, although it was well known that Wriothesley turned Bacon's enemy after the fall of Essex. Too little is known about the judicial history of Bacon, and it has very little relevance to his literary works.

Against Oxford was brought the usual argument that he died already in 1604. No argument has been found against Derby's possible authorship of Shakespeare, so together Oxford and Derby could make a very strong case for being the Shakespeare writers together.

Against this stands the fact that the Sonnets, published in 1609, could only have been written by one single person, and that this person has also left his singular touch in all of the plays.

No argument has been brought to cast doubts on the suggested Marlowe case for Shakespeare, since it can neither be proved that Marlowe died in 1593 nor that he survived the Deptford incident, although the Le Doulx case could provide the evidence for Marlowe's survival, if an expert graphologist could identify Le Doulx' handwriting as identical with Marlowe's. But some Marlovians claim that the nature and contents of Le Doulx's coffre (the books of the materials for Marlowe's and Shakespeare's works) are evidence enough for the Marlowe-Shakespeare authorship and that the identification of their handwritings with each other is unnecessary.

The standard of the lectures was generally considered better than that of the Marlowe Symposium, April 27th 2002, at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, by those who were there.

Comments to Arden of Feversham

This wonderful play has a unique position in early English drama by its very thorough and extremely vivid realism. Almost the only other plays to reach the vicinity of its juicy and palpable trueness to life are "A Yorkshire Tragedy" and "The Merry Wives of Windsor". The eyebrow-raising description of exact localities, like Rainham Down, the inns of "Nag's Head" in London and the "Flower-de-Luce" in Feversham and the characterization of the ferry station in act IV scene 2 together with striking characterizations of secondary personages like Dick Greene and John Reede, victims both to Arden, the tailor and his sister, the simplicity of the stall-boy Michael and even the short episode with lord Cheiny endows the drama with a sense of reality so strong and authentic, that you can't resist the impression that the author must have experienced the whole story himself or at least had some very authentic eyewitnesses to recount it for him. The crime was quite sensational in its time in Canterbury and thereabouts, it was the dominating scandal of Kent at the time, and the play displays a very convincing rendering of the whole story almost to exactitude in its description of the events. Most remarkable of all, though, are the characterizations of the main protagonists, Alice Arden and the murderer Black Will. The personality of Alice is depicted with an almost lyrical empathy, she stands for the literary highlights of the play and is the psychologically most elaborated portrait. You feel with her all the way and understand her completely no matter how sharply she turns from one extreme sentiment to another in the opposite direction, from shameless criminality to humble softness, hypersensitive hesitancy and real female sentimentality and capriciousness. Her manoeuvres are so genuinely female that it's difficult to imagine her part being played by a male actor.

Black Will is the contrast: a thorough villain of such dimensions, that he glories in his villainy. But worst of all is that he is intelligent and witty, he is constantly funny, and you understand his original personality from his background that he was brought up to be a professional murderer by his practical experiences in the war. The glory he made his own in the war he carries on in peacetime as a professional murderer, as if killing people in war or in peace made no difference. Together, these two are an irresistible couple.

Who, then, is the author of this uniquely social-realistic play about events around Canterbury in 1550? My conviction is that it could only be Christopher Marlowe, born and raised in Canterbury, where these events must have been the topic of ever recurring discussions by his parents and their generation during his childhood, since

the scandal happened when they were in their best age, and where Alice Arden herself was burned at the stake. Richard Greene was hanged in Ospringe, from which place Marlowe's father came only 10 miles from Canterbury and which today is part of Faversham, where the groom Michael and Bradshaw were publicly executed. The play bears obvious marks of having been next to self-experienced, and the closest you can get is childhood impressions of authentic testimonies. All this would fit with Marlowe but hardly with any other contemporary English dramatist.

