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CONTENTS

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF 'GRO-MGON CHOS-RGYAL 'PHAGS-PA
TASHI DENSAPA

ON ATISA'S ITINERARY IN TIBET
BIRESHWAR PRASAD SINGH

INDIA AND TIBET
NIRMAL C. SINHA

NOTES & TOPICS
NIRMAL C. SINHA

BOOK REVIEWS
NIRMAL C. SINHA
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A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF 'GRO-MGON
CHOS-RGYAL 'PHAGS-PA

—TASHI DENSAPA

A. 'Gro-mgon Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan, a Sa-sky-a-pa bbla-ma of the thirteenth century, is not an unfamiliar figure in the history and religion of Tibet. His name appears in almost every historical text, as well as religious works, and it is verbalized daily in the chanting of thousands of Sa-sky-a-pa monks for he is among the lamaic teachers of the Sa-sky-a-pa sect. Just as all Tibetan sects trace their origin to an Indian lineage, Virupa is the Pandita from whom the Sa-sky-a-pa received the teachings of the Lam-bras (Path and Fruit). The lineage of Lam-bras teachers from the Buddha, through the Indian guru, down to 'Phags-pa is as follows:

Rdo-rje-chang (Vajradhara)
Bdzag-med-ma
Virupa
Nag-po-pa
Da-ma-rupa
'Bro-gmi Sa-sky-a ye-shes
Se-mkhar chos-be kun-rig
Zhang-djempa Ba-chos-bar
Bla-ma Sa-sky-a-pa chen-po Kun-dga' snying-po
Sdon-dpon Bod-nams rje-mo
Rje-btsun Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan
Chos-dje Sa-sky-a Pandita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan
'Gro-mgon Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan.

In addition, 'Phags-pa was a descendant of the 'Khon family who maintain that they are descended from the Gods of Light: the Three Heavenly Brothers (the-mdzad-brwa). The name 'Khon a said to have originated at a time when the gods were at war with the demons. G.ya'-spang-skyes, one of the descendants of G.ya'-ring, son of a god, killed the demon Skya-ring khrag-med and took his wife. The son born from their union was named "Khon-bar-skyes." ("Born during the struggle"). Hence, the family lineage became known as "Khon.

Historically, tradition traces the 'Khon line back to 'Khon Dpal-po-che', one of the ministers of the eighth century king, Khrisrong lde-brtsa. The 'Khon lineage can be traced down to Lkon-mchog rgyal-po, who built a monastery at the place called Sa-sky-a, from which the sect later derived its name. His son Sa-ch'en Kun-dga' snying-po is credited with reforming his father's Rgying-ma teachings and establishing the organized Sa-sky-a-pa sect. Sa-ch'en's son was Dpal-ch'en 'od-po who had two sons: one was the Great Sa-sky-a Pandita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan; the other Zangs-tsha bsdod-nams rgyal-mtshan.

Zangs-tsha's son, Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan, at the age of ten, accompanied

An English translation of the Rnam-thar with critical notes by the author is under publication. Author's introduction to the English translation is published here in the form of an article.
Sa-skya Pandita to the court of the Mongol Khan and there won favor and earned the name of *Phags-pa* ("Noble One").

**SAKYA—MONGOLS**

Like Alexander the Great, the Great Mongol chief, Genghis Khan threatened the doorsteps of all his neighbors. Tibet learned of his presence, but was spared raids at first owing to her formidable natural barriers. In the time of Gadan, the Mongols first entered Tibet proper (1259), plundering Rwa-sgreng and Rgyal Lha-khang, and leaving the Tibetans in great shock, now well aware of their danger.

It was in the midst of this turmoil that Sa-skya Pandita was invited to the camp of Gadan, Khan of the Kokonor region, at the suggestion of two of his generals. There is no evidence as to the nature of this invitation nor to the way in which it was accepted; however most Tibetan scholars hold the view that Sa-skya Pandita willingly accepted the invitation in the hope that his visit would bear fruit both in political and religious affairs.

On the occasion of this visit, Sakya Pandita took with him his two nephews, Bde-gros rgyal-mtshan and Phya-na-erd-je, aged ten and sixteen respectively. According to Professor Tucci1 however, the two nephews may have been taken as hostages to the Mongol camp as much as two years before the actual meeting between Gadan and Sa-skya Pandita. On the other hand, some Tibetan scholars believe that Sa-skya Pandita was already on his way to China, pausing frequently on the journey to deliver sermons and initiations in various places, and he therefore sent his young nephews on ahead of him. The reason for their accompanying him in the first place seems to be that the boys had lost their parents and Sa-skya Pandita had assumed their guardianship.

The nephew *Phags-pa* in winning the favor of Godon Khan, proved to be a great asset to his uncle. And when Sa-skya Pandita passed away in 1251 at the age of seventy, he handed his spiritual authority on to *Phags-pa*. When Godan died, *Phags-pa* won the favor of the young prince, Kublai. When Kublai became Khan, *Phags-pa* received the title of Imperial Preceptor (T∫-h∫h), along with the temporal and spiritual authority over Tibet as the Khan’s present for Buddhist initiations given him by *Phags-pa*. *Phags-pa* remained in China for 15 years, and when he returned to Sa-skya in 1265 he was received warmly and with great honor. The affairs of Tibet were conducted by a Chief Administrator (Dpon-chen) at Sa-skya, appointed by *Phags-pa* and approved by the Khan.

Two years later (1267), the Khan sent representatives requesting the return of *Phags-pa* to the Mongolian imperial court. At this time, following the pattern of Mongol administration, thirteen officials were appointed to govern Tibet.

In 1268, at the request of the Khan, *Phags-pa* created a square-style script which could be used for all the languages of the Mongols’ vast empire; and though short-lived as a functional system, the writing is still known today as *Phags-pa* Script.

*Phags-pa* left China for the last time in 1274, making a gradual journey to Tibet where he arrived at Sakya in 1276. He passed away in 1280 at the...
Two accounts relate that his was not a natural death, but that he had been poisoned by his personal servant (Gsiol-dpon). The servant, instigating against the Dpon-chen had written to the Khan in 'Phags-pa's name, charging the Dpon-chen with treason. The Khan sent an army to remedy the situation, at which the intriguer is reputed to have poisoned 'Phags-pa and then committed suicide. The Mongols, thinking 'Phags-pa had been murdered by the Dpon-chen, executed him. But it is said that the Dpon-chen pleaded his innocence and loyalty, and that as proof of his innocence his blood would be white at his execution. And so it was! The Khan, on hearing the full report, is said to have had his own commanders executed for not making a full and proper inquiry.

8. There are two known biographies of Chos-rgyal 'Phags-pa in Sa-skya sources. The first, a fairly detailed biography, is found in the Sa-sky-a-i cha'i sbyin-pa Rin-chen rin-po-che-lus. The first seven volumes of this seventeen-volume work contain ra-nur-thar of the lineages of Sa-sky-a from the beginning to the present, and Volume Kha (known as Lam 'bras blo-ma byrgyu-pa 'nam-thar) has the 'Phags-pa biography composed by Sher-chen Ye-sher Rgyal-m Transmit. The second ra-nur-thar is found in the Sa-sky-a dbang-skabs chos-pa rin-chen bang-mdud composed by 'Jam-mgon A-myes chab's Kuns-dga' Bood-namg. There are a few other brief biographies in works like the Lam 'bras blo-ma byrgyu-pa 'tsar snang-ba by Blo-ma chen-pa Bood-nams rgyal-m transmit. These however are all by Sa-sky-a lamas and somewhat colored by the viewpoint of that order.

2. The 'Khrog lineage of which 'Phags-pa comes can be found in several Tibetan chronicles apart from those already mentioned, most of them composed by a Sa-sky-a lamas. It is interesting to note here the partiality of the writers, not so much in they explicit statements as in the space, and stress given to 'Phags-pa's achievements. The closer the writer's text is in friendly relations with Sa-sky-a, the more space and stress placed on 'Phags-pa. Some Dge-lugs-pa authors (e.g., the Fifth Dalai Lama), give 'Phags-pa rather extensive treatment in their chronicles, Ksun-pa mkha'-pa Ye-shes-pal- 'byed gives a certain amount of information on 'Phags-pa in his Dge-lugs bstan bzhed. Blo-grang Tsho-pel gives fifteen pages of details of 'Phags-pa's life in the Nor gyi choo-phyung.

On the other hand most of the Bka'-rgyud-pa authors have all but ignored the Paton-Phient relationship (lom-gros) between the Mongol khan and the Sa-sky-a, e.g., Dpa'-bo byrgyu-ba phreng-ba's Cho'-byung mkhas-pa-i gsal-ba (1545-1563). Volume Kha, devotes only twelve lines to 'Phags-pa and his allowing freedom to the different sects in Tibet when he might have influenced the Khan to interdict all but the teachings of the Sa-sky-a-pa as Tibet's state religion.

The Cho'-byung of Padma Dkar-po has only a few lines on 'Phags-pa, with brief mention of the three gifts presented to him when he conferred initiation on the Mongol Khan.

Tshal-pa Kuns-dga' rdo-rje's Deb-ther has only three lines about 'Phags-pa.

7
The only Rneying-ma-pa zhon-tbyung (religious history) available is that of 8Ishad-jo.pa-der-sprul-sku Jigs-bral Ye-shes rdo-rje, which records exclusively the events and holy men of the Rneying-ma-pa sect, giving the briefest mention of 'Phags-pa and his relationship with the Mongols. According to Sde-gzhung sprul-sku, Kun-dga’ bbrang, there is nothing relevant to the history of the Khen and 'Phags-pa in the various other Rneying-ma-pa religious histories which he had seen in Tibet.

Professor G. Tucci elaborates at some length in his Tibetan Painted Scrolls on the Tibet-Mongol relationship during the time of 'Phags-pa.

Tuppon Shabha, in his Tibet A Political History, has a quite comprehensive study of 'Phags-pa, using as his sources the Gdong-rab chen-po and the Fifth Dalai Lama’s Chronicle.

