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BUDDHIST RELIGION IN BURMA,
BEFORE AND AFTER 1885

—TREVOR LING

BUDDHIST ECCLESIASTICISM IN 19TH CENTURY BURMA

An account of Buddhist life in Burma during the reign of King Mindon is contained in the Pali chronicle entitled Sāmaratana. This is the work of the King's own tutor, Pañhaśāṃ, whose account of Burmese Buddhist history takes the reader as far as the year 1860, three years after the founding of the city of Mandalay by King Mindon. As the author says, in almost the last words of his account: "This is the founding of the Sāmaṇa in the city of Ratanapuṇa (i.e. Mandalay)." (1)

The 'Sāmaṇa', whose history he has been writing, the Sāmaṇa which he had now seen established in the new capital city of Mandalay, consisted of a particular pattern of relationship between Burmese King and Buddhist monks in which Pañhaśāṃ himself had a special interest. Elsewhere in his chronicle he declares that "under the patronage of the righteous kings, this religion of the supreme Buddha (Sāmsāra-buddhada sāmaṇa) in the Maramma country (Burma) was made to shine greatly and, it came to growth, prosperity and full development. And the religion as it is called (sāmaṇa ca nava etana) endures under the patronage of kings." (2) He adds that its prosperity was not only the work of kings, but of all the loyal people as well: "also all the inhabitants of the kingdom, who were obedient to their kings and supported by the righteous kings, were the helpers of the religion (sāmaṇaḥ upokarā)." (3)

The word sāmaṇa is here given a somewhat more specialised meaning than that which it bears in the canonical literature, where it means generally, the message, or teaching or instruction, or doctrine of the Buddha. (4) From that primary meaning a more specialised usage follows, in which the 'ninefold Buddhist-sāmaṇa' is spoken of; this is a way of distinguishing nine types of canonical literature in which the doctrine is contained. (5)

The word sāmaru as it is used by Pañhaśāṃ, however, clearly indicates a particular kind of Buddhist polity. Sometimes sāmaru is virtually equivalent to 'Sangha', as in the account of the reform of the Sangha by Mindon in 1858, when the king asked who, in the Buddhist-sāmaṇa, are the monks and novices whose way of life does not conform with the Vinaya. (4) At other times it appears to indicate as we have first seen a polity which kings and lay-people also co-operate in building up.

It is in the sāmaṇa in this sense that Pañhaśāṃ's interest appears to lie. It is this which he sets out to chronicle: "the history of the sāmaṇa in the Aparanta country", that is, in Burma. In doing so, one of his major concerns is to show that orthodoxy has to be distinguished from unorthodoxy, and it is quite clear that he regards himself as tutor of the king and chief Buddhist monk, as representing orthodoxy. Since the king's teacher was holder of the title 'head of the sāmaṇa', or, in Burmese Aññhina-baing, it is evident
that the royalty supported Buddhist establishment was regarded as representing orthodoxy. This term was well known to the French Bishop, Bigot, who recorded in a work written and published in Burma in Monson's reign, in 1866, that the keystone of the Buddhist faith is the superlatively great master residing in the capital or its suburbs. His introduction extends over all the fraternity within the realm of his Burmese Majesty. His position near the seat of Government and his capacity of king's master, or teacher, must have at all times conferred upon him a very great degree of influence over all his subordinates. He is honoured with minute care of Thanbanapun, meaning that he has power and control over all that appertains to Religion. It does not appear that peculiarly shining qualifications or high attainments are required in him who is honoured with such dignity. The mere accidental circumstance of having been the king's instructor when he was yet a youth, is a sufficient, nay, the only necessary recommendation for the promotion to such a high position. Hence is generally happens that each king, on his accession to the throne, confers the highest dignity of the order to his favourite monastic. It was this fortuitous way of making thanbanapun that the British administrators in Burma after the annexation of 1855, were not in a position to appreciate. As we shall see later, part of the trouble over the appointment of a new thanbanapun was that the British Governor was too conscientious is trying to get, as he thought, the right man.

The system within which the thanbanapun functioned was one which can be described as royal state Buddhism, or in the sense in which the word is used by Puthiasami, the abhara. It was a system in which the king had become the final authority in ecclesiastical affairs, in Mahel Bode observed on the evidence of the Sasanaraya,(1) and in which the higher members of the Sangha had become councilors of State, or dignitaries of a Church supported and enriched by royal bounty. But also at the lower levels especially, the monks acted as a 'social force, an upholder of humanity and justice against barbaric tyranny, a gavel, stern warning influence in the midst of a careless people.'(2) This function the monks continued to fulfill after the British usurpation of royal power, and in spite of the absence of an effective thanbanapun. So far as the royal State and its official Buddhist officers were concerned, however, Bode comments that there was 'in the religious history of Mrauknu a striking departure from the Master's (that is, the Buddha's) conception of the true Samana, the monk-philosopher, with his intense spiri
tuality, and his detachment from all'.(3)

It was a system in which the Buddhist monk depended to a very large degree for his well being upon the king's power. Such was the nature of this royal power that it amounted to despotism, sometimes benevolent, sometimes not, and under such rule 'no man's property or labour is his own; the means of supporting the Sangha may be withdrawn from any subject who is under the royal displeasure'. Thus, Bode points out, 'the peaceful, easy life dear to the Burmese bhikkhu the necessary calm for study or the writing of books, the land of water to be set apart for ecclesiastical ceremonies (a fitting place for which is the highest importance, all these are only secured by the king's favour and protection'.'(4) In his view it is this which explains the general loyalty of the Sangha to the head of the State. But it is not certain that all monks were subjects to ecclesiastical authority, or supposed this royal Buddhism. Puthiasami himself gives plenty of evidence of 'divvimentu' monks who refused to bow to official rulings made by thanbanapun and king in concert, as, for one example in the famous robe-wearing controversy.
Pāḷihāsāmi’s interest was, as we have noted, to emphasise the distinction between orthodoxy and unorthodoxy among Buddhist monks. This is in itself also an acknowledgment that monks in Burma in mid-19th century differed considerably in their views of what it was to be a Buddhist. In this version of the matter orthodoxy consisted in the ability to prove one’s position by showing that it was derived from some great Buddhist teacher of the past, by the only recognized method for doing so, which was appeal to the canonical Pali texts. As in many other cases in the history of religion the politicisation of religion is accompanied by the need for a definitive standard of orthodoxy, in order to try to ensure unity within the ranks of the professionals of the state religion. Such orthodoxy is likely to be in greater or lesser degree arbitrary, and possibly even a matter of historical chance. It becomes in effect a type of prejudice, and can sometimes be very rigid. Certainly, as Bode recognises there are, woven into Pāḷihāsāmi’s work considerable “orthodox prejudices”.(10) His historical record is one sided and is marked by some glaring and significant omissions.(11) What is perhaps most indicative of the fact that here we get a picture of only one element in the Buddhist religious life of Burma in the nineteenth century, alongside which it is necessary to set others, is the writer’s apparent total lack of interest in what may be called popular religion, even of a Buddhist kind. We “rarely hear of popular movements and feelings” comments Bode in her introduction.(12)

Yet it is certain that there were other varieties of Buddhist religion. By his concern for orthodoxy against unorthodoxy Pāḷihāsāmi tacitly recognises this; other witnesses are more positive and explicit. As a modern Burmese writer puts it: “Buddhism had never in any place been a single canonical religion and Burmese Buddhism was no exception”. Every monk was encouraged “to debate any point of doctrine or monastic usage, and only when the discussions resulted in serious controversy did it become necessary for the whole congregation of monks to vote and to express the view of the majority. Even at that point, the minority could leave the congregation and form a group of their own.”(13)

The existence of such variety as would be likely to result from the working of this principle is well attested. Michael Mendelsohn, in particular has emphasised this, especially in his recent work, Sangha ana State in Burma.(14) Moreover, Mendelsohn’s own field work in Burma in 1938-1939 was effective in revealing the existence of Buddhist ‘Messianic’ associations, or gantyes, which, since their basis is one which runs back into the medieval period, are likely to have been a feature of Burmese Buddhist life for some centuries, even although they did not receive much mention in written documents, at least until the British period.(15) There was, moreover, what he has called the ‘passive’ sangha that is, communities of monks who were content to take the Vinaya as their sole arbiter, and to dispense with any royal patron or controller.

On the basis of all these considerations, Mendelsohn would seem to be justified in concluding that “the thathanhung was never regarded by the whole, fundamentally ungovernable, Sangha as its head”.(16) And it is clear that while one kind of religion, the royal state Buddhism or icṣanya, in which Pāḷihāsāmi had a vested interest, had ‘endured under the patronage of kings’ this by no means constituted the Buddhist community in Burma in its entirety. What has befell the Buddhist religion in Burma in the modern period cannot, therefore, be regarded simply as a question of what befell the icṣuṇa in 1885
and afterwards. It is this latter question which has monopolised much of the discussion of the condition of Buddhist religion in Burma during the period of British rule and after. A better balance needs to be struck between this one element and others which are equally important, notably those which existed outside the network of royal Buddhism, local Buddhist communities, independent, not conforming to state orthodoxy, but possibly more faithful to the Vinaya in some cases, or to the essential conceptions of the Buddha-sastra in India.

