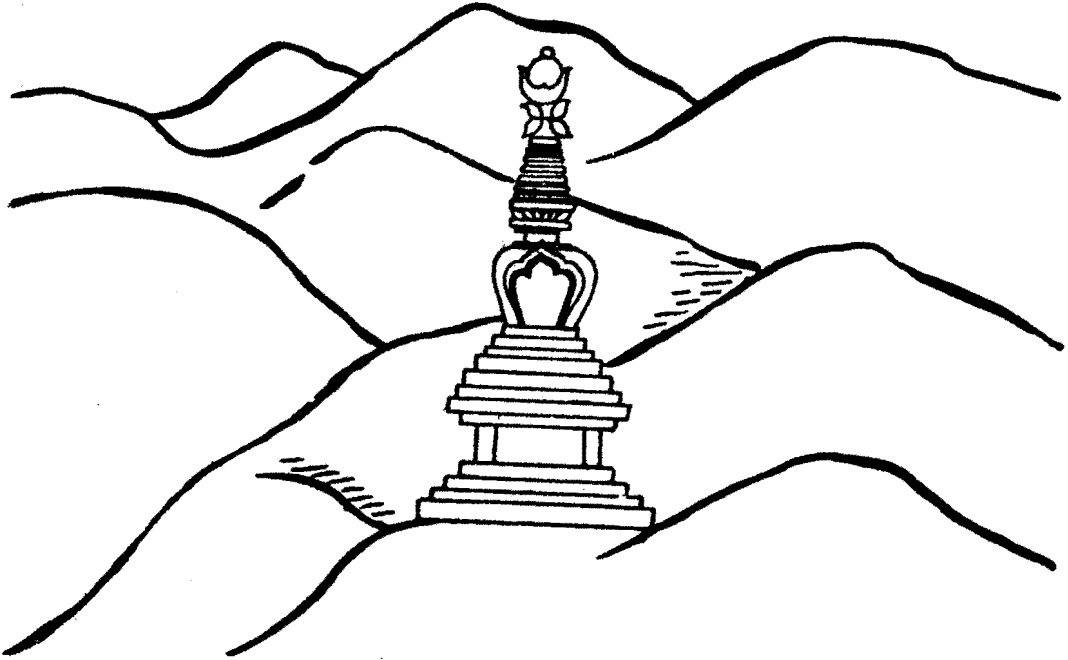


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**SIKKIM RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TIBETOLOGY**

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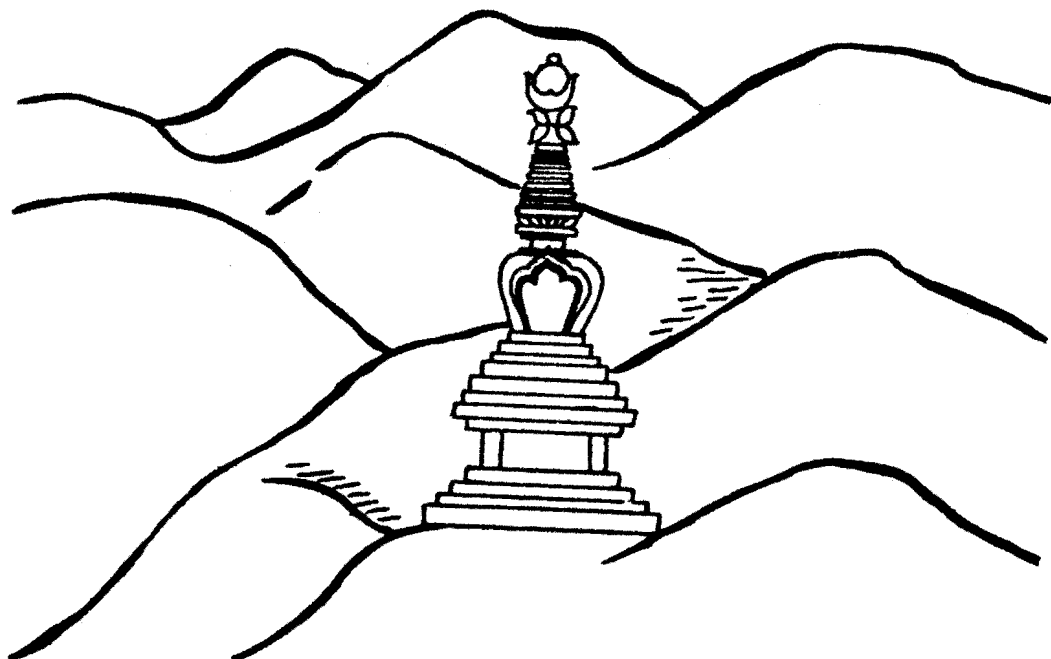
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## ASOKA'S DHAMMA

- *Nirmal C. Sinha*

**A**soka's place is second in the history of Dhamma, second only to the founder, Gautama Siddhartha the Buddha. Both Theravada (Southern Buddhist) and Mahayana (Northern Buddhist) traditions agree on this point that Asoka is second to Buddha. Nigrodha or Upagupta, Nagasena or Nagarjuna, both Theravada and Mahayana traditions agree, rank after Asoka. Brahmanical (Hindu) literary works extant bear testimony to Asoka being a great Buddhist. Kalhana in *Rajatarangini* (12th Cent. A.D.) records Asoka as having adopted the creed of Jina (= Buddha) and as the builder of numerous Stupas and Chaityas.

Modern scholars, mostly European, however question the authenticity or purity of Asoka's Dhamma. Critics of Asoka notice the absence of Four Noble Truths, Eight Fold Path and Nirvana from Asoka's Edicts and point to Asoka's mention of Svaga (Svarga) or Heaven in the Edicts. Some scholars hint that Asoka's toleration policy was to accommodate Brahmanical faith while others label Asoka's Dhamma as his invention. In my submission Asoka was a Buddhist first and a Buddhist last. Asoka's own words, that is, Asoka's Edicts substantiate this finding.

Inscriptions of Asoka were read and translated by pioneer scholars like Senart, Hultzsch, Bhandarkar, Barua and Woolner. I

cannot claim competence to improve on their work and extract mainly from the literal translation of Hultzsch (Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum: Volume I, London 1925). This ensures that I do not read my own meaning into any word of Asoka. For the same reason I use already done English translation of Pali/Sanskrit texts.

## II

Asoka's Edicts concerned exclusively or specifically with Buddhism or Buddhist population consist of Bairat (Bhabru) Edict, Lumbini and Nigali Sagar Inscriptions and Allahabad-Sanchi-Sarnath Edict.

Bairat (Bhabru) Edict being most relevant to this question of Asoka's Dhamma may be reproduced in full.

"The Magadha King Priyadarsin, having saluted the Samgha hopes they are both well and comfortable. It is known to you, Sirs, how great is my reverence and faith in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Samgha. Whatever, Sirs, has been spoken by the blessed Buddha, all that is quite well spoken. But, Sirs, what would appear to me to be referred to by the words of the scripture: 'thus the true Dharma will be of long duration' that I feel bound to declare. The following expositions of Dharma, Sirs, viz(1) the Vinaya Samukasa, (2) the Aliyavasas, (3) the Anagatabhayas (4) the Munigathas, (5) the Moneya-suta, (6) the Upatissapasina and (7) the Laghulovado which was spoken by the blessed Buddha concerning falsehood - I desire Sirs, that many groups of monks and many nuns may repeatedly listen to these expositions of the Dharma and may reflect on them. In the same way both layman and lay women should act. For the following purpose, Sirs, am I causing this to be written viz in order that they may know my intention" Eng. Tr. Hultzsch.

Three points in Bairat (Bhabru) Edict need be noted. First, Asoka with due deference and humble submission to Sangha, affirms his reverence cum faith in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and in that order. Second, Asoka declares in dogma style, that all that Bhagavan



Buddha has spoken is gospel truth. And third as Magadha Raja, that is, as a Raja following the footsteps of Buddha and protecting Dharma, Asoka politely commands the monks, the nuns, the laymen and the laywoman to regularly listen to and reflect on the seven Dharma texts listed therewith. These texts are identifiable in Pali Canon.

A.C. Sen proposes the following identifications. Vinayasamukasa = Atthavasagga (Passage-2) in Anguttara Nikaya. Aliyavasani is in Sangiti-Suttanta and Dasuttara-Suttanta in Digha Nikaya. Anagatabhayani is in Angutara Nikaya. Munigatha=Munisutta in Suttanipata. Moneyasutta=Moneyya sutta in Anguttara Nikaya. Upatisapasina=Sariputtasutta in Suttanipata. Laghulavada=Rahulovada in Majjhima Nikaya (Sen : Asoka's Edicts, Calcutta 1956, pp 132-3). Scholars differ about identifications but all agree that Asoka's seven texts belong to the Canon as preserved till then.

Bairat (Bhabru) Edict bears full testimony that Asoka was a devout Buddhist and in denominational sense. Asoka in Rupnath version of Minor Rock Edict calls himself Prakasa Sakya, that is, openly Buddhist (Hultzsch) or avowed Buddhist (Sen). This Rupnath term, PRAKASA SAKYA, has remained little noticed. That Asoka was openly and avowed Buddhist is fully borne out by Lumbini and Nigali Sagar Inscription.

Lumbini (Rummindei) Inscription reads thus

"When King Devanam Priya Priyadarsin had been anointed twenty years, he came himself and worshipped this spot, because the Buddha Sakyamuni was born here.

"He both caused to be made a stone bearing a horse and caused stone pillar to be set up in order to show that the blessed one was born here."

"He made the village of Lumbini free of taxes and paying only an eighth share of the produce." (Eng. tr. Hultzsch).

Nigali Sagar Inscription reads thus :

"When King Devanampriya Priyadarsin had been anointed fourteen years, he enlarged the Stupa of the Buddha Konakamana to the double of its original size.

"And when he had been anointed twenty years, he came himself and worshipped this spot and caused a stone pillar to be set up." (Eng. tr. Hultzsch).

From Lumbini Inscription we learn that to mark his pilgrimage to the birthplace of Buddha Sakyamuni, Asoka made the Lumbini dwellers free of taxes (that is, imposts in addition to crop share) and reduced the crown's share of crop to one-eighth. Nigalisagar Inscription tells us Asoka believed in the concept of precursor Buddha and practised worship of Stupa.

Asoka, an avowed Buddhist, did special favour to Lumbini villagers and observed the ritual of Stupa adoration. Asoka thus was frankly a sectarian Buddhist. I have my reservations to label Asoka a sectarian but I am constrained to do so for the satisfaction of the detractors of Asoka's Dhamma. The Dhamma which Asoka practised was above sectarianism.

Asoka's Edict forbidding the penalizing schism in the Sangha is inscribed on pillars at Allahabad, Sanchi, and Sarnath with slight local variations. The vital portion common to the three versions reads thus: "The Sangha both of monks and nuns is made united and cannot be divided. The monk or nun who shall break up the Samgha must be caused to put on white robes and to reside in a non-residence. For my desire is that the Samgha may be united and of long duration." (Eng. tr. Hultzsch). Change from saffron to white and residence away from sangharama would mark defrocking.

This Schism Edict along with Bairat (Bhabru) Rock Edict are edicts in right sense. These two carry the sanction of the sovereign authority. Bairat (Bhabru) Edict commands clergy as well as laity to do constant contemplation of Buddhavachana specifying seven items.

The Schism Edict lays down appropriate punishment for any attempt to split or wreck the church.

Asoka was humble and submissive to the Samgha but would not shrink from his duty to punish the breakers of the Sangha which was then not even three hundred years old and which should live for three millennia or more. Asoka, striving for concord among the diverse religious communities or sects in his empire, began at home and was determined to uproot the seeds of discord within his own sect.

It may be emphatically noted that Asoka was an orthodox Buddhist. Asoka used the epithet Bhagavan for Buddha as in Bairat (Bhabru) Edict and Lumbini Inscription. And Asoka would not violate Buddha's sentiments on Rupakaya. The Maurya sculptors, whether Yona, Kamboja or native, could have easily shaped a Buddharupa generations before the image from Mathura or Gandhara. Asoka, a true orthodox, commandeered the master craftsmen to shape in stone the four symbolic animals: elephant, horse, bull and lion. Only an orthodox believer would desist from the temptation of portraying Bhagavan Buddha.

