

Exploring Remotest Asia
Wilder Wohns Rose Book-Collecting Prize Entry

Not long after I entered the third grade, I returned from school to find a new object sitting in the corner of my room: my brother's 1970s-era globe. He had departed for college a few days earlier and had left it as a parting gift. As I poured over the globe, my eyes were drawn to a country that seemed to encircle the earth: "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." I was astonished that the country stretched from Eastern Europe to the Pacific Ocean, from islands far north of the Arctic Circle to mountains approaching the Himalayas. I would pick the most remote looking place within those boundaries and wonder, "what secrets do these lands contain?"

From then on, my imagination wandered past the borders of the former USSR and across broad ranges of times, but I never stopped staring in wonder at remote spots on the map of Asia. I was fascinated by both the cities with exotic names and the spaces with no names at all, the rivers traced by explorers hundreds of years ago, and the peaks which had been conquered in the past century. My book collection is an attempt to understand the mystery of those lands. Encompassing works from the first half of the 19th century until the year 2010, and dealing with people from St. Petersburg to Tokyo and events from Nepal to Mongolia, it is unified by an interest in the mystique of lands, people, and stories from across Asia. I am interested in the explorers who traversed the lands, in the meeting of peoples from disparate locations and cultures, and in how the effects of these interactions resonated across the world.

My collection grows as I continue to discover gripping stories of brave mountaineers and dogged explorers, but I also am eager to expand its breadth. Most works in my collection were penned by European and American men, so I would like to include more Asian, as well as female, authors. Ekai Kawaguchi was a Japanese Zen monk and the first Japanese person to enter Nepal and Tibet, which were strictly closed to foreigners at the time. Fanny Bullock Workman gained renown in the early 20th century for climbing and surveying in the Karakorum and Himalayas. Acquiring these explorers' works would add important perspectives to my collection and more fully tell the story of these fascinating lands.

From the forbidding Siberian tundra to the ancient cultures of Central Asia and Japan, the vast expanses of Asia have served as the backdrop to some of most important stories in human history. I started collecting because I was curious about what had happened in these remote lands. But I became a collector when I found that my books did much more. They inspire me with stories of boundless ambition and courage, with knowledge of worlds far removed in time, place, and culture from my own, and with reassurance that life is full of possibilities for those who search for them.

Bibliography

Atkinson, Thomas Witlam. *Oriental and Western Siberia*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1858. Print.

This volume contains accounts of Atkinson's extensive travels in Siberia and Central Asia. *Oriental and Western Siberia* also contains some excellent sketches that evoke the wild nature of the land. Atkinson proudly announces that he had traveled almost 40,000 miles in seven years and was able to explore lands that neither Marco Polo nor Huc (whose *Travels in Tartary, Thibet, and China* is also in my collection) had traversed. The author also remarks that he was able to sketch scenes that had never been recorded before. This volume is a first edition.

Bernstein, Jeremy. *The Wildest Dreams of Kew: A Profile of Nepal*. Delhi: Book Faith India, 1998. Print.

The Wildest Dreams of Kew provides a wonderful comparison to *Picturesque Nepal* which was written by Percy Brown (see entry below). Both are descriptions of Nepal, and though this book was originally published in 1970, while *Picturesque Nepal* was published in 1912, there are interesting consistencies between both travelogues. Both are concerned with changes happening to the country, but find that the time of their visit was significant in that so many traditions were still preserved. Bernstein evokes the mystique of Nepal with descriptions such as the following: “a holy man, his face distant with rapture, plays a harmonium and chants songs that must be as old as the country itself” (50). I found this book while browsing in a bookstore in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Bonvalot, Gabriel. *Across Thibet*. New York: Cassell Publishing Company, 1892. Print.

Bonvalot was a French explorer, a “traveler” in his own words, who sought to cross from France to French Indochina (present day Vietnam), a journey of thousands of kilometers across the “roof of the world.” The obstacles he had to overcome in this epic journey are too numerous to name, but his exploits stand as a testament to virtues of persistence and courage. After more than a year, Bonvalot completed his extraordinary journey. This volume is a first edition.

Bookwalter, John W. *Siberia and Central Asia*. London: C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd., 1900. Print.

