VOL XII  No. 2

11th July 1976
NAMGYAL INSTITUTE OF TIBETOLOGY
GANGTOK, Sikkim.
The Bulletin of Theology seeks to serve the readers with an interest in this field of study. The image portraying the steps on the mountains suggests the dimensions of the field.
11th July 1975.
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SUNYATA AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN BUDDHISM

By—N.A. S., 1917.

The concept of Sunyata is one of the main topics in Buddhism. Its early reference has been found in the Majjhima Nikaya, III, p. 164, by the elucidation of Sunyata-vibhava (सुन्यताविभव). It is stated there that the monastery is Sunya, devoid of inhabitants, cows and horses, etc., but not Sunya of monks, and this is common characteristic. One dwelling in the forest may be devoid of the village and its men, but not devoid of the forest existence. In the same way when a meditator meditates on the earth, one object without its rivers and mountains, etc., he remains devoid of men, forest or hills, etc., but not devoid of the earthiness. When the meditator rises up to the fifth meditation concentrating his mind on infinite space, this much remains in his mind as a real object, Sunya. Similarly in his subsequent higher meditations on infinite consciousness, on the state of nothingness, on emptiness, and on the state of no-consciousness his meditations become devoid of every other object but not devoid of the meditated objects. In his last meditation on the absence of any object animating-enacted, is found that even this concept is not everlasting and permanent and thus he gets rid of his three anima of thirst, rebirth and ignorance. Even though the meditator in this last concentration is freed from these impurities, still, he, however, retains the sense of his body as constituted of the six organs up to the end of his life. Thus we find explained in this Discourse the internal vuñña, Sunna, and the external vuñña, Sunna, viz., the former is the deliverance of one's mind from the said impurities, whereas the latter is the absence of something else in a particular place or object, e.g., monastery, etc. It is most likely that this internal Sunna is conveyed in such passage like: Sunna vuñña yah Sunna vuñña-yuddha, "Dve vuñāya vā sattām barsā... and is meted with Sunna, internal purification". 

A new interpretation of the term may be traced in S.n., IV p. 54. Ananda makes a query to Buddha on the meaning of the world empty and Buddha's answer is that it is empty because of the absence in it of the self and of anything of the self. This new interpretation is to put throughout the later Pali texts like the Sutta Pitaka, and other Sutras it seems as well.

A new expression has been formed in S.n., I, p. 153 to convey the absence of soul in man in a stanza attributed to Aye Bikkhu. It
reads: "To conceive a permanent living being in this body is a wrong view coming from the god of death, Mara. For, this body is pure collocation of the manifest elements, and there is not found a permanent living being. Sriiva" [Siddhārtha-gautama]: 'You, oh! Sage śāṅkiliṣṭa! The same expression in the Theragāthā, 709; Siddhartha-Sambhava-sāmartham'! The idea that śuddhi stands in lieu of Sunya has been suggested from the Sanskrit counterpart of the cited Pali stanza found in the Abhidhammakosa-bhāṣya of Vasubandhu, p. 460.

Thus the term, Sunya assumed a new definite significance which fact will be more and more confirmed in the subsequent citations.

Sukhām-Samādhī is mentioned along with animitta and apāndita in Vinaya IV, 33, Dīgh III, 219, Sam I, 360, Ang I, 299 (Lamotte, Histoire, p. 47).

The above three Samadhīs occur sometimes under three Vinokas (emancipation) and sometimes under Vinoksa-mukha (channel of emancipation). Sunyas-vinokka (सूर्यकालिणिक्ष) is when one's mind is completely free from the three impurities (Dhammapada, Sect 7, vers. 4). डॅन्नुपाल्ल विनोकज्ज (विनोक-विनोक्का) is only two vinokkas, viz. Sunnata and animitta as in the Cula-Sunnata-sutta of Majjhika-nikaya.

So vinoksa-mukha results from the contemplation on the non-soul-conception (Compendium, p. 216, Abb. Sin IX, 39) The Vāmaitīmagga of Upatissa, (p. 313) also makes clear how the void-emancipation is fulfilled through penetration into no-soul-thought. One dwelling on the no-soul-thought obtains Sunnata-vinokka-mukha, says the Pati-sambhīda (cited in Abb. Dīpa, p. 474, n. 3). This specified import of Sunyata has been much amplified by other Pali authors like Nāgisaṃsa and Buddhaghosa. The former comments: "the self-character of all the manifest elements, the supreme voidness, i.e. absence of any living being and intention the extreme voidness should be made bright" Samhāranam Sathavam parāno-Sunyam nirik-priyāstav-avastov Sunnham aṣṭikāvabha 2 (Milinda, Bombay Univ. Series, p. 494); while the latter remark: Just as a wooden mill is void, i.e. free of any living being and intention (niṣṣvam niṣītana) and yet it acts as if it walks and

1. Note it is sunya (सूर्य) because there is no Śattra, i sentient being in it.
2. संयान्यं सम्बन्धं पहसुकानं तिथिः निविज्ञनम्।
   अबूताकृतं बालिनवशः।
stand; just so is Numa-na, man, he is void, i.e. free from any living being and retention (ajjhavatattvavipada), yet he looks as if he has a self and intention and discharges duties, etc. (Vis. megapp. ch. 18).

Even ceti in Mahayana Sutras he favored the idea that the Sunya-convert counteracts Sakya-dhara, belief in self (Lamotte, Vimalakirti, p. 146, n. 16 and Sthiramatsyavadi, p. 27) as against the Sunyatinś, Sūtra’s saying:

"Voidness does neither arise nor die as all these things are devoid of their self-character.

न पूर्वः वर्जय से च विहिलेत्
भगवान् वा इन सम्बन्धे: ॥

(ch. 7; Ver. 28 cited in Budhdg. ma-Sanghita, p. 129).

Let us see now what Nāga jun, the great champion of the Sunya self is as. He made a critical treatment of it not on the cheap and rather his 166th shin classified. However it should be noted that he is a Pāṇiniś, that is a Pāṇiniś-practitioner, viz. he would combat strongly and radically every proposition relating to any metaphysical topic put forward by his opponent. Who, e.g. the proposition is presented, viz. ceti, in case produces certain results, he finds fullest with every tui of the proposition asking whether the case, ad the result is existent or non-existent and concludes ultimately that both the case and the result are Sunya, void. This conclusion he makes clearly in this tui as:

"This world is : no tui continuity of causes and effect; there is no Sātiy, i.e. existence being (sattvatantrikatva in the original tui).
For no world thing comes out of void thing!"


The idea implied here is that the process of causes and results continues for ever without the void of any conscious agent is the fundamental topic of the Sārimbha-Sūtra. Note the causation formula stated in the Sūtra:

"The seed while producing the fruit does not think ‘I am producing it!; he produces, while being produced does not think ‘I am produced by the ego’, etc." (p.4). Thus the entire process of causation is free from any conscious agent, giving nirvinm (निर्विन्नम्) (p.3). Compare the Thangka: Saddha dharmãppadhyàpam Sadhã sadhakam.

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"Pure is production of things and pure is the continuity of the manifest elements" substituting an old terminology Suddha, pure for Sunya, void, (Abhinutobha-bha's ver. 9) and note his another saying: Suddham aninnaam etam, "This is all pure and without an \( \text{vetted} \)" (ibid.9).

We can now see that the comments on Sunyata (सुन्यता) made by Ngogoeu and Buddha-ghosa as noted above (p.18) are quite in keeping with the traditional thinking of the early Buddhists.

Thus the cause, effect and the act of production being void, Nagurjuna declares:

"What is the dependent origination,
We call it voidness" (Madh. Sastra, ch. 14, Ver.18).

