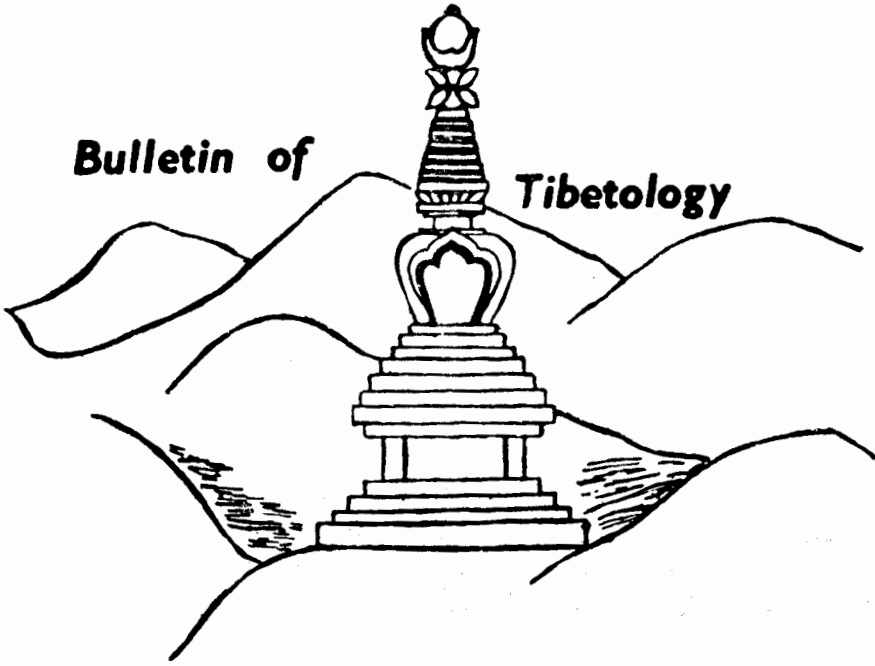


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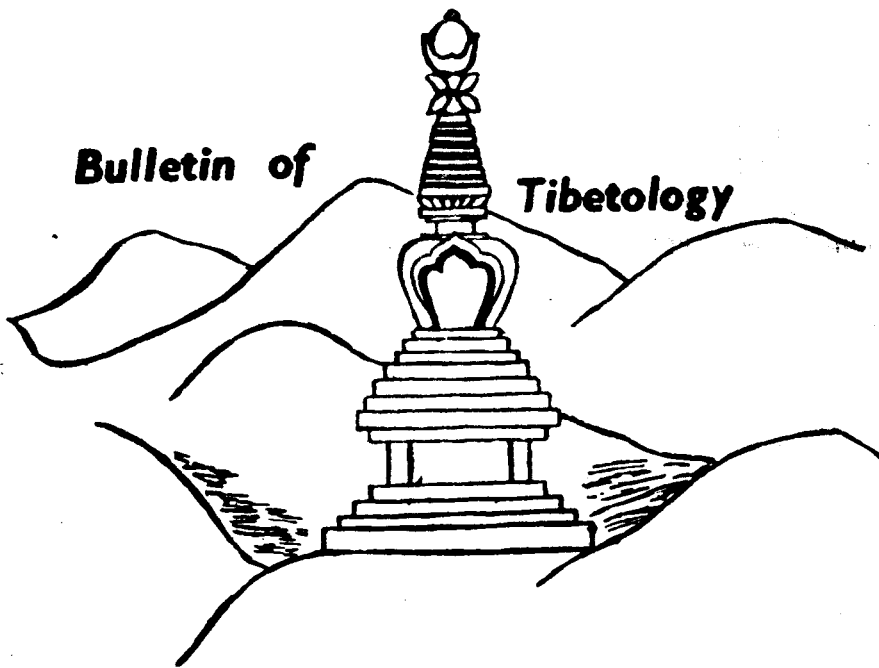
--The Bulletin of Tibetology seeks to serve the specialist as well as the general reader with an interest in this field of study. The motif portraying the Stupa on the mountains suggests the dimensions of the field--

EDITORS

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HOW OLD WAS SRONG BRTSAN SGAM PO ?

—H. E. RICHARDSON

The tradition perpetuated by Tibetan religious historians from Sa-Skya Graps-pa Rgyal-Mtshan onwards, that Srong Brtsan Sgam Po died at the age of 82 is probably not now accepted by any western scholar. It is explained by Professor Roerich in his introduction to *The Blue Annals* as due to the interpretation of the Manjusrimulatantra as a reference to Srong Brtsan. Other explanations might be suggested but it is my intention here only to outline broadly the salient points in the evidence before the XIIIth century—and the age of the religious historians—which militate against the traditional view of Srong Brtsan's age.

The date of Srong Brtsan Sgam Po's death is clearly determined. The Tibetan Tun Huang Annals and the Chinese T'ang Annals agree in putting it in a year which by western calculations is 650 A.D. The argument of Professor Hisashi Sato in favour of 649 is not conclusive and, in any event, it makes small difference whether the death occurred at the end of 649 or the beginning of 650 (the date which I prefer). The point is that, given this clear date for the king's death, it would, on the traditional view, be necessary to put his birth c 568. Against that, Roerich following Schmidt, favours the year 617 which is derived from an interpretation of Ssanang Ssetsen; but Ssanang himself depends on traditional sources and if 617 should prove so nearly right it would be more of an inspired guess than a calculation substantiated by early evidence.

The key date for Tibetan history of the time is contained in the T'ang Annals which record that in the 8th year of Cheng Kuan, which corresponds with 634 A.D., the Tsan p'u K'i Lung Tsan—who must be Srong Brtsan Sgam Po—sent envoys to the Emperor. Lung Tsan is said to have been a minor when he came to the throne. The Emperor returned his embassy and in a further Tibetan mission the king asked for a Chinese princess in marriage. When this was refused, the Tibetan king attacked first the namad tribes on the Chinese border and then China itself with the result that in 640 a Chinese princess was granted as his bride. This date agrees with the earliest Tibetan record, the Tun Huang Annals. If the traditional story is to be accepted, it would mean that when Srong Brtsan conducted his campaign against China and acquired his Chinese bride he was between 66 and 70. This does not appear very probable and there is a hint in the later tradition that this was not so; for some

of the accounts imply that the minister Mgar was acting on behalf of a young king when he conducted the marriage negotiations at the Chinese court.

There is at the beginning of the MSS of the Tun Huang Annals a damaged passage which the editors of the transcription and translation in *Documents de Tuen Houang Relatifs a l'Histoire du Tibet* have not reproduced. I intend to deal with this passage in detail elsewhere and all that need be said here is that the MSS of which through the kindness of the Bibliotheque Nationale of France I have secured a photo copy, carries the dating contained in the Annals quite clearly back to the year 634 and beyond. The passage of the Annals with which the published edition opens contains a summary of events before 650 from which date the record provides a short account of the events of each year. The summary as published refers briefly to two groups of events three and six years respectively before 650. The division into multiples of three appears to be significant and systematic. The summary shows that six years before the death of Srong Brtsan Sgam Po *i. e.* c 644, there was a revolt of Zhang Zhung; and that three years before that, there was trouble in Nepal and the Chinese princess arrived in Lhasa—viz 641. From here the unpublished passage, which is continuous with what follows it, takes the historical summary back for a further considerable period. It shows that an uncertain number of years before the arrival of the princess in 641 (the part of the MSS which contained the exact figure is damaged) a younger brother of Srong Brtsan Sgam Po died in suspicious circumstances. If a three year period was used, the date would be c 639. Then another uncertain number of years earlier it is recorded that Srong Brtsan Sgam Po undertook a military expedition against China. This must be the campaign which led to the grant of a princess; and from the Chinese record it can be dated c 635/636—another three year interval. Then, a further uncertain period earlier came the disgrace and death of the minister Myang Mang Po Rje Zhang Snang. Allowing for another three year interval this would be c 632/633. There is a reference to these events in a different part of the Tun Huang documents also, where they are put after the expedition. The more careful version of the Annals is to be preferred; but in any case, it is clear that the death of Myang was comparatively close in time to the expedition. One further paragraph—the first of the damaged passage—appears to relate to the deeds of Myang when he was acting as minister on behalf of the young king after his accession. In this case an interval of three years appears too short. From both Tibetan and Chinese records it is

seen that Srong Brtsan was a minor when he came to the throne ; it is not suggested that he was an infant. It is known that on his death he was succeeded by an infant grandson and so it is necessary in calculating the date of his accession to make reasonable allowance for two generations. Taking a further three years interval before 632/633, giving c 629 for his accession, and assuming his age then to have been say 13 to 16 would not give enough time for the birth of a son and grandson. If a six year interval is assumed, on the analogy of the later part of the summary, we should have the year c 627 for his accession.

If the later tradition were to be accepted, the accession of the king (at the conjectural age of 13 to 16) would have to be put c 583,586. This would mean that the interval between the paragraph about Myang which can be dated c 632, and the paragraph dealing with events after the accession would cover a period of nearly 50 years. On the analogy of the rest of the summary, which be it noted, is continuous and homogeneous, that is not acceptable.

