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CONTENTS

HOW OLD WAS SRONG BRISAN SGAMPO
H. E. RICHARDSON 5

PRINCIPLES OF BUDDHIST TANTRISM
LAMA ANAGARIKA GOVINDA 9

THE TIBETAN TRADITION OF GEOGRAPHY
TURRILL V. WYLIÉ 17

UTTARAKURU
BUDDHA PRAKASH 27

NOTES & TOPICS
NIRMAL C. SINHA 35
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HOW OLD WAS STRONG BRITSA NN SGAM PO?

H. E. RICHARDSON

The tradition perpetuated by Tibetan religious historians from Sa-\nBiya Graps-pa Rgyal-Wtshan onwards, that Strong Britsan Sgam Po died at\nthe age of 82 is probably not now accepted by any Western scholar. It\nis explained by Professor Roerich in his introduction to The Blue Annals\nas due to the interpretation of the Manjusimitranta as a reference to\Strong Britsan. Other explanations might be suggested but it is my inten-\tion here only to outline broadly the salient points in the evidence before\the Xth century—and the age of the religious historians—which militate\against the traditional view of Strong Britsan’s age.

The date of Strong Britsan Sgam Po’s death is clearly determined\The Tibetan Tun Huang Annals and the Chinese Tang Annals agree in\putting it in a year which by Western calculations is 668 A.D. The argu-\ment of Professor H. Sato in favour of 669 is not conclusive and,\in any event it makes small difference whether the death occurred at the\end of 668 or the beginning of 669 (the date which I prefer). The point\is that, given this clear date for the king’s death, it would, on the\traditional view, be necessary to put his birth c. 668. Against this, Roer-\ich following Schmidt, favours the year 617 which is derived from an\interpretation of Sanang Smeten; but Sanang himself depends on tradi-\tional sources and if 617 should prove so nearly right it would be more\of an inspired guess than a calculation substantiated by early evidence.

The key date for Tibetan history of the time is contained in the\Tang Annals which record that in the 5th year of Cheng Kuan, which\corresponds with 634 A.D., the Tsam pru Khun Lung Tsen—who must be\Strong Britsan Sgam Po—sent envoys to the Emperor. Lung Tsen is said\to have been a minor when he came to the throne. The Emperor returned\his embassy and, in a further Tibetan mission the king asked for a Chinese\princess in marriage. When this was refused, the Tibetans attacked\first the Namag tribes on the Chinese border and then China itself with\the result that in 640 a Chinese princess was granted as his bride. This\date agrees with the earliest Tibetan record, the Tun Huang Annals. If\the traditional story is to be accepted, it would mean that when Strong\Britsan conducted his campaign against China and acquired his Chinese\bride he was between 66 and 70. This does not appear very probable\and there is a hint in the later tradition that this was not so; for some
of the accounts imply that the minister Mar was acting on behalf of a young king when he conducted the marriage negotiations at the Chinese court.

There is at the beginning of the MSS of the Tun Huang Annals a damaged passage which the editors of the transcription and translation in Documents du Tun Huang Reliefs a l’Histoire du Tibet have not reproduced. I intend to deal with this passage in detail elsewhere and all that need be said here is that the MSS of which through the kindness of the Bibliothèque Nationale of France I have secured a photo copy, carries the dating contained in the Annals quite clearly back to the year 634 and beyond. The passage of the Annals with which the published edition opens contains a summary of events before 650 from which date the record provides a short account of the events of each year. The summary as published refers briefly to two groups of events three and six years respectively before 650. The division into multiples of three appears to be significant and systematic. The summary shows that six years before the death of Songtsen Gampo, i.e. c. 644, there was a revolt of Zhang Zhung; and that three years before that, there was trouble in Nepal and the Chinese princess arrived in Lhasa—viz 641. From here the unpublished passage, which is continuous with what follows it, takes the historical summary back for a further considerable period. It shows that an uncertain number of years before the arrival of the princess in 641 (the part of the MSS which contained the exact figure is damaged) a younger brother of Songtsen Gampo died in suspicious circumstances. If a three year period was used, the date would be c. 639.

Then another uncertain number of years earlier it is recorded that Songtsen Gampo undertook a military expedition against China. This must be the campaign which led to the grant of a princess; and from the Chinese record it can be dated c. 635/636—another three year interval. Then, a further uncertain period earlier came the disgrace and death of the minister Myang Mang Po Hye Zhang Snang. Allowing for another three year interval this would be c. 632/633. There is a reference to these events in a different part of the Tun Huang documents also, where they are put after the expedition. The more careful version of the Annals is to be preferred; but in any case, it is clear that the death of Myang was comparatively close in time to the expedition. One further paragraph—the first of the damaged passage—appears to relate to the death of Myang when he was acting as minister on behalf of the young king after his accession. In this case an interval of three years appears too short. From both Tibetan and Chinese records it is
seen that Song Britan was a minor when he came to the throne; it is not suggested that he was an infant. It is known that on his death he was succeeded by an infant grandson and so it is necessary in calculating the date of his accession to make reasonable allowance for two generations. Taking a further three years interval before 632/633, giving c 629 for his accession, and assuming his age then to have been say 13 to 16 would not give enough time for the birth of a son and grandson. If a six year interval is assumed, on the analogy of the later part of the summary, we should have the year c 627 for his accession.

If the later tradition were to be accepted, the accession of the king (at the conjectural age of 13 to 16) would have to be put c 593-596. This would mean that the interval between the paragraph above Myang which can be dated c 632 and the paragraph dealing with events after the accession would cover a period of nearly 50 years. On the analogy of the rest of the summary, which be it noted, is continuous and homogeneous, that is not acceptable.

The impossibility of the traditional story is underlined by what is known about the minister Myang Zhang Saang. Other parts the Tun Huang documents in Chronicle form show that Myang was active during the reign of Song Britan's father. He was clearly older than Song Britan and, as he died c 632 at the earliest, he would have been, on the traditional theory, at least 75 when the expedition took place. Similar evidence applies also to another famous minister Khyung po Zu Ixe, who was responsible for the fall of Myang; he, too, served Song Britan's father. It is hardly possible that Chinese sources would not have remarked on this regime of an old king and ancient ministers; on the contrary, the clear impression is given that when Song Britan first came in contact with the Chinese court c 634 he was a young man. But the exact age at which he came to the throne and the exact date of his birth remain uncertain.

The traditional year of Song Britan's birth is an Ox year (traditions which attribute an animal–element dating at this period of Tibetan history can not be treated as realistic; and it is on the basis of an Ox year that Schmidt calculates the date of the king's birth as 617). Since he died in 650 this would mean that Song Britan fathered a son when he was only 16 years old and that his son did the same. This is certainly not usual in present day Tibet and cannot be regarded as probable. There is no evidence before the eleventh century that Song Britan was born in an Ox year but if the tradition be considered acceptable, the Ox year
605 would seem more reasonable. From the earliest records—both Chinese and Tibetan—this seems a little too early and a date which would make the king somewhat younger at the time of his first contact with China seems preferable. It is not improbable that the dismissal of the hitherto dominant minister Myang and the expedition against China were the first acts of Srong brtсан Sgam Po after he had reached years of maturity and decision; and my own preference is to treat the exact year of his birth as still debatable with the probability lying somewhere between the years 608 and 613, which would make him about 24 to 28 at the time of his campaign against China and 37 to 41 when he died in 650.

