Appendix A

Researcher’s interview with Lama Dup Tshering:

Lama, Dup Tshering, aged 72, is the head lama (dorje lopen) of Old Rumtek Monastery, East Sikkim. He is the member of the dutchi which is responsible for the administration of the monastery, its maintenance and settlement of cultivators. The researcher sought an interview with him on 16th February, 2011 and the following questions were put forward to him.

1. What is the meaning of the dutchi?
2. Who introduced it in Sikkim?
3. What are its functions?
4. Who are the members of the dutchi?

The respondent informed the researcher that the dutchi is the governing body of the gonpas of Sikkim which were built in Sikkim under the Namgyal rulers of Sikkim. These gonpas were allotted lands for the maintenance of these Buddhist religious institutions and for performing religious ceremonies. It was during the third Namgyal ruler, Chagdor Namgyal, Chayik was written by him which became the constitution of the gonpas and provided for a governing body called the dutchi for carrying out the smooth functioning of the gonpas. The dutchi has the power to settle the cultivators and fix the revenue to be paid by them. At the initial stage the Chayik was meant only for the Pemayangtse gonpa, later it was made uniform to all the monasteries built by the Chogyals of Sikkim. The dutchi is constituted of the dorje lopen himself, khenpo and chuldrim. Chagdor Namgyal devoted most of his time in religious activities and ordered that every second son from the Bhutia family of Sikkim should be sent to Pemayangtse gonpa to become a lama. He also built a gonpa for the Limboos at Pemayangtse and the alphabets for Lepcha subjects were also invented by him. He was of the opinion that since it is not possible for the dutchi to settle the land affairs with the cultivators as they are busy with religious matters they have granted the lands through middlemen or leased out, however, the records of the functioning of the monasteries and details of accounts are kept by the dutchi.

Researcher’s interview with Uday Chandra Basistha:

Uday Chandra Basistha, aged 73, is the retired officer of Education Department, Government of Sikkim. He is the author of Sikkimka Chadparva (Religious Festivals of Sikkim) and gives various religious discourses. He is credited with having knowledge on religion and cultures of Sikkim among all the three communities viz. the Bhutias, Lepchas and the Nepalese. The researcher met him on 9th October, 2012 and information was received from him on the questions put in the following way.
1. What were the different forms of marriage in Sikkim especially among the Nepalese?

2. How was it organized?

3. Was dissolution of marriage permissible?

4. Could widow remarry?

5. Whether these forms of marriage exist today?

The respondent informed that in Sikkim different forms of marriage were prevalent. Among them polyandry among the Bhutias and the Lepchas was common. Child marriage was common among the Nepalese belong to Brahmans and Kshatriyas. Among other Nepalese marriage was arranged by their parents. Sometimes the boy and the girl married by eloping and the ceremonies followed. In this case a mediator called kalita was to be sent to girl’s house to confirm the presence of the girl at boy’s house and was generally referred to as chor ko shor. The marriage started right with mangni or asking the hand of the girl for the boy. The marriage was finalized by sharing marwa and the date was fixed and the presents to be brought to bride’s house were consented. They had to bring marriage procession or janti on the day of marriage and formal declaration was made by their shamans by invoking spirits. The Nepalese except Brahmans and Kshatriyas married their elder sister-in-law and it was acceptable, however, they were required to pay fines or jaari if the husband was alive and were accepted as the member of the house after the ceremony of daal bhat. Dissolution of marriage was permissible after paying maintenance by the person who sought it. Among the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas marriage was arranged by their parents and child marriage was common till the mid of the 20th century. After marriage the bride was required to be brought to her parents known as duran and if she did not return to her in-laws the marriage was said to have dissolved. She was not allowed to remarry and the widow marriage was absent in those days. However, if a child became a widow before her menarche she was allowed to remarry. He was of the opinion that most of these traditions have now faded away due to the influence of modern education.

Researcher’s interview with Phur Tshering Lepcha:

Phur Tshering Lepcha, aged 78, is the ex mondal (village headman) of Marchak block, East Sikkim. Being a Lepcha and a headman of the village he is aware with the social activities regarding his village. The researcher met him on 16th March, 2011, and sought information on the following questions put forward to him.

1. How was the marriage among Lepchas and Bhutias arranged?

2. What were the different rituals organized by these communities during birth and death?

3. What were the different forms of music and dances among Bhutias and the Lepchas?
The respondent informed the researcher that among the Lepchas and the Bhutias marriage were arranged by their parents. In this case he informed that the role of maternal uncle among these communities was important. The Lepcha marriage was contracted in the early childhood and the boy had to serve the in-laws for two to three years before the marriage was finalized. The Bhutias adopted this custom from the Lepchas. The Lepchas also adopted the polyandry form of marriage from the Bhutias. They had to exchange chang or murwa or chi when the marriage was finalized. During the day of marriage the bride was required to come in a procession called gyampu kundae and had to bring live bull, pig, fowl and eggs along with ornaments as bride price. After days of feasting the marriage was said to be over. The new born baby was named after three to five days of its birth by the elders. Bijuas’ service was taken to ward off evil spirits and for safe delivery. During illness they also employed their service. When the Lepchas started converting to Buddhism the birth ritual of naming was done by the lamas. They performed pujas for well being of the whole family and ward off the evil spirits. Earlier the Lepchas used to bury the dead with the latter facing Kanchanjanga however, the Lepchas later started following the Buddhist tradition of cremating of the dead.

Researcher’s interview with Dr. M. P. Kharel:

Dr. M. P. Kharel, aged 57, is the Principal of Sikkim Government College, is among one of the learned figure in Sikkim. The researcher sought interview on 28th December, 2012 regarding the economic history of Sikkim and the following information were received from him on the basis of questions asked to him.

1. How was the land revenue collected from the people of Sikkim during Namgyals?
2. What were the changes brought about by the Nepalese and the British system?

He informed that the land revenue in Sikkim was never uniform the Chogyal used to stay at Chumbi for almost half the year. The officers collected the revenue of their behalf. It was the Newars who brought in the Nepalese system of land revenue in the form of bisa panja which was to be paid in kind. This was imposed on the Nepalese settlers by them after they got thikadari rights. Bisa panja literally meant five out of twenty. Later when the British came they abolished this system and collected revenue in kind.

Researcher’s interview with D. K. Rai:

D. K. Rai, age 56, is the OSD of Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department, Government of Sikkim. He is well aware of the land systems, taxes, and land revenue management in Sikkim. The researcher met him on 20th February, 2012 and the information received from him on the basis of the following questions asked to him are as follows.
1. How were the land revenue were collected in Sikkim in past?
2. Who granted land to the monasteries?
3. What was the measurement of those lands thus granted?

He informed that before the coming of the Nepalese he had no idea about the collection of land revenue however, after their settlement a sort of house tax called *dhuri khajana* from the new settlers. A *dhur* was an imaginary area of ten long steps of an average man on all four sides which was sufficient to build a house. At that time it was paid in kind of one *murhi* of paddy or at the rate of 1 rupee in cash per year. Lands were granted to the monasteries by the *Chogyals* measuring 15 to twenty acres of today’s measurement, near to the monastery or at a distance. The boundary of the said land was either a river, a pathway, stream a big rock or a high mound.