

Bulletin of Tibetology



NEW SERIES

1988

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**SIKKIM RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TIBETOLOGY
GANGTOK, INDIA**

- *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

JAMPAL K. RECHUNG

KUNGA YONTEN HOCHOTSANG

BHAJAGOVINDA GHOSH

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MALLI KĀ

Marianne Winder

One of the best known commentaries on the 'Four Medical Tantras', the *rGyud.bḡi*, is the *Vaidūrya sḡon.po* written by the De.srid Saḡs.rgyas rgya.mtsho during the 17th century. Its full title is: *gSo.ba.rig.pa'i.bstan.bcos.sḡan.bla'i.dgoḡs rgyan.rgyud bḡi'i.gsal.byed.bal.dur.sḡon.po'i.malli.ka*. 'The blue lapis lazuli jasmine ornament to remember the Medicine Buddha's teaching of medicine explaining the Four Tantras.' At least, this is the title of part one. The other three parts bear the same title up to and including *sḡon.po'i*, but instead of *malli.ka* they have *phreḡ.ba*. Now, *phreḡ.ba* means 'rosary'. This rosary consists of *sḡon.po*, 'blue', *bal.dur* or *vaidūrya*,¹⁾ that is, 'lapis lazuli' or 'beryl', 'cat's eye', or aquamarine'. As I have argued in my paper called *Vaidūrya*, in this context the word does not mean a specific gem as much as simply 'something very precious'. Thus, it is a rosary consisting of very precious stones. The word *phreḡ.ba* in the three other parts looks as if it replaced the *malli.ka* of the first part. What is this *malli.ka*?

The word is obviously a borrowing from the Sanskrit. What does it mean? The Sanskrit and the Pali words *mallikā* usually mean 'jasmine'. The word occurs as early as in the *Mahābharata* and many more times in Sanskrit literature. The word did not enter the Tibetan language as a loan word through medical texts. The *rGyud.bḡi* usually provides Tibetan words for plants with healing properties. There are very few

borrowings from the Sanskrit such as *so.ma.ra.dza* 'cannabis' and *pi.pi.liñ* 'pepper'. The word *mali.ka* is not amongst them, so it is to be concluded that whatever it means, for instance, 'jasmine', does not have healing properties. If the word did not enter the title of the sDe.srid's work from medical literature where did it come from ?

One of the possibilities is the work on the art of Poetics by Dandin called *Kāvya-darśa* which was a prescribed text in Gelugpa colleges. Dandin, Sanskrit Dandi, whose Tibetan name is *dByug.pa.can*, lived from the 6th to the 7th century. His 'Mirror of Poetry' was translated into Tibetan by *Srī Lakṣmīkara* and *Soñ.ston* in a Sa.skya monastery of Western Tibet, and edited by *dPal.lān bLo.gros.brta.n.pa.*

The passage where *mali.ka* occurs belongs to the second section of the *sñan.dñags.kyi.me.loñ* which is called *Don.gyi rgyan*, 'Embellishments in the interpretation'. Verse 214 says: 'The desire to describe a characteristic in a manner transcending worldly limits is [giving rise to] Hyperbole; it is the best of figures.' For example: 215: "Wearing wreaths of *mali.kā*, all their body anointed with fresh sandal and clad in linen garments the assignation-seekers are not to be distinguished in the moonlight." 216: 'Here is asserted, as being of a pre-eminent degree, the abundance of the moonlight.²⁾' The hyperbole consists in stating that the moonlight was so bright that the different people moving in it could not be distinguished. The word *mali.kā* here means 'jasmine'.

The Tibetan translation of the *Kāvya-darśa* passage reads as follows:

Verse 214: *mali.ka.yi.phreñ.tshogs.can ;*

lus.kun.khyab.pa'i.tsandan.gsher ;

dkar.ba'i.gos.can.mñon.'gro.ma ;
zla.ba'i.'od.la.mtshon.ma.yin ;;

Verse 215: zla.ba'i.'od.ni.lhag.pa.ñid ;
khyad.'phags.ldan.brjod.de.bžin.du ;
the.tshom.phul.byuñ.la.sogs.kyañ ;
gsal.phyir.cuñ.zad.bstan.par.bya ;;

Verse 216: dga'.ma.khyod.kyi.nu.ma.dañ ;
dpyi.yi.bar.na.skyed.pa.ni ;
yod.dañ.med.ces.bdag.gi.ni ;
the.tshom.da.duñ.zlog.ma.gyur ;;

The ⁴⁾Kāvya-darsa translation has been included in the Tanjur.
Though this textbook of Poetics was a setbook in Gelugpa colleges, this passage does not have anything to do with Buddhism. It seems therefore to be worthwhile to look for another wellknown text which might have introduced the word *mallikā* into the Tibetan language. Indeed, such a text can be found. It is the *Udānavarga*, a Sanskrit work containing portions of the *Dhammapada*, a very popular work in Pali. While the *Dhammapada* was a postcanonical work, the Tibetan translation of the *Udānavarga* is part of the Kanjur and presumably was part of the Sanskrit *Tripitaka*. It was compiled in Sanskrit by *Dharmatrata* (Tibetan Chos.skyob) between 75 B.C. and 200 A.D. and translated into Tibetan by *Vidyāprabhākara* and *Lotsava Rin.chen. mchog* and finally arranged by *dPal.brtsegs* in the 9th century.