The same idea he spells out in another context:

"Dependent origination is nothing but voidness, and is accepted by you".

Cited in Bodhi-Panjika, p. 454 from his Lokita-viuda 3o.

In all these passages the original idea of sunyata, selflessness intended in the term must not be overlooked by us. So the premises made by the Madhyavika authors as dharmas are Sunya, void and apra-paksha, non-substantial are quite sensible and suggestive. Although one may plead with Bhaskaraka (Karttaka, p. 16) that these two terms are synonyms, they have their own primary ideas and significances.

Some early Buddhists raise objection to such a wide application of Sunyata on the plea that Buddha preached it as a means to gain insight into self-soul-idea, (वैभवसता). Nagurjuna replies in this celebrated stanza:

"Sunyata has been preached by Buddhas with a view to removing all wrong speculations. But those who resort to it as an ultimate end are to be declared as incorrigible fellows". (Madh-Sastra, XIII, 8).

The above introductory statement by Candrakirti in his Prasnamapada makes clear that it was Nagurjuna who widened the application of Sunyata to the entire field of philosophical speculation. However, the
fact that the Sunyata-doctrine must be viewed as a suitable weapon to check all the wrong views and opinions has also been well stressed by Nagasena, a predecessor of Nagarjuna (See Milinda, p. 464).

Doctrine of Sunyata (सून्यता) is a fundamental topic of the Sunyasiddhi which adopted it as an antidote against the reality-notions of separate elements including the concepts of Umagata, etc. Sunyata is not applied to prajnapa dharmas, empirical things like chariot, house, etc, reality of which is negated by means of studies of the scripture. Sunyata-concept is not an end by itself, it is also put a stop to at the Nirvanic state (Ch. 141).

The S. Siddhi employs the term Sunya along with other three terms with reference to the elements in this order: anyya, dukkha, Sunya and anatman. Sunya has been made into 'selfless' in keeping with its early usage. Now the idea of anatman, 'selfless' becomes redundant; hence the term is treated as conveying the idea of non-substantial (chs. 189, 190, 191). The Siddhi presumably implies thereby the theory of two-fold soullessness, anatman of the Mahayana.

We may now try to find out whether we have any early authority employing all the four terms in parallel as in the S. Siddhi. The Thangpala (Talapata’s ver. 271) refers to them thus:

उदाहरण दुस्कर्म विवेक विनिमय

We have here two more characteristics, aghem, sinful and anelum, destructive. The Thera addresses his mind to be watchful of things in their true characteristics in order that it may remain aloof from them.

The mind’s watchfulness over the separate personality elements is one of the four ways of mindfulness, Satipatthana. It is explained in the Niyasas as to keep watch over the fact that dharmas like the removal of the hindrances, nirvāṇa, seven factors of Bodhi and four noble truths, etc, are real and so on. But Tasbihandha gives a different meaning of Dharmaṃritti. “The person engaged in it penetrates into the elements under four aspects: anyya, impermanent, dukkha, sorrowful, Sunya, void and anatman, selfless” (Abb. Vena, VI, 19). This interpretation should not be viewed as Vasubhandhu’s own, but it is, in fact, based on that of the early Sarvastivadin authors as many other topics of the Kosa are. Cfr. the same interpretation in the Abh. dipa with Vatti, p. 316-17. We have the same four aspects stated in another context. The Sarvastivadin’s Abhidhamma, e.g., Parac-vatika, p. 10, insists that the comprehension of the four Aryan truths must be effected
under four aspects each. The first truth, dakkhina-satya is classified as anitya, dakkha, anupa and anatta. The second truth, dakkha-satya covers the entire universe (S. Siddhi, ch. 15) of Buddhists in a great web of such truths and proved their ontological edifice well founded. It was probably S. Siddhi and his followers who picked up one important aspect of the dhamma, i.e. sanna and built out of it a stupendous philosophy of humanism (v. my paper on Buddhism in Bulletin, Theosophy, Vol. VIII, 1, pp. 72ff. and Patanjali-smrita in my nett-writing Buddhist Idealism).

The Patanjala probably refers to the four characteristics (lobhena) of dhamma: anitya, dakkha, anupa and anatta-satya (v. 15) and in its comment to four aspects (dhamma) of the yamakas: anitya, dakkha, anupa and anatta. Though these four are not spoken of here under dakkha-satya the context implies that they are described as characteristics of things under that truth (p. 164). Four perfections (pattirna) are mentioned as related to the four meditations: jhāna-jhāna towards impermanent things, meditative conceptions towards impermanent things, sattvika towards selfless things and dhyāna towards selfish things. Since the name of body is ṣuddha, Vāc is destroyed in the meditations, converse of them are attributed to the corp. body, viz. sunya-parisanna, permanence-clums, sabhp, kṣam-clums, anupa-sabhā-clums and subha-parisanna, reprehension-clums.

According to S. Siddhi these four perfections are to be checked by their four spinal levels (pariccheda), viz. four ways of meditation; the spinal levels. The four spinal levels are dhamma, void because there is neither producer nor object in them; they are anatta, (voidness) because there is no identification independent (S. Sūtra, XVII, 20-31). It became now evident that the S. Siddhi and Asvaghosa have faithfully kept up the early doctrine in interpreting anupa into soundless or silent; but in respect of anatta, the S. Siddhi made it into anit-pattirna, non-attached, permanently following Nagarjuna and his school whereas Asvaghosa put it into desireless. The three root characteristics of sattvika also reversed by Nagarjuna in his Satyakhyātā without explaining how (cf. cit. p. 10).
A CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE YOGACARA AND THE MADHYAMIKAS

The Yogacara idealists maintain that the objective world that we experience is a false reflection of our mind. It is unreal because it does not stand our critical and logical test as Dignaga has proved (Samkhyana-pariksha). Its one phase of the store-consciousness which is an accumulation of mental forces from immemorial time (sattvikavijnana-sravana). The store-consciousness must be checked and substantiated by pure in extra-mundane knowledge. To do away with it is to acquire sammati lokasa (v. Tattvadarshani, M. Vidyagho, l, 5, tathya-vastuprutroche Trinika, 3).

Maitreya calls it Sanyata, voidness on the ground that it is cleansing of all deluding forces which generate illusive appearance of the external things as well as attachment to them. Voidness is not an absolute non-entity but something more. His plea is that the liberation is secured as a result of cleaning one’s own mind of its misconceptions and perverted. Because our consciousness presents an illusive show before us, we cannot deny its existence altogether. We deny its illusive characters; its self-substance remains there. The illusive characters are irreducible and grouping objects (pratisthakram pramey). Its self-substance is beyond the reach of the ordinary mind, hence it can hardly be denied (v. e. Vabh. Tika, p. 16, 10-11).

This conception of Sanyata differentiates them from the Madhyamikas. For Nagarjuna, propounds of the Madhyamika School, Sanyata, voidness conveys the idea of non-substantiability (an ratana) and serves as an antidote against all misconceptions and false notions. It has also been equated with the idea of relativity, i.e., some contingent existence of things. Nagarjuna says: whichever is brought about by causal relations is not really produced, and hence non-existent. He sometime raises

1. Cf. Majh. Ill, pp. 104ff.; Culasanatana-Sutta. The purport of this Sutta is summed up thus: “The true solitude is not to be found in forest-dwelling nor in the Concentration of heed from all ideas, but from in attaining to the deliverance from avasas.”

Mahala Sakha, Pali Preran Name, p. 904-5.

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the concept of Śrīyāta to the status of the Absolute Truth, which he
defines as free of four categoricd attributes, ent. etc. (v. M. Vetti.
pp. 176, 491 & 572); but he never says that Śrīyāta by itself
is the Truth.

