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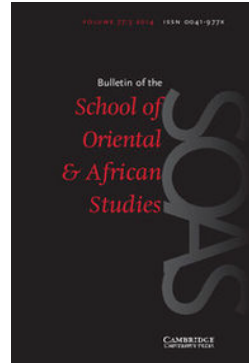
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John Kenneth Knaus:*Beyond Shangri-La: America and Tibet's Move into the 21st Century. (American Encounters / Global Interactions.)* xvii, 355 pp. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012. ISBN 978 0 8223 5234 1.

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previously classified documents and the 85 pages of footnotes contain a large number of primary source references and points that will be of lasting interest to scholars. One wonders if the authors, or their publishers, had fully determined whether this was to be a popular or an academic work. It should have been the latter and as such contains material that makes it a worthwhile addition to the literature.

A.C. McKay

JOHN KENNETH KNAUS:

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The history of Tibet's past century and its struggle to obtain international recognition for its unique political, cultural and religious status are as fascinating as they are disheartening. Thanks to a number of cinematic, fictional, as well as scholarly productions, the story of Tibetans' gradual assimilation into the People's Republic of China, Tibetan resistance, the flight of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, the emergence of the Tibetan diaspora, and the impact that these events had on the international community are rightly becoming the subjects of more and more research. Knaus' latest publication centres on Tibet's dramatic forced entrance into the modern world, especially from the perspective of American diplomacy and foreign affairs, providing a welcome addition to a growing scholarship on this topic. Knaus combines an in-depth knowledge of the political interests, strategic benefits, and geopolitical implications of the US involvement in Tibet–China engagements worthy of an intelligence officer – which he was, as a CIA operations officer in the Tibetan Task Force in the 1960s – with the erudite and eloquent skills of a historian and researcher – which he is, being an independent scholar affiliated with the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies. Knaus' latest book complements his previous work, *Orphans of the Cold War*, in which he recounts the story of the Tibetan Guerrilla war against Mao's Red Army in Tibet in which he was involved.

Beyond Shangri-La can be roughly divided into three large segments. In the first section, the first eight chapters, Knaus narrates the experiences of the diplomats, botanists, adventurers, OSS (the precursor of today's Central Intelligence Agency) officers, and adventurers who gave birth to the early twentieth-century American curiosity for Tibet. Here Knaus fleshes out how at its onset, this romantic fascination was influenced by a Shangri-Laic vision of Tibet and its people propagated by James Hilton's famous novel *Lost Horizon* (1933) and popularized by director Frank Capra's homonymous movie (1937). However, it became increasingly underpinned by a pragmatic yet realistic US interest in Tibet only as a potential route to provide arms to Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist armies in their battle against the rising Communist forces in China (p. 41). At this time, after the death of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama and the ascent of the Fourteenth, Tenzin Gyatso, Tibetans first faced the cruel reality of a potentially imminent takeover by Mao Zedong's Communist army. In a way, then, the book here can serve as a meditation on the nature of foreign affairs and relations. Considered at best a "buffer state" (p. 40) in the Great Game manoeuvres at the heart of the geopolitics of the British and Russian Empires, the United States' role in this was that of a "bystander" (p. 62), indicating that its ideological as well as strategic interests in Tibet were very limited (p. 64).

The bulk of the second and central segment of the book, in nine chapters, centres on the United States' adventurous involvement in Tibetan affairs and its support for Tibetan attempts to resist China's takeover. There is no shortage of scholarship on the US agreement to support the Dalai Lama's request for help in his endeavour to lead an "autonomous Tibet" (p. 92) as the US sought to slow down Communist expansion in East Asia. One of the highlights in Knaus' recounting of Tibet's fantastic fight against Chinese dominance and the US government's covert participation is the role of Gyalo Thondup, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama's elder brother, whom Knaus celebrates as the architect of Tibetan resistance. Through anecdotes and memories collected through personal interviews with the Tibetan activist, Knaus handles the often convoluted and controversial workings of this "ardent nationalist" and "pragmatic politician" (p. 141) who acted as a negotiator in the early rounds of Sino-Tibetan interactions remarkably well. Although already introduced in his previous book, in this work Knaus delves into a detailed account of his life and studies in China, his problematic relationship with his family, links with the CIA, and the patriotic endeavours of a "complex man of lively intellect" who was "the most skilled political operator" (pp. 98–108). Reading about the actions and courageous guerrilla incursions by the US-trained Tibetan resistance warriors is absolutely intriguing, even if Knaus examined those years in his previous book.

What the educated reader of things Tibetan will appreciate most in Knaus' book, however, is to be found in its last six chapters, which constitute the newest contribution of the work. Here *Beyond Shangri-La* picks up the story from 1974, when his first book concluded with the Nixon government's complete retreat from the covert support of the Tibetan fight in China. Knaus analyses the intricacies of the more recent Sino-Tibetan "dialogues" and the characters behind them that have contributed to generating Americans' newfound love for the Dalai Lama and the cause of Tibetans' struggle for recognition in China. Through US officials' quotes, citations, statements, and personal commitments on Tibet and human rights issues in the PRC, Knaus knits together a picture of the US administration's political strategies over the past thirty years. In Knaus' book, the success of the Dalai Lama in ingratiating Washington to his cause is due to several major factors, such as his charisma, the appeal of Buddhism in the US to liberals interested in the "science of the mind", the conservatives' interests in seeing the Dalai Lama "as a victim of Chinese Communism", and last but not least, the major support of Hollywood stars (pp. 220–21).

Knaus' work is an important contribution to the understanding of the political mechanisms behind US attempts to help the Dalai Lama and Tibetans' standing in the international arena. This is a work of careful and meticulous research. The use of a diversity of sources from archival documents and collections of papers to letters and interviews makes this book an optimal resource for educated readers and students of Tibetan history and foreign affairs who will find valuable information in Knaus' rendering of the complex features of US and Tibet relations in the twentieth and twenty-first century.

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