(Me Richardson prefers Srong BRTSAN to Srong B TsAN since BRTSAN is the oldest recorded form. For the usage BRTSAN in the nomenclature of the kings as in epigraphs reference may be made to this author’s Ancient Historical Events at Lhasa (London 1952), BRTSAN is a modern usage, BRTSAN and BTSAN have similar if not identical meaning. A twelfth century Mongol scholar, Geshe Choke, notes in his dictionary under the entry thus (Lhasa xylograph Vol. 2; also Peking edition Page 688).—NC5)
PRINCIPLES OF BUDDHIST TANTRISM

—LAMA ANAGARIKA GOVINDA

The word *tantra* (Tib. *bying*-bras) is related to the concept of weaving and its derivatives (thread, weft, fabric, etc.), hinting at the interwovenness of things and actions, the interdependence of all that exists, the continuity in the interaction of cause and effect, as well as in spiritual and traditional development which like a thread weaves its way through the fabric of history and of individual lives. The term *tantra* (Tib. *bying*), therefore, can also stand for tradition, spiritual continuity or succession. The scriptures, however, which in Buddhism go by the title of *tantras*, are invariably of a mystic nature and try to establish the inner relationships of things: the parallelism of microcosm and macrocosm, mind and universe, ritual and reality, the world of matter and the world of the spirit. This is achieved through exercises in which *yatra* (Tib. *bya*-bras), *maha* (Tib. *mah-*), and *nirv* (Tib. *ni-rpa*), the parallelism of the visible, the audible, and the touchable, unite the powers of mind (Tib. *byin-mdan*), speech (Tib. *phun-*), and body (Tib. *chos-*), in order to realize the final state of completeness and enlightenment.

Thus in applying the words of Guru Gampopa, it may be said that the Buddhist Tantras represent "a philosophy comprehensive enough to embrace the whole of knowledge, a system of meditation which will produce the power of concentrating the mind upon anything whatsoever, and an art of living which will enable one to utilize each activity (of body, speech, and mind) as an aid on the Path of Liberation".

Among all the aspects of Buddhism, its Tantric teachings have until now been the most neglected and misunderstood. The reason for this was the fact that these scriptures cannot be understood merely philologically but only from the point of view of yogic experience, which cannot be learned from books. Moreover, those books, from which information was sought, were written in a peculiar idiom, a language of symbols and secret conceptions which in Sanskrit was called *vajrapada* (Sans. *vajra-pada*; literally "twilight language"; because of the double meaning which underlay its words).

This symbolic language was not only a protection against intellectual curiosity and misuse of yogic practices by the ignorant or the uninitiated, but had its origin mainly in the fact that the ordinary language is not able to express the highest experiences of the mind. The indescribable,
which is experienced by नान (Sadhana, the true devotee) can only be hinted at by symbols, similes and paradoxes.

The influence of Tantric Buddhism upon Hinduism was so profound, that up to the present day the majority of Western scholars labour under the impression that Tantrism is a Hindustan creation which was taken over later by more or less decadent Buddhist schools.

Against this view speaks the great antiquity and consistent development of Tantric tendencies in Buddhism. Already the early Mahasanghikas had a special collection of manteric formulas in their Dharani-pitaka (दधरानी पिताक) and the Marjuri-nukalika (मार्जुरी नुकलिका), which according to some authorities goes back to the first century A.D., contains not only mantras and dharmas (दर्म), but numerous mandalas (मण्डल) and mudras (मूड्रा) as well. Even if the dating of the Marjuri-nukalika is somewhat uncertain, it seems probable that the Buddhist Tantric system had crystallized into definite form by the end of the third century A.D., as we see from the well-known Gaya samaja (ग्याजा समाजा) Tib Tantra.

To declare Buddhist Tantrism as an offshoot of Saivism is only possible for those who have no first-hand knowledge of Tantric literature. A comparison of the Hindu Tantras with those of Buddhism (which are mostly preserved in Tibetan and which therefore for long remained unnoticed by Indologists) not only shows an astonishing divergence of methods and aims, in spite of external similarities, but proves the spiritual and historical priority and originality of the Buddhist Tantras.

Sankararaya, the great Hindu philosopher of the 9th century A.D., whose works form the foundation of all Saivite philosophy, made use of the ideas of Nagarjuna and his followers to such an extent that orthodox Hindus suspected him of being a secret devotee of Buddhism. In a similar way the Hindu Tantras, too, took over the methods and principles of Buddhist Tantrism and adapted them to their own purposes (much as the Buddhists had adapted the age-old principles and techniques of Yoga to their own systems of meditation). This view is not only held by Tibetan tradition but confirmed by Indian scholars after a critical investigation of the earliest Sanskrit texts of Tantric Buddhism and their historical and ideological relationship with the Hindu Tantras.

Thus Bennytox Bhattacharya in his Introduction to Buddhist Esotericism, has come to the conclusion, “it is possible to declare, without
fear of contradiction, that the Buddhists were the first to introduce the Tantras into their religion, and that the Hindus borrowed them from the Buddhists in later times, and that it is idle to say that later Buddhism was an outcome of Saivism". (p.147)

To judge Buddhist Tantric teachings and symbols from the standpoint of Hindu Tantras, and specially from the principles of Sakthism is not only inadequate but thoroughly misleading, because both systems start from entirely different premises. Although both make use of the methods of yoga and of similar technical philosophical terms, there is little justification for declaring Buddhism to be identical with Brahmanism and therefore in interpreting the Buddhist Tantras in the light of the Hindu Tantras, or vice versa.

The main difference is that Buddhist Tantrism is not Sakthism. The concept of Sakti (goddess), divine power, of the creative female aspect of the Highest God (Shiva, Shakti), or his emanations does not play any role in Buddhism; in fact, the term Sakti never occurs in Buddhist Tantras in this connection, while in the Hindu Tantras, the concept of power (Shakti) forms the focus of interest. The central idea of Tantric Buddhism, however, is Siva (prajna—knowledge, wisdom).

To the Buddhist, Sakti (goddess) is Maya (illusion), the very power that creates illusion, from which only prajna can liberate us. It is, therefore not the aim of the Buddhist to acquire power, or to join himself to the powers of the universe, either to become their instrument or to become their master, but on the contrary, he tries to free himself from those powers, which for ages kept him in a prisoner of samsara (eternity). He strives to receive those powers, which have kept him going in the rounds of life and death, in order to liberate himself from their dominion. However, he does not try to negate them or to destroy them, but to transform them in the fire of knowledge, so that they may become forces of enlightenment which, instead of creating further differentiation, flow in the opposite direction: towards union, towards wholeness, towards completeness.

The attitude of the Hindu Tantra is quite different, if not contrary. "United with the Sakti, be full of power"—says the Tantra (Kula-coddmani Tantra). "From the union of Siva (Shiva) and Sakti (goddess) the world is created". The Buddhist, on the other hand, does not want the creation and unfoldment of the world, but the realization of the "uncreated, unformed" state of sunya (void), from which all creation proceeds, or which is prior to and beyond all creation (if one may put the inexpressible into human language).
The becoming conscious of this sunyata (sunyata, Tib. projña) or highest knowledge. The realization of this highest knowledge in life is enlightenment (ātma), i.e. if projña (मूल) or sunyata (सून्यता), the passive, all embracing female principle, from which everything proceeds and into which everything recedes, is united with the dynamic male principle of active universal love and compassion, which represents the means (मूल Tib.) for the realization of projña and sunyata, then perfect Buddhahood is attained. Intellect without feeling, knowledge without love, and reason without compassion lead to pure negation, to rigidity, spiritual death, to mere vacuity, while feeling without reason, love without knowledge (blind love), compassion without understanding, lead to confusion and dissolution; but where both are united, where the great synthesis of heart and head, feeling and intellect highest love and deepest knowledge has taken place completeness is re-established, perfect enlightenment is attained.

The process of enlightenment is therefore represented by the most obvious, the most human and at the same time the most universal symbol imaginable: the union of male and female in the ecstasy of love, in which the active element (upaya) is represented as a male, the passive (projña) by a female figure, in contrast to the Hindu Tantras, in which the female aspect is represented as Sakti, i.e., the active principle, and the male aspect as Siva, the pure state of divine consciousness or ‘being’, i.e., the passive principle, or the ‘resting in its own nature’.