### III

Asoka's Edicts for SAVALOKA/SAVAMUNISA, that is, all men irrespective of race or religion within the empire or beyond may be listed thus: the Fourteen Rock Edicts, the Two Separate Kalinga Rock Edicts, the Seven Pillar Edicts, the Minor Rock Edict and the Graeco-Aramaic Rock Edict. The Rock Edicts and Pillar Edicts are named Dhammalipi, that is, rescript on Dhamma.

Dhamma, as is well known, is rendered variously in English e.g. morality, piety, righteousness, mercy or truth but hardly as religion. For Asoka never proclaimed any intention to propagate a particular Dhamma (Dharma) in the sense of religion in his edicts inscribed on stone. Those who look for theology or metaphysics of Dhamma in Asoka's Dhammalipis begin with a wrong presumption and after much labour conclude that Asoka's Dhamma was not Buddhism.

Contents of Asoka's Edicts should be studied without any *a priori* consideration. The two early edicts, namely Graeco-Aramaic Edict and Minor Rock Edict both dated around his 11th regnal year need be studied first.

A Graeco-Aramaic bilingual inscription was discovered in April 1957 a few miles west of Kandahar (Afghanistan) and after decipherment of the two texts was found to be an Asoka Edict. The two texts, Greek and Aramaic, are versions of the same edict, announcing in brief the basic tenets of Dhamma, around the 11th regnal year of King Piyadassi.

"Because of the King's promotion of Dhamma everything thrives throughout the world. The King abstains from killing living beings. Likewise all men (including fishermen and huntsmen) desist from killing. Similarly men have given up high temper and are respectful to their parents and elders. Dhamma has done good to all men and will continue to do so."

For making the above gist-common to both Greek and Aramaic versions - I draw on translations by Carrabelli and Garbini in *Serie Orientale Roma*, XXIX (Rome 1964). The two brief texts, 15 lines in Greek and 8 lines in Aramaic, do not go beyond the ethics of Buddhism cum non-violence.

Ancient Kandahar, the western outpost of Asoka's empire, was India's project board into Hellenic and Iranian worlds. Asoka in this early edict purposefully projected some basics of his Dhamma like compassion for all living beings, control of temper and concern for the aged. The same, slightly amplified, is found in some South Indian versions of Minor Rock Edict.

Minor Rock Edict, found at many places - Bairat, Gujara, Rupnath, Sahasram in North India Maski, Palkigunda, Rajula Mandagiri, Siddapura, Yerragudi in South India - with slight variations in the text, was issued in Asoka's 11th regnal year. The edict makes three important statements, and adds a postscript in some South Indian versions.

First, for two years and a half prior to this edict Devanampriya (i.e. Asoka) has been a lay worshipper of Buddha; in the second half of this period he joined the Sangha and worked with great zeal. Second, as fruit of this zeal, gods and men in Jambudvipa, who were formerly unmingled are now mingled. Third, fruit of zeal can be attained by all persons, high and low; one can attain great heaven if he is very zealous. Eng. tr. Hultzsch.

First is a public announcement that Asoka trod the path of Buddha from around the 8th regnal year; the announcement adds that for more than a year Asoka could not work with requisite zeal. Kalinga War, an event of eighth regnal year was no doubt a turning point in Asoka's life; whether immediately after, or a year or two later, Asoka resolved to propagate the tenets of compassion for living beings, control of temper, care for the aged and so on.

Second is an extra-ordinary claim that by zealous efforts Asoka mingled gods and men in Jambudvipa (i.e. India). An early interpretation that Asoka organized religious festivals in which gods from heaven came to earth and mixed with men is now ruled out. European scholars like Sylvain Levi (*Journal Asiatique* 1911) and Jean Filliozat (*Journal Asiatique* 1949) hold that Asoka changed the traditional protocol and made the royalty mix with the common man. A Kshattriya is as much a Deva as a Brahmana; and the plural form Devas may be honorific for the kind or may include the entire royalty and the topmost in the government. Indian scholars like D.R. Bhandarkar (*Asoka*, Calcutta 1932) and A.C. Sen (*Asoka's Edicts*, Calcutta 1956) hold that Asoka by precept and practice made his men god like, that is, virtuous, I subscribe to the interpretation of Sylvain Levi (*Bulletin of Tibetology* 1992). Supposing that either theory may be valid the inference is irresistible that gods were not much superior to men, and almost equals, in Asoka's Dhamma. This conforms to the teachings of Buddha remembered as DEVA MANUSHYĀNĀM ŚĀSTĀ (i.e. Teacher of Gods and Men).

Third is a simple affirmation that high and low, big and small, are alike entitled to edification and upliftment. Buddha Sakyamuni

was the first prophet to promise salvation for all irrespective of caste or colour; there was no sense of civilized or elect in Buddha's mind. Asoka repeats Buddha's promise in this early edict which according to some epigraphists may be dated as the first edict of Asoka.

A postscript to Brahmagiri, Siddapura, Jatinga Ramesvara and Yerragudi versions of Minor Rock Edict lists the qualities of Dhamma in plain language. The Brahmagiri postscript reads thus in Hultzsche's translation :

"Obedience must be rendered to mother and father, likewise to elders; firmness of compassion must be shown towards animals, the truth must be spoken; these same moral virtues must be practised. In the same way the pupil must show reverence to the master, and one must behave in a suitable manner towards relatives. This is an ancient rule, and conduces to long life."

Practice of these simple virtues (Dhammagunas) would no doubt lead to happy long life. For all men; big and small, high and low, that was Asoka's promise. This finds elaboration in the Fourteen Rock Edicts and the Seven Pillar Edicts.

#### IV

A series of fourteen edicts issued in 12th and 13th regnal years and found inscribed on rocks at Shahbazgarhi (Peshawar, Pakistan), Manshera (Hazara, Pakistan), Kalsi (Dehradun, Uttar Pradesh), Dhauili (Puri, Orissa), Jaugada (Gangam, Orissa), Yerragudi (Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh), Sopara (Thana, Maharashtra) and Girnar (Kathiawad, Gujarat) -- is known as Fourteen Rock Edicts; there are slight local variations: Sopara text a fragment; Girnar and Kalsi least damaged and most complete; Edicts XI-XIII left out at Dhauili and Jaugada, and replaced by two Separate Edicts.

A series of seven edicts -- I-VI issued in 26th regnal year and VII issued in 27th regnal year -- inscribed on a pillar at Topra (Ambala, Haryana; pillar transported to Delhi by Sultan Firoz

Tughluk in 1356 AD) is known as Seven Pillar Edicts. The series, minus VII, was inscribed on pillars at Meerut (Uttar Pradesh, transported to Delhi by Sultan Firoz Tughluk), Allahabad (U.P.) Lauriya Araraj (Champaran, Bihar), Lauriya Nandangarh (Champaran, Bihar) and Rampurva (Champaran, Bihar). Obviously Pillar Edict VII could not be inscribed at other places because of ageing and death of Asoka, assuming Asoka reigned for thirty years or less.

It has to be noted that Fourteen Rock Edicts and Two Kalinga Edicts were issued in the years after Asoka's conversion while the Seven Pillar Edicts were issued in his last years, that is, when Asoka was an old and established devotee of TriRatna as borne out by Bairat (Bhabru) Edict which is dated between 22nd and 24th regnal years by some Scholars (Sen, Asoka's Edicts).

The point for notice is that the contents of the Fourteen Rock Edicts and those of the Seven Pillar Edicts are essentially the same so far as Dhamma is concerned. Asoka was steady and sure as a Buddhsit devotee till the end, and in my understanding, Asoka did not add to or amend in any way the Dhamma wherein he took refuge after the Kalinga War.

What is Dhamma? In Minor Edict, Postscript (quoted above) Asoka enumerates the first three constituents of Dhamma thus: obedience to parents and elders, compassion to living beings and truthfulness. In Rock Edict III Asoka says: "Meritorious is obedience to mother and father. Liberality to friends, acquaintances and relatives, to Brahmanas and Sramanas is meritorious. Abstention from killing animals is meritorious. Moderation in expenditure and moderation in possessions are meritorious". In Rock Edict XI, Dhamma is detailed thus: "Proper courtesy to slaves and servants, obedience to mother and father, liberality to friends, acquaintances and relatives, to Brahamanas and Sramanas, and abstention from killing animals" Trans. Hultsch.

In Pillar Edict II, Asoka includes within Dhamma "few sins, many virtuous deeds, compassion, liberality, truthfulness and

purity.... benefits for bipeds and quadrupeds, birds and aquatic animals". In Pillar Edict III passions leading to sin are thus enumerated "fierceness, cruelty, anger, pride and envy". In Pillar Edict VII "practice of morality consists of compassion, liberality, truthfulness, purity, gentleness and goodness and good deeds are found in obedience to mother and father and elders, courtesy to the aged, courtesy to Brahmanas and Sramanas, courtesy to the poor and distressed and even to slaves and servants". Trans. Hultzsch.

Scholars questioning the authenticity of Asoka's Dhamma find nothing specially Buddhist in the pithy sayings of Asoka. True the constituents or qualities of Dhamma as in Asoka's Edicts are to be found in all sublime religions. It needs be noted that Asoka deliberately emphasised the basic tenets of Dhamma. These specially chosen tenets however conform to Buddha's teaching. Asoka's pithy sayings echo the verses of Dhammapada, a faithful record of Buddha's word.

A few examples from Dhammapada should suffice. While verse 183 enjoins 'no evil act whatsoever', 'practice of virtue' and 'purity of mind' as BUDDHA ŚĀSANA (Teaching of Buddha), verse 224 promises that 'speaking truth', 'suppressing anger' and 'generosity to the seeker' take one close to gods. Verse 84 warns against evil desire and evil conduct while verse 217 praises one who is truthful, dutiful, virtuous and is established in Dhamma. Asoka echoes this when he tells his "sons, grandsons and great grandsons" as well as all who would read his words on stone that "practice of Dhamma is not possible for a person devoid of good conduct" ,(Rock Edict IV). As in Dhammapada so in Asoka's Edicts, the basic tenets concern the character and conduct of the believer and are in no way involved with theology or metaphysics.

Asoka was certainly not ignorant of the philosophy of Buddha. In my reading Asoka deliberately avoided any reference to concepts like ANATMA (Negation of soul) or NIRVĀNA (Emancipation). Asoka's mission was to spread, all over his empire and then beyond, the Dhamma which at the time of his accession was a regional sect confined within Madhyadesa (midlands). The statesman in Asoka



shunned the path of encounter with the ancient concepts dear to other sects like Brahmana, Jaina or Ajivika. Asoka chose to propagate those tenets of Buddhism which no ancient sect could deny. Asoka's call was to all men, without distinction of caste, colour and even creed. Asoka's care and concern for all creeds or sects find conspicuous reference in his edicts.

Asoka describes his missionary endeavour, in Rock Edict XIII, as 'conquest by morality' (Dhamma Vijaya) which do not cause sufferings, as in Kalinga War, and causes only satisfaction (Pitilasa/Pritirasa). Bhandarkar's rendering of Pritirasa as 'love' or 'flavour of love' seems accurate and apt since the DhammaViaya all over, in the empire and abroad, was by persuasion and not by coercion, physical or moral. In pillar Edict VII, Asoka claims to have promoted Dhamma both by restriction (e.g. on animal slaughter) and exhortation (e.g. edicts) but asserts that exhortation is absolutely superior to restriction. If that be so within the empire, exhortation could be the sole means abroad. May be exhortation abroad was backed by beneficent activities like care of the sick and old both among men and animals. That was no act of force: that was an act of love. The outcome of Dhamma Vijaya was tremendous. During Asoka's life time Buddhism spread all over Jambudvipa (India) : it reached Khotan in the north, Afghanistan in the north west and Sinhala (Sri Lanka) in the south. Buddhism was preached in Asoka's life time in Middle East, Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Macedon and Epirus; it made a lasting impression on Irano-Hellenic World. In a century after Asoka, Buddhism emerged as a major religion on par with Brahmanism, Confucianism and Zoroastrianism. Buddhism was not ethno-centric and was therefore poised to be the universal religion from the very beginning. That expectation was eventually realized because of Asoka's commencing with the humanism of Buddha.