The subject of the book is the Bookwalter’s travels in Siberia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, in addition to European Russia. Bookwalter is American, and thus his account is different in a number of respects than that of British writers. This perspective is demonstrated in his analysis of “The Great Game.” My collection includes a number of books by British explorers during this period, as well as those by other Western and Northern Europeans and Americans, but I hope to one day obtain Russian accounts as well. This book is a first edition from Powell’s bookstore in Chicago.

Brown, Percy. *Picturesque Nepal*. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1912. Print.

This volume contains a description of Nepal intended for foreign readers. It is interesting to note that in the introduction, the author expresses concern that the traditional ways of Nepal are disappearing as the country attempts to adopt more modern practices. I was fortunate enough to visit Nepal in the summer of 2013, and while the capital of Kathmandu was a bustling center of commerce, the villages and more remote areas of the country resonated with the descriptions in *Picturesque Nepal*. Thus the concern about globalization over a century ago when the book was published is interesting to contrast with my recent experience in the nation. This book is a first edition.

Cooper, Michael. *They Came to Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965. Print.

This book is an excellent example of the type of exploration and cross-cultural interaction in which I am most interested. It contains early records of Europeans’ observations about Japan. For about 100 years before Japan’s famous period of isolation, Europeans traveled across the nation as the *Sengoku* warring states period drew to its conclusion. These accounts are particularly valuable for they reveal as much about Europeans and how they perceived the “natives” as it does about Japan itself. The Westerners were so confident of their superiority that they were often taken aback by Japan’s sophisticated culture, which had evolved without contact with Europe.

Craig, Albert M. and Donald H. Shively. *Personality in Japanese History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970. Print.

This interesting volume is a compilation of analyses of various Japanese historical figures. It is important to my collection because it presents an in-depth analysis of some of the people who shaped Japanese history. Many of the people profiled (the Shogun rulers of feudal Japan, the intellectuals, artists, and Samurai to name a few) are responsible for making this culture so unique. I received this book as a gift from my mother.

Craig, Robert W. *Storm and Sorrow in the High Pamirs*. London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1981. Print.

This is an account of tragedy that struck during a Soviet-organized, international climbing expedition in the Pamir mountain range (found in Soviet Central Asia). It is an interesting addition to my collection because it deals with the intersection of mountaineering and cross-cultural communication. Terrible storms and earthquakes caused fifteen deaths on the mountain. The author believed that the presence of foreigners made the Soviet organizers mount daring rescue attempts of stranded climbers in an attempt to avoid embarrassment. This book was a gift from my father.

Denys, F. Ward. *Our Summer in the Vale of Kashmir*. Washington D.C.: James William Bryan, 1915. Print.

Before Kashmir became known as a dangerous war zone and point of contention between India and Pakistan, the land was a favorite summer destination for the British in India. In this work, Denys, an American, describes the incredible beauty and singular charm of the region.

Dolgorouky, Princess Stephanie. *Russia Before the Crash*. Paris: Herbert Clark, 1926. Print;

This work is exemplary of the nature of the Russian Royal Family before the revolutions which ended the Romanov dynasty. The Princess concerns herself mainly with the intrigues of her family. Alongside the works of Lenin and the propagandist works of the Soviets, I find it interesting to see the story from the perspective of one of the vanquished royal family. Yet the Princess is so involved in recounting the minutia of her family's history and various marriages that she seldom discusses the revolutionaries, apart from descriptions of assassinations that she witnessed. She never fails to praise the "Czar Liberator" (125), and I came to understand that she and her peers lived in a cloistered world away from executions and Siberian prison camps. This volume is a first edition.

Erman, Adolph. *Travels in Siberia: Including Excursions Northwards, Down the Obi, to The Polar Circle; and Southwards, to The Chinese Frontier*. Trans. William Desborough Cooley. 2 vols. London: Longman, Brown green, and Longmans, 1848. Print

Erman's *Travels in Siberia* stands out as a truly extraordinary tale of exploration and adventure, even among the illustrious company of the likes of Sven Hedin, Younghusband, and Eric Sipton. The extent of Erman's travels is truly remarkable. Decades before the construction of the Trans-Siberian railway, he traversed Siberia, traveling up and down rivers to reach the Arctic Circle, the borders of China, and even the Pacific Ocean at Okhotsk, a remote Russian base more than a thousand miles northeast of the Chinese frontier. These two volumes are first editions.