In Buddhist symbolism, the Knower (Buddha) becomes one with his knowledge (projña), just as man and wife become one in the embrace of love, and this becoming one is the highest indescribable happiness, mahasukha (महसूक्षा, Tib. རྱག་གུ་) . The Dhyāni-Buddhas (ध्यातीन, i.e., the ideal Buddhas visualized in meditation) and the Dhyāni-Bodhisattvas (ध्यातीन बोधिसत्व), as embodiments of the active urge of enlightenment which finds its expression in upaya, the all-embracing love and compassion, are therefore represented in the embrace of their projña, symbolized by a female deity, the embodiment of highest knowledge.

This is not the arbitrary reversal of Hindu symbology, but the consequent application of a principle which is of fundamental importance for the entire Buddhist Tantric system.

By confusing Buddhist Tantra with the Saktism of the Hindu Tantras, a basic misconception had been created, which up to the present
day has prevented a clear understanding of the Vajrayana and its symbolism, in iconography as well as in literature, especially that of the Siddhats. The latter used a particular form of symbolism, in which very often the highest was clothed in the form of the lowest, the most sacred in the form of the most profane, the transcendent in the form of the most earthly, and deepest knowledge in the form of the most grotesque paradoxes. It was not only a language for initiates, but a kind of shock therapy, which had become necessary on account of the over-intellectualization of the religious and philosophical life of those times.

Though the polarity of male and female principles is recognized in the Tantras of the Vajrayana and is an important feature of its symbolism, it is raised upon a plane which is as far away from the sphere of pure sexuality as the mathematical juxtaposition of positive and negative signs, which is as valid in the realm of irrational values as in that of rational or concrete concepts.

In Tibet the male and female Dhyani-Buddhas and Buddhist deities are regarded as little as ‘sexual beings’ as in certain schools of Japan; and to the Tibetans even their aspect of union (bles Tlp. ) is indissolubly associated with the highest spiritual reality in the process of enlightenment so that associations with the realm of physical sexuality are completely ignored.

We must not forget that the figurative representation of these symbols are not locked upon as portraying human beings, but as embodying the experiences and visions of meditation. In such a state, however, there is nothing more that could be called ‘sexual’, there is only the super-individual polarity of all life, which rules all mental and physical activities, and which is transcended only in the ultimate state of integration, in the realization of snyata. This is the state which is called mahamudra (pomg; Tlp. ), the ‘Great Attitude’ or ‘the Great Symbol’, which has given its name to one of the most important systems of meditation in Tibet.

In the earlier forms of Indian Buddhist Tantrism, Mahamudra was represented as the ‘eternal female’ principle, as may be seen from Advaita-vajra’s definition: ‘The words ‘great’ and ‘mudra’ form together the term ‘mahamudra’. She is not something (pratisamsthita); she is free from the veil which cover the cognizable object and so on; she shines forth like the serene sky at noon during autumn; she is the support of all success; she is the identity samatha and abheda; her body is compassion (prajna)’.
which is not restricted to a single object: she is the uniqueness of Great Bliss (धर्मोऽवस्थितं)1.

If in one of the most controversial passages of Anangavajra's विभ्रोमानि विनिमयग्रहने निर्दिष्टा it is said that all women should be enjoyed by the sadhaka in order to experience the mahimādura, it is clear that this can not be understood in the physical sense, but that it can only be applied to that highest form of love which is not restricted to a single object and which is able to see all ‘female’ qualities, whether in ourselves or in others, as those of the Divine Mother (गुंधोगभूमि) 2.

Another passage, which by its very grotesqueness proves that it is meant to be a paradox and is not to be taken literally states that “the sadhaka who has sexual intercourse with his mother, his sister, his daughter, and his sister’s daughter, will easily succeed in his striving for the ultimate goal (सम्प्रदायित्वम्)”.3

To take expressions like ‘mother’, ‘sister’, ‘daughter’ or ‘sister’s daughter’ literally in this connection is as senseless as taking literally the well-known bhuvanacittā verse (No. 294), which says that, after having killed father and mother and two Kṣatriya kings, and destroyed a Kingdom with all its inhabitants, the Brahmārṣi remains free from sin.4 Here ‘father and mother’ stands for ‘egoism and craving’ (Pali: भौतिकम् and सुखः) the ‘two kings’ for the erroneous views of annihilation or eternal existence (धनं तद्विनिर्वाणं) the kingdom and its inhabitants’ for the twelve spheres of consciousness (द्वादश शवासनम्) and the Brahmata for the liberated monk (प्राप्तिः).

2. प्रभृतिसंविद्याचैव in Two Vijayamana Works, Gaikwad Oriental Series, No. XLIV, p. 22.
3. प्रभृतिसंविद्याचैव V, 25, quoted in Yogamadha, p. 106. A similar statement is found in the Gubjy-samaj a Tantra.
4. महार सिंह विद्धश राजगर्भे छ च ज्ञातिः । एवं सिंहाशेषः प्रेस्तो करतेऽति सर्वकालः ॥

14
To maintain that Tantric Buddhists actually encouraged incest and licentiousness is as ridiculous as accusing the Theravadin of committing matricide and patricide and similar heinous crimes. If we only take the trouble to investigate the living tradition of the Tantras in their genuine, unadulterated forms, as they existed still in out days in thousands of monasteries and hermitages of Tibet, where the ideals of sense control and renunciation were held in the highest esteem, then only can we realize how ill-founded and worthless are the current theories which try to drag the Tantras into the realm of sensuality.

From the point of view of the Tibetan Tantric tradition, the above mentioned passages can only be meaningful in the context of yoga terminology.

All women in the world signifies all the elements which make up the female principles of our psycho-physical personality which, as the Buddha says, represents what is called the world. To these principles correspond, on the opposite side, an equal number of male principles. Four of the female principles form a special group, representing the vital forces (kaśyas) of the Great Elements (agnis): Earth, Water, Fire, Air and their corresponding psychic centres (vajras) or plans of consciousness within the human body. In each of them the union of male and female principles must take place, before the fifth and highest stage is reached; if the expressions ‘mother’, ‘sister’, ‘daughter’, etc., are applied to the forces of these fundamental qualities of the nāstabhuja, the meaning of the symbolism becomes clear.

In other words, instead of seeking union with a woman outside ourselves, we have to seek it within ourselves (‘in our own family’) by the union of our male and female qualities in the process of meditation. This is clearly stated in Naropa’s famous “Six Doctrines” ()

upon which the most important yoga method of the Kārgyupa ( ) school is based, a method which was practised by Milarepa, the most saintly and austere of all the great masters of meditation (whom certainly nobody could accuse of ‘sexual practices’). Though we cannot here go into the details of this yoga, a short quotation may suffice to prove our point. “The vital force of the Five Aggregates (Tib. , Skt. āsāna) in its real nature, pertains to the masculine aspect of the Buddha-principle manifesting through the left psychic nerve (Tib. , Skt. śakti); the vital force of the Five Elements (Tib. , Skt. āśā), in its real nature, pertains to the feminine aspect.
of the Buddha principle manifesting through the right psychic nerve (Tib. Skt. रूढा नात्रि). As the vital lotus with these two aspects of it in union, descendeth into the median nerve (Tib. Skt. गुण) gradually there cometh the realization... and one attains the transcendent boon of the Great Symbol (महामुहूर्त), the union of the male and female principles (as upasya and parva) in the highest state of Buddhahood.

Thus, only if we are able to see the relationship of body and mind, of physical and spiritual interaction in a universal perspective, and if in this way we overcome the "I" and "mine" and the whole structure of egocentric feelings, opinions, and prejudices which produce the illusory sense of our separate individuality, then only can we rise into the sphere of Buddhahood.

THE TIBETAN TRADITION OF GEOGRAPHY

— TURREL V. WYLIE

Geography, as a scientific description of the physical world, did not develop in Tibet in a manner analogous to that of western civilizations. Physical geography with its study of the earth's surface, climate, and the distribution of flora and fauna did not emerge as a branch of learning. Historically speaking, only two traditions evolved: political geography and religious geography. The commonly used term, "political geography," requires no special clarification here, but the concept of "religious geography," which is as familiar to Tibetans as it is strange to foreigners, needs some explanation. The term "religious geography" is used in this article to refer to that corpus of Tibetan literature which describes the geographic location and the religious history of sacred places and things without reference to the physical features of the region or its flora and fauna.