The relevant *Dhammapada* passage occurs in verse 11 of the chapter called 'Flowers' which is chapter 4. It is verse 54 of the whole of the *Dhammapada*: 'The perfume of flowers blows not against the wind nor does the fragrance of sandal-

wood, tagara and jasmine. The fragrance of the virtuous does blow against the wind; the virtuous man pervades every direction.⁵⁾ What is meant is the atmosphere of peace and friendliness surrounding the people whose mind is concentrated on the spiritual side of life. The word 'jasmine' here translates Pali *mālikā*. In the next verse, 12(55), the word does not occur in the Pali version but it does in the Tibetan one. I, therefore, will give a translation of the Pali first: 'Sandalwood, Tagara, lotus, jasmine (here the Pali word *vassikī* is used for 'jasmine' instead of *mālikā*), - of all these kinds of fragrance, the perfume of virtue is by far the best.'

The Tibetan adaptation in the Udānavarga reads as follows:⁶⁾
⁷⁾ 'The scent of flowers does not move without being directed by the wind, (me.tog.dri.ni.rdzi.phyogs.min.mi.'gro)! nor does that of roots, Tagara or Sandalwood (rtsa.ba.rgya.spos.tsan.dan.rnams.kyañ.min).!
 The holy scent moves without being directed by the wind (dam.pa'i.dri.ni.rdzi.phyogs.min.'gro.ste).!
 The virtuous man pervades all directions' (phyogs.rnams.kun.tu mi.mchog.dri.yis.khyab).!

The word for 'jasmine' occurs in the next stanza:
 'Tagara and sandalwood, (rgya.spos.dañ.ni.tsan.dan.dañ) blue lotus and jasmine (ut.pa.la.dañ.[ed. Beckh] *mālikā*, [Peking Kanjur, Otani] *mālikī*):
 better than these kinds of incense (spos.kyi.rigs.ni.'di.dag pas):
 (Beckh and sNar.thañ Tanjur:) the scent of discipline comes as a fragrant offering, (tshul.krims.dri.bsuf.phul.du.phyin):
 (Peking Tanjur:) the scent of keeping the discipline comes as an offering (tshul.khrims.dri.bsruñ.phul.du.phyin).!!

It would be very plausible that the sDe.srid if he composed the title of the *Vaidurya sNon.po* himself borrowed the word from the Tibetan Udānavarga. However, the form used there is *ma.li.ka* or *ma.li.ki* and not *māli.ka*. There is another passage in a work composed in the Pali language, namely the *Hatthavanagallavihāravamsa*, the lineage or history of the Elephant Rocky Forest Temple in Ceylon, composed during the reign of Pandita Parakramabāhu of Dambadeniya (1266-1301 A.D.)⁹⁾, which contains a passage where the word *mālika* occurs, this time with a long first a and a single l:

'The slander darts of the wicked become blunted (on reaching) the shield of forbearance of the righteous and are changed into the flowers of praise (bestowed) in the society (of the just); whence they become bound with the flowery chaplets¹⁰⁾ (*mālika*) of their virtues.' This refers to the practice of

adorning people with wreaths or garlands as marks of respect. Here the word does no longer mean 'jasmine' but 'chaplet' or 'garland', it being the diminutive form of *māla*. Association with this word which is the same in Sanskrit as in Pali may have caused the sDe.srid or whoever composed these titles to use *phreṅ.ba* in the titles of the other three volumes.¹¹⁾ The fact remains that the first volume of the *Vaidurya sNon.po* uses the word *māli.ka* in its title and not *ma.li.ka*.

Therefore the idea for it does probably not come from the *Udānavarga* but from Dandin's work, while the titles of the other three volumes may have been influenced by the thought of *ma.li.ka*.

In Prakrit *mālikā* can mean, apart from the jasmine plant and flower, an earthenware vessel of a particular shape, Sanskrit *māllaka* from, which compounds with *mālika*¹²⁾ are

formed can also mean a lampstand or a lamp. Though the shape is not specified it is probably that of a jasmine blossom. In Sinhalese it means a vessel made of a coconut shell for containing oil.¹³⁾ This seems to suggest that the vessels received their names because of the association with scented oil reminding of jasmine blossoms. But it is unlikely that the meaning 'vessel' was in the mind of the sDe.srid Sañs.rgyas rGya.mtsho.

