The great Tantric guru Padmasambhava is popularly known as Guru Rin-po-che in Tibet and other Himalayan states. At present very little record is available about his life and career prior to his departure to the Land of Snow. It is known to us that he was the son of King Indrabhuti. According to the opinion of the historians, the king Indrabhuti was the ruler of Udyana or Oda-ana. Regarding the identification of this place, scholars differ in their view. Some suggest that this is identical with Udyana or Urgyan B.C. Law opines that "it was situated on the river Su-p'po-fa-nu, the Subhavastu in Skt., the Suastus of Arrian, and the modern Swat river. Udyana embraced the four modern districts of Panjkora, Bajaur, Swat and Buner." However, during the visit of Fa-hsien this place was a part of North-buda. In this connection T.T. Rinpoche remarks that Padmasambhava "was born from a lotus blossom on the milk-ocean in the country of Urgyan which modern scholars believe to be the Swat Valley of Pakistan. He took birth eight years after Buddha's Mahaparinirvana. He attained deathless Siddhi through tantric practice and at the age of more than 1000 years went to Tibet." 1 This remark of Rinpoche is not based on the historical data, but based on the popular beliefs.

On the other hand another group of the historians opine that Uda-ana was the ancient name of modern Orissa and Indrabhuti was the ruler of this area. 2

Indrabhuti is said to have composed the work entitled Jnanasiddhi, expounding the principles of the Vajrayana system. He writes that the visibility or dhyana of the nature can neither be explained nor expressed by citing similes. It remains all the more indescribable and incomprehensible. He lays emphasis on the formlessness or nirakarta of both. This work of Indrabhuti begins with an invocation of Lord Jagannatha in consonance with the tradition which requires writers from Orissa to begin their works after an invocation prayer to Jagannatha. According to law Jagannatha is sarvasahdhammayat or the supreme embodiment of Buddha. He has been regarded as representing the formlessness aspect of the supreme force and innumerable works, particularly of the medieval period, describes Lord Jagannatha so. For the example the famous Orisa Srimadhagavata of Jagannath Das begins with an invocation to this formlessness aspect of the Lord. 2 Thus, it may be suggested that Indrabhuti was the king of ancient Orissa and Padmasambhava being his son was born in ancient Orissa. Regarding the age of Indrabhuti, it may be argued that since his son Padmasambhava, who was equally a luminary in the Vajrayana system, carried forward the doctrine of the sect to Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan, Sikim etc. in the 8th/9th century A.D. Indrabhuti, as a king may be presumed to be living by this period. However, unfortunately his identity as a king of Orissa is difficult to establish. By this period the Bhuama rule in central place and the Somavamsi in Western Orissa has been firmly grounded, but no ruler occurs with the name indrabhuti. His sister Lakshmikara, the expounder of the Sahajayana system, seems to bear the Bhasmakara title and there is in fact a king of this dynasty bearing the name Lakshmikara (8th Century A.D.) Indrabhuti's territory Sambhala has been identified as Sambhalpur region by Sahu, 3 mainly on the ground that Prolenya has referred to a region Sambhalaka as situ-
at the bank of the river Manada, which has been identified with the river Mahasiri. Panagranh expresses doubts over such identification of Sambhalaka with Sambalpur, because at no point of time, Sambalpur, a part of Kolaya, was over a part of Udiyana or Udviyaj, more so when no antiquity of monument there exists prior to the 15th-16th century to support this identification.

Again, it is known that Padmasambhava was the brother-in-law and collaborator of Sañtarakshita, a great scholar and abbot of Nalanda University, who visited Tibet to spread the Dharma by the request of the king Thrisong Detsun. It is known form the history of Tibet that during the reign of the 17th king of the Chogyal, hundreds of Indian scholars and yogic masters were invited to Tibet.

Chatrapal in his book suggests that Padmasambhava had many wives and Mandarav was the sister of Sautaraksha and one of them. Again, Raw mentions that Mandarav was the daughter of King Indrabhuti. Hoffman, on the other hand, says that the legendary account pregnant with historical gleanings appears that Padmasambhava was an adopted son of King Indrabhuti. Thus, the personal life of Padmasambhava is not clear before us.

