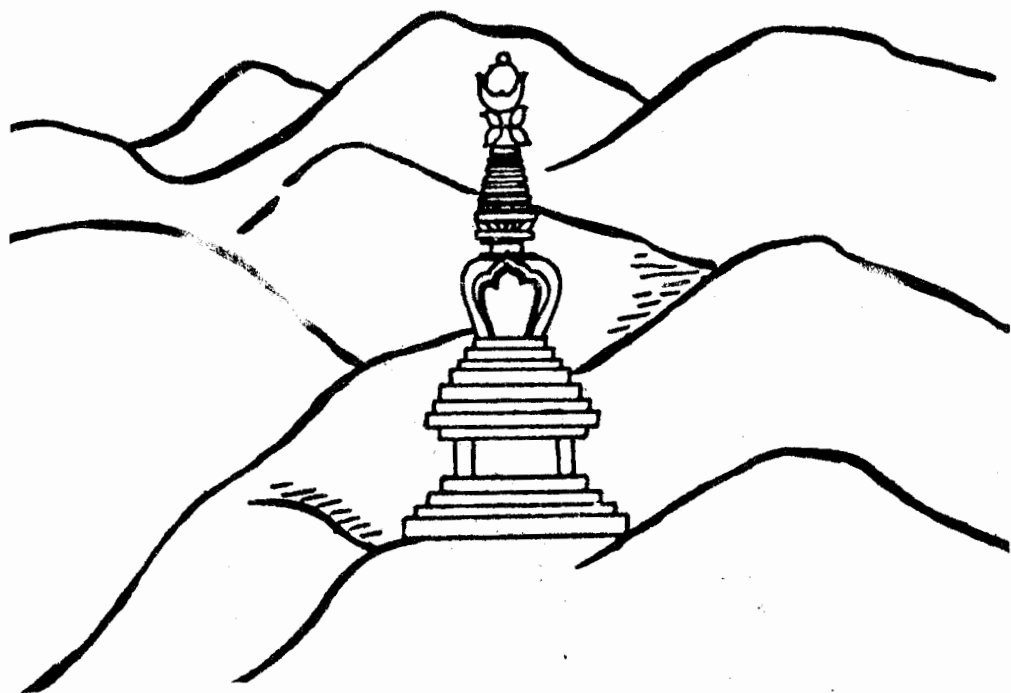


BULLETIN OF TIBETOLOGY



1996

NEW SERIES

No. 1

19 February 1996
SIKKIM RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TIBETOLOGY
GANGTOK - SIKKIM

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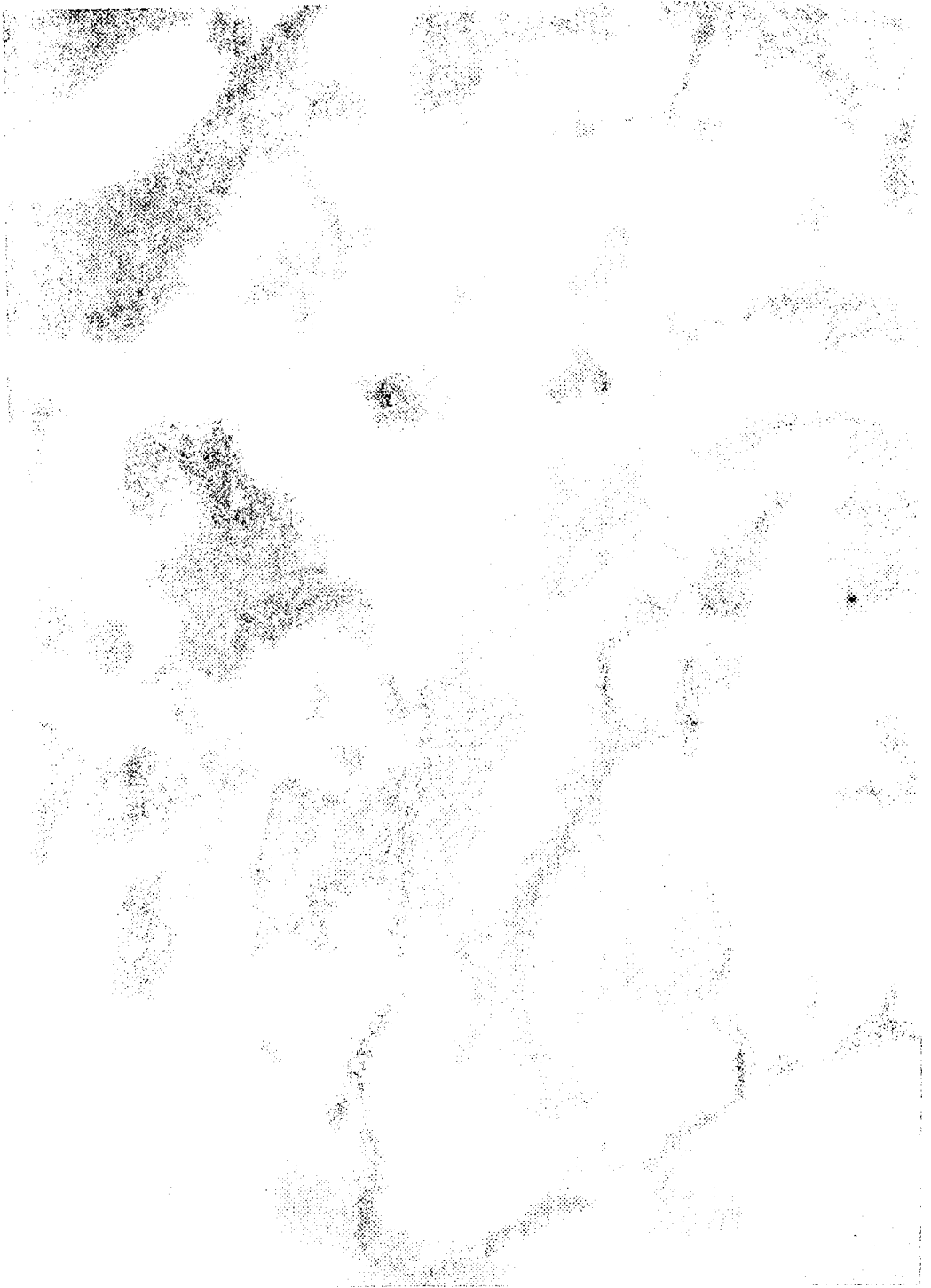
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His Holiness The Late 16th Karmapa



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

His Holiness The Late 16th Gyalwa Karmapa (RANGJUNG RIGPE DORJI)

- P. B. Chakrabarty -

The Karma Kagyudpa school of Mahayana Buddhism in Tibet (belonging to Mahayana Buddhism) is based on the famous Six Religious Doctrine (Chos, Drung, bDus, Pahi and bRis) as propounded by the four celebrated Buddhist saints, Tilopa (975 A.D.), Naropa, Marpa and Milarepa (1052-1135 A.D.). The school stresses the metaphysics of "Sunyanata" or the unqualified void which means undifferentiated unity, a unity between subject and object residing completely in itself. This concept was adopted by the early Vajrayana sect from the Sunyavadins and it formed the essential under current in the spritual ilfe of the Buddhist Trantricists in Tibet. The Kagyudpa School developed a special system of meditation as expounded and practised by the four Buddhist saints (Siddhas) mentioned in the foregoing.

The Divine Guru of Kagyudpa Sect, Dorje Chang (Dharma Kaya Vajra Dhara) had imparted the teaching of "Maha Mudra" meditation to Tilopa who conveyed it orally, as an esoteric doctrine to his deciple Naropa, the renowned Buddhist Pundit and Yogi who had been once the Chancellor at the ancient Nalanda University. The Six Doctrines of Naropa are the doctrine of Inner Fire (Tibetan -Tumo), the doctrine of Illusory-body (Tib-Gyu-Lu), the doctrine of the Dream State (Mi-lam), the doctrine of the Clear Light (Tib-Ho-Sal), the doctrine of Intermediate State (Tib-Bar-Do) and the doctrine of the Tranference of Conciousness (Tib-Pho-Wa). Naropa had propagated the doctrine to Marpa, the great Tibetan Yogi and scholar-translator who having attained perfection in spritual meditation and devotional practices and mastery over the sacred text (Sutras), transmitted the doctrine to Tibet for the first time. Marpa was followed by his illustrious disciple Milarepa whose fame as a towering Buddhist saint and yogi spread throughout the Mahayana Buddhist world in those times.

Milarepa's spritual practice lies in the Yoga of Inner Fire or "Tumo". Marpa gave him the religious texts on "Tumo" along with Naropa's mantle as a symbol of spritual supremacy. Milarepa had unloosened the knots of his own being and attained ultimate integration, the light of united wisdom.

The great Tibetan saint-scholar Cho-Je-Gampopa was Milarepa's chief disciple whose deciple Dhusum Khyenpa was the first Karmapa. By virtue of his attainment of the highest spritual wisdom, the Karmapa became a seer of the

past, present and the future and gave indications of his being as incarnation (Avatar) of the Bodhisattava Avalokiteshvara, personification of boundless compassion who refused to attain Buddhahood (Nirvana) in order to dedicate himself to the deliverance of living beings from the ills and sufferings of this world and to guide all human beings to the Path of Dharma.

The Karmapa Line began in 1110 A.D., with Dhusum Khyenpa of Dresod in east Tibet as the first Karmapa who had founded monasteries in eastern and central Tibet, including the Tsurphu Gompa where all the Karmapas lived. The Karmapas shine resplendant for their integrity of character, erudite scholarship and rare excellence in yogic practices. In human form they symbolised supreme compassion and kings, lamas and the laity in Tibetan, the Chinese and the Mongolian communities honoured and followed their path.

The Karmapas travelled widely all over Tibet, China, Mongolia, Sikkim, Nepal, Bhutan and India. Mighty rulers, namely Kublai Khan of Mongolia, the Khakhan of Karakoram and the Emperor Toghan Temur would honour the Karmapas and listen to their teachings. Time and again the powerful rulers of Central Asia invited the Karmapas and accepted them as their spiritual Gurus. Sometimes those rulers even abandoned their plans of conquest on the advice of the Karmapas. The rulers of Sikkim (till 1975), Bhutan, Nepal and Ladakh also had been great devotees of the Karmapas. His Holiness the Dalai Lama both in the past and in the present recognised the Karmapas as the supreme heads of the Karmapa sect. In fact, the Karmapas of the Black Hat Sect always received the goodwill of the Dalai Lamas in their task of leading their followers to the goal of liberation, peace and tranquility. Some gompas in Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal and Ladakh form the nucleus of the spiritual activities of the Karmapa sect.

It has been a traditional practice of all Karmapas to predict their next birth before their demise. The fifteenth Karmapa's prediction about his next birth came true in all details. His Holiness the Late 16th Gyalwa Karmapa was born in eastern Dokham in Tibet in 1923. Three days after his birth, the baby incarnation uttered the mantras of "Manjushri" (God of learning, Tibetan-Jampeyang) and Avalokiteshvara - Lotus - in hand (In Mahayana Buddhist pantheon, Avalokiteshvara is the diety symbolising infinite compassion). At the age of eight, he was ceremoniously taken to Sharpul Palpung Chos Khorling in Kham province in eastern Tibet where he was solemnly enthroned amid all the avatars, lamas, disciples, officers and laymen of Dokham -Chuzhi-Gandruk and Tsurphu, the principal seat of the Karmapa Sect. Hundreds of thousands of devotees assembled there and had the first "Darshan" and his blessings. Thereafter the assemblage there, after all religious ceremonies, saw him off for Tsurphu. On his way, he called upon the 13th Dalai Lama, Thupden Gyatso who graciously recognised him as the 16th Karmapa. When he Tsurphu, the ceremony of recog-

nition was again performed. Representatives of the rulers of Sikkim, Bhutan, Ladakh and eminent Incarnate Lamas (Avatars) from all Kagyudpa monasteries attended the holy function. The Tibetan Government too sent its high dignitaries to be present on the solemn occasion.