In this connection I quote from a Santiniketan Discourse of Rabindra Nath Tagore in 1911. I translate from the original in Bengali, "Buddhism has a hard core of metaphysics in it. However Buddhism's world-wide victory was not due to the excellence of its metaphysics. Buddha's Karuṇā (Compassion), Buddha's Maitrī (Love)

and Buddha's Hridaya-Prasara (Catholicity of Mind) account for Buddhism's victory everywhere". Asoka began with the tenets of KARUṆĀ, MAITRĪ and HRDAYA-PRASĀRA while the higher teachings of Buddha would follow as a matter of course.

In his edicts Asoka includes in Dhamma courtesy to Brahmanas and Sramanas as a meritorious practice. Sometimes the compound form Brahmana-Sramana is used. It denotes holy men, ascetics and mendicants, of both orthodox (i.e. Vedic) and heterodox (i.e. Non-Vedic) systems. In Rock Edicts V, VII and XII Asoka uses the term SAVA PĀSAMDĀ, that is, all sects, and not only Brahmanism and Buddhism. In Rock Edict XIII Asoka says that there may be lands like that of the Yonas where Brahmanas and Sramanas are not found but there is no land where men are not attached to some sect or religion. (I admit my responsibility for this interpretation of the words in Rock Edict XIII, lines 38-39 of Kalsi version. In my reading Asoka speaks here of Irano-Hellenic world and politely affirms that though Brahmanas and Sramanas are not found there, such lands have their own religious sects and holymen). Asoka had his vision of moral and spiritual aspirations of man everywhere, within or beyond his empire.

Within his empire "King Devanampriya Priyadarsin desires that all sects may reside everywhere, for all these sects desire self control and purity of mind". (Rock Edict VII, trans. Hultzsch). In Rock Edict XII, Asoka develops the theme further. He says "he is honouring all sects, both ascetics and householders, with gifts and with honours of various kinds. But he does not value either gifts or honours so highly as that promotion of the essentials of all sects should take place and this promotion of essentials is possible in many ways. But the root is guarding one's own speech; that neither praising one's own sect nor blaming other sects should take place on improper occasions, or that it should be moderate in every case. But other sects ought to be duly honoured in every case ..... For whosoever praises his own sect or blames other sects - all this out of devotion to his own sect, that is, with the view of glorifying his own sect - if he is acting thus, he rather injures his own sect very severely". "Therefore" Asoka advises "SAMAVĀYA (Concord) alone is meritorious, that they should

both hear and obey each others morals. For this is his desire that all sects should be full of learning and should be pure in doctrine". And Asoka repeats that "he does not value either gifts or honours as high as that promotion of essentials of all sects should take place". (Trans. Hultzsch).

Detractors of Asoka's loyalty to Buddhism mark gifts and honours to other sects as evidence of Asoka's family associations with Ajivika, Brahmana and Jaina sects. On the otherhand the scholars contending that fall of the Mauryas was due to Brahmanical reaction against Asoka's Dhamma hold that his patronage of Buddhism was excessive and to the detriment of Brahmanism. Fact is that Asoka patronised all sects and held holymen of all sects in high respect. This was because he believed that all sects "desired selfcontrol and purity of mind" (Rock Edict VII); holymen of all sects practised self control and purity of mind and therefore deserved high honour. But misconduct of a holyman was not to be tolerated. In Bairat (Bhabru) Edict, Asoka makes a special mention of Buddha's exhortation against false-speech, obviously because of such propensity on the part of some monks. In Allahabad-Sanchi-Sarnath Edict Asoka commands expulsion from Sangha of any monk or nun attempting schism. Likewise Asoka's veneration for Brahmana sect and holymen of that sect did not dissuade him from banning animal sacrifices and carnival type festive meetings. (Rock Edict I) Asoka devoted one entire edict (Rock Edict IX) to the ceremonies performed by householders of all sects like those on child birth, marriage, illness or journey. Asoka condemns such "ceremonies as useless or vulgar" and commends only "the ceremony of Dhamma", that is, "Proper courtesy to slaves and servants, reverence to elders, gentleness to animals and liberality to Brahmanas and Sramanas; these and such virtues called Dhamma-mangala" (Trans. Hultzsch). Asoka's tolerance was not to protect rites and rituals of different religions but to promote the essentials of different religions.

Asoka is the first monarch or head of state to proclaim, as in Rock Edict XII, that promotion of essentials (SĀLA/SĀRA) of all religions is possible, and such is possible because basically (i.e. in essentials) all religions are same. Critics trace Asoka's sentiments to

the eclectic ethos of the Maurya Age and hint that not only different Indian creeds like Ajivika, Brahmana or Jaina but also Hellenic and Iranic cults contributed to the eclectic character of the Mauryas, particularly Asoka.

Substituting 'catholic' for 'eclectic', Asoka's sentiments may be traced back to the early Vedic Sages. The unrecorded sage or sages spoke thus : EKAM SAT VIPRĀH BAHUDHĀ VADANTI (Truth is One, seers name It in various ways). Buddha Sakyamuni followed the message in his own way (see below). Guru Nanak (1469-1509) put into practice this Vedic concept by mingling the two seemingly contradictory systems as Hinduism and Islam. Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-1886) re-affirmed this ancient truth when he said, and said repeatedly, "Different religions are different roads to the summit".

Buddha's reverence for Brahmana as holyman is well known from Dhammapada and Milindapanho. Not so well known are some verses of Chulaṭṭhiyūha Sutta and Maha viyūha Sutta in Sutta-nipata; these verses anticipate the ideas which Asoka expresses in Rock Edict XII. These verses, as translated by Bhandarkar, may conclude this discussion on Asoka's Dhamma.

"He who does not acknowledge an opponent's Dhamma is a fool, a beast, one of poor understanding. All are fools with a very poor understanding: all these abide by their own views".

"For the truth is one, there is not a second about which one intelligent man might dispute with another intelligent man. But they themselves proclaim different truths, therefore the Samanas do not say one and the same thing".

"Those who preach a Dhamma different from this, fall short of purity and are imperfect, so the Tīthiyas say repeatedly: for they are inflamed by passion for their own views".

"Those who are highest in virtue (Sila) say that purity (Suddhi) is through restraint (Sannama). Taking this vow (Vata) they serve. Thus only let us learn purity from Master."

**LIFE OF HIS HOLINESS  
THE VTH DALAI LAMA  
NGAG-DBANG BLO-BZANG RGYA-MTSHO(1617-1682 A.D.)**

*- Acharya Samten Gyatso*

**T**he Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology Library contains many rare books in its collection and proposes to reprint some of the most outstanding works such as collected works of the Great Vth Dalai Lama. The only complete volumes(Sungbum) of the Vth Dalai Lama is available and is preserved in this Institute. It is our privilege to take up this rare and prestigious publication. It is our inspiration and hope that this publication will benefit the scholars and Institutes around the globe.

Briefly speaking, the Vth Dalai Lama's works are of two types:

- (i) the exoteric teachings which runs into 21 volumes and contains the works on various aspects such as:
  - 1. Biography of Vth Dalai Lama and others(Rnam-thar)
  - 2. Commentary on Prajna paramita(Shes-rab-kyi-pha-rol-tu phyin-pa)
  - 3. Commentary on Madhyamika(Dbu-ma)
  - 4. Vinaya('Dul-ba)
  - 5. Abhidharma(Chos-mngon-pa-mdzod)
  - 6. Instruction on meditation(Khrid-yig)
  - 7. History of Tibet(Deb-ther rdzogs-Idan gzhon-nu)
  - 8. Poetics(snyan-ngag)

9. Astrology(Rtsis)

10. Ritual Text(Cho-Ga)

- (ii) The esoteric teachings deal exclusively with high tantric aspects of teachings and it is contained in four volumes. The entire gamut of the works are contained in 25 volumes.

The Vth Dalai Lama, Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho(1617-1682 A.D) was born in the Fire-Snake year corresponding to 1617 A.D in the holy place called 'Phyong-rgyas phying-bar stag-rtse in southern Tibet. His father was Hor-bdud-'dul rab-brtan and mother Khri-Lcam kun-dga' Lha-mdzes. Unlike other children, he possessed a unique character and pleasing disposition and often showed the posture of exposition of Dharma as an incarnate Lama. Many great Lamas like Atisha Dipankara, Tsong-Kha-pa etc. graced him with their visions. The first Panchen Lama Blo-bzang chos-kyi rygal-mtshan and many other protective deities of Dharma confirmed and identified him as the real incarnate of the IVth Dalai Lama, Rgyal-ba yon-tan rgya-mtsho(1589-1617 A.D)

As exhorted by 1st Panchen Lama, the then Dalai Lama was invited to 'Bras-spungs monastery. Subsequently during the Water-Dog Year, when he was six years old, many great Lamas from Se-ra and 'Bras-spungs monastery invited the new incarnate to Dga'-Idan Pho-Brang (Palace). At the age of nine, he was sacramented with the ordination of Sramanera(novice monk) by the first Panchen Lama and Khri Rinpoche Dkon-mchog chos-'phel who thereupon conferred upon him the name Blo-bzang rgya-mtsho. Consequently, khri Rinpoche was appointed as a regular tutor of Vth Dalai Lama. Apart from his tutor, he completed his studies of sutras, tantras and other sciences of learning under many eminent teachers of the time.

In the Earth-Male Tiger year, when he was twenty two years old, he was conferred with the higher ordination in monkhood by the first Panchen Lama in front of an image of the noble-Lord(JOWORJE). During his rule, the doctrine of Buddha was widely diffused over the Himalayan Kingdom of Tibet. Moreover, in the Iron-Female Snake year, when he was twenty five years old, the mongol emperor Go-shri Stan-

'dzin chos-kyi rgyal-po entrusted the conquered territory of the thirteen states(Bod Khri skor bcu-gsum) of Tibet to him where a splendid palace Rtse Potala was built for his residence. The patron saint of Tibet, the self-born Avalokitesvara(spyan-ras-gzigs) ascended and was enshrined on the throne in the palace.

In the Water-Male Dragon year, the Dalai Lama went to eastern China, Mongolia and Turkistan in order to promote peace among human beings through the propagation of Dharma. When he returned from China, he taught the doctrine of Buddha to innumerable people according to the wishes of individuals and simultaneously the ordination in complete monkhood was conferred upon by him to many enthusiastic pupils thereby introducing the stringent codes of religious discipline in different assemblies of monks. He learnt the rnying-ma-pa philosophy for dissemination of the doctrine consistent with the ritualistic disciplines. He composed many philosophical works on Buddhism for the preservation and continuity of doctrines till posterity, besides holding both the spiritual and temporal power over Tibet(Chos-srid gnyis -ldan). In the Water-Dog year corresponding to 1682 A.D at the age of sixty six, he departed from the world of mortal existence, to rest peacefully in the abode of purity.

## WORKS OF VTH DALAI LAMA

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

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| Vol. Ka   | -dkar-chag (Index)   |
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| Vol. kha. | Dkar-chag (Index)  |
| Vol. kha. | Zab-pa dang rgya-che-ba'i dam-pa'i chos-kyi thob-yig gang-ga'i chu-rgyun las glegs-bam gnyis-pa. Secret biography of Vth Dalai Lama, Vol. II.774 Folio.  |

- Vol. Ga.           Dkar-chag (Index)
- Vol. Ga.           Zab-pa dang rgya-che-ba'i dam-pa'i chos-kyi thobd-yig gang-ga'i chu-rgyun las glegs-bam gsum-pa. Secret biography of Vth Dalai Lama, Vol. III.734 Folio.
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- Vol.Nga            -Zab-pa dang rgya-che ba'i dam-pa'i chos-kyi thob-yig gang-ga'i chu-rgyun las glegs-bam bzhi-pa. Secret biography of Vth Dalai Lama, Vol. IV. 738 Folio.
- Vol. Ca.           dkar-chag(Index)
- Vol. Ca.           Za-hor gyi ban-de ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho'i 'di-s nang 'khrul-pa'i-rol-rtsed rtogs-brjod kyi tshul du bkod-pa du-ku-la'i gos-bzang las glegs-bam dang-po. Autobiography of Vth Dalai Lama. Vol. V. 730 Folio.
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                  shing-rta. Biography of IIIrd Dalai Lama, 1543-1588  
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- Vol.   Nya.     jig-rten dbang-phyug thams-cad mkhyen-pa yon-tan  
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gnyis-pa.