The play also raises other discussions. The main character Mr Arden himself carries the same family name as William Shakespeare's mother. It's almost impossible, though, that Shakespeare could have written the play, since he had no connections whatever with Kent. There is the well-known theory, though, that Marlowe could have been forced underground from the persecution against free-thinkers by the government, so that he could continue his poetical activities but under the cover of William Shakespeare. Marlowe's personality, as we know it from other plays in his name, fits well into the character of 'Black Will'. It's easy to guess that Marlowe could have acted that part on stage. That personality is so original that it must have made a deep impression on the audience, and Marlowe himself as its author and perhaps actor on stage could have identified himself with him. Since after the crisis of May 1593 he no longer could show in public with his real name but might have continued writing under the name of Shakespeare, he could also have identified himself with the name of 'Will' in for example the sonnets. That could explain the sonnets 134-36 with their wordplay on the name of 'Will'.

That the play is Shakespearean is undeniable. The sustained lyricism, the marvellous music of the language, the luscious humour, the striking characterizations - everything points to an early Shakespeare, who probably was Marlowe.

Gothenburg, February 9th, 2004.

Raoul Wallenberg and Tibet

The Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg disappeared in Budapest January 1945 after a peerlessly heroic engagement to save tens of thousands, maybe up to 30,000 Jews from the Nazi holocaust in Hungary. He was last seen alive as he was escorted away by Russian officials of the Stalinist occupation. The Swedish government decided to be patient.

When two years later Moscow reported that Raoul Wallenberg was dead, this was swallowed by the Swedish government without comment. It also swallowed the Russian explanation that Raoul Wallenberg never had entered Soviet territory but had found his end in Hungary. It also swallowed that no evidence ever was produced by the Russians to confirm Wallenberg's death. Whatever could the Swedish government do? The more important then to watch what they did *not* do.

When later there were witness reports that Wallenberg was alive, that he had been seen in Moscow by other prisoners and that these had been tapping messages between themselves through the prison walls of Lubyanka, that psychiatrists happened to mention they had had him as a patient and other such stuff, the Swedish government became active but in the opposite way to what would have been expected as rational. They silenced the matter. The foreign minister accepted

the Russian word that Wallenberg was dead (without evidence) and refused to accept any other version or even any other possibility, since he did not want to offend the Russians. "The Soviet authorities are respectable. They wouldn't tell a lie. We must believe them, we have no choice. We must respect them." This cowardice even worsened during the years, during decades the cruelty of silence was the only policy allowed - there was a governmental effort to silence the matter to nothing, and this policy was maintained until the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Not until then, after 50 years, one acknowledgement after the other started gradually to turn up. The Soviet authorities had been lying from the start, and Sweden had not even questioned the lies. The governmental policy was admitted to have been cowardly false. The first official excuses from the government to Raoul Wallenberg's family were delivered - after 50 years.

This remarkable Raoul Wallenberg syndrome reappears in the even more revolting standpoint of the world in the Tibetan issue. Independent Tibet was occupied by military force by Communist China in 1950. Only El Salvador dared to raise the issue in the United Nations and was silenced. In 1956 the Chinese started their methodical destruction of Tibet with its culture and history by bombings and closing and looting of monasteries, the universities of Tibet, and their temples. Not until Dalai Lama's escape in 1959 did the Tibetan issue start some attention. A commission of international jurists in Geneva decided to investigate the case and arrived at the conclusion that China had already committed genocide in Tibet. Nobody did anything about it. In 1966 commenced the total devastation of Tibet, which was allowed to rave at large for ten years while the United States by the initiative of Henry Kissinger withdrew their support for the Tibetan resistance movement and abandoned Taiwan (which actually was governed by the only legal government of China), to instead start making business with Communist China and Mao Zedong, the murderer of at least 43 million of his own subjects. (Taiwan is today a developed and working democracy while China after 54 years is still the world's greatest dictatorship.) No one did anything for Tibet except specially invited leftist writers, like Han Suyin, who wrote books about Tibet depicting China as her benefactor and liberator. The first book to criticize China from inside Tibet was not written until 1979 (John F. Avedon's *"In Exile from the Land of Snows"*.)