Since religious geography is a characteristic of the Tibetan tradition and is substantiated by various autochthonous monographic studies, it will be discussed first in this article. The tradition of political geography, which reflects the historical evolution of the Tibetan state, is not found in such monographic studies and must be reconstructed from diverse data found in unrelated textual materials. In view of the fragmented and often hypothetical nature of the "political geography" tradition, it will be discussed last in this article.

RELIGIOUS GEOGRAPHY

There are various examples of Tibetan literature which may be grouped together and classified as religious geographic literature. These texts are intended primarily to describe the geographical location and religious history of pilgrimage places, sacred objects, and the hermitages of former Buddhist holy men. They are devoid of specific information on physical geography per se and are better understood when thought of as guide-books for pilgrims visiting unfamiliar places and things.

The corpus of this geographic literature may be divided, for the sake of convenience and discussion in this article, into the following general types:

17
The first type, the "register", is limited to the description of a single pilgrimage place with an account of the various sacred objects to be found there. A lengthy example of this type is the Lha-ldan sprul pa'i gtsug-lag khang-gi dkar-chen shel-dkar me-long ("The bright mirror register of the emanated temple of Lha-ldan [=Lhasa]"), by the V Dalai Lama Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1652). This register is a detailed account of the sacred objects found in the Jokhang temple in Lhasa and comprises the entire volume Dzis of the V Dalai Lama's collected writings (gsung-bum). In contrast to this detailed register by a famous author, there are many short registers by anonymous authors. An example of this type is the Bal-yul meho-rten Phags-pa shing-kun dang de'i gnas-gi-rnam s-kyl-dkar-chag ("Register of the Nepalese stupa Phags-pa thing kun [=Swayambhunath] and other pilgrimage places"). This text is xylograph of only ten folios and is printed in the Spro-lma'i s-khang, a temple near the Swayambhunath stupa itself. No author is mentioned in its colophon.

The second type, the "guide-book", describes more than one pilgrimage place and offers terse directions how to travel between them. A very short example of such a guide-book is the Bal-yul gnas-yig, a xylograph of only eleven folios, which lists the various significant pilgrimage places one encounters when travelling from India northward to, and including, the Kham-ndu valley.

Perhaps the most distinguished and detailed guide-book found in religious literature is the Dbus-gtsang gi gnas-rten rags-ring-gyi mshcan byang mdor-bodus 'dul-pa'i spon ("Short summary of the pure names of some of the holy place and images of Dbus and Gtsang, called the Seed of Faith") by Jam dbyang mchyen-brtse dbang-po kun-dga' brtan-pa'i rgyal-mshcan (1820-1892). This guide-book in twenty-nine folios gives directions to pilgrims how to travel from one to another of the more famous pilgrimage places in the central Tibetan provinces of Dbus and Gtsang. It is an excellent source of proper orthography of place names as well as a survey of the significant monasteries, temples images, and hermitages together with a brief historical account of them. This valuable guide-book like the others of the "religious geographic type" is devoid of special information on flora, fauna and topography.
The third type, the "passport", as indicated by the term implies a guide-book for pilgrims whose pilgrimage involves travel between two or more countries. The most famous example of the passport type of geographical text is the Shambhava-b'i lan-yig ("Passport to Shambhala") by the 11th Panchen Lama Blo-bzang dpal-dan ye-shes (1738-1760). This passport-type of guide-book involves international travel for it describes the way in which one must proceed in order to travel to the paradise of Shambhala. Shambhala is the realm ruled by the Kulika kings, who have preserved the teachings of the Dur-kyi ' showdown (Talecakra-tantra) and who will eventually destroy the heretics and a new age of Buddhism will begin.  

The last type, the "global-description", is unique and represented by a single text the Dezam-ling chen-po'i rgyas-bshad smad-bod kun-ngo mtsho-long ("The mirror which illuminates all inanimate and animate things and explains fully the Great World"), by Bla-ma Bstan-po Simin-grol sprul-skus 'Jam-dpal chos-kyi bstan-'dzin phrin-las (1789-1835). This comprehensive geography in 146 folios is a description of the known world and was compiled in 1820 by the Bla-ma Bstan-po during his residence in Peking, where he had access to European geographies as well as Russian and Chinese ones. His accounts of the western world, which were based on inadequate secondary sources, are interesting and at times amusing. The chief value of his work is the section on Tibet (rje- brtse 58-81) which surveys the religious geography of Tibet from Stong-Mng-ri in the west to Ru-bzhed of Dbus-Gtang in the center, and to Khams and A-mdo in the east. This section is unique in Tibetan geographical literature because it is a "guide-book" to all regions of Tibet, not just one or two.

On the other hand, this "global-description" by Bla-ma Bstan-po should not be considered a true type within the Tibetan tradition of religious geography. Every chief monastery and temple has its own register (spar-chen) and guide-books (gnyis-bshad) are available for various regions of Tibet and bordering areas. The passport (blo-yig) type, although involving international pilgrimage, particularly to a Buddhist paradise, is adequately substantiated in the geographic tradition; but the global-description (go-b'i kha-byarg) is evidenced only by the text of the Bla-ma Bstan-po. Moreover, there is an inconsistency in the geographical writings of the Bla-ma Bstan-po, which indicates that he viewed Tibetan geography from the traditional "religious" function but viewed the western world through the eyes of the foreign geographers whose works...
be used. For example, his description of Tibetan topography is con-
cerned exclusively with pilgrimage places, as seen in the following passage:
"In the region southwest of there is Yar-lung. There are such things
two of the three main places (rten-gsum) namely: the monad-ran called
Gung thang-bum mo-che, Tane-gyal-bum pa, and Tsey-chen-bum-pa.
...""13", but his description of the western himalaya arrives at physical
geography. Compare his passage: ..., ..., [In South America] ..., due
to the excessive warmth, there are many kinds of fruits and many kinds
of crops (obtained) without plowing, such as mo kui (maize). Since
there are a great many birds, such as domesticated fowls which change
color, and fish and game animals, the people of those countries always
have a livelihood and so there is no poverty."14 From this contrast
between his "religious geography" for Tibet and "semi-physical geography"
for foreign countries, it may be postulated that the Bla-ma Bitan-po,
who was living in Peking at the time, had to rely upon written Tibetan
geographical literature; all of which reflected the "religious" tradition of
geographic description. Since the Bla-ma Bitan-po's monumental work is
unique in Tibetan literature, it should perhaps not be considered a true
type of geographical text, but rather an exceptional type.

**POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY**

As noted earlier, "political" geography—unlike "religious" geogra-
phy—was not the subject of singular studies in Tibet and thus there
are no available monographs on this type of geography; however, data
relating to the political areas of Tibet are found in various and diverse
sources which provide insights into the Tibetan tradition of "political"
geography.

For the sake of convenience, Tibetan political history may be divided
into four major periods.—(1) legendary, (2) dynastic, (3) hegemonic
and (4) theocratic. The legendary period is implied by the name represents
the pre-historical period characterized by fact, legend, and myth. There
are no sources—indigenous or foreign—to shed light on Tibetan con-
cepts of political areas prior to the development of a written script in
the seventh century A.D.

**Dynastic Period (629-842)**

The "dynastic" period began with the reign of Srong-btsan sgam-
po (ascended 639—died 649) because it was during his time that the
province of the Tibetan kingdom began to expand into a royal empire,
The kingdom inherited by Srong-btsan sgam-po included the regions of Dwags-po, Rigs-yul, Ngas-po and Rtag-bod, as well as the country of Sum-po, which had been subjugated in the time of his father. The division of the kingdom in central Tibet into the ‘Four Samnars’ (Ru-bzhi) appeared early in the dynastic period and is attested by documents found at Tun-huang. As the nucleus of royal power was expanded into an empire various regions were brought under Tibetan domination. The Yang-tung people in the northeast were subjugated first, the A zha, who occupied the area near Lake Kokonor. Next defeated were the Tung-hsiang who lived to the east of the A zha, which extended the Tibetan empire over the region known as A-mdo and brought it up to the frontier of Tang China. Zhang Zhong, the region lying to the west of central Tibet, was subjugated in the time of Srong-btsan sgam-po as well.