To the best of the present writer’s knowledge, the rnam-thar translated in this article is the only biography of 'Phags-pa composed by a person not of the Sás-kyapa sect. Most of the material used in it seems to have been derived mainly from the Sás-kyapa’s Gdong-rab chen-po, as well as from the Fifth Dalai Lama’s Chronicle. The Gdong-rab chen-po devotes some forty-three folios to a question-and-answer discussion in the Dharma between 'Phags-pa and Rka'-gdam-pa dge-bshe Nam-srI-bsam-thub (‘nam-thub); however Dkon-mchog ‘Jigs-med dbang-po, by omitting this discussion, has presented the essential and important events of 'Phags-pa’s life in a precise yet comprehensive manner.

The full title of this book is Rje-btsan thams-cad mkhyen-pa Leng-skyi Rol-pa’s rdo-rje’s ‘Khreng-rab kyi phlong-ba gtim-du bshad-pa rgyo-mthar dud-pa’s lIong-stong.

The original syllograph was composed and printed at Bkra-sbI-shis’khyil (A’mode), and consists of 120 folios and a title page. Naxang Gelek Dru-sno has made photocopies of the original and published them in a book under the title of The Collected Works of Dkon-mchog ‘Jigs-med-dbang-pan, Volume II. (Gadan Sung-rab Mi-snyan Gyumpel Series, Volume 22, New Delhi, 1971). The biography (rnam-thar) of Cho-rgyal ‘Phags-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan is contained in a series of abridged biographies of the predecessors of Rol-pa’s rdo-rje (1717-1780) in the Leng-skyi incarnation lineage.

The author, the second Jam-dbyangs bshad-pa Dkon-mchog ‘Jigs-med dbang-po, made a condensed book of all the available biographies of the lives of the Leng-skyi incarnation at the request of Em-mchI Cho-rje Blo-bzang Rnam-rgyal. The book is divided into fourteen chapters of biographies:

1. Dgra-krom-pa Tsun-dA
2. Slob-dpon Shkya-bde-bo-gnyen (Shkyamitra)
3. Grol-thob Darpa Awar
4. Lcchen Kaa-ba Dpal-brungs
5. Cha-rgye Sgro-phug-pa (1674-1134)
6. Grub-dbang SrI-rI-pa
7. Glang-nI-thang-pa Rdo-rje-seng (1054-1123)
9. Bla-ma Dam-pa Bod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1312-1375)
This biography along with the others in the collection is considered to be among the finest in its genre for Tibetan style. The author, Dkon-mchog ’Jigs-med dbang-po, is well known for his literary ability, and the very fact that he was requested to compose the ram-thar of Pan-chen Rin-po-che, from among thousands of very learned lamas and dge-bshes of Ser-’Bras-Dga’-sum attests to his being considered one of the outstanding Dga’-’dkan-pa66 lamas of his time.

The author of this abridged ram-thar is held in the highest esteem by all learned Tibetan scholars as one of the finest writers in Tibetan literature. According to Sde-gshung, ’phreul-sku Klu-dga’-bla-ragru, the importance of this author is attested by his being the chief source of information for most scholars of Ser-’Bras-Dga’-sum in their own compositions. Thus it is only fitting to glance briefly at the life of the well-respected saint, Dkon-mchog ’Jigs-med-dbang-po.

He was born to Ngag-dbang ram-rgyal at a small place in Lang-’jan district of Jh-kong, the present Jang-gyen hosian of Ch’ing-lai province67. He was born in the Earth-Monkey year (1728) amidst very auspicious signs. When he was only a few weeks old, he clapped his hands and made other gestures of the religious debate. His parents fearing that he was possessed of evil spirits, consulted many saintly lamas and asked their opinion. They were told that he was an incarnation of a high lama. When the child learned to speak, he recounted his past lives very vividly. His mother and his uncle had vision in which they were told that he was the incarnation of Jam-dbyangs Ral-sa-pa of Bla-brang Bka’-shis-khyi68. When he was six years old he received his first monastic ordination.

When news of this child was circulated, a delegation from Bka’-shis-khyi came to interview him, taking the belongings of the previous incarnation. The boy passed all the tests, even recognising the treasures of the previous lama. However, due to internal disagreements within the bla-brang (estate), the boy was not enthroned as abbot until the age of sixteen. The final decision was made only after consulting a number of oracles, including the State Oracle (Gnas-chung cho-skyong).

Having been formally recognised, he then began his spiritual training and studies. He was a very diligent and serious student, and one of his foremost teachers. Dge-bshes Ngag-dbang Brtan-gzin69, remarked that if a person wanted a son, he should want someone like this. At the age of 22, he received the final monastic ordination (dge-sdang) from Lang-skya Rol-pa (rdo-rje)70.

At the age of 25 (in 1752), having completed his training in the five sciences71, he went to Lhasa on pilgrimage. There he was fortunate in being received by the 7th Dalai Lama Bka’-brang Rgya-mtsho72 and the 3rd Pan-chen Dpa’-’dan Ye-shey73 who had come to Lhasa from Bka’-shis-blu}-po74 to receive initiations from the Dalai Lama. Dkon-mchog ’Jigs-med Dbang-po was privileged to receive the same teachings and initiations along
with the Panchen Lama. He made great offerings and presents to all the monasteries, and remained in Lhasa until he was 32 years old (1739). While in central Tibet, he entered Sgo-rgung college (gra-tshang) of 3rai-slings monastery and received instruction from Mkhann-chen Sanga-rgyas Rdo-rje. He completed his Dge-bshes degree at Na-tog.

When he returned to A-mdog he made great improvements at Bkra-shis 'khyi, setting up new regulations and establishing new institutions and buildings. The relationship between the people of the district and the monastery was excellent. He gave many teachings and explanations of the Dharma to hundreds of monks at his bla-brang.

Then he visited Mongolia and China, his main purpose being a pilgrimage to the Five-Peaks Mountain (ri-bo-ris-ling). The site of Er-li-dei nang-mhan (fu-fa Ch'an-shih Hu-ts'ak'u-ta) was conferred on him by the Ch'ien-lung Emperor.

When the Panchen Lama was on his way to China, Dkon-mchog 'jigs-med dbang-po was of great service to him, especially for vaccinating him and his entire company against smallpox. And at Zhing Sku-bum, he arranged a banquet for the Grand Lama which included five hundred courses of delicacies—a display which seems to have been reported to the Emperor of China.

Among more than the thirty great masters from whom he received teaching and initiations, to mention a few were:

- the Seventh Dalai Lama Bskal-brang rgya-mtho;
- Panchen Dpal-IDan Ye-she;
- Lcang-skya rol-pa'i rdzod;
- Su-skya 'byed-chen Kun-dga' blo-gros;
- Dkon-mchog Byams-pa rin-poche;
- Klong-idol bla-ma Ngag-dbang blo-brang.

With such vast learning, Dkon-mchog 'jigs-med also attracted many students, some of whom became great scholars in Tibet:

- Sa-skya Khri-bo 'jam-mgon dbang-sdul snying-po.
- Klong-idol rin-poche.
- Gang-thang 'jam-pa'i dbyangs.
- Dkon-mchog 'byan-pa'i sgron-me.
- Thub'u mkhan-ko.
- Khri-nam-brang-mchog.
- A-skya yongs-'dzin; and others.

After completing many labors for the benefit of the Dharma, and composing eleven great works, he passed away at the age of sixty.

NOTES


3. 'Khon dpal-po-che is the earliest mentioned ancestor family and this is the earliest that the 'Khon name appears in Tibetan historical documents. Cf. Rgyu lded yig chung (f. 130b—134b); B.A., p. 615.

4. Sa-skya Paṇḍita Kun-dga’ rgyal-mtshan henceforth will be known as Sa-skya Paṇḍita, Chos-rje Paṇ-chen, or Sa-pa-pa.

5. The Mongol Khan referred to here is Godan. He was Khan, at that time, of the Kokonor region, Cf. Tucci (T.P.S.) p. 9.

6. This information is given by Professor Tucci in (T.P.S.) p. 9.

7. The two sources which relate the unnatural death of Chos-Rgyal 'Phags-pa are
   (i) Bod-kyi deb-thar dbyud kyi rgyal mo'i grol-bhams, also known as Bod-kyi deb-thar rtsed-ltan gzhon nu'i dge-'ston, by the Fifth Dalai Lama Nggag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtho, p. 130, Varanasi (1967).
   (ii) Rgyal-rabz ‘phrul-kyi lde-migs, also known as the Deb-thar dam-po'i deb-gsar-ma, by Bod-nams grags-pa, p. 13.

8. This book is also known as Gung-nang rin-po-che lam-bras kyi chos-thor khegpo-po. This 17 volume work was collected and edited by Jam-dbyangs blo-gter dbang-po, the abbot of ngor E-wang chos-ltas. The first volume contains biographies (mam-thar) of the various lam-bras lineage Lamas. The 10 remaining volumes contain teachings, initiations, rituals, sadhanas and instructions.

9. Sher-chen ye-shes rgyal-mtshan belonged to the family known as Sha-pa, of which the direct unbroken lineage is the present Klu-uding family, whose eldest son inherited the seat of the abbot of Ngor, (DTKNI); (SWG).

10. ‘Jam-mgon A-myos-zhab Kun-dga’ bood-nams rgyal-mtshan was a ‘Khon and a Sa-skya Kiri-chen. He was a monk, but had to give up his vows as his brothers passed away without any sons to continue the family name. See Glossary.

11. The first seven volumes of the Lam-bras (see note 9). Bla-ma dam-po Bod-mtams rgyal-mtshan is also a ‘Khon and Sa-skya Kiri-chen. See Glossary.

12. See translation note 7, section (1).


17. 'Tshad-pa Kun-dga’ rdz-sjye madza’ pa’i bhu-lam deb-ser or Deb-ser dmar-po.


19. See translation note 152.

20. Li’ lo-nag-rgo-pa mdzad-pa’i dgra-sta; ultris Ye-snes bstan-pa’i sgrom-me, (1717-1786). He had tremendous influence in Mongolian, where he revised the Bstan-pa’i dgra-sta (translated from Tibetan into Mongolian in 1749). He was very learned and his literary activity is unparalleled. See Biography of Lo-nag-skya Rol-pa’i dgra-sta by Phu-kwan Blo-bzang chos-khyi-nams (1737-1802).