The Idealists do not agree with Śrīgorjuna’s line of thinking.
Mātreyā, leader of the school has presented convincingly his case and
shown how the concept of Śrīyāta should be viewed in order to accom-
plish the cherished purpose. He asks: ‘How is voidness to be viewed?
His reply is —

When something is absent in a place, that place is devoid
(प्रभु) of that something; what is left out there over and above
that something, exists there forever. Perceiving it in this manner
one is said to have grasped voidness is a true perspective. Grasping
this, one is said to have penetrated deep into voidness. This point
is further illustrated as follow:

Suppose, we have here some object (śrama) specified as Rupa,
etc. When its aspect coming under category of designation does not
at all exist as it is imposed thereon, that object is devoid of the aspect
that is designated as Rupa, etc. What is seen there is the object design-
ated as Rupa, etc., and what serves as the basis of the designation is this
अपदि (प्रभु) (serving simply as accessory to each designation)
is something real. When one understands truly well these two: the
basic object and the designation, he does not impose anything that is
not there, does not negate the basic truth (प्रभु), neither exaggerates
nor belittles, neither removes nor imposes, but understands the truth
well; that is the Tatāta (प्रभु) which is indicible in its nature:
This is known as well grasped voidness.

The fact that every element is indicible in its nature is to
be ascertained from the scripture also. Buddha says in the Bhav.
Sankhāra:

Whichever thing is designated with which its designation
(नामस्त) that (designated) thing does not at all exist in
itself: this is true law of elements (प्रभु) . (1.5.3, 11.4)

1. The same idea is expressed in M. b. III, p. 106:

इसी को मूल विद्या हो जिसमा सुधार होने चाहिए। इसी का सबः सुधार होने चाहिए।
सब वहाँ अन्य भूखियों बिगिनाते हैं। इस विद्या एकुण मानव विद्या विद्या
विश्वास पुरुषुक्त अक्षरात्र मूल विद्या हो जिसमा सुधार होने चाहिए।
Dharmata according to Kukullama is prakrti, true characteristic of all elements that remains outside of all discursive talk:

शरसवेत्यवायनमतमहत्यानं सत्यम् — Prajika.

How one is said to have ill-grasped voidness is also elucidated by Mārtreya thus: If any ascetic or Brahmana does not wish to conceive that what is devoid of something that something is non-existent and what is left out there is existent, then voidness becomes ill-understood. Why so? Because it is proper to say that when there is something absent, that something is non-existent; whereas if it is there, that basic element is existent. If every thing (i.e. both) is non-existent, how will it be? What is it that is devoid? Of what it is devoid? Nor is it proper to say that it is devoid of itself. Therefore the concept of voidness in this manner becomes ill-grasped (II G. IV, etc., E, L.V. Pou in: Note on Sunyata with an extract from Bodhisattva-readings).

Speaking earlier of the Nihilists (Viprakars) who denies absolutely any fundamentals underlying our talk and designations Mārtreya observes: We shall disclose how a Nihilist who challenges the very basic principle hidden beneath the surface of things like rupa, etc. (matter) shall be fallen from this spiritual discipline (dharma-sastra). To the person who denies even the basic principle (samsthata) in such things it is impossible to speak of the basic truth and the designations. For example, the talk of the soul (pudgala) is possible only in the presence of five aggregates of elements, matter etc. but not in their absence. Likewise in the presence of the basic truth underlying the matter, etc. the designations of such things are possible but not otherwise. In its absence one makes a baseless talk. When there is no basic principle, the baseless talk also will not be there. Thus there are certain people who on account of their ill understanding, having heard the discourses that are inclined to Mahayana ideas and attached to the elucidation of voidness and logical meanings, do not grasp the true meaning of what is preached there, speculate wrongly, and with the help of improper and ill formulated logic conceive wrong ideas thus: Designation is only one principal truth; one who conceives in this manner conceives not well. For them the basic principle that serves as substratum of designation is absent and the designation also by no means is possible. How can there be the designation itself as the basic principle? In this manner they destroy both the principle as well as designation. The basic principle being denied, be is to be declared as a principal Nihilist (Pradhamanastika). As such he deserves neither conversation nor co-existence with the wise men. He not only dopes himself but dopes others too. Buddha with
this idea in view says: Every thing is possible for certain person of the soul-view; but nothing is possible for him who misconceives the voidness. Why so? A man of soul-view may be deluded in respect of one knowable reality (pura) but he does not dispute every knowable reality. Nor will he; due to that view, fall into unhappy state of life. He will neither dispute with any seeker of truth, nor will he dispute him. He may on the other hand, make the person secure a true dharma. But a man of misconceived voidness will be deluded in respect of knowable reality and neglect it. Due to that he will fall into unhappy state of life and destroy the seeker of truth and the end of misery. He will become finally negligent in his religious duties (sikṣapade). This person negating the truth (knowable reality) will fall from the spiritual discipline (dharma-śrṅgeya) (I bid.)

Prof. Louis de Vallee Poussin thinks that the absolute Nihilist (Vaiśistika) referred to in the passage cited above is perhaps Bhavaviveka of the Mādhyamika school or the Mādhyamika system itself which maintains the views similar to those expressed in the passage. It is most likely that the passage criticizes Nāgarjuna’s school which holds the view that everything including Nīruṇa is absolutely void. Nāgarjuna, too warns that voidness being ill grasped will destroy the seeker of the truth; e.g. the serpent when one catches it improperly destroys the person (M. Sutra, XXIV. 11).

It is interesting to note that the above passage throws among other things new light on the origin of the Idealist thought in Buddhism. Māleśāya makes absolutely clear that his school was started with a view to reinterpret the concept of Sunyata (空) which was elaborated in the Pratītyasamutpāda Sūtras and which was made again the subject matter of the Mādhyamika Sūtras. It was the Mādhyamika who upheld the view that Sunyata stands for an absolute negation of any conceivable thought about the ultimate truth. He never speaks of any fundamental principle (अति मुन्य) underlying our daily experiences. The Idealist characterizes it as not, existent whereas the Mādhyamika keeps it clear from such characterization. For him the absolute is free of any attribute, existence or non-existence.

It is quite logical to plead with the Idealists that there ought to be some basic principle on which our Illusory talk is founded. This point is well elucidated by Candrakīrti in course of presenting the Idealistic position in his Madh. Avatara as follows:

"The relative existence (pratâstanta) ought to be upheld since it is considered to be the basis of entire chain of imaginings. The illusion of smoke arises on the support of a rope. No such illusion would arise in the absence of rope. Likewise the idea of blue, etc.

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arises on the support of some basic mind. If this basic fact is absent, why would the basis of the idea of blue, etc.? Therefore we ought to uphold pratisthata, the basic mind, the basic cause of the blue-idea, etc. It is also a causative agent of devising ideas as well as purifying ones. In the meantime one realizes that what is absent in a place is co-existing truly. This (realization) is what is called truly entering into voidness. By realizing thiswise voidness becomes well conceived" (v. my Sinhalese text, p. 41, f. pub. in JOR. M. Supplement, 1938).

Cf. kiti already remarks that the advocate of God holds that He is creator of the universe, like wise the advocate of the store-consciousness pl. does in the text of the Dharma Sutra. He produces the appearance of the world. But there is one difference between these two schools, viz., God is permanent for the former and the store-consciousness is impermanent for the latter (I bid.).

This argument set forth by the Advocate is in favor of one basic principle tallies remarkably with one presented by the Advaita Vedanta. The universe for the Vedanta is in illusion and is founded on the impersonal Brahman which is eternal and sees all of all illusion and illusory titles. The Buddhist Advaita agrees with the Advaita Vedanta in so far as one basic reality (बिश्वेत्तर) is conceived, but differ from the latter in viewing it as momentary. Since the basic store-consciousness is momentary and saturated with seeds of creative or accidental consequences it is gradually to be eliminated and substituted fully for or converted into a permanent ultimate knowledge.

