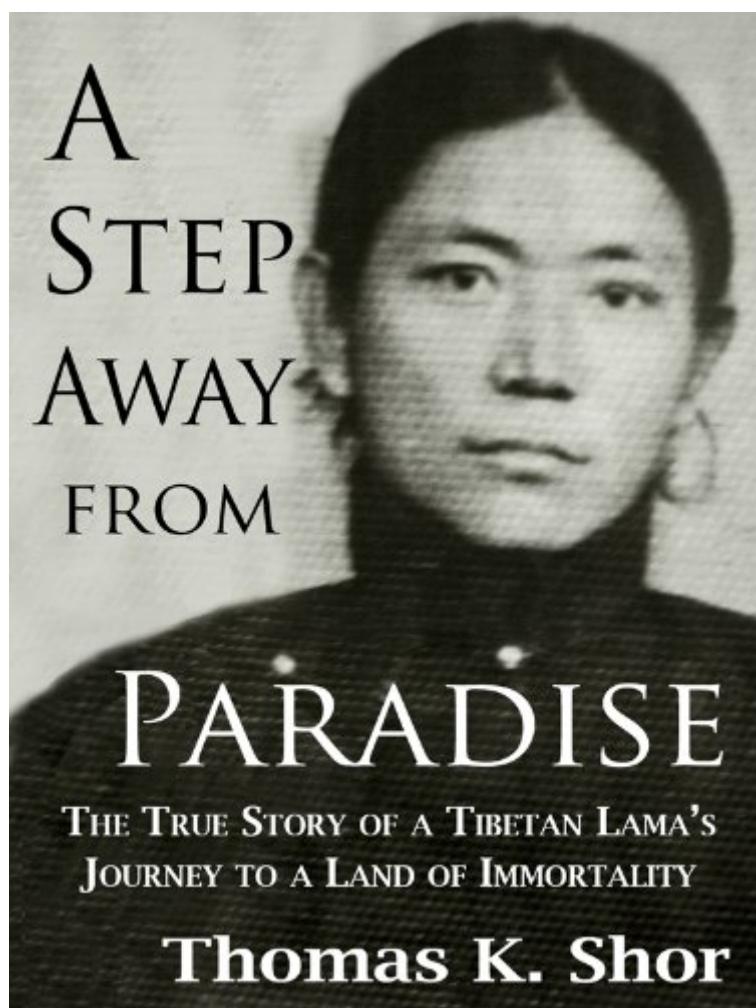


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A Step Away From Paradise: A Tibetan Lama's Extraordinary Journey To A Land Of Immortality



Synopsis

IN THE EARLY 1960S, a Tibetan lama, a charismatic and learned visionary mystic named Tulshuk Lingpa, led over 300 followers into the high glaciers of the Himalayas in order to *open the way* to a hidden land of immortality fabled in Tibetan tradition dating back at least to the 12th century. Fifty years later, Thomas K. Shor tracks down the surviving members of this visionary expedition and entwines their remarkable stories of faith and adventure with his own quest to discover the reality of this land known as Beyul. What emerges is a breathtaking story alive with possibility, bringing the reader as close to the Hidden Land as a book possibly can. As the astounding account unfolds, the reader is sure to repeat the question constantly raised by the author in his interviews: And then what happened? *A Step Away From Paradise* tells the story of Lama Tulshuk Lingpa's life and his unlikely expedition to a land beyond cares while reflecting on what this means for the rest of us. It draws on both research and extensive interviews with the surviving members of this extraordinary expedition. The book is richly illustrated with portraits of those who went with Tulshuk Lingpa and the places he traveled to. The book also delves into the tradition within Tibetan Buddhism of Shambhala and the hidden valleys, which mirror legends around the world of utopias and lands of milk and honey, thus showing that the quest for the hidden land is a universal urge of humanity.

