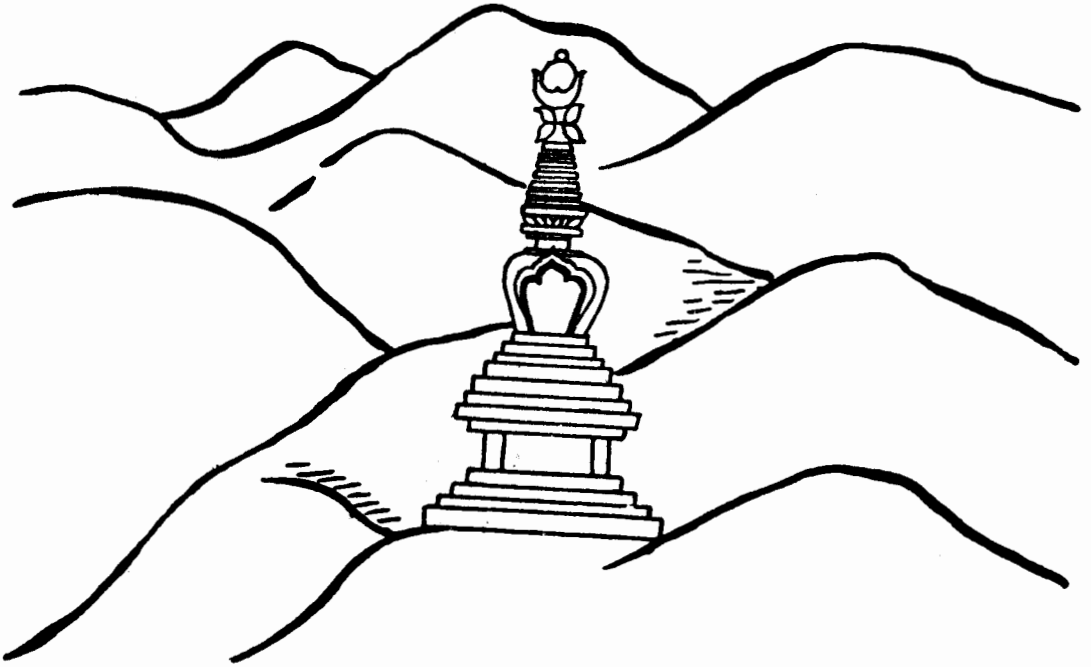


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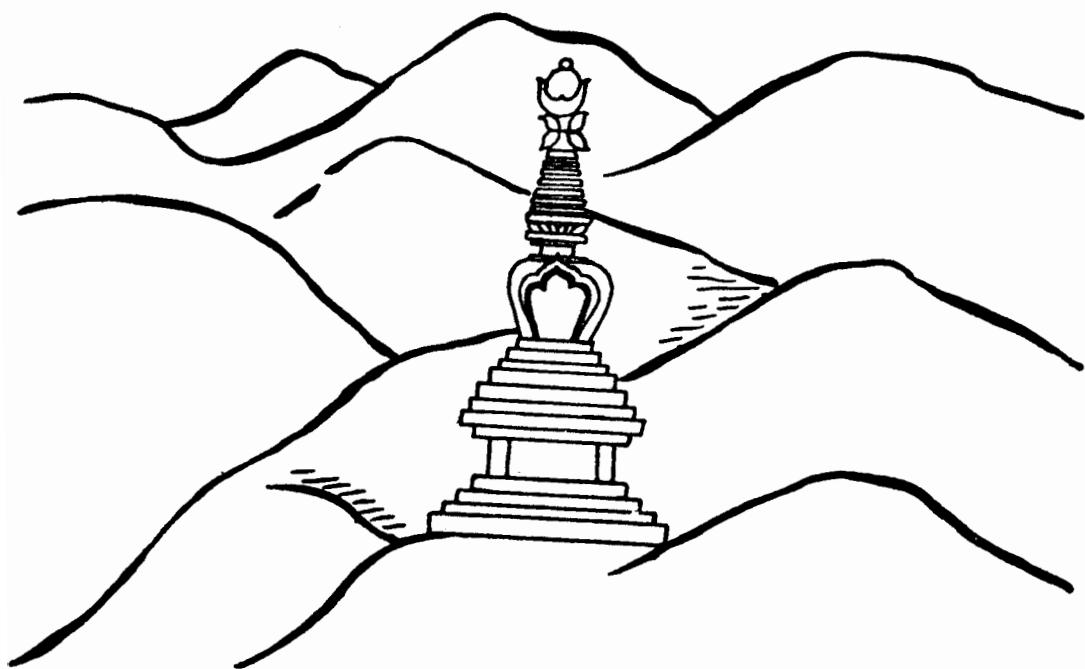
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The Bulletin of Tibetology seeks to serve the specialist as well as the general reader with an interest in this field of study. The motif portraying the Stupa on the mountains suggests the dimensions of the field.

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AŚOKA'S DHAMMA : TESTIMONY OF MONUMENTS

- *Nirmal C. Sinha*

I

Question is often raised about authenticity or purity of Asoka's Buddhism. The gravamen of critics' charges is that Asoka in his edicts does not refer to the Four Noble Truths and the Eight Fold Path and that Asoka in his edicts is totally silent on typically Buddhist concepts like ANĀTMĀ, NIRVĀṆA or ŚŪNYATĀ. It is proposed to present here Asoka's credentials as a Buddhist, from Asoka's own words inscribed on rocks and pillars and from figures and symbols on these rocks and pillars.

Asoka's inscriptions exclusively or specifically for Buddhism or Buddhist population may be listed thus: Bairat (Bhabru) Edict, Lumbini & Nigali Sagar inscriptions, and Allahabad - Sanchi - Sarnath Pillar Edict.

Bairat (Bhabru) Edict records three notable statements. Asoka affirms his faith cum reverence in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and in that order. Asoka says, in dogma style, that whatever Bhagavan Buddha has spoken is wellspoken. Asoka commends 7(seven) Dharma texts for constant perusal (remembrance) by monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen; all these texts are traceable in early Pali canon.

