

## Langmusi: Monks and Mountains (8/16/2007-8/17/2007)

The small Tibetan town of Langmusi straddles the border between the Chinese provinces of Sichuan and Gansu. It has become a popular stop for tourists traveling between these two provinces via the Tibetan plateau due to the two monasteries in town and the surrounding jagged mountain landscape. Of course with the tourist are the business and restaurants that cater to them and one of the landmarks in Langmusi is Lesha's restaurant where you can down a monster sized yak burger. Although the burger is more of a yak "Sloppy Joe" than proper burger, it was a very tasty change of pace from the Chinese and Tibetan fare I had consuming since I left Chengdu. After being on my own traveling through the off the beaten path places of northern Sichuan it was nice to meet some other westerners again. One of the guys I met was doing research for his Ph.D. in anthropology studying the Tibetan identity and was currently working out of Xining. He was an interesting guy to talk to. Among other things I found it interesting that the nomads that are found living in tents throughout the Tibetan areas are no longer true nomads. The government gives them three pieces of land and they move between those three designated spaces. A solution which has led to over grazing and the environmental problems such as soil erosion associated with it.

My time in Langmusi was spent hiking and visiting the monasteries at a leisurely pace. My first day in town the weather did not cooperate and I abandon my hike after the trail rose in to the clouds, and I was struggling upwards with nothing to see except the white cloud of mists that surrounded me. The second day my luck with the weather was much better and after catching the tail end of the monk debates at the monastery I climbed one of the mountains overlooking the town for a spectacular 360 degree view of the surrounding mountains, grasslands, and gorges.



**Monks at a monastery in Langmusi.**

**Yak skull and nomad tent with the jagged peaks of the gorge near Langmusi.**





**Monks debating in front of the main prayer hall at a monastery in Langmusi.**



**Monks debating, Langmusi.**



**Monk hanging a prayer flag, Langmusi.**



**Monk hanging a prayer flag, Langmusi.**



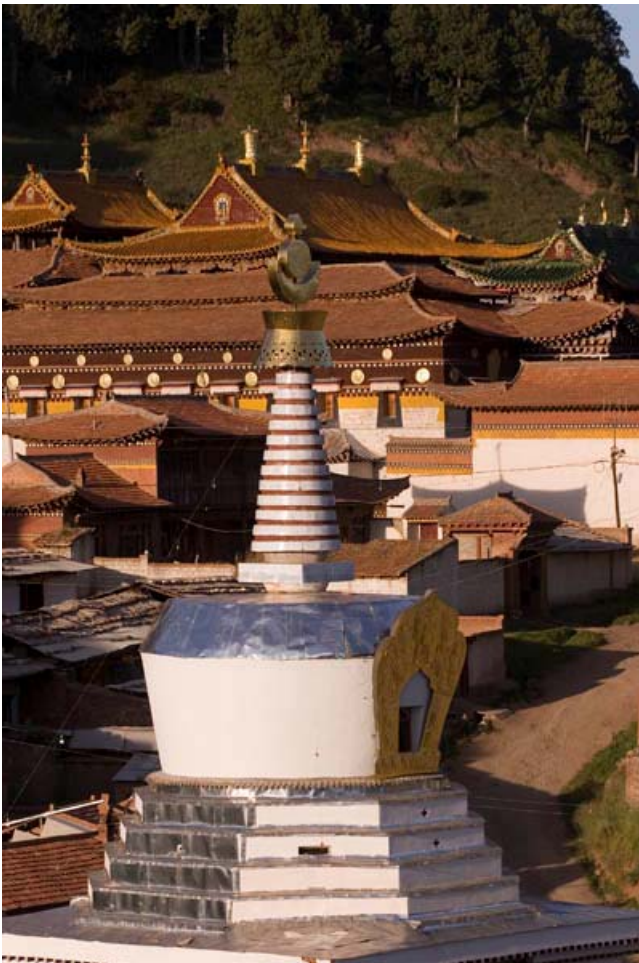
**Monks raising another prayer flag. It must have been prayer flag hanging day in Langmusi.**



**Monk watching the prayer flag hanging, Langmusi.**



**Stupa at a monastery in Langmusi.**



**Stupa at a monastery in Langmusi.**



**Woman making her *kora*, circumambulation, around a monastery in Langmusi.**



**Prayer flags above  
Langmusi.**



**Boy waits for his mother to finish turning  
prayer wheels at a monastery in Langmusi.**



**Wildflower near Langmusi.**



**View of Langmusi the mountain in the back is the one I climbed. Langmusi is at 3300 m (~10,900 ft) so I'm guessing the peak was somewhat over 4000 m (maybe ~14,000 ft)**



**View from the top of the peak I climbed near Langmusi.**



**Pilgrims performing  
*kora*, circumambulation  
of a monastery in  
Langmusi.**