Till the age of 13, His Holiness the Late Gyalwa Karmapa received teachings in different branches of Buddhism and Tantric practice. He then left for Sarpul Palpung in Kham and performed many a miracle on the way. At Dongtok he left on a stream on footmark which could be seen on the frozen river in winter even today. He was invited by the Li-Thang-Wa, a local ruler who was never at peace with the Chang-Zhang-Wa, another tribal ruler. The Gyalwa Karmapa's arrival ended the dispute without any bloodshed. He left here another footprint which could still be seen at Li-Thang Pangphuk monastery.

The Royal Government of Bhutan was represented by a large team consisting of the Representative of H.M. the King, Ashi Sonam and her husband, and other members of Bhutan's Royal family.

During the cremation ceremony, a supernatural phenomenon was observed by all present at the occasion. While his mortal body was burning in the funeral pyre, a rainbow arched across the sunlit sky although it did not rain at all. It is a common knowledge that the rainbow, a physical phenomenon, is seen in the sky only when the sun shines after a shower. And yet the rainbow without any shower was seen by all. Another unusual phenomenon that took place was also mind boggling for the Karmapa's heart, tongue and eyes remained unburnt. They have been kept along with his holy ashes inside a newly built stupa (Relic receptacle) made of gold. Thus passed away the 16th Karmapa, leaving behind his imperishable religious perfume to guide us to the path of virtue and Dharma.

His Holiness the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa dedicated his whole life to the noble cause of Buddhism to liberate all sentient beings from sufferings. By virtue of his fathomless compassion and dominant personality, he founded with the help of many Kagyudpa lamas, 240 Dharma Centres in the U.S.A., Canada, Europe, Latin America, India and Southeast Asia.

His Guru and prominent avatars (incarnates) gave him special initiations (Tib-Kah Wang) in Kham in Tibet. At the age of 18, he left for Tsurphu and stayed there till 1944. He penetrated into the depths of Buddhist philosophy and mysticism and mastered canonical scriptures and meditation in all their branches. Quite some years ago being invited by the then King of Bhutan, he came to Bhutan and stayed with His Majesty for about 45 days, giving "Darshan" and blessings to the King, monks and laymen. Later on he made a pilgrimage to Nepal, visiting all the sacred places there. The Prime Minister of Nepal's residence was graced by the solemn Vajra Mukut Ceremony (Thunderbolt Hat Cer-

emony). Following his Nepal visit, his Holiness visited all the sacred places of pilgrimage in India. On his arrival at Buddha Gaya, the then Chogyal (King) of Sikkim invited him to visit Sikkim. In Sikkim he gave "Darshan" and blessings to the lamas and the laity. Before returning to Tsurphu, he visited Khunu and Kailash.

On his return to Tsurphu in 1953, the 16th Incarnate Gyalwa Karmapa ordered the rebuilding of the monastery of the Karmapas in Tsurphu and during the period between 1953-56, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama graced Tsurphu by his visit. Then H.H. Gyalwa Karmapa revisited India on a pilgrimage during 2500th Buddha Jayanti celebrations, returning to Tsurphu in Tibet via Sikkim in 1957. During this period Tibet was facing the onslaught of Chinese military occupation. Apprehending the calamity that was overshadowing Tibet after the Chinese invasion, he left Tibet and came to India via Bhutan in 1959, leaving almost everything at Tsurphu and bringing with him a large number of monks along with important images, scriptures and essential ceremonial objects. At the invitation of the then Chogyal of Sikkim, Late P.T. Namgyal, he stayed at the ancient monastery at Rumtek village, a few miles to the west of Gangtok for about four years until a new monastery complex was built in 1963 close to the old one for him and his disciples by the Government of India. Since then he had been staying in the new monastery till his demise. He founded the International Dharma Chakra Centre at Rumtek, his seat in exile since 1959.

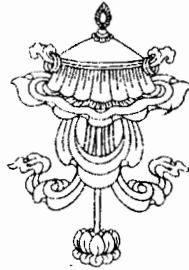
The Karmapa, an incarnation of the Bodhisattava Avalokiteshvara, adopted the practice of giving darshan of the sacred Vajra Mukut (sacred Thunderbolt Crown). The original crown is said to have been woven out of the precious hair of 100,000 "Dakinis" or Celestial Beings and offered to Dhusun Khyenpa, the first Karmapa who had sanctified and blessed it with the indefinable miraculous virtue of "Deliverance on Sight". The "Vajra Mukut" was shown to the public during a special ceremony held on auspicious days at Rumtek monastery.

On November 6, 1981, H.H. the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa suffering from throat cancer for some time, passed away in Chicago, U.S.A.. His death plunged Buddhists all over the globe in deep grief. In keeping with the Buddhist tradition, religious rituals were held at Rumtek monastery where his body was kept embalmed for 49 days. The cremation ceremony was held on December 20, 1981, an auspicious day, in the presence of hundreds of devotees who had come from all over the world. Among distinguished personages present at the solemn ceremony were the then Governor of Sikkim, Homi J.H. Taleyar Khan, the former Governor, Bepin Behari Lal, Sikkim's then Chief Minister, Nar Bahadur Bhandari and members of Sikkim Cabinet

Under his guidance, 500 sets of the immortal Buddha's Kangyur were printed and he donated this to monasteries of all sects and reprinted many valuable religious books to restore Lord Buddha's teachings. He blessed countless peo-

ple regardless of race, caste and religion and many new monastic colleges and meditation centres came to be established through his direct and indirect influences.

There is a confidential and prophetic will left by His Holiness for the recognition of his new incarnation. Rumtek monastery is now the Dharma Chakra Centre and the International Kagyudpa Headquarters.



FOOTNOTES

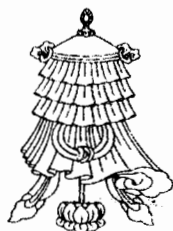
(1) The writer of this article had the good fortune to witness twice, the most auspicious "Vajra Mukut Ceremony" (the sacred Thunderbolt Crown Ceremony), performed by His Holiness the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa at Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim.

(2) Karma Pakshi, the second Karmapa in the lineage, convinced the Chinese Taoists of the excellence of Tibetan Buddhism with all its yogic practices. He threw away the costly presents offered to him on his travels into a spring near Shang Tu in China and recovered them from a pool near Tsurphu in Tibet. Miracles performed by the 5th Karmapa, Dezin Shekpa are inscribed on a big silkbacked scroll in five languages. The Karmapas travelled widely over Tibet, China, Mongolia, Sikkim, Nepal, Bhutan and India, studied the rare religious manuscripts in ancient monasteries there and contributed their own spiritual experiences and knowledge to Tibetan Literature.

(3) In 1952, the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa accompanied H.H. the Dalai Lama on his political mission to China.

The Karmapa Lineage

I	Dhusum Khyenpa	-	1110 - 1193 A.D.
II	Karma Pakshi	-	1204 - 1283 A.D.
III	Rangjung Dorje	-	1284 - 1339 A.D.
IV	Rolpei Dorje	-	1340 - 1383 A.D.
V	Deshin Shekpa	-	1384 - 1415 A.D.
VI	Tongwa Donden	-	1416 - 1453 A.D.
VII	Chodrag Gyamtso	-	1454 - 1506 A.D.
VIII	Mikyo Dorje	-	1507 - 1554 A.D.
IX	Wangchuk Dorje	-	1556 - 1603 A.D.
X	Choying Dorje	-	1604 - 1674 A.D.
XI	Yeshe Dorje	-	1676 - 1702 A.D.
XII	Changchub Dorje	-	1703 - 1732 A.D.
XIII	Dadul Dorje	-	1733 - 1797 A.D.
XIV	Thegchog Dorje	-	1798 - 1863 A.D.
XV	Khakhyab Dorje	-	1871 - 1922 A.D.
XVI	Rangjung Rigpe Dorje	-	1924 - 1981 A.D.



Karma and Rebirth In Buddhism

- Thupten Tenzing -

A Summary Introduction to Karma

The doctrine of Karma is the foundation of Buddhist ethics. It maintains that the whole world is subject to the same kind of uniform law. It recognises the rule of law both within and outside in inner life as well as in outward nature. Every action accordingly produces its effect not only in the physical world but also causes certain impression in the inner self of the agent. These impressions inevitably determine the future mode of existence of the agent and one cannot escape them. The present placement of an individual in a particular social situation and the association of a particular type of psycho-physical complex with it is all solely due to the past Karmas of that individual. The past actions determine our present state of existence and our present actions would in turn determine our future state of existence.

The doctrine of Karma is therefore based on certain fundamental postulates: (i) It is the law of causality of cause-effect. All Karmas or deeds produce effect or bear results. In the case of volitional Karmas, they are classified as good and evil, right and wrong, just and unjust, depending on the intent of the doer. It is the motivation of one's action which is important. (ii) It is the law of personal responsibility in which a doer himself must bear the consequences of his actions. Thus liability cannot be shifted. (iii) It is the law of retributive justice. There is no escape for doer from the consequences of his Karmas. (iv) And the Karma is supposed to have no beginning, but it can have an end. The means of attaining that end, of destroying the working of Karma is the Eight Fold Path, as the Master set forth in his first discourse.

A Summary Introduction to Rebirth

The theory of rebirth envisage that all sentient creation is endowed with consciousness and this consciousness transmigrates at the time of death to a new birth. This transmigration is regulated by the accumulated Karmas which have yet to mature and fructify. The cycle of rebirth and the process of thought-formation are one and the same thing¹.

In Buddhist tradition rebirth is an accepted fact. Jataka (Mzad-bryga - dpag -bsam - khri- shing) which narrates about the previous career of the Buddha as Bodhisattva bears an evidence of rebirth. It is also seen in that context that Bodhisattva was born in different forms of existence before becoming the

¹ Reading the mind: Advice for meditators by Tan Acharn Kor Khao - Saun-luang. The Wheel Publication 1993.

Buddha. Since he was always exerting for the benefit of all the sentient beings, his birth was always in a good state of existence. For example, the Body of Bliss (Sans. Sambhoga-Kaya. Tib. Longs-sku) is regarded as the result of the previous virtuous deeds of the Buddha of the biotic force, which, owing to its sublime character, brings out the attainment of this highest of corporeal forms¹. But there are also number of peoples who suffer in many ways, who are born in various planes of existence.

Diverse Nature of Karmas

It is the doctrine of Karma that explains the difference among living beings. Once a young man named Subbha went to Lord Buddha and put this question: Ven'ble Gotama, I see so many differences among living beings, and human beings for that matter- some are born in rich conditions and others in poor conditions, some are intelligent and others are dull, some are lovely and others are repulsive, some live long and others die quite young. So what could be the reason for all these differences? Lord Buddha said that these differences are due to differences in actions². Similarly Majjhima Nikaya III, 204 says that it is Karma which divide people into high and low. Milindapanho elaborates, "it is through a difference in their Karma that men are not alike; some lived long, some lived short, some are healthy and some are weak, some wise and some foolish. Karma allots to beings meanness and greatness".

Constituent Factors

After examining the causation of Karmas, Buddha found that man is determined by one of the three factors: (i) external stimuli, (ii) conscious motives, or (iii) unconscious motives.

External contact as a cause of Karma is explained as behaviour in terms of a stimuli-response sort of model, where reflex movement or behaviour follows sensory excitation. Conscious motives are those such as greed or attachment (Sans. Raga, Tib 'Dod-Chags), hate or aversion (Sans. Doasa, Tib. L'Khonpa) and delusion (Sans. Moha, Tib. Gti-mug). Generally it is evil behaviour that is produced by these motives, while morally good behaviour is motivated by the absence of greed, hate and delusion (alobha, adosa and ahoma). Thus Buddha emphasized the psychological aspect of behaviour and equated Karma with violation (Cetana). Among the unconscious motives are the desire to perpetuate life and the desire to avoid death; and desire for pleasure and aversion to pain. These motives, though unconscious, result from mistaken understanding of the nature of human existence. While human behaviour is itself conditioned by causes, it is followed by correlated consequences. This correlation

1 . Abhisamayalamkara, VIII, pg - 19,20

2. Culakammavibhanga Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya, III, pg - 202-206

between action and consequence constitutes the doctrine of Karma in Buddhism¹.