The empire was expanded northwesterly into Li-yul (Khotan) and the ‘Four Garrisons of An-hai’, which controlled the area currently known as Chinese Turkestan, were captured during the reign of Khi Mang-slon mang-pha (ascended 650-died 576). Following the death of the king, Zhang Zhong revolted and its subjugation eventually led to its incorporation into the Tibetan empire to such an extent that its own language and cultural identity died out.

Although the Tibetans lost control of the Chinese Turkestan region to the Chinese in 672, they retained domination over most of the other subjugated regions until the middle of the ninth century. That region, comprised of the areas known as Shod Mungs-ris, Dbus, Gsang Khams, and A-mdo, was under Tibetan control for over 200 years resulting in the firm establishment of the Tibetans with their language and culture. This, then, was the origin and extent of the geographical area referred to in later times as ‘ethnic’ Tibet in contrast to ‘political’ Tibet.

Hegemonic Period (842-1642)

The Tibetan empire collapsed in the middle of the ninth century for various reasons, not the least of which was the assassination of the anti-Buddhist ksig. Glang-dar-ma, in 842, which led to schisms in the royal lineage and subsequent fragmentation of the kingdom and loss of ‘political’ unity. Thus began period of ‘hegemonic’ rule that endured for centuries.

A nebulous form of political unity was restored in central Tibet.
In 1247, when Sa-skya Pandita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1182-1251) was invested with authority over the Khri-skor bce-gsum (Thirteen Monastic Orders) by the Mongol Prince, Gyalshen son of Ogodei Khan, it is to be noted that the Thirteen Monastic Orders did not comprise all of "ethnic" Tibet, only the regions of Dbus, Gsang and Yar-brog. Sa-skya Pandita, as head of the Sa-skya-pa sect, became the first lama to rule central Tibet—in theory, if not in fact—and his investiture marked the beginning of that unique form of government found in Tibet where the secular authority is held by an ecclesiastic.

Phags-pa (1226-1280), a nephew of Sa-skya Pandita, became the religious teacher of Gubdul Khan, who first invested "Phags-pa with authority over the Thirteen Monastic Orders and then over the Chos kha Grum (Three Provinces), namely: (1) Dbus-Gsang, (2) Mdo-stod and (3) Mdo-smad. These last two provinces are the areas of Khams and Amdo respectively; therefore, "Phags-pa was invested with authority over "ethnic" Tibet. Although the Sa-skya-pa sect lost its political supremacy in Tibet by the middle of the 14th century, the ensuing rulers considered themselves as masters over "ethnic" Tibet as a "political" unit.

Theocratic Period (1642-1959)

The theocratic period of Tibetan political history began with the rise to political and religious supremacy by the 5th Dalai Lama and the resultant form of government endured until the occupation of Tibet by the Communist Chinese in the 20th century. The Tibetan traditional concept of "ethnic" Tibet remained generally consistent during the theocratic period; however, the event of "political" Tibet was induced by the "loss" of border regions to China.

In 1724, the province of Mdo-stod (Amdo) was integrated into the Manchu empire as the province of Ch'ing-hai by the Yung-cheng Emperor (reigned 1723-1726) following the suppression of a Mongol revolt against the Manchu throne.

In 1728, the eastern portion of Mdo-stod (Khams) was taken under Manchu rule when the Sino-Tibetan frontier was moved from Ta-cham-tu (at 102 degrees east longitude) westward to Bam Pass (at 99 degrees west longitude) and the area was known as province of Hui-t'ang. After this, "political" Tibet extended from Lhasa in the west to the upper reaches of the Yangtze River in the east; a geographical
region that remained generally constant until the overthrow of the Manchus and the fall of the Ching Dynasty in 1911.

Disagreement between Tibet and China over the location of the Sino-Tibetan frontier was one of the primary causes of the rupture of the tripartite meeting at Simla in 1913-1914. The meeting was held to resolve various questions relating to the mutual interests of the governments of Tibet, China, and Great Britain. At the meeting, Blon-chan Bhadra-sgra, the plenipotentiary for Tibet, demanded that the frontier be moved back to Ta-chien-lu where it was prior to 1726, and the Chinese plenipotentiary demanded the frontier be moved further westward to Raya-ma; a village about one hundred miles east of Lhasa itself. The Chinese demand was based upon the fact that the military expedition of 1910 under the command of Chao Iin-ferg had established an outpost there for the assault on Lhasa.

Sir Arthur Henry McMahon, the British plenipotentiary, sought to resolve the disagreement by suggesting that the 1726 Sino-Tibetan frontier at the Bam Pass be retained and the area known as the Hai-k'ang province would be called Inner Tibet and administered by the Chinese. The area west of the Pass would be called Outer Tibet and would remain autonomous. This compromise solution was acceptable to the Tibetan Government, but not to the Chinese, which refused to ratify the Simla agreement, thereby forfeiting its rights of suzerainty over Tibet as specified in the agreement itself.

The governments of Tibet and Great Britain ratified and adhered to the Simla agreement, which established and controlled trade relations between the countries of Tibet and British India as well as demarcated the frontier between these two countries by the so-called McMahon Line, which ran from the northeastern border of Bhutan eastward to Burma. Although not specifically resolved by the Simla agreement, because of the Chinese refusal to ratify the agreement, the Sino-Tibetan frontier of 1726 continued to be regarded by the Tibetans as the de facto boundary between their country and China.

CONCLUSION

As stated at the beginning of this article, there are two traditions of geography in Tibet—"religious geography" and "political geography". There are several textual examples of "religious" geography but no monographic studies by Tibetans on "political" geography. This is easier
understood when it is remembered that the written language served the primary didactic purpose of transmitting Buddhist teachings and that Tibetan literature is devoted to "religious" subjects. Although there are no books on "political" geography, the Tibetans have a definite tradition of "political" areas and boundaries which reflects their historical concepts of "political" and "religious" Tibet. Perhaps because of the dominance of subjectivism over the Tibetan mentalpentia, other types of geography—physical, economic, and toponomastic—did not develop because they represent an objective description of the phenomenal world.

NOTES


3. This dkar-chag by the V Dalai Lama was the basis for Waddell's description of the Jo khang, see L. Austin Waddell, "The Cathedral of Lhasa", Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (1856).

4. A similar guide to the other major stupas in the Kathmandu valley named Bodhnath, goes beyond the usual limits of a dkar-chag. This guide, titled Mchad rten chen-po Bya-rang kha shel gyi bra-rgyas thang-pa grol-lag ("The history of the great stupa Bya-rang kha shel [=Bodhnath], by the hearing of which one is saved") is forty-four xelograph, which includes an historical account (lo-rigs) of the stupa as an anonymous work printed in a temple near the stupa itself. Although titled a "history" (lo-rigs), it should be considered one of the dkar-chag type.

5. This valuable guide book was translated with footnotes by Alfonsa Ferrari (1918-1954), whose work was completed and edited by Professor Luciano Pellech under the title: "mK’von byams’s Guide to the holy places of Central Tibet", Sere Oriensale Romae, Vol. XVI (Rome, 1955) xxii, 199, and 51 photographic plates.

6. This work has been translated by Gruwedel under the title: "Der Weg Nach Shambhala", Abhandlungen der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. XXIX, Band 3 (Munich, 1911).

8. The Tibetan section (folios 58-81) of this work have been translated with footnotes by Turrell Wylie under the title: "The Geography of Tibet according to the 'Dzam-gling-rgyas-bshad'; Series Orientalica Roma, Vol. XXV (Rome, 1962); xxxvii, 286 and a map.