22. See Dga’-茸-gnut-sun is the abbreviation for the three largest Dge-lugs-pa monasteries in Tibet. They are situated in the Lhasa region. Prior to the communist Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1950, the monastic population was estimated as follows:

Ser Se-ru, 5500 monks:
Dga’ Dga’-shad, 3300 monks


24. Blo-brang Bka’-bshis-khyil: the monastery was founded in A.D. 1708 by Kun-mkhyen Lam-dbyangs bshad-pa Rdo-rje ngag-dbang brtsun-'grus. For full account of this monastery, the incarnation and his history, see Rodel, pp. 29-47. See also TPS, p. 260.

25. The State Oracle (Gnas-chung Cho-skysyong) is the tutelary deity of the Dge-legs-pa sect, and is especially associated with Bka’-bshis-mens thug-pa, speaks through this oracle. Mediums are selected through (1) heredity, or (2) the spirit of the deity sometimes enter into a person and thus the person automatically becomes the medium. All such mediums are given good positions and held in high respect. The Gnas-chung medium holds the highest place because of the official rank of being the State Oracle and plays an important part in the recognition of the Dalai Lama, and in any other state affairs the final decision is always made with his consultation.


28. See translation note 155.

29. The Seventh Dalai Lama, Dkar-bshang dpal-mtsho (108-1577) was born at Li-thang in Khams, in the seventh month of the Ear-th-Mouse.
year (1708). Lha-bzang Khan on hearing of the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama sent a delegate to investigate; however, the boy was concealed and the parents were advised to take him to a safe place in the Kokonor region, where certain Mongol tribes offered him recognition and protection. The Manchus seeing an opportunity to extend their influence in Tibet, offered protection and the boy was taken to Shu-shun monastery in 1716 for education.

Then came the clash between the two Mongol tribes; Tshe-dbang sbyed-brtan, Duangar Mongols and the Qoshot-Mongols of Lha-bzang Khan in Tibet.

The Duangars wanted to bring the Seventh Dalai Lama to Lhasa but he was under Manchu protection. When the Kangxi Emperor heard of his recognition, he sent official confirmation with a seal of the Sixth Dalai Lama in 1720.

On the ninth month of the Iron-Mouse year, he was brought to Lhasa and embraced in the Potala. Then in the second month of the Iron-Sheep year (1753), the Seventh Dalai Lama assumed full spiritual and temporal powers over Tibet. For details see ‘Dad-pa’s snye-ma (A biography of the Seventh Dalai Lama) by Lhaang-skya Rol-pa’s rdo-rje. (Also see, Shaka-kha, p. 135-156).

30. The third Panchen Lama Dpal-ltan Ye-sher (1737-1780). Following the death of the Second Panchen Lama Blo bzang yeshes dpal-ltan-po in 1737, at the age of seventy-four, a reincarnation was found a year later at Brcha-shis-rje in Shangri. The boy was formally recognized by the Seventh Dalai Lama and named Dpal-ltan Ye-sher.

At the invitation of the Manchu Emperor, the Panchen Lama, with permission of the Dalai Lama, proceeded to China by the way of Mongolia in 1779, for the interest of Buddhist religion, in spite of the smallpox epidemic in China. He was warmly received at Jefol by the Ch‘ee-lung Emperor in 1780. They proceeded to Peking where the Panchen Lama was accorded a grandiose welcome. During his stay in China at the Yellow Palace (Huang Si), he skillfully influenced the Manchu court and reduced the amount of Manchu interference in Tibet. Unfortunately he did not live long enough to complete his diplomatic and spiritual mission. He contracted smallpox and died in Peking in November of 1780. His remains were returned to Brcha-shis-ltan-po and preserved in a mausoleum there.

31. Brcha-shis ltan-po is the large monastery of the Panchen Lama near Shigatse. It was built in 1447 by Dge-lugs-pa, a disciple of Trom-bka-pa. He is posthumously known as the first Dalai Lama, because that title was not originated until 1578. For detail on the monastery and its founder, see Bell, p. 161-166; Tuco (1775) p. 30, and B.A., p. 339.


ABBREVIATIONS

SA G. N. Roerich, Blue Annals of gZon-ldan.
Das S. Ch. Das *A Tibetan-English Dictionary.*

DTKN Personal communication: Sde-gzung sprul sku Kung da’bal-brang.

LP Personal communication: Bio-dzung Phun-tso Pha lung pa.

RD & Sn Richardson and Snellgrove, *A Cultural History of Tibet.*

Shakabpa W. D. Shakabpa, Tibet, *A Political History.*

Skt Sanskrit

Swg Personal communication: Zur-khang su-dbang-che mo Dbang-chen-dge-legs

TPS G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls.*


Wylie T. Y. Wylie, "The Geography of Tibet" according to the ’Dzam gling-rgyas-brhad."
ON ATISA'S ITINERARY IN TIBET
—MIRESHWAR PRASAD SINGH

I

According to Prof. Petech, Sum-pa-nkhan-po-Ye-ses-dral-byor, the Mongolian historiographer, completed his encyclopaedic work popularly known as "Dpag-bum-jon-bzan in A.D. 1746. The full title of the work is 'Phags-yul-rnga-nch'en-po-bod-dan-sog-yul-du-dam-pa'i-chos-byun-btha, Dpag-bum-jon-bzan-po-byan-bhe (i.e. the history of Buddhism in India, Tibet, China and Mongolia). The Re'u-mig, i.e. chronological table, forms part of the aforementioned work as edited by Dr. Lokesh Chandra from the collection of Dr. Raghuvira. Sum-pa was a prolific writer and hardly there is any subject which has been left from the domain of his writing. He wrote on history, grammar, mathematics, astrology, geography and almost all subjects concerning Buddhist religion. Sum-pa was born in Wood-Ape year (A.D. 1704) in the neighbourhood of dgon-lsh monastery of Amdo in upper Tibet. The monastery lies to the north east of Hsi-ning in the Ching-hai (Tsinghai or Koko Nor) province of China which is inhabited by Chinese, Tibetans and Mongouns. According to Karat Das, Sum-pa died at the age of 73 which should be A.D. 1776 according to Tibetan way of calculating time. Tibetologists, however, are not in agreement about the date of his death.

In the year 1746, Sum-pa describes the principal events of Tibet year by year beginning from A.D. 1027 to A.D. 1746. He has divided the whole chronology according to Tibetan system into 12 cycles of 60 years each. An English translation of the portion of Re'u-mig containing the chronology and chronicle of Atisa's visit to Tibet and his work there is given below.

II

FIRST CYCLE

Fire-Hare
(A.D. 1027)

Kolyamsantra Po-to-ba-rin-chhen-gsal was born. The twelfth Kukhgyu Rigs-igden-bslu-gthins-pa-yi-ma sat on the throne of Sambhala. Gyi-lo-tshatsas (lo-tsa-ba) translated Kaldarwa into Tibetan language. Since Buddha attained Nirvana in the Fire-Hare year, this was the 361st year of Asho'dagri. According to some historians who believe that Buddha passed away in the year Iron-Dragon, this was the 496th year of Asho'dagri.

Earth-Dragon
(A.D. 1028)

According to some Gyi-lo translated the great commentary of Kaldarwa into Tibetan in th. year.

Earth-Serpent
(A.D. 1029)

Se-ston-kun-rigs, the spiritual teacher of the sister of Ma-chig-sha-ma-kham-drith and disciple of Brol-mi-lo-tsatsa was born.
Phu-chhang-ba-phon-geyan was born. According to Deb Ston-po²⁹ (Blue Annals), Po-lo-ba was also born during the year but the year Fire-Hare is certain³⁰.

Thod-lad-pa-in-chhen-shhil-po, the pupil of Sda-skna-ba was born.

Sda-skna-ba-tsel-sku-rkhrin-'bar was born. Deb Ston-po (Blue Annals), however mentions that he was born in Earth-Tiger year.

Kho-dkon-mchog-trsal-po of Sa-skyä was born.

Blu-chhen-po-dgo-sa-pa-tsh-gal passed away from this world.

Nyog-chhos-rdo-rje, the pupil of Mar-pa was born.

According to astrology and travel accounts of Jo-bo (Atisha)³⁰, he reached mNa-'ri³¹.

Thos-pa-dga' (Mi-la-ras-pa) was born. Ba-ri-lo-tsa-rin-grags was born³². The monastery of Sha-lo³³ was founded. According to written travel accounts, Atisha left Nepal. Ni-rro-par-chhen died³⁴.

According to some travel books Jo-bo (Atisha) reached Nepal.

Pe-sa-yi-'bar, the principal disciple of dGonpa-pa³⁵ was born. Myug-rum-pa-mi-rag-long-brtse-brus-'bar was born. Atisha reached Mda'-ris.

Brog-mi-lo-tshas founded the monastery of Myug-nag³⁶.

Ma-lo-tsha-Chhos-'bar, a native of La-Stod and famous as the mate-partner of Ma-chig-skna-ma was born³⁷. Brom paid his respects to Atisha.

Nil
Fire-Dog
(A.D. 1046)

rGyal-ston of rGyal was born. Zhaggrags-pa, son of iche-dal-sgo-pa was born. Chag-khi-khad-bang met Atisa.

Earth-Mouse
(A.D. 1048)

Nil

Eath-Ox
(A.D. 1049)

Ma-dro-pa founded L-dgon.29

Iron-Tiger
(A.D. 1050)

gNa-eho-ba' but was born. From gave ouch presents to Atisa.

Iron-Sheep
(A.D. 1051)

mkhas-grub thinks that Atisa wrote his work on Buddhism chronology during the year and hence according to him Atisa was born in Water-Horse year.30

Water-Dragon
(A.D. 1052)

mDud-mtha'-bodrig ('Drel-mtha'-bodrig) the pupil of Khams-pa-lhun-pa, Lab-sgron, Yu-mo and sgra-sgo- m 'Nin-ma sent of later spread of Buddhism in Tibet was born.31

Water-Serpent
(A.D. 1053)

Was sDud-po-sneubs-Chhos 'bar born?