WRITER AND PHOTOGRAPHER Thomas K. Shor was born in Boston, USA, and studied comparative religion and literature in Vermont. With an ear for unusual stories, the fortune to attract them and an eye for detail, he has travelled the planet's mountainous realms—from the Mayan Highlands of southern Mexico in the midst of insurrection to the mountains of Greece and, more recently to the Indian Himalayas—to collect, illustrate and write stories, with a uniquely personal character often having the flavor of fable. Shor has lectured widely on his writings and has had solo exhibits of his photographs in Europe and in India. He is the author of *Windblown Clouds* and can often be found in the most obscure locales, immersed in a compelling story touching upon fundamental human themes. The author's website is www.ThomasShor.com

From the Foreword by Tenzin Palmo: *A STEP AWAY FROM PARADISE* is a riveting tale of adventure, intrigue and devotion. [It] deals with an aspect of Tibetan Buddhism that is in some ways more honest to the real spirit of Tibet than all the usual books on Tibetan doctrine and will, I am sure, be of interest to a wide audience. It is a fascinating account of a little-known charismatic figure that will challenge even the most skeptical mind and provide a fresh perspective on what we normally regard as reality. Like no other book I have ever read, *A Step Away from Paradise* is both unique and intriguing. Highly recommended.

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Customer Reviews

"What would happen if Lewis Carroll had proclaimed the reality of Wonderland? What if he had gathered a following and launched an expedition?" This is how Thomas Shor introduce us to the extraordinary account of the life of the crazy wisdom yogi, Tulshuk Lingpa. He was the Terton who would open the gate of the Pure Land of Beyul Demoshong, the Hidden Land of the Great Valley of Rice. Supposedly located inside Sikkim but three times larger than this, Demoshong would be opened at the precise moment, by the prophesied Terton who would enter through the hidden western gate in the slope of mount Kanchejunga followed by whoever had and unbreakable faith in the Beyul. Having the expedition to the Hidden Land as a main subject and motive of the whole book, Shor interviewed over the years tens of people who met Tulshuk Lingpa, forming a very detailed and accurate life story and deeds of this mystic Terton. The whole story looks like an amazing fantasy novel, but all was true, just 50 years ago. Demoshong, is still there, waiting...

I loved this story, the author knows how to pace the novel in such a way that everything is revealed in the proper time... just like a hidden treasure. It was especially interesting because I trek in this region yearly, and know a lot of the places and landmarks in the valley. I'm going back to

Kanchenjunga this year, now I'll be keeping a lookout for a hidden land now :)

Amazing story. Well written and researched with excellent explanation of Tibetan Buddhist history and ideas. Wonderful descriptions of inner and outer life in Sikkim. Paints wonderful pictures of the people involved in this extraordinary story

First of all I have to say that I read this intriguing story sometime ago now however it remains somewhat imprinted in my mind. I chanced across this book at the time I was becoming more interested in the Terton (treasure revealer) lineages of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. To find an account of a Terton who lived comparatively recently was just a blessing. In this book Thomas Shor introduces the reader to a world that we can only imagine. A world where reality as we know is very different to the reality of a realised being. Some call it 'crazy wisdom'. I was left wondering how it would be to experience the world through Tulshuk Lingpa. What is equally fascinating to read is the faith and devotion his followers had in him in that they were willing to give up everything to follow him on his quest of opening up a whole new world. Along the way the author also introduces the reader to some very interesting Himalayan characters. I highly recommend this book to anyone who is interested in Tibetan Buddhism, the Terton tradition or Himalayan culture in general. I look forward to reading his new book next year which is promising to recount his own experiences with Buddhist Masters.

I couldn't stop reading this book. It is beautifully and thoughtfully written, impeccably researched and really captures the essence of this great being.

I could not put this book down. The author's writing transports you to Sikkim. It is a wonderful biographical journey.

Magnificent. Lovely work, easy to digest and utterly fascinating. Bravo!

Author put in a lot of hard work to record all facts but should have explained better on guru rinpoche. Guru rinpoche is no wizard but rather a Buddha especially from a Tibetan Buddhism perspective. This book has many high lamas quoted and really an extraordinary book of how important devotion is for Tibetan Buddhism. All in all the most incredible but factual biography of a true legendary Terton.

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