The impossibility of the traditional story is underlined by what is known about the minister Myang Zhang Snang. Other parts the Tun Huang documents in Chronicle form show that Myang was active during the reign of Srong Brtsan's father. He was clearly older than Srong Brtsan and, as he died c 632 at the earliest, he would have been, on the traditional theory, at least 75 when the expedition took place. Similar evidence applies also to another famous minister Khyung po Zu Tse, who was responsible for the fall of Myang ; he, too, served Srong Brtsan's father. It is hardly possible that Chinese sources would not have remarked on this regime of an old king and ancient ministers ; on the contrary, the clear impression is given that when Srong Brtsan first came in contact with the Chinese court c 634 he was a young man. But the exact age at which he came to the throne and the exact date of his birth remain uncertain.

The traditional year of Srong Brtsan's birth is an Ox year (traditions which attribute an animal+element dating at this period of Tibetan history can not be treated as realistic); and it is on the basis of an Ox year that Schmidt calculates the date of the king's birth as 617. Since he died in 650 this would mean that Srong Brtsan fathered a son when he was only 16 years old and that his son did the same. This is certainly not usual in present day Tibet and cannot be regarded as probable. There is no evidence before the XIIIth century that Srong Brtsan was born in an Ox year but if the tradition be considered acceptable, the Ox year

605 would seem more reasonable. From the earliest records—both Chinese and Tibetan—this seems a little too early and a date which would make the king somewhat younger at the time of his first contact with China seems preferable. It is not improbable that the dismissal of the hitherto dominant minister Myang and the expedition against China were the first acts of Srong Brtsan Sgam Po after he had reached years of maturity and decision; and my own preference is to treat the exact year of his birth as still debatable with the probability lying somewhere between the years 609 and 613, which would make him about 24 to 28 at the time of his campaign against China and 37 to 41 when he died in 650.

[Mr Richardson prefers SRONG BRTSAN to SRONG BTSAN since BRTSAN is the oldest recorded form. For the usage BRTSAN in the nomenclature of the kings as in epigraphs reference may be made to this author's *Ancient Historical Edicts at Lhasa* (London 1952). BTSAN is a modern usage. BRTSAN and BTSAN have similar if not identical meaning. A twentieth century Mongol scholar, Geshe Choda, notes in his dictionary under the entry thus (Lhasa xylograph Vol. 2 ; also Peking edition Page 686). —NCS]

PRINCIPLES OF BUDDHIST TANTRISM

—LAMA ANAGARIKA GOVINDA

The word *tantra* (तन्त्र) is related to the concept of weaving and its derivatives (thread, web, fabric, etc.), hinting at the interwovenness of things and actions, the interdependence of all that exists, the continuity in the interaction of cause and effect, as well as in spiritual and traditional development which like a thread weaves its way through the fabric of history and of individual lives. The term *tantra* (Tib. ,therefore can also stand for tradition, spiritual continuity or succession. The scriptures, however, which in Buddhism go by the title of *Tantra*, are invariably of a mystic nature and try to establish the inner relationships of things: the parallelism of microcosm and macrocosm, mind and universe, ritual and reality, the world of matter and the world of the spirit. This is achieved through exercises in which *yantra* (यन्त्र), *mantra* (मन्त्र), and *mudra* (मुद्रा), the parallelism of the visible, the audible, and the touchable, unite the powers of mind (चित्त), speech (वाक्), and body (काय), in order to realize the final state of completeness and enlightenment.

Thus in applying the words of Guru Gampopa, it may be said that the Buddhist Tantras represent "a philosophy comprehensive enough to embrace the whole of knowledge, a system of meditation which will produce the power of concentrating the mind upon anything whatsoever, and an art of living which will enable one to utilize each activity (of body, speech, and mind) as an aid on the Path of Liberation"

Among all the aspects of Buddhism, its Tantric teachings have until now been the most, neglected and misunderstood. The reason for this was the fact that these scriptures cannot be understood merely philologically, but only from the point of view of *yogic* experience, which cannot be learned from books. Moreover, those books, from which information was sought, were written in a peculiar idiom, a language of symbols and secret conventions which in Sanskrit was called सन्ध्याभाषा (*Sandhyabhasa*, literally "twilight language", because of the double meaning which underlay its words).

This symbolic language was not only a protection against intellectual curiosity and misuse of yogic practices by the ignorant or the uninitiated, but, had its origin mainly in the fact that the ordinary language is not able to express the highest experiences of the mind. The indescribable,

which is experienced by साधक (*Sadhaka*, the true devotee) can only be hinted at by symbols, similes and paradoxes.

The influence of Tantric Buddhism upon Hinduism was so profound, that up to the present day the majority of Western scholars labour under the impression that Tantrism is a Hinduistic creation which was taken over later by more or less decadent Buddhist schools.

Against this view speaks the great antiquity and consistent development of Tantric tendencies in Buddhism. Already the early *Mahasanghikas* had a special collection of mantric formulas in their *Dharani-pitaka* (धारणीपिटक) ; and the *Manjusri-mulakalpa* (मञ्जुश्रीमूलकल्प), which according to some authorities goes back to the first century A. D., contains not only *mantras* and *dharanis* (धारणी) but numerous *mandalas* (मण्डल) and *mudras* (मुद्रा) as well. Even if the dating of the *Manjusri-mulakalpa* is somewhat uncertain, it seems probable that the Buddhist Tantric system had crystallized into definite form by the end of the third century A. D., as we see from the well-known *Guhya samaja* (गुह्यसमाज Tib *Tantra*).

To declare Buddhist Tantrism as an off-shoot of Saivism is only possible for those who have no first-hand knowledge of Tantric literature. A comparison of the Hindu Tantras with those of Buddhism (which are mostly preserved in Tibetan and which therefore for long remained unnoticed by Indologists) not only shows an astonishing divergence of methods and aims, in spite of external similarities, but proves the spiritual and historical priority and originality of the Buddhist Tantras.

Sankaracarya, the great Hindu philosopher of the 9th century A. D., whose works form the foundation of all Saivaite philosophy, made use of the ideas of *Nagarjuna* and his followers to such an extent that orthodox Hindus suspected him of being a secret devotee of Buddhism. In a similar way the Hindu Tantras, too, took over the methods and principles of Buddhist Tantrism and adapted them to their own purposes (much as the Buddhists had adapted the age-old principles and techniques of *yoga* to their own systems of meditation). This view is not only held by Tibetan tradition but confirmed by Indian scholars after a critical investigation of the earliest Sanskrit texts of Tantric Buddhism and their historical and ideological relationship with the Hindu Tantras.

Thus Benoytosh Bhattacharya in his *Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, has come to the conclusion, "it is possible to declare, without

fear of contradiction, that the Buddhists were the first to introduce the Tantras into their religion, and that the Hindus borrowed them from the Buddhists in later times, and that it is idle to say that later Buddhism was an outcome of Saivism'. (p.147)

To judge Buddhist Tantric teachings and symbols from the standpoint of Hindu Tantras, and specially from the principles of Saktism is not only inadequate but thoroughly misleading, because both systems start from entirely different premises. Although both make use of the methods of *yoga* and of similar technical philosophical terms, there is little justification for declaring Buddhism to be identical with Brahmanism and therefore in interpreting the Buddhist Tantras in the light of the Hindu Tantras, or vice versa.

The main difference is that Buddhist Tantrism is not Saktism. The concept of *Sakti* (शक्ति, divine power) of the creative female aspect of the Highest God (*Siva*, शिव), or his emanations does not play any role in Buddhism: in fact, the term *Sakti* never occurs in Buddhist Tantras in this connection, while in the Hindu Tantras, the concept of power (शक्ति) forms the focus of interest. The central idea of Tantric Buddhism, however, is *prajna* (प्रज्ञा = knowledge, wisdom).

To the Buddhist, *Sakti* (शक्ति) is *maya* (माया), the very power that creates illusion, from which only *prajna* can liberate us. It is, therefore not the aim of the Buddhist to acquire power, or to join himself to the powers of the universe, either to become their instrument or to become their master, but on the contrary, he tries to free himself from those powers, which for aeons kept him a prisoner of *samsara* (संसार). He strives to perceive those powers, which have kept him going in the rounds of life and death, in order to liberate himself from their dominion. However, he does not try to negate them or to destroy them, but to transform them in the fire of knowledge, so that they may become forces of enlightenment which, instead of creating further differentiation, flow in the opposite direction: towards union, towards wholeness, towards completeness.

The attitude of the Hindu Tantras is quite different, if not contrary. "United with the *Sakti*, be full of power" says कुलचूडमणितंत्र (*Kula-cudamani Tantra*). 'From the union of *Siva* (शिव) and *Sakti* (शक्ति) the world is created'. The Buddhist, on the other hand, does not want the creation and unfoldment of the world but the realization of the "uncreated, unformed" state of *sunyata* (शून्यता), from which all creation proceeds, or which is prior to and beyond all creation (if one may put the inexpressible into human language).