- 1) Studies on Indian medical history, ed. Meulenbeld and Wujastyk, Groningen Oriental Studies, vol.2, 1987, pp.91-101.
- 2) Kāvya-darśa of Dandin. Sanskrit and English translation by S.K. Belvalkar. Poona, Oriental Booksupplying Agency. 1924, p.33.
- 3) Kāvya-darśa. Sanskrit and Tibetan texts edited by Anukul Chandra Banerjee. University of Calcutta. 1939, pp.140-141.
- 4) The Tibetan Tripitaka. Peking Edition. Edited by Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki. Tokyo-Kyoto, Tibetan Tripitaka Research Institute. sGra.rig.pa. Volume 140, No.5789. p.188, stanza 141b, line 5 - p.189, stanza 142a, line 1.
- 5) Translated by Nārada Mahāthera, Calcutta, Mahabodhi Society, 1976, p.41.
- 6) Translated from the Sanskrit into Tibetan by Chos.skyob, Vidyāprabhākara and Rin.chen.mchog. Revised by dPal.brtsegs during the 9th century.
- 7) sNar.thañ Tanjur, vol.mDo 71, f.11b, lines 1-2; also ed. Hermann Beckh, Berlin, G. Reimer, 1911, p.26, item VI, 14-15. Also Tibetan Tripitaka, Peking ed. by D.T. Suzuki, reprinted under the supervision of the Otani University, Kyoto, vol.39, item 992, no.6:tshul.khrims, p.92, f.225a, line 8 to f.225b, line 1. Also Sel.mkhar MS Kanjur, folio 142a5-a8. This MS Kanjur at the British Library is going to be described in detail by the Ven. Lama Chi.med Rinpoche, Curator of Tibetan Manuscripts and Xylographs at the British Library, in the near future.
- 8) What is meant are the five medicinal roots: 1) ra.mñe (Polygonatum officinale), 2) lca.ba (Selinum tenuifolium), 3) ñe.śiñ (Polygonatum falcatum), 4) 'a.śo.ga.ndha (Asparagus lucidus), 5) gze.ma (Tribulus terrestris).
- 9) Attanagalu-Vansa, ed. and trl.J. d'Alwis, 2nd ed., 1887.

10) The Attanagalu-Vansa translated by J. d'Alwis. Colombo, William & Norgate, 1866. Chapter II, paragraph 10, on p.26.

11) I am indebted to Mr. K.D. Somadasa of the British Library for explaining to me that the word in this context could not

mean 'jasmine' but had to mean something like 'garland' because the word 'bound with' is literally used in the Pali text.

12) Sir Monier Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1899, p.793, cols.1 and 2; A.A. Macdonell, *A practical Sanskrit Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 1929, reprinted 1954, p.220, col.1.

13) Benjamin Clough, *Sinhalese-English dictionary*, Colombo, 1892. p.464, col.1.

MADHYAMA-ṢAṬKA BY MAITRIGUPTA

Dr. Mark Tatz

This brief text, which has no known commentary, identifies itself (verse 3) as an account of philosophic systems (a siddhānta). In it, Maitrīgupta focuses upon several schools' understanding of "middle way". Probably, the text was composed as a topical outline for teaching. It is one of a number of his works expounding images or technical terms from Mahāyāna tradition. A Sanskrit version survives, ¹ as well as one Tibetan translation. ²

The work was studied and translated into English by Sunitikumar Pathak, and published in the Adyar Library Bulletin in 1961. ³ There the Sanskrit is reprinted with emendations, and the Tibetan is transliterated from the Narthang edition of the Sacred Canon. To the study is prefixed an account of the author, Maitrīgupta. The use of Tibetan sources signals a knowledgeable and conscientious approach to the subject matter. However, insufficient materials were brought to bear for either study (that of the author, or that of the text) to avoid errors. This is an attempt to bring up to date our understanding of the text, but without correcting the work of Pathak on every point.

Maitrīgupta, also known as Maitrīpāda (to the Tibetans, Maitrīpa) and Advayavajra, is dated ca 1007-1085. ⁴ He is known, among other things, for his exposition of a variant of Mahāmudrā ("Great Symbol") philosophy known as amanasikāra. His usage of this term will be explored in context of the translation of another of his works. ⁵

The Tibetan redactor Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub, in his analytic list of works that expound the Amanasikāra system, describes the Six Verses as teaching the philosophic view that characterizes Tantrism. ⁶ This is the source of the Narthang catalogue's identification of this work as "teaching the tantric view" (Pathak 539-40). The comment describes the text, however, not the author.

Maitrīgupta shows how each of the four Mahāyāna philosophic systems defines the term "middle way". The term is used interchangeably with "freedom from the four extremes" (asserting eternalism, nihilism, neither, and both), and "dependent origination". In context of the correct approach, Maitrīgupta makes the further identifications "clear light nature of a meditational deity" and "non-dual great bliss". The terms "empty" and "un arising" are also adduced as equivalents.

Three verses present the views of three systems; three verses follow with the preferred interpretation.

To explain and expand the verses would in effect recreate the Mahāyāna sections of Advayavajra's Ratnāvalī, his full exposition of siddhānta. But a translation of the Ratnāvalī is forthcoming. ⁷ So let me limit myself to identifying the four systems, not all of which find room to be named in the "Six Verses".