Lumbini Pillar Inscription tells us that Asoka made pilgrimage in 20th regnal year to the spot, where Buddha Bhagavan was born; that Asoka set up the stone pillar to mark the spot; and that Asoka made the village Lumbini free of taxes and reduced its cropshare for the kind to an eighth.

Nigali Sagar Pillar Inscription tells us that Asoka, in 20th regnal year, made pilgrimage to the Stupa of Kanakamuni, a precursor Buddha and that earlier, in 14th regnal year, Asoka had enlarged the Stupa to double of its original size.

The edict inscribed on pillars at Allahabad, Sanchi and Sarnath is a command "that any monk or nun who shall break up the Sangha must be made to put on white robes and to reside outside" (away from Sangharama). As protector of Dhamma Asoka made Sangha a solid body and penalised dissidence.

Data yielded by the above four epigraphs lead to categorical conclusion that Asoka was Buddhist by profession and practice. Asoka avowed in public his reverence cum faith in Tri-Ratna. He designated Buddha Sakyamuni as Bhagavan, the highest epithet for a mortal in theist as well as atheist sects in ancient India. He made pilgrimage to Buddha's birth place and exempted the people dwelling there from taxes. He was deeply read in the canon - not yet systematically preserved - and proclaimed that all Buddha-Vachana was gospel truths. He made pilgrimage to the Stupa of a precursor Buddha. And he penalised any attempt to split the Sangha.

Leaving aside the missions and projects to disseminate Dhamma all over, the facts listed above are sufficient to label Asoka as a Buddhist in denominational or sectarian sense. I use these terms to satisfy the critics of Asoka's Dhamma, and I do so with reservations as Asoka is much above such labels.

II

Detractors of Asoka's Dhamma make much of the omission of Four Noble Truths and Eight Fold Path or of absolute silence on ANĀTMĀ, NIRVĀNA AND ŚŪNYATĀ in the inscriptions of Asoka. I write at length on the entire subject elsewhere. In that detailed discussion I conclude that Asoka was not ignorant of the abstruse concepts of Non-Soul, Emancipation and Void, and that Asoka deliberately avoided any reference to these concepts in the edicts. Here in this article I contend, on the basis of sculptures and reliefs on Asokan monuments, that Asoka certainly had knowledge of Four Noble Truths, Eight Fold Path, Twelve Links of Existence etc. but would not exhibit that knowledge.

Most famous of Asoka's symbols on stone is Dharmachakra on the round abacus below the capital of the pillar. This Dharmachakra has 24 spokes. Ancient Indian convention was that a wheel had 8 spokes, eight being an auspicious number both in Brahmanism and Buddhism. In Buddhism 'eight' symbolises Eight fold Path and symbolises doubly Four Noble Truths. So the spokes of Dharmachakra should be 'eight' or 'multiple of eight'. In some cases the Dharmachakra would have 12 (i.e. 8+4) spokes emphasising Twelve Links of Existence.

Asoka's Dharmachakra symbolises Triple Jewel, Four Noble Truths and Eight Fold Path; 24 is a multiple of 3, 4 or 8. Theras and Lamas consider 24 as the L.C.M. of 3 and 8. If I point out that 24 is also multiple of 12, Theras and Lamas find this as symbolising twice Twelve Links of Existence. Lamas would add that 24 is multiple of 2 also and that 2 stands for Two Truths: Relative Truth and Absolute Truth. Theras may not agree because the concept of Two Truths propounded by Nagarjuna may not be as old as Asoka. Lamas and Theras hold that the concepts of Triple Jewel, Four Noble Truths, Eight Fold Path and Twelve Links of Existence are as old as the Turning of Dharmachakra by Buddha Sakyamuni.

The recovered fragments of Dharmachakra as on the heads of four lions of Sarnath Pillar suggest 32 spokes and as such a multiple of Four (Noble Truths) and Eight(Fold Path). Theras and Lamas on being told this fully agree with me. Asoka depicted Four Noble Truths and Eight Fold Path on stone conspicuously but not loudly as his critics would have desired.

The number of spokes was no doubt as per Asoka's specification and was not out of the imagination of the sculptors, whether foreign or native. Asoka could prescribe canonical texts both for clergy and laity and could certainly command the craftsmen to depict 'eight' multiplied by 'three' or 'eight' multiplied by 'four' within available space.

Not less important than the 'number symbols' are the 'animal symbols' in Asokan art. The animals are elephant, bull, horse and lion.

The elephant stands for the immaculate conception of Buddha who in the form of white elephant had descended from the heaven in dream when Maya(Mother) was quite old and beyond the age of child bearing. The bull is the sign of nativity because Gautama Siddhartha (i.e. Buddha) was born under the zodiacal sign of Taurus(Vrisha). Scholars who dispute the possibility of this zodiacal sign in summer (Vaisakha) full moon hold that Virsha is the sign of Mahapurusha in all Indian religions and should be taken as the mark of great being par excellence. The horse stands for the one born in the royal stables the same fullmoon night, which as a colt was the playmate of child Siddhartha, which later was Siddhartha's mount and which drew the chariot to the Four Sights which inspired Siddhartha to investigate into the roots of mankind's sufferings; the horse on the night of renunciation grew soft pads under the hoofs and thus made the exit from the palace noiseless. Thus horse, the mark of royalty, turned out to be the mark of renunciation. The lion

represents Sakyasinha (lion of Sakyas) who was lion of mankind, Narasinha or Narottama, "the best of bipeds". Lion symbolises majesty, here spiritual majesty. Four lions crouching back to back symbolise Dhamma's majesty around the four quarters.

The question arises why the craftsmen, who could shape such exquisite figures of animals, did not attempt a figure of Bhagavan Buddha. The answer is this : Asoka was a Buddhist, an orthodox Buddhist so Asoka desisted from any attempt to make an image of Buddha. For Asoka would not defy Buddha's sentiments about iconic representation. Buddha had repeatedly enjoined his disciples not to adore his RŪPAKĀYA (Physical Form) but to adore his DHAMMAKĀYA (Spiritual Form). Even an old disciple on death bed was reprimanded for his last wish to have a glimpse of Buddha; vide Vakkali episode in Digha-nikaya.