The becoming conscious of this sunyata (शून्यता Tib.), is *prajna* (प्रज्ञा Tib.), or highest knowledge. The realization of this highest knowledge in life is enlightenment (बोधि), i.e. if *prajna* (प्रज्ञा) or *sunyata* (शून्यता), the passive, all embracing female principle, from which everything proceeds and into which everything recedes, is united with the dynamic male principle of active universal love and compassion, which represents the means (उपाय Tib.) for the realization of *prajna* and *sunyata*, then perfect Buddhahood is attained. Intellect without feeling, knowledge without love, and reason without compassion lead to pure negation, to rigidity, spiritual death, to mere vacuity, while feeling without reason, love without knowledge (blind love), compassion without understanding, lead to confusion and dissolution; but where both are united, where the great synthesis of heart and head, feeling and intellect highest love and deepest knowledge has taken place, completeness is re-established, perfect enlightenment is attained.

The process of enlightenment is therefore represented by the most obvious, the most human and at the same time the most universal symbol imaginable: the union of male and female in the ecstasy of love, in which the active element (*upaya*) is represented as a male, the passive (*prajna*) by a female figure, in contrast to the Hindu Tantras, in which the female aspect is represented as *Sakti*, i. e., the active principle, and the male aspect as *Siva*, the pure state of divine consciousness or 'being', i. e., the passive principle, or the 'resting in its own nature'.

In Buddhist symbolism, the Knower (Buddha) becomes one with his knowledge (*prajna*), just as man and wife become one in the embrace of love, and this becoming one is the highest indescribable happiness, *mahasukha* (महासुख Tib.) The Dhyani-Buddhas (ध्यानीबुद्ध i. e., the ideal Buddhas visualized in meditation) and the Dhyani-Bodhisattvas (ध्यानी बोधिसत्त्व), as embodiments of the active urge of enlightenment which finds its expression in *upaya*, the all-embracing love and compassion, are therefore represented in the embrace of their *prajna*, symbolized by a female deity, the embodiment of highest knowledge.

This is not the arbitrary reversal of Hindu symbology, but the consequent application of a principle which is of fundamental importance for the entire Buddhist Tantric system.

By confusing Buddhist Tantrism with the Saktism of the Hindu Tantras, a basic misconception had been created, which up to the present

day has prevented a clear understanding of the *Vajrayana* and its symbolism, in iconography as well as in literature, especially that of the *Siddhas*. The latter used a particular form of symbology, in which very often the highest was clothed in the form of the lowest, the most sacred in the form of the most profane, the transcendent in the form of the most earthly, and deepest knowledge in the form of the most grotesque paradoxes. It was not only a language for initiates, but a kind of shock therapy, which had become necessary on account of the over-intellectualization of the religious and philosophical life of those times.

Though the polarity of male and female principles is recognized in the Tantras of the *Vajrayana* and is an important feature of its symbolism, it is raised upon a plane which is as far away from the sphere of mere sexuality as the mathematical juxtaposition of positive and negative signs, which is as valid in the realm of irrational values as in that of rational or concrete concepts.

In Tibet the male and female Dhyani-Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are regarded as little as "sexual beings" as in certain schools of Japan; and to the Tibetan even their aspect of union (युगनद्ध Tib.) is indissolubly associated with the highest spiritual reality in the process of enlightenment, so that associations with the realm of physical sexuality are completely ignored.

We must not forget that the figural representation of these symbols are not looked upon as portraying human beings, but as embodying the experiences and visions of meditation. In such a state, however, there is nothing more that could be called 'sexual', there is only the super-individual polarity of all life, which rules all mental and physical activities, and which is transcended only in the ultimate state of integration, in the realization of *smyata*. This is the state which is called *mahamudra* (महामुद्रा Tib.), the "Great Attitude" or "the Great Symbol", which has given its name to one of the most important systems of meditation in Tibet.

In the earlier forms of Indian Buddhist Tantrism, *Mahamudra* was represented as the 'eternal female' principle, as may be seen from *Advaya-vajra's* definition: "The words 'great' and 'mudra' form together the term 'mahamudra'. She is not something (तत्रःस्वभावः); she is free from the veils which cover the cognizable object and so on; she shines forth like the serene sky at noon during autumn; she is the support of all success; she is the identity *samsara* and *nirvana*; her body is compassion (करुणा)

which is not restricted to a single object ; she is the uniqueness of Great Bliss (महासुखैकरूप)'¹

If in one of the most controversial passages of Anangavajra's प्रज्ञोपाय विनिश्चय सिद्धि² it is said that all women should be enjoyed by the *sadhaka* in order to experience the *mahamudra*, it is clear that this can not be understood in the physical sense, but that it can only be applied to that highest form of love which is not restricted to a single object and which is able to see all 'female' qualities, whether in ourselves or in others, as those of the Divine Mother (प्रज्ञापारमिता Tib.

Another passage, which by its very grotesqueness proves that it is meant to be a paradox and is not to be taken literally states that "the *sadhaka* who has sexual intercourse with his mother, his sister, his daughter, and his sister's daughter, will easily succeed in his striving for the ultimate goal (तत्त्वयीग)'³

To take expressions like 'mother' 'sister', 'daughter' or 'sister's daughter' literally in this connection is as senseless as taking literally the well-known *Dhammapada* verse (No. 294), which says that, after having killed father and mother and two Ksatriya kings, and destroyed a Kingdom with all its inhabitants, the *Brahmana* remains free from sin.⁴ Here 'father and mother' stands for 'egoism and craving' (Pali : अस्मिन्न and तण्हा) the 'two kings' for the erroneous views of annihilation or eternal existence (उच्छेद वा सासृत दिद्धि), the kingdom and its inhabitants' for 'the twelve spheres of consciousness' (द्वादशायतनानि) and the *Brahmana* for the liberated monk (भिक्षु).

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1. अद्वयवज्र : चतुर्-मुद्रा quoted in *Yuganaddha* by H. V. Guenther (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Banaras, 1952).
 2. प्रज्ञोपायविनिश्चयसिद्धि in *Two Vajrayana Works*, Gaikwad Oriental Series, No. XLIV, p. 22.
 3. प्रज्ञोपायविनिश्चयसिद्धि V, 25, quoted in *Yuganaddha*, p. 106. A similar statement is found in the *Guhyasamaj a Tantra*.
 4. मातरं पितरं हन्त्वा, राजानो द्वे च खत्तिये ।
रडुं सानुचरं हन्त्वा, अनीघी याति ब्राह्मणे ॥

To maintain that Tantric Buddhists actually encouraged incest and licentiousness is as ridiculous as accusing the *Theravadins* of condoning matricide and patricide and similar heinous crimes. If we only take the trouble to investigate the living tradition of the Tantras in their genuine, unadulterated forms, as they existed still in our days in thousands of monasteries and hermitages of Tibet, where the ideals of sense-control and renunciation were held in the highest esteem, then only can we realize how ill-founded and worthless are the current theories which try to drag the Tantras into the realm of sensuality.

From the point of view of the Tibetan Tantric tradition, the above mentioned passages can only be meaningful in the context of *yoga* terminology.

'All women in the world' signifies all the elements which make up the female principles of our psycho-physical personality which, as the Buddha says, represents what is called 'the world'. To these principles correspond, on the opposite side, an equal number of male principles. Four of the female principles form a special group, representing the vital forces (गण) of the Great Elements (महाभूत), Earth, Water, Fire, Air and their corresponding psychic centres (चक्र) or plans of consciousness within the human body. In each of them the union of male and female principles must take place, before the fifth and highest stage is reached. If the expressions 'mother', 'sister', 'daughter', etc, are applied to the forces of these fundamental qualities of the *mohabhutas*, the meaning of the symbolism becomes clear.

In other words, instead of seeking union with a woman outside ourselves, we have to seek it within ourselves ('in our own family') by the union of our male and female qualities in the process of meditation. This is clearly stated in Naropa's famous "Six Doctrines" (

) upon which the most important *yoga* method of the Kargyupa () school is based, a method which was practised by *Milarepa*, the most saintly and austere of all the great masters of meditation (whom certainly nobody could accuse of 'sexual practices'). Though we cannot here go into the details of this *yoga*, a short quotation may suffice to prove our point. "The vital force of the Five Aggregates (Tib. Skt. स्कन्ध) in its real nature, pertaineth to the masculine aspect of the Buddha-principle manifesting through the left psychic nerve (Tib. Skt ईडा नाडि). The vital force of the Five Elements (Tib. Skt, घातु), in its real nature, pertaineth to the feminine aspect

of the Buddha principle manifesting through the right psychic nerve (Tib. Skt. विज्ञान नाडि). As the vital force with these two aspects of it in union, descendeth into the median nerve (Tib. Skt. सुषुम्ना) gradually there cometh the realization....." and one attains the transcendental boon of the Great Symbol (*mahamudra*),⁵ the union of the male and female principles (as *upaya* and *prajna*) in the highest state of Buddhahood.

Thus, only if we are able to see the relationship of body and mind, of physical and spiritual interaction in a universal perspective, and if in this way we overcome the "I" and "mine" and the whole structure of egocentric feelings, opinions, and prejudices which produce the illusion of our separate individuality, then only can we rise into the sphere of Buddhahood.