The nature of the exiles which the Burmese people experienced on 1885 was, strictly, national and psychological rather than religious. There is evidence that religions belief, practices and institutions continued very much as before, outside the capital city. Bode records that "the changes brought about in Burma by the annexation ... affected the Buddhist religion and the Order very little", and quotes Fielding Hall's testimony that while the monks of Burma ceased to have the direct influence upon public affairs which some of them had exercised before 1885, nevertheless in general the status and prestige of the monks among the people was by no means lessened, and of their literary activity we have abundant evidence".17) Commenting on the condition of what he calls "the elusive Sangha majority" in Burma in 1885 Mendelson suggests that the overwhelming "passive" majority (politically and sociologically passive, that is) was not much affected by the change of government. It was, he says, "elusive in so far as it lacked a high degree of organization and leadership and elusive also in that it had a great turnover of personnel". Moreover, he adds, "in its very nature, the Sangha is a body which simply does not need self-government, or government of any kind ... Its simple strength, residing in the patron-monk relationship, still enables a great number of monks to survive today in the way in which it appears the Buddha once wished them to survive".18)

One aspect of the British annexation of 1885 which has received some attention in connection with Buddhist religion in Burma is the failure to appoint a new thanakaung, in the way that Burmese kings had done. This, it is sometimes argued, had a serious, adverse effect on the condition of Burmese Buddhism. Various comments on this argument can be made.

In the first place the influence and power of the thanakaung was already in decline by 1886, for we have Bigandet's evidence to that effect. "In our days (i.e. at the time of writing), the power of the thanakaung is merely nominal; the effects of his jurisdiction are scarcely felt beyond his own neighborhood. Such, however, was not the case in former times."19) When eighteenth century accounts of the power and activities of the thanakaung are compared with those of the nineteenth century the general impression conveyed by the comparison is that by the latter period the power and importance of the thanakaung was in decline.

The British administrators of Burma from 1885 onwards were not unwilling to appoint a successor to the thanakaung of the last Burmese king. The difficulty in doing so lay in the fact that they misunderstood the nature of the task which had devolved upon them. An account of the events of the period written by a British administrator, Sir Henry Thirkell White, records that the Chief Commissioner recognized the importance of enlisting the support of the thanakaung and of offering him whatever help and encouragement it was open to the new Government to give, in order to maintain the
traditional system. ‘At the time of the annexation the Thathanhaing was a weak but well-meaning person who had been King Thibaw’s tutor. The Chief Commissioner interviewed him in person and essayed to excite his enthusiasm for the new Government ... The Thathanhaing was induced to visit Rangoon with a view to the extension of his authority over Lower Burma. Government provided for his journey, which was made in some state with a long train of monks. He was received with rapture at Prome and in Rangoon and a rest-house (Zayat) for him and his successors was built on the slope of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda’. In spite of all that could be done, however, the result only emphasised the extent to which ecclesiastical power had declined in Lower Burma between 1852 and 1885, when many of the more ecclesiastical monks had fled from the British-controlled area to the security of Mandalay.

The effort (by the Chief Commissioner) was ineffectual. Neither that Thathanhaing nor his successors have exercised any power in Lower Burma, which still remains in a state of representation .... The Thathanhaing had not the authority, even if he had the will, to control and direct his monks by moral force alone (21).

When this thathanhaing died the problem of appointing a successor faced the Government. Not wishing to take the positive action of naming a successor, which would have been contrary to what had become the British policy of neutrality in matters of religion, the Government indicated that it would be willing fully to recognize any successor whom the Buddhist leaders might wish to name. But this was not the way things had been done by the kings. The Chief monks of the Sangha would inevitably disagree, it seems, about whose name should be put forward. The kings had always declared who was Thathanhaing. As one of the chief monks said, ‘What was the use of the Uparaja (vice regent) asking us to decide who shall be Thathanhaing?’ The pupils of each great Thera will always think it to be wrong to vote for anyone else than his own teacher, and all the Theras will never agree. If the Uparaja, like our Burmese kings, had said, ‘So and so is the Thathanhaing’ then we should accept his selection and everyone would be very pleased (22).

If there was a single major factor in the change which occurred in the political status and influence of the Sanga during the British period it was not in the absence of a thathanhaing but the absence of a king. The traditional ecclesiastical Buddhism at the pre-1885 days rested heavily on the presence and power of the king, the reflection of whose glory was seen in his thathanhaing. The British conquest, the exile of the king, and the removal of the royal throne from Mandalay Palace to a museum in Calcutta meant for many Burmese Buddhists the collapse of a cosmology and the system of morality that was largely associated with it. It was this national psychological crisis which was one of the most potent causes of the social and moral upheaval of the period following 1885.

Another crucial factor was the change brought about in the nature of the education which now replaced the traditional, monastery-centred schooling which village boys and girls had received in the old days. At the beginning of the first Anglo-Burmese war, Burma had a higher rate of literacy than England, thanks to the monk-teachers in every village. And at the same time as they learnt to read and write, Burmese children had also absorbed the attitudes and values of their religion. When the new Government began to set up schools the education offered was as Thukell White records, ‘rigidly secular’. Commenting on this, he says, ‘It is now felt by many that this policy,
however well intentioned, was mistaken, that in allowing, or even encouraging education to be exclusively secular, government had done much to sap the foundations of morality and loyalty, to undermine the basis of character. Probably the right course would have been not to stand aloof from the diverse creeds of the Empire, but to take an active interest in all, and so see that each had fair play and encouragement.(23) But such a policy, so far as the Indian Empire was concerned, had to wait until the establishment of the 'secular', or religiously plural independent republic of India in 1947. Any attempt by the British Government of Burma to pursue a policy of this sort would, observed Thirkell White, not have been tolerated by Christian public opinion in England. In words that are well worth recalling, for they have not entirely lost their force, he observed: 'So far as India is concerned the tiresome thing about public opinion in England is that, where interest might be beneficial, it cannot be roused; while in some vital matter in which only the man on the spot had materials for judging, the British public, or its spokesmen, insist on interfering.(24)

With the establishment of British rule in Burma, forms of employment were being offered in Rangoon and other towns, in commercial and government offices, or which the traditional education, namely, reading, writing, and study of the scriptures, was not an appropriate preparation. Burmese Buddhist parents began sending their children to missionary and government schools. The devaluation of monastic education resulted in a reduction in the amount of religious and moral instruction being given to the young and predisposed them to look down on the excessively traditionalist learning of the monks. On the other hand, the new style of education had consequences for Burma which Protestant missionaries may not have foreseen: it produced a new type of Buddhist layman, who was able to bring to bear upon the hitherto excessively text-centred religious teaching of the monks something of a wider world. However, had the monks in village monastery-schools been given adequate opportunities and encouragement it is possible that they might have co-operated in expanding the scope of village education. A British memorandum of 1868-9 had already recognized this possibility. It noted that "the best method for reaching the masses in British Burma" was the village monastery school. It proposed that books dealing with subjects such as arithmetic and land-measuring should be made available to the village schools. If these were furnished to the chief Phyuwe of each monastery, and a qualified Burmese teacher engaged to supervise the studies occasionally" then it was likely "that the books supplied would be willingly used".(23) Had such a policy of co-operation with Buddhist monks at village level in the work of education been rigorously followed, it might well have prevented the alienation of many Burmese children from Buddhist religion and culture, and there might have been a significantly different sequel to British rule in Burma. But the general policy towards Buddhism which was forced upon British administrators by the religious arrogance of some nineteenth century Englishmen, and the pursuit of money which began under British rule, together ensured that Buddhist monastery education declined. Moreover, in the event, many monks were unwilling to co-operate.

The subject is a large one, and hasty generalization in such a complex area are dangerous, but perhaps a tentative conclusion may be suggested at this point. In the case of British political irritation into the life of Burma it was mainly the ecclesiastical form of Buddhism (that is, the sūtra, which flourished under the patronage of kings) which suffered, because of the extent to which royal power was used, to speak, its life-blood; other, local forms, the
"passive" or Vinaya-rulled and Visaya-following Sanghas would not have been greatly affected by political interference. But in the case of British educational irruption into the life of Burma it was the entire fabric of Buddhist religion that suffered; the damage was more widespread, and was felt in thousands of villages and towns throughout Buddhist Burma. R. Groot Brown, who worked in Burma for 28 years from 1889, opens his account of education there by pointing to "the remarkable fact that the Burmese had universal education of a sort long before anything of the kind existed in any European country". He ends his account with the sad observation that British educational policy in Burma had brought about a reversal of that earlier, happier condition of things: "What it has done is to equip, or attempt to equip, with knowledge the children of a tiny group of people who happened to have money or to live in Rangoon. As a result we have a handful of Burmese who are both educated and intelligent, a great many who are educated but not intelligent, and a great many more (i.e. outside Rangoon) who are intelligent but not educated." Buddhist values could have survived the destruction of state Buddhism in Burma. What they were less easily able to survive was the destruction of the religious element in education.

NOTES
2. E. g. Digha Nikaya I. 110; II 206; Sutta Nipata 482 etc.
4. Sāsanavamsa 154f.
8. Ibid. p. 57.
9. Ibid. p. 53.
10. Ibid. p. 57.
11. Ibid. p. 53.
12. Ibid. p. 35.


24. Ibid.


26. R. Grant Brown, Burma as I saw it, 1926, p. 90.

27. Ibid., p. 100.
INDIA AND TIBET

—Historical Considerations—

—NIRMAL C. SINHA

I

EARLIEST CONTACTS

Exchange of ideas like exchange of commodities between two neighbouring countries is the ideal norm of nations. Relations between India and Tibet in the past amply illustrate this ideal. Even the Himalayas were not sufficient barriers and the Inao-Tibetan relationship was not a one-way traffic in commerce or culture.