Law of Cause and Effect

We are responsible for our actions. We are what we have made and we shall be what we make. Dhammapada (Chos-kyi-tseg-ched) asserts, "not in the sky, not in the midst of sea, nor anywhere else on earth is there a spot where a man may be freed from the consequences of evil deeds". The text further says, "by oneself evil is done, by oneself one suffers. By oneself evil is undone, by oneself one is purified". Thus the doctrine of Karma became an unescapable law of personal responsibility and retributive justice based on one's action. Here we may take into consideration the nature of these actions. They are threefold: verbal actions, bodily actions and mental actions. Their moral significance is not the same. Verbal and bodily actions are physical in nature, and these actions are only the manifestations of thoughts. Therefore they assume their moral significance according to the thoughts that give rise to them.

Mind is the Foundation of all the Actions

As the Dhammapada says, "mind proceeds all unwholesome (Sans. Akusala, Tib. Mi-dge-wa) states and is their chief: they are all mind-made. If with an impure mind, a person speaks or acts, misery will follow him. Similarly mind proceeds all wholesome (Sans. Kusala, Tib. Dge-wa) states and is their chief: they are all man-made. If with pure mind, a person speaks or acts, happiness will follow him". It is something like this:

Sow a thought and
reap an act
Sow an act and
reap a habit
Sow a habit and
reap a character
Sow a character and
reap a destiny.

But thought is a general term which covers so many aspects of our mental life. In Abhidhamma (Chos-mngon-pa) they have analysed the functions of eighty nine consciousness in continuous process of birth-death-rebirth till the life process ceases². The Lankavatara sutra (Lang-kar-gshes-pa'-mdo) mentions in details regarding the functioning of mind and its relation with potential consciousness, otherwise known as store consciousness (Sans. Alaya-vijnana, Tib. Kun-gzi nram-par-ses-pa). The same sutra deals with the problem of the

1 Buddhist Philosophy: A Historical Analysis by David J. Kalupahana, third printing, 1982.

2 Visuddhimagga, pg - 454.

mental state immediately before death and the desire for rebirth under the influence of Karmic effect.

Among these mental states the most important one is known as Cetan i.e. volition including intention and motive. It is the intention or motive that determine the ethical nature of our action. Acts are divided into three categories in relation to doers having their respective effect: (i) acts resulting effects in this life of the doer (Ditthadhammavedaniya Kamma), (ii) acts bearing results in the next life (Uppajjavedaniya Kamma), (iii) and acts having result in a future life (Apparapariyavedaniya Kamma).

Generating Factors of Motivation

How the motivation or intention arises in the mental process? According to Abhidhamma, when an object which may be internal or external appears within the range of our mind, we first become conscious of it. Then we try to ascertain what it is in the light of our previous experience. Then we have some feeling towards it in the light of our relation or association with it. This is feeling (Sans. Vedana, Tib. Tshor-ba).

Upto this point the whole mental process is receptive. So far there is nothing wrong. They are said to be resultant (Sans. Vipaka, Tib. Rnam-smin). But then we do not stop here. After experiencing Vedana or feeling we take an attitude towards the object, pass judgement and take a decision what to do with it. This is the active or rather the reactive stage of mental process known as Javana¹ leading to the formation of impression (Sans. Samskara, Tib. 'Dus-byas) involving volition (Cetana). In fact samskara is synonym for Cetana. So if our attitude is right then there is wholesome act (Sans. Kusala, Tib. Dge-wa), if it is wrong then there is unwholesome act (Sans. Akusala, Tib. Mi-dge-wa). It is this stage of the mental process that leaves Samskaras or impressions in our mind. And it is these impressions that give shape and form to our character. But then Samskara which keeps on multiplying are not of the same nature. They can be divided into three groups: (i) some Samskara are weak in nature and the impression left behind by them is like a line drawn in water; (ii) there are other Samskaras which are somewhat strong in their impression lasts for sometimes like a line drawn on sand; (iii) and there are still other Samskaras which are very strong in nature and they leave a lasting impression on the mind like a line cut into a rock with hammer and chisel².

Though we create all types of samskaras in course of a day, we may remember only one or two which are very strong at the end of the day. So is the case at the end of a week, a month or a year. And at the time of death, the strongest Samskara gives a push to the life process and there is rebirth. So this

1 Manual of Avhidhamma by Narada Maha Thera, pg - 167-170

2. Puggalapannatti, pg - 32

cycle of birth and death keeps on revolving giving happiness and misery according to the nature of Samskara we create. In this context we can divide all persons into four categories according to their conduct: (i) one who goes from darkness to darkness; (ii) one who goes from darkness to light; (iii) one who goes from light to darkness; (iv) and one who goes from light to light¹.

So we know that Karma or act is actually the processing factor by which the clinging to life inherent in the beings continues.

Karma is not Bondage

However the theory of Karma should not be mistaken for fatalism. It does not regard the stock of past Karma as a dead weight lying on the shoulders of man, hindering his work and implying complete pre-determination as what the individual will be so. Instead it views the individuals as free agents who are not only supposed to have a capacity to distinguish between right and wrong but also have a capacity of a free choice. In fact if the doctrine of Karma were to advocate complete determinism it would have gone against the very spirit of the scriptures, which enjoin certain prescriptions and prohibitions, because if one is bound to do what one does all prescriptions and prohibitions would be rendered useless. Far from advocating determinism this doctrine highlights our free agency but in doing so it also makes us aware of our responsibilities and enlightens us towards our duties. Thus it links freedom with responsibilities.

We may sum up our analysis of the theory of Karma by restating that neither it stands for the denial of human freedom nor for discouragement in moral effort. It implies that we are at every moment making our character and shaping our destiny. As the Buddha said, "action is the field, consciousness the seed, and craving the moisture which lead to the rebirth of a being"².

Rebirth

Many scholars held that the Buddhist did not believe in a transmigration of soul. The source of the doctrine of Anatmavada or absence of soul is the Anattalakkhana sutta or the Vinayapitaka ('Dul-wa'i sde-snod) which is the basis of the doctrine of Pudgala sunyata (Gang-zag bdag-med). The doctrine of Anatmavada (Bdag-med kyi lta-ba), these scholars say, leads to a very anomalous situation such as there is no actor apart from action. More importantly it repudiates the concept of transmigration and rebirth and of personal responsibility for Karmas without a person and its rebirth to experience the consequences of the Karmas is perplexing.

Transmigration of Consciousness

Buddha replaced the soul by the theory of mind-continuum, by a series of physical states rigorously conditioned as to their nature by the casual law governing

1 Jataka, II, pg - 17

2 Buddhist Philosophy: A Historical Analysis by David J. Kalupahana, third printing 1982

them (Dhama-sanketa). According to him this alone provides for progress (change, efficacy) and continuity (responsibility), as each succeeding state (good or bad) is the result of the previous state. Therefore rebirth does not mean that the soul bodily, as an identical individual essence, transports itself from one place to another. It only means that a new series of states is generated conditioned by the previous states. Nothing is lost, and a new birth is a result of the previous. The Salistamba sutra puts the matter definitely: "there is no element which migrates from this world to the other; but there is recognition (realisation) of the fruition of Karma, as there is continuity of causes and conditions.

Consciousness and Psychophysical Personality

The human personality is analysed into two ways: first, in terms of six elements—earth, water, fire, air, space and consciousness; and second, in terms of the five aggregates—material form, feeling, perception, disposition and consciousness. They all form a human personality denoted by psychophysical personality (Sans. Nama rupa, Tib. Ming-gzugs). The process of rebirth is therefore explained as the combining of the two factors, consciousness (Sans. Vijnana, Tib. Rnam-ses) and the psychophysical personality (Sans. Nama rupa, Tib. Ming-gzugs). The psychophysical personality referred to here is the foetus formed in the mother's womb (gabbha) and which represents the beginning of a new life span. Consciousness surviving from the past is said to become infused in this new personality, and thus continuity is maintained between the two lives. The latent dispositions in this surviving consciousness therefore determine to a great extent the nature of the new personality.

Thus three factors are generally taken as a necessary conditions for the birth of a being: (i) coitus of the parents, (ii) the mother being in the proper season to conceive, and (iii) the presence of a gandhabba. The first two factors go to produce what is called gabbha or foetus that is formed in the mother's womb. This living organism is called Namarupa or the psychophysical personality. It becomes complete only when influenced by a surviving consciousness which in the above context, is represented by Gandhabba. This connection between a surviving consciousness and the psychophysical personality is emphasized in the casual sequence of the twelve dependent origination (Sans. Pratityasamutpada, Tib. Rten-'brel yan-lag bchu-gnyis) which shows nothing stands permanent like soul from ignorance to death. Whatever is originated under casual sequence is to perish. This is only the reality of moral consciousness and the efficacy of Karma¹.

The Sphere of Rebirth

In the Wheel of Life (Sans. Bhavacakra, Tib. Srid-pa'i 'khor-lo) the continuous process of revolving state from one birth to another is depicted in the six re-

1 Central Philosophy of Buddhism by T. R. V. Murti, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 2nd edition - 1960

gions of rebirth ('Gro ba rig-drug) namely, the three higher realms of god (Sans. Deva, Tib. Lha), human being (Sans. Purusa, Tib. Mi), and titans (Sans. Asura, Tib. Lha-ma-yin); and the three lower realms of hell (Sans. Naraka, Tib. Dmyal-ba), hungry ghosts (Sans. Preta, Tib. Yi-dvags), and animal (Sans. Triyak, Tib. Dus-'gro). The sphere of rebirth is further divided into three world system namely, the world of desire (Sans. Kamaloka, Tib. 'Dod-khams), the world of form (Sans. Rupaloka, Tib. Gzugs-khams), and the world of formlessness (Sans. Arupaloka, Tib. Gzugs-med-khams) in which beings are born to these different planes of existence due to the force of Karma. Then there is intermediate state (Sans. Antarabhāva, Tib. Bardo) between birth and death. This intermediate state is generally believed to be consciousness (Sans. Vijnana, Tib. Rnam-ses) that continues after death. This is in tune with the theory of unbroken continuity of life process (Avicchina) which became one of the major doctrinal standpoints of Santarakshita¹. It is in accordance with the theory of Vijnanavada which fundamental doctrine is the mind only (Sans. Citta-matrata, Tib. Sems-tsam-pa) and it is the Vijnavadins that emphasises the concept of Antarabhava². They affirmed that matter (Sans. Rupa, Tib. Gzugs) is a projection of mind and therefore there was an intermediate existence which consists of Vijnana only. The Lankavatara sutra says that but for Antarabhava (Bar-do), no consciousness (Sans. Vijnana, Tib. Rnam-ses) will evolve in the earthly existence of womb-born (Sans. Jarayuja, Tib. Mnal-skyes), the egg-born (Sans. Andaja, Tib. Sgong-skyes), moisture born (Sans. Sams-vedaja, Tib. Drod-skyes), and super-natural-born (Sans. Upapaduka, Tib. Rzus-skyes). The Abhidharma Kosa (Chos-mngon-pa'i mzd) discusses the concept and gives many descriptive epithets for the intermediate state. It is said that it is Manomaya (product of mind). It searches deliberately for the world in which it is destined to be born. It feeds on smell (Sans. Gandharva, Tib. Dri) and it lasts only for a time being. The same text also listed the Antarabhava as one of the seven existences.

