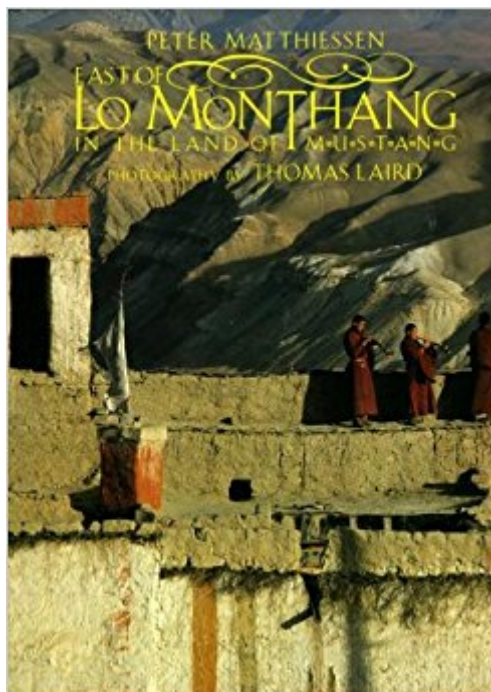


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# East Of Lo Monthang



## Synopsis

In its heyday (1400-1600), the kingdom of Lo dominated the Kali Gandaki River trade between India and Tibet. By the 18th century, Lo had lost control over this trade and had been incorporated into the modern Kingdom of Nepal. Isolated deep in the Himalayas, Lo's hereditary Rajas retained most of their feudal powers and the area remained closed to the outside world until 1991. In the spring of 1992, author Peter Matthiessen and photographer Tom Laird travelled deep in the secret valley of Sao Kohla, tucked high in the northernmost reaches of the Himalayas. They were the first Westerners to venture there in 30 years. From the central city of Lo Monthang, known as "Mustang", Matthiessen and Laird, with an entourage of attendants and horsemen, began an expedition across arid plateaux and through narrow river chasms to reach precariously perched monasteries. They camped among nomad herdsmen who spent nights guarding their goats from predatory snow leopards. This book reveals an unknown land where peaks five miles high cast their shadows over the deepest canyon in the world and where mountain nomads spend their lives herding their flocks across desolate slopes and through desert valleys. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Returning after 20 years to Pokhara in central Nepal, where his award-winning Snow Leopard drew its fire, Matthiessen delivers another superb report from the land in the clouds. This time, he has collaborated with photographer Thomas Laird, which adds greatly to the effect of Matthiessen's prose--the clarity of the beautiful images equaling the clarity of the words. With detached compassion, Matthiessen puts into simple order the daily life of this politically and environmentally

ravaged land, from the rituals of sheep herding and wheat harvesting to the constant demands placed on a local Buddhist priest. Most readers will find that the stunning photography only enhances the feeling of actually being there. Raul Nino --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Peter Matthiessen, distinguished novelist, naturalist, journalist, and explorer, was born in New York City and has been a commercial fisherman and charterboat captain. He participated as a diver in the worldwide search for the great white shark that culminated in his book *Blue Meridian* and in the film *Blue Water, White Death*. His fiction includes *Race Rock*; *Partisans*; *Raditzer*; *At Play in the Fields of the Lord*, which was nominated for a National Book Award; and most recently *Far Tortuga*. His nonfiction includes *The Tree Where Man Was Born*, which was nominated for a National Book Award, *The Snow Leopard*, which won a National Book Award in 1979, and *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*.

I remember being a very young child, reading this book when it was brand new, when the pages were crisp and had that new-archival-paper smell, and it was so big that I had to splay it out on the comfortable, clean rug at my local library to adequately read and absorb in all of the photographs. This book had it all for a young reader: What boy of 8 or 9 wouldn't be excited by lost kingdoms, thousands of miles away from your own home, isolated by time and rugged terrain, with its own unique cultural heritage, way of life, and preserved traditions? And what better writer and guide than one of the world's last authentic adventurers, the late Peter Matthiessen? Matthiessen led the entirety of life: He was a CIA agent in exotic localities, was published in *National Geographic*, visited the most unique places in the world to report his findings to readers like me, both young and old. He is a gem that will truly be missed, but the scope of his character can be found left behind in books where he searches for the subliminal parts of our society forgotten by time (and they're not always prescient, either--in "*Snow Leopard*", Matthiessen never finds the eponymous creature, for example). Now, as an adult, this book is no longer too small for my hands--it fits quite nicely, a bit like a newspaper would--yet I still prefer reading it, much as I did when I was a very young child, laid out so I can see all the pictures and fully engross myself in this lost world forgotten by time and modern travel. I just hope *The Land of Mustang* is still much the way it was today, as it was then.

If you are traveling to Lo Manthang, or if you love Tibetan culture and history this is a must-read book. The writing and photographs are stunning. This region of Nepal was only recently opened up

to tourism. This book gives a vivid and realistic portrait of this rapidly changing area. I would pair it with the book "The Snow Leopard" for maximal enjoyment of this wonderful place.

This book is the "Classic" photo book of Mustang and Lo Monthang. Most of us will never get there (tourism is severely limited, and the hike in is difficult at best) to see it ourselves. This book takes us on a journey to a place that is also a step way back in time (no electricity, phones, etc throughout most of the country). Highly recommended for look at a "country within a country" (Mustang is within Nepal), that most don't even know exists.

Just what I hoped it would be.

Far flung & far far away, not exactly easy to get to. can't wait to go gorgeous photos thank you peter matthiessen

Wonderful account of early visit to this unusual area. Great photos. I was very pleased to find this out of circulation volume.

A coffee-table photographic book detailing the authors' trip to Upper Mustang and Lo Manthang in May 1992. There are over 156 photos, 68 a full page or larger. The front cover is Lo Manthang. The authors travel from Jomsom to Kagheni, with an interesting description of the ghost eaters, and then up the Kali Gandaki River route, where they visit a remote gumpa and meet the nomads who live in the area. The monks and local people tell stories of the mehti (Yeti), but no sightings or evidence is found. Snow leopards do exist and kill some of the animals. They then visit Lo Manthang and attend the Tiji Festival. We see the people harvesting, attend a wedding, and meet the King and his wife, Tashi Tenzing, the abbot of Chodi Gumpa, and the local Tibetan medicine man. Matthiessen describes Lo Manthang: "With its twenty-foot high surrounding wall and its sentinel turrets at each corner, with its prayer flags and white central palace and red temples, Lo Monthang seems formidable and enormous by comparison to the other isolated settlements we have passed through, yet this medieval town on its remote desert plateau is thought to have just one hundred and eighty households, and less than one thousand inhabitants, and one could circumambulate the city walls four times in an hour, as King Jigme Palbar Bista, on his royal constitutional, is said to do at sunrise every morning." Matthiessen describes the Tiji Festival: "The costumes and masks, the twelve-foot horns, the gold cups of wheat, the butter cakes, the snow peaks and wind and dust and sun, the

mehti, snow leopard, snow pigeons, saligrams, the dying glacier and the desert ruins, the drunks and rajas and foreigners, the dogs and yaks. Tantra!"The photos are excellent, especially those of the Tiji Festival, Lo Manthang from overhead, and inside the temples. The writing is wonderfully descriptive, especially of the Tiji Festival.

Peter Matthiessen teams up with the great photography of Thomas Laird to provide a thrilling coffee table style journal to one of the magical kingdoms of our planet. The photos are truly incredible, and Peter's descriptive writing portrays the life of an ancient kingdom on the Tibetan plateau of Nepal.Â Dancing on the Edge of an Endangered Planet

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