1) Those who profess that cognition possesses forms (the Sākāra-vāda) describe the object of cognition as existing in a momentary mode. The Sākāra-vāda consists of the Sautrāntika school, which is regarded as Mahāyāna, plus the Sākāra-vāda branch of the Yogācāra.

2) Those who profess the absence of forms (the Nirākāra-vāda branch of the Yogācāra), describe reality as an expression of self-awareness.

3) Among the Madhyamaka, those who profess illusion-like nonduality (the Māyopamādvaya-vāda) describe reality as transparent, or clear light.

4) The Madhyamaka to which to author adheres, those who profess the unsupportedness of all phenomena (the Apratiṣṭhāna-vāda), is expounded in more detail in the second triad of verses.

In the edition that follows, the Sanskrit has been corrected by reference to the Tibetan, and to meter.

English Translation

1) To professors of Sākāra, "freedom from the four extremes" means understanding that the object of cognition exists in a momentary mode, empty of thought-constructions and lacking objectification.

2) "Middle way" is defined [by professors of Nirākāra] in terms of a self-awareness that is not nil; it appears as blue, etc. objects, but characteristics do not arise in it.

3) To professors of Māyopamādvaya, "freedom from the four extremes" is [to know that] the characteristics are false, and [in reality] clear light.

The following system has evidence for its beliefs.

4) To know the emptiness of objects is to know emptiness free of appearance and free of coverings. That is the Middle Way from which the "subsequent" or conventional has been purged.

5) Whether it is clear light or not, in reality it is unobjectifiable. Because things are by nature unarising in any way, we define "middle way" without reference to them.

6) To possess the clear light nature of a meditational deity is to be "free from the four extremes". To enjoy the nature of non-dual great bliss is identical with dependent origination.

Sanskrit Edition

catuṣkoṭiviniirmuktāḥ/ jñānavastu sadkṣaṇīkām//
kalpaśūnyam anāmbhyām/ viduḥ sākāravādināḥ//1//

svasamvitter anucchedāt/ nīlādīnām ābhāsanāt//
nimittānām anutpādāt/ madhyamā pratīpat matā//2//

catuṣkoṭiviniirmuktāḥ/ prakāśālīkalakṣaṇāḥ//
māyopamādvayaścaīṣa/ siddhānto pramāṇasaṅgaḥ//3//

vastuśūnyā tu yā vittir/ nirāvilā nirañjanā//
madhyamā parīpat saiva/ tatprṛṣṭhe śuddhasamvṛtiḥ//4//

prakāśo vāprakāśo vā/ tattvato nopalabhyate//
sarvathājātarūpatvāt/ madhyamām apare viduḥ//5//

catuṣkoṭiviniirmuktāḥ/ prakāśo devatātmakāḥ//
sukhādvayasvabhāvaśca/ pratītyotpādamātrakaḥ//6//

Notes

¹ Work no. 18 in Haraprasad Shastri, ed.,

Advayavajrasaṅgraha (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1937).

² Tibetan translation by Vajrapāṇi and Nags-tsho

Tshul-khrims-rgyal-ba. Otani Catalogue no. 3074, Tohoku
Catalogue no. 2230.

³ Sunitikumar Pathak, "The Madhyamaṣaṭka of Metri". Adyar

Library Bulletin vol. 25 (1961), pp. 539-49.

⁴ Mark Tatz, "The Life of the Siddha-Philosopher

Maitrīgupta". Journal of the American Oriental Society 107:4

(1987):698b. See also idem, "Maitrī-pa and Atīśa" in Proceedings

of the 4th International Seminar on Tibetan Studies (Munich 1985, in press); and idem, "Maitrīpa and Ratnākaraśānti" in Burmiok Athing Commemorative Volume (Dharmasala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, forthcoming).

⁵ Advayavajra, Amanasikāra-uddeśa, Tohoku no.

2249 = Shastri, ed., op. cit no. 21

⁶ Bu-ston, Gsan-yig p. 116. In The Collected Works of Bu-ston, part 26 (La). Published by Lokesh Chandra. New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1971.

⁷ Tatz, tr., "Tattva-Ratnāvalī, The Precious Garland of Verses on Reality, by Advayavajra a.k.a. Maitrīgupta, Maitrīpa" in G. Kuppuram, ed., Recent Researches in Indian Society and Culture: Essays in Honour of Professor Upendra Thakur.