In the Tibetan spritual tradition there is a practice called 'Pho-ba' or 'the great transference'. This practice is designed to lead one to a good future life. After the dissolution of the elements, senses, and the sense objects, there is a space of time, just as the three last stages are about to begin. This space is the most efficacious moment to practice 'Pbo-ba or transference. The individual goes into the post-death stage called 'Bar-do' which is of threefold division: (i) the Bar-do of dying, (ii) the Bar-do of the being of the Bar-do Chos-nyid, (iii) and the Bar-do of finding the place of rebirth. The duration of time it will take for each of these stages can vary widely from one individual to another and particularly the exact duration of each stage during the meditative or spiritual development of individual may change significantly. So whatever ordinary actions,

1 Origin and Doctrines of early Buddhist Schools by J. Masuda.

2 Lankavatara Sutra

virtuous actions and unvirtuous actions an individual was accustomed to, he will see himself going through again as a mental experience. For an ordinary person of no spritual development this will go on for about forty nine days, through a variety of stages. A person of some meditative development may begin to understand this state as it goes on and thus escape from this delusory experience in the first two weeks¹.

Thus one can reborn in the higher realms by the force of virtuous acts of charity (Sans. Dana, Tib. Sbyin-pa), moral conduct (Sans. Sila, Tib. Tshui-khrim) and contemplation (Sans. Samadhi, Tib. Tin-nge-'zin). The sum results of these virtuous acts is transferred to a formation of distinct consciousness. The consciousness from its embryonic stage in the mother's womb gradually takes the shape of six sense organs and at the completion of ten months would appear in the external world in the shape of body and mind. But one can be condemned to the birth of three lower realms by the force of ignorance of one's action in which a Karma is accumulated that will result in the formation of consciousness having a distinctive mark of various Karmic inclination (Vag-chags). Thus consciousness frequently cultivated by thirst and clinging leads to the three lower worlds of hell, hungry ghosts and animal.

Therefore, a being is reborn, according to the Karma and rebirth, as a result of ignorance (Sans. Avidya, Tib. Ma-rig-pa), craving (Sans. Tanha, Tib. Sred-pa), and the resultant grasping (Sans. Upadana, Tib. Nye-war len-pa).

Extinction of Rebirth

Freedom (Sans. Vimukti, Tib. Rnam-par-grol-ba) or the attainment of Nibbana consists in eliminating these three causes by the development of insight or knowledge and elimination of craving and non-grasping. Therefore, the attainment of happiness in this present existence and the elimination of future suffering by putting an end to the vicious cycle of existence can be attained by the elimination of craving. But for achieving this one must emphasise on the practice of meditation, higher state of mental concentration and many other means of achievement. The attainment of Nibbana is the extinction of Karma and thereby no existence occurs. For this attainment two distinct courses of practice has developed, namely, practice enunciated in Paramita-way and practice as made in tantric way. Both ways aim at neutralisation of Karma with its effect by performing Karma producing good effect. For the neutralisation of Karmic effects simultaneous cultivation of wisdom (Sans. Prajna, Tib. Ses-rab) and compassion (Sans. Karuna, Tib. Snng-rje) are essential according to both the ways. Through these practices one can achieve the cessation of life and death process symbolized by a full moon at the top, outside the circle of the Wheel of Life.

1 Past, Present and Future Life in Tibetan Medicine by Venerable Dr. Trogawa Rinpoche. Bulletin of Tibetology, spl. Volume of 1993, pg - 45

Review of Socio-Political Development in Tibet (600-1950)

- **Dr.Yeshi Choedon** -

The political history of Tibet manifests the shifting basis of power and influence. For the earlier rulers, force or strength might have been the critical determinant of political domination. However, Tibetan society underwent revolutionary change with the introduction of Buddhism which gradually permeated every aspect of life. It provided conducive condition for the emergence of unique religio-political system which came to be known as Choe-si-nyiden form of government.

This paper attempts to trace the socio-political developments of Tibet in course of centuries and then deals with structure of government under Choe-si-nyiden form of government. The paper concludes with highlight of factors which could have evolved the ancient nation into a modern nation state.

(I)

Much before the Choe-si-nyiden form of government, Tibet had been governed by the monarchy system with unbroken line of forty two kings ruling over the ancient land of Tibet upto the ninth century¹. The recorded history of Tibet starts from the seventh century when Tibet emerged as a formidable military power in Central Asia under the thirty-third king, Song-Tsen-Gampo. Although the Tibetan kings represented the embodiment of power in its most primitive form—force, and although force was indeed the practical basis of their rule, it seems they could not do so on a long term basis without some justification to make use of force legitimate. So the earlier rulers claimed to be divine descendants and the possession of magical power. The first king, Gnya-khri-tsen-po, believed to have descent from the “country of Gods” above the sky to rule the six tribes of Tibet, he and six of his successors were beleived to have “returned to the sky when they died by means of a sky-cord”. Similarly, when Tho-Thori Gnyan Tsan mysteriously received the first Buddhist text, it was believed to have “descended from the sky”. These myths provided extra human sanction to legitimize their rule².

Song-Tsen-Gampo and successive kings fiercely competed with other nations for domination of Central Asia and laid the foundation of Tibetan Empire in Central Asia³. At the sametime Song-Tsen Gampo played pioneering role in establishing Buddhism in Tibet. The written script in Tibetan language was invented during his time to translate the Buddhist sacred books. He introduced legal code for the nation based on the teachings of Buddha. This period is

regarded as the dawn of Tibetan civilization⁴. The imperial tasks and pious deeds initiated by Song-Tsan-Gampo were carried on by the successive kings. Despite their abiding sympathy for Buddhism, the successive kings had to allow both Bon, the indigenous religion, and Buddhism to exist side by side as Bon was too powerful to be ousted altogether. Subsequently, some elements of Bon religion had been absorbed and made subservient to the Tibetan Buddhism⁵. However, Buddhism had not become a mass phenomenon during the reign of these kings. In fact, there seems to be no evidence to prove that any of the Tibetan kings has ever called himself or was called by his contemporaries as Choegyal. It was an honourific title conferred posthumously to those Tibetan kings who were believed to have patronised Buddhism by the authors of Choe Byung works and by other lama scholars in gratitude⁶.

Along with the establishment of an extensive empire, there developed constant rivalry among the noble families to have dominant influence in the court. The rival families employed religion as a pretext to justify their clash of interests. King Ral-pa Can was murdered by his brother, Lang-dar-ma, who led the anti-Buddhist party. Pro Bon ministers helped Lang-dar-ma to succeed to the throne. They embarked on the task of destroying Buddhism almost to extinction. Eventually Lang-dar-ma was in turn assassinated by a Buddhist monk in 842. With him came to an end the imperial age of Tibetan history.

After the assassination of Lang-dar-ma, the Tibetan kingdom had been disintegrated into a number of princedoms which were nearly always at logger heads with each other. The rulers of these princedoms regarded the patronage of Buddhism as a matter of social prestige and means of political rivalry. Thus this period witnessed not only renewal but also renaissance of Tibetan Buddhism. During this period the four major sects of Tibetan Buddhism, Nyingmapa, Kadampa, Kagyupa and Sakyapa took shape, most of the great lama scholars wrote their monumental works and also did the excellent translations of the Buddhist classics into Tibetan that fuelled the renaissance. Thus Buddhism was transformed from a courtly interest into social force which eventually engulfed the whole of Tibet⁷. Rival royal families patronized various religious sects in a bid to regain their power and prestige. Thus once again the political struggle drew its vigour from rivalries between religious sects. The religious sects, having acquired by this time great authority, had become a new power in the politics of Tibet and were gradually replacing noble families in terms of influence and prestige in the society⁸.

When the Mongols were carrying out their expansionist policy in the thirteenth century, Tibet was also invaded by Changis Khan's second son, Godan Khan. In 1247, Godan Khan selected the most eminent Lama of the day, Sakya Pandita, as virtual ruler of Tibet. Godan Khan's choice of Sakya Pandita was deliberate as the Sakya Lama enjoyed high reputation in Tibet. Subsequent hereditary abbots of the Sakya Sect was recognised by the Mongol Yuan Emperors of China as the highest authority of Tibet. Thus began the system of ruler in whose hands earthly authority and the prestige of religious sanctity were united.

Ideas underlying the legitimacy of Sakya Lama's rule was a complex amalgam of Bon, Buddhist myths as well as Chinese imperial notions. At the Buddhist level, the Sakya Lamas claimed to be the manifestation of Manjusri, the Bodhisattva of knowledge and wisdom. This claim probably originated with the Sakya Pandita's reputation for learning. Despite the fact that they used every conceivable idea to legitimize their rule, the priest politician role was "far from being accepted in Tibet". The lay nobility and other sects were "jealous of the supremacy of Sakya⁹". They grudgingly accepted the authority of the Sakya as long as the Mongols had to be feared and respected. The Sakya ruled over Tibet for about hundred years. The Sakya Lamas remain the historic transition from royal authority based on force to Lamaist authority based on religious belief.

In 1358 the rule of Sakya Lamas were overthrown by Chang-chub-Gyaltzen who brought nearly the whole of Tibet under his sway. Thus began the rule Phamo Drukpa period which lasted till 1434. The Phamo Drukpa's family was closely connected with Sakya sects rival, Kargyupa sect. Lamenting over the weakened position of Tibet, Chang-chub Gyaltzen embarked on the task of fostering a feeling of national unity and revived the tradition and glories of the early kings¹⁰. Phamo Drukpa's rule was eventually ousted in 1434 by the Rimpung princes who had the backing of the Karmapa sect. The influence of the Karmapa heirarchs was also important to the success of the Tsang kings who ruled Tibet after the Rimpung family.

These historical developments bear testimony to the fact that it was impossible for any non-priest, no matter how powerful he might have been, to rule Tibet without some religious sanction and active support provided by one religious sect or the other.

Gelugpa sect is the last major religious sect formed in Tibetan Buddhism. Tsongkapa (1357-1419), the founder of Gelugpa sect, aimed to reform Buddhism in Tibet by stressing on the need to return to greater austerity and spirituality. This new sect gained popularity not only within the country but also within a short span of time commended the spritual allegiance of almost all the rival tribes of Mongolia. The success of the new monastic order created hostility. Gelugpa sect was harassed by the king of Tsang. The Gelugpa turned to the Mongol for help. In 1642, A Mongol prince, Gushi Khan, proceeded into Tibet where he defeated the king of Tsang and conferred on the head of Gelugpa sect, the Fifth Dalai Lama, the supreme authority over Tibet. Since then the ten successive Dalai Lamas ruled over Tibet.

The Dalai Lama has been beleived to be the reincarnation of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of compassion, who is regarded in Tibetan tradition as the founder and protector of Tibetan race. Although Gelugpa sect was not the first one to introduce the theory of reincarnation in Tibetan Buddhism, it proved to be of a decisive importance for the Tibetan polity as it legitimized the political succession since the seventeenth century. For over three hundred years, the successive Dalai Lamas have been the spritual and the

temporal rulers of Tibet He is recognised as such by other religious sects in Tibet. Thus the office of the Dalai Lama became the summit of the religio-political fabric of Tibetan system which brought into fusion the temporal and spiritual leadership and converted Tibet from a land torn by political and religious strife into a single nation under the central theocratic government¹¹.

Apart from the pure religious sanction, the Dalai Lama's indisputable authority rested on the military protection provided by Mongols and Chinese, while the pacifist nature of Buddhism killed the Tibetan martial spirit. The domestic political basis of the Dalai Lama's rule was provided by the large number of monks and monasteries. The spiritual and temporal ascendancy of the Dalai Lama also represents the culmination of the long process of rivalry and adjustment between the religious hierarchy and lay nobility¹².

(II)

Tibetan government established under the Dalai Lamas was described as Choe-si-nyiden. While in organizational sense it meant a dyarchy of clerical and lay elements, in ideological sense it meant a synthesis-harmonious blend of religion and politics¹³. The government was expected to work for the people's temporal happiness in this world and for spritual happiness in the world thereafter. Throughout the complex government structure, religious and secular affairs were intricately intertwined.