Chinese travel accounts like that of Hiuen Tsang and Tibetan chronicles like that of Taranatha speak of Buddha images made in wood on the specifications of devotee kings like Prasenajit and Udayana. If true, such images were made for preservation and record and certainly not for public adoration and exhibition. Asoka, as an orthodox believer must have thought so when confronted with the contemporaneous Buddha images in wood.

III

Asoka desisted from making the Buddha-rupa though he had a number of master sculptors under command. These master sculptors were recruited on merit and not on racial grounds. Perhaps the majority of Asoka's craftsmen were Yavanas, that is, Greeks and Iranians.

There has been a great debate to determine the racial stock of Asoka's sculptors. Scholars like Vincent Smith (*History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, Oxford 1930) upholding the foreign background of these artists are known as "imperialists". Scholars like Ananda

Coomaraswamy (*History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, London 1927) upholding the Indian background of these artists are known as "nationalists". In my submission both schools are totally blind to the basic quality of Buddhism. In Brahmanism, as later in Hinduism, the image maker should be a native and of the same religion. In Buddhism merit and not birth was the qualification for the image maker; caste or race of the image maker was immaterial in Buddhism.

In this connection it needs be noted that Buddha Sakyamuni was the first prophet to expound spiritual knowledge to all men without distinction of caste, colour or race. In India Vedic sages preached for the people accepted as ĀRYA. Outside Confucius, Moses and Zoroaster preached to their respective kinsmen known as 'civilised' or 'elect'. Buddha Sakyamuni had no such inhibition against outsiders. Right from the beginning Damma was therefore poised to be a universal creed. If all were eligible "to perceive Buddha's Teaching" all were eligible "to perceive Buddha's Form".

Asoka addressed his edicts to SAVA LOKA/SAVA MUNISĀ and had no inhibition about Yavanas in drawing figures and symbols. Scholars like Mortimer Wheeler (in *Ancient India*, Vol IV) think that Asoka employed unemployed Yavanas settled in India. A more correct view would be that Asoka recruited his craftsmen on merit only. As in Dhamma so in Dhammavijaya (Asoka's description of his successful missionary work in Rock Edict XIII) there was no question of ĀRYA or YAVANA.

Mute monuments testify for all time that Devanampriya Priyadarsi Raja Asoka was a Buddhist first and a Buddhist last. ●

TIBETAN MEDICINE, ITS HUMOURS AND ELEMENTS

*Talk given by Marianne Winder at the Meeting of the
National Institute of Medical Herbalists at Norwich
on the 6th of April, 1993*

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TIBETAN MEDICINE, ITS HUMOURS AND ELEMENTS

Geographical distribution

Tibetan medicine is the traditional medicine practised throughout Tibet, throughout Mongolia, and in the countries of the Himalayan region where Tibetans live, with the refugee camps and Dharamsala, the residence of the Dalai Lama, and including Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal. In Chinese occupied Tibet it has to coexist with Chinese medicine, and in the other countries western medicine is used when it is more helpful. Generally speaking, acute conditions are more often curable by western remedies like penicillin and treatments like surgery, while Tibetan medicine gives better results in chronic cases.

Origins

People always want to know whether Indian or Chinese influence can be detected in Tibetan medicine. Historically, it was India from where the influences came at first. Legend has it that before the 7th century AD two Indian doctors, and what's more, one of them a lady doctor, came to visit Tibet and to teach simple health and general living rules. Until then a practice was prevalent which has also been reported from Siberian tribes and from the Iranian Bakhtiaris, namely that the old when sick were left to die. The biography of the great Tibetan doctor Yuthok of the 9th century gives

a legendary history of medicine before his time where it is recounted that the two Indian doctors found a woman putting her sick mother out of doors to die, and the Indian doctors took her back into the house, cured her and gave teachings on ethics and behaviour to the daughter.

In the 7th century the Tibetan King Srongtsangampo married two princesses, one from Nepal and one from China. The Chinese princess brought Buddhist and medical books with her. Whether and when these were translated into Tibetan is not certain. The 9th century great Doctor Yuthok went to India three times to learn medicine at the feet of Indian masters, and his descendant, also called Yuthok, of the 11th century, six times. The Elder Yuthok was born towards the end of the 8th century. But even before that, during the middle of the 8th century, the greatest Tibetan work on medicine, called "The Four Treatises" or rGyud.bzi is said to have appeared in Tibetan and to have been hidden in the first Buddhist monastery called Samye until such time as when people would be able to understand it. It is unlikely to be a translation from the Sanskrit because, in spite of its popularity and universal use in Tibet it has not been incorporated into the Tibetan Buddhist Canon where other medical works which were translated from the Sanskrit are listed. The Canon only contains works translated from the Sanskrit. In the case of some Chinese works, these clearly had been translated into Chinese from the Sanskrit but are no longer extant in Sanskrit. However, several passages have been identified as being very similar to passages in the great Indian medical work, called *Aṣṭāṅgahṛdaya* by Vāgbhata. Probably some orally transmitted knowledge of Indian medicine beyond that taught by the two early visitors had reached Tibet where the unknown author of the "Four Treatises" composed them.

Buddhist medicine - three humours - three fires

The Chief characteristic of Tibetan Medicine is that it is Buddhist medicine. This can be seen immediately from its important

principle of the three humours: bile, phlegm and wind. All diseases are classified according to these three principles because Tibetan Medicine links them up with the Buddhist concept of the three 'fires' burning to some degree in each human being: greed, hatred and delusion. People in whose make-up wind is the chief ingredient are plagued by greed, avarice and lust. 'wind' does, of course, not just mean air or breath in the body but currents of energy running in certain directions. Those people who are characterised by a preponderance of bile feel a lot of negative emotions such as hatred, envy, jealousy and so on. Those whose body contains a lot of phlegm or mucus are given inordinately to delusions about the nature of existence and their own role in it. The greedier people become the more wind is produced in them. Whenever a person with a bile problem gets angry he or she produces more bile. People with too much phlegm are indolent and sleepy, and through their laziness more phlegm will accumulate in their body.