MADHYAMAṢATKA

DERGE TANJUR

༡༡། །ཀྱི་གར་སྐད་དུ། མ་རྒྱུ་མ་ལྟ།
པོད་སྐད་དུ། དབྱ་མ་དུག་པ།

མངས་སྐྱ་ས་ལ་ཤུག་ཅེ་ཚེ་ལ་ལོ། །
མཐའ་བཞི་ལས་ནི་རྣམ་གྲོ་ལ་བའི། །
ཤེས་པ་སྐད་ཅིག་ལ་ཡོད་དེ། །
རྟོག་པས་སྐྱོད་ཞིང་དམིགས་པ་མེད། །
རྣམ་བཅས་སྐྱ་བར་ཤེས་པ་རྒྱ། །

ཚད་པ་མ་ཡིན་རུང་འིག་ནི། །
སྐྱོན་པོ་ལ་ལོགས་པར་སྐྱུང་བ། །
དེ་ནི་མཚན་ཉིད་གྱིས་མ་སྐྱེས། །
དབྱ་མ་པ་ཡི་ལམ་དུ་འདོད། །

མཐའ་བཞི་ལས་ནི་རྣམ་གྲོ་ལ་བའི། །
གསལ་པ་བརྒྱུན་པའི་མཚན་ཉིད་དེ། །
དེ་ནི་སྐྱུ་མ་ལྟར་གཉིས་མེད། །
ཚད་མའ་ལྟར་པའི་གྲུབ་མཐའོ། །

དང་མ་པོ་སྟོང་པར་རིག་པ་གད་། །
སྤང་བ་མེད་ཅིང་སྟོལ་གཤོག་ས་མེད། །
དེ་ཅིང་དབུ་མ་པ་ཡི་ལམ། །
རྗེས་ཐོབ་དག་པའི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཡིན། །

གསལ་པ་བཟུང་ཏེ་མི་གསལ་བ། །
དེ་ཅིང་ལ་ཤིང་མི་གསལ་སྤྱེད། །
རྣམ་ཀུན་མ་སྟོལ་པ་རང་བཞིན། །
གཞན་དག་དབུ་མ་པ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡོད། །

ལམ་པ་བཞི་ལས་ནི་རྣམ་གྲོལ་བའི། །
གསལ་པ་སྟོལ་བ་དག་ཅིང་ཅན། །
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JOWOJE PALDEN ATISA AND TWO DISCIPLES

DOMTONPA GYALWAI JUNGNEY

NGOK LEGPAI SHERAB

ATĪŚA DĪPAṆKARA ŚRĪJÑĀNA

J. K. Rechung

Many scholars have written about the life and works of the most renowned Pandita Atisa Dipankara Srijnana (Tib: Jo-wo-rje dpal-ldan Atisa). Yet I undertake the task of attempting another account from Tibetan literary sources, not for merit but with the hope that it will furnish some further information for those interested.

Atisa was born in the Water-Horse year (982 A.D.) in the province called Zahor which was part of what was called Vangala. There have been different views on the part of scholars regarding the birth-place of Atisa. The Tibetan historians tend to locate the birth place at Vikramapura in the district of Dacca, now in Bangladesh. This was first stated by Bu-ston rin chen grub, and later by Sum-pa mkhan-po ye-shes dpal-byor and Taranatha. Another great scholar Tshegling yongzin yeshe gyaltsen, in his account of the Lam-rim bla-brgyud rnam-thar (the biography of lineage of the doctrine of Lam-rim, the graded path to enlightenment) has also mentioned that Atisa was actually born in a place not far from Vikramapura temple. I, too, share the same view as my own research on Atisa's life and works in Tibet substantiate the general view. Moreover, Nagtso lotsawa, who was acquainted with Atisa and spent many years with him mentioned in his text Bstod-pa brgyad-bcu-pa (Eighty slokas in praise of Atisa) that Vikramapura was the birth-place of Atisa.

Atisa was honoured both in India and Tibet for his great contribution to Buddhism. With his magnetic personality and profound knowledge of Buddhism, he converted several renowned heretics and their followers into Buddhists, with the result that Buddhism spread far and wide.

Tshegling yongzin yeshe gyaltsen in Lam-rim bla-brgyud rnam-thar (p. 154) writes that during one of Atisa's tours as a prince around the city, he came across his chief tutelary deity, the goddess Tārā, in the form of a young lady attired in white standing among the crowd of people. She addressed him personally and advised him to stay clear of the desires of the world. She told him that once he was overcome by these desires, he would find it very difficult to rid himself of them. By doing so, she said that he would be able to retain his personal morals and purity. Through his one hundred and fifty two former lives (skyes-rab/jātakas) Atisa had attained the status of Pandita with the highest form of pure and moral conduct.

Atisa underwent thirteen months of hardship on the journey across the seas in a boat in order to pay a visit to the Lama Serlingpa (Āchārya Suvarṇadvīpī), who resided on a remote island. Atisa stayed there for twelve years, during the period of which he acquired the knowledge of Bdag-gzhan mnyam-brje (ātma-para-samatā-parivarta). This doctrine was transmitted by Lord Buddha himself through Maitreya, Shantideva and other saints to Serlingpa. Moreover, he was the master of all spiritual knowledge including aspects of Tantrayāna and Sūtrayāna. At the time of returning to India from Suvarṇadvīpa, his chief Guru Āchārya Suvarṇadvīpī (gser-gling-pa) gave him a golden statue of Lord Buddha which was found in his early age and consecrated him as the master of the Doctrine.