Wood-Horse
(A.D. 1054)

gLa-bri-lab-pa-ru-lo-je-sesge, the disciple of Po-po-ba was born. bla-mu-pun, the pupil of Roh-Zon-lo-tsats la-bho-ba, was born. Atisa attained Parinirvāṇa.

III

Notes


2. A complete list of his works can be found in dPags-pa-ba, ed. and trans. Loken Chandra, Part III.

3. S. C. Das incorrectly calculates Wood-Age year as equivalent to A.D. 1702 (JASB, 1889, I, P. 37). For correct Christian equivalents of Tibetan years, see “Table of Tibetan Sexagenary Cycle” Journals Asiatica, 1913, Part 1, p. 666-67.

4. dPags-pa-ba, ed. and trans. Preface, p. XIL.

5. JASB, 1889, I, p. 39.

6. For example, S. Bira has given A. D. 1786 as the year of his death.

17
(Aca. Orientalia, XVII, Part I, p. 77; Cf. Samtan G. Karmay, 
The Treasury of Good Sayings: A Tibetan History of Duston (London: 
1977), p. 197 where he seems to doubt that Sum-pa died in A.D. 
1776 as according to the colophon of a work composed by Sum-pa, 
it is mentioned that he composed the work in A.D. 1786.
7. We have used the Tibetan text of Rja-wa-mig as contained in \textit{dpags-
bstan-ljon-brtan} edited by Dr. Lokesh Chandra.
9. Here Sum-pa is obviously referring to Duston (See E. Obermiller, 
\textit{long-ba-wi-chos-dan-chos}- 
\textit{sumo-ba-yi-thar-byen-ba} (Deb-ther-mot-po or the Blue Annals,
the Singes of the Doctrine and Preachers in the land of Tibet.
It was composed by \textit{Gos-los-tsa-ba-tsul-ma-pal}
(A.D. 1392—A.D. 1448). It is generally referred to by its abbreviat-
ed title Deb-ston or Blue Annals (BA, I, Intro., i).
11. See BA, I, pp. 263 according to which Po-to-ba was born in Iron-
Sheep year (A.D. 1031) and died at the age of 75 in the year Wood-
Bird (A.D. 1103).
12. Attila is popularly known in Tibet by the name of Jo-bo or Jo-bo-rje 
(literally the Arya or the noble red).
13. The year of Attila’s reaching \textit{mNa}-ri does not seem to be correct 
for Sum-pa himself later states that he reached \textit{mNa}-ri in \textit{Water-
Horse} year i.e. A.D. 1042. \textit{Gos-lo-tsa-ba} also holds that Attila 
reached \textit{mNa}-ri in \textit{Water-Horse} year i.e. A.D. 1042 (BA, I, p. 247; 
307-11 \textit{mNa}-ri is identical with \textit{mNa}-on which is the westernmost 
province of Tibet, also known as Ngari thorsum, containing mainly 
of the districts of Parang Shanglung and Man-yul (TED, p. 362.
Cf. TEJ, p. 132).
14. Thos-pa-dga’ (meaning delightful to hear) was the name given to 
\textit{Mia-la-rna-pa} at the time of his birth by his father. Sum-pa seems 
to have borrowed the date from \textit{Gos-lo-tsa-ba} who also assigns 
his death to Water-Horse year (A.D. 1123) and says that he died at 
the age of 84. \textit{Gos-lo-tsa-ba} has arrived at these dates after making 
firm calculations (BA, I, pp. 427-436). In another source, the 
states of his birth and death are given as Water-Dragon year (A.D. 
1082) and Water-Horse year (A.D. 1135) respectively. This source, 
however, also agrees that he died at the age of 84 (W. Y. Evans-
15. The monastery of \textit{sha-ba} was, according to Duston, founded by 
Leh-te-sten-wa-rab-byun-gnas. There were four primary and six 
secondary sections here (Buston, II, p. 206). The place was a few 
miles south-west of Tashilhunpo, the seat of the famous historian, 
and chronicler Duston Rin-po-che (TED, p. 184).
16. Na-to-pan-chhen (i.e. Naropa) was born in A.D. 956 JBRs 1967, p. 125.

17. S. C. Das translates this passage: “Ye-des-bhar of Sneju swar, the eldest son of Dgun-pa was born”. He thus describes the name wrongly and translated the Tibetan word flat-chen to mean “oldest son” incorrectly here. The word means “principal disciple” (CT B4, II, p. 311).

18. CT B4, I, p. 207.

19. S. C. Das (JASB, 1889, p. 41), however, translates the crucial text as follows: “Mc-chig sha-ma’s husband was born. Rhma Lo-chha Chhos-ba of La-sled was born.” But in our opinion the text refers to only one person named Rhma-lo-tsha-Chhos-ba who was not the husband of Mc-chig-Sha-ma but her male partner. Mc-chig-Sha-ma was married at the age of 14 but being disgusted with her marriage, she ingred insanity and separated from her husband (B4, I, p. 221). Rhma-lo-tsha-ba accepted Mc-chig-sha-ma as his Mogri, i.e. female partner (B4, II, p. 219) after she left her husband.

20. Identical with the monastery of Ro-don which lies on the route from Pum-tsong-giki to Bka-las-bshu-po (MBHGC, p. 1566; CT Tsug, TPS, p. 200) wherein Tsug-po places Pothon i.e. same as Ro-don on the road between Lha-bse and Bka-las-bshu-po i.e. Tashilhunpo in the neighborhood of Zahn-ge-don.

21. Here S. C. Das does not give the complete translation of the passage. He simply mentions “Achis wrote his work on the Buddhist Chronology” (JASB, 1889, p. 41). Water-Horse year, the year of Achi’s birth given here, is equivalent to A.D. 982 (vide M.P. Pelliot, “Table of Tibetan Sceunmary cycle”. Journal Asiatique, 1913, part I, pp. 666-67).

22. S. C. Das translates the whole passage incorrectly (JASB, 1889, p. 41); (CT B4, I, pp. 175-189 wherein names of the teachers of Dharmas-bohti were given.


Abbreviations

JASB — Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
JBRs — The Journal of Bihar Research Society, Patna.
TPS — Tibetan Painted Scrolls by S. Tsug.
RINCHEN TERZOD

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INDIA AND TIBET

—Geographical Considerations—

—NIRMAL C. SINHA

I

No two scholars or no two explorers would agree about the precise territorial limits of Tibet. This would be as much true in 1900-07 when both Britain and Russia were determined to keep the other power out of Tibet as of 1951-54 when China finally incorporated Tibet into the fold of the Great Han Motherland and made considerable changes in the eastern and northern parts of what was once Tibet. Besides no definition of Tibet could be satisfactory both for the anthropologist and the philologist.

For Tibet in the first half of this century a British military report of 1910 may be quoted: "Tibet lies in the heart of the Asiatic continent, and extends, roughly from the 79th to the 103rd degree of east longitude, and from the 28th to the 37th degree of north latitude. It is bounded on the north and east by the Chinese provinces of Turkistan, Mongolia, Kansu, Shu-chuan, and Yunnan; and on the south and west by the British territories or dependencies of Assam, Bhutan, Sikim, Nepal, British Garhwal, Tehri Garhwal, Bashahr, Kangra, and Kashmir. It will thus be seen that Great Britain and China are the only two countries whose territories are contiguous with those of Tibet."

"The actual boundaries of Tibet, especially to the north and east, are ill-defined and frequently non-existent. It is therefore difficult to estimate the area of the country with any exactitude, but, including all the country south of the Ailsh Tagh and Nan Shan mountains, it may be taken as some 600,000 square miles, and may be said to approximate to the area of Eastern Bengal and Assam, Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjab, and Bombay, put together". [The Indian provinces named here were as in 1913.]

In a well-known Tibetan geographical work composed in 1820 by a Mongol scholar, Bla-ma Btsan-po, occurs the following description of Tibet.

"Fifteering roughly north and north east of the country of India or bordering on the north from Bhangla-la is the country of Tibet...... The country of Tibet is the region of himavat which is the land converted by Avadhitesvara. That country (himavat) is much higher than the other surrounding countries. It is a region, where both in summer and winter, the heat and cold are moderate, and the fear of famine, beasts of pray, poisonous serpents, poisonous insects, heat and cold are not great.

"(Besides) the snow-mountains and other mountains there are great lakes of clear cool sparkling water in many sections of the country. And various rivers and tributaries, which possess the eight qualities of water......"

This article presents the author’s lecture at Calcutta University on 30th July 1977.
A synopsis of the author’s three lectures entitled “India and Tibet—a study in inter-dependence” is appended at the end.
"There are a great many forests, grassy regions, and alpine meadows there, and although the arable fields and summer pastures are not large in size, there are no desert plains or saline regions".

Several points in the above description may be noticed. Tibet is located as India's neighbour; India as the Land of Enlightenment is not only the most coveted neighbour but forms also Tibet's high way to the Mahasiddhi. Bodhgaya Avalokitesvara is, in Tibetan legend, credited with having be-gotten the man in Tibet, and also credited with converting Tibet into Dharmas through incarnations beginning with King Songtsen Gampo. Later when the Tibetan monarchy collapsed incarnations of Avalokitesvara came to rule Tibet; these incarnations are the Dalai Lamas of Tibet.

The references to temperate climate, grassy regions, arable fields and absence of famine do reflect facets of a highland with sparse population, and significantly enough there is little reference to mines and minerals, which were not unknown. Besides for a Mongolian, with experience of cold in Mongolia and north China and of heat in north India, climate of Tibet was an ideal one. More important than mines and minerals were the food crops: barley, wheat, buckwheat, maize, millet, oats, peas and even rice. Snow mountains, great lakes and mighty rivers indeed made Tibet a happy land. An ancient hymn describes Tibet as "The centre of snow mountains; the source of great rivers; a lofty country and a pure land".

II

As the source of great rivers, Tibet, more than any other country, has shaped the history of Asia; it will be fair to describe both India and China as gifts par excellence of the rivers of Tibet. Appropriately much of this paper on 'Geographical Considerations' may be devoted to the rivers of Tibet. These are: the Indus, the Sutlej, the Gogra or Karnali—an affluent of the Ganges, the Tsang-po or Brahmaputra, the Nang Ho or Yellow River, the Yangtse Kiang, the Mekong and the Salwen. If the Himalayan and Trans-Himalayan affluents of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, the eastern Tibetan affluents of the Yangtse Kiang, and the Indus rivers of the Kun Lun and the Chang Tsang are added, Tibet may be counted as the biggest and the most potent hydrographic entity in Asia. The major rivers may be described here.