While much is on record regarding India’s influence on Tibetan culture, Tibet’s impact on Indian culture remains obscure. With the antiquity of Tantra traced back to the Indus civilization and with Mount Kailas as the focal point in Tantra, regular contacts and exchanges between the Buddhists on both sides of the Himalayas in pre-Buddhist and even pre-Vedic times are no longer ruled out. Some scholars surmise that even Indian Tantric was developed from the pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet called Bon.

Sufficient literary evidence is there to suggest far knowledge of Himalayan or Trans-Himalayan region in North India in Buddha’s time. Arjuna had reached Uttarakshir, beyond the Kun Lun mountains, by way of Lake Manas which was the country of the Hatakas. The offerings of gold at Yudhishthira’s court (ptiyah) the variety recovered from the Pipiltika in Western Tibet. The Gol-digging Arts of Herodorus and the Pipiltika of Mahabharata were no doubt, the same obscure fauna. The traffic of pilgrims and merchants to and from Kailas-Mansarovar area was indeed a busy traffic in the Maurya period and Aryan missionaries like Kasyapa and Madhyamangata might have shared the Himalayas to acquire on-the-ground knowledge of the Himalayas.

Advent of Buddhism in Tibet opened a fresh chapter not only in the history of Tibet but also in the history of Asia and this chapter closes in the middle of the current century.

II

BUDDHISM IN TIBET

The first kings of Tibet reputedly come from Magadha, the home province of Asoka, at a time when the Maurya Empire was breaking up. These kings down to 27th generation followed the old Tibetan religion Bon. During

This article presents the author's second lecture on "India and Tibet—a study in interdependence" at Cuttack University on 21 July 1977. The first lecture was published in Bulletin of Tibetology (1977). The third and concluding lecture will come out in the next number of the Bulletin. A synopsis of the three lectures is appended at the end.

12
the reign of Lha-tho-dro-ri, the 28th king, a volume of Buddhist canon reached
the court; the Kungrans were then ruling over northern India and Inner Asia.
The book, when deciphered later, was found to contain the exploits and virtues
of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. As the Lord of Compassion, Avalokitesvara
was the leading deity of Mahayana pantheon. In Tibet he came to be regarded
as the father of mankind and adored as the Sole God of the Land of snow.

Firm evidence about Buddhism in Tibet, however, dates from the time
of Song-trin Gampo (c. 605-650) whose two queens, one from Nepal and
one from Chia, were devout Buddhist. He had a scholarly minister, Thomya
Sambotha, who devised an alphabet from Brahmi script and founded the
systematic translation of the Buddhist canon. Temples were built and images
of the Buddha and Mahayana deities were installed. The principal temple
was located in the newly founded capital at Lhasa. Monks and scholars
from Nepal and India were invited to expound the Buddha’s Doctrine. The
king drew up a code of customs and morals which believers down to our time
have acknowledged and observed as integral parts of the Cho or Dharma.

GURU RINPOCHE

The progress of Buddhism was by no means smooth for the first two
hundred years as it had to reckon with the hostility of the native religion. The
Bon was deeply rooted not only in the mind of the common man, it
was strongly entrenched in the court itself. Ministers and even members of
the royalty were often ambivalent and some continued to die hard. The Bon
priests disputed the authority of the Indian monks and challenged them to
proselytize and miracles. Vicious in doctrinal debates was easy for the scholar-
monks who no doubt emphasized the doctrine of salvation for all. The field
of magic was however not convenient for the monks from India as few of
them were adept in Tantra. In the second half of the eighth century, during
the reign of Trisong De-sen, the Buddhist monks failed to meet the Bon
priests in an encounter of miracle. The Bon elements in the court proclaims
the foreigners’ defeat and reconverted the bulk of the population into their
native faith. But the king did not yield and invited the famous master of
Tantra, Guru Padmasambhava, to visit Tibet. The Guru answered the call
reached Lhasa overcoming en route the demons set up by the Bon magicians
and in a number of bouts conclusively proved the superiority of Buddhist
Tantra. For example he could divert a hail storm conjured up by the native
priests while the native priests could not contain a similar scourge set by the
Guru. In short the superiority of Buddhist magic was indisputable and the
Dharma emerged victorious in the field of mysteries also. Ambivalent be-
lievers soon sought refuge in Buddhism.

The saviour of Dharma came to be adored as Guru Rinpoche, that is,
Guru Nitra. Guru Rinpoche was indeed the saviour of Buddhism in Tibet.
While his miracles are a matter of belief, his achievements are solid facts of
history. Besides proving the superiority of Buddhism over Bon the Guru
handled the great problem of a foreign religion with high state-ship. He
felt the imperative need of nationalizing the church and with the aid of Santa-
rakshita, who was already in Tibet, he ordained the First Seven natives into
the Sangha, thereby, founding the Lamast Order. The Guru and Santarak-
shita helped the king to build a monastery on the river Tsang-po
(Brahmaputra); it was modelled on Odantapuri and named after
Achintysupsi as Samye. Significantly enough the Guru tolerated some Bon
mystic practices which, if not identical with, were not unlike the rituals of Tantra.

Buddhism as a universal religion acclimatized itself to the native genius of the country and the Guru’s cult of Vajra (Dorje) no doubt became the national cult of Tibet. Under this impact even the Bon priests had to admit ideas and images of Buddhism into their creed, though a contra or wrong meaning was read into each such adaptation. Thus Buddhism had come to stay in Tibet in one form or other.

The few Chinese exponents of Dharma who used to visit Tibet from the time of Song-tsen Gampo’s marriage with a Chinese princess failed to comprehend the moral and spiritual needs of the Barbarian of Tibet. A few years after Padmasambhava and Santarakshita, two conflicting opinions about attainment of Enlightenment were being expounded, one by the Indian Kamaalasita and other by the Chinese Hashtag. In a final debate, the assembly of believers voted for the Indian exponent. Both views, it is now found, were correct but the Indian master had spoken the Tibetan mind. The Tibetans ceremoniously expelled the Chinese exponent and banned for ever propagation of Dharma in Tibet by the Chinese. Nearly three centuries later when Atisa came to propagate the Sat Dharma, he also would not altogether reject the Tibetan sentiments.

LIVING BUDDHAS

The historic reason for the success of Buddhism in foreign lands was the promise of universal salvation through Love, Compassion and Spirit of Tolerance. The Mahayana ideal of collective endeavour, in which devotees morally and intellectually superior would share their Punya with the handicapped ones, sharpened the edge of Dharma for the nomadic and pastoral communities. The Bodhisattva thus played the role of a hero in society in Tibetan sense of the term ‘hero’. The Tibetans prayed, as they still pray, for the repeated rebirth of a Buddha in the making, or of one who is already a Buddha, or even of a celestial being. Thus there are incantations of Padmasambhava and Atisa: the Buddhas in mundane form, and of Avalokiteswara and Amitabha: the Buddhas in celestial form. Such incarnations, known as Tulku, are wrongly described in Western idiom as Living Buddhas. Early European visitors to China picked up this nomenclature from confused Confucian literati.

THE RED AND THE YELLOW

Another Western usage is to divide Tibetan Buddhism into Red and Yellow. By Red is meant the three earlier sects, Nyingma, Kagyu and Sakya, and by Yellow is denoted the later Gelugpa. The Nyingma dates back to the advent of Padmasambhava, that is, the second half of the eighth century. The Kagyu trace their heritage to a great Siddha of eastern India named Naropa (died 1040), the Sakya to a scholar and patron of learning from Central Tibet named Khon-gyal (1034-1073) and the Gelug to a great monk-scholar from Kokonor named Tsongkhapa (1357-1419). There is a sharp difference of opinion regarding esoteric practices and monastic discipline between the so-called Red Sects on one hand and the Yellow on the other. For latly in general, all temples and monasteries of all sects are equally holy and good both for congregation and pilgrimage. Incarnations connected with Red
have been found in Yellow households while some highest Yellow incarna-
tions have come from Red families. All incarnations of all sects, however, render obedience to the incarnation of Avalokitesvara—the Dalai Lama—as the Sole God of the Land of Snow.

III

LANGUAGE OF INDIA IN TIBET

“The waters of Ganga made fertile the arid steppes of Inner Asia”. That is how a German scholar had described the great efflorescence of Buddhist literature in the sands and snows of Inner Asia. The Bhagarathe who took the stream to the arid north was in the grateful imagination of Northern Buddhists, come from Varanasi, where Buddha Sakyamuni had turned the Wheel of Law. In Trans-Himalayan legend the Sacred Lotus after it withered away in Varanasi blossomed in Lhasa, and the Master’s “body, speech and mind” made a reappearance in the Trans-Himalayan highlands. Lhasa in welcoming Sanskrit was no doubt sheltering the language of the Land of Enlightenment and Bod-skad (Tibetan) as the medium of the Dharma became as sacred as Sanskrit. The layout, content and presentation of Tibetan canon and all later works down to the last days of Lamaism have been such that a Nepali Vajrayara, proud of his country having been the refuge of Sanskrit learning, has no hesitation to describe Bod-skad as Lhasa Sanskrit. By the label Lhasa Sanskrit a Nepali Buddhist would not merely imply that the Tibetan script is derived from Sanskrit source but also claim that Tibetan literature preserves the treasures of Sanskrit literature. Much of the originals are lost to the world today while most of the remnants in Sanskrit the world owes to the care and zeal of Nepali scholars during the centuries when Sanskrit learning in the Land of Enlightenment was in shade. Western scholarship would testify that the monastic universities in Tibet and Mongolia not merely preserved the treasures of Sanskrit but also developed the Sanskrit traditions in their seats. Thus Logic and Metaphysics, Medicine and Chemistry from India flourished in Sakya, Tashilhunpo, Drepung, Derge, Kumbum and Urga.