5. W. Y. Evans-Wentz and Dawa Samdup : *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, p. 220ff.

THE TIBETAN TRADITION OF GEOGRAPHY

—TURREL V. WYLIE

Geography, as a scientific description of the physical world, did not develop in Tibet in a manner analogous to that of western civilizations. Physical geography with its study of the earth's surface, climate, and the distribution of flora and fauna did not emerge as a branch of learning. Historically speaking, only two traditions evolved: political geography and religious geography. The commonly used term, "political geography" requires no special clarification here, but the concept of "religious geography", which is as familiar to Tibetans as it is strange to foreigners, needs some explanations. The term "religious geography" is used in this article to refer to that corpus of Tibetan literature which describes the geographic location and the religious history of sacred places and things without reference to the physical features of the region or its flora and fauna.

Since religious geography is a characteristic of the Tibetan tradition and is substantiated by various autochthonous monographic studies, it will be discussed first in this article. The tradition of political geography, which reflects the historical evolution of the Tibetan state, is not found in such monographic studies and must be reconstructed from diverse data found in unrelated textual materials. In view of the fragmented and often hypothetical nature of the "political geography" tradition, it will be discussed last in this article.

RELIGIOUS GEOGRAPHY

There are various examples of Tibetan literature which may be grouped together and classified as religious geographic literature. These texts are intended primarily to describe the geographical location and religious history of pilgrimage places, sacred objects, and the hermitages of former Buddhist holy men. They are devoid of specific information on physical geography *per se* and are better understood when thought of as *guide-books* for pilgrims visiting unfamiliar places and things.

The corpus of this geographic literature may be divided, for the sake of convenience and discussion in this article, into the following general types:

Dkar-chag ¹	(“Register”)
Gnas-bshad	(“Guide-book”)
Lam-yig	(“Passport”)
Go-la'i kha-byang	(“Global-description”)

The first type, the “register”, is limited to the description of a single pilgrimage place with an account of the various sacred objects to be found there.² A lengthy example of this type is the *Lha-Idan sprul-pa'i gtsug-lag khang-gi dkar-chag shel-dkar me-long* (“The bright mirror register of the emanated temple of Lha-Idan [=Lhasa]” by the V Dalai Lama Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (1617-1682). This register is a detailed account of the sacred objects found in the Jo-khang temple in Lhasa and comprises the entire volume *Dza* of the V Dalai Lama's collected writings (gsung-'bum).³

In contrast to this detailed register by a famous author, there are many short registers by anonymous authors. An example of this type is the *Bal-yul mchod rten 'Phags-pa shing-kun dang de'i gnas-gzhan-rna s-kyi-dkar-chag* (“Register of the Nepalese stupa Phags-pa shing kun [=Svayambhunath] and other pilgrimage places”). This text is xylograph of only ten folios and is printed in the Sgrol-ma'i lha-khang, a temple near the Svayambhunath stupa itself. No author is mentioned in its colophon.⁴

The second type, the “guide-book”, describes more than one pilgrimage place and offers terse directions how to travel between them. A very short example of such a guide-book is the *Bal-yul gnas-yig*, a xylograph of only eleven folios, which lists the various significant pilgrimage places one encounters when travelling from India northward to, and including, the Kathmandu valley.

Perhaps the most distinguished and detailed guide-book found in religious geographic literature is the *Dhus-gtsang-gi gnas-rtan rags-rim-gyi mtshan byang mdor-bsdus dad-pa'i sa-bon* (“Short summary of the pure names of some of the holy place and images of Dbus and Gtsang, called the Seed of Faith”) by 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen-brtse dbang-po kun-dga' bstan-pa'i rgyal mtshan (1820-1892).⁵ This guide-book in twenty-nine folios gives directions to pilgrims how to travel from one to another of the more famous pilgrimage places in the central Tibetan provinces of Dbus and Gtsang. It is an excellent source of proper orthography of place names as well as a survey of the significant monasteries, temples images, and hermitages together with a brief historical account of them. This valuable guide-book like the others of the “religious geographic type” is devoid of special information on flora, fauna and topography.

The third type, the "passport", as indicated by the term implies a guide-book for pilgrims whose pilgrimage involves travel between two or more countries. The most famous example of the passport type of geographical text is the *Shambha-la'i lam-yig* ("Passport to Shambhala") by the III Panchen Lama Blo-bzang dpal-ldan ye-shes (1738-1780).⁶ This passport-type of guide-book involves international travel for it describes the way in which one must proceed in order to travel to the paradise of Shambhala. Shambhala is the realm ruled by the Kulika kings, who have preserved the teachings of the *Dus-kyi 'khor-lo rgyud* (Kalacakra-tantra) and who will eventually destroy the heretics and a new age of Buddhism will begin.⁷

The last type, the "global-description", is unique and represented by a single text the *'Dzam-gling chen-po'i rgyas-bshad snod-bcud kun-gsal me-long* ("The mirror which illuminates all inanimate and animate things and explains fully the Great World") by Bla-ma Btsan-po Simin-grol sprul-sku 'Jam-dpal chos-kyi bstan-'dzin phiin-las (1789-1838).⁸ This comprehensive geography in 146 folios is a description of the known world and was compiled in 1820 by the Bla-ma Btsan-po during his residence in Peking, where he had access to European geographies as well as Russian and Chinese ones. His accounts of the western world, which were based on inadequate secondary sources, are interesting and at times amusing.⁹ The chief value of his work is the section on Tibet (folios 58-81) which surveys the religious geography of Tibet from Stod Mnga'-ris in the west, to Ru-bzhi of Dbus-Gtsang in the center, and to Khams and A-mdo in the east. This section is unique in Tibetan geographical literature because it is a "guide-book" to all regions of Tibet, not just one or two.

On the other hand, this "global-description" by Bla-ma Btsan-po should not be considered a true type within the Tibetan tradition of religious geography. Every chief monastery and temple has its own register (*dkar-chag*) and guide-books (*gnas-bshad*) are available for various region of Tibet and bordering areas. The passport (*lam yig*) type, although involving international pilgrimage particularly to a Buddhist paradise, is adequately substantiated in the geographic tradition; but the global-description (*go-la'i kha-byarg*) is evidenced only by the text of the Bla-ma Btsan-po. Moreover, there is an inconsistency in the geographical writings of the Bla-ma Btsan po, which indicates that he viewed Tibetan geography from the traditional 'religious' function but viewed the western world through the eyes of the foreign geographers whose works

he used. For example, his description of Tibetan topography is concerned exclusively with pilgrimage places, as seen in the following passage: "In the region southwest of there is Yar-lung. There are such things there as the three receptacles (rten-gsum) namely: the mchod-rten called Gung thang-'bum-mo-che, Tshe-rgyal-'bum-pa, and Theg-chen-'bum-pa,"¹⁰; but his description of the western hemisphere arrives at physical geography. Compare his passage: [in South America] due to the excessive warmth, there are many kinds of fruits and many kinds of crops (obtained) without plowing, such as *ma kai* (maize). Since there are a great many birds, such as domesticated fowls which change color, and fish and game animals, the people of those countries always have a livelihood and so there is no poverty."¹¹ From this contrast between his "religious geography" for Tibet and "semi-physical geography" for foreign countries, it may be postulated that the Bla-ma Btsan-po, who was living in Peking at the time, had to rely upon *written* Tibetan geographical literature; all of which reflected the "religious" tradition of geographic description. Since the Bla-ma Btsan-po's monumental work is unique in Tibetan literature, it should perhaps not be considered a true type of geographical text, but rather an exceptional type.

POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

As noted earlier, "political" geography—unlike "religious" geography—was not the subject of singular studies in Tibet and thus there are no available monographs on this type of geography; however, data relating to the political areas of Tibet are found in various and diverse sources which provide an insight into the Tibetan tradition of "political" geography.

For the sake of convenience, Tibetan political history may be divided into four major periods—(1) legendary, (2) dynastic, (3) hegemonic and (4) theocratic. The legendary period, as implied by the name represents the pre-historical period characterized by fact, legend, and myth. There are no sources—indigenous or foreign—to shed light on Tibetan concepts of political areas prior to the development of a written script in the seventh century A. D.

Dynastic Period (629-842)

The "dynastic" period began with the reign of Srong-btsan sgam-po (ascended 629—died 649) because it was during his time that the nucleus of the Tibetan kingdom began to expand into a royal empire.

The kingdom inherited by Srong-btsan sgam-po included the regions of Dwags-po, Rkong-yul, Ngas-po and Rtsang-bod, as well as the country of Sum-pa, which had been subjugated in the time of his father.¹² The division of the kingdom in central Tibet into the 'Four Banners' (Ru-bzhi) appeared early in the dynastic period and is attested by documents found at Tun-huang.¹³ As the nucleus of royal power was expanded into an empire various regions were brought under Tibetan domination. The Yang-t'ung people in the northeast were subjugated first, then the A zha, who occupied the area near Lake Kokonor. Next defeated were the Tang-hsiang, who lived to the east of the A-zha; which extended the Tibetan empire over the region known as A-mdo and brought it up to the frontier of T'ang China. Zhang-zhung, the region lying to the west of central Tibet, was subdued in the time of Srong btsan sgam-po as well.