## **PARALLELISM BETWEEN INDO-IRANIAN "SOMA HAOMA" RITUALS & THE "CHI-DYO" RITUALS OF THE LEPCHAS OF SIKKIM**

*P.B.Chakrabarty*

**A**lcoholic drinks play a very important role in all sacrificial ceremonies and rituals observed by the Lepchas (Rongkup) of Sikkim. One such drink is the "Chi" which is millet beer and another alcoholic sacrificial drink is "Dyo" made from medicinal herbs, roots or other fermentable plants. According to ancient tradition of the Lepchas, "Chi" is of divine origin. Legend has it that the ferment used in the preparation of "Chi" was brought to mankind from the nether world in a cunning manner by a cockroach named "Tagder Palyong". The Lepchas of Sikkim link up immortality with this drink. It is believed that the quail (Lepcha name - Kohom fo) is one of the two birds which fetched this drink of immortality from heaven. Then again, the "Chi" sacrifice is closely linked with the bull and performed on the head of the animal. The "Chi" sacrifice is intimately bound up with the life and rituals of the Lepchas and an integral part of the cultural heritage of their ancestors.

We find striking parallelism between the Indo-Iranian "Soma-Haoma" sacrifices and the "Chi" sacrifice of the Lepchas of

Sikkim. According to Indo-European beliefs, the drink which manifests secret, ecstatic and exciting power to men is an essence of the gods, and a special possession of theirs. The dwelling place of this drink "Soma" rasa of the gods is heaven and from its heavenly storage, the bird eagle of the king of the Aryan god Indra (the nectar carrying eagle of Zeus, Greek god King of Olympus) or the god himself disguised as a bird, fetched or stole it from the jealously watching demons. It is accepted by most experts that at the time of the Indo-Europeans, the concept of god-like immortality was already connected with the drink of the gods (Indo-European words-Amrita and Ambrosia). As human life is preserved by taking meat and drink and specially death is warded off for a time, at least, by medicine, so the godly existence must also depend on the partaking of a sacrificial drink whose essence is immortality. "Soma-Haoma" was this drink of immortality.

Similar sacrifice as the nourishment of the gods is performed by the Lepcha folk too. "Tak-bo-thing", the wonder power god of the Lepchas made his first sacrifice of many fruits and fish to "It-bo-Rum", the supreme god of Rong folk or the Lepchas. Thus according to H.Oldenberg, the stimulating drink possessed with demonic strength, like the sacrificial fire of the Indo-Iranians becomes a mighty god among the Lepchas as among the Indo-Iranians. Besides this, there is a close parallelism between the intimate linkage of the Indo-Iranian "Soma-Haoma" sacrifices with the cattle and the Lepchas cult of the stimulating drink "Chi" linked with the bull.

To quote Oldenberg, "Soma is dressed in the cow robe-the admixture of milk in it". Likewise, the lepchas decorate the bowl of "Chi" with three little pats of butter called "San-dyo" and place the Chi" offering on the forehead of the bull. This is very significant.

The blessed killing of the "Haoma bull" among the ancient Iranians and the most Solemn "Soma" sacrifice of the ancient Indians on the one hand and the cult of the intoxicating drink "Chi" connected with the bull cult of the Lepchas are strikingly parallel. Another

striking point of similarity between the two rituals is that just as the Iranian Gatha - religion is Dionysiac and it indulges in the "Haoma" delirium with ecstasies and trances, so during a sacrificial ceremony of the Lepchas, the Rong highpriests and highpriestesses (Bongthing and Mun) partake of "Chi", rouse themselves into frenzy and finally begin their ecstatic dances and soul-wanderings. Then again, the preparation of the other Lepcha alcoholic drink "Dyo" and that of the "Soma-Haoma" drinks of the Indo-Iranians are similar but the secret of the latter's extraction has been lost. The herbs and "Soma-Haoma" were also medicinal plants.

The Lepcha "Dyo" is prepared from some medicinal herbs mentioned in the Rikveda as "Medicine for the sick" which even brought about immortality. According to Oldenberg, "Soma rasa" (Iranian Haoma) was not a popular drink since it was made from a rare plant. The common alcoholic drink of the ancient Aryans was "Sura" which too was a sacrificial drink besides the "Soma" sacrifice. Here too we find a remarkable parallel to the Lepcha common brew "Chi" (although it is of divine origin) easily made from millet and "Dyo", infrequently made from some rare herbs and not commonly used in sacrificial rituals. Thus the Lepcha drink "Dyo" is the counterpart of Aryan "Soma rasa" while "Chi" holds the status of the Aryan "Sura".

Strangely enough, Aryan "Sura" in Vedic myth, is the goddess of wine just as Lepcha millet brew "Chi" is regarded as a female. According to the eminent German anthropologist and ethnologist, Mattlias Hermanns, the Lepcha "Chi" sacrifice closely linked up with the bull cult, has an entirely original and individual character. It belongs to their ancestral heritage and was not borrowed from the ancient Aryans nor from other peoples outside Sikkim.

The writer of the article during his strenuous trek to Zongu, Lepcha settlement in North Sikkim, gleaned information from the elderly Lepcha people that the "Chi" sacrifice custom was handed down to them from generation to generation. It is, therefore, of indigenous origin and not influenced by sacrificial rituals. The Lepcha

**"Chi-Dyo" sacrificial rituals developed independently of the ancient Indo-Iranians "Soma-Haoma" sacrificial ceremonies.**

**Footnotes.** The cult of the killings of the Soma in the form of little plant shoots in the vedic sacrifice and the myth of the slaughter of the Haoma bull in the mythology of Mithra have a wide ethrological connection and happened to be the Aryan shaping of and ancient prehistorical mythology and cult. If Zoroaster, the founder of the Zoroastrian religion disclaims with passion and holy anger against the killing of bulls, it is not for agricultural and utilitarian reasons, but because this ritual formed the constituent part of the old religion. Now the Soma sacrifice, the highest and the most Solemn sacrifice of the ancient Aryans, was not essentially offering of a gift to the gods but the renewal of the original sacrifice of the gods. As the gods in heaven create the Soma rain for the good of the World, so does man on earth in the holy ceremony prepares the drink of immortality which stands for rain as the fountain head of life in order to share in the blessing of the gods like the original sacrifice. The killing of cattle again and again condemned by Zoroaster, was the imitation and repetition of the indeed cruel but blessed killing of the original bull. And in very close relation with this, Zoroaster condemned in the same place the Haoma sacrifice although he did not mention the name Haoma but used instead, and old unmistakeable title of the Haoma.

The sacrifice of the bull in the Mithra cult and its cosmic meaning is believed by H. Lommel to be identical with the Iranian Haoma sacrifice. But the beliefs of the Rong people (Lepcha tribe) and their rituals and rites prove beyond any shadow of doubt that the intoxicating drink and the cult of the bull are not identical but are two altogether independent cults. Moreover, they are not the imitation of the original offering of the deity itself. This mystification is not found among the most ancient ethnological tribes but found among those tribes professing a peculiar mystery-religion. Other experts believe that the intoxicating Haoma has been supplanted by the milk-Haoma which links up with an ancient milk-mystery.

The Indo-Iranians would perform the Soma-Haoma sacrifice in spring time for all the gods. As the stimulating Soma-Haoma drinks taken by the Indo-Iranians would give them daemonic strength and fill them with almost boundless exhilaration, so the Rong people by partaking of the millet brew "Chi", would drive themselves into a state of ecstasy. A brief description of the process of preparation of this alcoholic drink would not be out of place here. Well-ripened small millet grains are dried in the Sun for three days and then cooked in an earthenware pot covered with a bamboo mat. A larger barrel is inverted over it. After the cooking, the ferment is added to the boiled millet for fermentation to occur. The fermented liquor is then left in the Sun for several days in order to make the alcoholic content stronger. Finally the grains are squeezed out and the chi-brew is thus made. The fermenting grains are then put into a bamboo cylinder and warm water is poured into it. This water becomes alcoholic and is sucked in intermittently through a bamboo reed in order to avoid the impure sediment.

The other type alcoholic drink, Dyo, is made from medicinal roots, herbs or other fermentable plants. The preparation depends on the material used in each case. The roots are soaked in warm water, the fermenting material is added and the whole connection allowed to ferment. After a few days the extract is squeezed out.

The home of the Soma plant is supposed to be high rocky mountains. In the Rik veda, there are references to "Soma on the rocks", the eagle robs Soma from the rocks", it is a dweller of the mountain world". In one place in the Rik veda, the name of such a mountain is said to be Mujevat. According to the Mahabharata (XIV), this is a mountain in the rear of the Himalaya. The plant being a medicinal herb, was called "Medicine for the Sick". The medicinal efficacy was so potent that it was even known as "Medicine of Immortality".

In those bygone days blurred by the mist of time, no Indo-Aryans lived in this mountain world. It is therefore very probable that from very early time they obtained medicinal herbs and

roots from the mountain dwellers. In the Atharva Veda it is said, "The young maid of the Kirata race digs the drug root with shovels wrought of gold on the high ridges of the hills".. The expression "Kirata-tikta occurs in Sanskrit and means a very bitter medicinal plant. This name is distorted in Prakrit as "Cilaa-itta". In olden days in Bengal it is known as Cirayita and today it is known as Cirata. According to Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, it means "Medicine of the Kirata".

The some plant's juice was equally bitter. It is said that the Kirata provided the Aryans with soma plants. If the plant grew in the high Himalaya, then the Aryans would not have been able to obtain it except through the Kirata and other Himalayan tribes having a knowledge of the medicinal herbs.

The some plants were ground according to primitive methods by the Aryans by means of grinding stones and later on crushed in a stone mortar. thereafter, the juice was squeezed out. This soma juice was reddish brown or greenish-yellow in colour. It was strained through a sheep wool strainer for purification. Likewise, the Iranians purified the Haoma juice by means of a stainer made of hair from the body of the holy white bull. During the process three priests would chant a hymn in monotone. The juice was frequently mixed with water, milk or sour milk and then poured back and forth into different barrels to cause fermentation to prepare an alcoholic drink. This process, according to Matthias Hermanns, shows that soma juice was a rare intoxicating drink. The ordinary alcoholic drink of the ancient Aryans, he opines, was "Sura" which too was used for the purpose of ritual sacrifice. According to Hermanns the Himalayan tribes gave "Soma" to the Aryans and disclosed to them the recipe for making it.

This does not prove beyond doubt that the sacrifice of the alcoholic drink was introduced by the Aryans.

The ides of the alcoholic drink of the gods appears, according to Oldenberg, to exist during the time of the Indo-Europeans.

To them it was the old honey mead. Instead of mead used by the Aryans earlier, they began using soma when they migrated to India and came to know of its use from the Himalayan tribal people.

the customs and rituals of the Lepchas of Sikkim run parallel to the ancient Indo-Iranian customs. Among the southern Himalayan tribe, the Lepchas, according to M. Hermanns, are the only tribe having knowledge of plants and the art of preparing intoxicating drinks from them. the Tibetans call the Drink of Immortality "Dud-rtzi". It is nectar or ambrosia although literally it means the devil's drink. They use the word "Homa" to mean butter-burnt offering. "Ho-ma-byed-pa" usually means to offer. The Tibetan word "Homa" is related to the Iranian word "Haoma" and not to the Sanskrit word "Soma". Then again, the expression "devil's drink" is a derogatory appellation. Zoroaster too expressed the same derogatory feeling regarding the Haoma drinking bout. these two facts, Hermanns opines, appear to indicate that the Tibetans imbibed the Iranian heritage.

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## **SOME NOTES ON "SOMA", "HAOMA", "AMRITA", "SURA", ETC.**

**SOMA** : In Hindu mythology soma is an alcoholic liquor consumed by the vedic priests in order to induce a state of ecstasy. Agni, the divine fire was the spirit of Soma and the effect of pouring libations on the altar fires was to enable the gods to combat the forces of darkness and to maintain the order of light. It is believed to have been prepared by fermentation of wild species of Himalayan rhubarb. Eventually Soma became identified with the elixir of life supposed, when drunk, to prolong life.