At the head of the structure was the Dalai Lama¹⁴. He was an absolute ruler with all authorities converging in his hand. During the time when a Dalai Lama had yet to be identified and if he was a minor, his power was excercised by a regent, normally a high Lama chosen by the National Assembly. As regent lacked the Dalai Lama's ultimate authority and prestige, no regent could be as active and innovative as a Dalai Lama and consequently the rule of the regents was sometime characterized by political stagnation and also by corruption.

The Chikyab Kenpo, Lord Chamberlain, served as the Dalai Lama's link with both the religious and the secular administrative staff. He was selected by the Dalai Lama himself. His direct access to the Dalai Lama made him an influential person.

The secular administration was headed by a Prime Minister and a cabinet. The thirteenth Dalai Lama appointed three Prime Ministers, two layman and a monk who acted jointly in deciding matters of state. The fourteenth Dalai Lama appointed two Prime Ministers during his rule in Tibet, one monk and one layman, who also acted jointly. The Prime Ministers, in case of Tibet did not perform usual functions associated with a Prime Minister. They acted as liaison between the cabinet and the Dalai Lamas, as well as to assume some functions that the Dalai Lama wanted to avoid, such as final action in criminal cases. All final authority remained in the hands of the Dalai Lama. The position of Prime Minister was therefore not as important as the title implies, although the Prime Minister enjoyed considerable personal influence and held second rank in the hierarchical structure of the government.

Most of the executive work in the secular field was handled by the Kashag (Cabinet). It was composed of four Kalons (Ministers), three of these Kalons were lay officials and one was high-ranking monk official. The Kalons were appointed by the Dalai Lama or the regent. They held third rank. The Kashag had power over the internal administration of the country in the matters relating to politics, revenue and justice. No Kalon held any specific portfolio and they used to make joint decisions.

In accordance with the dual function of the Dalai Lama's rule, the administrative structure of the government was divided into a religious and a secular segment. But these two segments were not exclusive as their functions overlapped with each other, especially the religious segment exercising power over the secular matters.

The religious administration was handled by the Tsyigtsang, the peak ecclesiastical secretariat, headed by four high monk officials who held the fourth rank. They handled the affairs of all monk officials and dealt with matters relating to monastic affairs. Their authority often extended into secular affairs in many crucial respect as well, such as adjudication of civil suits, their role as chairman of the National Assembly and so on.

The lay officials were derived from the aristocratic families, who were permitted to retain their estates in exchange for the obligation to provide at least one son per estate to serve as an official in the government. The candidates received practical training in the Tsikang, the office of Revenue and if found adequately prepared, the heads of the department recommended to the Kashag for appointment to official rank. From among them, the Cabinet selected its appointees to administrative positions in Central Government as well as in the province and district office. The ratio between the officials and people were very wide. The disproportion between the number of officials and the numbers of people whose affairs they were to manage, reflects the limited scope of governmental action. It indicates that social and economic affairs to a large extent were carried on outside the framework of the government and its officials.

The traditional structure also had the National Assembly which was regarded as representing the whole nation. The Assembly was composed of both lay and monk officials including abbots and representatives of the three great Gelugpa monasteries near Lhasa as well as representatives of every class and professions such as artists, craftsman, soldiers and tradesman- a total of about seven hundred people. It met only when called into sessions during times of crisis or to seek opinion before taking major decision by the government. Although it had no actual legislative function or control over the executive, its views were taken into account by the Dalai Lama and the Kashag while making policy decision.

(III)

Although the Dalai Lama had supreme authority in the country and the powers were centralized in the national government, Tibetan society in general was not

tightly controlled and regulated. Tibet had none of the complex organizations run by large bureaucracy, legal structures and above all state coercive power with which modern society functions. On the contrary, Tibet had small number of officials in proportion to the population and it was also known for the almost complete absence of any police force. The government was based on a voluntary acceptance of its authority which was inspired by the religious faith of Tibetans. Due to the limited nature of the government activities, indomitable spirits of the Tibetans and existence of unique socio-cultural traditions, one could trace certain democratic elements in the traditional Tibetan society.

One such element is noticeable in the Buddhist religion in general and the Tibetan monastic organization in particular. Buddhism, which pervade every aspect of Tibetan life, preaches equality of all human beings. Indian history shows that Buddhism condemned the caste system and gave hope to the people in the lower social ladder. Through the doctrine of Karma, each individual is made responsible for his or her present life and life hereafter by his or her positive or negative deeds. Tibet's monastic system provided unrestrained opportunities for social mobility¹⁵. Admission to monastic institution was open to all and all class distinction in Tibetan society was overcome within the organization. The monasteries offered equal opportunities to all to rise to any height through their own scholarship. Thus a son of humble family could reach highest religious and administrative office if he had required capabilities and wisdom. There is a popular Tibetan saying: "If the mother's son has the knowledge, the golden throne of Gaden (the highest position in the hierarchy of the Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism) has no ownership".

The monasteries were also known for democratic management of their internal affairs. In a sense, administration of a monastery could be compared to that of constitutional monarchy, the head of the monastery was usually an incarnated lama or else an abbot, and in most cases he was appointed by the Dalai Lama from a number of candidates selected by a committee of monks of that monastery. Important matters of the monastery were decided in a formal assembly which was usually held once a month and chaired by a senior monk or in a special sessions called by the abbot. In small monasteries, all the fully ordained monks participated in the assembly; in large monasteries, each unit send a representative to the assembly. Some monks were incharge of religious activities and some were of economic activities of the monastery. All of them under the direction of the abbot and supervised by the assembly. Thus, monasteries of all sects had autonomy in managing their internal affairs and most of them had tradition of democratic management¹⁶.

The Dalai Lama was found through a system of reincarnation that ensured that the rule of Tibet did not become hereditary. It had a great advantage over other available forms of succession- monarchical heredity or selection by aristocratic oligarchy. It is the monastic order which had the large degree of social mobility, that had the crucial role in selecting the Dalai Lama's incarnations. Most of the Dalai Lamas including the Thirteenth and the Fourteenth,

came from common peasant families in remote parts of Tibet. Once discovered, the Dalai Lamas had to undergo vigorous training and education to build up his charismatic qualities which needs to be proved and be recognised by his people¹⁷.

In theory, Tibet had a centralized system of government with concentration of all powers with the national government at Lhasa. But the effective central control over the whole of the country was problematic because of the great distances between different parts of the country and the difficulty of pre-modern communication system on horseback or runners over large stretches of land with scarce population. Therefore in practice evolved a limited government not only in terms of central control but also control by region or local governments over the people. The traditional society developed high degree of social cooperation among the people in the community. It also provided scope for the development of indigenous leadership and organization to manage the affairs at village, town and city level. Further, the people were economically self-sufficient. So they could enjoy a large measure of social and political autonomy. The people's participation in the governance was possible because even the regional and local government agencies had to depend on the cooperation of the people to carry on its activities.

Important issues were discussed in the community meetings and if necessary petitions were sent by the community to the regional or central governments through their headman. If the government officials commits excess of power, misuse of authority or persisted in harassing the people, the Tibetans were quite capable of protesting and resisting and even resort to complain against the erring officials to the government at Lhasa or appeal directly to the Dalai Lama¹⁸.

Democratic element is also reflected in the National Assembly which was regarded as representing the whole nation. Although its members were not elected through popular election, its members represented different occupations and classes. Its views were taken into account by the government while making major decisions.

Although, people voluntarily accepted the government authority, they had never acquiesced timidly to everything that was done by the government. The public opinion expected strict observance of customs and traditions; officials were expected not to transgress the bounds of their authority. As there was no newspapers nor broadcasting system nor other means of expressions, the people developed typical Tibetan ways to express their opinion through street songs and postures (yiggyur). These were the popular medium of expression of the public opinion. Through these medium of expression, people's grievances and protests became known not only in the whole community but also taken note of by the government authorities.

Traditional Tibetan society was, by no means, perfect and need for reforms were felt by some of the relatively young energetic officials. They realized the vast political changes outside Tibet and perceived the danger posed by

Tibet from China. These officials were of the opinion that unless they modernize the military and change socio-political system, it would be difficult for Tibet to face the challenge and safeguard its independence. The modernist movement was inspired and supported by both the Thirteenth and the Fourteenth Dalai Lamas. Under the guidance of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, the military modernization was planned and promoted with a clear grasp of the needs for training, equipment and a financial basis. English schools were opened in Gyantse and Lhasa. A small police force was formed. A few Tibetans were sent abroad for technical studies. Although the modernist movement was neither strong nor widespread, in due course of time it could have developed in Tibet the political, economic and military infrastructure of a reasonably modern state. However, direction of socio-political developments in Tibet was reversed as conservative officials as well as monastic segment out maneuvered the modernist group. They saw in the modernist movement a shift to secularism and diffusion of alien ideas which would harm Buddhism and disrupt the traditional power balance in Tibet¹⁹.

When the Fourteenth Dalai Lama assumed full authority of the government in November 1950, he did not take long to realise the need for reform and change in the society. He attempted to introduce far-reaching administrative and land reforms. He created a special reform committee and authorized it to hear and redress complaints by individuals against the district or local authorities. He approved the proposal for debt exemption submitted by the committee. A law was made against the demanding of free transport by officials and the rate of interest charged by money-lenders was limited. He was also thinking of introducing modernization in the field of education and communication. However, due to the determined Chinese opposition, who had already occupied the country, these reforms could not be implemented²⁰. The Chinese had no intention of allowing the Tibetan Government to usurp their self-styled role as saviours of the working class.

The above discussion shows that different means were used at different phases of history to legitimize the authorities in Tibet. Since the thirteenth century, religious belief played a major role in acquiring the legitimacy. Not only the cultural foundation of the Tibetan society was laid by the religion but it also brought into existence a unique political system in which religious and secular affairs were intricately intertwined. It was not a static system but rather it was gradually evolving according to the changing need of time. There were also forces within the society which felt the need of modernization and change in the existing system. If Tibet were left to itself, it would have evolved into a modern nation-state competent to play its role in the comity of nations.



FOOTNOTES

1. H.E. Richardson, "The Origin of the Tibetan Kingdom" in Bulletin of Tibetology. no. 1, 1989, p.5.
2. Dawa Norbu, "Changing Notions of Authority and Shifting Basis of Power and Their Combined Impact on Political Development in Tibet 600- 1950", unpublished paper prepared for the Ninth Wisconsin Conference on South Asia, November 7-9, 1980 held at Madison, pp. 7-22.
3. H.E. Richardson, Tibet and its History (Boston, 1984), p.29; Charles Bell, Tibet: Past and Present (Oxford, 1968), p.28. Chinese source confirm the great military strength and the aggressive military campaign of the Tibetans both against China and India. One Chinese author says that some time about 787 A.D. the Emperor of China made an alliance with the Caliph of Baghdad and some Indian Princes for security against the Tibetan. See R.C. Majumdar and A.D. Pusalkar, The History and Culture of the Indian People: Age of Imperial Kanauj (Bombay, 1955), p.445.
4. For detail see Sarat Chandra Das, The Religion and History of Tibet (New Delhi, 1988), pp. 33-34.
5. Richardson (1984) p.3; Helmut Haffmann, The Religion of Tibet (London, 1961), pp. 66-83.
6. Chos-byung means history of religion. The authors of Chos-byung and other Lama scholars had written the ancient Tibetan history in the light of Buddhism and in terms of Buddhist logic during the Buddhist renaissance. The myth of Choegyal is an intellectual legacy of this period. For detail see Dawa Norbu (1980), pp. 1-7.
7. Dawa Norbu, "Some Objective Conditions for Cultural Creativity in Medieval Tibet", The Tibet Journal, vol.x, no.4, Winter 1985, pp. 47-48.
8. Dawa Norbu (1980), pp. 22-27.
9. Cited in Dawa Norbu (1980), p. 36.
10. Tsepon W.D. Shakapa, "The rise of Changchub Gyaltzen and the Phagmo Drupa Period", Bulletin of Tibetology. no. 1, 1981, pp.23-30; Richardson (1984), p. 35.
11. The Karmapas were the first to use the Buddhist idea of reincarnation. For detail see Franz Michael, Rule by Incarnation (Colorado, 1982). See also Ram Rahul, The Government and Politics of Tibet (Delhi, (1969), pp. 5-21.
12. Dawa Norbu (1980), pp.47-50.
13. See Nirmal Chandra Sinha, Prolegomena to Lamaist Polity (Calcutta, 1969), pp. 5-21; See also Nirmal chandra Sinha "Chhos Sri Gnyi Lden", in Bulletin of Tibetology, vol.V, no.3, November 1968, pp. 13-20.
14. For detail of the Structure of the government see Franz Michael (1982), pp. 51-64.
15. Franz Michael (1982), pp. 116-119.
16. Franz Michael (1982), pp. 111-112.
17. Franz Michael (1982), pp. 48.
18. Franz Michael (1982), pp. 79-81.
19. Melvyn C. Golstein, A History of Modern Tibet, 1913-1951, (Berkeley, 1989), pp. 84-426; Michael Harris Goodman, The Last Dalai Lama A Biography (Boston, 1987), pp. 193-195.
20. Dalai Lama, Freedom in Exile (Delhi, 1990), pp. 85-85.