Thereby at last an opposition started to make itself heard in one upsetting testimonial account after the other, the flow of which has never been interrupted; but still the political establishments of the world continue to support China with cajolery: "But China is a respectable nation. They do as well as they can. Although their execution statistics surpass the whole rest of the world they make progress in human rights. After all, they don't perform public executions any longer by shots in the neck but instead by injections in specially designed execution buses, so that the victims can die comfortably. We must respect China and acknowledge that Tibet is part of China, for the sake of China." (China stands for 20% of the world's population but 70% of the world's executions.) While at the same time China enforces mass immigration of Chinese into Tibet to definitely sinocize Tibet by drowning the Tibetan people in Chinese masses, who are not even constituted to live in such an extreme climate; so that Lhasa, the magical capital of Tibet, is now a circus of Chinese brothels, Karaoke bars and sterile business complexes of concrete blocks, where all the profits are Chinese, while the Tibetans are marginalized and sorted out like a lower caste without any rights of their own as citizens or even as human beings.

Unlike the Raoul Wallenberg case, no Chinese has ever made any Tibetan excuses or indemnified anything of the Chinese holocaust against the Tibetan people and culture, which process instead is just kept rolling on and even accelerated together with the Chinese executions, which also are speeded up after constantly quicker summary trials; while the world keeps disinterestedly looking on and lick China under her feet as if in a kind of voluntary blindness and refusal to recognize the evidence of a 50 year old political problem, which by this neglect just keeps growing, given fresh fuel and dirt today in Nepal and France; as the authorities of Nepal in spite of international law returns Tibetan refugees to China (since China pays Nepalese policemen to do this) where the fugitives consequently are maltreated and vanish; and as the French president Jacques Chirac, duped by a Chinese economical charm offensive, tries to persuade the European Community to resume the arms trade with China, which export was interrupted after the massacres by the Chinese authorities on Tiananmen Square in Beijing, June 4th 1989. For what purpose will China use those arms? Shoot more Tibetans and Uighurs? Start war against Taiwan?

The 27th Gothenburg Film Festival.

One of the discussions was whether the most important film of the festival was *"The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine"* from Cambodia or *"The Cry of the Snow Lion"* from Tibet. Both were documentaries about recent genocides, and both had their Scandinavian first nights. The difference between them, however, was considerable.

The Cambodian film made by one of the rare survivors shows the automatic apparatus from the inside, set for systematic genocide without anyone being able to stop it. The film conveys an impression of maximal horror since, unlike recounts from Auschwitz, it has a more authentic touch by the fact that the real tormentors play their own parts in the film. We have only been able to look into Auschwitz after it was all over, with all the activities terminated and all the victims, living and dead, removed forever; but here the actual genocidal process goes on before our own eyes without there being anything we or the victims can do about it. The result is so heavy, that even professional and hardened self-tormentors must find it unendurable. And this occurred under a regime that was praised as an example all over the world by intellectuals of the left led by such infallible and intelligent prophets as Jean Paul Sartre, who obviously didn't care about what Pol Pot actually was busy at.

The Khmer Rouge and their murder of 1,5 million of their own subjects is however a finished story, while the Tibetan trauma goes on and has been going on for more than 50 years. *"The Cry of the Snow Lion"* is an objective documentary carefully compiled during 9 years, which deals with all the important milestones on the way: "the peaceful liberation" by military force of Communist China, the introductory destruction of the monasteries and the Tibetan university system during the 50s, the starvation crisis 1959-62 because of Mao's "agricultural reforms" which implied the deaths of 30 million Chinese during these three years only, the Tibetan uprising 1959 with Dalai Lama's consequential escape, how after that Tibet was hermetically closed up and shut for insight from abroad for 20 years while the genocide on the Tibetans ruthlessly went on, the total destruction during the cultural revolution advocated by Mao during his last ten years, the final opening of Tibet to

foreign investigation in 1979 with shocking revelations of the heartrending sufferings of a tortured people, how CIA helped the armed resistance for 15 years to then under Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon betray and abandon them, the new uprisings in Lhasa 1987 with the Chinese atrocities filmed in broad daylight and so on all the way up to the videofilmed Chinese destruction of Serthar in 2002 when 9000 monks and nuns were driven away and their homes systematically destroyed. Many renowned tibetologists are interviewed in the film, you can see what John F. Avedon looks like, who wrote the first critical book against China about Tibet in 1979, Stephen Batchelor, who wrote the first truthful Tibetan guidebook, Robbie Barnett of the TIN and many other legendary authorities on the Tibetan issue. Even some Chinese are interviewed who appear like completely brainwashed dummies who have no thought of their own left in their heads but are only allowed to prattle propaganda. One of the most upsetting scenes is of a festival in Nagchu, where the Tibetans appear all dressed up flamboyantly for their festivities, but something is wrong. Not one Tibetan is smiling. In the next moment you see why: they are being watched by heavily armed troops who all have their machine guns ready. If anyone doesn't cooperate in this propaganda manifestation of the perfect harmony between Chinese and Tibetan, he knows what to expect!