Humours and Temperaments

Here you will recognise the 'phlegmatic' person of western psychology. As some of you will know from Chaucer and Shakespeare the West also used to divide mankind by so-called humours, but into four types: the phlegmatic, the choleric, the melancholic and the sanguine type. We see that early European medicine distinguished between a yellow and a black bile, the yellow producing the choleric temperament and the black bile the melancholic, while in the East it was assumed that there was only one type of bile. Instead of blood in European typology, wind was the third humour in India and Tibet. Though these descriptions survive in the temperaments, as psychological distinctions, originally they referred to people physically with too much of one humour or another. The choleric type had too much yellow bile, the melancholic had too much black bile, and the sanguine type was too full-blooded. The word 'humour' itself which in modern times has acquired a very specialised meaning, originally meant 'a fluid' as in the word 'humid'. In the West, too, it became less and less of a physical entity and developed more and more of a psychological significance.

Āyurveda - humours not humidity but 'faults'

With psychological types we are further removed from the idea of humidity, and this started already in Indian medicine, the *Āyurveda*. From the Indian *Āyurveda* the Tibetan concept of humours was derived. The *Āyurveda* whose origins can be traced to between 200 BC and 400 AD, also has three humours but not yet connected to the Buddhist three 'fires of greed, hatred and delusion'. The Sanskrit word for 'humour' is *doṣa*. This corresponds in Pali, the language of the early Buddhist scriptures, to *dosa*, the Tibetan *nye(s)pa* which means 'fault' with no connotation of humidity. This name is also slightly misleading because bile, phlegm and wind are needed in the body. They become faults when they are not balanced, and there is too much too little of one or the other. So the word 'humour' is inexact because wind is not a fluid, and the word 'fault' is incorrect because it is only the imbalance which is faulty.

As has been pointed out by Burang and others, the words for the three humours, bile, phlegm and wind, do not always have to refer to physical entities but to certain conditions of body and mind connected with them. The positive use of wind is for the production of the spiritual development of the individual to be encouraged through long hours of meditation, fasting, and ascetic practices which, however, when overdone or overlaid with pride about achievement or if used for material ends can have harmful effects. The positive side of bile is the production of energy and enterprise which then can be misused for too much combativeness which engenders and is fed by negative emotions such as hatred, anger, ambition, jealousy and envy, and by overindulgence in alcohol and drugs. The positive aspect of phlegm is a peaceful disposition, but the excessive presence of phlegm may be due to a dependence on creature comforts and an over-emphasis on material well-being coupled with a lack of insight into the true purpose of existence and the spiritual nature of what is worth striving for.

Combinations of humours

I have told you of the division of diseases into those with one of the three humours excessive. There are also diseases in which two humours are stronger than the third one. A disease can give a superfluity of all three humours or an insufficiency of all three. There can also be a preponderance of just one or an insufficiency of just one, or a preponderance of two humours or an insufficiency of two. The ideal is that all the humours should be balanced, and there should not be too much or too little of any of them. When the Indians called them 'faults', that is not quite a happy appellation because a certain amount of wind, bile and phlegm is necessary in the body. It is the balance that is important. Transfer this to the three fires, and it is clear that only a Buddha can live entirely without greed, aggression and delusion.

The elements

What I want to say about the elements is that each humour is symbolically connected with an element: bile with fire, phlegm with water, and wind with air. The traditional number of elements in the West is four: fire, air, water and earth. Sometimes a fifth is added: aether, for instance, by Aristotle. Indian and Tibetan medicine has five elements: earth, water, air, fire and as the fifth element space, Sanskrit *ākāśaḥ* Tibetan *nam.mkha* 'sky' which, of course, corresponds to space. Chinese medicine and astrology have also five elements: wood (corresponding to Western, Indian and Tibetan space), fire, earth, metal (corresponding to air) and water. In Tibetan writings we come across the Chinese five elements chiefly in astrological literature. The Tibetans have two systems of astrology, the Indian and the Chinese one.

Hot and Cold

In Western sources, such as Aristotle, the elements are characterised by the four qualities of all physical objects: cold, hot, moist

and dry. Aether occurs only in some of his works and is not of the same order as the four gross physical elements. Earth is cold and dry, water is cold and moist, fire is hot and dry and air is hot and moist. This fourfold division found its way into Tibetan medicine, probably at the time when during the 7th century a court physician who was a Persian called Galenos added Greek medicine to medical knowledge in Tibet. Then all diseases in Tibetan medicine were being divided into hot and cold diseases. This is not a feature to be found in Ayurveda, Indian medicine, from which other features of Tibetan medicine were derived. But it has found its way into Burmese and Thai medicine, perhaps during the 17th century, through Spanish missionaries.

The number three

While the figure four was important in European medicine - four qualities and four elements - in Indian Medicine the figure three was more important. In Indian philosophy all existence is divided into three categories or Skt. *gunas*: *sattva* 'being, and usually good being', *rajas* 'energy' and *tamas* 'darkness, inertia'. The Ayurveda then transfers those three categories to the three principles in the body: wind corresponding to mind, then bile to energy, and phlegm to inert matter. Buddhism declares that life consists of three qualities, namely suffering, impermanence and not-self. And Tibetan medicine connects the Buddhist three fires, namely, greed, hatred and delusion with wind, bile and phlegm.

Three of the elements symbolise the three states of matter known to Western physics : earth the solid state, water the fluid state, and air the gaseous state. The fourth element, fire, produces the transformation of the states into each other; metal melts and becomes fluid, and fluids become gaseous, and reversely, water becomes ice. Aether or *akasha* represents the subtle state not yet recognised by Western science. In Tibetan medicine subtle channels and wheels are of importance. They are channels and wheels of energy. It has been explained by Tibetan doctors that the *cakras* and *nāḍīs*, as the wheels and channels are called in Sanskrit, are activated by a subtle force

one could call *psi* and belongs to the subtle body while the meridians used in Chinese acupuncture are activated by *ch'i*, a force which belongs to the gross body.

Out of the theory of four, or sometimes five elements, slowly the idea of more elements developed, so that in the first part of the 20th century, 92 elements were recognised, each of which contained atoms of one kind only. They were divided according to how many atoms a molecule of each contained. Then when the scientists succeeded in splitting the atom, many more elements were discovered.