Hoffman, further, suggests that Padmasambhava got his intellectual and spiritual training under two Buddhist monk-scholars, viz., Guru Buddha-jñānapāda and Anangavajra. His relation with Sautaraksha and academic apprenticeship to the erudite scholarly guidance of two intellectual giants of his time are the testimonies of Padmasambhava as a wise and deep knowledge of Buddhist. His proficiency in Tantric Buddhism has been ascertained by his study of the "Tricycle" philosophy, logic and social sciences in India. Besides, he reinforced his theoretical knowledge with practical experience by defeating several scholars in Tantric contests. He successfully manifested his abilities as the Professor of Yoga school of Tibetan Buddhism at Nalanda Mahavihara. Sankalita states that leaving aside the folklore about his birth and early life, which cannot be well relied upon, what we know positively of him is that he resided at the Nalanda University when the Tibetan king sent an invitation to him, by the advice of Sautaraksha, and that he was a prominent exponent of the Yoga school. Thus equipped himself with learning of his contemporary Buddhist scholars and went to Nepa to invite to Tibet on a state call which was around third. However, according to the Tibetan tradition, he was 1000 years old during his visit to Tibet. Again, some scholars think that Padmasambhava had visited Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal before entering into Tibet. Now we would like to say something about his visit to Nepal before entering into Tibet.

The great Tantric scholar required to equip himself with many things from Sautaraksha before his final journey to Tibet. A prior knowledge of Tibetan religious and political conditions was an important task for him. He stayed in Nepal for four years and this proved to be an advantage point for him from where he could observe an survey the course of events taking place in Tibet and the Nepalese Buddhists who were familiar with the Tibetan mysteries helped him as the first hand informants. As he was entrusted with the task of dealing with Tibetan religious affairs for which he was not well prepared, he had to train proper helpers in Nepal as the special Dākins to be used in Tibet. He, in addition to his consort Mandarav, took three Dākines form Nepal viz., a Tibetan Dākini named Bkra-shis-phyi-dron, domiciled in the Himalayan District (Mon) and two other of Nepa-
BULLETIN OF TIBETOLOGY

Volume 15, Number 1
January-March 1967

36

Wee originare Kálasiddhi and Sákyadevi. 12 Chattopadhyaya is of opinion that Mándarā and the Tibetan Dākini are often portrayed to the left and right of the master in religious pictures of the Nying-ma-pa sect.13

Thus Padmasambhava, when visited Tibet by the request of king Khri-srong-lde-u-btsan in 8th century A.D., being well acquainted with the secrets of Tibet, easily dominated the evil spirits as well as the Bon-pretis. It is believed that in Tibet, Padmasambhava "turned barren land into fruitful land and diverted the river Brahmaputra into an underground cavern." This remark simply suggests that he took steps to improve agriculture and ensured economic welfare of the Tibetans by developing the irrigation facilities. Thus, Padmasambhava was not only the preacher of religion in Tibet, but he made all round development of Tibet and, therefore, he was widely accepted by the Tibetans in the name of Guru Rinpoche.

Again, Sántaraksita returned to Tibet to assist the Guru in the fulfillment of his mission. They established the "Samye" monastery at Lhassa which became the Vātsala of the Mahāyāna Buddhism beyond the Himalayas. In this monastery the first seven Tibetan took ordination as Bhikṣus. Some more Indian scholars also invited to Tibet by the instruction, such as Vaibhava and Sāiva Pālsar translated numerous sutra and tantra texts from Sanskrit into Tibetan. Thus, by the grace of Guru, Tibet attained a high degree of spiritual development. Gradually, the Tibetan Buddhism, founded by Guru Rinpoche, was accepted unanimously and this religion also crossed the boundaries of Tibet and went to Mongolia, Russia and Kalmar. This religion was also accepted by the Himalayan tribes of Ladāk, Bhutan and Sikkim in due course.