Frazier, Ian. *Travels in Siberia*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010. Print.

Travels in Siberia is the modern equivalent of *Oriental and Western Siberia*, *Siberia and Central Asia*, Adolph Erman's *Travels in Siberia* or any of the early accounts of Siberian

travel. Frazier, a contributor to *The New Yorker* describes the wilds of Siberia with clear, engaging prose. Comparing this work with the earlier travelogues lead me to think not only about the obvious changes and similarities in the Siberia that these adventurers witness, but also about the nature of time and change in a broader sense. Despite the obvious radical changes that occurred during Russia's tumultuous 20th century, much stayed the same. Vodka continues to play a significant role in social interactions with the Siberians, bureaucracy is still obstinate (it seems that authorities have grown much less accommodating since the early European travelers to Siberia), and yet the grand scale of the land still seems to hold great promise.

Fukuzawa, Yukichi. *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa*. Trans. Eiichi Kiyooka. New York: Columbia University Press, 1968. Print.

Yukichi Fukuzawa is one of the most important figures in the modernization of Japan. A student of the West, he did much to bring Western knowledge to Japan, encourage education, and propel Japan into the ranks of the Great Powers. The tales of Fukuzawa's travels in Europe and America are a delight to read. He and his compatriots encounter many of the same difficulties and wonders as did the Westerners who visited Japan. As in *They Came to Japan*, even those who were averse to all things foreign often capitulated when faced with "such a spread of food, delicacies of 'both the woods and the sea,'" as they encountered in a French hotel (128).

Graham, Stephen. *Through Russian Central Asia*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916. Print.

This is another splendid account of Central Asia written by a British author and published during World War I. I find it interesting to read as an account of the area before the great changes brought about by the Russian Revolution.

Grenard, F. *Tibet: The Country and its Inhabitants*. Trans. A. Teixeira de Mattos. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1904. Print.

The author wrote a scientific description of Tibetans and their land including a discussion of socio-economics. There is much detail about agriculture, cattle breeding, hunting, mines, and manufacturing. Grenard also created and included an ethnographical and political map of Central Asia. This book is a first edition.

Halstead, Murat. *The War Between Russia and Japan*. No publisher information found, 1904. Print.

This is undoubtedly one of my favorite books in my collection. It draws together so many of the themes I am interested in: conflict between two very different peoples and cultures, a Siberian setting, changes in Japan after contact with the West, and the huge geopolitical consequences of events in remote locales. *War Between Russia and Japan* is the account of Murat Halstead, a war correspondent of the Russo-Japanese War. There are not only vivid descriptions and illustrations of the battles fought, but also evocative portrayals of individuals and cultural practices. One feature of the book that I find particularly interesting is the racial prejudices that Halstead brings to his writing. These views were challenged when the world witnessed a European nation defeated by an Asian one. This book is a first edition.

Heber, A. Reeve, and Kathleen M. Herber. In *Himalayan Tibet*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1926. Print.

This is a record of the 12 years that the Hebers spent in Tibet. They describe the Tibetan people, their culture, religion, and Tibetan climate, flora and fauna. There is quite a

bit about Ladakh (an area in modern-day Northern India near the Himalayas) and the Ladakhis as the Hebers had friends among these people. This volume is a first edition.

Hedin, Sven. *Central Asia and Tibet: Towards the Holy City of Lassa*. 2 vols. London: Hurst and Blackett, Ltd., 1903. Print.

Sven Hedin was a colorful character in the history of Asian exploration during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Hedin was involved in “The Great Game” and was notable for exploration of Central Asia and the discovery of mountain ranges, the sources of various rivers, and historical sites. These two volumes detail his epic journey through Russia, Central Asia, Tibet, Mongolia, and China. It is doubtlessly one of my favorite books, for Hedin masterfully relates his adventures, his encounters with Mongols, Tibetans, and Central Asians in such a way that reaffirms why I love these stories. These volumes are first editions.