The empire was expanded northwesterly into Li-yul (Khotan) and the "Four Garrisons of An-hsi", which controlled the area currently known as Chinese Turkestan, were captured during the reign of Khri Mang-slon mang rtsan (ascended 650-died 676). Following the death of this king, Zhang zhung revolted and its resubjugation eventually led to its incorporation into the Tibetan empire to such an extent that its own language and cultural identity died out.

Although the Tibetans lost control of the Chinese Turkestan region to the Chinese in 692, they retained domination over most of the other subjugated regions until the middle of the ninth century. That region, comprised of the areas known as Stod Mnga -ris, Dbus, Gtsang, Khams, and A-mdo, was under Tibetan control for over 200 years resulting in the firm establishment of the Tibetans with their language and culture. This, then, was the origin and extent of the geographical area referred to in later times as "ethnic" Tibet in contrast to "political" Tibet.

Hegemonic Period (842-1642)

The Tibetan empire collapsed in the middle of the ninth century for various reasons, not the least of which was the assassination of the anti-Buddhist king, Glang-dar-ma, in 842, which led to schisms in the royal lineage and subsequent fragmentation of the kingdom and loss of "political" unity. Thus began period of "hegemonic" rule that endured for centuries.

A nebulous form of political unity was restored in central Tibet

in 1247, when Sa-skya Pandita Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1182-1251) was invested with authority over the Khri-skor bcu-gsum (Thirteen Myriarchies) by the Mongol Prince, Godan son of Ogodai Khan. It is to be noted that the Thirteen Myriarchies did not comprise all of "ethnic" Tibet; only the regions of Dbus, Gtsang and Yar-'brog. Sa-skya Pandita, as head of the Sa skya-pa sect, became the first lama to rule central Tibet—in theory, if not in fact—and his investiture marked the beginning of that unique form of government found in Tibet where the secular authority is held by an ecclesiastic.

Phags-pa (1235-1280), a nephew of Sa-skya Pandita, became the religious teacher of Qubilai Khan, who first invested Phags-pa with authority over the Thirteen Myriarchies and then over the Chol-kha Gsum (Three Provinces), namely: (1) Dbus-Gtsang, (2) Mdo-stod and (3) Mdo-smad. These last two provinces are the areas of Khams and A-mdo respectively; therefore, Phags-pa was invested with authority over "ethnic" Tibet. Although the Sa-skya-pa sect lost its political supremacy in Tibet by the middle of the 14th century, the ensuing rulers considered themselves as masters over "ethnic" Tibet as a "political" unit.

Theocratic Period (1642-1959)

The theocratic period of Tibetan political history began with the rise to political and religious supremacy by the V Dalai Lama and the resultant form of government endured until the occupation of Tibet by the Communist Chinese in the 20th century. The Tibetan traditional concept of "ethnic" Tibet remained generally consistent during the theocratic period; however, the extent of "political" Tibet was reduced by the loss of border regions to China.

In 1724, the province of Mdo-smad (A-mdo) was integrated into the Manchu empire as the province of Ch'ing-hai by the Yung-cheng Emperor (reigned 1723-1735) following the suppression of a Mongol revolt against the Manchu throne.

In 1726, the eastern portion of Mdo-stod (Khams) was taken under Manchu rule when the Sino-Tibetan frontier was moved from Ta-chien-lu (at 102 degrees east longitude) west ward to Bam Pass (at 99 degrees east longitude) and the area was known as province of Hsi-k'ang.¹⁴ After this, "political" Tibet extended from Ladakh in the west to the upper reaches of the Yangtze River in the east; a geographical

region that remained generally constant until the overthrow of the Manchus and the fall of the Ching Dynasty in 1911.

Disagreement between Tibet and China over the location of the Sino-Tibetan frontier was one of the primary which caused the rupture of the tripartite meeting at Simla in 1913-1914. The meeting was held to resolve various questions relating to the mutual interests of the governments of Tibet, China and Great Britain. At the meeting, Blon-chen Bshad-sgra, the plenipotentiary for Tibet, demanded that the frontier be moved back to Ta-chien-lu where it was prior to 1726, and the Chinese plenipotentiary demanded the frontier be moved further west-ward to Rgyamda', a village about one hundred miles east of Lhasa itself. The Chinese demand was based upon the fact that the military expedition of 1910 under the command of Chao Erh-feng had established an outpost there for the assault on Lhasa.

Sir Arthur Henry McMahon, the British plenipotentiary, sought to resolve the disagreement by suggesting that the 1726 Sino-Tibetan frontier at the Bam Pass be retained and the area known as the Hsi-k'ang province would be called Inner Tibet and administered by the Chinese. The area west of the Pass would be called Outer Tibet and would remain autonomous. This compromise solution was acceptable to the Tibetan Government, but not to the Chinese, which refused to ratify the Simla agreement, thereby forfeiting its rights of suzerainty over Tibet as specified in the agreement itself.

The governments of Tibet and Great Britain ratified and adhered to the Simla agreement, which established and controlled trade relations between the countries of Tibet and British India as well as demarcated the frontier between those two countries by the so-called McMahon Line, which ran from the northeastern border of Bhutan eastward to Burma. Although not specifically resolved by the Simla agreement, because of the Chinese refusal to ratify the agreement, the Sino Tibetan frontier of 1726 continued to be regarded by the Tibetans as the *de facto* boundary between their country and China.

CONCLUSION

As stated at the beginning of this article, there are two traditions of geography in Tibet—"religious geography" and "political geography". There are several textual examples of "religious" geography but no monographic studies by Tibetans on "political" geography. This is easier

understood when it is remembered that the written language served the primary didactic purpose of transmitting Buddhist teachings and most Tibetan literature is devoted to "religious" subjects. Although there are no books on "political" geography, the Tibetans have a definite tradition of "political" areas and boundaries which reflects their historical concepts of "ethnic" and "political" Tibet. Perhaps because of the domination of subjectivism over the Tibetan intelligentsia, other types of geography—physical, economic, and topographic—did not develop because they represent an objective description of the phenomenal world.

NOTES

1. The system of Tibetan transcription used in this article is that described in Wylie. "A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 22 (1959), pp. 261-267.
2. For a detailed discussion on dkar-chag and the value of such registers, see Giuseppe Tucci. *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, Vol. I (Rome, 1959), p. 153-ff.
3. This dkar-chag by the V Dalai Lama was the basis for Waddell's description of the Jo khang. See L. Austine Waddell "The Cathedral of Lhasa" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1896)
4. A similar guide to the other major stupa in the Kathmandu valley, namely Bodhnath, goes beyond the usual limits of a dkar-chag. This guide, titled *Mchod rten chen-po Bya-rung kha shor-gyi lo-rgyus thos-pas grol-ba* ("The history of the great stupa Bya-rung kha-shor [=Bodhnath], by the hearing of which one is saved") a forty-folio xylograph, which includes an historical account (lo-rgyus) of the stupa, is an anonymous work printed in a temple near the stupa itself. Although titled a "history" (lo-rgyus) it should be considered one of the dkar-chag type.
5. This valuable guide book was translated with footnotes by Alfonso Ferrari (1918-1954), whose work was completed and edited by Professor Luciano Petech under the title: "mK'yen brtse's Guide to the holy places of Central Tibet", *Serie Orientale Roma*, Vol. XVI (Rome, 1958) xxii, 199, and 53 photographic plates.
6. This work has been translated by Grunwedel under the title: "Der Weg Nach Shambhala", *Abhandlungen der Koniglich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, XXIX, Band 3 (Munchen, 1915).
7. Helmut Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet*, (London, 1961), p. 124-ff.

8. The Tibetan section (folios 58-81) of this work have been translated with footnotes by Turrell Wylie under the title : "The Geography of Tibet according to the 'Dzam-gling-rgyas-bshad'", *Serie Orientale Roma*, Vol. XXV (Rome, 1962) xxxvii, 286 and a map.
9. Turrell Wylie, "Dating the Tibetan Geography 'Dzam-gling-rgyas-bshad through its description of the western hemisphere'", *Central Asiatic Journal*, Vol. IV-4 (1959), pp. 300-311.
10. Wylie, "The Geography of Tibet", p. 90.
11. Wylie, "Dating the Tibetan Geography.....", pp. 308-309.
12. F. W. Thomas, *Ancient Folk-Literature from North-Eastern Tibet*, (Berlin, 1957), pp. 1-13.
13. See, *inter alia*, Bacot-Thomas-Toussaint, *Documents de Touen-Houang Relatifs a l'Histoire du Tibet*, (Paris, 1940-1946), p. 25.
14. Wylie, "The Geography of Tibet.....", p. 182, note 618.