Why the legendary author of Tibetan alphabet, Thomi Sambhota, did not seek inspiration for a script from the great neighbouring country in the east, has puzzled many Sinologists today. As the medium of expression in the Celestial Empire, the Chinese script had a sanctity of its own. Mastery of the ideograph was a hallmark of academic and bureaucratic power inside the Middle Kingdom while beyond the outermost frontiers of the Middle Kingdom the ideograph was a symbol of culture. A barbarian speaking the Celestial language was a lesser barbarian and if a barbarian could read and write the script his access to power and privilege in the Celestial court was ensured. Besides dissemination of Chinese language and Chinese script beyond the Han frontiers was a fundamental principle of imperial statecraft throughout history. Thus the Manchu, the Mongol and even the Turki (Uighur) had to accept Chinese language and script for varying periods to varying degrees and the vertical form was adopted in Manchu and Mongol scripts. An American Sinologist has therefore described the Tibetan escape from Chinese language and script as an inexplicable phenomenon. The truth of the matter is that the Tibetan speech is not as near the Han as many Sinologists presume. If the term Mongoloid is used in a wide sense both Tibetan and Chinese languages are Mongoloid languages. Tibetan is also a
tonal speech like Chinese but Tibetan is not so predominantly monosyllabic as Chinese. Even if there are affinities, as presumed by some Sinologists, an ideograph established in one language is not necessarily adequate for the imagery and idiom of another. While linguistics and morphology conceal the secrets of failure of Chinese ideograph in Tibet, Tibetans have their own explanation for the success of Sanskrit. Twenty years ago in Tashilhunpo and Drepung I made enquiries as to why the pictograph was found unsuitable for transcription of Tibetan speech and how did Thomi Sambhota and his colleagues adjudicate the claims of different Indo-Iranian and Mediterranean scripts. I had in mind that the Brahmi script was possibly an import from the west of Saptasindhu and that in the first half of the seventh century Kharoshthi and several other scripts were prevalent in the regions west and northwest of Tibet. The answer of the Tibetan scholars was, however, as simple as the Tibetan mind. I was told that there was no need to adjudicate the merits of different phonetic scripts known to Thomy and his friends. The need for a script had arisen out of the need for translating Buddhist texts in Tibetan language. It was thus "a good act" or "a natural process", interdependent on the other processes of Dharma as in Pratityasamutpadā. Thus the script had to be looked for in the same region from where came the Sacred Books. The process did not end with the Svaya Vyanjana of Sanskrit or the horizontal Rupa from left to right. The Tibetan book, though made of paper, did not follow the format of Chinese scroll but adopted the palm-leaf format of India. An honorific designation for a Tibetan loose-leaf book is Poti derived from Sanskrit Punthi/Pustika. Indic or Sanskritic sentiments for books and learning have influenced Tibetan mind ever since.

To start with, the invention of alphabet was treated as a divine gift as in Sanskrit tradition: Brahmi was reputed to have come from the mouth of Brahma. It is not certain whether Thomi Sambhota, the formulator of alphabets, devised his set of thirty letters from the archaic Nagarī (Kanjana/Lantsha) or from Kashmīri (Sarada) characters. What is certain and indisputable, both among Tibetan believers and modern scholars, is that the Tibetan alphabet was of Brahmi origin. It is curious that while the words Brahmi and Nagarī were obsolete in many Indian vernaculars by the beginning of the nineteenth century, these words were current among the Lamas and other learned people all over the Tibetan-speaking world. It is relevant to point out that in India the term Brahmi was re-discovered towards the middle of the nineteenth century, thanks to archaeologists and epigraphists. In Tibet terms like Akṣara, Sabdā, Vak or Varna came to be sanctified exactly as in India and each term was most meticulously translated to convey the different meanings under different contexts. The veneration for Akṣara as in traditional India was fully reflected in Tibet in handling of books as if they were icons. I was surprised to notice such usage in Tibet in 1955-56. A Tibetan book, even if it be on a mundane matter, cannot be left on the floor or cast away like an old pair of shoes. The Imperishable Object, as the Sacred Letter or Akṣara, is the heart of the matter. The Tibetan veneration for Nagarī as the kin of Brahmi should be an enlightenment to those scholars who champion transcription of Sanskrit works in Roman and would discard Nagarī as internationally less honourable than Roman. I am not a linguist nor by any means am good in reading scripts obsolete in our country today. But for me the most important evidence of Indian culture in Tibet and even the Baikali has been the most conspicuous presence of the Six Mystic Syllables OM-MA-NI-PAD-ME-HUM on rock and boulders, stupas and temples, prayerwheels and altars; and I had not the least doubt on my first sight of Six
Mystic Syllables that the Tibetan Aksara was a Rupa of Sanskrit Aksara.

The Tibetan veneration for the Sacred Letter from the Land of Enlightenment was also expressed in calling the vowels and consonants as Ali and Kai, the two mystic terms used in Tantras which can be traced back to the Veda. The learned Tibetan unhesitatingly affirms that Aksara goes back to pre-Buddhist times in the Veda. The adoration of Vak and Aksara, Brahman and Sarasvati in Rig Veda and later literature needs no presentation here. What needs emphasis here is that Sarasvati is the only Vedic deity and for that matter the only Brahmanical or Hindu deity who is held in highest adoration in Mahayana pantheon and therefore in Northern Buddhist countries like Tibet and Mongolia. While other Hindu deities like Brahma, Indra or Ganessa were incorporated into Mahayana pantheon simply as accessory deities aiding and serving Buddhas Sakyamuni or other Buddhas and while even some Hindu deities were objected under the feet of a Buddha or held in utmost ridicule, Sarasvati was adored as a goddess on her own right. The Mahayana veneration for Sarasvati progressed across the Himalayas, and at Yangchen in Tibet and Mongolia Sarasvati is the deity for scholars and laymen alike irrespective of any sectarian considerations. The Tibetan literature from Thonmi Sambhota down to the twentieth century abounds with utterances and remarks about the significance and sanctity of Sabda Brahman.

LITERATURE OF INDIA IN TIBET

The translation of the Buddhist canon from Sanskrit into Tibetan has been universally admitted as the most scientific and yet local ever before the present day UNESCO programmes. The national endeavour in Bod-ylul (Tibet) running through four centuries may be best described in ecoteric diction in the union of Prajna (Wisdom) of India and Upayakausalya (Ingenuity) of Tibet. Infinite wealth and refinement of Sanskrit had to come to terms with the originality and independence of Tibetan. Western scholars who have mastered Indian and Sanskrit and Sino languages have not discovered any affinities between Tibetan and any of these groups. Buisel Gould and Hugh Richardson speaking, reading and writing Tibetan almost like the Tibetan—wrote in 1943 that “Tibetan is widely separated in vocabulary, grammar and mode of thought from any language with which the learner is expected to be familiar.” Earlier a renowned master of languages, Denison Ross, had admitted the same, though he felt that his mastery of Russian was complementary to his mastery of Tibetan and vice-versa. Knowledge of Sanskrit, which Denison Ross and Hugh Richardson had acquired before beginning Tibetan, did not determine the proficiency of such eminent Tibetologists.

To obtain the exact meaning of Sanskrit words and phrases Thonmi Sambhota and his successors had first resorted to a servile imitation of Sanskrit layout and style and ignored the claims of Tibetan syntax. This resulted in monstrous compositions which misrepresented the grammar of Sanskrit and denied the genius of Tibetan language. These translations were later on considerably revised or altogether replaced; a few survive in the manuscripts discovered from the Caves of Thousand Buddhas and other sites in the north and north-west of Tibet. In the latter or revised translations imagery and idiom of Sanskrit underwent welcome Tibetanization along with honourable acceptance of native idiom and imagery.

No effort was spared to probe into the etymology of a Sabia or to unravel
the aphorisms of Vyakarana. Panini and later Sarasvata Vyakarana were studied with the same zeal as in the Tols in India. Thus while each word of the original was rendered into its exact appropriate in Tibetan, the Tibetan syntax was compiled with. For every translation there would be one (or two) Indian scholar knowing Tibetan and one (or two) Tibetan scholar know- ing Sanskrit. For support to translators, compilation of grammars and lexicons was also taken in hand. For widely used or commonplace terms like Buddha, Dharma or Sangha uniform sets of equivalents were fixed by a central council of translators. The result of the translations from the time of Thonmi (c. 650) till the propagation by Atisa (c. 950) were later incorporated into two encyclopaedic collections called Kanjur and Tanjur. Kanjur stands for Budchavacana and Tanjur for Sastra. Thus Abhidharma, Pratiparamita and Vinaya, the treatises of Nagarjuna, Asanga and Dignaga or the latest Mahayana tracts from Pala Bengal are all enshrined in these collections. But for this faithful and yet idiomatic translation many of the Buddhist Sanskrit works would have been lost forever.