Hedin, Sven. *Through Asia*. 2 vols. London: Methuen & Co, 1898. Print.

Hedin traveled to, through, and around the Russian Pamirs in 1893 to 1897. He made many scientific observations and mapped areas that had never been previously explored. He was meticulous in his measurements of mountain heights, river water flow, and topography of glaciers, using numerous surveying instruments. Hedin was a geographical explorer, which made him unique among many of the other authors who traveled through Central Asia. These volumes are first editions.

Hedin, Sven. *Trans-Himalaya*. 3 vols. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1910. Print.

This is another one of Hedin’s marvelous accounts of his explorations. Hedin returned to Tibet and the Himalaya three years after returning from the adventures recounted in *Central Asia and Tibet: Towards the Holy City of Lassa*. He set out after realizing that a great deal of Tibet had yet to be mapped and that geographically speaking there must be an undiscovered mountain range. His adventures fill three volumes and include pictures of mountains and various mountain peoples. These volumes are important to my collection because they are yet another wonderful example of Hedin’s pioneering explorations. The set are reprints of the first edition.

Hopkirk, Peter. *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*. New York: Kodansha International, 1990. Print.

The Great Game details the struggle between the Russian and British Empires in Central Asia during the 19th and early 20th centuries. It is fascinating to see the parallels between this competition and the current struggle for influence in the region. The subject of this book elucidates another feature of Asian exploration that draws me to the subject: the titanic geopolitical battles that are waged among remote mountain peaks and desolate deserts. In *The Great Game*, explorers not only meet foreign peoples and discover new geographical features, but they are also the primary agents in a struggle that will have ramifications in the world’s greatest centers of wealth and power. This book also contains references to many other authors who participated in “The Great Game,” such as Francis Younghusband.

Huc, M. *Travels in Tartary, Thibet, and China*. Trans. W. Hazlitt. 2 vols. London: Office of the National Illustrated Library, 1851. Print.

This pair of books was written by a missionary, Huc, who traveled with another missionary to Lhasa with bold hopes of converting the Dalai Lama into a “branch Pope.” Huc and the other missionary were deported to China where they complained about their treatment in Lhasa. Huc’s contribution to the understanding of Tibetan Buddhism was his

description of the numerous analogies between Roman Catholicism and Tibetan Buddhism. This volume is a first edition.

Jacob, Alaric. *A Russian Journey: From Suzdal to Samarkand*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1969. Print.

This book is special among travelogues in my collection because it is a joint collaboration between a writer and an artist (not unlike the beautifully illustrated book *Kashmir* by Younghusband and Molyneux). It is also interesting in comparison to both the earlier and later works about travel in Russia and the Soviet Union. There are similarities which seem endemic to the terrain: endless vodka offered to the travelers, difficult bureaucracies, and general bewilderment with the scale of the country and sights that they visit. However, there are particularly Soviet aspects to this travel as well, such as the ever-present specter of the state intelligence forces and the backdrop of communist ideals on the landscape and the people. Comparing books from the three time periods (Pre-revolution, Soviet era, and post-communism), Western travelers consistently observe that each system (monarchism, communism, capitalism) has lent its own dysfunctional flavor to the country.

Keay, John. *The Gilgit Game: The Explorers of the Western Himalayas 1865-95*. Newton Abbot: Readers Union Group of Book Clubs, 1979. Print.

This book chronicles exploration of the Western Himalayas from 1865 to 1895, and is essentially the story of the "The Great Game." Gilgit in the Western Himalaya is an extremely remote region that became a flashpoint in the hostile relations between the Russian and British empires. The book describes the journeys of individuals who masqueraded as freelance travelers, but who were actually intelligence agents on military patrols. Keay describes their geographical findings, which were initially considered top secret. Kipling wrote about the Gilgit story, creating fictional versions of the actual explorers.

Keay, John. *When Men and Mountains Meet: The Explorers of the Western Himalayas 1820-75*. London: John Murray (Publishers) Ltd., 1977. Print.

This book covers the explorers of the Western Himalayas from 1820 to 1875. This region was fascinating to Westerners since many of the fabled cities of the Western Himalayas had not been visited since the time of Marco Polo. The region was very difficult to explore due to the terrain and the rulers of the area. Some of the explorers described by Keay in *When Men & Mountains Meet* were eccentric characters, including a missionary who crossed the mountains naked.