**HAOMA** : Soma was worshipped in Zoroastrian mythology by the name Haoma. It was regarded as the purifier of the place of the Sacred fire and as the destroyer of demons and tyrants.

**AMRITA** : In vedic myth, it is the ambrosia of the gods. This elixir or drink of immortality referred to in the mythological "Churning of the Ocean" is probably another version of Soma. As a result of the "Churning of the Ocean" performed by the gods (Devas) and demons (Asuras) with the help of Vasuki, ruler of the clan of serpent-worshippers, coiled round the Mandar mountain, a pitcher containing Amrita rose up from the Ocean bed and from the hands of the Asuras, it was cleverly snatched away by the Devas (the gods) who drank the Amrita and became immortal. Amrita is identified with Sudha.

**SURA** : It is the goddess of wine according to the vedic mythology. It was produced owing to the Churning of the Ocean during the Kurma Avatar aeon. The accepted sense of the word is alcoholic drink prepared by fermenting fruit juice or some herbal juice rich in carbohydrates. The fermented liquor is then distilled to get alcoholic beverage.

**KURMA AVATAR** : In Vedic myth, Kurma Avatar is the second or tortoise incarnation of Lord Vishnu. This forms the second episode of the Deluge legend which began during Vishnu's Matsya Avatar period. Here the god incarnate descended to the bottom of the Ocean to recover the treasures of the Vedic tribes lost during the Deluge. As



a tortoise he stationed himself at the sea bottom and on his back was placed the Mandar mountain round which was coiled Vasuki. The gods at the tail end and the demons (Aruras) at the mouth of the serpent king churned up the ocean with tremendous force when the following precious objects came up :- Airavata, Indra's elephant, Amrita; the ambrosia of the gods; Dhanus, the bow of victory; Kaustabha, the jewel of Vishnu; Lakshmi (or sri), Vishnu's wife; Parijata, the tree of knowledge; Rambha, the first of the celestial nymphs (Apsaras); Sankha, the conch of victory; Sura, the goddess of wine; Surabhi; the cow of plenty; Uccaihsrava, the first horse; Visha or Halahal, the deadly poison.

**KVASIR** : It will be relevant here to touch upon the Nordic myth according to which Kvasir was the wisest of men who was killed by the dwarfs, Tjalar and Galar in Spartheim.

After his death his blood mixed with the honey mead was fermented in Odherir, the magic cauldron to produce an intoxicating liquor which gave wisdom, the knowledge of runes and charms and the gift of poetry. The soma of the ancient Aryans and the Haoma of the Iranians were believed to possess similar power.

**ZARATHUSTRA** : By about 600 B.C., the Zoroastrian religion reached its nadir, and but for the work of Zarathustra who recognized it, it would doubtless have vanished. His writings are recorded in the Zend-Avesta, the Bible of the Zoroastrian religion which laid down a standard text for the tales forming the basis of the doctrine. He appears to have been a religious leader like Moses, bringing the people back to their faith.

In 520 B.C., the Persian king Darius had substitute the new monotheism of Zarathustra for the then existing polytheism. According to Egerton Sykes, whether Zoroaster is another version of Zarathustra or whether he was the real founder of the religion is not clear but it is, however, reasonably certain that the religion doctrine of Zoroaster was definitely existent for a long period prior to 600 B.C., when Zarathustra is believed to have put the Zend-Avesta into writing

later-day Zoroastrianism carried to extreme limits, the worship of the sacred fire brought by the Indo-Germans from their northern habitat. The modern parsees of Maharastra profess Zoroastrianism.

**MITHRA** : Mithra or Mitra, first appears as a god in the Vedic Hymns where he is mentioned about one hundred and seventy times. He would appear to have been a human being who was elevated to the divine rank after his death which had taken place before the Aryans reached India. In the Rik-Veda he is regarded as one of the twelve Adityas (Aditya is a personification of the generative powers of nature). As the Hindu religion gave rise to Brahmanism, the cult of Mithra gradually vanished.

The Iranians, however, made him of the Ameshas (the six immortal Holy ones) as the genius of heavenly light. He was the chief of a heavenly host of Ahura (Benign powers according to Zoroastrian religion) whom he led against the evil forces of the Devas (Benign forces according to the Aryan faith). In the reform of the Mazdean religion done by Zoroaster, Mithra was reduced in status from the rank of Amesha of that of Yazata (celestial being in charge of a heavenly task) where he stood between the opposing forces of good and evil, always helping in the saving of souls. The worship of Mithra is always associated with the killing of bulls and was introduced into the Roman world from Cappadocia. By the time of the Persian king Xerxes I, it had spread into Greece. Mithraism was an aesthetic religion of truth, purity and right for men only and women worshipped Cybele but the dominant feature of the religion was dualism with good and evil equally balanced.

But for the spread of Christianity, Mithraism would now have been the religion of Europe. The Mithra religion, unlike the Dionysiac Zoroastrianism, was sober, formalistic and Apollonic.

**N.B** These notes are based on the finding of the eminent : British mythographer Egerton Sykes who compiled them in the form of a book titled "Everyman's Dictionary of Non-classical Mythology".

**A Special Note on "Chi"** (1) This is protected by a deity named "Don-dyo-chi-log" who is accorded the same homage as the supreme god of the Lepcha tribe named "It-bo-rum". The Lepcha people offer the chi brew to their deities in a wooden vessel together with rice and flesh of little birds on a banana leaf-plate. "Chi" has to be prepared by a young virgin and the sacrifice is called "Rum-fat" or "Lyang-rum-fat" and performed once a year in honour of It-bo-rum sometimes in December or January. Generally the head of a family who is also the family priest, performs the "Chi" sacrificial ceremony.

Strangely enough, the Lepcha alcoholic liquor "Chi" is regarded as a female just as "Sura" in Vedic myth is the goddess of wine.

- (2) The Lepcha people call themselves "Mutan-chi-Rongkup" meaning "Dear children of Mother Nature".



*BUDDHA ŚĀKYAMUNI*

## BUDDHIST HYMNAL

- B. Ghosh

**I**n earliest literary antecedent of Pali Sanskrit devotional poetry and hymnology is to be found in Theravada Pali and Mahayana Sanskrit cannon and non-cannonical literatures. But hymns are abundantly offered to Buddha Sakyamuni, foregone Buddhas, Future Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, female divinties like Tara, Prajnaparamita and lesser divinities. Following the translation of Sanskrit Buddhist *Stavas* or *Stotras* the Lamas of Tibet and other himalayan regions also composed many devotional poetries. Even metamorphosed historical personalities like Mahaguru Padmasambhava, Tsongkhapa, Sakya Pandita, Longchen Rabjam etc. were eulogised through many praises and prayers.

The earliest hymns are found in Rg-veda., Purusa-sukta, extolling the supreme impersonal godhead for the *creation* of the universe. Hymns to *Hiranya-garbha* – the Golden-germ and to gods like Vishnu, Agni, Indra, Varuna, Mitra and other vedic gods are also found in vedas.

The hymns are inspired by abiding sentiment of human heart, but while the devotional spirit of God-seeker (*Devayu*) and god lover (*Deva-Kama*) in that far of age is nearly the same as that formed in later times the respective theme and mode of expression are

necessarily divergent. (Aspects of Sanskrit Literature by Sushil Kumar De, Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyya, Cacutta 1959. p.101).

As in vedic and puranic literature we find worship and inspiring praise to natural phenomena the elaborate and somewhat mechanical rituals to "Homa" with its pouring of libations, chanting and repetition as formulas, was replaced by more personal and sensible mode of Puja, with its offering of flower, food, incense, song and dance. These modes of worship are amazingly found in the ritual worship of Buddhists Mahayana and Tantrayana. Hymnology has various facets of devotional sentiment and devotional spirits. But here abstain from discussing them in detail.

"With the development of inexorable doctrine of Karma and rebirth Sanskrit literature became pervaded with deeply pessimistic spirit. The classical system of philosophy, which greater leisure had brought into existence, started with the presumption of human misery and occupied themselves with theories of its eradication; and in this procedure the heterodox religious system of Buddhism and Jainism agreed" (Ibid. p.102)

But very soon the higher poetry and philosophy invaded the field, and the Stotra became an important, if somewhat neglected, wing of the *Kavya* poetry itself. Asvaghosa's early eulogy of Buddha in his *Buddha carita* (XXVII) is unfortunately lost in Sanskrit, but the spurious *gandi-stotra-gatha*, ascribed to him, has been restored and edited. This Sanskrit text is small poem in twenty-nine stanzas, composed mostly in the sonorous sragdhara metre. It is a hymn in praise of *Gandi*, the Buddhist monastery gong, consisting a long symmetrical piece of wood; the theme of the poem is the religious message which its sound is supposed to carry when beaten with a short wooden club (Ibid.103).

Of Asvaghosa's successors, Mātrceta has ascribed to his credit some twelve works in Tibetan and one in Chinese. Most of these are in the nature of Stotras, and some belong distinctly to Mahayana: but only fragments of *Satapancasatika-stotra* and *Catuh-sataka-stotra*,

penagyrlic of one hundred and fifty and four hundred stanzas respectively, have been recovered in Sanskrit. Both these works are simple devotional poems in Slokas. They are praised by Chinese pilgrim yi-tsing who spent 671 to 690 A.D., in India, to whom matrceta is already famous poet. The later Buddhist stotras are true to the manner and diction of Hindu stotras, the only difference lying in the mode and object of adoration. The *Lokesvara-sataka* of Vajradatta, who lived under devapala in the 9th century A.D., is composed in the elaborate sragdhara-metre. Describing the physical features and mental excellence of Avalokitesvara. In the same sragdhara-metre and polished diction is composed a large number stotras to Tara, who is the female counterpart to Avalokitesvara but who is absorbed with later Hindu Pantheon as an aspect of *Sakti*. It may be noted here in Mahayana-Vajrayana *Sakti* is replaced with *Prajna*. As many as ninety-six Buddhist texts relating to Tara are mentioned, but of these the *Arya-Tara-sragdhara-stotra*, in thirty seven verses, of the Kashmirian sarvajnamitra who lived in the first half of 8th century A.D., is perhaps the most remarkable. (Aspects of Sanskrit literature, p. 117). We come across the repeated reference to great similarity between Mahayana-Sutras and puranas, many distinguished scholars like Maurice Winternitz, Keith, S.N.Dasgupta etc. in the field of Sanskrit literature have highlighted the theme in histories of the Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina literature.

In the ancient Puranas many texts which were connected with the cult of the Hindu gods, were included and appended, such as *Māhātmya* (glorification of holy places), *Stotras* and *Kalpas* (sacred precept). In the same way there is also a Buddhistic "*Purana*", the *Svayambhū-Purāṇa*, which is not really a Purana, But a *māhātmya*. It is glorification of the holy places in Nepal, especially the *Svayambhū-caitya* near Kathmandu. The work is a manual for pilgrims, and therefore, also contains descriptions of ceremonies e.g. for the worship of Nagas so as to obtain rain, and many a legend attaching to the various holy places. Thus for instance in chapter IV, the *mani-cudavadana* is told by way of glorifying the river *manirohini*. In *Svayambhū-Purāṇa*, Svayambhū, "the self-existence", which in Hinduism one of the names of god Brahman, appears as the

king as teacher of the world, seated on a wondrous Lotus, the root of which had been planted in bygone ages by an earlier Buddha. (A History Of Indian literatur Vol. II. Buddhist and Jaina literature by M. Winternitz, 1933 p. 375-76).