When Atisa was at Bodh Gaya, a battle was fought between king Nayapāla (c. 1038-1055 A.D.) of Magadha and king Karana (karṇa) of the West. The battle lasted for many days. Since they could not cause any destruction to the cities, they destroyed all the temples and killed four monks and one Upāsaka. They even carried away all the properties of the temples. When the armies of king Nayapāla slaughtered the troops of king Karana, Atisa took the latter under his protection and so saved many lives. He then brought the struggle to an end. (For details vide Manjumdar's The History of Bengal).

During the reign of king Mahapāla, Atisa was invited to the university of Vikramasila. Inside the temple of the university the king had the portrait of Atisa done in fresco paintings on the left wall of the temple and that of the great Nāgārjuna on the right wall. This was done to imply that Atisa was as great and learned as the renowned Buddhist Āchārya Nāgārjuna (1st half of 2nd century A.D.). This university was built by king Dharmapāla, who was a great patron of Mahāyāna Buddhism and who ruled over Bengal for twenty years. In the 12th century and later during the Turkish invasion, like the other Buddhist establishments and universities, the Vikramasila university too was destroyed. Later, he was given the charge of eighteen monasteries. Buddhism started flourishing all over the area. During those days Pandita of West, East and Central India held Atisa in great esteem and he was recognised as master of all the Tantra and Sūtra.

At one time, Naropa, the founder of the Bk'a-rgyud-pa sect visited the Vikramasila University when Atisa was there. He was given a grand reception by the scholars at

the university. Atisa escorted the saint into the university holding his right hand. Naropa then entrusted Atisa with the task of upholding the Dharma. Atisa told him that while Naropa would be compared to the sun and the moon, Atisa was only a fire fly and as such he would not be able to illuminate the earth as Naropa could. Naropa replied that he would soon leave and that he could find no one more suitable than Atisa for the task in hand. About twenty days after this Naropa passed away.

The goddess Tārā was his guide throughout his life. She protected him from all threats, and he was blessed with the divine power of clearing all his doubts with her. The Buddha, and especially the deities Tārā and Avalokiteśvara, directed him to Tibet and saw him through all the hazards that he met on the way. About a century before the arrival of Atisa in Tibet Buddhism was rapidly declining there. The renegade Tibetan king Lang darma attempted to wipe out the Buddhist faith by persecuting the monks and by destroying all the temples and statues of the Buddhist faith. As such, Buddhism deteriorated and corrupt debasing rituals prevailed over the religion in Tibet. The later kings of Tibet, Ye-shes-hod and Byang-chub-hod therefore, asked Atisa to visit Tibet and restore the pure doctrine there and so establish the true faith.

The original idea of Atisa having to go to Tibet was formed when Atisa was, in one of his previous incarnations, Vimala, the Lama Demamepa (Dri-ma med-pa). While in discussion with the prince Ratna-prajā (Dkon-mchog-hbang) in Odiyana, he told the prince that Tibet was lacking in the true faith or religion and that the people were failing to lead a happy

and contented life. He asked the prince to take birth in Tibet as a king when he would invite Vimala from India in order to carry out the reform.

In Kadam Bucho it is said that during one of the discussions between Vimala and prince Ratna Prajā a sound from heaven was suddenly heard saying "the Protectors of the World and Heaven, the Victorious Guru and the spiritual sons are now gathered in Odiyana; the future gathering will be in the Land of Snow. For millions of years to come, you two, Guru and disciple, will remain inseparable for the benefit of living beings like sandalwood and its fragrance." The prince then said to his Guru Vimala. "the melodious sound we heard as oracle from the sky prophesying about the past, present and future was divine. Today we had many auspicious omens on this gathering."

The Lama, then gave prince Ratna prajā a discourse on the Three Jewels. He added that to the east of Odiyana there was a place called Dorjedan (Vajrasana), where Buddhas of three times attained their enlightenment. And in its north there was a country called the Land of Snow- Tibet, where the religion was yet to flourish and where the demons were destroying the living beings with all their evil power. "There" the Lama said, "I will send my emanation (Padmasambhava) to control the demons and to protect people from the corrupt practices and the evil spirits, and lead them to peace and happiness. Before I send my emanation to help the people, you send your incarnation in the form of king (Songtsen Gampo) to protect its people and to invite the real emanation of Lord Buddha from China, Akṣobhya Vajra (Mikyo dorje) and from Nepal Mañjuśrī-vajra (Jampal dorje) with your different

manifestations. To protect the people from eight fearful happenings two goddesses, Māricī (Od-zer-can-ma/Gya-sa) and Bhrikuti (Khro-gnyer can-ma/Bal-sa), must be invited. Then only can the religion flourish in that country."

"To the north of Central Tibet, you should take birth in a noble family whom everyone can respect and bless your emanation to invite me to Tibet from India. Then only can we liberate sentient beings from misery of Samsara". (Kadam Bucho vol. Ka, Folio 75-76).