Khrushchev, Nikita Sergeevich. *Khrushchev Remembers*. Trans. Strobe Talbott. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970. Print.

Khrushchev's memoirs contain many sections that are of significance to my collection. For example, there are sections about Khrushchev's Virgin Lands Campaign in Siberia, development of the Central Asian Republics, and Chinese claims on Siberian land, among other topics.

Ed. M.P. Kim, Y.S. Borisov, and V.S. Lelchuk. *The Soviet Union Today*. Trans. Vechor-Sheherbovich. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975. Print.

This book is a propagandist report on the development of the Soviet Union which was intended for Western readers. It is full of positive statistics and accounts of Soviet economic development, the advancement of Soviet science, and frequent explanations of how Lenin's vision is being realized. In regards to my collection, the most pertinent sections involve descriptions of how the Soviet minority peoples are faring and how life is changing in the

Soviet Union outside of the traditional industrial centers in European Russia. The authors report that the nation is well on the way to perfect equality, measured by the number of cinemas, factories, interracial marriages, and every other imaginable index.

Lamb, Harold. *Genghis Khan: The Emperor of All Men*. Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., 1927. Print.

This biography of Genghis Khan is written in such a way that it captures the conquests and feats of Genghis Khan in their grandest and most dramatic proportions. This is befitting of the greatest conqueror in this history of the world, whose empire is the only one which came to encompass nearly all of the areas with which my collection is concerned (the Mongols failed to capture Japan). Genghis Khan uniquely embodies the themes of my collection, for he not only conquered a vast array of foreign peoples, but also created a great period of peace and cultural exchange that allowed the Silk Road to flourish and led to the travels of Marco Polo. Genghis Khan is one of the most prominent figures in the story of Asia and thus my collection would be incomplete without this important biography.

Landon, Perceval. *The Opening of Tibet*. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1905. Print.

This book fills an important part of my collection for it is the complete account of the British expedition to Tibet in 1903-04. This has been considered the last great move in "The Great Game." The British sought to prevent any Russian influence in Tibet and sent an expedition commanded by James Macdonald and Francis Younghusband (I have two works by Younghusband in my collection). The account was written by Landon, who was a special correspondent from *The Times* of London. Landon goes to great lengths to explain British fears about a Buryat monk by the name of Dorzhiev (spelled Dorjjeff in this account) whom they considered to be a Russian agent. Their suspicions were used as justifications for the expedition-turned-invasion of Tibet.

Landor, A. Henry Savage. *In the Forbidden Land*. 2 vols. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1899. Print.

A. Henry Savage Landor journeyed to Tibet in 1897 and was captured by lamas and soldiers. He was imprisoned and tortured then eventually freed by a doctor and a political leader. Due to Landor's statements to the *Daily Mail* about outrageous abuses by the Tibetans, the British authorities governing India and portions of Tibet intervened. These volumes are first editions.

Lenin, V.I. *The Collected Works of Lenin*. Ed. Henry M. Christman. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1987. Print.

I asked for, and received this book on my 13th birthday, making it one of the first books in my collection. Lenin wrote some of these works during his imprisonment in Siberia, and the influence of these works came to be felt across the world.

Massie, Robert K. *Peter the Great: His Life and World*. New York: Alfred K. Knopf, 1980. Print.

This biography is unique in my collection because it is signed by the author. Siberia had already been conquered by the time of Peter the Great's ascent, but Kamchatka and the Kuril Islands came under Russia's domain during his reign. He also appointed Vitus Bering to head the expedition to investigate if Asia and North America were attached by land to one another. Peter desired to trade with India, and to that end made various efforts to reach the subcontinent, including an unsuccessful naval expedition to Madagascar and a military expedition to the Khan of Khiva (present day Uzbekistan), which was bloodily defeated.

McDowell, Bart. *Journey Across Russia: The Soviet Union Today*. Washington D.C.: The National Geographic Society, 1977. Print.