In Tibetan imagery, built upon ancient Buddhist lore, the major rivers of Tibet are those that originated in the Kailas-Mansarover area and flowed over the Himalayas through the Aryabrahami into the high areas. Traditionally four rivers of India are thus associated with snow cliffs or glacial cones which once looked like animal heads from distance. There are several versions of these 'animal heads' and the streams running out of the 'animal mouths'. The Lhassa version may be presented here. The Tashk Khabah (Falls from the Horse's Mouth) flows eastward, joins the Kyishu River south of Lhasa—and ultimately becomes the Brahmaputra in Assam and Bengal. The Langche Khabah (Falls from the Elephant's Mouth) flows southward to become the Sutlej in the Punjab. The Maaycha Khabah (Falls from the Peacock's Mouth) flows westward and becomes the holy Gang when it reaches Haridwar. The Songye Khabah (Falls from the Lion's Mouth) flows west and becomes Sindhu in Kashmir, and its estuary is called Suth.
Tibetan theory about the Ganges originating in the catchments of Kailas-Manasarovar is not merely based on the Sanskrit abhidharma-kosa or earlier Pali records. Even as late as the second half of the eighteenth century Tibetan pilgrims and merchants are known to have seen the 'animal head' out of which streamed forth the Ganges. Cho-je Pa-trul and Lama Tsampo record from hearing as in ancient tradition as well as from knowledge of pilgrims and other on-the-spot observers. While orthodox Hindus, in both north and south India, would locate this lost source of the Ganges to a sub-terranean glacier connecting with Gangotri glacier, more modern minds would straightforwardly reject the story of the Tibetan origins of the Ganges as a myth. As one humbly claiming to know both the soil and the soul of Tibet, this author would only refer to the peculiarities of the Roof of the World. In Tibet mountains have been rising; depressions have been sinking; lakes, rivers and glaciers have been shifting—and all these even in the historic past within one millennium.

Glacial icefields on the south of the Kailas Mountains are known to have changed very much in dimensions and directions; the great swamp near Kasa in the mid-17th century provides today the hard landing ground for the heaviest jets. It is thus no wonder that the ancient source of the Ganges is lost today due to diverse and simultaneous processes of dessication, erosion, winds and tectonics.

Under compulsion of events the Hindu pilgrims for Jumlamukhi had to set up a temple in Kangra; likewise a Mount Kailas and a Lake Manas had to be found on the southern slopes of the Himalayas; Sakaratthaya is known to have sanctified the Bodhimath Temple in place of that near Tholing on the northern slopes of the Himalayas. So when a relentless Nature dried up or buried the first fountain head, the Hindus found the Gangotri as equally hazardous spot for pilgrimage.

It is relevant to point out that unlike Sindhu, Satadru and Brahmaputra, the form Ganga is not of pure or true Indian origin. The word is not known in Vedic period and modern scholars have justifiably traced it to Tibetan-Burmese origin. In Tibetan language the river is celebrated as Ganga, and it is derived from terms Gangri (snow mountain) and Bumdo (Daughter).

That perhaps is the cause in favour of Ganga's Tibetan origins.

A major river, in Tibetan tradition, is not necessarily a mighty river as understood in modern terms. What makes a river major in Tibet is its source and the sacred fountain head for major rivers is Kailas-Manasarovar. Thus in ancient times when the Guss and the Sita rivers—or their principal affluents—streamed out of the Kailas range, these came to be ranked as major rivers. The rivers, Hwang Ho and Yangtze Kiang, Mekong and Salween, rising in the eastern highlands were no doubt as sacred as any river in Tibet but did not attain the high sanctity of rivers like the Ganges, the Sindhu or the Brahmaputra.

As if annoyed with this treatment, the mighty rivers—Hwang Ho, Yangtze Kiang, Mekong and Salween—are pushing back their sources ever further westward and this process has been noticed by the Tibetans and Sibiu elements in eastern Tibet during the last one hundred years or a little more.

In India—till the neighbours on the west and the east claimed share
over the waters of the Sindhu, the Ganga and the Brahmaputra—there was no interest in the origins of the rivers; in China from the time of Emperor Chien Lung a systematic probe into the headwaters of the Hwang Ho and Yangtse Kiang has been carried out on a national scale. The Han conquest pressured in eastern Tibet, both in the north and south, has been a movement of rice-eating population crowding along the river banks. Thus by the second quarter of the twentieth century the Kansu region, where the present Dalai Lama was born (1933), was a Han dominated area where the only language taught in the schools was Chinese.

With the events of 1950-51 when the People’s Republic of China completed the occupation of the entire highlands stretching from 105° degree to 79° degree east longitude, Chinese scientists made a thorough probe into the geography of what they called the Tibet Region of China and arrived at the following conclusions.

In the course of the centuries the immense energy of the rivers in Tibet has gone to waste. Only in a few places have the Tibetans adapted it for the turning of millstones powered by water wheels. Possessing huge reserves of power, the Tibetan rivers in the very near future, as the economy is developed in the Chinese People’s Republic, including development in Tibet itself, can be used for the production of electric power. A scientific expedition conducting research in Tibet in 1951-53 searched out and estimated the available reserves of hydro-electric power. The Tsangpo attracted the special attention of the researchers, being in the basin of this river that the economic life of Tibet is concentrated. According to preliminary calculations, the Tsangpo in its middle and lower course can produce 62 million kilowatt hours of electric power. The best prospects of the Tsangpo are two sectors where the river flows in narrow and where it carries large volumes of water and has its maximum energy. The first sector—Yarchey—situated somewhat to the west of the city of Chulul (Tsyyuhsu). The discharge of water at low water is here equal to 57.5 cubic meters per second. For a distance of 20 kilometers the slope of the river is almost 90 meters. The Tsangpo possesses still greater power: on average the discharge is 130 cubic meters per second and the slope is a distance of 48 kilometers is 200 meters. Above these sectors are situated broad sections of valley which can be utilized perfectly as natural reservoirs. Further to the east at the bend of the Tsangpo (the Bom Region) conditions for the construction of a hydro-electric station are still more favorable since the climate becomes moister, more moderate and warmer, the velocity of flow and the level of the water in the river become more stable. For the development of electric power in Tibet the upper courses of the Salween, Mekong and Yangtse Rivers will also take on significance. They are separated by narrow water divides where there are eight suitable sites, which together with one tributary, the Botby-Tsanzam, possess according to preliminary data, a total complex of power of 1,070,460 horsepower. Three sites have a power potential between 30,000–50,000 horsepower, three between 70,000–100,000 horsepower, one—130,000 horsepower, one 360,000 horsepower and the Botby-Tsanzam has 15 suitable sites with a total power of 120,000 horsepower.

The above estimate represents the minimum expectations as the development projects and river training projects during the last twenty years have yielded further potentials. The point for interest in any discussion about
"India and Tibet" is simply this: if the course of Tsangpo (as Brahmaputra is called in Tibet), particularly through the sharp bends and steep cascades in Kongbo, is in the hands of scientists and technologists hostile to India the prospects for India will be indeed gloomy.

III

A grateful imagination of the ancient peoples in the Indo-Gangetic plains had fixed the fountain head of all the gifts of good living at Mount Sumeru in far north. Chinese Buddhist cosmography would locate Mount Sumeru somewhere along the Kun Lun Mountains. Tibetan tradition would make a more precise identification viz Mount Kailas. Scholars and scientists of modern India should wake up to the historical significance of the mythical mountain.

Scholars and scientists of modern India should also note with gratitude that while, in the medieval times and till the British conquest, our intelligentsia had but vague notions of Indianhood or Indianness, Tibetan intelligentsia— monks and scholars—merchants and officials—had a firm sense of India as a great country and as one country. And this was shared by even the illiterate peasants and nomads.

Two countries loomed large in the imagination of all Tibetans. These were China and India, both great in extent, width or size: 3500 or 3500. China was designated Gyingag (gya-nag), that is, a great country where people dressed in black; India was designated Gyagar (gya-gar), that is, a great country where people dressed in white and where people’s food was mostly white, that is, rice, sugar and vegetarian dishes.

An homonym description for India was Pasyag (phags-ba), that is, Aryadesha, Noble Land or Land of Enlightenment. Another description, Phaglung (phags-khrungs) or Restplace of the Holy Ones stretches this Land of Enlightenment much beyond Lumbini, Bodhgaya, Varanasi and Kusinagara and covers the entire sub-continent from Kashmir to Kanchipuram and from Gandhara to Kamarpura.

For Buddhists and Bodhisattvas had blessed all parts of Javadvipa. Budha Sakyamuni was born in Kapilavastu; Asoka was born in Magadha, Kanishka ruled in Kashmir and Punjab; Nagarjuna came from Andhra Pradesh; Aryadeva came from Sindhala; Asanga and Vasubandhu were translators of Purushapura, Dignaga was from Kanchipuram; Dharmakirti was born in Tirimallapura; Guru Padmasambhava, born in Buvastu had visited the Kamarpura Lohit regions; the first monastery of Tibet, Semye or Achintya, was named after the Ajahnia in Mahakashira. These and hundreds other facts, a modern Indian would learn in the monasteries of Tibet in this author did two decades ago. It was also learned that Gyagar Key (gya-gar-skad) or the Language of India was Sanskrit.

Earthquakes are frequent in Tibet and Tibetans live with earthquakes but would associate unusual occurrences with tragedies at home. An intense earthquake occurred in Lhasa on 13 August 1947; no less than 40 individual shocks were heard and houses rocked and rocked. That was Tibet’s protest against the disruption of the age-old unity of the Land of Enlightenment,
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INDIA AND TIBET

—A STUDY IN INTERDEPENDENCE—

SYNOPSIS

The theme will be presented in three lectures under the captions: (1) India and Tibet—Geographical Considerations; (2) India and Tibet—Historical Considerations; and (3) India and Tibet—Material Considerations.