UTTARAKURU

—BUDDHA PRAKASH

According to the earliest geographical conception of the Puranas, the earth was taken to consist of four continental regions, viz Jambudvipa, Ketumala, Bhadravarsa and Uttarakuru.¹ Jambudvipa stood for India proper, Ketumala represented the Oxus region, as the river Svaraksu (Vaksu) flowed through it, Bhadravarsa signified the Jaxartes region, as the river Sita watered it, and Uttarakuru denoted the country beyond it. In Buddhist texts these continental regions are differently named as Jambudvipa, to the south of mount Sumeru (Sineru), Aparagodana (Aparagoyana) to its west, Purvavideha to its east, and Uttarakuru to its north.² Both these traditions agree on the fact that Uttarakuru was the name of the region to the north of India.

The name Uttarakuru or northern Kuru is used in contradistinction to Dakshinakuru or southern Kuru. In the *Mahabharata* the Uttarakurus are juxtaposed with the Dakshinakurus.³ The distance between their countries can be measured by the marches of Arjuna described in the *Sabhaparvan*. After crossing the White Mountain (*Svetaparnvata*), he marched through Kimpurusavarsa and reached the Manasarovara Lake, in the country of the Hatakas, dominated by the Gandharvas.⁴ From there he entered into the region called Harivarsa, beyond which lay the land of the Uttarakurus. Elsewhere in the epic the region to the north of India, corresponding to Svetaparnvata and Kimpurusavarsa, is called Haimavata, and the site of the Manasarovara Lake is indicated by the mountain Hemakuta, beyond which is said to lie Harivarsa.⁵ The Kailasa Range, running parallel to the Ladakh Range, 50 miles behind it, is, thus, the dividing line between Haimavata and Harivarsa. According to Bana, Arjuna reached the Hemakuta mountain, whose caves were echoing with the twangs of the bows of the irritated Gandharvas, after traversing the territory of China.⁶ Here the use of the word China seems to be intended to denote the Mongoloid people of the Himalayan regions, also called *Kirata*, a word derived from *Kiranti* or *Kirati* the name of a group of people in eastern Nepal.⁷ Beyond Harivarsa, including the territories of Tibet, lay the idyllic and utopian land of the Kurus, called Uttarakuru. This was the land of mystery and solitude, where nothing familiar could be seen,⁸ and it was useless to wage war.⁹ According to a tradition, the head of the demon Mahisa, severed by Skanda, formed a huge mountain, that blocked the entry into the Uttarakuru

country.¹⁰ Yet Arjuna is said to have reached its frontier and conquered the northern Kurus living there.¹¹ The result of this campaign was that the people of the mountainous regions presented themselves with the offerings of garlands of jade, characteristic of Uttarakuru, and the powerful herbs of the Trans-Kailasa territory at the Rajasuya sacrifice of Yudhisthira.¹²

It is clear from the above account of the location of Uttarakuru that it lay to the north of the Himalayas, possibly, beyond Tibet, in the vicinity of the mountain Meru,¹³ which seems to represent the Pamirs, as shown by Sylvain Levi.¹⁴ According to the Great Epic, this land was marked by idyllic pleasure, bucolic beauty and sylvan silence. The trees produced elegant fruits and flowers; the earth yielded gold and rubies; the seasons were agreeable: the people were healthy and cheerful and had a life-span of 11,000 years; they passed their time in song, dance and merrymaking and among them sexual relations were promiscuous and unbridled. It was a veritable land of gods (*devaloka*). There the righteous people were born to enjoy the fruits of their meritorious deeds. In particular, the warriors, losing their life on the battle field, were transferred to that region.¹⁵ Even those, who made gifts of houses to Brahmanas were entitled to be born in that country.¹⁶ These data show that Uttarakuru cannot be the bleak mountainous country of the Himalayas, but the region to the north of it, watered by the Tarim and its tributaries, where the oases-states of Bharuka, Kuca, Karashahr and Turfan, on the northern route, and Khotan, Niya, Endere, Calmadana, Kroraina, Charklik and Miran, on the southern route, flourished in ancient times. Chinese travellers and pilgrims have testified to the prosperity and richness of these regions and the religiosity and righteousness of their people and Indian writers have described their luxury, affluence, wealth and bliss by the terms Manikancanavarsa, Bhadravarsa, Gandharvaloka and Aparagodana.

The names Kuru and Uttarakuru came into vogue in the Brahmana period. It is significant that the word 'Kuru' is conspicuous by absence in the earliest strata of the *Rgveda*. Only once in the tenth mandala there is a reference to Kurusravana Trasadasyava, but he is called the king of the Purus.¹⁷ Even in the territory of the Drasadvati, Sarasvati and Apaya, later known as Kuruksetra on account of the association of the Kurus the Bharata kings are said to have kindled the sacred fires.¹⁸ In the Apri hymns Sarasvati is mentioned with Bharati, the glory of the Bharatas. In the *Vajasneyi Samhita* the Bharatas appear in place of the Kurus-Pancalas.¹⁹ But in the Brahmana texts the Kurus become very prominent

and are usually associated with the Pancalas.²⁰ They are also said to be in occupation of the territory, through which the rivers Drsadvati, Sarasvati and Apaya flowed, and which, consequently, came to be known as Kuruksetra.²¹ It was the home of later vedic culture ; its speech was best and purest and its mode of sacrifice was ideal and perfect.²²

Besides the Kurus, there are references to the Uttarakurus in Brahmana literature. In the *Aitareya Brahmana* (VIII, 14), it is stated that the people, living beyond the snowy regions, like the Uttarakurus, anoint their kings for *Vairajya*, who, as result, are called *Virats*. At another place in the same text (VIII, 23), Vasistha Satyahavya is stated to have anointed Janamtapi Atyarati, according to the ritual of Aindra Mahabhiseka, who, in consequence, went over the whole earth and conquered it upto the oceans. Thereupon, Vasistha Satyahavya demanded his fees. Atyarati replied that when he would conquer the Uttarakurus, he would confer the whole empire on him and himself become the commander of his army. Satyahavya retorted that the country of the Uttarakurus was the land of gods, whom no body could conquer, and, since he had deceived him, he would snatch everything from him. As a result, Atyarati lost his prowess and Susmin son of Saibya, killed him.

It is clear from the above data that the Kurus came into the lime-light in the later vedic period. They migrated from their homeland to the north of the Himalayas, and entered into India, driving away the Bharatas and occupying their habitat between the Drsadvati and the Sarasvati. Gradually, the Purus and the Bharatas mixed with them and became one people, as is clear from the expression *Kuravo Nama Bharatah* occurring in the *Mahabharata* (XII, 349, 44). In the beginning their relations with the pancalas were good, but, in course of time, differences appeared among them and culminated in the famous *Mahabharata* war.²³ Though settled in the fertile and prosperous country of the Sarasvati and the Yamuna, they preserved the memories of their idyllic home in the northern regions and treated it as the abode of gods. Another section of the Kurus reached Iran and Western Asia and penetrated into Anatolia. Traces of the *volkerwanderung* of the Kurus in these regions are found in a series of place-names and personal names current there. A town in Sogdiana still bears the name Kurkath; two kings of the Parsuwas Ansan branch of the Achaemenian family of Iran were named Kuru; a river in Transcaucasia, to the north-west of Panzis, is called Kur (Cyrus of Hellenic geographers); the region round the confluence between the river Hermus and its right bank tributary, the Phrygius, just to the north of the city of "Magnesia-under-

Sipylus" is known as Koroupedion, meaning the Kuru Plain or Kuruksetra which, like its Indian namesake, was the scene of memorable wars, like those between Seleucos Nicator and Lysimachus in 281 B.C. and the Romans and Antiochus III in 190 B.C., which decided the fate of empires in that region.²⁴ Thus, it appears that a wing of the Kurus left their homeland for the west, swept through the corridor between the southern foot of the Elburz Range and the northern edge of the Central Desert of Iran and reached the pasture-lands in the basin of Lake Urmiah and beyond that, in the steppe country in the lower basin of the rivers Aras and Kur, adjoining the west coast of the Caspian Sea. From there they travelled on still farther westward over the watershed between the basins of the Aras and the Qyzyl Irmaq (Halys) and debouched into the Anatolian Peninsula to settle in the region called the Kuru Plain after their name. Another detachment of the Kurus found its way to Luristan and joined the Early Achaemenids; whilst a third one swung to the south-east and through Bactriana and the Hindu-Kush moved into the Panjab and occupied the Sarasvati-Yamuna region. It is significant that one section of the Kurus, called Pratipeyas, are known as Balhikas, since one of the sons of Pratipa was called Balhika.²⁵ According to the Ramayana, Pururavas Aila, the progenitor of the Ailas, with whom the Kurus were associated migrated to the middle country Balhi or Bactriana.²⁶ Thus, we observe that, starting from their northern homeland (Uttarakurus), the Kurus moved to the west, and, breaking into several branches, migrated upto Anatolia, Luristan and the Panjab. As I have shown elsewhere, the painted grey ware, which succeeded the ochre-coloured ware, at more than fifty sites in U.P. and the Panjab, and may be dated 1200-1100 B.C., was associated with the Kurus.²⁷ We may, thus, date the *volkerwanderung* of the Kurus about the middle of the second millenium B.C. or a bit later.