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Buddhist Hymnal by Bhajagovinda Ghosh

प्रज्ञापारमितास्तवः

ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་པ་རོལ་ཏུ་སྤྱིན་མའི་བསྟོན་པ།

ॐ नमो भगवत्यै आर्यप्रज्ञापारमितायै

བཙེམ་ལྡན་འདས་མ་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་པ་རོལ་ཏུ་སྤྱིན་པ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚུལ་ལོ།

Prayer to the Perfection of Wisdom

निर्विकल्पे नमस्तुभ्यं प्रज्ञापारमितेअमिते ।
या त्वं सर्वानवघातिं निखद्यैर्निरीक्ष्यते ॥ १ ॥

གང་མྱོད་སྐུ་ཀུན་ཉེས་མེད་ལ།
ཉེས་མེད་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་གཟིགས་མཛད་པ།
དཔག་མེད་ཤེས་རབ་པ་རོལ་སྤྱིན།
རྣམ་པར་མེདྲིག་ཕྱག་འཚུལ་འདུད། १

Homage to Thee,perfect wisdom,
Boundless and transcending thought !
All Thy limbs are without blemish,
Faultless those who Thee discern. 1

आकाशमिव निर्लेपां निष्प्रपचश्च निरक्षराम् ।
यस्त्वां पश्यति भावेन स पश्यति तथागतम् ॥ २ ॥

རྣམ་མཁེའ་བཞིན་དུ་གོས་མེད་ཅིང་།
སྤྱོས་པ་མེད་ཅིང་ཡི་གེ་མེད།
བསམ་ཡས་ཁྱོད་མཐོང་གང་ཡིན་པ།
དེས་ནི་དེ་བཞིན་གསེགས་པ་མཐོང་།། ༡

Spotless, unobstructed, silent,
Like the vast expanse of space !
who in truth does really see Thee
The Tathagata perceives. 2

तव चार्यगुणघाया बुद्धस्य च जगद्गुरोः ।
न पश्यन्त्यन्तरं सन्तश्चन्द्रचन्द्रिकयोधि ॥ ३ ॥

འཕགས་མ་ཡོན་ཏན་ལྷུག་ཁྱོད་དང་།
སངས་རྒྱས་འགྲོ་བའི་ལྷ་མ་རྣམས།
ཁྱད་པར་ཡོད་པར་མ་འཁྲུམས་ཏེ།
ལྷ་བ་དང་ནི་ལྷ་འོད་བཞིན།། ༢

As the moonlight does not differ
From the moon, so also Thou
who abound'st in holy virtues,
And the teacher of the world. 3

कृपात्मकाः प्रपद्य त्वां बुद्धधर्मपुरःसराम् ।
सुखेनायान्ति माहात्म्यमतुलं भक्तिवत्सले ॥ ४ ॥

गुण'य'बुद्ध'धर्म'पुरः'सराम् ।
सुखे'नायान्ति' माहा'त्म्य'मतुलं ।
भक्ति'वत्सले ॥ ४ ॥

Those, all pity, who came to Thee
Buddhadharmas heralding,
They will win with ease, O Gracious !
Majesty beyond compare. 4

सकृदप्याशये शुद्धे यस्तां विधिवदीक्षते ।
तेनापि नियतं सिद्धिः प्राप्यतेअमीधदशनि ॥ ५ ॥

सकृ'दप्याशये' शुद्धे' यस्तां' विधि'वदीक्षते ।
तेना'पि' नियतं' सिद्धिः' प्राप्य'तेअमीध'दशनि ॥ ५ ॥

Pure in heart, when once they duly
Look upon Thee, surely then
Their complete success is certain
O, Thou fruitful to behold. 5

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सर्वेषामपि वीराणां परार्थे नियतात्मनाम् ।
पोषिका जनयित्री च माता त्वमसि वत्सला ॥ ६ ॥

གཞན་དོན་མངོན་དགའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཅན།
དཔའ་བོ་དག་ནི་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི།
གསོ་མཛད་བསྐྱེད་པར་མཛད་པ་སྟེ།
ཁྱོད་ནི་བྱམས་མའི་ཡུམ་ལགས་སོ།། ༤

To all heroes who of others
Have the welfare close at heart
Than a mother, who doesn't nourish,
Givest birth, and givest love. 6

यद् बुद्धा लोकगुरवः पुत्रास्तव कृपालवः ।
तेन त्वमसि कल्याणि सर्वसत्वपितामही ॥ ७ ॥

གང་སྐྱད་སངས་རྒྱལ་འཇིག་རྟེན་གཙོ།
ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཅན་རྣམས་ཁྱོད་ཀྱི་སྲས།
དེ་ཡི་སྐྱད་དུ་དགེ་མ་ཁྱོད།
སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་ཀྱི་སྤྱི་མོ་ལགས།། ༧

Teachers of the world, the Buddhas;
Are Thine own compassionate sons;
Then art thou, O Blessed Lady,
Grandma thus of beings all. 7

सर्वपारमिताभिस्त्वं निर्मलाभिरनिन्दिते ।
चन्द्रलेखेव ताराभिरनुयातासि सर्वदा ॥ ८ ॥

ཕ་རོལ་ཕྱིན་པ་ཐི་མེད་པ།
གུན་གྱིས་མ་སྐྱད་པ་ཁྱོད་གྱི།
དུས་གུན་རྗེས་སུ་འབྲང་ལགས་པ།
ཚུ་སྐར་རྣམས་གྱིས་ལྷ་རིས་བཞིན།། ८

All th' immaculate perfections
At all times encircle Thee,
As the stars surround the crecent,
O Thou blameless holy one ! 8

विनेयं जनमासाड्य तत्र तत्र तथागतैः ।
बहुरूपा त्वमेवैका नानानामभिरीडसे ॥ ९ ॥

གདུལ་བྱའི་འགྲོ་བམ་བརྟེན་ནས།
དེ་དང་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་རྣམས་གྱིས།
ཁྱོད་ཉིད་གཅིག་ཕུ་ཚུ་ལ་མང་དུ།
སྣ་ཚོགས་མཚན་གྱིས་བཤུགས་པ་མཛད།། ९

Those in need of light considering,
The Tathagatas extol
Thee, the Single One, as many,
Multiformed and many-named. 9

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प्रभां प्राप्येव दीप्तांशोरवश्यायोदबिन्दवः ।
त्वां प्राप्य प्रलयं यान्ति दोषावादाश्च वादिनाम् ॥ १० ॥

ཟེལ་པའི་ཚུ་ཡི་ཐིགས་པ་རྣམས།
ཉི་མའི་འོད་དང་མཇལ་བ་བཞིན།
ཀོལ་བ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་རྩོད་དང་སློན།
ཁྱོད་དང་མཇལ་ན་འཇིག་པར་འགྱུར།། १०

As the drops of dew in contact
With the sun's rays disappear,
So all theorizings vanish,
Once one has obtained Thee. 10

त्वमेव त्वासजननी बालानां भीमदर्शना ।
आशवासजननी चासि विदुषां सौम्यदर्शना ॥ ११ ॥

ཁྱོད་ཉིད་བྱེས་པ་རྣམས་ལ་ཉེ།
སྐྱག་བྱེད་མཐོང་ན་འཇིགས་པ་དང་།
མཁས་པ་རྣམས་ལ་དབྱུགས་འབྱེན་པ།
སླེད་པས་མཐོང་ན་ཞི་བ་ལགས།། ११

When as fearful Thou appearst
Thou endanger'st fear in fools;
When benignly Thou appearst
Comes assurance to the wise 11

यस्य त्वय्यभिष्वं स्तन्नाथस्य न विद्यते ।
तस्यम्ब कथमन्यत्र रागद्वेषौ भविष्यतः ॥ १२ ॥

མྱོད་མགོན་གང་ལ་མྱོད་ལ་ཡང་།
མངོན་པར་ཆགས་པ་མངའ་མིན་ན།
དེ་ལ་ཡུམ་གཅིག་ཇི་ལྟར་ན།
གཞན་ལ་འདོད་ཆགས་ཞེ་སྤང་འབྱུང་།། १२

How will one who no affection
Has for Thee, though yet you saved him,
Have, O mother, greed and loathing
For the many other things? 12

नागच्छसि कुलशिचच्चं न च क्वचन गच्छसि ।
स्थानेष्वपि च सर्वेषु विद्वभिर्नोपलभ्यसे ॥ १३ ॥

མྱོད་ནི་གང་ནས་མ་བྱོན་ཞིང་།
གང་དུ་ཡང་ནི་མི་གཤེགས་པས།
གནས་ནི་ཐམས་ཅད་དག་དུ་ཡང་།
མཁས་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་དམིགས་མ་ལགས།། १३

Not from anywhere Thau comest,
And to anywhere dost Thou go;
In no dwelling place have sages
Ever apprehended Thee. 13

ये त्वामेवं न पश्यन्ति प्रपश्यन्ते च भावतः ।
प्रपद्य च विमुच्यन्ते तदिदं महद्भूतम् ॥ १४ ॥

གང་ཚྲིད་དེ་ལྟར་མ་འཁྲུམས་ནས།
བསམ་པ་ཡིས་ནི་བསྐྱབས་པ་དང་།
བསྐྱབས་པ་ལས་ནི་རྣམ་གྲོལ་བ།
དེ་འདིར་སྐད་བྱང་ཆེན་ལོ་ལགས།། १८

Not to see Thee in this manner
is to have attained to Thee,
Gaining thus the final freedom -
O how wonderful is this. 14

त्वामेव बध्यते पश्यन्नपश्यन्नपि बध्यते ।
त्वामेव मुच्यते पश्यन्नपश्यन्नपि मुच्यते ॥ १५ ॥

ཚྲིད་ནིད་མཐོང་ན་འཆིང་འགྱུར་ཞིང་།
མ་མཐོང་ན་ཡང་འཆིང་བར་འགྱུར།
ཚྲིད་ནིད་མཐོང་ན་གྲོལ་འགྱུར་ཞིང་།
མ་མཐོང་ན་ཡང་གྲོལ་བར་འགྱུར།། १५

One indeed is bound who sees Thee;
One who sees not is bound too,
One again is freed who sees Thee;
One who sees not freed is too. 15

अहो विस्मयनीयासि गम्भीरासि यशस्विनी ।
सुदुर्बोधासि मायेव दृश्यसे न च दृश्यसे ॥ १६ ॥