However, we have no information regarding the role of Guru Rinpoche in Tibet after the death of Sántaraksita. Scholars differ in this matter. Majumdar says that he left Tibet after a residence of short period to preach the Dharma in other adjoining areas. 14 Hoffmann believes that he remained in Tibet for a total period of 18 months. 15 He, however, does not mention anything in this matter. The followers of the Guru claim that he stayed in Tibet about 55 years. 16 On the basis of the suggestion made by Majumdar it may be claimed that Guru visited Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladak and other Himalayan region to make popular the Lamaist faith in these areas so that the Tibetan Buddhist followers might get his constant spiritual guidance in time of general crisis.

Earlier it has been mentioned that many Pandits were invited to Tibet and they worked with Tibetan scholars for the translation of the Buddhist scriptures from Sanskrit into Tibetan. In one of the smaller temples (sgra-bshis-a-ga-gar-gling) if Samye monastery, 100 Indian Pandits and Tibetan translators worked together on the translations of sutras and tantras. Many texts were also brought from other lands by the miraculous power of Guru and were translated. Atsė became surprised to find so many Tantras in the library of Samye monastery, which he had never seen in India.

Thus the mission of Guru Rinpoche to Tibet firmly established Buddhism in the land of snow. He cleared away the forces that were hindering it and taught the Dharma in such a skillful manner that many Tibetans attained realization. The school that grew out of his mission is known as the Nyingma and it has survived through an unbroken lineage of masters until the present day.

Before going to mention about the Lamas-mer in Sikkim we would like to mention here
about the doctrine of the Nyingma school. This sect classifies all of the Buddha's teachings and paths to enlightenment into Nino Yanas. The first three are called the Henukasamana Yanas—"Yanas of cause". They are known as the Sravakayana, Pratyaka-buddhayana, and the Bodhisattvayana. The last six Yanas are called Phalavayas—"Yanas of result". These Yanas contain the tantric teachings and are known as the Three Outer Tantras (Pre-nygued-sde-gsum) and Three Inner Tantras (nang-nygued-sde-gsum) They are Kriyayoga (Tib. bya-rgya), Carityoga (Tib. byo-rgya), Yogatantrya (Tib. byor-rgya), Mahayoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga (Tib. rgyud-pa-chen-po). The last one is Atiyoga in the highest teaching of the Nying-ma-pa and it is exclusively a Nyingma practice.21

Dezongchen practitioners think that all the appearances are illusions of the deluded mind. They are false because in reality their nature is free from conceptualizations. In nature all existents are the same and they are pure in the Dharma-kaya. In practice there is no acceptance of rejection, rather all existents are accepted as manifestations of the nature Dharma-kaya. There are three aspects here: Smde (Skt. Cittavarga), Longde (Skt. Abhyantavarga), and Men-ngagde (Skt. Upadesavarga).

These teachings are instructions which introduce a novice to the nature of the mind or the nature of all existence, the Dharma-kaya, by the most direct method of practice. After receiving the introduction to the nature, one maintains the practice to make clear and to stabilize this state of awareness and to attain freedom from worldly defilement for ever. When this meditation on the nature of mind is perfected, all existence will dissolve into the vast expanse of Dharma-kaya, the Dharma-kaya.

II

Buddhism in Tibet is known as Lamayana. A Lamayana is a superior monk and a religious teacher. A Lamayana is also a "guru" (Preceptor) of the practicing religion which is known as Lamayana. Lamayana is not a distinct form of either Mahayana or Theravada. It is an admixture of Bon practices and elements of Tantricism at the centre of which the Buddha has been placed.22 Lamayana has different sects of which Nying-nya is the oldest. It was established by Guru Rinpoche. This sect is respected for its strict norms of monastic life and maintenance of the purity of the doctrine. Kadam, a sect of Lamayana originated with the famous Gelug which is less ascetic but highly ritualistic. From Kadam developed two other sects known as Kagyud and Sakya. There are some Buddhist of Sikkim and Darjeeling are followers of Karma. Dag school is prominent in Bhutan and Ladakh. Dikung is another school which has a large monastery, hundred miles North-East of Lhasa.