In the Buddhist philosophical system, the *Abhidharma*, the elements (Sanskrit *dhātu*, Tibetan *Khams*) are subdivided into 1) physical elements, corresponding to the four elements posited in the West, namely earth or solid, water or liquid, fire or heat, and air or motion element. But then there are 2) in addition the 18 partly physical and partly mental elements constituting the necessary conditions for mental processes, namely the five sense organs, eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and the five senses, sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. These ten are physical. They are complemented by eight mental elements: eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness plus because the sixth sense is the mind, there is the mind element, the thought element, and the mind consciousness element. Here the mind element is the organ with which we think, corresponding to eye, ear etc. Thought corresponds to the action such as sight, sound etc. The mind consciousness element arises when the mind becomes conscious of the object of its thought, the same way as when the eye becomes conscious of the object of its sight. It is clear that the five physical senses are not fulfilling their function unless the consciousness can apprehend what they convey. In the same way the processes of thought remain unconscious unless the mind consciousness element arises.

The Tibetan system of medicine

Tibetan medical theory uses the simile of a tree with three roots: (A) body, (B) diagnosis, and (C) treatment. From root (A) body

two trunks spring forth : the healthy organism, which roughly corresponds to western anatomy and physiology, and the diseased organism, corresponding to pathology. Root (B) diagnosis, sprouts three trunks: observation, palpation and questioning. From root (C) treatment, come four trunks: diet, behaviour, therapy and medicines. These trunks then each have a number of branches which then bear the leaves which are the diseases. Even in the healthy body, the branches mentioned, such as, for instance, the impurities, can be the causes of diseases. This scholastic method of subdividing, reminiscent of the western Middle Ages, results in the enumeration and suggestions for curing of 404 diseases.

Division of diseases

All diseases are divided, firstly, according to the preponderant humour or humours, and secondly, according to whether they are hot or cold. You can, for instance, have a hot bile disease or a cold bile disease. Very generally speaking, hot diseases are usually accompanied by a high temperature or a fever, and cold diseases by either a streaming cold or the affected organ feeling cold to the touch. But just as the humours can have some more symbolic meaning, so also 'hot' and 'cold' do not always have to be taken literally. This can be seen from the fact that there are 404 diseases, all categorised in this manner. Just as the diseases are divided into hot ones and cold ones, when plant remedies are used these are also divided in various ways. They can be divided according to six tastes : sweet, sour, bitter, astringent, pungent and salty.

Mental diseases

Though root (A) only mentions the healthy and diseased organism, because of the nature of Tibetan medicine which is holistic, mental diseases are naturally included. In Buddhist philosophy, the mind is the sixth sense which is as capable of undergoing disease and providing cure as the other senses. The doctor who very often is a trained monk or Lama always is aware of the mental and spiritual connection with the disease. Most mental diseases, and specially those

of children, are described as being caused by demons. The type of demon is traced from the behaviour of the patient. For instance, the disease of a patient who shouts loud and aggressive nonsense is thought to be caused by an *asura* or anti-god, an irascible demon. Its description corresponds to the clinical description of mania. Similarly, the description of mental states caused by other demons corresponds to various types of schizophrenia. While we in the west might exchange the name of a mental disease for that of a demon, the treatment is rather different for it seeks to propitiate the demons. Some demons need to be warm and in friendly company, others have to be expelled. Some mental diseases are traced back to metabolic and nutritional defects and poisoning of the system, and the treatment consists in a change of diet.

Disease concepts

In Western antiquity and during the Middle Ages right into the time of the Renaissance, because of the theory of the humours or complexions, it was the constitution of a patient which was the important thing. All his diseases and his or her general state of health would depend on the patient's constitution : whether he or she inclined towards a preponderance of certain humours or others. With Jan Baptista Van Helmont (1577-1644) the idea of individual diseases came in according to which it is not the constitution of a patient but the kind of environment he gets into and the miasma which brings contagion. The disease is something that comes to the patient from outside his body. In the 18th century the Italian Giovanni Morgagni wrote a book on the focuses of diseases in the body, each disease having its own particular character. The cells which form the body were only discovered towards the middle of the 19th century. Bacteria were only discovered in the 19th century and viruses at the threshold of the 20th. In 1892 it was shown that the virus affecting tobacco plants causing mosaic disease was able to pass through filters capable of holding back ordinary bacteria. All these developments took the attention away from the constitution of a patient and centered it on individual diseases. Through our interest in traditional medicine we are now coming round full circle to the concept of holistic medicine

which treats the whole person, not just an individual disease. But we cannot just ditch what we have learned throughout the centuries. Our additional knowledge about the causes of individual diseases ought to be helpful in supplementing what we learn from Tibetan medicine. In fact, the *Güshi* enumerates a great number of disease syndromes to which one ought to be able to give western names according to the symptoms and changes mentioned. The present Western terminology of diseases is also very recent. If you look at 19th century books on medicine you find terms like 'brain fever', 'lung inflammation', 'stomach chill' etc. So, just as the world of motor cars, aeroplanes, electric light, radio and television, not to speak of the use of computers and nuclear energy, is only that of the 20th century, the detailed scientific nomenclature of diseases is also a 20th century phenomenon. The acquisition of a proper nomenclature is too precious to give up in the face of traditional medicine. It should be used but a dimension can be added by seeing how often the cause of a disease is psychosomatic, and it is the development of the spiritual wellbeing of a patient which will help him to recover and not to have relapses. When the major Tibetan medical works are going to be translated one ought to try to determine from the symptoms and course of the disease to which disease in modern terms a description applies. At the same time, I think, the literal translation from the Tibetan should also be given because sometimes something may be described that we do not know about in the West, for instance, the results of intense day and night, week after week, meditation. Mediaeval Western monks may have practised in this way, but descriptions of their health would again have been made in mediaeval terms. So in translating, not only will we have to find out what plants and mineral and animal substances are being referred to, sometimes plants no longer in existence, sometimes plants growing quite differently in a different climate, but also what diseases in modern terms are meant when certain syndromes are described.

Treatments

Treatments can be water therapy like standing under a waterfall, head therapy by means of hot embrocations, psychological

therapy by means of prayer, meditation and spiritual advice, and, most of all treatment by materia medica. Mineral remedies include precious stones ground down and put into medicines, animal remedies include bear bile and snake flesh.