Vasubandhu’s definition of the perfect knowledge is that when the basic consciousness, paratanta is made born of all impure ideas (parikalpa), it becomes perfect knowledge (parinirmita). Since the latter is evolved from the former, the latter is considered as a real entity. In Madhyamika’s terminology samata Tathata (समता तथता) is paratanta and Vinala Tathata (विनाल तथता) is parinirmita or avyakta Tathagatagarbha is paratanta and Dharma-kaya is parinirmita, or according to Madhyamika-vibhanga Abhamsparshaka (अभूपर्यःक्षेत्र) is paratanta and Tatra Sambava (ततव संबंध) is parinirmita.

Maitreya remarks that the Absolute is sometimes confused with impurities, and sometimes freed from them. Owing to combination he strongly adheres to the idea of subject-object relations in his mind and entertains a mingling about the concept of Sunyata, i.e., ideation-bane, entanglement. When he gives up the idea and acquires the true knowledge, then the true concept of voidness dwells in his mind and he is said to be freed from impurities. Thus the pure or.
impure state of mind is contingent (वास्तविक) or conditioned and does not affect its own nature; for it is forever shining in its nature (स्वभाविकममा). The water or gold, e.g., is pure in its nature but becomes impure on account of its contamination with impure elements. Likewise is the mind. But the contaminated state is something actual and not our guess. Otherwise all people would become at once wise and noble (M. Vibh. Tīkā, p. 412-3). Its original purity also cannot be questioned; otherwise all our efforts for our spiritual betterment would be in vain and produce little effect. A Bodhisattva takes to the spiritual path in order that he would serve people and fulfill their desires. That is the primary purpose in his life.

Now let us note the Ratnagotra’s comment on Sunyata. Tathāgatādham is void of the accidental impurities which are of separable character, and non-void of the highest virtues of inseparable character (I. 153). There is nothing to be removed, nor is there anything to be imposed upon it (absolute). The absolute (चेत) should be viewed as such; one who views it in its true perspective gets released. In these statements the characteristic of Sunyata is elucidated as a middle path (मध्यमान्त) since it has been denied of either impermanence or imputation. The author further declares the Mahayana’ and their mode of thinking. Those whose thought is distracted from the enunciated import of Sunyata or not composed or concentrated upon it are declared to be drifted from the Sunyata. In the absence of true comprehension of sunyata of the highest import (परमस्तर) the undiscriminated absolute element (विद्य) cannot be comprehended or cognized introspectively. With this intention it is stated (by Buddhā): Tathāgatas’ comprehension of Sunyata is no other than that of Tathāgata’s which is unknown or unrealized by the Śravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, etc. (P. 76). The same treatise declares those who profess and adhere to the Sunyata-concepts itself are maddened in the doctrine. Buddha declares towards such persons: Far better is the belief in soul (तन्मयरूप) of Sumeru mountain dimension than an absurd sunyata-concept (p.18. 1. II). Nagarjuna too is not less emphatic in denouncing such obsession: Those who adhere to the Sunyata-concept by itself, we call them incorrigible (M. Sutra, XIII. 8). These two statements make it plain that each school holds its own interpretation prima facie correct and condemns other’s one as fallacious. An interesting parallel to this idea of Sunyata, not ideal by itself can be traced in the Jainaism, mantra.

Bone of contention between the Yogacara and the Madhyamika schools is the question of Pratistha. The Yogacara (Vijñānavādin) holds it as real and existing, because it serves as a basis of our designations and imputations. However Bhaviveka, a champion of Svanatrikā Madhyamika school refuses to accept its reality. He has also
criticized the interpretation of Sunyata as has been shown in the above cited passage (of the Yogacarabhumi: योगचर्चा सम्बन्धम् etc.), Read his Karatalakata (Visvabhakti pub 1949, pp 15-16 37-59). He has been accused by Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hsuin Tsang and others that he has made Mahayana lacking in laukana, paramantra, etc. (r. My Introp. XII-III, Karatala).

For the Vijayananda, paratatra, relative entity may be unreal only in so far as its imposed aspect is concerned भवायत्वेव अति but not absolutely unreal. It is an entity which consists of eight consciousness elements (क्रियाविषयक स्त्रियुक्त परतत्त्व) M. Vabh. Tika I, p. 15).

This point has been emphasized in the first stanza of his treatise by Maitreyana:

There is a (foundation of) unreal imputations, but in it duality (of the subject-and-object-aspects) is not there. There is, however, Sunyata, voidness; in that voidness even there is imputation. (Mahayana, I. 2).

Here the foundation of imputation is the mind and mental states (verse 9); they continue by way of causes and conditions up to the time of Nirvana and cover the three spheres of existence (Mah. Tika, p. 12. L.10-11; also Trimsika, p. 41).

The later schools of Buddhism in Tibet and Mongolia which sprang from the Yogacara school have admitted the mind as the ultimate principle and viewed it as sunya with the implication of advaya, non-dual. Note, for example, Tibet’s great Yogin Milarepa’s statement (Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup’s translation)” I understood the Sunyata and Nirvna to be dependent and relative states and that the Universal cause is mind which is distinct from ideas of interestingness or partiality. This universal cause, when directed along the path of disbelief (or relinquishness) resulted in the Samvara; while, if it be directed along the path of Ahimsa, it resulted in Nirvana. I was perfectly convinced that the real source of both Samvara and Nirvna lay in the voidness (of the Supreme Mind) ”-p 209. Previously Milarepa is said to be well versed in the exposition of the science of the clear void of mind, wherein all forms and substances have their course and origin. Here the mind is viewed as the void which however is not the void of nothingness, but the primordial uncreated, unformed, incapable of being described in terms of phenomenal experience (pp 30-7). The primordial cause is pri-
mendicant Mind, the one unity. All pairs of opposites being but concepts of mundane mind—when viewed by the supra-mundane nature of enlightenment merge in at-one-ment, and duality is realized to be illusion (p. 85, n. 1, v. Evans Wentz, Milarepa, Oxford, 1958).

Note

The term, Sunya in the following instances indicate the absence of people or some person:—

भौमोर्धिकामुण्डा सुन्यम्.

वासुधर्मकालालम् वभावम्.

तत्त्वादिपत्तिकालालम् सुन्यम्.

संस्कृतकालालम् अभावम्.

कोसद्वयम्, p 400.

N. A. Sastri,
Santiniketan.
Introduction

I am writing this short article from Tibetan sources as a remembrance of the great efforts and sacrifices that the people and Kings of Tibet made to bring over Pandita Atisha Dipankara Sri-Jnana so that he might reform and re-invigorate the old religion of Tibet which had become lax and corrupt at that time, by infusing the strength and wisdom of the vigorous foundations of Indian Buddhist philosophy. I hope to write a separate paper on the work of the great pandita at a future date.

Rechung Rinpoche Jampal Kunzang.

HOW THE TIBETAN BODHSATTAVA KINGS INVITED ATISHA DIPANKARA SRI-JNANA TO TIBET

Buddhism was first introduced in Tibet in the year 337 A.D. during the reign of the 18th King of Tibet, King Lha-tho-li-myam-btsan. Later in the seventh century at the time when bron-ges-sgam-po, a re-incarnation of Avalokitesvara and the 33rd King of Tibet was reigning, the art of writing and Buddhist Sanskrit literature was brought to Tibet.

The religion spread rapidly and it is recorded that by the 8th century during the reign of Khri-sron-lde-btsan, the 38th King of Tibet and founder of the Bsam-pa monastery, it was flourishing throughout the whole of Tibet.