In spite of its complete neutrality, the film makes a horrendous impression by its summing up of the situation, that this has been going on since 50 years and is going on still. This systematic genocide has never relaxed for 40 years. Every day a few Tibetans disappear, every day a few fugitives cross the Himalayas into India and get chillblains and black toes on the way, every day new innocent prisoners are murdered in Chinese prisons or torture chambers somewhere, and every day there are new executions and forced sterilizations. We can not see them, they occur behind bars on a low scale, but indefatigably they keep going on without China doing anything to stop it. On the contrary, the process is constantly encouraged and urged on by Beijing, where it is officially proclaimed that it doesn't happen with a beaming smile to charm the world, while the population of Lhasa day by day is getting less Tibetan and more Chinese, and where most Chinese are soldiers (at least 300,000 in Tibet) and implanted prostitutes (568 brothels in Lhasa 1999). The core of the Tibetan problem is that the unacceptability and injustice of the Chinese oppression only can worsen as long as nobody does anything about it. It's worse than Chinese torture; it is the Chinese form of genocide, as slowly and as unnoticeably as possible.

The Himalayas Updated - notes on the way, by Christian Lanciai.

There is a saying in the Himalayas, that "if man is to have a future at all, he must understand himself and his own past." Maybe that is why I keep returning to the Himalayas: in front of the face of the highest, purest and loveliest mountains in the world you stand naked, spiritually naked, and you have to confront your own nakedness and consider your situation carefully. Thus you are forced to get to know and understand yourself.

Man is much more than just his historical past. For me, the main attraction of India is her spiritual depth and the seriousness of her culture. Indian civilisation is probably the oldest in the world, it is impossible to date, but Hinduism is certainly the world's oldest living religion, and her main offspring is Buddhism. But Hinduism was born in the mountains of the Himalayas.

In the depth of the great Himalayas you find a valley called "the Valley of the Gods". It's in the heart of the land of Vishnu, but the geographical names of that area are rather of the predecessors to the well-known Indian gods Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, that is, of Rudra, Karna, Indra and others. You find these valleys and strange places in Garwhal, western Uttaranchal, where the Ganges runs up, where also the sacred pilgrimage sites Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath are found, all these representing different sources of the Ganga, the holy river of India.

But no matter how sacred these places are, for many modern people and thinkers the chief place of attraction in India is Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh because of the Dalai Lama's presence there. He represents much more than just Tibetan Buddhism since he there leads an exile government of the suppressed Tibet and the persecuted Tibetan people, who today face what the Jews stood against in the Second World War. The comparison is not far-fetched, though there are differences: the Jews did not have a country of their own when the Nazi persecution set in, but the Tibetans did have their own country which never had belonged to anyone else, when the Chinese occupied it by military force and compelled many Tibetans to choose between exile or death. Many who chose to remain perished in torture chambers or labour camps, at least about 500,000, probably much more. It's not a Chinese tradition to count casualties.

For this very special situation of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans, he appears as the leading freedom fighter of the world together with the imprisoned Aung Sang Suu Kyi of Burma, especially since both strictly follow the principle of non-violence. Their method is wisdom and patience against the cruelty and folly of mundane politics.

You can feel this inspired freedom aspiration all over Dharamsala mixed with bitter memories and painful melancholy, but the optimism is there. Just as the Nazi terror became a driving force for the Jews with their greatest dynamic expansion since the times of king David and Christ for a result, so will the communist-atheist persecution of Buddhism and the Tibetan nation and culture transform into perhaps the greatest dynamic growth of Tibetanism and Buddhism in history - for the first time Buddhism will spread into all corners of the world.