The *Mahabharata* connects India with the land of Uttarakuru through Himalayan regions rather than the north-western passes. As shown above, Arjuna is said to have gone there *via* Kimpurusavarsa, Gandharvaloka, Haimavata, Hemakuta and Harivarsa, corresponding to different Himalayan regions. From early times the people of the Indian plains have been in contact with the Kailas region through many routes. Some of them are: (1) from Almora *via* Askot, Khela, Garbyang, Lipu Lekh Pass (16,750 ft.) & Taklakat to Kailash (Tarchhen) 238 miles, (2) from Almora *via* Askot, Khela, Darma Pass (18,510) and Gyanima Mandi 227 miles, (3) from Almora *via* Bageshvar, Milam, Unta-Dhura

Pass (17,590), Jyanti Pass (18,500), Kungri-Bingri Pass (18,300) and Gyanima Mandi-210 miles, (4) from Joshimatha *via* Gunla-Niti Pass (16,600), Narba Mandi, Sibchilim Mandi and Gyanima Mandi-200 miles, (5) from Joshimatha *via* Damjan Niti Pass (16,200), Tonjan La (16,350) Sibchilim Mandi and Gyanima Mandi-160 miles, (6) from Joshimatha *via* Hoti-Niti Pass (16,390), Sibchilim Mandi and Gyanima Mandi-158 miles, (7) from Badrinath *via* Mana Pass (18,400). Thuling Matha, Dapa, Nabra, Sibchilim and Gyanima Mandi-238 miles, (8) from Mukhuva-Gangotri *via* Nilang, Jelukhaga Pass (17,490), Puling Mandi, Thuling, Dapa, Sibchilim and Gyanima Mandi-243 miles, (9) from Simla *via* Rampur, Shipki Pass (15,400), Shiring La (16,400), Loache La (18,510), Gartok (15,100), Chargot La (16,200), and Tirthapuri-445 miles, (10) from Simla *via* Rampur, Shipki Pass, Shiring La, Thuling, Dapa, Sibchilim, and Gyanima Mandi-473 miles. (11) from Srinagar (Kashmir) *via* Zojila (11,578), Nammik (13,000), Fotu La (13,446), Leh (Ladhakh), Taglang La (17,500), Damchok, Gargunsa, Gartok, Chargot La (16,200) and Tirthapuri-605 miles, (12) from Kathmandu (Nepal, Pasupatinath) *via* Muktinath, Khocharnath and Taklakot-525 miles, (13) from Kullu in Kangra District through Rampur Bashahr state *via* Thuling. In the east there were routes connecting Assam with Tibet and China. One route passed through Yung-tch'ang and Wanting and corresponds to the Burma Road. Another route led from Szechuan to Lhasa and Assam. Often pilgrims used to bypass Tibet in the south by following the Tasng-Po route. The twenty Chinese monks, who according to I-T'ing, arrived in India during the reign of Srigupta, who constructed for them a temple called Chinese Temple (Chih-na-ssu), 40 Yojanas to the east of the famous Mahabodhi Temple at Nalanda, came by one of these routes. Chinese bamboos and silks reached India along these routes, whence they were carried Bactriana before the journey of Chang-K'ien in the second century B.C. Later, the Chinese adventurer Wang-hsuan-Tsche advanced along one of these routes to capture Kanauj after the demise of Harsa and the usurpation of Arjuna or Arunasva in the seventh century. According to the *Mahabharata* (III, 177, 11-13) the Pandava brothers advanced north of Badri and, scaling the Himalayas, probably *via* Mana Pass, Thuling Math, Dapa, Nabra, Sibchilim and Gyanima Mandi, and passing through the lands of the Chinas, Tusaras, Daradas, Kulindas etc. reached the kingdom of the Kirata king Subahu. It is noteworthy that in subsequent Indian traditions, embodied in the Great Epic, the routes leading to Uttarakuru are said to pass through the Himalayas rather than the passes of the Hindu-Kush and the Pamirs. It

appears that either there was an infiltration of people from Uttarakuru to Kurukshetra along the Himalayan routes, besides the immigration of these peoples from Bactrian quarters along the north-western passes, or, after the settlement of the Kurus in India, the tradition of their coming from the north-west was forgotten and a connection between their Indian abode and their *urheimat* beyond the Himalayas was established through Himalayan routes, that were regularly in use.

NOTES

1. *Mahabharata* VI, 7, 11.
मद्राश्वः केतुमालश्च जम्बूद्वीपश्च भारत ।
उत्तराश्चैव कुरवः कृतपुण्यप्रतिश्रयाः ।
2. *Papancasudani*, I p. 434; *Dhammapada-atthakatha*, p. 482;
G. P. Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, Vol. II p. 236.
3. *Mahabharata*, I, 102, 10.
उत्तरैः कुरूभिः सार्धं दक्षिणाः कुरवस्तथा ।
4. *Ibid*, II, 25, 5.
सरो मानसमासाद्य हाटकानमितः प्रभुः ।
गन्धर्वरक्षितं देशं व्यजयत्पाण्डवस्ततः ॥
5. *Ibid* VI, 7, 6.
इदं तु भारतं वर्षं ततो हैमवत् परम् ।
हेमकूटात्परं चैव हरिवर्षं प्रचक्षते ॥
6. Bana, *Harsacarita*, ed P. V. Kane, p. 59
पाण्डवः सव्यसाची चीनविषयमतिक्रम्य राजसूयसम्पदे क्रुध्यद्गन्धर्व-
धनुष्कोट्टिकारकूजितकुञ्जं हेमकूटपर्वतं पराजैष्ट ।
7. Suniti Kumar Chatterji 'Kirata-Jana-Krti' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (Letters)*, Vol. XVI (1953) p. 169.
8. *Mahabharata* II, 25, 12.
प्रतिष्टश्चापि कौन्तेय नेह द्रक्ष्यसि किञ्चन ।
न हि मानुषदेहेन शक्यमत्राभिवीक्षितुम् ॥
9. *Ibid* II, 25 11.
उत्तराः कुरवो ह्येते नात्र युद्धं प्रवर्तते ।
10. *Ibid* III, 231, 14612.
पतता शिरसा तेन द्वारं षोडशयोजनम् ।
पर्वताभेन पिहितं तदगम्यं ततोऽभवत् ॥
उत्तराः कुरवस्तेन गच्छन्त्यध यथासुखम् ॥

11. Ibid V, 22, 8.
दिशं ह्युदीचीमपि चोत्तरान्कुरुन् गाण्डीषधन्वैकरथो जिगाय ।
12. Ibid II 48, 6.
उत्तरेभ्यः कुरुभ्यश्चाप्यपोढं मालयमम्बुभिः ।
उत्तरादपि कैलासादोषधीः सुमहाबलाः ॥
पार्वतीया बलिं चान्यमाहृत्य प्रणताः स्थिताः ॥
13. Ibid VI, 8, 23.
मेरुप्रदक्षिणं कृत्वा संप्रयात्युत्तरान्कुरुन् ।
Ibid VI, 8, 2,
दक्षिणेन तु नीलस्य मेरोः पार्श्वे तथोत्तरे
उत्तराः कुरवो राजन्पुण्याः सिद्धनिषेविताः ।
14. Buddha Prakash, *India and the World*, p. 226.
15. *Mahabharata* XI, 26 17.
ये तत्र निहता राजन्नन्तरायोधनं प्रति ।
यथाकथंचित्ते राजन्संप्राप्ता उत्तरान्कुरुन् ।
16. Ibid XIII, 57, 2958.
17. *Rgveda* X, 33, 4.
18. *Rgveda* III, 23.
19. *Vajasaneyi Samhita*, XI, 3, 3.
20. *Jaiminiya Upanisad Brahmana* III, 7, 6, VIII, 7; *Kausitaki Upanisad* IV, 1; *Gopatha Brahmana* I, 2, 9; *Kathaka Samhita* X, 6.
21. *Pancavimsa Brahmana* XXV, 10; *Satapatha Brahmana* IV, 1, 5, 13; *Aitareya Brahmana* VII, 30; *Jaiminiya Brahmana* III, 126.
22. *Satapatha Brahmana* III, 2, 3, 15; *Sankhayana Srutasutra* XV; 3, 15; *Latayana Srutasutra* VIII, 11, 18,
23. Buddha Prakash, *Political and Social Movements in Ancient Panjab* pp. 128-131,
24. K J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*, Vol IV Part II pp. 458-71.
25. *Mahabharata* II, 63, 2112.
26. *Ramayana* VII, 90, 21-23.
27. Buddha Prakash, *Political and Social Movements in Ancient Panjab* p. 23.

Notes & Topics

UTTARAKURU IN TIBETAN TRADITION

The world in Tibetan written and oral tradition is composed of four continents on four sides of Mount Ri-rab (Skt सुमेरु): Sar Lu-phag (Skt पूर्व(विदेह) in the east. Dzam-ling (Skt जम्बुद्वीप) in the south. Ba-lang-chyo (Skt गोधाग्र) in the west and Jhang-daminen (Skt उत्तरकुरु) in the north.