The 44th King of Tibet, King mNga'-bdag-dpal-bshes-btsan had a son named Kyi-lde-njia-ma-ngag, who on his way to the western most province of mNga-ris-tod was escorted till gTsang-lde-ma-gyung-drung by the two minister shang-pa-tshab-rinchen-lde and Chog-ro-lug-pa-lha-bsgos. When the ministers were seeking their leave the Prince told them that if he were made King of the northern province of Tibet, each of them were to send a daughter to be made his queens. The people of the northern province of Tibet, mNga-ris-tod, on hearing of the Princess arrival, requested him to be their King and on accepting their request he became King of the northern province of Tibet. The two ministers kept their promise and sent their daughters, Pa-tshab-btsa and Chog-rot-bsa to be his queens.

Queen Pa-tshab-btsa had no issue, but Queen Chog-ro-bsa had three sons, bkra-shis-ngon, dpal-gyi-ngon and IDe-gtsug-ngon. The
three were known as the Lords of the upper country, sTod-gyi-mgon-
gum.

The district of Pa-zang was given to Prince bKra-sPhrin-mgon and the districts of shang-chung and mang-yul to Prince dpal-gyi-mgon and Prince bDe-rgup-mgon respectively. The three provinces were known as mNgas-'brul-skra-gum.

bKra-sPhrin-mgon had two sons, mNgags-bsdus-gsho-'dre and dSogs-rje. mNgags-bsdus-gsho-'dre, in turn had two sons, Dar-po-rje and dNga-grzags. dSogs-rjes' two sons, lHa-bde-bsad three sons, Hod-dpe, Pho-bzhin-dshi-ba-hod and lHu-btsun-byung-chub-bod.

When mNgags-bsdus-gsho-'dre (11th century) became King he was aware of the great works done by his ancestors in the preaching and spreading of Buddhism. He gave up his worldly life along with his two sons, and was thereafter known as lHa-bde-bsa-ba-hod. Lord Buddha prophesied as mentioned in the manuscript, Tsa-ag, that there would come a ruler in Tibet by the name of lHa-bde-bsa-ba-hod.

lHa-bde-bsa-ba-hod became very religious (Dharma-Ri-pa) and learnt the Sutra and Tantra. During his time there was a great controversy going on between those practising the Tantra and those practising the Sutra, each stating that the other form of practise was incorrect.

Ye-sha-ba-hod, in order to correct this misunderstanding, called seven most intelligent boys of the age-group of ten, and taught them how to read and write. They were ordained as monks and each escorted by two attendants, were sent to K. himin in search of religion and to study the doctrine of Vajrayana (bDud-lc) and Guy. From there they went to India and became chen-po of K. himin no matter what, they went to Tibet to bring the Tantric texts to Tibet. They were also to invite to Tibet other Panditas whom they felt would be of benefit to the Tibetan people. The seven monks along with their attendants, totalling twenty-one, started on their mission to India. The journey being long and difficult, nineteen of the members died on the way leaving only Lo-chung-bri-ba-ba and Lo-chung-bri-ba-his, rich. In the course of time these two became very learned having taken instructions on Buddhism from many Indian Panditas. As the time came for their return to Tibet they were in search of the Panditas in Tibet. They held begging to get information for them regarding Pandas who would teach Buddhism to the Tibetan people and lead them in the right direction.
They went to Vikramasila monastery and made enquiries about Pandita from whose teachings the Tibetan people would benefit. The name of Atisha Dipamkara Shri-karma was mentioned as being the most renowned Buddhist Pandita and the most suited to be invited to Tibet, but who they said would decline the invitation to Tibet, lo-chos-rin-chen-toang-po and Lo-chung-lesa-pa-shi-shi-rub knowing the name of the Pandita who could be invited to Tibet, but whom they could not invite, returned to Tibet. On their return they reported to King Yet shis-bod about their failure to fuel any Pandita from whose teaching the Tibetan people would be benefitted, except Atisha Dipamkara, who meanwhile had been invited from Bodhgaya to Vikramasila monastery by King Mahapala.

King Ye-shis-bod having been impressed by the information given about Atisha, sent Lotsava-rGya-brtan-drus-seng ge along with a hundred attendants to India, giving him a lump of gold weighing sixteen drangs (13 tulas roughly) and several other pieces of gold, to invite Atisha to Tibet. Lotsava-rGya-brtan-seng ge (Viryasimha) proceeded to India and on arriving at the Vikramasila monastery had an audience with Atisha. He presented the lump of gold to Atisha from King Ye-shis-bod and conveyed Ye-shis-bod’s message requesting Atisha to come to Tibet.

Atisha refused to accept the invitation, intent on the tears of Lotsava-rGya-brtan-seng ge and returned the lump of gold. Many of the attendants who accompanied Lotsava died in the meantime due to heat, and much of the gold pieces were utilised. Lotsava returned to Tibet and returned the lump of gold to King Ye-shis-bod. He related to him his unsuccessful mission to India. Ye-shis-bod was very grateful to Lotsava for having undertaken the hazardous journey to India and risking his life. He said he would try to invite Atisha again, failing which, some other renowned Panditas would be invited.

During that time Neg-tsho Lotsava Tanul-khris-sog-rgyal-va (Jay-sila) requested Lotsava-rGya-brtan seng to teach him Avidarma. The request was declined as Lotsava-rGya-brtan-seng was proceeding to India to obtain religious instructions from Atisha. Neg-tsho pleaded to be allowed to accompany Lotsava-rGya-brtan-seng to India and so he along with four or five other attendants went to India with Lotsava-rGya-brtan seng. At this time King Ye-shis-bod made a visit to the Indian continent, being aware of the purpose of Ye-shis-bod’s visit, and knowing that King Ye-shis-bod’s ancestors were responsible for the introduction and spreading of Buddhism in Tibet, had Ye-shis-bod captured and imprisoned.

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King Yetshu lod's nephew, learning of his uncle's arrest and imprisonment, went to his rescue with a hundred householders.

The King of Gyatso said, "I will offer you an alternative choice. You must either refrain from inviting Panchas and surrender to me as my subject or you must bring gold equal in weight to your uncle's body as ransom for his release." The king-by-ng-chub-bod chose to pay gold to the king of Gyatso. He offered the king of Gyatso a hundred strings gold and asked for the release of his uncle, but the king refused and insisted on having gold equal in weight to his uncle's body. The king-by-ng-chub-bod then offered more gold but still the king of Gyatso was unsatisfied and asked for additional gold equal in size to the captive's head.

Thus failing to appease the king of Gyatso, the king-by-ng-chub-bod visited the jail where his uncle was, and looking through the chink in the door said, "Oh my gracious Uncle, this is an unfortunate event that has fallen upon you due to your former karmas. If you had fought and defeat this evil king then there would be much bloodshed and great suffering, and we would both be reborn in undesirable states. On the other hand it is better for you to give up your life rather than to become a subject of this brutal king of Gyatso. I have chosen to buy your release with gold and have already offered a quantity equal to your body's weight. However, the king wants more gold equal in size to your head, which I shall now go and collect and offer to him for your release. Until then I request you to think that this is the fruit of your former karmas and pray to the three jewels (deva-nemi-bhang-gum) to strengthen your moral courage." 