Herbal remedies

But the greatest number of remedies are plant remedies. They are prescribed as polypharmacy, that is, a number of plant ingredients together in most prescriptions. There is always one chief ingredient and the others each serve a purpose. One may disguise the unpleasant taste of the chief ingredient, another one may prevent side effects, one may help the consistency of the remedy making it softer or harder or less sticky. In each case it is stated which part of the plant is to be used: the stem, the root, the flower and so on. The form in which it is to be given is mentioned: whether as a decoction, a pill, in powder form and so on. If it is to be given suspended in a fluid the vehicle in which it is to be given is mentioned, such as water or honey. F. i. a myrobalan medicine with seven ingredients consists of myrobalan, olive, Solanum jaquinia, Terminalia belerica, Sophor flavescens, Inula helenium and Hedychium spicatum. It is used as a decoction against high blood pressure, fever, colds and influenza. A question which somebody is bound to ask is whether the doctrine of signatures occurs in Tibetan plant lore. Yes, it does. For instance, a remedy that alleviates blood diseases contains, amongst other plants, red sandalwood, madder and red lac or shellac. Homeopathy as such is not used, rather are cooling and astringent plants used to cure feverish complaints.

Application today

How does a mediaeval system of medicine with an uninterrupted tradition fit into the modern world? All Tibetan doctors learn the old texts and the later ones derived from them. But the present Dalai Lama gave out a ruling that in practice only that should be used which is found helpful today. Where modern remedies such as quinine or penicillin have supervened they should be used. Most of

the old theories are thereby not invalidated if understood in the right way. For instance, while the West has discarded humoral pathology, if the humours are understood in the symbolic way in which they were probably also meant in the Hippocratic tradition before it got written down, it is still a valid explanation and method of dividing diseases. Hippocrates came at the end of a long lineage of doctors and their sons and pupils with an oral tradition. The Hippocratic oath is a last remnant of this. In most psychosomatic conditions and in chronic cases Tibetan medicine has been found more effective than western methods. And, being a holistic method of healing it is better capable of diagnosing psychosomatic causes for diseases. And, as you well know herbal remedies have far less side effects than the modern synthetic medicines.

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THE SVĀDHIṢṬHĀNA-KRAMA OF SARAHAPĀ(-DA)

- S.K. Pathak

The Svādhiṣṭhāna-Krama (rañ byin gyis brlab pa'i rim pa)¹ consisting of sixteen verses has been preserved in the Bstan 'gyur collection in Tibetan. Its Sanskrit original has been lost. Munidatta in his Sanskrit commentary of the Caryāgītikōśa quotes verses ascribed to Sarahapāda and five verses of the present text may tally with those references². It, therefore, leaves room to hold that the Svādhiṣṭhāna-Krama composed in Sanskrit had been available during the lifetime of Munidatta³.

As many as twenty five texts are ascribed to Saraha in the Rgyud 'grel (Tantra nibandha) section of the Tibetan Bstan' gyur collection, with the variations in the namings of Saraha such as, Śrī-mahā-Saraha, Maheśavara-Saraha, Saharapā(-da) Savareśwara, Savarīpāda etc⁴. It is known that the term 'saraha' itself is an epithet meaning a man with an arrow. The images of Saraha, which have come down to us, depict Sarahapā (-da) Siddhacārya by painting him with an arrow in his hand. A legend supported by its mystic interpretations has been mentioned by Guenther from the traditional accounts⁵.

However, the works ascribed to Saraha, as available in Tibetan, may be broadly classified into the following categories of

the Tantra nibandha⁶. (i) Krama (ii) Upadeśa (Tattva) (iii) Dr̥ṣṭi (Bhaavana) (iv) Vajra-caryā (giti and doha) (v) Sādhanā. Such classifications of the Tantra literature had probably evolved when codification and systematisation of the Tantra were made in the Christian era. In this context the question whether the Tantra is the Buddhavacana appears to be inconsistent here; but it cannot be denied that the nucleus of the Tantra has been observed in the Pali Vinaya Piṭaka and Sutta Piṭaka as well as in the Sūtras or Āgamas available in Sanskrit, Chinese or Tibetan. According to the Tibetan traditions, the Tantra has been accepted as the Buddhavacana with reference to Buddha's preachings amongst the monks having high calibre to grasp the subtle doctrine at the Dhanyakataka monastery of Srisaila⁷. The contributions of Saraha in this respect claim his indigenoussness in the field of the Tantra nibandha literature after about thousand years from the Mahāparinirvāṇa of Buddha Gautama.

'Krama' suggests 'Sequence' in practice (caryā Tib. Spyod pa) towards the unification (Samatvaṃ) of the mind of an individual practitioner with Thatness (Tathatā) or the intrinsicness of That pervading the universe and infinitum. In that context the present text has been aptly composed by Saraha the foremost exponent of Mahāmudrā (Phyag rgya chen mo) belonging to the Uḍḍiyāna in order to cut off the wheel of Saṃsāra having the cycle of continuous births and rebirths⁸.

The Svādhiṣṭhāna-Krama begins with the author's benediction with great respect for his Guru who bestows the knowledge of vajrāmṛta. He further lays emphasis on the basic points of Sahaja-yoga⁹. Traditionally, Saraha is said to have the realisation of Mahāmudrā from the Siddha-Dakini at Sambhāsa Caitya of Dharmagañja in Uḍḍiyāna. Mahāmudrā has been regarded as the highest form of practice in respect of an excellent practioner as described in the Mañjuśrīmūlakatantra. Mahāmudrā is Śūnya by self-nature because it is not dependent. It is also devoid of any defilement. It stands on the essenceless of dharma (intrinsic characteristics of an object or a being) and, therefore is unconstituted. Mahāmudrā is beyond of any communicable letter, inexplicable but it holds the

efficacy of being communicated at all times¹⁰. In this connection of Mahāmudrā-tattvanakṣaropadeśa may be referred.