It is not possible, in the present state of our knowledge at least, to construct any satisfactory geography out of the available data about these continents. Besides Dzam-ling (Jambu-dvipa), which was a firm geographical reality, the other three continents were, if not altogether fabulous lands largely *terra incognita*. All information from Kanjur, Tanjur, other literary texts and oral traditions may be fitted *par excellence* into what Turrell Wylie designates "Religious Geography" (supra p. 17).

Ri-rab (Sumeru) for instance is a concept more useful and necessary for rituals and meditations than for travel, trade or even pilgrimage in physical sense. For location of this traditional focal point of the universe a modern enquirer has to trace a line stretching from Mount Kailas in the east to Pamirs in the west. From the data in Chinese Buddhist cosmography, obviously built on Indian Buddhist tradition, Needham firmly identifies Mount Sumeru with the Kun Lun Mountains (*Science and Civilisation in China*, Vol. III. Cambridge 1959, pp. 565-568)

For location of Jhang-daminen (Uttarakuru) we have a few premises to start with. It was on the north of Ri-rab (Sumeru), that is, far north of Dzam-ling (Jambu-dvipa). Dzam-ling in Tibetan tradition included India as well as Tibet. Therefore Jhang-daminen (Uttarakuru) was on the north of Tibet as well.

Now if the Kun-luns be the Mount Sumeru there can be no objection to locating Uttarakuru (Jhang-daminen) in the Tarim basin as Buddha Prakash suggests (supra p. 28).

The picture of Uttarakuru drawn from Sanskrit literature tallies broadly with that of Jhang-daminen in Tibetan literature. In both, this is a paradise on earth : a weird land with a bracing climate and a kind soil ;

a people with promiscuous morals and high longevity. In comparison with the cold and desolate plains in the south (Jhang-thang) and the sandy waste (Samo) in the north (Gobi) the Tarim valley with its oasis townships and wandering lakes was indeed a paradise. According to Buddha Prakash the emigration of the Kurus from their northern home began in the middle of second millenium B. C. It is a well-known fact that even in historical times the contour and soil of Eastern Turkestan have changed considerably. There was more of water and less of sands in prehistoric and proto-historic times. It is not unlikely that the inroads of sandy waste began in the second millenium B. C. only and led to dispersal of the Kurus. Even with the present conditions Tarim valley is a rich land surrounded by less fortunate ones. Its crops include barley, wheat, rice and cotton. The fruits which appear at all tables are melons, apples, pears, apricots peaches, nectarines, pomegranates, plums, cherries and mulberries. Mineral wealth is not inconsiderable. The items which concern us here are jade-stone and gold from the Kunlun range. Garlands of jade and gold came from Uttarakuru to the court of Yudhisthira (supra p. 28). Tarim valley was the meeting ground of races and cultures, commodities and concepts. Perhaps all this accounted for diverse morals and lax morals.

The Tibetan tradition adds a curious piece of information about the Uttarakuru people, viz., that this people possessed an unpleasant speech or coarse voice. Otherwise the Sanskrit tradition about Uttarakuru, the Tibetan tradition about Jhang-daminen and modern travel accounts about Tarim valley (e. g Menon : *Delhi-Chungking*, Oxford 1947) agree in describing the people concerned as strong and sturdy, gay and pleasure loving.

From the Chos-Jung (=history of the religion) two important facts about Jhang-daminen (Uttarakuru) have come down to us. (i) One of the Sixteen Arhats, Vakula, settled down in Jhang-daminen to uphold the Sacred Doctrine there. (ii) People of Jhang-daminen could become Buddhists but were debarred from entry into monastic discipline. This second point is no doubt of great interest.

In view of their promiscuous morals people of Jhang daminen have been all through considered to be unfit for ordination. They were in fact brande to be as unfit as the hermaphrodites, on the authority of Vasubandhu.

(Tanjur, Mnon, Ku)

Presiding officers and abbots of Tibetan monasteries were rather meticulous in implementing this ban. Enquiries about a monk candidate's qualifications and antecedents contained a specific question as to whether he was a native of Jhang-daminen. An instance may be cited from Sakya Lama Phag-pa (1235-1280). A great proselytizer though he was, Phag-pa in his Instructions for Ordination laid down this specific question: Are you or are you not from Jhang-daminen? (Sakya Kabum Vol. 15. This reference has been traced for me by my pupil Mynak Tulku Jamyang Kunga). It is evident that, though to-day few Tibetan scholars and monks can make any guess about its location, from about 815 A. D. (when *Abhidharmakosa* was translated into Tibetan) till about 1280 A. D. (when Phag pa died) Jhang-daminen was a reality, a part of this phenomenal world and not a mythical land.

It is however a riddle why people of Tarim valley or its neighbourhood came to suffer from such disability at the hands of Tibetan Lamas. One is tempted to add to this the fact that a Tun-huang document entitled *The Religious Annals of the Li-Country* even indicates Uttarakuru in the direction of Tarim valley somewhere in the Eastern Turkestan (Thomas: *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents*, Part I, London 1935, page 318, fn 11).

It is to be noted that the Eastern Turkestan was a famous Buddhist country long before Tibet became Buddhist. This land not only nursed and nourished Buddhism but was instrumental in its passage to China. Much of the Tantric practices—which characterize Tibetan Buddhism—was earlier in prevalence in the Eastern Turkestan. Yet ironically enough the natives of the land which had produced Dharmanandi, Dharmaraksa, Kumarabodhi and Kumarajiva were refused ordination in Tibet later.

It is also a fact that Buddhism began its decline in the Eastern Turkestan from about 800 A. D. and by the time of Phag-pa in Tibet (1235-1280) it had become an insignificant element in the Tarim valley. Even the community of Indian merchants (? Sartha/सार्थ= Sart) settled there embraced Islam and became the elite of the new Musulman population.

It is not unlikely that the Mongol tradition may preserve useful data for drawing a clearer picture of Jhang-daminen. The Tibetan tradition developed out of Indian Buddhist tradition and obstinately adhered to the ban for entry into monastic discipline in respect of natives of

Jhang-daminen. It is to be noted that Mongolia, a country on the north of Tibet, did not suffer from such disability. The Mongol recruits to Tibetan monasteries (first Sakyapa and then Gelugpa) were esteemed agents for propagation of the Mahayana in a land where Shamanism, Christianity and Islam counted their priests also and where eclecticism was a characteristic feature of the people's life. This *Bulletin* expects to publish in a later issue findings of eminent Mongol scholars on Mongol tradition about Jhang-daminen.

The Classical writers (of the West) referred to a people called Attakorae or Ottokorus. Some scholars identify Attakorae with the Uttarakuru and locate them in Turkestan, preferably the Eastern Turkestan. This would place the habitat of the Uttarakuru on the north of Mount Meru. But the attempt to identify the Hyperboreans with the Uttarakuru has to encounter the theory of Tomaschek as developed by Hudson. This theory places the Hyperboreans in the neighbourhood of what is today Peking (Hudson : *Europe and China*, London 1931, ch. 1). Peking is in the direction of Sar Lu Phag or Purvavideha of Buddhist tradition. Jhang-daminen or Uttarakuru has to be found somewhere on the north both of India and Tibet.

NIRMAL C. SINHA

OBITUARY : WILLIAM McGOVERN

Dr. William Montgomery McGovern died in December 1964 in Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A.

Born on 28 September 1897 in Brooklyn, McGovern had his education outside U.S.A. He took courses in History and Philosophy in Sorbonne, Berlin and Oxford and later studied Buddhism in principal monasteries of China and Japan. To a good knowledge of Greek and Latin he added an equally good knowledge of Chinese and Japanese and had some acquaintance with Sanskrit and Iranian. McGovern thus shaped into an encyclopaedist with his interests ranging over antiquities, linguistics, religions and governments. His publications include *Modern Japan* (1920), *Colloquial Japanese* (1921), *Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism* (1922), *Manual of Buddhist Philosophy* (1923), *To Lhasa in Disguise* (1924), *The Early Empires in Central Asia* (1937),

As a research scholar and as a teacher McGovern's first love was history and civilisation of the East. While hardly thirty he made his mark as a Lecturer in Chinese and Japanese languages in the School of Oriental Studies, London,

Later he took up teaching Political Science at Harvard and North Western Universities, U.S.A. For over 25 years until his death he was Professor of Political Science at the North Western University. In this role he gained the high esteem of his students for his popular exposition of political theories and institutions; the lectures and talks were packed with data drawn from his wide studies as well as world wide experiences. At the same time his reputation as an Oriental scholar remained high.

After Pearl Harbour, he was called for service to a high advisory post in US war administration. This was as much because of his mastery of the two Far Eastern languages as because of his being a friend of the late Sun Yat Sen and his co-workers.

McGovern's passing away will be felt in circles connected with Central Asia and Mahayana. He was a pioneer and as such his studies in these fields may have been rendered inadequate by later discoveries of both archaeological and literary materials. The point for remembrance today is that McGovern was among the first few to notice the role of Central Asia in the entire history of man and to underline the importance of Mahayana for all students of history.

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