It is known form the history of Sikkim that Guru Rinpoche did not convert any Sikmmese to cult introduced by him, but did select a few for the sacred places to be built in Sikkim.23 It was his follower Lhatun who preached Lamayana in Sikkim much later. At present we get three facts based on the traditions, regarding the introduction of Lamaism in Sikkim. According to the first one, the struggle and conflicts among the followers of the "Yellow Hats" and the "Red Hats" in Tibet forced the latter to seek refuge in Sikkim, where they attained the status of aristocracy. They tried to convert the Sikmmese, those who were the worshippers of nature, to Buddhism. Though the Lepchas tried to keep themselves aloof, still they succeeded to some extent. In order to avoid any possible opposition from Lepchas, these immigrants
Bulletin of Tibetology

now choose one venerable person Phuntsog Namgyal as the temporal and spiritual leader of Sikkim, whose ancestry they traced from a legendary prince who founded the kingdom of Minyag in eastern Tibet in 9th century A.D.

The second fact is that a Tibetan named Zo-khyi-bumtsi his country under pressure from the Chinese and Mongols and came to Sikkim during the reign of last Lepcha king. He approached the chief priest Ti Kung Tiek for his blessings so that he might beget some children. He got three sons and they conquered Sikkim. All the Lepcha books and manuscripts were burnt and Lamasism was introduced.

The third tradition suggests that Lhatun, a follower of the Nyingma school, preached the teachings of Guru Rinpoche in Sikkim for the first time in 17th century A.D. Lhatun suggested the name of Phuntsog, a resident of the Kham region of eastern Tibet should be the spiritual and temporal ruler of Sikkim on the basis of the prophecy of Guru Rinpoche. The Lepchas accepted the suggestion and made Phuntsog their Leader. Thus, Lamasim was introduced by Lhatun with the support from the ruler. It is believed that Lhatun was the incarnation of Bimalamitra, the great religious preacher of Ascent India and Tibet.

In this context the remark of Chopra is noteworthy. He says that Phuntsog Namgyal was born in Gangtok in 1604 A.D. and was proclaimed king in 1641 A.D. by the three Lamas on the initiative of Lhatun Chogpo, the well-known Lamasim model, and received the title of Chogyal. However, we may opine safely that Lhatun, a follower of the teachings of Guru Rinpoche, preached the teaching of Guru in Sikkim in 17th century A.D. and in this way the Nyingma doctrine, for the first time, entered into Sikkim.

It is also known from the records that two other Nyingma Lamas arrived in Sikkim during the time of Lhatun from two other directions. They met with each other in the place called Yuk-sam, which literally means the meeting place of three peoples. Thus this place may be treated as the place of origin of Lamasism in Sikkim.

Now we would like to study on the rise and development of the Lamasim in this small state. The Lamasim of this region belongs to the streamformed or Red Hat Sect and consists of the two sects of Mahayana-Nyingma and Kagyu. 

The Kagyu school was established by the great yogi Khyangpo Naljor (A.D. 974-1079). The main teachings of this school were on the five Tantras: the Chakrasamvara the Hevajra, the Mahamayi, the Guhyasamaja and the Vajrabhairava. This school has two main sub sects and many minor ones. The two main schools are: - Shangpa Kagyu and Dergo Kagyu.

Dargye Kagyu’ translated literally means transmission of the order of Dargo. Dargo is one of the names for the great-scholar and yogi Gangpopa who lived in Dargo valleys, and played a decisive role in the establishment of this school in Tibet. The founder of the school was Marpa Lotsawa (A.D. 1012-1099). It is known that his two main teachers were Matripa and Naropa, both of whom were among the eighty-four Mahasiddhas of Buddha India. Through the teaching and blessing of Matripa he accomplished the absolute realization of Mahamudra. Upon returning to Tibet he transmitted the teaching of Chakrasamvara, Guhyasamaja, Hevajra Mahamayi and other tantric to his disciples. Milarepa, the great yogi was one of his four principal disciples. The four major sub-schools and eight minor sub-schools are the Karma Kagyu, the Phagtrul Kagyu, the Tshalpa Kagyu and the
Baron Kagyuud

Historically, the Lamas of Sikkm has retained some elements of the earlier Bon reli-
gion, which they had replaced. According to the opinion of Chopel, its prominent example is
that celibacy and abstinence are very rarely practiced by its followers in Sikkm.