A bit further away in Himachal you find a paradise of a different kind, where you find cannabis growing all over the country wild in nature around Manali, the Kullu valley and Manikaran. Those who find the best way to enjoy life through drugs will find many hippie paradises in the eastern areas of Himachal.

Further down is Shimla, the last Indian summer capital of the British, which still retains its style and is an agreeable spot to spend some days in. Another place like that is Mussoorie above Dehra Doon, one of the nicest hill stations, which is almost exactly as the British left it. Further down is Rishikesh on the Ganges, an entirely vegetarian town with many holy men: you can't find a drop of alcohol or a piece of meat for eating in the whole town. I never heard of anyone who didn't like it in Rishikesh.

But let's move up along the river to the sources of the Ganga and to the valleys of the gods. If you follow the river up west you will eventually reach Gangotri, the traditional temple at the main source of the holy river. But this river is now being controlled by a dam, which has caused much controversy. Several towns and villages have been drowned, like Tehri, and people refused to move from their family homes through many generations to alien places until they were forced to. If an earthquake will happen here and the dam will burst, all Rishikesh will be washed away.

But the eastern arm of the river is more interesting. It's called Aliknanda, and along it you will find a richer landscape with flourishing villages and communities to a much greater extent than on the main Ganga. Another riverarm leads up to Gaurikund, from where you can walk up to the temple of Kedarnath at 3500 meters, another source of the Ganga. It is set under wild mountains in the middle of the snows and is a quite fantastic place.

But if you keep following the Aliknanda you will eventually end up in the valley of the gods, where the small town of Joshimath has perhaps the wildest and most dramatic settings found anywhere in the world. It's right in the middle of the great Himalayas, where the river bursts through the mountains in gorges which you can't see the bottom of, while the mountains rise sharply and almost vertically straight up to 7000 meters and more. One of the mountains here is the Nanda Devi, the highest mountain of India, at 7800 meters. It's a sharp top with a hunch like a camel and is a very spectacular mountain and almost impossible to climb. You see it best from Auli, a small village above Joshimath, at 3000 meters.

Of course there are lots of places around here where you can retreat and philosophise in peace and quiet, like Gandhi did in Kausani, where he wrote his autobiography. There is an ashram there in his name with a museum and is a very peaceful spot, ideal for a retreat, and you can see all the Garwhal high Himalayas from there.

Lower down and more busy is Almora, the old capital of this part of the world, with the shrine of Kesaar Devi next to it, another hippie paradise; but for me Almora is too modern and hectic. I prefer the delightful oasis of Naini Tal, a small summer town constructed around a lake, which was the first summer capital of the British in the 1820s. The style and charm of those days is still there. It's a wondrous place where Christian churches, Hindu temples, Moslem mosques and a Buddhist Tibetan monastery exist together without any problem at all; but the centre of the town is an impressive cricket field just by the water. They always play there, and loudspeakers keep informing the whole town how the game goes. Together with Dharamsala and Darjeeling, it's one of my favourite spots in India.

Darjeeling lies on the other eastern side of Nepal and is geographically Sikkimese. The British leased it from Sikkim in the 1840s to start growing tea there, and after Indian independence 1947 Nehru continued the lease contract with Sikkim and even voluntarily doubled the fee. Not until India formally occupied Sikkim in 1974 there was no need for India to continue paying the rent for Darjeeling to Sikkim.

The main reason why Indira Gandhi decided to put an end to Sikkim independence was her fear that China would do it instead. Not until this year did China accept Sikkim as a part of India, while India at the same time formally accepted Tibet as a part of China. One can't help remembering the pact between Nazi-Germany and Soviet-Russia in 1939 before they cut up Poland between themselves.

The main characteristic of the landscape and mentality of Sikkim is softness. It is a green lush country completely dominated by its sacred mountain the majestic Kanjenjunga, who generously spreads out her hills in all directions towards the east in grand green valleys and an extremely agreeable landscape incomparable with anything else. This geographical harmony also marks the people, who perhaps are

the kindest in all India. It was an independent kingdom for many centuries until India decided to incorporate it into the Indian Union, thus making sure the Chinese would not invade it. Previously, Sikkim had only had troubles with Nepal, which consistently has been rather aggressive against Sikkim; and the main population of Sikkim today are Nepalese, whereas the original Sikkim people, the Lepcha, have withdrawn more and more into a rather obscure minority.