His uncle king Ye-bhug-khag-bdud said, "I thought you were a pious child with the disposition of a lama but you do difficult tasks with diligence, but now I see that even if I die you are capable of continuing the excellent customs established by our ancestors. Moreover, what you have said is very impressive and has a great meaning and I am satisfied with it. Formerly I thought that I should not die before I established perfect religious customs in this country, but now I am an old man and even if I do not die this time, I will have only fifteen years to live. In none of my former lives have I lived for the sake of the Dharma and now it is very good to die for it. It is very amazing that you have found gold as much as my body's weight but now it will not be possible to find additional gold equal to the size of my head. Do not give any gold to this brutal king, rather take the gold to India and try to persuade Padmasambhava to come to Tibet. Please convey this message to the Panchas, that, I have satisfied my life to this brutal king of Gyatso for the sake of you and the Dharma. Do please look upon me and bless me whenever I shall be in the future and grant..."
me the boon of meeting you during my immediate re-birth. It is my principle intention that you should come to Tibet and make Buddhism flourish here and I request you to graciously fulfill my wish."

He told his nephew to convey this message to Atisha and forget about him but to think of the doctrine of Buddhism. The nephew looking through the crack in the door saw that his uncle King Yeshi-hod was bound by a rope. His hair had become white and his body was shrunken and unrecognizable. Lha-btsan byung-chub-hod was much grieved by this sight, said "I-o-lang-ri" (yes) and departed. At that time Nag-mtso Lotstsa Tshul-khrim-spyi-hu was residing at Gung-du-Chung-gyur-gyi-shakgang and learning about this Lha-btsan-byung-chub-hod called on him. He requested Nag-mtso Lotstsa to sit on a high pedestal and he offered him praise for his serving goodness and nobility. Lha-btsan-byung-chub-hod then said "My ancestors were kings and ministers who were re-learnings of Bodhisattvas. They introduced Buddhism into Tibet and under them it flourished. However, nowadays Buddhism in Tibet has greatly deteriorated and men with evil natures are on the increase. Most of the learned and venerable people have passed away and this situation brings great distress to us. To remedy matters my uncle and I selected many men whom we sent to India with presents, and at least hundred Stangs of gold, to invite Atisha to Tibet. Unfortunately most of them died during the journey due to snake-bite and heat and all the gold was lost. Hence could you please carry my Uncle King Yeshi-hod's message to Atisha and tell him that my uncle has given his life to the benevolent king of Gzing for Buddhism and for Atisha. Please also tell him that we have lost many men and much property and if we common men have so much moral courage, then what about him Atisha, most gracious one of boundless mercy and protector of living beings." Then Lha-btsan-byung-chub-hod gave him seven hundred Stangs of gold (equivalent to 779 tolas) and said "Please take this gold to Atisha, Tell him how difficult it is to find gold even of the size of a pea without great effort in a poor country like Tibet, that this is the last of our man and gold and so if he does not come this time even then he is without mercy and we will have to go out way without the guidance of Buddhism." He repeatedly requested Nag-mtso Lotstsa to convey this message to Atisha even if he did not want to come. While speaking he was shedding tears. On hearing all that was said to him, Nag-mtso Lotstsa went till his own face was covered with tears and his body shivered and he could not bring himself to face Lha-btsan-byung-chub-hod as he knew what he said was the truth. Hence forgetting about the difficulties and dangers to his life he agreed to undertake the hazardous journey and said "Ho-lang-ri" (yes). The Nag-mtso Lotstsa took seven hundred gold Stangs and started his journey to India with six attendants. Lha-btsan-byung-chub-hod went a long distance to see them off and said "Most venerable one, you have done a great service by accepting this mission"
and I shall return this favour when you come back to Tibet. Please pray to Avalokiteśvara continuously for your safe return." On the way to Nepal, Nag-mdzö Lozawa met a man who said, "It appears to me that you are undertaking a long and hazardous journey of great importance. Recall, therefore, the following mantras and you shall have a safe journey and success in attaining your objective. The mantras are as follows, 'I bow before the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and bless the sources of all the Buddhas, the doctrine of Buddhism will spread in the snow-faced land of Tibet'. The Nag-mdzö Lozawa asked him who he was and he replied, 'You shall know later on'. Journeying onwards Nag-mdzö Lozawa reached a place bordering Nepal. There he asked an Ačarja for shelter and was accommodated along with his attendants in a bamboo house. The Ačarja knew that Nag-mdzö Lozawa had gold. He was planning to set fire to the bamboo house at night. While they were asleep, a white robed man entered the bamboo house and said, 'Please do not sleep here, go away immediately otherwise your life will be in danger, I am a patron deity of all the Tibetans'. The Nag-mdzö Lozawa and his attendants offered prayers to Avalokiteśvara and immediately fled from there. At day break they met a petty king from Nepal who was on his way to Vikramashila monastery and Nag-mdzö Lozawa accompanied him. When they reached the river Ganges, the King, using his influence, boarded a boat first with his attendants and departed leaving the others behind. By this night was approaching and Nag-mdzö Lozawa got worried as he was carrying much gold. He concealed the gold in the sand and slept somewhere else after praying to the Thre Jewels (dkon-mchog-sum). After some time a white robed boatman came and said, "I have come to fetch you all." So taking the gold they boarded the boat and crossed the Ganges. When they reached the other side of the river Nag-mdzö Lozawa asked the boatman "who are you? I think you are not an ordinary person". The boatman replied, "You will know me afterwards. To-night you can sleep under the portico of Vikramashila monastery and you will not be robbed". Hearing this they departed and at midnight reached the gate of Vikramashila. Lozawa rgya-brtan-seng knowing that they had arrived, looked out from a window above the gate and asked them where they had come from. On being told that they from Ngag-ri-stod, he told them to entrust all valuables with the gate keeper boy and to go to sleep and that in the morning the gate would be opened. The Nag-mdzö Lozawa entrusted all the gold to the boy. Whereupon the boy said, "The best friend is one who can be trusted. Please do not worry and sleep well". Early next morning the gate was opened and a Tibetan boy wearing clothes made from herdman's blanket came and said, "We Tibetans are very talkative and cannot keep secrets but you know that if one wishes to achieve a very important task, one must be extremely cautious and secretive. Now, Lozawa rgya-brtan-seng is at the Tibet Hostel, so please inquire where he is, and go there".
Nagmen lotawa went in search of the Tibet hostel. While passing a narrow road he met an old, saintly Rushi living long orange hair and beard and carrying a walking stick of driftwood. The Rushi asked him where he had come from and the purpose of his visit. Nagmen lotawa said, "We have come from Nagmenstod to invite Atisha to Tibet. Could you please tell me where the Tibet hostel is?" Thereon the Rushi said, "This morning what the boy told you was the truth. There is no hope of achieving your objective because you Tibetans tell the truth even to strangers in the street. This time no harm has been done as you have spoken to me. However, in future do not tell anyone of your mission except to Atisha himself." Then showing the Tibet hostel he departed. Nagmen lotawa was surprised and perplexed by the Rushi's appearance. When he reached lotawa rgya-btsun-seng ri dge, he presented him some gold and told him the purpose of his visit to India. Then lotawa rgya-btsun-seng advised him not to disclose to anyone the purpose of his visit, but to say that he had come to further his studies. This advice was given because Atisha had a powerful patron called Kshvira Ratanakura who would not allow Atisha to leave India. He further advised Nagmen lotawa to call on Shrivira Ratanakura with a presentation of half-sang of gold and tell him, that they had come from Tibet and requested permission to get a perfect education in Buddhism from Atisha as they had not succeeded in inviting him to Tibet. Then they should relax, study, and be patient and later on when Atisha came there, they could make their request to him.

Nagmen lotawa did as he was advised and accompanied by lotawa rgya-btsun-seng visited Kshvira Ratanakura, paid him his respects and presented him half of a sang of gold. He spoke as he had been told to, and Kshvira Ratanakura replied, "It is very good that you have come to study. We are not short of men but if there is no Atisha then the other Paurhas cannot convert beings into perfection. India the source of Buddhism will deteriorate if Atisha leaves the country, otherwise we have great affection towards the Tibetan people. We know how much wealth and men have been lost by the Tibetan Dharma Raj and we are greatly ashamed of this. It is wonderful that you Tibetans have such great respect for Indians." He further added many sweet words.

