

For the inhabitants carry out their intercourse with great fairness, those of the province of Tibet placing rope ladders for the descent, and when the business is over they remove these ladders. If they have no ladders, they let down their merchandise in a basket, and then carry on a conversation from the heights. In this way they conclude their bargains.

By Tibet he means Ladak. He has heard of the existence of the very high mountains between Kashmir and Ladak, though the story of the rope ladders belongs to other parts of the mountains. What else he knew of Tibet is very meagre:

The mountains begin in Pegū and are found as far as Kashmīr, and thence to the river Indus, to Kābul, Balkh, and Tartary. The inhabitants of these mountains are of an almost white complexion, eyes and nose small, and their speech is different from that of the Mogul country and very similar to Chinese. — In these mountain ranges, twentyfour days' journey from the city of Patnah, is an absolute king called Botand (?Bhutān). He has in his territories much gold, perfect musk, rubies, and precious stones.

After having dwelt a little on the curious customs of the Tibetans, he goes on to say:

It is through this country that lies the route to China, but it is a very long way, and the roads most hazardous from the great mountains and many rivers. I state this on information given me by some Armenians and others who had been there, including two Jesuits, who came from China by this road. One was a Fleming and the other a German, with whom I had many a talk about this country.¹

His Botand is the same as MONSERRATE'S Both or Bothant, and has in this connection to be regarded as western Tibet proper. That he here really meant Tibet, appears from the fact that he has got some of his information from Grueber and Dorville who arrived at Agra in 1662.

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In the *Mercure de France* for July 1718, the narrative of a traveller in Tibet is published, probably a missionary who seems to have travelled in 1706, or at least to have gathered his information about this time. His information was republished a hundred years later under the title *Nouvelle description du royaume de Boutan, faite par un voyageur qui y a demeuré fort longtemps*.² By Boutan he obviously means Southern or proper Tibet. He is supposed to be authentic, though several of his statements are somewhat curious. The author, whosoever he may be, has at least got a very strong impression of the high barren and snow-covered mountains and of the desolate inhospitable alpine nature of Boutan. He says:

Le royaume de Boutan est situé dans l'Asie: à l'orient, il confine avec la Chine; à l'occident avec l'Indoustan, c'est-à-dire avec les royaumes de Niépal ou de Nercerri; au septentrion, avec les royaumes de Foukten et des Kalmouks, dans la Tartarie; et au midi, avec le Mogul, ou même comme le prétendent quelques-uns, avec le royaume de

¹ Op. cit., p. 439, 440.

² *Nouvelles annales des voyages*, Tome IV, Paris 1820, p. 291 et seq.