Geographically, Darjeeling belongs to Sikkim, although its characteristic is entirely different. The name 'Dorjeling' means the 'home of the thunderbolt', and Darjeeling could be described as one of the most dramatic places in India, not only because of the very changeable and constantly surprising weather - you can have glorious sunshine in one moment to be immersed in fog the next, and then suddenly there are torrential showers and thunder. The main languages are Nepali, Hindi and Bengali, but the first language is English. More than any place in India, Darjeeling has retained its British stamp, and when Gandhi wanted to separate India from the British (and cause the secession of Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon as well) Darjeeling was not interested. Several of the small provinces east of Darjeeling shared that failure to be impressed by the activities of Gandhi, and some of them are still fighting to get rid of the Hindu dominance. The North East Territories are the most troublesome spot in India after Kashmir, and foreigners are not allowed there without special permits. The people there are mainly Christian and Burmese.

Nepal, which produced the best soldiers for the British Empire, the famous Gurkhas, and which always co-operated well with Britain although never colonised, suffered a very traumatic tragedy the other year, when the heir to the throne shot his whole family dead except his uncle, who is now king. Behind this atrocious family quarrel was much more than the heir's displeasure at his parents' not allowing him to marry the girl he wanted. He was on drugs, mainly cocaine, which his uncle had initiated him into the use of, and the terrible royal family tragedy should be seen mainly as the result of a drug psychosis on behalf of the heir, who ended the massacre by turning his gun on himself. Since then there has been no real stability in Nepal. The king, the former uncle, is conservative and has little concern for his people. Being an orthodox Hindu, he doesn't like Buddhists and Christians much, and things have not improved during his rule. On the contrary, the Maoist guerrilla warfare has increased, and it's not safe anymore for anyone to journey by road. There are police checkpoints everywhere causing much trouble and delay, traffic doesn't work at night because of the curfew, and even tourists have become robbed by bandits.

China obviously plays some part in this, since she officially supports the Nepalese central government and the royal throne while at the same time she provides the Maoist guerrilla with weapons. I have heard this from several sources. China denies this, but the weapons of the guerrillas are Chinese. China claims Tibetans smuggle them across, or that Indian communists are doing it; but the only motive behind this must be a Chinese ambition to gain more control of Nepal, like she has of Burma, where the military dictatorship firmly maintains the economic control of the country by a monopoly on drugs, mainly heroin. Only the Chinese government has accepted the military dictatorial government of Burma, backing it up with weapons. One can see Chinese control of Nepal increasing: she wants to stop the refugee flow from Tibet to Nepal, and Nepal has started to return Tibetan fugitives to China, spiting the United Nations international agreement concerning political refugees. Nepal is in a bad fix between the giants India and China with no

other bordering countries except these threatening mammoth states. Of course she is afraid of both and has a difficult diplomatic balance to keep by trying not to upset or anger any of them. But whatever Nepal does to please India will anger China, and vice versa, so Nepal can do nothing to improve her relationships without causing either of her two overbearing neighbours to start threatening again.

On the other hand, every traveller I have met to Burma has praised the country and her people. The trick in visiting Burma is not to make any money exchange at the airport but to reserve all expenses for the people, so that the military government gets nothing. It's easy to travel alone, people are extremely helpful and want to speak English with you, it's ideal for a student of Buddhism, adorer of nature and lover of idylls; and the military autocracy will of course fall sooner or later to give way to the democratic opposition led by the most admirable Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung Sang Suu Kyi, who has devoted her life solely to serve and help her people. Burma (Myanmar) is definitely a country of the future.

If there are troubles in Nepal, there are no less troubles in main India, which was manifest as I travelled through Bihar. The same kind of strikes that paralyse Nepalese traffic sometimes occur in India. I was held up seven hours on a train because a local politician had felt insulted and in anger organised the local police to stop the trains indefinitely until he had obtained an excuse; and as I travelled by bus there was a corpse on the road, which also caused the police to stop the traffic on the main road in India to the North Eastern Territories for hours. Bihar is the most notoriously criminal state of India, it is backward, illiteracy is high, it's difficult to find people who can speak English, so for us it is best avoided. The problem is that it is the heart of India, so it's difficult to avoid.