One day Atisha was distributing food offerings among the beggars. Nagmen lotawa was present and asked a beggar "Is this Atisha?" One of the beggars replied, "What are you talking about? We shall not allow you to take Atisha to Tibet. We are not going to sacrifice our food share as we are poor and unprotected. This is not Atisha, he is a great person and lives elsewhere." The next day Atisha was again distributing food offerings among beggars. One beggar boy
not getting a share, ran after Atisha calling him 'Atisha, bhulobhalo ho!' Nge-mtso Lotawa saw Atisha and thought, the Pandita must be Atisha and ran after him. Lotawa shedding tears and disappointment, he seized Atisha robe. Then Atisha said, "Do not cry. What you speak is indeed the truth. I am most ashamed at not being of help to the king and people of Tibet. But now as you see I am becoming old and moreover, I am holding many keys for the Monastery. However, I am still thinking of you so please pay to the Three Jewels." When Atisha spoke these words, Nge-mtso Lotawa was filled with hope and could not speak for sometime. Atisha then said, "Let us go the Buddha Gaya" and they went. On reaching Buddha Gaya, there suddenly appeared before them a boy wearing white clothes and holding a crystal rosary and arrow in his hands. He bowed before Atisha and said "Oh, lord, please go to Tibet for these Tibetan venerables are indeed much to be pitied." Saying this the boy departed. Nge-mtso Lotawa asked Atisha, "who was that beautiful boy who spoke Tibetan?" Atisha replied, "You Tibetans are very hard to satisfy. Tomorrow there will be a Yogi at the North of Buddha Gaya, ask her/". The next day Nge-mtso Lotawa went to the Northern part of Buddha Gaya and after some time a Yogi holding a drum in her hand came dancing along. Lotawa went to her and asked her about the boy. She replied that it was very surprising that he is a Tibetan, should ask her an Indian, such a question and went away.

One day Atisha went to Nalanda Monastery and Nge-mtso Lotawa followed him. He saw Atisha sitting in front of the Maha Bodhi statue. On his right was the same boy who appeared previously and on his left a greenish blue coloured girl. Both were setting their elbows on Atisha's knees and glancing at each other. Then the boy said, "This is the time for Atshia go to Tibet," and went away. Nge-mtso Lotawa knew that some deities had appeared in the form of the boy and the girl and was delighted to have seen them but was very sorry that they had now left. He told Atisha, "The last time I asked the Yogi about the boy who spoke Tibetan, but my doubts remained unsolved. Today too I am still ignorant of his identity. Since I started on my journey to India, there have been many emanations of protectors who have appeared to me and given me guidance and protection but I do not know who they are. I request you to tell me all about them and to make preparations for your journey to Tibet."

Atisha told him that there was a girl weaving cotton yarn at the Southern gate of Vikramashila Palace whom he should go and ask. Nge-mtso Lotawa went to the Southern gate of the Palace and asked the girl all about what happened in the past. The girl asked him "Who is the celebrated dge-bynep-chos-bshad from Central Tibet (dRim) residing in East Tibet (Khum)?" The girl asked him, "Which race does he belong to?"
and Ngag-mo Lotsawa replied, "He is called bhotrom-stong-pa". The girl then told him that this was the person whom he was asking her about and told him not to pretend. He did not know as he knew the persons name, place and age. Then Ngag-mo Lotsawa knew that all those who had helped him were members of bhotrom-stong-pa. The man who got him out of the bamboo house in Nupi, the lama, the gatekeeper boy, Lotsawa rGyur-bston-seng, on the night of his arrival at Vikramashila Monastery, the boy who was wearing clothes made of bhadra's blanket, the Old Rishi in the narrow street of Vikramashila, the beggar boy, the boy who was holding the crystal arrow and also the boy and girl with Alisha in Buddha Gaya, were all members of bhotrom-stong-pa, who himself was a real re-incarnation of Avor-lom-store (the patron deity of Tibet). Ngag-mo Lotsawa prayed to him deeply and was relaxed.

After some time he went to see Alisha and told him, "Today we are earnestly requesting you to have pity on us and come to Tibet". Alisha replied, "You Lotsawa are very respectful. Moreover yesterday, Lotsawa rGyur-bston-seng too, came to see me and made an urgent request telling me about all that the Tibetans had undergone. After hearing him there came to my mind a picture of that Tibetan Dharma Raja bDud-pa-tshang and I feel deeply sorry for them. That sinful hereafter king of Gar-log will have no place other than hell to go to. Those noble Bodhisattvas who have faced great hardships must by now be in Tulku Paradise (dKor-lha). What Dharma Raja bDud-bum-byang-chub-bod bCia said is very true". With tears in his eyes he further added, "Now I shall think of those Dharma Rajas and Lotsawa and not permit all their sacrifices to have been in vain".

After three days the Lotsaws again repeated their request to Alisha at rGyur-bston-seng's house and by this time Alisha had decided to go to Tibet. It took some time for Alisha to finish his work for the Monastery. Finally when they were ready to start their journey they had a problem regarding their loads. There were so many loads and if all of us accompanied them, then Sadhaka rGya'm kyi would know that Lotsawa was going to Tibet and may stop him. Besides, to transport the sixty loads, they needed beasts of burden and so Ngag-mo Lotsawa was very worried. Suddenly two Tibetan lamas, father and son, wearing long pointed caps came with thirty Yaks, and they suggested that all the loads should be loaded quickly so as not to disturb the peoples' attentions. At about midnight all the loads were loaded on the Yaks and sent on their journey towards Tibet. It is not known how they crossed the Ganges river. The next morning Alisha went to see Sadhaka rRadraka and told him that he would like to show the holy places to the Tibetan venerables and at the same time offer prayers at the holy places and asked his permission to leave. Sadhaka rRadraka told him it was a
very good idea but requested Atisha to wait for a few days as he also wished to join the party. So later on they all went together to see the many pilgrimage centres. Finally Atisha said to Sahavina Ratnakeru, "Now I am going to see the Mīra Temple which is very far away from here and hence it will be very difficult for you to come." Sahavina Ratnakeru then realized that Atisha now wanted to go to Tibet. He turned to Ngemto Lhotara and said, "You told me that you had come to study but you have come to steal my Pandita. This time I can stop Atisha if I desire, but will not since I love the Tibetan Dharma (Bodhisattva) who has sacrificed his own life and wealth for the sake of the Dharma. Besides you are also connected to me as my pupil. Therefore you can take Atisha for three years and then you must bring him back to me, otherwise the courage between two masters and pupil will cease".

Ngemto Lhotara was very unhappy at what Sahavina Ratnakeru said, but he knew that the journey to Tibet was very difficult. He agreed to take Atisha for three years, but if he were to spend three years in Tibet, it would not be sufficient time for the Tibetans to obtain perfect knowledge of Buddhism. He was very worried about this but at the same time, they had to proceed onwards to Tibet. After passing the Mīra Temple they reached a border region between Nepal and India. There eighteen Tirthika Tathāgatas came and, using their miraculous powers, tried to harm Atisha and his thirty-four disciples because they were jealous that he would spread Buddhism in Tibet. Atisha performed a series of rites propitiating the Goddess Tara (Grotorna) and made their bodhisattvas like idols. Later on when they had entered Nepalese land he set them free by offering donations on a handful of sand.