According to the earliest geographical conception of the Purasas, the earth was taken to consist of four continental regions, viz. Jambudvipa, Kumatama, Bhdrasavarsa and Uttarakuru.1 Jambudvipa stood for India proper. Kumatama represented the Oxus region, as the river Svaraka (Vaksa) flowed through it. Bhdrasavarsa signified the Jaxartes region, as the river Sita watered it, and Uttarakuru denoted the country beyond it. In Buddhist texts these continental regions are differently named as Jambudipa, to the south of Mount Sumeru (Sineru). Aparagodana (Aparagoyana) to its west Puraviddana to its east, and Uttarakuru to its north.2 Both these traditions agree on the fact that Uttarakuru was the name of the region to the north of India.

The name Uttarakuru or northern Kuru is used in contradistinction to Dakinakuru or southern Kuru. In the Mahabharata the Uttarakurus are juxtaposed with the Dakinakurus.3 The distance between their countries can be measured by the marches of Arjuna described in the Sabhaparvan. After crossing the White Mountain (Svaparnatesa), he marched through Kimpurusavarsa and reached the Maniseraova Lake in the country of the Hatakas, dominated by the Gandharvas.4 From there he entered into the region called Harivarsa, beyond which lay the land of the Uttarakurus. Elsewhere in the epic the region to the north of Indra, corresponding to Svatapasvata and Kimpurusavarsa, is called Halmavata, and the site of the Maniserova Lake is indicated by the mountain Hemakuta, beyond which is said to lie Harivarsa.5 The Kailasa Range, running parallel to the Ladakh Range, 50 miles behind it, is, thus, the dividing line between Halmavata and Harivarsa. According to Bana, Arjuna reached the Hemakuta mountain, whose caves were echoing with the twangs of the bows of the initiated Gandharvas, after traversing the territory of China.6 Here the use of the word China seems to be intended to denote the Mongoloid people of the Himalayan regions, also called Kirata, a word derived from Kivanti or Kirati the name of a group of people in eastern Nepal.7 Beyond Harivarsa, including the territories of Tibet, lay the idyllic and utopian land of the Kuru, called Uttarakuru. This was the land of mystery and solitude, where nothing familiar could be seen,8 and it was useless to wage war.9 According to a tradition, the head of the demon Mahisa, severed by Skanda, formed a huge mountain, that blocked the entry into the Uttarakuru.
country. Yet Arjuna is said to have reached its frontier and conquered
the northern Kurus living there. The result of this campaign was that the
people of the mountainous regions presented themselves with the offerings:
that of garlands of jade, characteristic of Uttarakuru, and the powerful herbs
of the Trans Kalasas territory at the Rajaurya sacrifice of Yudhishtira.

It is clear from the above account of the location of Uttarakuru
that it lay to the north of the Himalayas, possibly, beyond Tibet, in the
vicinity of the mountain Meru, which seems to represent the Parnas,
as shown by Sylvain Levi. According to the Great Epic, this land was
marked by idyllic pleasure, bucolic beauty and sylvan silence. The trees
produced elegant fruits and flowers; the earth yielded gold and rubies;
the seasons were agreeable: the people were healthy and cheerful and
had a life-span of 11,000 years; they passed their time in song, dance
and marriage making and among them sexual relations were promiscuous
and unbridled. It was a veritable land of gods (devaloka). There the
righteous people were born to enjoy the fruits of their meritorious deeds.
In particular, the warriors, losing their life on the battle field, were
transferred to that region. Even those, who made gifts of houses to
Brahmanas were entitled to be born in that country. These data show
that Uttarakuru cannot be the bleak mountainous country of the Him-
layas, but the region to the north of it, watered by the Tarim and its
tributaries, where the oases-states of Borsa, Kuca, Karashahr and Turfan,
on the northern route, and Khotan, Niya, Endere, Calmedena, Koraina,
Charkilk and Miran, on the southern route, flourished in ancient times.
Chinese travellers and pilgrims have testified to the prosperity and
richness of these regions and the religiosity and righteousness of their
people and Indian writers have described their luxury, influence, wealth
and bliss by the terms Manikancanavasa, Bhdrasavasa, Gandharvaloka
and Aparagodana.

The names Kuru and Uttarakuru came into vogue in the Brahmana
period. It is significant that the word “Kuru” is conspicuous by absence
in the earliest strata of the Rigveda. Only once in the tenth mandala there
is a reference to Kurusanavas Trasadasyavas, but he is called the king of
the Kurus. Even in the territory of the Drasadvati, Sarasvati and
Ayapu, later known as Kuruksetra on account of the association of the
Kurus the Bharata kings are said to have kindled the sacred fires. In the
Apri hymns Sarasvati is mentioned with Bhasti, the glory of the Bhar-
tas. In the Vajasaney Samhita the Bharatas appear in place of the Kurus,
Pancharat. But in the Brahmana texts the Kurus become very prominent

27
and are usually associated with the Pancalas. They are also said to be in occupation of the territory, through which the rivers Drasdvati, Sarasvati and Apaya flowed, and which, consequently, came to be known as Kuruksena. It was the home of later Vedic culture; its speech was best and purest and its mode of sacrifice was ideal and perfect.

Besides the Kuru, there are references to the Uttararaka in Brahmana literature. In the Altaraya Brahmana (VIII, 14), it is stated that the people, living beyond the snowy regions, like the Uttararaka, avoid their kings for Vairaja, who, as result, are called Vairaj. At another place in the same text (VIII, 23), Vasishtha Satyabhaya is stated to have enjoined Janamapati Atyasti. According to the ritual of Aindra Mahabhisheka, who, in consequence, went over the whole earth and conquered it up to the oceans, Thevapipam, Vasishtha Satyabhaya demanded his fees. Atyasti replied that when he would conquer the Uttararaka, he would confer the whole empire on him and himself become the commander of his army. Satyabhaya reported that the country of the Uttararaka was the land of gods, whom nobody could conquer, and since he had deceived him, he would snatch everything from him. As a result, Atyasti lost his prowess and Susain son of Saiyba, killed him.

It is clear from the above data that the Kuru came into the limelight in the later Vedic period. They migrated from their homeland to the north of the Himalayas, and entered into India, driving away the Shyetas and occupying their habitat between the Drasdvati and Sarasvati. Gradually, the Purus and the Shitas mixed with them and became one people, as is clear from the expressions Kuruva Nama Bharata occurring in the Mahabharata (XII, 349, 64). In the beginning their relations with the Pancalas were good, but, in course of time, differences appeared among them and culminated in the famous Mahabharata war. Though settled in the fertile and prosperous country of the Sarasvati and the Yamuna, they preserved the memories of their idyllic home in the northern regions and treated it as the abode of gods. Another section of the Kuru reached Iran and Western Asia and penetrated into Anatolia Traces of the voitvarunde-rung of the Kuru in those regions are found in a series of place-names and personal names current there. A town in Sogdiana still bears the name Kurka; two kings of the Parhaeia Aryan branch of the Achaemenian family of Iran were named Kur; a river in Transcaucasia, to the north-west of Parniz, is called Kur (Cyros of Hel lenic geographers); the region round the confluence between the river Hormus and its right bank tributary, the Parygus, just to the north of the city of "Magna-

28
Sipylos is known as Koroupiae, meaning the Kuru Plain or Kuruksetra, which, like its Indian namesake, was the scene of memorable wars, like those between Seleucus Nicator and Lysimachus in 281 B.C., and the Romans and Antiochus III in 190 B.C., which decided the fate of empires in that region. Thus, it appears that a wing of the Kurus left their homeland for the west, swept through the corridor between the southern foot of the Elburz Range and the northern edge of the Central Desert of Iran and reached the pasture-lands in the basin of Lake Urmiah and beyond that, in the steppe country in the lower basin of the river Aras and Kur, adjoined the west coast of the Caspian Sea. From there they travelled on still farther westward over the watershed between the basins of the Aras and the Ozyyl Irana (Halys) and debouched into the Anatolian Peninsula to settle in the region called the Kuru Plain after their name. Another detachment of the Kurus found its way to Luristan and joined the Early Achaemenids, whilst a third one swung to the southeast and through Bactriana and the Hindu Kush moved into the Punjab and occupied the Sarasvati-Yamuna region. It is significant that one section of the Kurus, called Pratipryas, are known as Bahlkhas, since one of the sons of Pratipra was called Bahlaka. According to the Ramayana, Pururavas Aila, the progenitor of the Ailas, with whom the Kurus were associated migrated to the middle country Sali or Bactriana. Thus, we observe that, starting from their northern homeland (Uttarakuru), the Kurus moved to the west, and, breaking into several branches, migrated into Anatolia, Luristan and the Punjab. As I have shown elsewhere, the painted grey ware, which succeeded the ochre-coloured ware, at more than fifty sites in U.P. and the Punjab and may be dated 1200-1100 B.C., was associated with the Kurus. We may, thus, date the westerndgression of the Kurus about the middle of the second millennium B.C. or a bit later.