Once when Atisa was praying to his tutelary deity Avalokiteśvara to find out whether there were any restrictions or obstructions on his going to Tibet, Avalokiteśvara appeared in his own form and said: "O Holy one, you know what the secret teachings of the past, where you will find your tutelary deity, the Goddess Tārā (Rje-btsun sgröl-ma), who is looking after the welfare of the living beings. There you will find your disciples waiting for your guidance."

With prayers Atisa bowed in front of the image of his deity and asked whether the teachings of Buddha would flourish in Tibet or not if he went there, whether he would be able to fulfil the desire of Dharmaraja of Tibet, and thirdly, whether there was any hazards to his life there. It was the goddess Tara who said that his going to Tibet would be of great value to all the beings there, and particularly to an upāsikā. But, she said, his life would be shortened by twenty years. Atisa, however made his journey to Tibet through Nepal in 1042 A.D.

Upon Atisa's arrival in Tibet, he sent a messenger to the king Byang-chub-hod to inform him of his arrival.

The king was elated at the news and remembered his dream of the previous night. He said that he had seen a sun rising from west and a moon from the east. They both rose in the sky towards each other and upon coming in contact. The king saw the whole world illuminated, the sky clear of dust and clouds and the stars at their brightest. He thought it was a beautiful sign befitting the great occasion.

Atisa was escorted to the Tho-ling (mtho-gling)¹ monastery by the king. Upon seeing the paintings of the deities on the wall, Atisa composed a string of hymns on the spot, one in praise of the deities. The king and the Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo were astonished and so moved that they asked Atisa to be their Guru. It was here that Atisa wrote his well-known text Bodhipathapradīpa. The scholars of Tibet held that there was a Doctrine here which was equal to that of any holy text. This was mainly due to the fact that Bodhipathapradīpa, though not long, contained the essence of all other texts.

Atisa spent three years in Nga-ris, nine years in Nyethang² (snye-thang), and five years in other places of Central Tibet. It was under Atisa's influence that the famous Kadampa sect sprang up. The word Kadampa means the attempt of a person to take in each and every word of the Buddha's teachings in order to attain enlightenment. He also introduced a Doctrine divided into seven parts (Lha-chos bdun-Idan/Sapta-deva-dharma)³ four of which concern four different Doctrines. The rest include the Tripiṭakas. This Doctrine is a very popular one among the Tibetans even today.

During Atisa's stay at Samye, he was delighted to see many Sanskrit manuscripts in Peharling and remarked that it was difficult to preserve such Sanskrit manuscripts even in India.

He then visited Lhasa at the invitation of Rngog-legs-pa'i shes-rab. On his arrival at the city, Jo-wo thug-je chen-po (avalokitesvara) the patron deity of Tibet, appeared in white robe to receive Atisa saying "Welcome Mahāpandita, the Victorious!" On seeing and hearing the patron deity of Tibet, Atisa ran forward towards the deity in order to pay his respect, but jo-wo thug-je chen-po disappeared. The other people who had not seen the deity questioned Atisa about his strange behaviour to which he replied that he had seen a white robed apparition which he knew was jo-wo thug-je chen-po.

Later when he visited the Gtsug-lag-khang, he wondered whether there was any historical account behind the foundation of such a great temple. Meanwhile, an old beggar woman, reading Atisa's mind, asked him whether he wanted a full account of the establishment of the Gtsug-lag-khang. Atisa at once knew that this beggar woman was no ordinary beggar but some goddess in disguise. He told her that he wanted an account of the Gtsug-lag-khang. She thereupon said that there was a vase-shaped pillar in the Gtsug-lag-khang and if Atisa dug two and a half fathoms deep under it, he would find the key to the establishment of the Gtsug-lag-khang. She told him not to utter a word about it to anyone.

When Atisa began digging under the vase-shaped pillar for the manuscript, the deity who was guarding the manuscript told him that he would be given only a day to complete copying the manuscript. Unfortunately, Atisa could not complete copying the manuscript and had to place it back under the pillar again. This great historical account of Tibet is called 'Bk'a-chems Ka-'Khol-ma', is honour of the great Atisa and has brought the greatness of the Gtsug-lag-khang in the light of many.

During his stay in Nyethang, one of his chief disciples Dom-ston-pa continued for days and nights discussing with Atisa the paths of the past, present and future Buddhas who went through the various stages to attain enlightenment.

In the year 1054 A.D. at Nyethang, Atisa left this world for Tushita heaven. He was reborn there as Deva, Nam-mkhah dri-ma med-pa.

It is due to Atisa that the Tibetans are such staunch Buddhists and have been so, ever since Atisa came to Tibet.