This book is similar to *A Russian Journey: From Suzdal to Samarkand*, in that both are illustrated works about travel in the Soviet Union. This volume is full of excellent photographs. The nature of the commentary is different in these two volumes however. The first is more of the informal travelogue style, while this National Geographic book is in the style of the magazine's articles, which are more objective and less inclined to directly address certain sensitive political issues. Regardless, this is an enjoyable book to pursue and delivers reliably professional quality photography and prose. The book also presents well-researched background information on every topic.

McGovern, William M. *To Lhasa in Disguise: A Secret Expedition through Mysterious Tibet*. London: Thornton Butterworth, 1924. Print.

In his later years as a professor at Northwestern University, William Montgomery McGovern had the reputation of being a "real-life Indiana Jones." As a young man he had studied as a monk in Japanese Zen monastery before sneaking into to Lhasa disguised as a Tibetan servant. This latter story is the subject of this work, in which he recounts in gripping detail how, after being officially refused entry to Tibet, he crossed the Himalayas in winter and reached Lhasa. He left the city after donning his disguise once again to escape a riotous crowd of monks enraged by the presence of a Westerner. Montgomery's later life is full of similarly incredible exploits. He is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable authors in my collection.

Nansen, Fridtjof. *Through Siberia The Land of the Future*. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1914. Print.

Fridtjof Nansen is a legendary explorer, and later a scientist, humanitarian and diplomat (receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1922). This book is important to my collection not only because it is written by such a distinguished figure, but also because it deals with an ambitious attempt to open up a trade route via the Arctic Ocean and the Yenisei River to the interior of Siberia. Such an undertaking is similar to the current attempts to open the "Northeast Passage," a shipping route through the Arctic Ocean that would connect the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

Neve, Ernest F. *A Crusader in Kashmir*. London: Seeley, Service & Co. Ltd., 1928. Print.

Ernest Neve, M.D. was a medical missionary and the book is about his brother, Dr. Arthur Neve, also a medical missionary. Arthur was head of the Kashmir Medical Mission. The Neve brothers believed that "For the continued presentation of Christianity to Hindus and Moslems there is no more potent agency than the work of Medical Missions." This volume helped me understand the motivations of some of the British colonialists who were inclined to humanitarianism. This volume is a first edition.

Norman, Henry. *All the Russias*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902. Print.

Henry Norman traveled throughout Siberia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus around the turn of the century. He strives to give the reader a complete picture of Russia at the time. I find his perspective on Russia in the international context to be most interesting. His reactions to the exotic nature of his surroundings are oftentimes comic to read, and I sometimes detected disdain for certain native customs. This book is a first edition.

Oliphant, Laurence. *The Russian Shoes of the Black Sea and A Journey to Katmandu*. Cologne: Konemann, 1998. Print.

The Russian Shoes of the Black Sea and A Journey to Katmandu is one of the first books I acquired, at the age of 12 or 13. It is a combined volume of two of Oliphant's books. I was already interested in travel stories to these parts of the world (Russia and the Himalayas) at this age.

Pereira, Cecil and Francis Younghusband. *Peking to Lhasa*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1926. Print.

This book is a narrative of the journeys in China made by General George Pereira, as compiled by the famous explorer Francis Younghusband. Pereira kept a detailed diary of his multiple trips to China and Tibet, where he eventually died. Pereira also surveyed the region enabling maps to be created, which are kept at the Royal Geographical Society in London. Pereira accomplished incredible expeditions in remote parts of China and Tibet, even though he had various physical ailments. This volume is a first edition.

Polo, Marco. *Marco Polo's Silk Road: The Art of the Journey*. London: Watkins Publishing, 2011. Print.

Marco Polo's tales are legendary, and I felt that my collection would be lacking if I did not have a copy of his memoirs. Like other books in my collection, his stories invoke the drama and the romance of the exotic lands that he traveled in and the extraordinary nature of his travels excite the reader's imagination. Furthermore, the accounts are even more valuable for my purposes because it is possible to compare the observations of Polo in the 13th century to those of travelers to the same areas in the 19th, 20th, or 21st centuries.

Service, Robert. *Lenin: A Biography*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000. Print.