The first lecture presents the theme of India and Tibet being a geographical unit, a unit of physical interdependence; India being more at the receiving end than Tibet. The second lecture presents the fact of India and Tibet in the past being in the same world of cultural, moral and spiritual values; Tibet being more at the receiving end than India. The third and concluding lecture contends that neither India nor Tibet could afford to have a hostile, indifferent or non-co-operation neighbour. Both for economic considerations and security reasons, Tibet and India have to cultivate active mutual aid in the race for survival.

26
The expressions India and Tibet in these three lectures would generally refer to the two geographical entities as known till the middle of this century. For India the terminal date is 1947 and for Tibet the terminal date is 1951. India and Tibet are, in these lectures, by and large, terms of human and cultural geography and either expression (India or Tibet) stands more for the soul of a people than for the soil of a country. The three lectures in totality, however, trace the inter-relationship between the matter and the spirit.

The pioneer scholars and leading authorities whose works are being drawn upon are listed at the end of each lecture. Specific and detailed references to their works and publications are not made for the simple reason that the author has weighed fully the data provided by these pioneers and authorities with his own findings and therefore this author takes full responsibility for the facts stated and the opinions expressed in these three lectures. This responsibility is entirely personal or individual on the part of this author and no office or institution with which this author is or was ever connected should in any way be associated with the facts and opinions expressed in these lectures. NCS 1977
NOTES & TOPICS

IN MEMORIAM

Ven Rigzin Lharam whose exquisite workmanship decorates the premises of the Sákîm Research Institute of Tibetology passed away in April last. Mr. Mooshchand Pradhan, a Founder Member of this Institute, passed away in May last. Obituary notices will be published in the next number of this Bulletin.

Professor Nalinaksha Dutt passed away in November 1973. It is regretted that no notice of this was made in the Bulletin. A notice is made now.

PROFESSORNALINAKSHA DUTT

Born on 4 December, 1893 Nalinaksha Dutt passed away on 27 November, 1973, that is, a week prior to his 80th birth anniversary. This was a life full of years and full of honours.

As an undergraduate student (Chittagong College and Presidency College, Bengal) young Nalinaksha Dutt had changed his interest from Mathematics and Physics, to Pali and Sanskrit and when he graduated M.A. with a First Class. First his talents were noticed by educators like Sir Autosh Mukerjee and specialist scholars like Mahamahopadhyaya Satish Chandra Vidyabhusan. Nalinaksha Dutt had taken a post in Jadavpur College, Rangoon for teaching Pali and Sanskrit there. Autosh Mukerjee persuaded him to return to Calcutta University and ordered relaxation of the Lecturer's routine to enable Dutt to pursue his studies in Buddhism. Dutt, now introduced to Satish Chandra Das and Kazi Dawa Sanders, delved deeper into Sanskrit Budhism since most of the Sanskrit Buddhist literature could be read in Tibetan translation only.

In appreciation of Dutt's researches in both the Schools of Buddhism, Calcutta University awarded him the Frenchch Roychand Scholarship and the Doctor's degree. When Dutt sought admission to London School of Oriental Studies for D. Litt.—without the preliminary Ph.D.—he was readily admitted. The strict and honest British Orientalists also admitted that at the moment there was no British scholar equally wellread in both Pali and Sanskrit Buddhism and nominated the Belgian scholar Professor Louis de la Ville Pousin to be Dutt's guide. Dutt had to reside in Brussels for a good part of his time to sit with La Ville Pousin. A major part of Dutt's dissertation for D. Litt. (London) came out in 1930 as Aspects of Mahayana Buddhism and its Relation to Hinayana. This was a monumental work in the sense that the book set right the record of split in Buddhism—in both historical and philosophical sequence.

28
In preparing this book, Aspects of Mahayana Buddhism, Dutt had to
defend his own readings and conclusions before a good number of Western
scholars: R. L. Turner, L. D. Barnett, E. D. Ross, E. J. Thomas, Max Walleser,
La Vallee Pesant and Th. Schoensteyn. The last two, the greatest Western
Buddhist scholars of the day, unreservedly admitted that Nalinaksha Dutt
had rectified many of the Western notions about Eastern concepts and that they
had profited from the debates with Dutt.

Nalinaksha Dutt, long before he held the Professorship at Calcutta
University, was known as the leading Indian scholar in Buddhism. Among
Dutt’s later publications were The Gilgit Manuscripts (1939-9), Pulacavatthu
Prasangapramid (1934) and Saddharma Pundarika (1952). The value of these
works is well-known to students and scholars of Buddhism. A note about
The Gilgit Manuscripts may be made here. When Western scholars recom-
mented by Sir Aurel Stein were pressing on the Kashmiri Darbar for decipher-
ing and editing the Manuscripts, the Dewan of Kashmir (Sir Gopalaswamy
Aiyar) located Nalinaksha Dutt as the most competent for the assignment.

Dutt held many offices with distinction. He was a Fellow of the Asiatic
Society, was its Vice-President for several terms and was its President for a
term. He was Senior Vice-President of the Mahabodhi Society for many
years. He was Vice-President of this Institute from 1919 till 1973.

The Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology owes much to Professor
Nalinaksha Dutt. He was not only the principal adviser and guide about
our publications, he was an active contributor to Bulletin of Tibetology. While
he was in MP (Baiya Sahib) he most warmly lent his support to our applica-
tions to the Government of India for grants. He is known to have spoken to
the then Prime Minister (Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru) and the then Education
Minister (Professor Hunayun Kabir) recommending our research and pub-
lication programmes.

I had known him first while a student at Calcutta University and later
more intimately when I took up studies on Inner Asia and Northern Buddhism.
It was indeed a proud privilege to sit at the feet of Professor Nalinaksha Dutt
and read the story of Dharma in India and abroad.

NIRMAL C. SINHA
BOOK REVIEWS


Lt Col. L. A. Waddell is an Indian Medical Service who was already a specialist scholar in the language and religion of Tibet when he accompanied the British Expedition of 1903-4. He has made painstaking studies of Buddhism in Burma, Nepal and Himalayas and is not undeservedly reputed as an authority on Buddhism. His abilities as an antiquarian and linguist notwithstanding, Waddell's attitude to Buddhism is unsympathetic and to Tibetan Buddhism it was openly hostile. This hostility was sharpened when the Dalai Lama XIII and his Lamas refused the British entry into Tibet. The book which Waddell wrote on return from Tibet, Lhasa and its Mysteries. has ever remained a book of denigration to Tibet: culture, religion, society and people—nothing could escape from the hostile pen of the ignoble scholar. The book today constitutes handy ammunition in the hands of Tibet's critics even though much of what Waddell wrote on religion and culture was later found by objective observers and sympathetic scholars as grossly misinformed and excessively exaggerated.

In the pages of the same book the author even unوتingingly contradicts himself. Ill-equipped Tibetan resistance against British army at Pitha and Gyantse evokes the author's unmitted praise.

"... The determination, resource, and bravery shown by the Tibetans in this fight was no surprise to those who had seen them at the attack on our post, and should dissuade, once for all, the absurd delusion that the Tibetans cannot fight. Their daring is superb. Although generally clumsily armed with antiquated weapons, they have some modern firearms and know how to use them. They have little to learn in the matter of fighting behind defences and taking advantage of cover, and they know how to charge. No finer feat of personal bravery could be conceived than the charge made by a party of 15 warriors, mounted on black mules with a party of 40 infantry, who burst out from the fort in a storm of bullets which saw them almost to a man, to carry aid to their comrades at Pitha, whom they thought too hardly pressed."

"The bravery of the Tibetans was now beyond dispute. Here they powerfully stood their ground when our sharps were bursting over them, and quickly returned shot after shot to their guns, for hours, notwithstanding that few of their shots carried far, whilst our shells were seen to be inflicting on them much loss. They have a good eye to positions, and are almost perfect at fighting behind defences, and would make excellent soldiers if trained and led by competent officers."

An enthusiastic to the author's anthem for Lamas is provided by his own record of his interview with the Regent, Gaden Ti Rimpoche.

30
“Talking of the religion of the country, he had heard, he said, of the interest I took in his creed. Then looking fixedly at me for a moment, he leaned forward across the table with a searching gaze, and asked slowly:—"Are you a Buddhist, or are you not?" I replied that I was not; but, as Christians, we had very much in common with the teachings of Buddha. He enquired eagerly: "Is Buddha mentioned in your Christian Scriptures?" to which I had to reply in the negative. But I said he would see how similar in many ways were the two creeds when I told him that the mainspring of Christ’s doctrine was "peace and goodwill to men", as was Buddha’s; that Christ had said, "Love your enemies, and do good as you will," "Love your enemies, and do good to those that hate you, and despitefully use you and persecute you," and that our Christian commandments were of exactly the same number as Buddha’s decadogue, and all of them were couched like his in the negative form—"thou shalt not" do so and so—and that many of them were identical in their substance."

"On this he exclaimed bitterly, smarting under the defeat inflicted on his country by our troops: "The English have no religion at all!" And on my enquiring why he thought so, he replied deliberately and emphatically: "Because I know it! Because I see it for myself in the faces and actions of your people! They all have hard hearts, and are specially trained to take life and to fight like very giant Titans who war even against the Gods!" I was bound to admit that a military expedition was an inconvenient object-lesson in practical Christianity, and urged that it was not a fair test, as war stirred up the worst passions in men’s hearts, and after all we did not want the war, that it was his people who had always fired the first shot; besides, they too had trained their men as well as they could to take life in war. "It is not only your military, but all your people, even those who are not military; you are all the same, except [here he added somewhat apologetically, probably out of deference to my feelings] you doctors, of whose humane work I have heard; but all the others are utterly devoid of religion!"