There is a collection of Four Hymns *Catustava*, of Nagarjuna in the Tibetan translation(French translation, by La Vallee Poussin, 1914). King Harsavardhana(600-647, A.D.) who, under the influence of Chinese pilgrim Hsuen-Tsang, leaned more and more strongly towards Buddhism during the last years of his life, composed a *suprabhata-stotra*, a morning Hymn in Praise of Buddha, in 24 verses and an *Asta-maha-sricaitya-stotra* (translation in Sanskrit by S.Levi, 1894), a "hymn in praise of the eight shrines," in 5 stanzas. The poet Vajradatta, who lived under king Devapala in 9th century is the auther of the "*Lokesvara-Sataka* the hundred (stanzas) in praise of Lokesvara, Poet become a leper owing to a curse, he implored Lokesvara i.e. Avalokitesvara to help him. There is a devotional poetry-stotra in 9 stanzas, the *Sapta-Buddha*, "praise to the seven Buddhas, Vipashyi, Sikhi, Visvabhu, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni & Kasyapa, and the Sakyamuni and future Buddha Maitreya worshipped and invoked one after another. There are numerous stotras or stavas, composed by devout Buddhists. in Tibetan canonical literature Tanjur commentaries, there is a collection of 71 important stavas in Bstod tshogs section, Vol. Ka, Serial No. 1127. Folio-1-258. This contains Hymns to Buddhas. Bodhisattvas, Prajnaparamita, Jataka, even to Indian Buddhist saint like Vanaratna from Pandita Vihara in Bengal.

While theology of Buddhist gods are abundantly discussed in vast Buddhist literature, the Hymnology - Stotras or Stavas, the devotional and inspiring invocation to Buddhist gods and goddesses narrate gestures denoting divine supramundane attributes, the recitation and contemplation of the Hymns bring about harmony and peace in the individual mind.

Hereunder, we propose to give some important Hymns which are available in Pali, Sanskrit and Tibetan along with english



translation, owing to want of space we propose to bring out other in next issues of Bulletin.

## NOTES

1. The Sanskrit text of the Tri kayastava after the Amdo edition of the Deb-ther sngon-po was first published by Baron A.Von Stael-Holstein in his article "Bemerkungen Zum Tri kayastava " in the Bulletin to L'Academie imperiale des sciences de st. Petersbourg, No. II (1911) . pp. 837-45. The Tibetan traslation of the poem is found in the Bstan-'gyur (bsTod- tshogs, No.1123 val. Ka. F. 70(b) - 71(a) of the (sde-dge edition). Professor Sylvain Levi reconstructed the Sanskrit text of the Tri kayastava in an article which appeared in the Revue de l'histoire des religions, paris, 1896. Vol. XXXIV. pp. 17-21. The above slokas are found in the , Sekoddesatika of Nadapada (Naro-pa), ed. by Marie E. Carelli, Gaekwad's Oriental Series, Vol. XC, (1941), p. 57 (Blue annals by George N. Roerich, Book I. Asiatic Society Calcutta, 1946. p. 1 ).
2. A translation into Tibetan of the slokas is given by Bu-ston Rinpoche in his Dban-mdo'i ram-bsad (Bu-ston gsung-'bum. Vol.III. (ga). fol. 46a). It agrees with that given by 'Gos lo-tsa-ba.(Ibid.p. 2-3).

## BUDDHA PUJA PALI

### I

।। नमो तस्स भगवतो अरहतो सम्मासम्बुद्धस्स ।।

*I bow down to the victoriously passed beyond, who has conquered the enemy, to the perfectly enlightened one - The Buddha.*

यो सन्निसिन्नो वरबोधिमूले ।  
मारं ससेनं महर्तिं विजित्वा ।  
सम्बोधिमागच्छि अनन्तो जाणो ।  
लोकुत्तमो तं पणमामि बुद्धं ।।

*I bow down to the Supramundane Buddha, who having become victorious over the Forces of Evil and their retinue, seated on the basement of Bodhi-Tree, Attained complete Enlightenment.*

## II

वष्णगन्धगुणोपेतं एतं कुसुमसन्तति ।  
पूजयामि मुनिन्दस्स सिरिपादसरोरुहे ।  
पूजेमि कुसुमेनानेन पुञ्जेनेतेन लभामि मोक्षं ।  
पुष्पं सिलायाति यथा इदं मे कायो तथा याति विनासभावं । ।

*I offer oblation to the benign Lotus-Feet of Lord Buddha, offering flower of beautiful hue, fragrance and endowd with divine qualities; I offer oblation to Lord Buddha with this flowers, through the merits I earn, may I be emancipated from the worldly sufferings. As the (beautiful) flower (gradually) decays, the same way gross body decays.*

## III

नत्थि मे सरणं अञ्जं बुद्धो मे सरणं वरं ।  
एतेन सच्चवञ्जेन होतु मे जयमङ्गलं । ।

*I have no other Refuge, The Lord Buddha is ultimate Refuge of mine; Through this utterance of truthful speech, may I become victorious and may good fortune prevail upon me.*

ब्रह्मिन्द देविन्द नरिन्द राजं ।  
बोधि सुबोधि करुणा गुणगं ।  
पञ्चापदीपज्जलितं जलंतं ।  
वन्दामि बुद्धं भवपारवैद्यं । ।

*I bow down to the Lord Buddhs, who is overlord of Brahma-the creator, The Indra-the lord of gods, who is monarch among the men, The monarch the supreme;*

*Who is worshipped with five burning lamps of wisdom, who is blazing light is the Phisician to lead others accross the other shore of cyclic Existence (Bhavapara). (Tr. self)*

## II BHAGAVAN ACARYA SHANKARA'S ELOQUENT INVOCATION TO BUDDHA

धराबद्धपद्मासनस्थाङ्गि यष्टि -  
नियम्यानिलन्यस्तनासाग्रदृष्टिः ।  
य आस्ते कलौ योगिनां चक्रवर्ती  
स बुद्धः प्रबुद्धोऽस्तु नश्वित्तवर्ती । ।

*Whose slender legs like the sticks are fixed in Lotus-seat(Padmasana)gesture on the ground,*

*Whose vision is fixed on the tip of nose, through the control over the breathing,*

*Who is universal monarch among the yogins, in the Kali-yuga. That Enlightened Buddha may adorn our heart.*

*This is the 9th verse of Visnu-dasavatara, stotra, of Acarya Sankara(8th century A.D.) (Tr. self)*

॥ नमो बुद्धाय ॥

यो नीको नाप्यनेकः स्वपरहितमहासम्पदाधारभूतो-  
नैवाभावो न भावः खमिव समरसो दुर्विभाव्यस्वभावः । ।  
निर्लेपं निर्विकारं शिवमसमसमं व्यापिनं निष्प्रपञ्चं -  
वन्दे प्रत्यात्मवेद्यं तमहमनुपमं धर्मकायं जिनानाम् । । १ । ।

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

གཅིག་མིན་དུ་མ་མེད་པ་དེ་གི་གཞན་ལ་མ་ན་པ་ཕྱད་ཕྱལ་ཆོག་པ་ཆེན་གཤིན་ལྟར་པ།  
དེས་མིན་དེས་པོ་མེད་པ་མེད་པ་མེད་པ་ལྟར་རིག་ཅིག་དྲོག་པ་པད་གཞི་ལ་མེད་པ་ཞིན་ཅན།  
གིས་པ་མེད་ཅིང་མེད་ལྟར་གིས་མི་མ་ཉམ་མ་ཉམ་པ་ཐུག་པ་ཅན་དེ་སྤྱོད་པ་མེད་པ།  
པོ་མེད་རིག་ཀྱང་པ་ན་མ་པ་ཉི་ཆོས་སྤྱོད་པ་མེད་གང་ཡིན་དེ་ལ་པད་གཞི་ལྟར་པ་ཆོས་པ།

(2)

*"Homage to the Buddha !*

*Which is neither one, nor many, the foundation of great and excellent benefit to itself and others,*

*Which is neither non-existent, nor existent, equal to Heaven, of equal flavour of unconceivable nature,*

*stainless, immutable, peaceful, matchless, all-pervading,  
unmanifested,*

*I salute that, which is to be intuited, the incomparable Spiritual Body (Dharma-Kaya) of the Jinās !.1.*

**SAMBHOGA-KAYA**

लोकातीतमधिन्यं सुकृतशतफलामात्मनो यो विभूति-  
पर्षन्मध्ये विचित्रं प्रथयति महतीं धीमतां प्रीतिहेतोः । ।

बुद्धानां सर्वलोकप्रसृतमविरतोदारसद्धर्मघोषं-

वन्दे सम्भोगकायं तमहमिह महाधर्मराज्यप्रतिष्ठम् । । २ । ।

[illegible]

(3)

*Which is transcendental, inconceivable, consisting of a hundred well-achieved results, magnificent, which causes the source of joy of wise men to spread in the midst of a resplendent assembly, manifested in all the worlds of the Buddhas, eternal, lofty, the voice of the Good Law. I salute this Body of Glory (Sambhoga-kaya). dwelling in the great Realm of the Doctrine.2.*

## NIRMANA-KAYA

**सत्त्वनां पाकहेतोः क्वचिदनल इवाभाति यो दीप्यमानः-**

सम्बोधी धर्मचक्रे क्वचिदपि च पुनर्दृश्यते यः प्रशान्तः । ।

नैकाकारप्रवृत्तं त्रिभवभयहरं विश्वरूपैरुपायैर-

वन्दे निर्माणकायं दशदिगनुगतं तन्महार्थं मुनीनाम् । । ३ । ।

སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ནི་མིན་པར་མཛད་པའི་ལམ་ཀུན་ཏུ་མེ་ལམ་ར་བཞིན་ཏུ་གསལ་བྱས་ཤིང་།  
ལམ་ལམ་ལང་ནི་རྟགས་པར་བྱས་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ལམ་ལོ་ར་བྱ་བའི་པར་གསལ་བྱས་ལ།  
རྩ་ཆོག་ལ་ཐབས་ཚུལ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ལམ་ལུགས་ཅིང་བྱིན་པ་གསལ་བྱས་ཀྱི་ལམ་ལོ་ར་བྱ་བ་  
ཡིན་པ་བཟུང་བྱས་མཛད་པའི་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྤྱུལ་སྤྱོད་ནི་ཆོད་གསལ་ཡིན་དེ་ལ་ཡུག་ལམ་ལོ།།

(7)

*Which to some shines like the lustre of fire in order to liberate all living beings,*

*Which, serene manifested to some the wheel of the Doctrine of Supreme Enlightenment,*

*Which, having destroyed the perils of the Three Worlds, manifested in itself by various means, and in various forms,*

*I salute this Manifested Body (Nirmana-kaya) of Saints of great purpose, pervading the Ten Directions.3.*

### NIRVIKALPA-JINA-KAYA

त्रैलोक्याचारमुक्तं गगनसमगतं सर्वभावस्वभावं-

शुद्धं शान्तं विविक्तं परमशिवमयं योगीनामेव गम्यं ।।

दुर्बोधं दुर्विचारं स्वपरहिततमं व्यापिनं निर्निमित्तं-

वन्दे कायं जिनानां सुखमसमसमं निर्विकल्पैकमूर्तिम् ।।४।।

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

*Emancipated from the laws of the Three Worlds, equal to Heaven, containing all existences,*

*pure, serene, profound, which is understood by yogins, endowed with the highest serenity,*

*difficult of perception, hard to be investigated, of the highest benefit to one's self and others, all-pervading, causeless,*

*I salute the Body of the Jinas, blissful, matchless, undifferentiated, of one form!4. (tr. Roerich)*

**BSTOD-TSHOGS**  
**VOL-KA**  
**BSTAN-'GYUR(DERGE)**

SI No.	Tibetan	Sanskrit
1109	Khyad-par-du 'phags-pa'i bstod-pa	Visesa-stava
1110	Khyad-par-du 'phags-pa'i bstod-pa'i rgya-cher bshad-pa	Visesa-stava- nama-tika
1111	Thams-cad mkhyen-pa dbang-phyug chen-po'i bstod-pa	Sarvajna - mahesvara- stotra-nama
1112	Lha-las Phul-du Phyung-bar bstod-pa	Devatisaya-stotra
1113	Lha-las phul-du byung-bar bstod-pa'i rgya-cher 'grel-pa	Devatisaya-stotra-tika.
1114	Sangs-rgyas kyi bstod-pa	Buddha-stotra-nama
1115	Chos-kyi sku-la gnas-pa'i yon-tan-la bstod-pa	
1116	De-kho-na-nyid-la bstod-pa	Tattva-stotra
1117	Bdud-btul-la bstod-pa	
1118	Chos-kyi dbyings-su bstod-pa	Dharmadhatu-stava
1119	Dpe-med-par bstod-pa	Nirupama-stava
1120	'Jigs-rten-las 'das-par bstod-pa	Lokatita-stava
1121	Sems-kyi rdo-rje'i bstod-pa	Citta-vajra-stava
1122	Don-dam-par bstod-pa	Paramartha-stava
1123	Sku-gsum-la bstod-pa	Kayatraya-stotra
1124	Sku-gsum-la bstod-pa zhes-bya-ba'i rnam-par 'grel-ba	Kaya-traya stotra nama-vivarana
1125	Sems-can mgu-bar bya-ba'i bstod-pa	Sattvaradhana-stava