Robert Service's *Lenin: A Biography* is valuable to this collection for it gives an overview of the man who was responsible for changing the face of much of Asia, and indeed the world. Of particular interest is that Lenin pursued a policy that actively sought to promote non-Russian citizens of the Soviet Union (such as Central Asians and indigenous Siberians). Lenin's successors continued this policy to varying degrees, with the major exception of Stalin's infamous persecutions of various ethnic groups.

Shipton, Eric. *Blank on the Map*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, Limited, 1938. Print.

Just the name of this book intrigued me, then when I read it, I was immediately impressed with Shipton as the embodiment of the ultimate explorer. Shipton believed that the most exciting thing about exploring and mapping is to be able to fill in the blanks on maps. He often traveled with Bill Tilman and the duo became well-known for their unique "fast and light" style of exploration. In this book, he travels to an unexplored region in the Karakoram Mountains near K2, the second highest mountain in the world. They mapped giant glaciers, climbed many un-named peaks, and crossed unknown passes. This book describes what some have called the greatest mountaineering feat up until that time. This volume is a first edition.

Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. I. *The Gulag Archipelago*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973. Print.

The Gulag Archipelago is a staggering piece of literature and, for my collecting purposes, an essential element in understanding the story of the Siberian landscape. The book is an all-encompassing look at persecution in the Soviet Union. The title describes the prisons, most notably ones located in Siberia, where political and other prisoners were held. I

feel that recognizing the tragedy of the countless souls who languished and died in these prisons is an essential component of my collection.

Turner, Samuel. *Siberia. A Record of Travel, Climbing, and Exploration*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1911. Print.

After concluding a business trip in Siberia, Samuel Turner, an English merchant, went climbing in the Altai Mountains, a remote range straddling Russia, Mongolia, China, and Kazakhstan. Turner survived a small avalanche while attempting to climb Belukha, the highest peak in the Altai. In his concluding remarks, he cautions against Japan's growing economic clout and proposes that Britain invest in Siberia's vast quantities of raw materials as a way of staving off Japanese ascendance in the Far East.

Waddell, L. Austine. *Lhasa and its Mysteries*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1906. Print.

Waddell learned the Tibetan language and studied Tibetan Buddhism. His contribution was a detailed description of the Grand Lama hierarchy and the hermits of Tibet. He tried to reach Lhasa in disguise, as non-Tibetans were forbidden from entering this city. He was eventually given permission to enter Lhasa. He had studied the city in incredible detail, so he remarks that he felt as if he had already seen it. This volume is a first edition.

Weston, Mark. *Giants of Japan*. New York: Kodansha International, 2002. Print.

In a similar vein to *Personality in Japanese History*, this book presents the lives of a few notable people in Japanese history. However, this work focuses less on their personality and more on their accomplishments and life stories. These men and women are from political, industrial, intellectual, military, sports, and artistic backgrounds. One reason that this book is important to my collection is that many of the featured people were fundamentally shaped by contact with non-Japanese cultures. Furthermore, many of them went on to shape not only Japan, but the world, because of these experiences.

White, W.L. *Report on the Russians*. New York: The World Publishing Company, 1946. Print.

This book is unique among the many accounts of travel to Russia that are in my collection. The trip was made by an American journalist in 1944, when America and the Soviet Union were war-time allies, but it was published in 1946, when tensions between the two nations were beginning to take shape. White also observed combat on the front with Germany. While he did not visit Siberia or Central Asia, his descriptions of the Russian people serve as valuable comparisons to the accounts of travelers to peace-time Russia.

Younghusband, Sir Francis. *Kashmir*. Illus. Major E. Molyneux. London: A. and C. Black, Ltd., 1917. Print.

This book contains both remarkable descriptions of Kashmir in the early 20th century and beautifully painted scenes of the same. Younghusband and Molyneux together impress upon the reader the great natural beauty of Kashmir. Their admiration helps the reader to understand why Kashmir was such a favorite resting place for the British in India. I am also glad to have the book in my collection because Younghusband is a very notable Asian explorer who participated in "The Great Game." Due to fears over expanding Russian influence in the Himalayas, Younghusband was sent into Tibet and was involved in a tragic massacre of Tibetans. I received this third edition as a gift from my father after returning from Nepal.