Through such scientific translations and regular exchange with Nepali and India's scholars, imagery and idiom of Sanskrit became a part and parcel of Tibetan literature and later, when Mongols embraced the Dharma, of Mongol literature. This impact is noticed most in the art of dialectics, science of poetics, and historiography. Buddhist logic with Indian art of polemics and Indian logician's mannerisms flourished in refuge in Sakya, Drepung and Urga. For models of rhetoric and prosody, men of letters in Tibet and Mongolia invariably referred back to Kavyadarsa and such works from India. Dialectics or poetics were, however, not much developed in Tibet before the advent of Dharma; therefore such Indian elements in Tibetan literature were more in the nature of innovations than revolutions. For a true revolution in Tibetan literature one has to notice the historiographical writings in Tibet. In the beginning, that is, before Sanskrit made its impact, the annals and chronicles of Tibet were inspired by the Chinese tradition of Shih-chi (the Record of the Scribe—the Record of a Historian). The Chinese method of record-keeping meant a meticulous regard for events and their dates. The Indian tradition of historical writings, as is well known, was indifferent to mundane happenings and their chronological sequence. The victory of Buddhism in Tibet was eventually the victory of Indian attitude to objects mundane. Men of letters including historical scholars, submitted to the Indian tradition. The Tibetan nomenclature for records, Yig-tshang, yielded to a new form Chen-jung (Chos-bhyyung) or the Growth of Religion. As the new nomenclature suggests the subject-matter of history was now the Dharma, its origin in India and its growth in the Trans-Himalayas. The Dharma was eternal and everything else was transitory, therefore the story of Dharma was history par excellence. The ideal history was no longer the Records (Yig-tshang) or the Line of Kings (Rgyal-rabs) but the Dharmakahini (Chos- hnyung). The lives and thoughts of the saints and scholars, the doctrinal debates and the constructions of temples and monasteries were now the stuff for the historiographer. Even that a strong sense for historical sequence and a high regard for firm chronology continued to characterize the chronicles of Tibet. It cannot be denied that Tibetan historical writings contained much useful data for history of the neighbouring countries. Taratatha's "History of Buddhism" abounds with legends and myths but provides some unimpeachable evidence where Indian literary sources are silent.

A measure of Sanskrit impact on Tibetan and Mongol languages is
provided by the wide currency of loan-words from Sanskrit. While a most faith-
ful and yet perfect translation of the entire corpus of Sanskrit vocabulary
was achieved and even many proper names like Asoka and Vaisali were ren-
deed into Tibetan, for academic as well as sentimental grounds the Sanskrit
forms of certain words were preferred. Thus while Buddha, Dharma and
Sangha or Veda and Vijnana were always expressed in Tibetan forms, terms
like Guru and Mthu or Sakayamuni and Panthi have been used in the original
form down to our time. Not that good Tibetan equivalents could not be
coined but that such coinage could not satisfactorily convey the full context
of the term. It will be interesting to give a few examples of Sanskrit loan-
words: Om, Mani, Padma, Vajrapani, Nalanda, Taksala. Some Sanskrit
words underwent sea-change in spelling and pronunciation. Five such loan-
words common to Tibetan and Mongol would be—Arya, Dharma, Panthi,
Ratna, Vajra. In Mongol there was a greater zeal to have as many Sanskrit
words as possible for the Mongol translator, rightly found that in the relay
of Dharma from Sanskrit to Mongol via Tibetan the original context would be
more obscure. I need also record my most pleasant experience in the
Buddha’s regions to hear the Burilat Mongols uttering the words like Adisa
(Atisha), Bandisa (Padthi) and Entani Ratna (Ratna) without any efforts in their
prayers in Mongol and their talks in Russian.

If I tell a Lama that modern researches have proved that there are sub-
stantial non-Aryan elements in Sanskrit vocabulary and that such words as
Cardana, Danila, Pandhila and Silva are probably of Dravidian stock the
Lama would retort that whatever is Sanskrit is Arya. If I argue farther I
may offend the Trans-Himalayan believer he be be a monk or a lama
or a dilettante. I had on several occasions told Lamas that in modern Indian
opinion Buddhism and Hinduism are traced to Tibet-Mongoloid stock and not Indo-Aryan. Far from pleasing the Lamas my statement was a sort
of blasphemy which pleased them considerably. To a Northern Buddhist
all moral and spiritual values are from Ayodhuni and Buddha Sakayamuni,
could not but be Arya and the language of Prajnaparamita was indeed Arya
par excellence.

IV

ROLE OF INDIAN SCRIPT

The role of the script in the evolution of Tibetan civilization has been
seen as historic as that of the religion. The most amazing story of Tibet—as the
only neighbour of China—to have gone out of the bounds of pictograph has
been narrated above. Firm adherence to phonetic script not only ruled out
any further association with Confucian literati or Han court but also opened
wide the doors on the south as well as the west. With this new instrument
of learning Tibet would not only absorb all that could be had from India but
would also go west to Iran, Arabia, Byzantium and Rome. Under the sus-
pires of AKSARA, the intelligentsia of Tibet could enjoy the Aben’s Fables
and Sufi poems. Tibet was no longer a Barbarian neighbour of China and
could now freely exchange ideas as well as commodities with a much wider
world than the Celestial Middle Kingdom. As the Lamas would say the
AKSARA made Tibet morally and materially independent of China. Tibet’s
intellectual as well as economic salvation lay in the AKSARA.

Political salvation of Tibet was also served in Tibet’s rejection of the

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Chinese script or refusal to have any adaptation of the Chinese script. Chinese anxiety to propagate their script in eastern regions of Tibet, particularly in Kokonor (Tsinghai) region, throughout the nineteenth century was both a symbol of Han colonial expansion and a move to liquidate the script as well as the language which distinguished the Bod-pa from the Han.

In ancient India, the Imperishable Object or Aksara was considered a divine gift come out of the mouth of Brahmman. This Aksara migrated to the Land of Snows in the seventh century after Christ. In both India and Tibet the phonetic script was afforded as most convenient and systematic form for expression of ideas.

For Tibet the phonetic script was also the symbol of identity and independence vis-a-vis China. An anxiety to disown any Chinese association with matters relating to DHARMA determined the Tibetan preference for Vajrasattva and expulsion of Hashang from Lhasa. Propagation of DHARMA by Chinese scholars and monks was banned for ever after the Lhasa Debate. A mystery still which celebrated the Expulsion of Hashang was a favourite item in the New Year Month in different parts of Tibet till the middle of this century.

ROLE OF INDIAN RELIGION

The entry of Buddhism from India was the most decisive event in the history of Tibet, China as well as India. Significantly enough the Chinese annals do not record much and are quite silent about the first Tibetan king's conversion. On the other hand the contacts with Chinese Buddhism, both before and after the official adoption of Indian Buddhism, feature in Chinese annals.

Denigration of Buddhism from China could not be defended on any metaphysical or theological grounds for the Chinese expositions were, at least in the contemporaneous Tang times, most faithful to the original Indian patterns. The Sino-phon scholars therefore describe Tibetan antagonism to Chinese Buddhism as bigoted servility to the scholars and monks from India. The Sino-phon scholars would call this a natural tendency to have the religion direct from the land where it originated.

The truth of the matter lies in considerations other than metaphysical or theological. We have to find the truth in extra-spiritual or secular considerations which eventually led to decline and near-extinction of Buddhism in China. Buddhism could never become a national religion in China for three simple reasons. The Buddhist monks would not kowtow to the Son of Heaven while the Confucian literati did. Buddhism preached negation of soul and proscribed ancestor worship. Buddhism preached equality: equality between man and woman and equality between 'barbarian' and 'civilized'. Buddhism was in short 'a barbarian religion' with priests in 'barbarian dress'. Thus except the Tang emperors, no Han Son of Heaven ever subscribed it. Shrewd Tibetan statesmen were no doubt seized of the precarious position of Buddhism in China and when they had a choice between China and India they would go for India. For Tibet, they rightly apprehended, Chinese Buddhism would be the Trojan Horse.

As later events proved, the DHARMA gained for Tibetan freedom at home.
and freedom abroad. Feudal lords and kirtas made room for the Lamas and Grand Lamas. In Tibet (and Mongolia) belief in the emergence of the Lama as Protector (Kyabgon) was prophesied in Siddhārmatanumārdhaka Sūtra. When Ailsa (Srijampa Dzogkarpa) visited Tibet (1424-1454) he confirmed this: he prophesied the fall of monarchy in the Land of Snows and the advent of Sañgharātra Avalokiteśvara as the Dharma-raja.

Fourteen incarnations of Avalokiteśvara—the fourteen Dalai Lamas—be known to have ruled Tibet in fulfillment of ancient prophecies. "As the supreme civil and religious ruler of Tibet the Dalai Lama enjoyed a real divine right and unlimited prestige'. There were no restrictions, internal or external, on the Dalai Lama's sovereignty.

Tibet owed her identity and independence to the Dharma. Tibet acknowledged that Dharma, the gift from India, had saved Tibet from Kidination.

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INDIA AND TIBET

—A STUDY IN INTERDEPENDENCE—

SYNOPSIS

The thesis 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.

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The first lecture presents the theme of India and Tibet being a geographical unit, a unit of physical independence; 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-cooperative neighbour. Both for economic considerations and security reasons, Tibet and India have to cultivate active mutual aid in the race for survival.