NOTES

1. Mtho-lding (gser-gyi-lha-khang) was founded by Rinchen-bzang-po but according to the Blue Annals and Pema Karpo'i Chojung, Lha-bla-ma ye-shes-hod founded the monastery. This monastery is situated in the Sotlej river valley about 60 miles south west of Gartok (For detail see 'Dzam-gling rgyas-bshad by T.V. Wylie).
2. Nyethang is a famous place in Tibetan history in central Tibet. One of the greatest apostles of Buddhism Atisa Dipankara died in Nyethang in 1054 A.D. on his way back to India (G. Tucci, Lhasa and beyond, pp. 69-70).
3. Bk'a-gdam lha-chos bdun-ldan (skt. Sapta-deva-dharma). Atisa introduced the Four Deities: Buddha Sakyamuni, bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, Tāra and Acala, and the three fold Doctrine of the Buddha, that is Sūtra, Vinaya and Abhidharma, as his own individual (personal) deities and his own individually selected Doctrine. The seven elements are collectively known as the doctrine of Kadam Lhacho Dundan. (Kadam Phacho, pt. II, SRIT, 1978).

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF TIBETAN TEXT

1. Chos-'byung gsung-rab Rin-po-che'i-mdzod
by Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub (c. 1290-1364 AD).
2. Dpag-bsam-ljon-bzang
by Sum-pa mkhan-po Ye-shes dpal-'byor (1709 - 86 A.D.)
3. Lam-rim bla-rgyud rnam-thar
by Tshe-gling yongs-'dzin ye-shes rgyal-mtshan (C. 1713-1793)
4. Bstod-pa brgyad-bcu-pa (Hymn in praise in eighty verses).
by Nag-tsho tshul-khrim rgyal-ba. Nag-tsho was the constant companion of Atisa for nineteen years. After the teacher passed away he got a scroll prepared by the Indian artisan Kriṣṇa-pa. Nag-tsho also wrote the Hymn on the back of the painted scroll (H. Eimer). Nag-tsho was the great Tibetan Lotsawa who succeeded in bringing Atisa to Tibet (1042 AD)
5. Bk'a-gdam Bu-chos (Life and teachings of Atisa's disciple)
by 'Brom-ston rgyal-ba'i 'byung-gnas (1004-1064 A.D.) the chief disciple. He came from Dom family of North Tibet. He studied under Gyung-chos mgon and received his Upasaka ordination from Rgyal-gyi zhang-chen. He also learnt Prajñāpāramitā, Tantra and Sūtra from Se-btsun dbang-Phyug gzhon-nu, and grammar, etymology etc from Pandita Smriti who was then resident in Tibet. When he was 41 years old he met Atisa in Purang (Western Tibet) and became one of his chief disciple. He spent 11 years with Atisa and acquired all the guru's accomplishments. After Atisa, Domton became head of Atisa's followers and founded the Reding Monastery where he stayed till he passed away at the age of 60 (Kadam Phacho, SRIT, Pt. I, 1977).

NOTES & TOPICS

ATISA THE TANTRIC INITIATE

Some scholars say that Atisa did not receive Tantric teachings and hence did not give Tantric initiations since it is forbidden for a monk to do so. They would substantiate this by quoting three ślokas from Bodhipathapradīpa. Evidently they have misinterpreted the slokas as there is much deeper mystic meaning in them.

The later revival of Buddhism began following the death of King Lang Darma in Eastern and Western Tibet in the 11th Century and after the Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo (985-1055 A.D). During this period, Pandita Āchārya Marpo also named Shes-rab gsang-ba (11th Century A.D) from Odiyana and a disciple of Kashmirian Ratna-vajra, visited Tibet (G.N. Roerich The Blue Annals pt. II p. 1049-50. The Asiatic Society, Calcutta 1953). He was a competent and well-known scholar both in India and in Tibet. But his disciple Pandita Shamthab mngon-po taught that a beginner in Tantric practices could be given Las-rgya (private Śakti) during the secret initiation. This was of great harm to the moral vow taken by the monks. Atisa, therefore, has objected to this in Bodhipathapradīpa. It however does not mean that a monk cannot receive Tantric teachings and initiations. It was clearly mentioned by Kun-mkhyen 'Jam-dbyang bshad-pa'i rdo-rje (17th Century A.D) in his work Lam-rim rnam-bshad lung-rig gter-mdzod vol. 4 (NGA), p. 424 (New Statesman Press, New Delhi 55).

Most of the Tantric texts mentioned that the best disciple to give Tantric initiation is one who has obtained the three following vows: the individual liberation vows (Prātimokṣasamvara /So-sor-thar pa'i-sdom-pa); the Bodhisattva vows: (Bodhisattvasamvara/Byangchub sems-dpa'i-sdom-pa); and the tantric vows (Mantra samvara/gsang-sngags-kyi-sdom-pa).

While looking through many Sanskrit manuscripts during the stay in Samye, Atisa was filled with pride at the thought that he was the most learned in Tantric literature. At that time in his dream a Dakini appeared and showed him many Tantric texts he had never seen before. This humbled Atisa and it has been mentioned in all Atisa's biographies written by different Tibetan scholars. This shows that Atisa had received various Tantric teachings and initiations.

- J.K. Rechung

ཧྲིལ་ལྷན་གྱི་མཚོ་གྲུ་གཞི་སྒྲིག་པའི་སྐྱེ་བོ་

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