The Mahabharata connects Indi with the land of Uttarakuru through Himalayan regions rather than the north-western passes. As shown above, Asjana is said to have gone there via Kinnarasvarasa, Gandharvalokasa, Harihavasa, Hemakuta and Haradasa, corresponding to different Himalayan regions. From early times the people of the Indian plains have been in contact with the Kallav region through many routes. Some of them are: (1) from Almora via Askot, Khel, Garbyang, Lipu Laik Pass (16,750 ft.) & Takiskat to Kallav (Tarchhen) - 225 miles, (2) from Almora via Askot, Khela, Darma Pass (18,510) and Gyanima Mandi 227 miles, (3) from Almora via Bepishwar, Milam, Unna-Dhura 29
Pass (17,500), Jayanti Pass (18,500), Kungri-Bingri Pass (19,300), and Gyanima Mandi-210 miles. (4) from Joshimath via Gula-Niti Pass (16,600), Naroda Mandi, Sibchilim Mandi, and Gyanima Mandi-200 miles. (5) from Joshimath via Damanji Niti Pass (16,200), Tonjik. La (16,350), Sibchilim Mandi, and Gyanima Mandi-150 miles. (6) from Joshimath via Hor-Niti Pass (16,350), Sibchilim, Mandi, and Gyanima Mandi-150 miles. (7) from Badrinath via Mana Pass (18,400), Thulung Matha, Dapa, Nabre, Sibchilim, and Gyanima Mandi-238 miles, (8) from Mushiwa-Gangotri via Niting, Velokha Pass (17,400), Pulling Mandi, Thulung, Dapa, Sibchilim, and Gyanima Mandi-244 miles, (9) from Sime via Rampur, Shikpi Pass (15,400), Shiring La (18,400), Loacho La (18,510), Gartok (15,100), Chargot La (16,200), and Tirthapuri-455 miles, (10) from Sime via Rampur, Shikpi Pass, Shiring La, Thulung, Dapa, Sibchilim, and Gyanima Mandi-472 miles, (11) from Srinagar (Kashmir) via Zojila (11,578), Namnik (13,000), Fotu La (13,446), Len (Lehathk), Taglang La (17,500), Damchok, Garguna, Gartok, Chargot La (16,200), and Tirthapuri-605 miles, (12) from Kathmandu (Nepal, Pasupatinath) via Mukthinath, Khochamth and Teklakot-525 miles, (13) from Kullu in Kangra District through Rampur Bashahr state via Thulung in the east there were routes connecting Assam with Tibet and China. One route passed through Yung-toh'yang and Wentling and corresponds to the Burma Road. Another route led from Szechuan to Lhasa and Assam. Often pilgrims used to bypass Tibet in the south by following the Tsang-Po route. The twenty Chinese monks, who according to I-Tsing, arrived in India during the reign of Srigupta, who constructed for them a temple called Chinese Temple (Chih-nu sut). 40 Yojanas to the east of the famous Mahabodhi Temple at Nalanda came by one of these routes. Chinese bamboo and silks reached India along these routes, whereas they were carried back by sea before the journey of Chandra Kini in the second century B.C. Later, the Chinese adventurer Wang Hsuan-Tsai advanced along one of these routes to capture Kanauj after the demise of Harsha and the usurpation of Arjuna or Avanasa in the seventh century. According to the Mekhakara (11, 177, 11-13) the Pandava brothers advanced north of Badri and, scaling the Himalayas, probably via Mana Pass, Thulung Matha, Dapa, Nabre, Sibchilim, and Gyanima Mandi, and passing through the lands of the Chinas, Tussar, Doradas, Kuliandes etc. reached the kingdom of the Kirata king Subahu. It is noteworthy that in subsequent Indian traditions, embodied in the Great Epic, the routes leading to Uttarakuru are said to pass through the Himalayas rather than the passes of the Hindu-Kush and the Pamirs.
appears that either there was an infiltration of people from Uttarakuru to Kurukschatra along the Himalayan routes, besides the immigration of these peoples from Bactrian quarters along the north-western passes, or, after the settlement of the Kuras in India, the tradition of their coming from the north-west was forgotten and a connection between their Indian abode and their aheinas beyond the Himalayas was established through Himalayan routes, that were regularly in use.

NOTES

1. Mahabharata VI, 7, 11.
3. Mahabharata, I, 102, 10.
4. Ibid., 25, 5.
5. Ibid. VI, 7, 6
6. Bana, Harsha-charita, ed. P. V. Kane, p. 59
8. Mahabharata II, 25, 12.
10. Ibid. III, 231, 14612.
11. Ibid. V. 22, 8.

12. Ibid. II 48, 6.

13. Ibid. VI, 8, 23.


15. Mahabharata XI, 16-17.

16. Ibid. XIII, 57-2958.

17. Rendra X. 33, 4.


20. Namastya Upanisad Brahmana XI, 7, 6, VIII, 7; Koustaki Upanisad IV, 5; Gopater Brahmana I, 2, 8; Kasika Sambhita VI, 6.

21. Patravvinsa Brahmana XV, 10; Satsaptha Brahmana IV, I, 9, 13; Atreya Brahmana VII, 30; Namastya Brahmana III, 126.

22. Satsaptha Brahmana III, 2, 3, 15; Sankhyana Satastustra XV; 3, 15; Lasyavarna Satastustra VIII, 11, 18.


25. Mahabharata II. 63, 2112.

26. Ramakrishna VII, 90, 21-23.

27. Buddha Prakash, Political and Social Movements in Ancient Panjab p. 23.
Notes & Topics

UTTARAKURU IN TIBETAN TRADITION

The world in Tibetan, written and oral tradition is composed of four continents on four sides of Mount Ri-rab (Skt gṛha): Sar Lu-phag (Skt ghṛha) in the east, Dzam-ling (Skt champa) in the south, Ba-lang-chyo (Skt dhārā) in the west and Jhang-damīnen (Skt ghṛga) in the north.

It is not possible, in the present state of our knowledge at least, to construct any satisfactory geography out of the available data about these continents. Besides Dzam-ling (Jambu-dvīpa), which was a firm geographical reality, the other three continents were, if not altogether fabulous lands largely terra incognita. All information from Kanjur, Tanjur, other literary texts and oral traditions may be fitted, par excellence into what Turrell Wyllie designates "Religious Geography" (supra p. 17).

Ri-rab (Sumeru) for instance is a concept more useful and necessary for rituals and meditations than for travel, trade or even pilgrimage in physical sense. For location of this traditional focal point of the universe a modern enquirer has to trace a line stretching from Mount Kailas in the east to Pamirs in the west. From the data in Chinese Buddhist cosmography, obviously built on Indian Buddhist tradition, Needham firmly identifies Mount Sumeru with the Kun Lun Mountains (Science and Civilization in China, Vol. III. Cambridge 1959, pp. 866-568).

