Margaret Gouin, based this book on her doctoral research at the Centre for Buddhist Studies of the University of Bristol (UK).

Buddhist practitioners in Tibet pay extraordinary attention to funerary rites. There is little academic literature that records the direct observation on these rites in Tibet. The book tries to fills an existing gap in the literature as there was no exhaustive study on the enactment of Tibetan Buddhist death rituals. It describes and analysis the structure and results of dead ritual in Tibetan Buddhism.

The author explores what is done when a Buddhist Tibetan dies, rather than what the so-called “Tibetan Book of the Dead” suggests it should be done. Margaret Gouin states that there is no standard for Buddhist funerals in Tibet. It varies depending on variables such as ethnicity of the deceased person, social standing and the historical time frame for example.

The book analysis what happens before death, immediately after death (spiritual concerns, practical concerns), the disposal of the body (burial, immersion, cremation, exposure and treatment of remains), special cases (such as holy persons, nobility, children and old people), the post-disposal rituals of benefit and protection (the bardo, the intermediate state and the rituals of benefit, such as bardo guidance, food offerings, making merit, purifying the deceased’s karma) and the ways of remembering the deceased.

Finally it includes a useful glossary that will help the reader to know the definitions of key Tibetan terms related to Buddhist funerals such as bardo (Liberation upon Hearing in the Intermediate State), jangwa (purification ritual), preta (hungry ghost) and tsok (a ritual offering of food).

In sum this book provides an interesting reading on Buddhist rituals in Tibet, opening our knowledge on burial practices in culturally Tibetan areas, a topic which has been little covered in literature.
This new book presents a collection of twelve chapters that address relations between Britain and Japan. The book has its origin in a conference entitled “Enemy to Friend: Britain and Japan at War and Peace” held on 7 September 2005 at the Cabinet War Rooms in London.

As editors of the book state, the goal of the book has been to discuss the issues of reconciliation and the promotion of mutual understanding between Britain and Japan in different arenas: from economic to politics to security. They consider that the greatest enemy to the future of UK and Japan relations may be complacency. Media attention in European countries lately focuses on China, India and Brazil as the coming global economic powerhouses. However little attention is paid to the role of Japan in today’s global economy. Similarly, Japanese attention may be focused on regional demands.

The book analyses a number of trends and developments that emerge in the UK-Japan bilateral relations. First, it is highlighted the shadow of the hegemony, always close. Second, the focus of reconciliation from the UK-Japan relationship to the relationships Japan maintains with its close neighbours in the East Asian regions has shifted. Finally the changes in the international systems and economies serve to offer opportunities and challenges in the bilateral relation between these two countries. These trends are illustrated with many cases and examples that will help the reader to gain a deeper insight into the topics.

The authors of chapters are leading academics and experts in the fields of Japanese Studies, International History and International Relations, with a special focus on Asia and in particular, on Japan. Some of these authors are Japanese born. Following the title of the book, the contents are structured in two obvious sections: At war (6 chapters) and at peace (8 chapters). All together offer the reader a way to explore the process that has occurred during last sixty year, more or less, of international relations: the change of the relation between UK and Japan from enemies to friends and cooperation. They examine the contrast between periods of peace and war in the development of relations between UK and Japan, analysing the relation between governments and peoples.

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