1126	Rdo-rje 'chang chen-po'i bstod-pa	maha-vajradhara stotra
1127	Shes-rab-kyi pha-rol-tu phyin-pa'i bstod-pa	Prajnaparamita-stotra
1128	Bsam-gyi mi-khyab-pa'i bstod-pa	Acintya-stava
1129	Bstod-pa-la 'das-par bstod-pa	Stutyatita-stava
1130	Bla-na med-pa'i bstod-pa	Niruttara-stava
1131	'Phags-pa'i rje-btsun 'Jam-dpal-gyi don-dam-pa'i bstod-pa	Arya-bhattacharaka- manjusri-paramartha- stuti-nama
1132	Rje-btsun 'phags-pa 'jam-pal-gyi snying-rje-la bstod-pa	Arya-manjusri- bhattacharaka-karuna stotra
1133	Gnas-chen-po brgyad-kyi mchod-rten-la bstod-pa	Asta-mahasthana- caitya-stotra
1134	Mdzad-pa bcu-gnyis-kyi tshul-la bstod-pa	Dvadasakara-nama- naya-stotra
1135	Phyag-'tshal-ba'i bstod-pa	Vandana-stotra-nama
1136	Dmyal-ba-nas-hdon-pa shes-bya-ba	-Narakoddhara-nama
1137	Sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das-la bstod-pa bsngags-par 'os-pa bsngags-pa-las bstod-par mi-nus-par bstod-pa.	Varnarhavarne- Bhagavato-buddhasya- stotra-sakyastava-nama
1138	Dkon-mchog-gsum-la bkra-shis-kyi bstod-pa	Triratna-mangala- stotra
1139	Yang-dag-par rdzogs-pa'i sangs-rgyas-kyi mtshan-la bstod-pa	Samyak-sambuddha- laksana-stotra
1140	Gcig-las 'Phros-pa'i bstod-pa	Ekottarika-stava.
1141	Bde-bar gshegs-pa sum-cu rtsa-lnga'i bstod-pa mtshan rin-po-ches sprad-pa	Sugata-pancatrimsat- stotra
1142	Tshig-brgyad-kyi bstod-pa	Padastaka-stotra



1143	Dkon-mchog-gsum-gyi bstod-pa	Triratna-stotra
1144	Dkon-mchog gsum-la bstod-pa'i 'grel-pa	Triratna-stotra-vrtti
1145	Brgya-lnga-bcu-pa zhes-bya-ba'i bstod-pa.	Satapancasatka-nama-stotra
1146	Brgya-lnga-bcu-pa zhes-bya-ba'i bstod-pa i 'grel-pa	Satapancasatka-nama stotra-tika
1147	Gandi'i bstod-pa tshigs-su bcad-pa	Gandi-stotra-gatha
1148	Spel-mar bstod - pa	Misraka-stotra-nama
1149	De-bzhin gshegs-pa thams-cad-la bstod-pa	Sarva-tathagata-stotra
1150	Bcom-ldan-'das shakya-thub-pa'i bstod-pa	Bhagavacchakya muni-stotra
1151	Dpal-ldan rje-btsun byang-chub chen-po'i bstod-pa	Sriman-mahabodhi-bhattaraka-stotra
1152	Sangs-rgyas-kyi bstod-pa bcu-pa.	Buddha-stava-dasa
1153	Yon-tan mtha'-yas-par bstod-pa	Guna-paryanta-stotra
1154	Yon-tan mtha' - yas-par bstod-pa'i 'grel-pa.	Guna-paryanta-stotra-tika
1155	Yon tan mtha'-yas-par don-gyi tshig-le'ur byas-pa	Gunaparyanta-stotra padakarika
1156	Sangs-rgyas yongs-su mya-ngan-las 'das-pa-la bstod-pa	Buddha-nirvana-stotra
1157	Bshags-pa'i bstod-pa	Desana-stava.
1158	Bshags-pa'i bstod-pa'i 'grel-pa	Desana-stava-vrtti.
1159	Sangs-rgyas dbang-bskur-ba zhes-bya-ba'i bstod-pa	Buddhabhiseka-nama-stotra
1160	Bcom-ldan-'das-la bstod-pa dpal rdo-rje 'dzin-gyi dbyangs	Sri-vajradhara-samgiti-bhagvat-stotra

1161	Bcom-ldan-'das-la bstod-pa dpal-rdo-rje 'dzin-gyi-dbyangs-kyi rgya-cher bshad-pa	Sri vajradhara-samgiti- bhagvat-stotra-tika
1162	De-bzhin gshegs-pa lnga-la bstod-pa	Panca-tathagata-stotra
1163	De-bzhin gshegs-pa bdun-gyi bstod-pa	Sapta-tathagata-stotra
1164	De-bzhin gshegs-pa brgyad-la bstod-pa	Asta tathagata-stotra
1165	Rab-tu snga-bar nam-langs-pa'i bstod-pa	Suprabhata-parbhata- stotra
1166	Gnas-chen-po brgyad-kyi mchod-rten-la phyag-'tshal-ba'i bstod-pa	Asta-mahasthana- caitya-vandana-stotra
1167	De-bzhin-gshegs pa'i-mtshan-brjod bskal-bzang rgyan-gyi-phreng-ba -shes-by-ba	-Tathagata-nama- sangiti-Kalipika bhadra- alankaramala-nama
1168	Sbyor-ba bzhi'i lha-la bstod-pa	Yoga-catur-deva-stotra- nama
1169	Mkhas-pa chen-po grags-pa rgyal-mtshan-la bstod-pa	Maha-pandita-kirti- dhvaja stotra
1170	Bla-ma dam-pa chos-kyi rgyal- po-la bstod-pa	Parama-guru-dharma- raja-stotra-nama
1171	Rje-btsun 'jig-rten dbang-phyug- seng-ge sgra-la bstod-pa	Simhanada-lokesvara- bhattaraka-stotra
1172	'Jig-rten dbang-phyug-gi bstod-pa rin-po-che'i phreng-ba	Lokesvara-ratna-mala- stava
1173	Tshogs-kyi dbang-phyug-gi bstod-pa	Ganesvara-stava
1174	Dpal-ri-khrod zhabs-kyi bstod-pa rin-po-che	Sri-Savarapada-stotra- nama
1175	Dpal-ldan bla-ma nags-kyi rin-chen- gyi bstod-pa bdun-pa	Sri-Guru-vanaratna- stotra-saptaka
1176	Skyes-pa rabs-kyi bstod-pa	Jataka-stava
1177	Bla-ma dam-pa-la bstod-pa	

**OBITUARY**

**MAYUM CHONYING WANGMO DORJI**

**O**n the night of March 26, corresponding to the 15th day of the second Bhutanese month, Her Royal Highness Mayum Chonying Wangmo Dorji His Majesty the King's beloved grand-mother attained the final state of beatitude in Bhutan House, Kalimpong. Mayum Chonying Wangmo Dorji, who had attained the ripe age of 97 years was one of the architects of Bhutanese History.

The prayers and ritual obsequies were presided over by Lam Namkhyi Nyingpo and Shechen Rabjam Rimpoché with the monks of Jongsa Goemba. A vast concourse of people from all walks of life including friends and well-wishers of the late Mayum thronged the Bhutan House premises at Kalimpong to catch a last glimpse of the grand lady whom they admired and adored, and to pay their final homage and tribute to the departed one.

Amidst universal mourning all over Bhutan, the Kuphung was cremated at the sacred Kurji Lhakhang in Bumthang on April 25, coinciding with the 15th day of the third month of the Bhutanese calendar.

Mayum was born in 1897 in Sikkim as the youngest child of Chogyal Thutob Namgyal the ninth consecrated ruler of Sikkim. Mayum who was the only sister to the 10th Chogyal Sidkeong Trulku and the 11th Chogyal Tashi Namgyal was given monastic education in her early years. She also acquired a good modern education.

She was a deeply religious person and a scholar with keen interest in the history and culture of Bhutan. She was a versatile adept in the history and culture of Tibet and Sikkim.



**Mayum Chonying Wangmo Dorji with H.M. the King in 1979**  
Courtesy 'KUENSEL' (Bhutan)

## OBITUARY

In the loving memory of her husband Gongzing Sonam Tobgye Dorji, son of Raja Ugyen Dorji, who died in 1953 Mayum offered gold to a project patronised by the third king His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, to write the whole set of Kanjur and Tenjur, comprising more than 300 volumes of the sacred teachings and expositions of lord Bhuddha, in letters of gold.

Mayum also constructed many Lhakhangs (Temples) and generously donated money for the renovation of monasteries and for the regular performances of rites and Dubchhen at Punakha, in keeping with the traditional Bhutanese Culture; and also for promoting the course of Mahayana Buddhism.

Rani Chonying Wangmo Dorji took active part in the organizational activities of Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok, Sikkim. She was co-opted in the General Council of SRIT; for the years 1964-65. Her name was proposed for election as Vice-President of the Institute General Council and executive board of the Institute for crudition in the field of Buddhist scholarship.

She was one of the permanent founder members of this Institute which is devoted to the study and promotion of Buddhism. We have in our possession, the 'Mayum Chonying Wangmo Dorji Blocks' of the Book containing the Tibetan translation done by Rani Churni Dorji and Chang-lo-chen Gong Kusho of the english narrative of the discovery and installation (Serthi-Ngasol) of His Holines the XIV Dalai Lama. Several copies were reproduced from this Block-print, on account of overwhelming demand for this work.

The President and Governing Body members, Director and Staff pay homage to the great departed soul and pray for eternal peace.

*(Some extracts are from Kuensel : Bhutan's National Newspaper, dt. 2.4.1994)*

*Dr. Lama T.D. Bhutia*  
Director  
SRIT

## OUR THREE MAJOR ART PUBLICATIONS

- 1 **RGYAN DRUG MCHOG GNYIS** (Six ornaments and Two Excellents) reproduces ancient scrolls(1670 A.C.) depicting Buddha, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmakirti, Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha. Reproductions are as per originals today after 300 years of display and worship with an attempt at niceties and the theme of the paintings, namely, the Mahayana philosophy; the treatment is designed to meet the needs of the general reader with an interest in the Trans-Himalayan art or Mahayana. A glossary in Sanskrit-Tibetan a key to place names and a note on source material are appended. illustrated with five colour plates and thirteen monochromes.(English text) Folio 54 Second Reprint. 1980 and priced at Silk Bound Rs. 300/-, Paper Bound Rs. 200/-.
- 2 **SANGS RGYAS STONG** : Subtitled An Introduction to mahayana Iconography. This book of 75 pages (11 and half inches x 8 inches) contains 4 colour plates and more than 80 line drawings(sketchs); thick paper back with Jacket depicting 33 Buddhas. Intended for the lay readers, this introductory account is based on original sources in Pali, Sanskrit and Tibetan. The basic concept of thousand Buddhas is explain at length, while all the important symbols and images in their variant forms are presented from believers' point of view. Art critic or academician will find the book worthy of perusal. (English text), Folio 75 pub. 1988 and priced at Rs. 200/-
- 3 **TALES THE THANKAS TELL** : Subtitled An Introduction to Tibetan Scroll Portraits. The book has 64 pages (11 & half inches x 8 inches) and contains well produced eleven colour plates, with Jacket depicting Buddha Sakyamuni and his two disciples. The book tells much about Mahayana Pantheon and particularly about the legends and myths around Buddhism as depicted through numerous Scroll Portrait forms. These colourful portraits speak about the contacts with the traditions of Tartary, China, India, Iran and Byzantium, Pub. 1989 and priced at Rs. 250/-

## NEW DIRECTOR

**S**ikkim Research Institute of Tibetology welcomes its new Director, Dr. Lama Thinley Dorji Bhutia, M.A., B.Ed., M.Phil., Ph.D. He hails from Yolmo community who had originally migrated from mainland Tibet to its southern part called Yolmo, which now comes under the kingdom of Nepal.