ཨེ་མ་ཡ་མཚན་ཆེར་འོང་མ།

གཤགས་ལྷམ་མ་ཁྱོད་བཟང་མོ་ལགས།

ཤིན་ཏུ་རྟོགས་དཀའ་སྐྱུ་མ་བཞིན།

སྤང་ཞིང་མི་སྤང་བ་ཡང་ལགས།། १६

Wonderful, Profound, Illustrious,
Hard Thau art to recognise,
Like a mock show Thou art seen, and
Yet Thou art not seen at all. 16

बुद्धैः प्रत्येकबुद्धैश्च श्रावकैश्च निषेविता ।
मार्गस्त्वमेको मोक्षस्य नास्त्यन्य इति निश्चयः ॥ १७ ॥

སངས་རྒྱལ་པ་པ་སངས་རྒྱལ་རྣམས་དང་།

ཉན་མོས་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ངེས་བཞེན་མ།

ཁྱོད་ནི་གཅིག་ཕུ་ཐར་པའི་ལམ།

དེ་ལྟར་གཞན་དག་མེད་པར་ངེས།། १७

By all Buddhas, Single Buddhas,
By Disciple courted, too,
Thou the one path to salvation,
There's no other verily. 17

व्यवहारं पुरस्कृत्य प्रज्ञप्त्यर्थं शरीरिणाम् ।
कृपया लोकनाथैस्त्वमुच्यसे च न चोच्यसे ॥ १८ ॥

ལུས་ཅན་རྣམས་ལ་ཕན་དོན་དུ།
ཐ་སྐྱོད་མདུན་དུ་མངོད་ནས་ཀྱི།
བརྗེ་བས་འཇིག་རྟེན་མགོན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས།
ཁྱོད་བསྐྱོན་མ་བསྐྱོན་པར་ཡང་གདེ། १८

Saviours of the world, from pity,
So that men might understand,
Speak of Thee, observing custom,
Yet of Thee they do not speak. 18

शक्तः कस्त्वामिह स्तोतुं निर्निमित्तां निरञ्जनाम् ।
सर्ववाग्विषयातीतां या त्वं क्वचिदनिःश्रिता ॥ १९ ॥

འདིར་ཁྱོད་བསྐྱོད་པར་སྐུས་རྗེ་ཐོགས།
མཚན་མ་མེད་ཅིང་གོས་པ་མེད།
ངག་གི་ཡུལ་ཀུན་ལས་འདས་མ།
གང་ཁྱོད་འགར་ཡང་རྟེན་མི་མངེ། १९

Who is able here to praise Thee,
Lacking signs and featureless?
Thou the range of speech transcending,
Not supported anywhere. 19

सत्येवमपि संवृत्या वाक्पथैर्वयमीदृशैः ।
त्वामस्तुत्यामपि स्तुत्वा तुषुदन्तः सुनिर्वृताः ॥ २० ॥

དེ་ལྟར་གང་ཡང་ལའ་གུན་རྫོབ་ཏུ།
བདག་ཅག་ངག་ལམ་འདི་འདྲ་བས།
ལྷོད་ནི་བསྟོན་བྱར་མི་གང་འཁའ་།
བསྟོག་པས་ཤིན་ཏུ་མྱ་ངན་འདས།། ༢༠

In such workds of current language
Constantly we laud Thee, whom,
None of our acclaim concrneth;
So we reach beatitude. 20

प्रज्ञापारमितां स्तुत्वा यन्मयोपचितं शुभम् ।
तेनास्त्वाशु जगत् कृत्स्नं प्रज्ञापारपरायणम् ॥ २१ ॥

ཤེས་རབ་མ་ཐོལ་ཕྱིན་བསྟོན་ལས།
བདག་གིས་དགེ་བ་གང་བསགས་པ།
དེ་ཡིས་འཇིག་རྟེན་མ་ལུས་པ།
ཤེས་རབ་མ་ཐོལ་ཕྱིན་གཞིལ་ཤོག།། ༢༡

By my praise of Perfect Wisdom
All the merit I may rere,
Let that make the world devoted
To this wisdom without peer. 21

ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་མ་ཐོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་མའི་བསྟོན་པ་སྟོབ་
དཔོན་འཕགས་པ་སྐྱ་སྐྱབ་ཀྱིས་མཇུག་པ་རྫོགས་སོ།།
ཁ་ཆེའི་པ་ཆེ་ཏུ་ཐིག་ལེ་བུམ་པ་དང་། ལེ་ཚུ་བ་སྟོ་ལྡན་
ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱར་བའོ།།

NOTE:

"The prayer to the Perfection of Wisdom" / Prajnaparamitastavah occurs in Pancavimsati-sahasrika Prajnaparamita composed by Acarya Nagarjuna in the 1st half of the 2nd century A.D. As evident from the statement in the end of salutation - Slob-dpon Phags-Pa Klu-sgrub kyis mdzad-pa rdzogs-so / Acarya Nagarjuna viracitah Samaptah (ed. Nalinaksha Dutt, Calcutta, Oriental Series, No. 8, Luzak & Co. London, 1934).

The Tibetan version of the salutation occurs in Tanjur, Bstod-Tshogs/Stava samgrahah (Vol. Ka, F. 76 (a) - (b). Another Tibetan version also occurs in Astasahasrika. Both the Tibetan versions tally with that of Sanskrit.

According to Dr. N. Dutt, the form of salutation 'Omn Namō Bhagvatyai Arya Prajnaparamitayai' is given only in Pancavimsatika, in all other manuscripts begins with 'Omn Namō Maitreyanathaya'.

English translation of the prayer by Edward Conze in *Buddhist scriptures*, pp; 168-171 (Penguin Classics / Penguin Books, England, 2nd Reprint 1966, 1st Pub. 1959, end Reprint 1960).

This is not the place to discuss the sublime metaphysical aspects of Prajnaparamita / Transcendental wisdom. We quote hereunder a short passage from the work of Edward Conze *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies*. Bruno Cassirer, Oxford, 1967, pp. 64. which, I think, will speak out the basic conception of perfection of wisdom. "The unity of compassion and wisdom is acted out by the six perfections, or Paramita, 'methods by which we can go to the Beyond'. A person turns into a Bodhisatva when he first resolves to win full enlightenment for the benefit of all beings. Thereafter, until Buddhahood, he passes many aeons in the practise of the Paramitas. So important is this concept that the Mahayana often refers to itself as the 'Vehicle of the Paramitas'. The six are: the perfections of giving, morality, patience, vigour, concentration, and wisdom."



TEACHINGS OF THE COLLECTED
WORKS OF HIS HOLINESS
THE Vth DALAI LAMA, NGAG-
DBANG BLO-BZANG RGYA-
MTSHO, 1617 - 1682 A.D.

- Tenzin Samphel -

The entire gamut of the collected works of His Holiness the Vth Dalai Lama are contained in 25 Volumes. The catalogue of the preceding 21 volumes (esoteric teachings) was already published in the Bulletin of Tibetology, New Series 1994 No. 2 in an article entitled 'Life of His Holiness the Vth Dalai Lama'. The catalogue of the concluding 4 volumes (Vol. Ka, Kha, Ga, Nga, No. 22, 23, 24, 25) of esoteric teachings of the collected works of Vth Dalai Lama, Ngag - Dbag Blo - Bzang Rgya - Mtsho is as follows:

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NGAG DBANG BLO BZANG RGYA MTSO (1617 -1682 A. D.)**

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- VOL.GA(23) - KHRO-BO ROL-PA'I ZIN-BRIS RIGS-'DZIN DGONGS-RGYAN BZHUGS-SO.
- VOL.GA(24) - GTER-KHA 'OG-MA'I GSANG-'DUS GZHUNG DANG LE'U BRGYAD-PA BSDEBS-PA'I LAS-BYANG RTSA-GSUM DGYES-PA'I ROL-GAR BZHUGS-SO.
- VOL.GA(25) - DPAL-KUN-TU BZANG-PO'I 'CHAMS-KYI BRJED-BYANG LHA'I ROL-GAR BZHUGS-SO.
- VOL.GA(26) - RJE-BTSUN BSAM-GTAN GLING-PA'I A-TI'I CHOS-SKOR GYI DKAR-CHAG THEG-MCHOG RIN-CHEN DO-SHAL ZHES-BYA-BA BZHUGS-SO.
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- VOL.NGA(2) - BLA—MA KAR-MA GU-RU'I BRGYUD-'DEBS BZHUGS.
- VOL.NGA(3) - BLA-MA KAR-MA GU-RU'I GYER-SGOM 'PHRIN LAS GZI-'OD STONG-'BAR BZHUGS-SO.

- VOL.NGA(4) - BLA-MA KAR-MA GU-RU'I 'PHRIN LAS DRAG PO'I SROG-
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- VOL.NGA(5) - BLA-MA KAR-MA GU-RU'I BSNYEN-YIG SBAR-BCANGS-MA
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- VOL.NGA(6) - KAR-MA GU-RU YANG-GSANG DRAG-PO DANG 'BREL-BA'I
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- VOL.NGA(7) - BLA-MA KAR-MA GU-RU'I GTOR-NAG-GI LAS-MTHA' GNAM-
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- VOL.NGA(9) - PHYIR-BZLOG 'KHOR-LO 'BAR-BA BZHUGS-SO.
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- VOL.NGA(12) - GYU-THOG SNYING-THIG-GI LAS-BYANG DPAG-BSAM
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- VOL.NGA(13) - THUG-CHOG DBANG-DRAG ROL-PA'I DGA'-STON BZHUGS.
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- VOL.NGA(16) - LHA-BRAG GTER-BYON NANG-SGRUB LCAGS-KYI SDONG-
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- VOL.NGA(17) - BYANG-GTER LCAGS-SDONG-MA'I DBANG-CHOG-GI LHAN-
THABS 'CHI-MED BDUD-RTSI'I BUM-BZANG ZHES-BYA-BA
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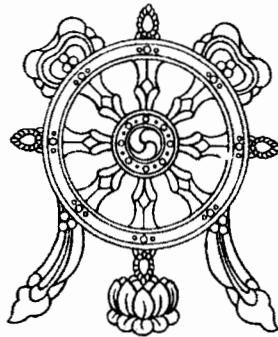
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- VOL.NGA(18) - KHRA-BRAG GTER-BYON-MA'I DREGS-'DUL BSNYEN-THABS
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- VOL.NGA(19) - RDO-RJE GTUM-PO'I LAS-BYANG RGYUN-;KHYER MTHONG-
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- VOL.NGA(25) - MKHA'-'GRO BSUN-BZLOG-GI BCA'-GSHOM CI-'DOD RTSE-DGA'
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- VOL.NGA(26) - BSUN-BZLOG-GI CHOG-SGRIGS 'CHI-BDAG GYUL-LAS
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- VOL.NGA(27) - PHYI-NAS MKHA'-'GRO BSUN-MA'I ZHU-BA BZHUGS.
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- VOL.NGA(30) - BRTAN-BZHUGS-KYI CHOG-SGRIGS RAB-BRTAN RDO-RJE'I
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- VOL.NGA(31) - RIGS-'DZIN SROG-SGRUB-KYI YANG-ZAB A-TI HR'I-
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- VOL.NGA(34) - TSHANGS-SRAS BZHAD-PA'I RDO-RJE'I GSUNG-'BUM
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- VOL.NGA(43) - GNOD-SBYIN YA-BA SKYA-BDUN-GYI MDOS-CHOG
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- VOL.NGA(45) - BOD-SKYONG BSTAN-MA BCU-GNYIS-KYI MDOS-KYI
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- VOL.NGA(46) - DRANG-SRONG KHYAB-'JUG RA'-H'U-LA'I LAS-BYANG
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- VOL.NGA(47) - KHYAB-'JUG RTEN-MDOS-KYI 'PHRIN-LAS DRANG-SRONG
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- VOL.NGA(49) - DRANG-SRONG LO-KA-TRI PA-LA'I SRUNG-BZLOG
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- VOL.NGA(51) - LO-KA-TRI'I GTANG-RAG BZHUGS.
- VOL.NGA(52) - SNGAGS-RGOD LO-KA-TRI PA-LA'I BZLOG-PA DANG
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- VOL.NGA(53) - GNYAN-CHEN THANG-LHA'I 'PHRIN-LAS BDUD-RTSI'I
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- VOL.NGA(54) - STAG-GZHON RGYAL-CHEN SDE-BZHI BKA'-SRUNG
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RDOR-LEGS ZHING-SKYONG MTHU-CHEN SDE-BZHI
PHUR-SRUNG RNAMS-KYI GSOL-MCHOD GZHI-BDAG
GTOR-MA DANG BCAS-PA BZHUGS-SO.
- VOL.NGA(55) - NAD-BDAG STOBS-'JOMS-KYI CHOG-SGRIGS MI-MTHUN
SMAG-RUM SEL-BA'I BRGYA-PHRAG NYI-DNGOS BZHUGS.