The capital Patna used to be the capital of the Indian Empire when it reached its highest expansion under the Buddhist king Ashoka the generation after Alexander the Great. It was then called Pataliputra and is still today an awesome metropolis of 3,5 million; but nothing is left of the ancient Buddhist imperial splendour - except the oasis Bodhgaya 100 kilometres to the south just off Gaya.

This is a fascinating spot where all Asia meets - here you find all Asian nationalities with Buddhist temples of their own, from Ceylon to Japan with all nations in between. The two most beautiful temples are the main Tibetan ones, but also the Thai and the Bhutan temples are startling masterpieces of architecture. Pilgrims from all over the world come here, even from the west, to study, meditate or just enjoy the peace around the Mahabodhi Stupa, built before the 7th century by the spot where the Buddha had his enlightenment, the holiest site of Buddhism in the world. It's impossible not to be impressed by the general atmosphere here of devotion, piety and respect.

What then is to be said about Tibet and China? Let me quote the words of a good friend of mine in Darjeeling:

"Another obviousness is the absurd political existence of the China phenomenon as a single extreme monster state in a fairly democratic world, but the politicians and business men of the leading democratic countries in the west are so stupid that they keep backing up, investing in and fawning on China in the preposterous illusion that China is a golden calf to make the best and quickest money out of, while in fact the whole Chinese society stands on clay feet and is tottering as the economy might

collapse at any moment, being overheated and completely corrupt. Their yuan is overrated, they invest tens of billions in megalomaniacal projects that destroy the environment instead of remedying the lacks and wants of the country; the railway to Tibet, their greatest project ever, can never pay itself off and is as absurd as the concentration camps project of Nazi Germany; and the second greatest, the Three Gorges Dam on Yangtse, may at any time burst in an earthquake causing all cities along the river to be washed away, while tens of millions of ordinary Chinese are evacuated by force to satisfy the vanity and inhumanity of the accountable bureaucrats. The situation in Tibet is the most flagrant manifestation of the hysterical madness of China. She does everything to extirpate the Tibetan people and culture to replace it with a Chinese one in order to forever confirm Chinese ownership of Tibet, while this only raises accelerating protests all over the world, highlighting China's catastrophic environmental destruction of Tibet. China is very well aware that she is making all efforts to destroy Tibet completely, and she does it on purpose, just because that villain Mao set China on that course, this Mao, whom the whole western world cherished and admired and kowtowed to just because America behaved badly in Vietnam, while everyone gladly closed their eyes to how badly Mao's China behaved in China and against their own people, the casualties being something about 150-200 million including all enforced abortions. China even opened fire against their own people on Tiananmen Square in the middle of the capital Beijing on June 4th 1989 - never has the cruelty and inhumanity of the governing party of China more clearly showed the nature of its real face of only cynical inhumanity and vanity; and still the Chinese continue to adore and cherish Mao and follow its beastly governing party, as if they refused to realise the obviousness of its absolutely and unacceptably criminal existence."

So the problem is not Tibet. The problem is China, and Tibet has wrongly been made to suffer for it.

But there is one more country in the Himalayas, which I have not dwelt on and even less been to visit - Bhutan. In a humdrum ordinary Indian canteen among locals I met a young lonely German lady with glasses who had been to Bhutan not as a tourist but on a special invitation and mission and thus got around the necessity to pay for her existence there by \$200 a day. She described Bhutan as the last Himalayan paradise - still completely segregated and untouched by the vitiation of modernism, mass tourism and mass immigration as well as completely free from civil wars and political crises - the monarchy still retains all power, and it's probably best that way. It's just to hope for the country's continued virginity and that she may continue like that in her own style as long as possible.

So there are still hidden and unknown Shangri-La-like paradises in the Himalayas although you have to search for them and they are getting more difficult to find. But they will always be there, they always were basically inaccessible, since they always were reserved for only those who really make an effort.

Thereby this Himalayan report is concluded for this time with this journey.

Christian Lanciai, five weeks in October-November, 2003.