In Sikkm, as Waddell suggests, there are three sub-sects of the Nyungma school: I.
They are: I. Lhatsum-pa to which belong most of the monasteries with Parthoengshi
(Pomayangshi) as the head, II. Kathok-pa with monasteries of Kathok and Doling, and III.
Nga dak-pa with the monasteries of Namechu. Tashiding, Simon and Thong-moche. These
sub-sects differ in their emphasis on some particular spiritual work such as ‘Lo-tho Ling-pa’
by Lhatsum pas, ‘Long-chen Rabjam’ by Kadhokpas and ‘Rig-dzin go dem can’ by Nga
dak-pas. However, the followers of all these sects believe in ‘Dong-chen Bo’ or the great lord
which is equivalent to the Indian Nisha yogi. All of them worship Guru Rinpoche. Their
highest guru is parachute, their spiritual tutelary deity in Duk-pa kah gye, and their
special guardian deity is Pad-gon den. They were a red hat, which has a special name
Tshun-penrangcho. Guru Rinpoche is worshipped under eight forms by the Nyungmapas. These
eight forms are called ‘Guru Tshon-gye’ or ‘the eight worshipful names of the teacher’. Waddell,
in his work, describes these, together with their usual paraphrase. They are mentioned below
on the basis of the work of Waddell.

I. Guru Padma byung-gnas ‘Born of a lotus’ for the happiness of the three worlds.
II. Guru Padmasambhava ‘Saviour by the Religious Doctrine’.
III. Guru Padma Gyalpo ‘The king of the Three Collections of Scriptures’.
IV. Guru Dorj Do-lo ‘The Dorje or Diamond comforter of all’.
V. Guru Nyungma ‘Od-sor ‘The Enlightening Sun of Darkness’.
VI. Guru Sakyas Song-go ‘The Second Sakyas-the-lion’, who does the work of eight sages.
VII. Guru Seng-ge-tha dok (Seng-ge-sgra-sgra) propagator of religion in the six worlds-with
‘rearing lion’s voice’.
VIII. Guru bLo-lan Mchog-sred ‘The conveyer of knowledge to all worlds’.

The Karmapa was one of the earliest sub-sects of the Kagyupa. Waddell suggests
that it differs from its parent Kagyupa in the adoption of the Nyungma ‘hidden revelation
found in Kongbo, and entitled ‘Lo-tho Ling-pa’ ‘the locally revealed merit’. He further
opines that the first Karmapa monastery in Sikkm was built in Ralong about 1730 A.D.
by the Sikkm ruler Gye-rim Namgyal at the special request of the North Karmapa Grand
Lama-dling-sang-chhung-mo. These Lamas claimed to be the incarnation of the celesttal
Buddha Vajradhara. The central image of a temple of this sect is usually that of the founder
of the sect i.e. Karmapa ‘Bhakshu’ otherwise their temples do not differ those of the
Nyungmapas.

Now we would like to say some words on the monasteries of Sikkm. Cospa gives a
list of seventy-five monasteries. According to his opinion during the eighteen fifty-two monas-
teries were receiving annual subsidy from the Government. The rest twenty-three were man-
aged by the donations from public. He further says that though there are 67 monasteries, still
now one finds a monastery almost on every top of a hill. The total number including these
Dhakhags exceed 160. 
As far as we know there are three types of monasteries in Sikkim: Rockcaves (tak-phu), Gompas and Temples (bla-khang). The four great caves which attract pilgrims from far and wide are Lhariyingphu in north of Tashiding, Kahdosagphu in the south, Bephu in the east and Dechiherpa in the west near Jorgeti. Most of the Gompas are used by monks for meditation. Those are far away from settlements. Most of the villages have a monastery of its own. According to Chopra Lachen villages have several types of monasteries. One is for the Lamas, the other for the nuns and the third for the public. Among the monasteries the oldest one is the Dubde monastery and it was established by Gyalwa Khatsun chempo during the reign of the first king of Sikkim. The second oldest monastery is Sanga choling and it was during the reign of the same king. He also built the Tashiding and Pemayangtse monasteries. All these four monasteries are the leading monasteries of Sikkim.