For location of Jhang-damīnen (Uttrakuru) we have a few premises to start with. It was on the north of Ri-rab (Sumeru), that is far north of Dzam-ling (Jambu-dvīpa). Dzam-ling in Tibetan tradition included Ling-phag (as well as Tibet). Therefore Jhang-damīnen (Uttrakuru) was on the north of Tibet as well.

Now if the Kun-luns be the Mount Sumeru there can be no objection to locating Uttrakuru (Jhang-damīnen) in the Tarim basin as Buddha Prakash suggests (supra p. 28).

The picture of Uttrakuru drawn from Sanskrit literature tallies broadly with that of Jhang-damīnen in Tibetan literature. In both, this is a paradise on earth: a weird land with a tracing climate and a kind soil;
a people with promiscuous morals and high longevity. In comparison with the cold and desolate plains in the south (Jhang-thang) and the sandy waste (Sahou) in the north (Godii) the Tarim valley with its oasis townships and wading lakes was indeed a paradise. According to Buddha Prakash the emigration of the Kuras from their northern home began in the middle of second millennium B. C. It is a well-known fact that even in historical times the contour and soil of Eastern Turkestan have changed considerably. There was more of water and less of sands in prehistoric and proto-historic times. It is not unlikely that the inundations of sandy waste began in the second millennium B. C. only and led to dispersal of the Kuras. Even with the present conditions Tarim valley is a rich land surrounded by less fortunate ones. Its crops include barley, wheat, rice and cotton. The fruits which appear at all tables are melons, apples, pears, apricots, peaches, nectarines, pomegranates, plums, cherries and mulberries. Mineral wealth is not inconsiderable. The items which concern us here are jade stone and gold from the Kunlun range. Garlands of jade and gold came from Utarakuru to the court of Yudhishthira (supra p. 29). Tarim valley was the meeting ground of races and cultures, commodities and concepts. Perhaps all this accounted for diverse morals and lax morals.

The Tibetan tradition adds a curious piece of information about the Utarakuru people, viz., that this people possessed an unpleasant speech or coarse voice. Otherwise the Sanskrit tradition about Uttarakuru, the Tibetan tradition about Jhang-daminen and modern travel accounts about Tarim valley (e.g. Menon: Dalai-Changkii, Oxford 1947) agree in describing the people concerned as strong and sturdy, gay and pleasing loving.

From the Chois-Jung (history of the religion) two important facts about Jhang-daminen (Uttarakuru) have come down to us. (i) One of the Sixteen Arhats, Vakula, settled down in Jhang-daminen to uphold the Sacred Doctrine there, (ii) People of Jhang-daminen could become Buddhists but were debarred from entry into monastic discipline. This second point is no doubt of great interest.

In view of their promiscuous morals people of Jhang daminen have been all through considered to be unfit for ordination. They were in fact branded to be as unfit as the hermaphrodites, on the authority of Vasubandhu.

(Tanjur, Monon, Ku)
Presiding officers and abbots of Tibetan monasteries were rather meticulous in implementing this ban. Enquiries about a monk candidate’s qualifications and antecedents contained a specific question as to whether he was a native of Jiang-damgen. An instance may be cited from Sakya Lamg Phag-pa (1238-1280). A great preceptor, though he was, Phag-pa in his Instructions for Ordination laid down this specific question: Are you or are you not from Jiang-damgen? (Sakya Kahun Vol. 15. This reference has been traced for me by my pupil Myanuk Tshulku Namgyal) It is evident that, though today few Tibetan scholars and monks can make any guess about its location, from about 815 A.D. (when Aśkāraṇakāsa was translated into Tibetan) until about 1280 A.D. (when Phag-pa died) Jiang-damgen was a reality, a part of this phenomenal world and not a mythical land.

It is however a riddle why people of Tarim valley or its neighborhood came to suffer from such disability at the hands of Tibetan Lamas. One is tempted to add to this the fact that a Tun-huang document entitled The Religious Ancestry of the Li-Country even indicates Ulrtara-kure in the direction of Tarim valley somewhere in the Eastern Turkestan (Thomas: Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents, Part I, London 1935, page 318, In 11).

It is to be noted that the Eastern Turkestan was a famous Buddhist country long before Tibet became Buddhist. This land not only nurtured and nourished Buddhism but was instrumental in its passage to China. Much of the Tantric practices—which characterize Tibetan Buddhism—was earlier in prevalence in the Eastern Turkestan. Yet ironically enough the natives of the land which had produced Dharmandari, Dharmarakas, Kunabodhi and Kunapajiva were refused ordination in Tibet later.

It is also a fact that Buddhism began its decline in the Eastern Turkestan from about 800 A.D. and by the time of Phag-pa in Tibet (1235-1280) it had become an insignificant element in the Tarim valley. Even the community of Indian merchants (? Sänthaṣṭra—Sart) settled there embraced Islam and became the elite of the new Muslim population.

It is not unlikely that the Mongol tradition may preserve useful data for drawing a clearer picture of Jiang-damgen. The Tibetan tradition developed out of Indian Buddhist tradition and obstinately adhered to the ban for entry into monastic discipline in respect of natives of
Jhang-damiren. It is to be noted that Mongolia, a country on the north of Tibet, did not suffer from such disability. The Mongol recruits to Tibetan monasteries (first Sakya-pa and then Geluga) were esteemed agents for propagation of the Mahayana in a land where Shamanism, Christianity and Islam counted their priests also and where eclecticism was a characteristic feature of the people's life. This Bulletin expects to publish in a later issue findings of eminent Mongol scholars on Mongol tradition about Jhang-damiren.

The Classical writers (of the West) referred to a people called Attakase or Uttarakus. Some scholars identify Attakase with the Uttarakuru and locate them in Turkestan, preferably the Eastern Turkestan. This would place the habitat of the Uttarakuru on the north of Mount Meu. But the attempt to identify the Hyperboeans with the Uttarakuru has to encounter the theory of Tomeskek as developed by Hudson. This theory places the Hyperboeans in the neighbourhood of what is today Peking (Hudson: Europe and China, London 1931, ch. 1). Peking is in the direction of Ser Lu Phag or Puravideva of Buddhist tradition. Jhang-damiren or Uttarakuru has to be found somewhere on the north both of India and Tibet.

NIRMAL C. SINHA

36
OBITUARY: WILLIAM McGovern

Dr. William Montgomery McGovern died in December 1964 in Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A.

Born on 28 September 1887 in Brooklyn, McGovern had his education outside U.S.A. He took courses in History and Philosophy in Sorbonne, Berlin and Oxford and later studied Buddhism in principal monasteries of China and Japan. To a good knowledge of Greek and Latin he added an equally good knowledge of Chinese and Japanese and had some acquaintance with Sanskrit and Persian. McGovern thus shaped into an encyclopaedist with his interests ranging over antiquities, linguistics, religions and governments. His publications include: Modern Japan (1920), Colloquial Japanese (1921), Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism (1922), Manual of Buddhist Philosophy (1923), To Lhasa in Uigurte (1924), The Early Empires in Central Asia (1937).

As a research scholar and as a teacher, McGovern's first love was history and civilization of the East. While hardly thirty he made his mark as a lecturer in Chinese and Japanese languages in the School of Oriental Studies, London.

Later he took up teaching Political Science at Harvard and North Western Universities, U.S.A. For over 25 years until his death he was Professor of Political Science at the North Western University. In this role he gained the high esteem of his students for his popular exposition of political theories and institutions; the lectures and talks were packed with data drawn from his wide studies as well as world wide experiences. At the same time his reputation as an Oriental scholar remained high.

After Pearl Harbour, he was called for service to a high advisory post in US war administration. This was as much because of his mastery of the two Far Eastern languages as because of his being a friend of the late Sun Yat Sen and his co-workers.

McGovern's passing away will be felt in circles connected with Central Asia and Manayana. He was a pioneer and as such his studies in these fields may have been rendered inadequate by later discoveries of both archaeological and literary materials. The point for remembrance today is that McGovern was among the first few to notice the role of Central Asia in the entire history of man and to underline the importance of Mahayana for all students of history.

NCS 37
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