Mahāmudrā is the unifying force between Svādhiṣṭhāna (rañ byin gyi rlabs) and Prabhasvara (rab gsal)¹¹ both. According to the enumeration of six circles (cakra) within a human body Svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra appears to be the circle of magnificence through which Spiral power which proceeds upwards to Prabhāsvara-Cakra on the head.¹² Svādhiṣṭhāna is distinct from Prajñādhiṣṭhāna (śes rab kyi byin gyi rlabs) the state of attaining holiness by Wisdom since prajñā is regarded as karmāṅga. Svādhiṣṭhāna refers to Saṃvṛti bodhicitta when it moves through an unfalling condition like Vajra; such is the manifestation of sa-ha-ja the energy which favours the beings to pass over the ocean of the world. Mahāmudrā practice is therefore a direct application of Wisdom-energy to the cessation of suffering.

These points have been explicitly elaborated in our present text. Sahaja-yoga is that which is devoid of any exertion i.e. 'spontaneously magnificent by its self-nature'. The phenomenal world, as manifested here, appears to be multiple on account of ignorance, but oneness prevails in all matters; so that the Wisdom arises in the midst of innumerable sprouts of illusions. He who attains such state through the gradual course takes a bath in joyful tears being filled in with heavy burden of sincerity or reverence and firm adherence to Dharma. He submits himself with the flowers made of his own mind in its self-nature, whatsoever he speaks, is the word of sincere reverence and whatever his hands perform is to bend down his head having the light containing the glow of spiritual splendour of Bliss.

Saraha in his Dohā Verses refers to the same idea in a different diction, e.g. as salt dissolves in water, my mind has been occupied fully with the Maiden; instantaneously Samarasa (Oneness through total dissolution) occurs when two minds become one. Here, oneness in mind is the basic state, which leads through the sequence to the Ulterior state of Samarasa when Mahāsukha alone prevails.

The English translation of the text with the Tibetan version have been given below :

Svādhiṣṭhāna-Krama in the Indian language.

Ran byin gyis brlab pa'i rim pa in Tibetan.

Obeisance to Śrīvajrasattva :

1. Obeisance fully to Bhagavān, the master of the emanation (of the worlds) for elucidating a function of his magnificence, and; he is praised for being gracious with Vajrāmṛta of illusory self-nature befitting to addilalitarasa in the joyful state of Sri Silvajra.

2. Obeisance to him who is One (alone) in a grandevrous form of Jina in the Sublime Joy. None among the sagacious can wake him in disposition; when (he) is awakened in a state of evenness (in mind), the sense-organs and their spheres (of an individual) subside.

3. Obeisance from every direction to Ārya-Śrīmati Vajravāk (lakṣaṇā) holding her Vajra-weapon, the self-nature of magnificent Bliss (sukhasvabhāva) in (the midst of) activities(in the phenomenal world, here Samvṛti); and, (She) being above of such activities goes everywhere with her selfnature of Vimala-prajñā and cuts off the net of turbidities of three places (gnas gsum) which resemble like twigs of wishes (arising out of thought construction).

4. Bow down to him with my head putting on his feet with dusts (gathered by walking on an uneven path of practice continuously) when his shoulders bend low (Carrying a heavy), by the load of devoutness; and, he, in spite of his always recollections of Vajraparikara (i.e. yogini partner of practice), enters into the state of happiness after being free from mental turbidities.

5. Again I bow down to him who visualises in (a state of) higher meditation his own performances appearing like his playfulness through his purified eyes in which the darkness (of stupidity) has been dispelled after being glistened with the light of Great Jewels

and, (thereby) Thatness (the Truth) distends (reveals) spontaneously by his grace.

6. Refuge to that mind of the Exalted Master who teaches the three worlds and pours the Bliss incessantly down from the abode of peace to the world (of existence) like a stream of knowledge flowing from the sky in which Śrīlalitavajra (devis) having their Prajñāpāramitā nature (become) joyous in the superior state.

7. Obeisance to the superior and pure speech of the Exalted one who may be alone born in a small filthy house having no associates (to attend) but holds the superior intellect surpassing that of a lord of lands (bhaumīndra), and, attains (a state of) evenness in mind as an elixir to control over serpent-like worldliness by the application of mantras for appeasement.

8. Obeisance with submission to him who dispells stupidity - like darkness of a chamber containing three states by rays coming out of the half Sun; and, according to the instructions of the Guru he achieves Prāṇāyāma (proper inhaling, holding and exhaling of breath regularly) in the lotus-like heart having its stems within.

9. If there be no alternative other than this (to attain happiness) recollect a little the dust-like kindness of the feet of the guru for obtaining meritorious deeds so that the bad conducts themselves will transpose the good ones.

10. By dint of dust-like favour of my Guru with devoutness, no amount of sickness falls upon (me) owing to old age, disease or sufferings to prick upon like nails of arrows. Unless a being is able to share the nector-like knowledge (about his ownself), the pangs of suffering continue to afflict more owing to the bad conducts performed by oneself.

11. No act is performed unless it functions (formulates) in the psychic sphere; such advices given by the Guru should be

observed (faithfully); so that, merits like compassion etc. arise in order of sequence spontaneously in the minds of devoted ones.

12. (Constituent) properties (by which the phenomenon world appears to be) of all these are one (equal), the self-nature of many is therefore without an equal; Yoga amounts to no exhaustion for being separated from (the cherished objects) of desire.

13. (I) bow down to Guru, the supreme in cognition, the leader carrying the load of faith on the Dharma (of Buddha here); his eyes being dipped in tears of joy he avails Bliss amongst relations (of the same family Kula).

14. Please accept the garland of flowers plucked out of my ideas having (colourful) words of reverence with a big knot (to fix upon on the string of a wreath); and let my hands perform deeds so that a glow of light will shine with splendour of the Joy.

15. O Protector, your little teachings on Wisdom (Prajñā) overpowers the jinaputri Kula like an efficient; so that, the self-nature of living beings (in the world) plays music in conformity with the taste of Bliss which is experienced by the virtuous only.

16. Being moistened with youthful love, you delineate the unprecedented path which is a great wonder, because it moves forward where no movement occurs; no least distinction is seen between the (suffering in) World and appeasement by him who moves forward (on the said path) befittingly inspite of continuous unevenness.