"I assured him that the people of England spend enormous sums of money on religion, and everywhere have built beautiful churches, several hundreds of which are much finer and more costly than any temple in Tibet, and that the commentaries and other books on our religion would fill enormous libraries, many times larger than those of the Tibetan monasteries, and that their priests were real ecclesiastics, preaching to and teaching the people, unlike the Lamas, who never teach the people but keep all their education within their order, and are therefore not ecclesiastics. Hereupon he answered with a fine scorn: "But what is the good of all these buildings, and all these books and teachings, if the people do not read them, or, in any case, do not practise their maxims?" As he was so hopelessly mired, I could only reply that I hoped he would judge us more generously when he knew us better, and that he might discover that, because of our superior strength in war, we could now afford to exercise the Christian principle of showing mercy to the weaker."

"On hearing that Buddha was not mentioned by name in our Scriptures, he did not evince a great desire to know more about other salient points of Christianity, but seemed interested in hearing that one great point of difference was, that man was to be saved, not by his own merits, but by the saving grace of God, his sins being atoned for by the sacrifice made by Christ. This was
quite foreign to all his conceptions, as he had been educated in the strict tradi-
tions of Buddhism with its ethical doctrine of retribution or karma, which
teaches that each soul has to work out its own salvation, and to counterbalance
by a corresponding number of good deeds all his accumulated misdeeds before
the latter are forgiven by the inexorable "Judge of the Dead.""

No honest reader can go wrong far with this book if he would care to
read another classic on Tibet, Peaks and Lamas by Marco Pallis, reviewed
below. Waddell's book remains a compulsory reading for many reasons.
Lhasa and its Mysteries was the first publication in any European language
to present a fairly comprehensive account of Lhasa and Central Tibet. Fairly
accurate maps and plans numbering 8, and 16 appendices covering Tibetan
Year Cycles, Population, Climate and Meteorology, Geology : Mines and
Metals, Fertility and Salinity of Soil, Fauna of Central and South Western
Tibet, Trade : Imports and Exports besides information about political history
and the progress of the British expedition make Lhasa and its Mysteries a
source-book of highest value. More than a hundred photographs are of great
archival interest.

Gaden Ti Rinpoche, Saja Shape, Bhutan Maharaja (Tonga Penlop),
Nepal Consul in Lhasa and members of the British expedition are found here
in authentic pictures. No careful reader can miss here the only 'non-marital'
element in the Younghusband Expedition : the Bengalee Babu (Mr Mitra).

Photo-mechanic reproduction of such a valuable book could have been
much better elsewhere in India.

NIRMAL C. SINHA

MARCO PALLIS : Peaks and Lamas, XVII & 433 pp. London : The
Woburn Press 1914. £ 6.50 [Originally published in 1939, this is a revised and
enlarged edition].

The author, Marco Pallis, is a many splendoured personality. Born of
Greek parents in England, the author is wellgrounded in the Classical learning
as understood in Europe and began as a historical scholar. Early in his youth
he answered the call of mountain. He is a distinguished mountaineer and is
equally distinguished in performing early music. He possesses deep on-the-
spot knowledge of the Himalayas and of Central Tibet. With a mastery of
the language, he could live and converse with the Lamas without any inter-
preters and was at home in the monasteries. Mysticist, eastern and western,
finds expression in the author's writings. High scholarship and deep under-
standing make Peaks and Lamas a work of abiding value to both scholars
and pilgrims in search of truth.

This considerably revised edition is substantially supplemented with four
Appendices: Shamanistic Elements in Tibetan Religion, Landed Estates in
Tibet prior to 1950, The Criminal Law in Tibet, and The Arts of Tibet. With
solid data acquired through sojourns Marco Pallis gives an authentic account
of culture and society in traditional Tibet. The author's magnificent photo-
graphs, of landscapes and architectural wonders, are here in excellent re-
productions. The layout and get up of the book are in unison with the gran-
deur of the theme. The price, £ 6.30 UK, is not high for such a superb pro-
duction.

32
The following extracts on the relationship between different types of Buddhism and between Buddhism and Hinduism will bear out this reviewer's finding that high scholarship and deep sympathy inform, and thrive in, the pages of Peas and Lamas.

"In seeking to determine which is the principle of unity animating the Tibetan civilization one must beware of being satisfied with an easy answer, such as saying that this principle is no other than the Buddhist doctrine itself; for though this statement is correct as far as it goes, it lacks precision, failing as it does to indicate which one, out of a whole body of ideas comprised within the one doctrinal plan, has been recipient of that general emphasis required for the moulding of an entire tradition structure according to a particular form, and, as it were, in its image. Though one knows that Buddhism, by imposing certain fundamental concepts, has become the rule of life over very wide areas extending from Ceylon to Japan, and that this has produced a certain community of outlook among all the peoples that have come within the Buddhist orbit, one cannot fail to recognize that in this general whole certain clearly distinguishable forms of civilization are to be found, the intellectual frontiers of which are in no wise determined by the Buddhist influence. The common presence of Buddhism does not, for instance, warrant one's placing the Chinese and Tibetan civilizations under one heading, even though they are next-door neighbours; and if Buddhism is admittedly a factor common to both, this fact has been insufficient to produce any very marked likeness in the two points of view, let alone identity.

"The chief difference between them lies in the fact that whereas in Tibet the Buddhist tradition is everything, having completely replaced its Bon-po predecessor, as China Buddhism was something in the nature of a graft, admitted a host timely and successful one, upon a civilization of which the pattern, in all essentials, had been already set before the arrival of the foreign influences. Since nothing in the existing Chinese form was found to be actually incompatible with the Buddhist point of view, the latest arrival from India found no difficulty in taking its place in the traditional life of the Far East on equal terms with its two other great constituents, namely Taoism, representative of an intellectuality so pure as to be adapted for the use of an exceptionally qualified "elite" only, and Confucianism, which is not, as is commonly supposed, a separate creation, still less a "religion," but which corresponds to that side of the Chinese tradition in which all without exception are able to participate, concerning itself as it does with social institutions and human relationships in general—the latter being given expression especially through its characteristic concepts of the race, the family, and the family ancestors. It might also be mentioned, is passing, that it the course of time Buddhism and Taoism engaged in many intellectual exchanges, some of which gave rise to that school, so rich in spiritual initiative, that is commonly known in the West under its Japanese name Zen.

"Similar considerations would have applied in India during the centuries when Hinduism and Buddhism coexisted there as separate currents of tradition: both continued to belong to the same civilization, the form of which had been laid down, under purely Hindu inspiration, at a time long anterior to the specific formulation of the Buddhist teachings. In any case, both in virtue of its origin and by the nature of its thought, Buddhism remains an Indian doctrine, having derived most of the basic concepts, if not all, from
the common root-stock of the Hindu metaphysic. It is not on that score that Buddhism can be called original; nor indeed, does it put forward any such claim, since the Buddha Himself always was at pains to repudiate, as a monstrous heresy, any suggestion that He had come to teach something new in the matter of doctrine; it is only modern Western writers, themselves imbued with individualistic prejudices, who have been determined at all costs to discover in Buddhism a radical innovation amounting to a revolt against the traditional spirit, and in the Buddha an early revolutionary working on Reforma-
tion lines.

"Where Buddhism was highly original, however, was in respect of its methods, affecting both the way of expounding the principles and the form of the spiritual disciplines that went with that knowledge. Indeed, but for a large measure of originality in the manner of recasting the eternal truths the Buddhist apostles would have been unable to carry out their appointed task of adapting the Indian metaphysic so as to render it eventually assimilable by non-Indian peoples, especially by the yellow races, whose mentality was so very different from that of the Indians. This task once accomplished, however, Indian Buddhism had little further cause to exist as a separate form and gradually disappeared, partly subsiding back into that Hinduism whence it had sprung and from which, despite controversies on the surface, it had, at heart, never been entirely severed.

"The Tibetan branch was one of the latest offshoots from the main stem of Buddhism, having only come into being during the seventh and eighth cen-
turies after Christ, chiefly through the work of Indian monks from Bengal and Kashmir. While accepting all the basic ideas taught by the Buddha, which it continued to share with all the other peoples of similar spiritual allegiance, Tibet early developed certain clearly marked features of its own, to the point of giving rise to a distinct form of civilization, comparable, on every count, with the other principal traditional forms of the world. This is possibly due in part to the incorporation of such features of the previous Bon-po tradi-
tion as could be usefully readapted; it was on the face of it unlikely, however, that any element specific to a form actually in process of replacement by ano-
other would retain sufficient intrinsic vitality to provide a whole civilization with its principle of unity, in the sense given to that term at the beginning of this chapter—that is to say, with an idea both distinct and powerful enough to create and nourish its own forms, conferring on them the means for per-
petuating their own character through long ages and of impressing it firmly and unmistakably upon the face of things and upon the thoughts of men.

"In fact, the idea that enjoys pride of place in the Tibetan tradition is one that figures in the Buddhist doctrine as originally imported from India. This presiding idea, colouring the outlook of sage and simple peasant alike (as we were repeatedly enabled to observe during our journeys), is the con-
ception of Bodhisattvahood, the state of the fully awakened being who, though under no further constraint by that Law of Causality which he has transcended, yet freely continues to expose the vicissitudes of the Round of Existence in virtue of his Self-identification with all the creatures still involved in epicenteric delusion and consequent suffering. Such an attitude must not, however, be confused with a kind of sentimental "altruism" in the social sense; indeed, a moment's reflection will show that he who has finally been set free from the false notion of a permanent "I", to be individually experienced, is at the same
time automatically rid of its correlative notion of "other." The Bodhisattva behaves as he does precisely because, for him, any kind of conceptual polarisation is inoperative, because, to his singleness of eye, all contrasted pairs such as the Round and Nirvana, Bondage and Deliverance, Material Substance and Spirit, together with all the subsidiary oppositions born of such contrasts, are alike resolved in the unity—or, as the Tibetans would say, in the "two-selves"—of That which he himself realises as the All-Principle (Tibetan Kun-ji), the eternal Cause and ground of all phenomenal existence."