Himself being a Lama for the past 51 years and having forty years of teaching and 32 long years of administrative experience, he had started his career as a Tibetan Teacher at Darjeeling Government High School where he was also appointed as the Boarding Superintendent. He had successfully completed the Officers' training at Kampti and had also been a senior NCC Officer there.

In 1966 he was appointed Tibetan Professor at the Nation's prestigious Institution at N.D.A., Khadakvasla, Poona where he was also holding the ex-officio portfolios of Secretary, N.D.A. English School, Academic Councillor and Officer-in Charge, Indian Music Club. Besides being musician, he is also a good vocalist.

On completion of seventeen years of service at the N.D.A., he was appointed Director by the UPSC to head the Defence Institute of Foreign Languages, New Delhi under the Government of India. The students of the Institute where training in thirteen foreign languages of the globe is imparted, ranged from the rank of a Sepoy to General and equivalent. He has brought unprecedented changes in the

Institution by revolutionising and modernising the entire system. Under his direction he had successfully arranged several extra-curricular activities like National Seminar, Workshop, Literary Meet, Convocation and Cultural Programmes which were chaired by high dignitaries and attended by eminent indigenous and foreign scholars and educationists.

During his thirteen years tenure at Delhi, he was associated with several important organisations. He had been Chairman, Board of Examiners; Member, Faculty of Arts, Delhi University; Member, CEAL, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Member, CDCFL, University Grants Commission; Department Representative, UPSC; and Member, Selection Committee, All India Radio, New Delhi.

Besides acquiring the highest university degree in Buddhist Studies, in the field of Buddhism too he has equally a great achievement to his credit. He was born in a family in which the entire generations had been devout Lamas. His late father, grandfather, great grand-father and other earlier were all Lamas. In fact, it is said that deeper analysis will reveal that the Lamaic lineage of his family leads upto the summit where it reaches Guru Padmasambhava.

While he was an able administrator and astute educationist through his training in intellectual, moral and physical discipline, he also, throughout maintained a meditative and religious balance in his life.

Under the disciple-ship of the most prominent Gurus of our time, namely His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama, His Eminence Zamyang Khentse Chokyi Lodro, His Eminence Dilgo Khentshe Rimpoche and His Eminence Lama Damay Tshering, Dr Bhutia has successfully completed long retreats in all the four stages of accomplishments like Shiwa (peaceful), Rgyad-pa (expansion), Dwang (empowerment) and Drag-po (Wrathfulness), the accomplishment of which is imperative for a versatile Ngingma Lama.

At nine he was initiated as a novice Lama at Mag-dhog Monastery, Allobari, Darjeeling. Between 1943-50 he successfully



completed three of his retreats comprising three months duration each under the able guidance of his first Guru Lama Damay Tsering, who bestowed upon him three different kinds of initiation (Wang, Lung and Thri) concerning Peaceful (Shi-wa); Expansion (rGyad-pa) Empowerment (dWang) and Wrathfulness (drag-po) which are imperative to accomplish for a Lama belonging to Nyingma sect. In 1955 he received yet another two important initiation from no less than the living god His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama and His Eminence Jamyang Khentse Chokyi Lodro, popularly known as Jamyang Khentse Rinpoche. He received the empowerment (Wang and Lung) concerning Mani-Mantra of Avalokitesvara (Chenrezig) and Vajrapani (Chana Dorji) from these two eminent Gurus respectively. These were followed by yet another two months retreat (Tsham) in seclusion. Finally, he received the empowerment of the highest meditational practice, namely "Dzogchen" from Dilgo Khentse Rinpoche, who was the foremost non-sectarian Rinpoche and very highly enlightened master of meditation. Dr Bhutia again underwent one month's meditation to accomplish this empowerment. Also he had undergone several meditation courses at Igatpuri under the able guidance of Ven. S.N. Goenkaji. It may sound like a fantasy, but his own book reveals that the duration of meditation he has completed during his last 51 years in the capacity of Lama, if it is compared in terms of years, he has completed 13 1\2 years full time medication course. Besides being a Lama and expert in meditation, he is also highly proficient in Yoga. He has been practising Yoga for the last thirty two years along with meditation. He has accomplished a good deal of research in Buddhism and has written books entitled "Mahayana Buddhism" and "Contribution of Padmasambhava to Tibetan Buddhism". His latest publication "Beyond Eternity Through Mysticism" has gained momentum in popularity and is being widely read in India and abroad.

He assumed Director's charge at SRIT from July, 1994. He seems to be a strict disciplinarian and a hard task master. Right from the day he took over, he has started revamping, overhauling and tightening the entire administrative and educational system in this Institution.

We hope and anticipate that, with active cooperation and wise guidance of the President and the Honourable Members of this august Institution, he will be able to unite this confluence of Mahayana-Vajrayana with the mainstream of the country.

Being second to none in its field, Tibetology occupies a unique position in our planet. In keeping with its aims and objectives, within a couple of months of his taking over, on 5th September, 1994 Dr. Bhutia convened a crucial meeting of the General Council and the Executive Board, both of which are headed by His Excellency the Governor of Sikkim in his capacity as the President. In the meeting Dr. Bhutia projected an unprecedented master-plan to transform Tibetology to a Deemed University within a span of three year's time. Since the Executive Board found the proposal to be fool-proof and fruitful, the members unanimously accepted the plan. With this, a new chapter in the annals of SRIT history has begun. The proposed Deemed University will also be the 'torch bearer' for the holy land of Sikkim and its generations to come.

*B. Ghosh*  
*Assistant Director*  
*SRIT*

## BEYOND ETERNITY THROUGH MYSTICISM

**T**he author, Lama T.D. Bhutia has to his credit 51 years of experience in lamahood, most profound lama as his masters, 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> years full time meditation course and 25 years of practice in yoga. He is also Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies.

He has condensed the essence of all his life-time experience in 'Beyond Eternity through Mysticism'. Although the book is written from the Tibetan Buddhist point of view, it is devoid of any superstition or blind faith. The reality of life and death has been made open secret and he has thrown it open to the readers to test it.

The ultimate goal of humanity does not rest within the ambit of eternity, but it is 'Beyond Eternity'. Instead of directly plunging into 'Mysticism', the book initially deals with sub-topics which gradually leads the readers to the depth of mysticism hidden in the subtle energy of our own and finally it penetrates deep into the subtlest mysticism by unveiling the truth pertaining to 'Great Perfection'.

Enlightenment cannot be bestowed upon us by god or goddess, but it has to be generated through our own vital energy like the illumination of electricity which is possible only with the combination of negative and positive circuits. Downward flow of vital energy (white in male and juice in female) is at anybody's beck and call. The

same vital energy, if one can make flow upward through the central channel by mystic force, one can remain in the stage 'Great Bliss' which is the stage 'Beyond Eternity'. Unlike the emission caused due to our carnal lust, 'Great Bliss' is free from vice. At this stage the practitioner spiritually delinks himself from corporeal existence and merges into voidness. Such void nature is not 'nothingness', but it is the voidness which manifests. At this stage, one cuts the root of his 'dualistic existence' and transforms himself to the 'Primordial' non-dual stage which has neither cause, nor effect; neither thought nor thinker; neither craving nor aversion; neither coming nor going, neither existence nor non-existence and neither birth nor death. This is the stage which is 'Beyond Eternity'. This is the originality of our consciousness (mind) which is devoid of 'self' or 'soul'. This is Enlightenment.

How the practice of such mystic technique in this life helps immensely the practitioner after death in the 'intermediate stage' is also made clear in this book. The author has unveiled this mysticism by describing at length three different kinds of meditation to reach 'Beyond Eternity' and has also left it open to readers to try the method and find out the truth. There is no hide and seek. An individual is the creator and he himself is the destroyer, none else. To choose between 'suffering' and 'enlightenment' is in our own hand and god or goddess has no role to play in it.

The book also narrates the horrifying suffering of the sentient being including gods, many of which hitherto were unheard of. It also explains the stage of 'complete Bliss' which is beyond the imagination of a lay-man.

The first mysticism that the book reveals is that the entire truth of the universe lies nowhere else than within the framework of our own body. The body is dissected into two parts, namely 'mind and matter'. The mind is primordially pure and serene, but as soon as it comes into contact with the five sense organs of our body, it is badly influenced. Thus the mind loses its originality and falls in the dragnet

of samsara, i.e., the world of suffering. The chapter 'mind and master' has been dealt with convincingly.

One can never liberate himself and go 'Beyond Eternity' so long as he does not properly understand the true nature of mind. The 'mysticism' concerning the primordial true nature of mind can only be unveiled through the via-media of 'meditation'. The author has highlighted three different modes of meditation for the purpose which are universal and practical.

An amazing description as to how after death our consciousness (mind) dances to the tune of predisposition in the intermediate stage where our Karmic reaction fails to recognise the true nature of mind and how again we choose our birth in the samsara is given.

The author has extended his help to those like-minded readers who want to go into further depth of 'Mysticism' to reach 'Beyond Eternity'. No pre-condition for conversion to any faith is laid for the purpose.

Apart from the esoteric title, at first glance one is tempted to think that this text is technically specific to Nyingmapa Vajrayana students and disciples, and hence is neither intended for nor necessarily suitable to students of other traditions of Buddhism. Yet the sincerity and depth of the author's perspective is so empathetic to the reader's need for the most essential, generalized information on Buddhist practice that any question of whether he is speaking to you or not becomes completely obsolete, despite the Tibetan Buddhist context from which it originates.

The principal motivating theme of Beyond Eternity is to eliminate "blind faith" from Buddhist practice by illuminating the theories underlying activities of Buddhists generally, and Vajrayana practitioners in particular. Beginning with a sound historical evolution of early Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism, the author then explores the topics of cause and effect, the five aggregates, dependent origination, meditation and the Hinayana and Mahayana paths.

Vajrayana is introduced by an in-depth review of Guru Padmasambhava's biography which is followed by a thoroughly detailed explanation of tantric practice. The preliminary practices and Dzogchen practice are then discussed. After a brief exploration of the nature of the Bardo, the author provides a colorful and intimate view of his own personal experience, and follows this with an appendix detailing the practices of offering incense and black tea, butter lamps, and other practical topics. The book closes with an exhaustive bibliography.

From the Yolmowa tribe, and having studied in monasteries and institutions in India since age ten, the author writes in straightforward (Indian-style) English which is not the result of translation. Furthermore, the author is a practitioner of over forty years under the disciple-ship of not only His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and His Holiness Dilgo Khentse Rinpoche, but the renowned holder of all four Tibetan Buddhist lineages, Jamyang Khyentse Chokyi Lodro, who spearheaded the non-sectarian movement in Tibet. Their influence permeates the author's presentation, and the information presented is sufficiently general to be of practical value to any student of Buddhism. The author's experience in study and practice with the Vipassana tradition reflects the seriousness with which he pursues his Buddhist life and has further empowered him to transcend orientations toward his own sect of Buddhism while at the same time faithfully pursuing its advice.

This valuable text is the unification of clear academic rigor and heart advice from the author which never relies on the reader's faith or superstition but rather the fruits of the author's own studies and practice. The world at large, and particularly students and practitioners of any form of Buddhism are indeed fortunate to have the opportunity to study with this previously little-known Buddhist and scholar of high caliber, which studying this book enables them to do in a manner rarely seen in other texts. All profits from the book are donated to the charitable cause of preserving the author's personal Buddhist lineage through support to its monastery in Darjeeling.

Presently the author is the Director, Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok, Sikkim (India). The book comprising 315 pages can be had from the Institute.

Price : Hard bound Rs. 250/-

Paper back Rs. 200/-

*B. Ghosh*  
*Asstt. Director*  
*SRIT*

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*In view of price hike in the printing and stationery cost, the following revision were made in the prices of publication with effect from 1st May, 1993 subject to further revision in course of time.*

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