NOTES AND TOPICS

The notes and topics section of the Bulletin provides a forum for the publication of short articles, reports, and reviews on a wide range of subjects related to Tibetan studies. The section is organized into several categories, including:

- **Notes:** Short, concise articles on specific topics.
- **Topics:** Longer, more detailed articles on broader subjects.
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A Brief Account of the Life of mNga' -bDag Sems-dPa' -Chen-Po (1591 - 1656 A.D.)

- Dr. Rigzin Ngodub Dokham -

mNga' -bDag Sems-dPa' Chen-Po was born in the Iron-Female Hare year of the tenth sexantry (Rab-byung) corresponding to 1591 A.D. at Pho-drang Sags-Khri to a pious couple named Chogyal bKra-Shis Khri-bTsen and bSod Nams sGrol Ma. The father Chogyal bKra Shis was a descendant of the great Tibetan king Khri-Srong ldeu-bTsan. One of the successors of this king known as gLang-darma had two wives. A son was born to the younger queen who was named mNga' -bDag Hod-Srung. The elder queen who did not beget any issue adopted the son of a destitute couple who eked out their living by begging. She took this recourse in order to thwart the young prince from becoming heir to the throne. The adopted boy was named mNag'-bDag Yum-bsTen. It is well known in history that gLang-darma ascended the throne after assassinating king Khri Ral-Pa Chen¹ and thereby became the most infamous apostate ruler. In the wake of his ignominious death at the hands of a priest Lha-lung dPal-gyi rDo-rJe², the two princes fought as adversaries for a considerable period of time, each one contending his claim to the throne. This internecine struggle resulted in defeat of the younger prince who was the rightful heir by virtue of his royal pedigree. Thus Hod-Srung and his son and successor dPal-Khor were vanquished. Those who belonged to dPal Khor's lineage went towards the upper part of Tibet like Mang-Yul, sPu-Rang, Las-sTed etc., and ruled these regions. Some generations of this family also settled down in the country called Guge. One of the kings of Guge named bKra-Shis Khri-bTsen and his wife Lha-gCig bSod-Nams sGrol-Ma were destined to become the parents of the Bodhisattva mNga'-Gdag Sems-dPa Chenpo according to the prophecy of the saint teacher Chos-rGyal sTag -Sham-Chen. Accordingly, on the fifth day of the fourth month (Hor-Zla bZhi-pa) of the Iron female-hare year (lCags-Mo-Yos), mNga' -bDag Sems-dPa Chen-Po announced his advent on earth.

The new-born became the darling of all the courtiers and the cynosure of all eyes. On attaining the age of five, he manifested miracles which inspired awe and wonder amongst those who had the opportunity to experience them. For

1 Khri-Ral-Pa-Chen, The 41st King was the third and youngest son of Sed-Na-Legs-Zin. He was assassinated around c. 902 A.D.

2. This even took place in the year 906 A.D. according to the Tibetan Annals.

instance, many people perceived the precocious child sitting upright in a meditative posture while his mother, the Queen performed her daily ritual prayers. The prince was later brought to the presence of the preceptor Chos-rGyal sTag-Shams-Chen who performed the tonsure ceremony as ordained by tradition. He visited central Tibet during his twenty first year where he received initiations, empowerments and instructions pertaining to various tantric disciplines from a host of erudite Masters of his time as well as from his own preceptor.

One day while engrossed in penance in an empty quarter in the vicinity of his palace Pho-drang Sag-Khri, he attained Transcendental Wisdom of the Infinite Void. Following this sublimating attainment, the prince sought the permission of his father and set out in quest of teachers and holy grounds for more sustained practices. For fifteen long years, he performed the most arduous austerities, meditating in retreats and uninhabitable fearsome burial grounds, subsisting on air and elixirs extracted from elements of nature.

Commensurate with his high attainments and spiritual eminence, Chos-rGyal sTag-Shams-Chen recognised and consecrated him as his successor, eulogising him as a second Mila-res-pa. Thus, conferring fame and honour to his well deserving disciple, Chos-rGyal sTag-Shams-Chen also bequeathed to him all his personal belongings, the crux of which was the sacrosanct Vase of gTer-Bhum³. It might be germane to quote at this juncture, an extract from the prophecy contained in the apocalyptic work of Guru Padmasambhava which was discovered from its hidden sanctuary by the gTer-rTon Ratna gLing-Pa⁴:

"Among my four reincarnations who will be manifested in the hidden land BasYul 'Bras-Mo-lJongs, one endowed with the long tresses of hair will appear from the western gate of the land".

True to this prophetic declaration, the chosen teacher arrived at Yuksam in Western Sikkim on the 3rd day of the 8th month of the water-male-horse year (Chu Pho-rTa) of the 11th sexanry corresponding to the year 1642 A.D. Here he conferred with his son who had accompanied him, regarding the founding of a monastery. In the 11th month of the same year on the 3rd day, the construction work of the monastic complex named as Lha-Khang dMar-Po, the first monastery of Sikkim was commenced. In due course of time, the work was completed along with the interior and exterior ornamentations. The images of Buddha corresponding to His body, mind and speech were too installed and consecrated within its sanctum.

According to the prophecy of Guru Padmasambhava discovered by Rinchen-gLing-Pa⁵, "One among the four yogins -rNal-'byor mChed bZhi will be a veritable lion among men, who by dint of his chivalry and sagacity will rule over the

3. This Vase is today enshrined at Brag-dKar bKara Shis sDings (Dagkar Tashiding) in West Sikkim and since then, it is the fulcrum of an annual celebration held on the fiteenth day of the first month. For details please refer B.T. - Vol. 3-92

4. nGo-mTshar-gTer-mZod of bLama Jigs-Med-dPao. Fols.

5. Ibid

sacred land". In keeping with this prediction, a resident of sGang-Tog (present day Gangtok) named Zhal-nGo A-Phag rDo-rJe was presented the seven objects of temporal power and the eight auspicious objects emblematic of prosperity, and thus blessed by the teacher to rule over the land. The king was also given a new name and hailed as Chos-rGyal Phun-tsogs-rNam-rGyal⁶. The Teacher further predicted that eighteen generations of his successors will rule the land. Thus, the coronation (gSer-Khri-mNga'-gSol) was performed and a dynasty established.

The royal preceptor performed the first Mani Dhung-sGrub, the accomplishment of one hundred million recitation of the Avalokitesvara Mantra⁷ at Lha-Khang dMar-Po under the benevolent patronage of the King. This occasion was rendered more potent and significant by the consecration of the holy Vase which is known as Bhum-sGrub⁸. The second Mani Dhung-sGrub was performed at Rinchen-sPung. Likewise it was at Karma-'Zom in sBar-sPong that this was accomplished for the third time. At the dGe-Legs-dGon in bKra-Shis-sDings, the teacher undertook the fourth and fifth Mani Dhung-sGrub. As a result of such repeated and consistent observance of the million-fold recitation and consecration of the Vase which became an annual feature among the devout Buddhists, many miraculous and auspicious signs and symbols became visible as though to endorse such successful accomplishments.

Eight years after his first advent, the Teacher founded another monastery near bKra-Shis-sDings and gave it the name Zil-gNon dGon-Po. Three years later, he once again conferred with his son and established a monastery called Byams-Pa-Lha-Khang within the portals of bKra-Shis-sDings. This monasatery was aptly named after the principal deity Maitreya Buddha to whom it was dedicated. After completing the task of raising this chapel, he returned to Tibet for a brief period where he spent three years. Thereafter, he visited the kingdom of Nepal and performed austerities pertaining to Vajrakila in the sacred rock cavern Yang-Le-Shod where Guru Padmasambhava too had meditated. He was blessed with a vision of Lord Vajrakila and attained a high and sublime state of bliss. The monarch of Nepal became his ardent devotee and accepting him as his royal preceptor, invested him with religious authority.

Once again, the teacher came back to 'Bras-lJongs enroute the town of Ellam in Nepal. Arriving at bKra-Shis-sDings, he spent a decade and half propagating the rNying-Ma-Pa doctrines. The renaissance ushered in by the teacher during these fifteen memorable years was like the glorious sun-rise, brilliant and all-encompassing.

As though guided by a presentiment that the end was drawing nearer, the Teacher one day addressed his disciples who were preparing for the sacra-

6. The Teacher mNga'-bDag-Sems-Pa Chenpo-Phun-Tsogs Rig-'Zin conferred his own title Phun-Tsogs to the King as a sobriquet that signifies a round accomplishment and prosperity

7. This is regarded as the second important work undertaken by the Teacher for the benefit of all sentient beings as well as the holy land of 'Bars-lJongs.

8. See footnote 3

mental observance of the holy tenth day⁹ in this manner-

“The Celestial Realms of Mighty Padma Hod,
The sacred Feet of Rig-Zin-Padma, His Presence Sublime;
Thither do I hasten verily as the arrow,
Sped from the bow held in titanic hands...”

While the Teacher uttered these parting words in the course of his last sermon, the disciples led by his own son Phun-Tshogs-Tshering-mNga-bDang sTen-Zin bade the Master to continue to live with them in the flesh as ever since his departure would virtually turn them all into destitutes. The Teacher, moved by their impassioned importunity replied that he had already extended his life on earth by five years purely for the sake of ‘Bras-Mo-lJongs. Now that he had accomplished his terrestrial mission, he was spreading his wings for the final flight into the Ultimate destination. “Yet, I will live amidst you for five more days since you have prayed that I should prolong my life”.

Having designated his son as his spiritual successor, the Teacher attained the Immaculate Sate of Dharmakaya on the fifteenth day. Nature paid her tribute to this great Master by revealing a cloudless sky on the day of cremation. Even as the flames licked the sacred body transmuting it into the elements, many devout ones observed the Master seated in the Lotus posture, levitating towards the heavens, while some others clearly perceived a stupa radiating great brilliance from its spire, heading towards the sky.

Thus, on attaining the age of sixty five, this great Teacher passed away from the land of mortals at bKra-Shis-sDings. Following this, his son and successor Phun-Tshogs and nephew Sems-dPah-Rinchen-dGon along with a host of learned disciples continued to disseminate the tradition founded and taught by the Master in a consistent and perennial stream. The tradition known as Byang-gTer or simply the tradition of mNga-bDag lives and still reverberates in the hallowed grounds of bKra-Shis-sDings, rNam-rTse, Zil-gNon, etc. The relics of the Master are enshrined in the monastery of bKra-Shis-sdings which is the premier monastery following the tradition of mNga-bDag -Sems-dPa'-Chenpo.

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6. sBas-Yul 'Bras-Mo-lJongs Kyi gNas-'Yig Phen-Yon Dhang bChas-Pa-nGo mChar-gTer-rDzod of bLama 'Jigs-Med-dPao.

9. The tenth day of every month is observed by all ardent Buddhists as the sacrosanct day when Guru Padmasambhava appears to bless his devotees.

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2. Prajna, Lexicon/Dictionary of Sanskrit-Tibetan Thesaurus-cum-grammar, 1961	150.00
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