NIRMAL C. SINHA


Gautama the Buddha was appropriately apotheosized as Bhaishajyaguru (Sman-gyi-bla or Sman-bla in Tibetan), that is, Master of Medicine. 'Medicine' Buddha is a poor construction in English and hardly conveys the meaning of the epithet Bhaishajyaguru or Sman-bla. In diagnosing the malady of sufferers which afflicts all animate or sentient beings, Buddha spoke of (i) rasa or drol-lo, (ii) raga baks or drol-ba baks, (iii) krodha or drol-ka rin-ba (sins-dan), and (iv) bhaishajya or marga (sugs-dmar). Buddha's Four Truths were based on ancient truths preserved and pursued by saints and seers who specialised both in medicine and meditation. The monks and scholars who followed the Path of Buddha took a special interest in developing further the 'science of healing' and during the Kushana period Ayurveda along with Dharma from India travelled into Inner Asia. In later time in Tibet (and Mongolia) Indian medicinal literature was intensively studied and progressed with the learning of Tibetan (and Mongol) scholars. Tibetan (and Mongol) literature preserves for posterity a treasure house of knowledge on medicine and surgery, pharmacology and chemistry, botany and zoology. Russian, German and British scholars have been for several decades probing into this treasure house.

The Welcome Foundation has sponsored this publication and deserves our thanks. The author, Rechung Rinpoche—an incarnation of the famous monk-scholar who presided over the Rechung monastery in the twelfth century of Christian era and who narrated the story of the great mystic poet Milarepa—is that rare combination of a Tibetan scholar who has gone through a full course of traditional schooling in Lhasa, who took a special course in medicine in Mentukhang, and who can render Tibetan idiom and imagery into English. He seeks to present a history of Tibetan medicine around the figure of the Great Yuthok (786-1113 AD), the reputed founder of Tibetan medicine. A good number of chapters from Yuthok's book and from Yuthok's biography are translated into English for the first time and the author can claim to be a first in the field.

The book is illustrated with 20 plates; 15 plates depict the anatomical and physiological data about human body; 2 plates illustrate the equipment of a Tibetan doctor, medical and surgical instruments; 2 depict, from painted scrolls, the Great Yuthok's life and work; 1 consists of 2 photographs of Heads of Mentukhang. There is an excellent and useful bibliography of books and articles in European languages. The book is not free from defects and
lacuna, particularly from the point of view of the Orientalist: linguist or antiquarian. The transcription of Sanskrit and Tibetan words has many falsities: and the Glossary is too inadequate. These defects, it is expected, will be attended to when a new edition is under preparation. Rechung Rinpoche's "Tibetan Medicine" is the most informative work on Tibetan medicine and associated sciences in a European language so far. The book should be of great value to modern and non-Tibetan students of medical sciences all over the world. I take this opportunity to highlight some points about history of medicine in Tibet.

Act of healing was certainly not unknown in one form or other in ancient Tibet. Shaman and Bon priests were possibly competent doctors and pre-Buddhist knowledge about healing had doubt survived and continued till the middle of the twelfth century when both Bon and Buddhist physicians of Tibet faced the same crisis. Tibetan Medicine or "Tibetan Buddhist Medicine" does solemnly trace its origins to Bhaishajyaguru but does not deny other influences. Rechung Rinpoche, who writes his introductory "History of Tibetan Medicine" in traditional style, may be quoted in this connection.

"To Tibet during the reign of King Lha-mtho-g yan-rtse, the twenty-fifth king of Tibet, two doctors came from India: Doctor Bu-bys-gdags-byed and Doctor Bu-bzhed-dgag-mdzes, and taught the populace some branches of Medicine, for instance, how to diagnose diseases. Before the two Indian doctors came, the Tibetans had only known some dietary rules and simple instructions like how to stop bleeding by applying hot butter.

"Three generations later King Mgo-rtse-gnyan Lde'u was attacked by a disease caused by demons. So he burned himself alive in a hole in the ground to prevent his descendants from contracting the disease caused by demons. His last words to his son, Prince Kon-ka Kha, were an injunction to worship the text gNyan-g chos-ba which had come down from the sky during the reign of his ancestor King Lha-mtho-g yan-rtse. In this way the Buddhist teaching was believed to have appeared for the first time in Tibet. Kha should invite a doctor from Ha-ba to operate on his eyes which were blind. The father also instructed him how to rule the country. The son did as he said and invited a very learned doctor who operated on his eyes with a golden instrument. Then he saw the demons living on skYid-rod stag-mdzes. Since then he was called Sting-ri gNyan-grags. During the reign of his son, King gNyan-rtse Sron-brtan, medical and astronomical text was believed to have been brought from China, but it is not clear which text it was.

"Under his son, King Sro-bzhed-gsum-po, the Tibetan alphabet was adapted from the Sanskrit Devanagari letters by Thonmi Sambhota who had gone to India and studied there. King Sro-bzhed-gsum-po's Queen, a Chinese princess, brought the medical text called Skyes-dbyad Chen-mo (Great Analytical Treatise on Medicine) from China, and it was translated into Tibetan by Has-dbang Mlaw-dus and Dharmaköta. He invited the following three great doctors to his Court: from India Bharadwaja, from China Han-wang-Hang and from Persia Doctor Glines. Each translated a book in their own way into Tibetan. The Indian doctor's texts were called Rduc-bshag-me Bu-Che-tsung (Big and Small Louise Gravel), and gByor-ba Mar-gnas (Preparation of New Butter), the Chinese doctor's text was called gYis-dbyad"
Thor-bu Chhe-chhu (Treatise of Great and Small Scattered Chinese Surgery), the Persian doctor's were called DDo-mo by-Dao-pa (Collection of Main Additions) and The Treatment for Cock, Peacock and Parrot. And from the discussion between the three doctors they composed a medical text called Mi-khy-nga-pa'i mVTo-'on-cho (The Weapon of the Fearless One), comprising seven chapters, and presented it to the King. They received presents from the King, took their leave, and went home, except for Galenos who stayed behind at the King's Court Physician. He settled down in Lhasa, married and had three sons: the oldest one he sent to the upper GTSian district where he married a member of the Thugs lineage, as a result of which it was constituted from there. The middle one he sent south of Tibet, to Gy-or-po, which started the lineage of the Southern doctors. The youngest one stayed with his father and they called him Jo-ros and he continued the lineage at Lhasa.1

The Persian doctor Galenos was probably a Hellenistic physician, a Bactrian or Kyrgyzian Greek. Tibet was having scholars and seers from the west even before the King Ston-bram, but the study of medicine and other sciences from the west could be possible only after a phonetic alphabet was adopted. The three imports from India—Dharma, Aksara and Bhavishya—determined the growth of science and civilization in Tibet.

Origin of Objects or Hetu is the basis of Dharma and the same is true of Ayurveda. The theory of three humours: Air, Bile and Phlegm, as the basis of Life Science was accepted and further developed in Tibetan system. In developing Indian medicine Tibetans (and Mongol) scholars and scientists no doubt drew upon their own experiences and findings as they drew upon vettas (Graeco-Iranian) and eacern (Bience) traditions. A student of modern medicine can thus profit from Tibetan pharmacology as practised till the middle of this century. I quote Reclung Rinpoche’s list of medicinal preparations “still used today”.

“(1) chen-chen bo-cbyang. Medicine with eighteen ingredients: yellow pigment taken from a concretion in an elephant’s head or in the entrails of other animals, camphor, coriander seed, olive, black aloeswood, Heter res-skor, red sandalwood, white sandalwood, saffron, blue water lily, aquatic insect, medicinal ginger, costus speciosa, jujusa gandaterusa, gold, copper, bitumen, chireta, cloves. A different quantity of each ingredient is specified. When mixed, it helps against convulsions, cholera, cramps, swellings and lumps. One teaspoonful should be mixed with boiling water and taken after meals.

“(2) srng-hdzin-bchur-dig, which has sixteen ingredients: cloves, black aloeswood, zuimeg, a mineral drug called slo-sho, costus speciosa, saffron, frankincense, sandalwood, tig, Nash, yellow pigment, shu-stiril, sha-chugs, salt, ginger, piper longum. It is used against nervous diseases and melancholia. To be taken in beer, or about one teaspoonful at hot water.

“(3) ba-tsi rdo-sbyor, which has ten ingredients: scoparia/prat/a Dune, saffron, sulphur, shu-chugs, nymoptala, rhus, cowhides, mask, black aloeswood, white and black tharshorn. Used against syphilis. To be taken with melted butter.

“(4) sga-ba, which has seven ingredients: herb whose root is used for purple dye, sama plant, justicia gandaterusa, comphire, costus speciosa, olive, 37
in appropriate quantities. Used against tuberculosis. To be taken in a spoonful of boiling water.

"(5) bdud-rad-gsum-shyon, which has three ingredients: Soma plant, syrup, camphor. These three mixed together, should be taken with beer. Used for vomiting, against bone fractures, tuberculosis and leprosy.

"(6) nor-bu-bdan-thang, which has seven ingredients: myrobolan, olive, Solanum japiusii, Terminalia beeria, Sophor flavescens, Inula helenium, Hedychium specinum. Three spoonfuls of these should be mixed together and boiled in a pint of water until the water is reduced to two thirds, and then drunk. Used against high blood pressure, fever, colds and influenza.

"(7) guer-mdog bcu-pa, which has ten ingredients: soma plant, myrobolan, liquorice, blumen, ginger, pomegranate, cardamom, pipe longum, erythe paniculata, rock salt from Sindh in Western India. Used against aphthae and high blood pressure. One spoonful to be taken in boiling water.

"(8) guer-mdog-bcu-gum, which has thirteen ingredients: pipe longum, saffen, blue lily, creeper, olive, juticia ganderussa, costus speciosus, salt, camphor, soma plant, low-growing hododendron, iron filings, snake meat. It should be made into a tablet the size of a small bean, which should be taken with boiling water. Used against high blood pressure and jaundice, tumours, indigestion, stomach trouble and fever."

Renchung Rimpoche has, wisely in my opinion, refrained from attempting a modernized version of history of medicine in his own country. His account bristling with legends and beliefs gives the facts of medicine and science as known to Tibetans for generations. A modern student of medical sciences should be able to find out positive and firm data that he is looking for. I write this review as a layman tired of numerous synthetic and anti-biotic recipes, and warmly invite modern physicians to investigate into Tibetan recipes. The Wellcome Foundation no doubt shares my sentiments.

NIRMAL C. SINHA

38
Besides eminent Tibetan, and Tibetan-speaking, monks and scholars, contributors to the forthcoming issues include:

Olaf Czecz
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