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 19.7.77
A SCANDAL AT TASHILHUNPO
—H. E. RICHARDSON

In 1946, while I was at Lhasa, when Tibetan guests were looking with me at illustrations in various books on Tibet we came across the photograph in Youngusband's India and Tibet (1910) of "the Shigatse Abbot" who visited him at Kanya Dzong in 1903. He was identified by my guests at the Skyabs-dbyangs, the highest-ranking monastic official of Tashilhunpo and the equivalent of the Spyi-khabs Rabjampa of the Lhasa administration. Someone remarked that he had been dismissed from his post after his visit to Youngusband; and supposing that to have been due to the failure of his mission, I thought no more of it until, many years later, I came across the inside story in the papers of Sir Charles Bell, now in the India Office Records, where he relates the account given him in 1914 by the famous Lochen Shatras (Rimpoche) of a notorious scandal at Tashilhunpo early in the present century. With the permission of the Director of the India Office Library and Records I have used that note as the basis of this article.

Some time before the British Mission to Lhasa it was reported to the Dalai Lama's government that the Panchen Lama's father had been murdered and that the Skyabs-dbyangs was engaged in sorcery against the Lhasa administration and was also trying to usurp the authority of the Panchen Lama. The Panchen on being asked about this reply that he wanted a thorough inquiry to be made; and accordingly a party of officials headed by Giar-byung Shapge was sent from Lhasa for that purpose. It was discovered that the Panchen Lama's father had an affair with the wife of another prominent Tashilhunpo official, the Gyer-tshang Chen-po. The woman attempted to poison the Panchen Lama's mother who, as David Macdonald records in Twenty Years in Tibet, was a deaf mute so that she could marry the father. But the plot miscarried and it was the Panchen's father and some of his servants who ate the poisoned food. They were saved only by the skill of a doctor known as Bada Amchi who, as I learnt somewhere (perhaps in another note by Bell) had accompanied the Skyabs-dbyangs on his visit to Youngusband at Kampa Dzong. A dog which ate some of the poisoned food was less fortunate. It died. The Gyer-tshang Chen-po's wife tried to put the blame on her daughter but was found guilty and was banished and heavily fined. The record does not say so but she was probably flogged as well. The Panchen's father, who must at least have been innocent of the poisoning attempt, was fined and imprisoned in Phuntsoling Dzong. These proceedings were presumably carried out by the Panchen Lama's ministers headed by the Skyabs-dbyangs but Gyer-tshang Chen-po, who was even more influential than the Skyabs-dbyangs, wanted further vengeance and presided the Skyabs-dbyangs to send orders to the Phuntsoling Dzong to have the Panchen Lama's father killed, which was done by clubbing him to death. In addition to this grave offence of which he was found guilty by Giar-byung Shapge and his colleagues the Skyabs-dbyangs was shown to have sought to bring the Dalai Lama's government under his influence by means of written magical charms which he kept beneath his seat and also of attempting to usurp the authority of the Panchen Lama. He and the Gyer-tshang Chen-po were heavily fined and degraded. There were probably other lesser figures who received

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similar punishment. All the fines were made over to the Panchen Lama.

The official enquiry must have taken place sometime between November 1903 and July 1904. The "Shigatse Abbot’s" visit to Younghusband lasted from July to October 1903. Younghusband to whom the Tibetan mind and Tibetan ways were a new experience describes him as courteous, kindly inclined and lacking in intellect. That judgement seems to underestimate the Tibetan ability to external showiness and strength of mind beneath a genuine calm and self-control and an assumed air of simplicity. Incidentally, W. D. Shakabpa states in his *Tibet* that the Shigatse delegation’s visit to Younghusband was made on the instruction of the Lhasa government. Shakabpa’s history also shows that Gsar-byung Tshe-brtan dbang-phiyang rdo-rje was appointed Shappe towards the end of 1903. In July 1904 he left Lhasa with the Dalai Lama in flight to Mongolia and, later, China. There is no indication how long before the enquiry the various crimes had taken place.

A possible sequel to those events may be seen in MacDonald’s *Twenty Years in Tibet* where he mentions two dismissed officials of the Panchen Lama who took service under the Lhasa government and were responsible for a great deal of the trouble between the Dalai and Panchen Lamas.

So far as I know, Bell’s is the only account of the affair but examination of Chinese records might find some trace of it.

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NOTES & TOPICS

BUDDHASASANA IN TIBET

The term Buddhaśasana as description for polity or ecclesiastical polity, as known in Theravada countries like Burma, is not known in Buddhist Sanskrit usage and in Tibetan language. A system of polity in which the presiding abbots or incarnates wielded temporal authority was however known in Tibet for eight hundred years till the middle of the twentieth century. The Sakya Lamas, the Karma Lamas and the Dashi Lamas have ruled Tibet, it is said, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Atisa (c982-1054) who propagated the Sacred Doctrine tamed between c1042-1054. Atisa is known to have made a specific prophecy about the advent of Avalokiteshvara in his spiritual lineage.

Atisa had visited the Savaśuddha (identified with Burma-Malaya-Java) before he visited Tibet. Did the political concepts of Buddhhasasana and Sangharaja travel with Atisa northward into Tibet and later Mongolia? The article ‘Buddhist religion in Burma, before and after 1385’ is thus relevant to this field of study.

NIRMAL C. SINHA

INVENTION OF TIBETAN ALPHABET

The date of invention of “Aṭṭha” and “Kali” in Tibet has so far not been settled to the satisfaction of modern scholars. Tibetans simply affirm that King Song-tsen Gambo’s minister Thonmi Sambhota went to India—possibly Kashmir and Nepal, studied the prevalent Brahmi scripts and returned with a set of alphabet and a form of script sometime around 630/635 A.D. Tibetans alloglossified the minister and called him incarnation of Manjusri. Good translations of Indian Buddhist texts are dated from 650-660 A.D.

Formulation of the alphabet, coining of the script and good translation—all these are in Tibetan imagination achievements of one generation. Modern scholars cannot accept this and find evidence from the Tung Huang records that the Tibetans scholars and nobles were in deep contact with literature and science both from China and India for long. The contacts began evidently before Song-tsen Gambo’s time; for alphabet and script, grammar and compositions flowing from Ali and Kali could not but be the outcome of hard and systematic work spread over more than one generation. In Tibetan legends, the need for alphabet arose only when King Song-tsen Gambo had imported Buddhism from India and Buddhist texts had to be made available in Tibetan language. Modern scholars agree that Tibetan nobles and scholars had good acquaintance with Chinese pigraphy and had rejected the Chinese alphabet because of sentimental attachment to the language of the Land of Enlightenment.

Tibetans merely say since the Dharma was from India, Aksara, which had to record the Teachings, was also from India. This however, cannot
satisfy the modern scholars. They say “The Tibetans were not so ‘stupid’ and ‘barbarous’ as their tradition points them. They were both worthy and intelligent” (R.A. Stein). In an article entitled “India and Tibet—Historical Considerations” in this issue of the Bulletin, N. C. Sinha supports the same view that the Tibetans were worthy and intelligent and propounds the thesis that the rejection of Chinese script and the adoption of Indian script were political acts. The new Dharma and the new Akṣara demarcated the culture and identity of the Bod-pa from those of the Han.

In this view adoption of ‘Buddhism from India’ was a cool calculated act. Scholars and nobles of Tibet had come into contact with Buddhism in China for decades before Song-tsen Gampo. But when the King’s conversion was effected it was not at the instance of Chinese Buddhism; the monks and scholars from the south were invited to convert Tibet into Buddhism. The expulsion of Hashang after the Lhasa debate as this author points out was a political act and could not be justified on grounds of theology. This political act was affirmed and confirmed by ban on Buddhist scholars and monks of China.

The veneration for phonetic alphabet vis-a-vis Chinese pictograph became an article of faith for Tibet. In Tibetan opera depicting the story of Song-tsen Gampo, the first act (or scene) is that of introduction of Ali and Kal by Thonmi Samkhota; the later acts narrate the marriage of the king to the Buddhist princesses—one from China and other from Nepal—and the advent of the monks from India and propagation of Dharma by these monks riding the Snow Lion. The precedence for alphabet, in Tibetan drama, gives support to modern scholars’ contention that the Akṣara was migrating to Tibet quite before the rise of Song-tsen Gampo. In orthodox Tibetan view the act (or scene) depicting the story of Thonmi Samkhota would be like the maṇḍalā-cūrana of Indian drama. What could be a better subject of the maṇḍalācūrana than obedience to Manjusri who was incarnate in the minister Thonmi Samakhota? Thonmi in his grammatical work makes salutations first to the Buddha then to Manjusri, Sadasiva (rat-siva) and gurus. Sadasiva as the primordial revealer of the imperishable sound was as much venerated in Buddhist Tibet as the Buddha. Situ Rinpoche’s commentary is quite explicit on this point.

Whether invention of phonetic alphabet from India was made before the introduction of Buddhism as the logic of history demands, or it was made after the introduction of Buddhism as the Tibetan legends affirm, the fact can not be denied that choice of phonetic alphabet from India determined the course of history in Tibet.

THUPAM K. GHOSH

STUPID BARBARIAN

Stupid Barbarian was the customary designation for a non-Han (e.g. Tibetan, Mongol or Manchu) in the language of the Middle Kingdom. The expression ‘barbarian’ had gone so deep that even the Conquering Emperors used it about their own Majesties. In the proclamations of the Conquering Emperors such expressions like “I being a barbarian I am free to follow a barbarian religion like that of Buddha” occurred. A Han Emperor is said to have remarked (c 477): “Foreign potentates cannot be compared even with
Chinese underlings: the T'ang-ch'ang king, although he counts among frontier potentates, is not equal even to a Chinese clerk’. Chi’en Lung’s description of Lord McCartney as “The Red Barbarian from the King of the Small Islands” (1793) was in same style.