Svādhiṣṭhāna Krama composed by mahāyogīśvara Śrīmahāsaraha ends. Translated by the Tibetan lotsaba Rmo-pan chos 'bar into Tibetan after being listened to the great paṇḍita Śāntabhadra (of India).

NOTES

1. Bstan 'gyur Rgyud 'grel Vol. CI. Printed edn. (Japanese) Vol. 69. P. 127-4-4 to 128-1-7. Folio No. 138b:5 to 139b:7.
2. Santi Bhiksu Shastri edn. Visva-Bharati pp. 49, 74, 84, 94, 101 & 206.
3. A Review of Rare Buddhist texts (Dhiḥ) page 81 Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath 1986.
4. Dkar Chag Volume of the Bstan 'gyur. Page 78-79.
5. Royal Song of Saraha. ed. Herbert Guenther p. 3 ff.
6. Studies in the Tantras. P.C. Bagchi. Calcutta University, Calcutta w.r.t. in Sammohana Tantra p. 35.
7. (i) Krama : 1 Svādhiṣṭhāna-Krama
(ii) Upadeśa : 2 Dvādaśopadeśa-gāthā.
(Tattva) : 3 Mahāmudropadeśa Dohakośa nāma
4. Tattopadeśa-sīkhara
5. Dohakośopodeśa-gīti
6. Kāyavākcittāmanasikāra (tattva)
(iii) Dṛṣṭi : 7. Bhāvanā dṛṣṭi (-caryāphalagītikā)
(Bhāvanā)

Besides these divisions several (iv) Vajra-gīti and Caryā-gīti texts have been preserved. Such as :

8. Mahāmudrā Vajragīti
9. Kāyakośāmṛta Vajragītā
10. Cittakośa-aja-Vajragītā.
11. Dohakośa-gīti
12. Vasantatilakā dohakośagītikā
13. Kakhasya dohā
14. Kakhasya dohāvṛtti
15. Sarahagīti

(v) Sādhana texts

16. Śrī Buddhakapāla-sādhanā
17. Śrī Buddhakapāla-tantrasya pañjikā (Jñānavatī)
18. Śrī Buddhakapāla nāma maṇḍala vidhi krama prodyotana
19. Sarvabhūtāvali vidhi.

It is to note that the above four books had been translated in Tibetan by Gayadhara and Zla ba'i 'od zer (13th Cent. A.D.)

20. Trailokya-vaśāṅkara Lokeśwara Sādhanā.
21. Do. Tr. Ratnākara in collaboration with Tshul khriims rgyal mtshan.
22. Trailokya-vaśāṅkarāvalokiteśwara sādhanā.
23. Trailokya-vaśāṅkara lokeswara Sādhanā, Sarahapāda.
24. Adhiṣṭhāna-mahākāla-sādhanā.
25. Mahākāla stotra.

Above these texts, three texts namely Svādhiṣṭhāna-Mahākāla-sādhanā of Śābarisvara, Svādhiṣṭhāna Śrī-Mahākāla-Sādhanā ascribed to Mahāśābaripāda and Mahākāla Stotra of Śrīśābaripāda may be noted in this connection.

7. Blue Annals : (Eng. Tran. of Deb ther snon po) Tr., G.N. Roerich Vol-II pp. 841. 863 & 1039.
8. An analysis of Phyag rgya as referred by Sarat Chandra Das is suggestive: 'Phyag' signifies the knowledge of Sūnyatā, while 'rgya' conveys the meaning of liberation from worldliness. (p. 831)
9. See Sahajagīti of Sarahapāda & Dohākośa of Saraha. as a pattern of Sublime Yoga with no exhaustion for being separated from the object of desire and that leads to a state of deep psychological equilibrium having no external manifestation for gain or loss regarding an object. S.B. Dasgupta. An Introduction to the Tantrik Buddhism may also be referred for Sahaja-yoga.
10. Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa-tantra refers to the primary thought of Mahāmudrā in the verses quoted below. (Mm. Ganapati Sastri edn). Trivendrum Oriental Series.

*dharmā-nairātmya-bhūtasthaḥ abhūto bhūtamudbhavaḥ/
virajasko 'aneṅjas'ca niṣṭho sūnyaḥ svabhāvataḥ//
akanisṭhastathā jyeṣṭhaḥ śubho nirvāṇagāminah/
panthāno 'nuttarāṃ bodhau pratyekārhasambhavo//p.476*

See also p. 513.

Subsequent development on Mahāmudrā has been studied in the work Mahāmudrā.

11. Munidatta reads : ekakā-ṣaṭpathayogāt sā avadhūtikā śuṇḍinī
ūrdhvanāsā ghaṅṭikārandhre candra-sūryau vāmadakṣiṇau
prauḍayogī balavanatau dvau sandhayati madhyamāyāṃ
praveśayati/etena svādhiṣṭhānam draḍhayati/comm. of verse of
Virupagiti No. 3. Caryāgītikośa. Śānti Bhikṣu Sastri. Advaya Vajra in
his Tattvavimśikā mentions svādhiṣṭhānapadam jñātum ye śaktā tat-
tvato nahi/mārgopadeśitasteṣāṃ kramataḥ bodhisiddhye (15.9).

12.

Vastusunyamajatam tu kevalam namamatrakam/
bhedanakhya[na]sarvajnah Svadhisthana-prabhasvarau//
Tattvaprasaka of Advayavajra

11.10

अधुना शाक्यमुद्देश्यः वद्ध्वैता तृभवालये ।
स्वयमेव भगवां शास्तु हस्तोत्तानतां कृथा ॥६॥
वेणिकाकारमावेष्टय मध्यमाङ्गुलि नामयेत् ।
कन्यसौ संस्पर्शयेद् धीमां उभा अङ्गुष्ठ उच्छ्रये ॥७॥
अङ्गुष्ठमञ्जल्याकारं दर्शयेन्मञ्जुरवे हिताम् ।
एषा मुद्रा महामुद्रा सर्वबुद्धानुवर्णिनी ।
सर्वथा साधिता देवी पूर्णोति च गीयते ॥८॥

४६ महामुद्रापटलविसरः ।

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