One day an emanation in the form of a hermaphrodite came with a Buddhist statue (Jo-wa-lam-ma-pa-gyi-brug-chu) and a letter from the king of Khoten (Liyul) to Atisha. When they reached Swyambhū, the celebrated Buddhist sanctuary (Phu-pa-gi) all the loads were piled one above the other and beautiful cushions and tables were laid out. Six horses were sent by Liuh-lam-bying-chu-lod to receive Atisha. The ceremony and served him and his party with food and tea in the Tibetan manner. They set up a high cushion for Atisha under the shade of a Pāmulpa tree. Other beautiful cushions were arranged in three rows to the left, right, and behind Atisha. A ceremony was held on the right side where Lhotara dropped a cushion and other Tibetans were seated. Pandita Vīpya Chandra and other Indians were seated on the left and at the head of the middle row was seated the great king Sūngla of Nepal on a throne especially prepared for him.

Atisha was served with a big bowl of white molasses, and tea in a valuable cup decorated with a dragon by the chief mīna-o-nu-pa.
named Sumpa. After this a beautiful white horse, called mThong-smom-clang-glug, lead with a piece of white silk in the manner of Siddhartha horse bs-Ngags-drin (KANOHAKA), was brought to him by the head of the six mNgos-rin-po. They had decorated the forehead of the horse with ornaments of pearls, a big turquoise and gold coins. They presented this horse to Atisha. He was delighted at the offering and said that it was very auspicious.

During this time in Nepal Lotsava rGyts-brtan-rngog took ill and died suddenly. Atisha was very much grieved. When Atishas' party reached the plain of Palpa called bkra-sis-khang, he offered his elephant Glang-po-che mthong-smom (Dzita-Ldod-bhiti) to the king Drag-po-mthlab-yus (Anantakirti) of Nepal and asked him to use the elephant only to carry building material like wood and stones for the construction of the Thang Vihara Temple and for other religious purpose. He forbade him to use the elephant for war and other sinful ends, but told the king that by keeping this elephant all his enemies would be subdued. As a compensation for the elephant Atisha told the king that he would have to bear all the costs incurred for building the Thang Vihara.

The king was very happy to hear what Atisha told him and promised to fulfill Atisha’s wishes. King Anantakirti offered his son prince Pai-mal-hod (Padma Prabha) to Atisha for ordination. Atisha ordained him and called him Lasi-dbang-po (Devindra). He was the first to be initiated by Atisha since he left India. When the party reached Bal-po-rang, three hundred horsemen wearing white robes and white ornaments and holding religious articles were sent by Lha-bsam-dbyang chub-hod to receive Atisha. Leading them was the minister Lai-lo-dros (Devamati) who presented newly made painting of Avalokitesvara to Atisha. Each of the other officers offered Atisha a white silk scarf. The party then proceeded on till they reached mThabs-ma-phum (Mastaro-vari) where he was warmly and visibly welcomed by Tibetan men. While Atisha was staying at mThabs-ma-phum, Lha-bsam-dbyang-chub-hod decorated the monastery of Yang-gling-Ser-gyi-tha-kang and the village and road leading to the monastery in preparation to welcome Atisha. When Atishas’ party reached mTholing-gbes-gyi-tha-kang the people of mNgos-rin-po came to welcome him. Atisha was accompanied by king Anantakirti of Nepal and his officers Ngag-mtho and other learned monks clad in Pandita robes. There were in all five hundred men on horseback. In the middle of the procession was Atisha riding his white horse mThong-smom-clang-glug. At the sight of him the people of mNgos-rin-po were struck with wonder and uttered the words "skyabs-ston-mchul-lo" (meaning take refuge in you) and “O Lord Atisha, master of Buddhist teaching’s, please look upon us Tibetan
people with compassion". Atisha was delighted by the deep faith shown by the Tibetan people in him.

Later on Atisha asked King Anumakriti of Nepal to return to his country and start building the Vihara at Bel-pot-chang. He gave him full instructions concerning the building and furnishing of the Vihara and installation of icons and paintings. On hearing that the king of Nepal was about the leave, the minister Lhasi-dzong-tshug sent a messenger to Lha-btsun-byung-chub-cho-dong to come immediately to receive Atisha and to meet king Anumakriti of Nepal. When Lha-btsun-byung-chub-cho-dong got the message he at once left for micing with six hundred and fifty attendants on horseback. At micing he said his respects to Atisha and king Anumakriti and gave them a grand reception. Lha-btsun-byung-chub-cho-dong presented thirty two horses to the Nepalese king and a gold 5000 s 500 each to the Panditas who were returning with him to Nepal. He accompanied the party a long distance, to see them off. Before parting he requested three of the Panditas to meet him again in the near future. Returning back Lha-btsun-byung-chub-cho-dong invited Atisha to his palace micing-tshang-chang. The party that proceeded hence consisted of about nine hundred horsemen carrying different religious banners.

Thereafter, for the next six months and twenty five days, Atisha fulfilled Lha-btsun-byung-chub-cho-dong's wishes by giving religious instructions. Following this he returned to Yang-ling-chen-ba-khang. There he met blo-od-ron-ston-pa who had come there from dbus. Many disciples and students had prophesied that blo-od-ron-ston-pa would become his chief disciple. blo-od-ron-ston-pa cleverly delayed Atisha's immediate return to India, by requesting him to teach him many subjects one after the other. Meanwhile blo-od-ron-ston-pa wrote to scholars (Gelug) in dbus asking them to come "inducing this immediately to see Atisha. Therefore many great scholars (Gelug) came to dbyig-tshang one after another and requested Atisha to visit dbyig and dbyigs. Fortunately for the Tibetans just at that time the border between Tibet and Nepal was closed due to internal feuds in Nepal and so Atisha being unable to return to India, consented to visit dbyig and dbyigs. Thereafter he never returned to India, but spent the rest of his life in Tibet, spreading and consolidating the doctrine of Mahayana Buddhism.

He founded the excellent teachings of bKa'-'grel-pa sect which soon spread throughout the country.
Rgyan-drug Mchog-Gnyis (Six Ornaments and Two Excellents) reproduces ancient scrolls (1670 A.C.) depicting Buddha, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmakirti, Guanaprabha, and Sakysprabha; reproductions are as per originals today after 300 years of display and worship with no attempt at restoration or retouching. The exposition in English presents the iconographical niceties and the theme of the paintings, namely, the Mahayana philosophy; the treatment is designed to meet also the needs of the general reader with an interest in Trans-Himalayan art or Mahayana. A glossary in Sanskrit-Tibetan, a key to place names and a note on source material are appended. Illustrated with five colour plates and thirteen monochromes.

April, 1961.

SOME PUBLICATIONS FROM NAMGYAL INSTITUTE OF TIBETOLOGY

Pajna or the famous Sanskrit-Tibetan Thesaurus-cum-Grammar was compiled by Tenzing Gyeltsen, a Khampa scholar educated in Nyiligmu and Siksya school of Derge, in 1771 A.C. Though this book was preserved in xylograph few copies of the block-prints are found outside Tibet. The lexicon portions are now presented in modern format with Tibetan words in Tibetan script and Sanskrit words in Sanskrit script with an elaborate foreword by Professor Nalinskha Dutt.

October 1961.
This is an account of early introduction of Tantric Doctrine in Tibet according to the concept of Nyingmapa, the oldest Buddhist school in Tibet. The author is a learned Nyingmapa Lama attached to this Institute. The text is in Tibetan language, 9½ x 6½" size in modern format. This publication gives briefly a clear concept of Nyingmapa School on Tantric Teaching in 13 chapters and may be of great interest to the scholars.

Monastic life in Tibet, is a new publication brought out under the auspicious of the Institute. The publication deals with monastic lives in three monasteries of different schools located at different places. The contributors are the three learned Lamas of the Institute, each of whom gives an account from his own personal experience.
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