The Tibetans, who carried nids into the central plains of the Middle Kingdom in the seventh and eighth centuries, however, adopted the expressions ‘stupid’ and ‘barbarian’ with great advantage in their diplomatic correspon-
dence with the Chinese. The Tibetan protestations of ‘innocence and ‘stupidity’ served them well in diplomatic encounters with the seasoned Con-
sultan literati. In a previous number of the Bulletin (Vol VII, No 1) Hugh Richardson wrote about the ‘honour’ of Fish Bag which the ‘stupid barbarian’ declined. The article in this number (A Scandal at Tashihunpo) cites an instance of Tibetan “scurrility concealed under an air of simplicity”.

ANIMAL SYMBOLS IN BUDDHIST ART

In a previous number (1977: 2) we had an article on ‘Animal symbols in Maurya Art’ from Nirharajin Ray. Illustrations (copyright: Archaeo-
logical Survey) are repeated in this number. An article on the same symbols as in Tibetan tradition will be published in the next number.

SRI MOTICHAND PRADHAN

Born on 30 July 1893 at Haridas Hatta, Darjeeling, Motichand Pradhan died on 7 May 1977 at his Kalimpong residence. He was the first son of Lambodar Pradhan, the wellknown citizen of Turuk in Sikkim. He had while quite an infant read in Turuk Mission Primary School and when nine was admitted into Darjeeling Government School from where he passed the Matriculation Examination (Calcutta University) in the first division and with Hindi as semicaral. He then joined the Scottish Churchs College, Calcutta and passed the Intermediate in Arts and Bachelor of Arts examination (Calcutta University) with credit. He was the first Nepali—“from Indus, Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim” in the words of Sir Charles Bell—to be a graduate of a modern university.

In 1916 Motichand Pradhan was selected for the Bengal Provincial Civil Service and was first appointed Sub-Deputy Collector. He had his training at Darjeeling, Comilla and Maida. In 1920 he was second officer in Kalim-
pong, and was in charge of Kalimpong Khas Mahal. Later he worked in Marshallaad for special training in land revenue settlement work. His pro-
ciciency in revenue administration in Rajahiti (1911) and Kangpore (1914) was much appreciated. As Deputy Magistrate cum Deputy Collector he was often requisitioned for the training of probationers in the Indian Civil Service. As Treasury Officer in Darjeeling (1938) and later Sub-Divisional Officer at Kurong and Kalimpong (1948) he was much sought after by his Senior (ICS) Officers for his knowledge and experience. When he retired in 1952 as SDO: Darjeeling, Motichand was a figure highly respected for his integrity and rectitude; he was as much feared by corrupt elements in society.
Well known for his honesty and his vast experience, Motichand was called back a year later from retirement by the government of his home state, Sikkim. For about a decade he worked as Chief Magistrate and Chief Executive Officer and for quite sometime as Transport Manager. After he retired from Sikkim Government service, he was on several occasions asked to advise on administrative problems in Sikkim.

Motichand Pradhan was an embodiment of our ancient adage—"plain living and high thinking". Well versed in Nepali and Sanskrit, Bengali and Hindi he was given to deep and wide readings particularly on Religion and Philosophy. His knowledge of Vivekananda, Gandhi and Aurobindo was astounding, and though a staunch follower of Krishnamurti he was ever open to different schools of thought. He was a master of Yoga practices and lived an ascetic’s life after retirement.

Motichand Pradhan was an active patron of arts and letters. He was for long President of Nepali Sahitya Sammelan, Darjeeling and President, since inception, of Nepali Sahitya Adhyayana Samiti, Kalimpong; he was a member of Himalayan Kala Mandir, Darjeeling.

With his interest in Buddhism and his knowledge of Sanskrit and Tibetan, he was an enthusiastic Founder Member of the Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology. He was a member of the General Council and of the Executive Board of this Institute for successive terms. Founder Director of the Institute, Professor Nirmal Singh, tells the writer that late Sri Motichand Pradhan’s material and moral support was indispensable in building up this Institute.

M. P. PRADHAN

The obituary on Ven Rzing Lharpa could not be published in this number as the photographs illustrating some of his works were not available till this number was going into print.

NCE
BOOK REVIEWS


Author's subtitle runs thus: An Account of the Country and People of Central Tibet and of the Progress of the Mission sent there by the British Government in the year 1903-4, written with the help of all the principal persons of the Mission. Publishers of the reprint put the subtitle 'The Mysterious City' on the dust cover. This reviewer would have suggested a subtitle thus: Travel Diary cum War Diary cum Political Commentary of the Times Correspondent with the Youngusband Expedition.

The two volumes (pp 414 & 426) may not be classed with specialist works like Waddell's Lhasa and its Mysteries reviewed in the previous issue of this Bulletin. Yet they have great value both for the specialists and the general readers. The author, Perceval Landon, had travelled widely before he was destined to visit Lhasa and Central Tibet and in reporting his travels he wielded his pen like a man of letters of the late Victorian era. "He took the keenest interest in the mysteries of Tibet and appreciated to the full the wonderful scenery which to my mind was infinitely the most fascinating of all our experiences" as Francis Younghusband wrote in his Introductory Note.

Landon's exquisite accounts of the wonderful landscapes from the railhead Sigatki to the destination Lhasa are quite many, while limited space for review would not permit extracting more than two.

The foliage of the Tista valley from Sevoke onwards covers several pages.

"The Himalayas' southern front ends with an abruptness which is almost startling, and five or six miles away it would have been difficult to point out a fissure in the great wall of mountains which stands untopped across the wide flat waste of northern Bengal. Through this curtain there is this one narrow channel and India ends at its jaws. The towering cliffs, clothes suddenly with vegetation wherever root-hold can be found, spring sharply upwards, and the first turn in the track by the river hides the plains, with their blue lines of trees fifteen miles away beside the levelled water. Sevoke, planted at the water-side just where the slacks of the fan diverge, is a little street of masonry. Dust hangs heavily in the air and dryness dulls the leaves. The only wet thing at Sevoke is the water itself, as it slackens way and gently swerves outwards at the foot of its long stair. Even the rough dugout boats, moored to the pebbly bank, are coated with dust, and the lumps of camphor are almost indistinguishable in the boxes in the shops from the inevitable Pedro cigarettes beside them. From Sevoke onwards the beauty of the road begins to grow. The track runs on the westward bank of the Tista, fifteen or twenty feet above the snow-green water. Almost from the first mile post it is a gradually increasing riot of foliage such as Hooker himself admitted to be unparalleled"
in the world. There is no colour on God’s palette which He has not used along this road. There is no variety of vegetation which He has not permitted to find its own place somewhere beside the slowly chilling path. Sal and gurjun lead on through teak to kapok and bamboo, then on through tree fern and rhododendron to the pine. Beyond these last, beech trees alone survive among the frozen rocks of the upper snows. At their roots, or from the hill-side above their tops, round their stems, or springing from their wood is almost every flower known to man, here wasting its luxuriance along the loneliest and liveliest two hundred miles on earth. Pepper ferns, with their dark green glossy foliage, vines and bind weeds, begonias and asphodel tangled themselves about the undergrowth of gorgeous shrubs, or stumps gay with scarlet fungus and dripping moss. Overhead the bald scarp of the rock, orange and ochre and cinnamon rarely broke through the trailing glories of smilax and other creepers. Once or twice down on the road itself, where a passage had been blasted years ago, the deep crystalline garnet rang not only with the echoes of the sweeping water below, but with the tiny persistence of the drip-well from its roof. Ferns lurk in every cleft, and, higher up, the majesty of some great osmunda thrives itself clear of the green confusion round its roots. Of greens, indeed, from the dark moss myrtle of some varnished leaf that ought to have been a magnolia, but probably was not, to the aquamarine of the young and dusty bamboo grass, from the feathery emerald of some patch of giant moss to the rich olive of a crown-vallary of orchid, none is unrepresented.

“Where the valley vegetation lies in the ugliest putrefaction there you will find the living jewels of this long file—a flash of emerald and chrome glazed with chocolate; a patch of brown, shot through with sapphire in the sun; a swallow-tail with olivine and black velvet where we may rarely see, beside some Norfolk broad, the dun and cream of his poor English cousin. Strong in the wing, zigzagging unballast in ten-foot swoops of pure colour, the butterflies lace the sunlight. And underfoot in the deep soft white dust the kidney footmark of the brown ox, or the kukri-like print of the high interted native are the only reminders in that hot world of colour that there are other things as graceless as oneself.”

“The colour of Tibet” in Landon’s knowledge “has no parallel in the world. Nowhere, neither in Egypt, nor in South Africa, nor even in places of such local reputation as Sydney, or Calcutta, or Athens, is there such a constancy of beauty, night and morning alike, as there is in these fertile plains inset in the mountain backbone of the world. Here there is a range and a quality in both light and colour which cannot be rendered by the best of coloured plates, but which must always be remembered if the dry bones of figure and fact are to be properly conceived.