Thus, the Buddhism or the Lamaism was introduced in Sikkim in the mid of 17th century A.D. and gradually, this new religion was widely accepted by the inhabitants of this small Himalayan state. The Drarma which was preached by the great guru Padmasambhava in 9th century A.D. was spread and accepted in Sikkim. A majority of monasteries of this State are also affiliated to the school called Nying-ma-pa which was also founded by Guru Rinpoche.

Notes and References:-
1. Tripathy, S.S.: 1988. Buddhism and other Religious Cults of South East India; Delhi, pp. 86-87
2. Law, B.C.: 1983. Historical Geography of Ancient India; First Indian Edition, Delhi, p. 132; Bhattacharya discusses about the identification of the place Uddiyana in detail. He however, opines that the exact situation of this pitha has been a matter of great controversy. At the end of his discussion he try to establish the fact that Uddiyana was located either in Bengal or Assam. This view of Bhattacharya is also not conclusive and we fail to accept him due to lack of sufficient arguments in his favour.

Again, the Tibetan scholar Pag-sam-jon-zan opines that Uddiyana is the place where Tantric Buddhism first developed (vade, Bhattacharya, B. An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism, O.U.P.: 1952, p. 45) Some scholars suggest that this branch of Buddhism was developed from ancient Orissa. Then Orissa may be identified as Uddiyana. The king Indrabhuj who was ruler of Uddiyana is the author of the Jnanasiddhi. In his work he identifies Lord Jagannatha with Buddha and he, not only begins his work with an invocation of Jagannatha he cites the word Jagannath and describes Him as sarvajñanamaya at least ten verses. Thus, we may safely infer that Uddiyana was ancient Orissa.
5. Ibid., p. 87
6. Cf. nāmaśūrdha samarāṇa aṣṭādhi paramāśūndanai
Yā vnum aśmadhitva anta vicyate naghate jagatai.
A close study of the work of ibn al-abbas suggests that Lord Jagannatha not only has invoked in the beginning of the Jñānasiddhi, as a form of Buddha viz.

Prasanta jagannathima sarvavyaginam gaganopanam

A close study of the work of indra bhatti suggests that Lord Jagannatha not only has been invoked in the beginning of the work, but in the whole work Jagannathas has been invoked for at least ten times.

9. Chattopadhyaya opines that Padmasambhava had many wives, one of whom is said to have been Śītaraksita's sister Mandaravi, who accompanied him during his Tibetan expeditions.

10. Ibid., p. 235.


13. Ibid., p. 47.


14-B. Chattopadhyaya, S. 1962. The Evolution of the Staffs in Ancient India. Calcutta; p. 120.


However, Roccrit mentions only two Nepali, Mākṣas namo, Kālaśiddhi and Śākyadevi, Rocric, G.N., 1949. The Blue Annals, pt. 1; Calcutta, p. 43.

16. Ibid., p. 42.


20. Rimpoché opines that Padmasambhava transformed barren, rocky land into pastures and easily water to spring from rocks. He further states that Guru remained for forty-five years and six months in Tibet and he left Tibet during the reign of king Thronoo Déc Utens's son, Prince Muther 'Gongpo. Rimpoche, T.T. 1987, Buddhism Civilization in Tibet. London: pp. 34-35


22. Waddell defines the word Lamasim as a mixture of Buddhism with a preponderating amount of mythology, mysticism, and magic: the doctrine of incarnate lamas and the worship of canonised saints, now such prominent features of Lamasim, are of recent origin. He further, opines that it was readily accepted as it protected the people from devils. p. 5.


25. Ibid., pp. 24-34.
26. Chopra opines that Gyalwa Lhatse Chhoepo came to Sikkim in early 17th century A.D. along with two other Lamas Nga-Thig Syems-pa Cherpoy and Katalog Rigzin Chhoepo, following the instructions of Guru Padmasambhava. They selected Chogyal Phunotok Namgyal as the first Dharma king of Sikkim and consecrated him at Yumtso in 1604 A.D. Chopra, F.N: 1979: Sikkim, p 85.
27. Ibid; pp. 78-81
28. Ibid.
30. Waddell, J.A.; 1973; Lamaism in Sikkim; p.10
31. Ibid; p 11
32. Ibid; p 12.
33. Ibid.
34. See Appendix I and II; pp. 99-103.
35. Ibid; p. 16
36. Ibid; p 12.