“During the mid-hours of a summer day, Tibet is perhaps not unlike the rest of the dry tropical zone. Here, as elsewhere, the fierce Oriental sun scorches away the softer tints, and the shrinking and stretching shadows of the white hours are too scanty to relieve the mirage and the monotony. All about Chang-lo the contemptuous shoulders of the shadeless mountains stand blank and uninviting. All along the plain as far as the eye can see the stretches of iris or barley and the plantations of willow-thorn are dulled into eucalyptus grey by the dust; the trees lift themselves dispirited, and the faint droop of every blade and every leaf tints the eye with unconscious sympathy. Fir off along the Shigatse road a pockmarked shuffles along, making in sheer
weariness as much dust as the careessel hoofs of a bullock, that dustiest of beasts. One does not look at the kouses. The sun beats off their coarse and strong grained white-wash, and one can hardly believe that they are the same dainty buildings of pearl-grey or rose-pink that one watched as they faded out of sight with the sunset yesterday evening. Everything shivers behind the crawling skeins of mirage. There is no strength, there are no outlines to anything in the plain, and even the hardthorn trees in the plantation are flecked. As one passes underneath them a kite or two dives downward from the branches. He will disturb little dust as he moves, for your kite mistreats a new perch, and the hough he sits on must be leafless both for the traverse of his outlook, and for the clear outrage of his wide wings. Also, you may be sure he has been to and fro fifty times to-day. See him settle a hundred yards away near that ugly signifiant heap of dirty maroon cloth, and mark the dust thrown forward by the thrashing brake-stroke of his great wings. It hangs in a pretty cloud still when we have come up to him and driven him away in indignation for a little space.

"Under foot the dwarf clematis shuts in from the midday heat its black snake-head flowers, and the young shoots of the jasmine turn the backs of their tender leaves to the sun, drooping a little as they do so. Veronica is there in stunted little bushes; vetches, rest-harrows, and dwarf indigolike plants swarm along the sides of the long dry water channels; and here and there, where the ditch runs steep, you may find, along towards the southern face, what looks for all the world like a thickly-sown bank of violet. Violets of course they are not, but the illusion is perfect, in colour, growth, and size alike. Near them tall fresh-looking docks have found a wet stratum deep below the dusty irrigation cut, and away in aopping water meadow by the river stunted Himalayan primulas make a closely carpet of pink.

"Late in the afternoon the change begins. Details of flowers and fields and trees vanish—and surely one is content to lose them in the scene that follows. First, the light pull of pure blue which has all day grazed over the end of the valley towards Dongte deepens into ultramarine ash. Then in a few minutes as it seems, the fleeces of white and silver in the west have gained weight, and a mottled company of argent and silver-grey and cyanine heaps itself across the track of the setting sun. The sky deepens from blue to amber without a transient tint of green, and the red camp-fires whiten as the daylight fades. But the true sunset is not yet. After many minutes comes the sight which is perhaps Tibet's most exquisite and peculiar gift: the double glory of the east and west alike, and the rainbow confusion among the wide waste of white mountain ranges.

"For ten minutes the sun will fight a path clear of his clouds and a luminous ray sweeps down the valley, lighting up the unsuspected ridges and blackening the lurking hollows of the hills. This is no common light. The Tibetans themselves have given it a name of its own, and indeed the gorge-yellow blaze which paints it shadows myrtle-green underneath the deepened indigo of the sky defies description and deserves a commemorative phrase for itself alone. But the strange thing is still to come. A quick five-fingered aurora of rose light arches over the sky, leaping from east to west as one gazes overhead. The fingers converge again in the east, where a growing splendour shapes itself to welcome them on the horizon's edge."

"Then comes the climax of the transformation scene. While the carmine
is still over-arching the sky, on either side the horizon deepens to a still darker shade, and the distant hills stand out against it with uncloudy sharpness, indescribably like a jagged and translucent scale of mother-of-pearl lighted from below. Above them the ravines, and the ridges are palely lost, and in their place mantles a nearly underlay of caspian pink and emerald green, almost moving as one watches. Then the slowly developed into tire and grow dull; the quick evening glow comes out from the plain, and a sharp little wind from the south-east is the herald of the stars.

“Those hills are as unlike the “common, amber, and east” of South Africa as the high crimson, gold-buckled curtains of Egypt, or the long contrasting belts of the western sky in mid-ocean. So peculiar are they, so this country that they have as much right to rank as one of its characteristic features as Etna superstitious, or the “bos gravitans” itself; and to leave them unmentioned, however imperfect and crude the suggestion may be, would be to cover up the first page of the book which is only now after many centuries opened to the world. Thus alone is my excuse for attempting what every man in this expedition knows in his heart to be impossible.”

Landon was as good an observer of Nature as of War. His admiration of 32 Pioneers (Shim) and of the Indian clerk may be quoted in this connection.

“. . . What the hardship must have been of climbing up to an altitude which could not have been of less than 18,300 feet is difficult for the ordinary reader to conceive. Hampered alike by his accoutrements and by the urgent anxiety for rapidity, Wassawa Singh still gave his men but scanty opportunities of rest. It was such a climb as many a member of the Alpine Club would, under the best circumstances, have declined to attempt, and the Order of Merit which was afterwards conferred upon Wassawa Singh was certainly one of the most hardly earned distinctions of the campaign.”

“. . . But, well or ill, every man reached for his rifle and came out to his place. The members of the Mission—Colonel Youngusband, Lieutenant-Colonel Waddell, Captain Ryder, and it should not be forgotten, Mr. Miller, the confidential clerk of the Mission—immediately manned the upper works, and a certain number of the followers displayed considerable martial energy in positions of more or less personal danger.”

The first passage describes the capture of Karo La and the second refers to the siege of Gyantse camp. There are passages appreciating the bravery and skill of the Gurkhas and Pathans. About the Pyoldt Surveyor's Landon wrote “I do not know that there are many feats in the world of adventure, endurance and pluck that will compare favourably with that of the Indian native entrusted with the work of secret exploration in Tibet.” Since those explorations had made the task of Youngusband Expedition less difficult.

Landon's observations on the political and diplomatic affairs were profound.

“Chinese supremacy over Tibet nominally dates from the year 1726, and as about that time the policy of isolation was adopted, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the Chinese pressed it upon the Tibetans with the idea of making a ‘buffer state’ of the most impenetrable desolation between their province and the unknown but growing power of the foreigners in India.”
Perhaps it was not the white foreigners alone that they dreaded; Nadir Shah’s invasion of India in 1737 must have been the cause of some anxiety to the Middle Kingdom. In any case we may fairly accept the definite statement of many travellers that the isolation of Tibet was in its origin a Chinese device, but that the Chinese were unable to secure admission into the province even for the strangers to whom they had given official permission.

In the concluding pages we read about the hostile demonstration, and stone-throwing, over the Chinese escorting Claude White, F.C. Wilton and Percival Landon around the Lhasa Cathedral.

The real significance of this incident must not be mistaken; in itself it was of no very great moment, but as indicating the utter contempt felt by the Tibetans for the suzerain power of Tibet, it is something which we cannot entirely ignore. The more we acquit the actual guardians of the temple from all complicity in it, the more spontaneous and popular does this outburst of indignation against the normal overlords of Tibet become. Even when their suzerainty was supposed to be supported by the presence of our troops, outside, it was possible that this could occur in the heart of Lhasa, and it is in itself a convincing proof that no action of the Chinese with regard to Tibet will, in the future, have any real importance, or be regarded by the Tibetans as binding upon themselves in any way.”

Prophetic words indeed: for till the middle of the century Tibet remained independent. Landon, like Waddell, was not objective about the Dalai Lama XIII, the architect of Tibet’s independence. Nor could he be fair or pains-taking about Lamaism. Later British scholars like Charles Bell redressed the imbalance to a considerable degree.

About 250 illustrations—photographs, drawings/sketches and colour paintings—and 6 maps add substantially to the pen pictures of Landon. Eleven items in the Appendix detail the composition and personnel of the Young-husband Mission, the history and political background of the events, the governmental system of Tibet, the natural history of Southern Tibet etc. Later researchers have amended many of the findings in Landon’s book. Even then the book should be of use to specialists. For the general readers this book provides access to the grandeur and wonders of nature which only sponsored tourists can enjoy today.

The binding and stitching of the two precious volumes should have been stronger and better.

NIRMAL C. SINHA

The following publications will be reviewed in the next number of the Bulletin:

ARABINDA DEB : Bhutan and India (Calcutta 1976)
JAHAR SEN : India-Nepal Trade in the Nineteenth Century (Calcutta 1977)
NIRMAL C. SINHA : An Introduction to the History and Religion of Tibet (Calcutta 1975)

BG

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RGYAN-DRUG MCHOG-GNYIS

An Art Book (Six Ornaments and Two Excellents) reproduces ancient scrolls (1670 A.C.) depicting Buddha, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmakirti, Gunagrabha and Sakyagrabha; 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. Price: Rupees Seventy Five.

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ATISA JAYANTI

To mark the Thousandth Birth Anniversary of Srijnana Dipankara Atisa (c.982-1054), Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology has programmed several publications.

KADAM PHACHO, containing the Life and Teachings of Atisa in Tibetan, is reproduced per photomechanic process direct from the original. It is published in three parts. Part 1 was published in March 1977; Part 2 is under print for publication in March 1978; Part 3 is scheduled for publication in October 1978. Each part (bound in cloth along palmleaf format) is priced at Rs 100/-.

SOUVENIR VOLUME (in English), containing essays and papers on the life of Atisa and on topics connected with the life, teachings and works of Atisa, written by eminent scholars and specialists is scheduled to go into print in summer 1978. Contributors include Manoranjan BASU, Debi Prasad CHATTOPADHYAYA, Vidy Prakash DUTT, Helmut EIMER, Myrcia ELIADE, Helmut HOFFMANN, Trevor LING, Marco FALLIS, Nilatranjan RAY, Hugh E RICHARDSON, Klaus SAGASTAR, Gene SMITH, Giuseppe TUCCI, Jagannath UPADHYAYA and Turrell V. WILIE.

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