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Tropu Lotsawa (1172-1236): Translator and Builder of Religious Institutions in 13th Century Tibet

Jared Ward

According to Carl Yamamoto, writing about Tibet in the twelfth century, “Buddhism had become an instrument not only of religious life but also of law, order and governance...”¹ The twelfth century and into the thirteenth was a period where religion ascended and in many ways a period defined by Buddhist sub-sects and their monastic centers. These centers were multi-functional institutions that fulfilled a range of roles: social, political and religious to form a network of non-centralized authority throughout Tibet. The lack of one dominant school during this period led to the flourishing of a variety of sub-sects all offering their own slightly different religious package with implications on the social and political landscape.²

At the head of each sub-sect were individuals of social and religious accomplishment who led diverse and dynamic religious communities that acted out social and political functions. These individuals and their communities became an animating force of thirteenth century Tibet, creating new schools of Buddhism through teacher-disciple lineages, teachings, and tutelary deity devotions validated by family and clan pedigree.³ One paradigmatic individual exemplifying this was Tropu Lotsawa Jampapel (1172-1236 CE), an early progenitor of the Tropu Kagyüpa sub-sect and prolific translator of Buddhist scripture.⁴ As the abbatial throne-holder of Tropu monastery, Tropu Lotsawa Jampapel personified the ability of Buddhism to concentrate religious and social authority. Tropu Lotsawa was a translator of Buddhist scripture, holder of lineages, host to three important Indian Buddhist teachers and the creator of religious monuments that marked sacred space and demonstrated wealth. The authority deposited in him and religious exemplars like him, was an extension of the power of Buddhism itself. By the thirteenth century Buddhism and social prosperity had forged an inseparable link in Tibet. As Ronald Davidson writes, “Empire building had become an extension of Buddhism’s ‘magical’ effect...”⁵ This magical effect dates back to the beginnings of the Tibetan Empire where conceptions of divine kingship existed.⁶ Tropu Lotsawa’s life is an example not of a divine king but a wealthy scion of Tibetan nobility, a builder of a socio-religious institution who led a life dedicated to religious goals. The following essay will examine the life of Tropu Lotsawa with a focus on how he participated in the building of social-religious institutions, an intertwining of the sacred, authority and governance. Along the way to unraveling

the life of Tropu Lotsawa, particular attention will be given to the religious community at Tropu, the religious individuals and their Buddhist practices and monuments, and the lineages formed by and through Tropu Lotsawa himself with three great Buddhist masters.

A basic definition of an institution, and a starting point for how Buddhist sub-sects functioned as one, is a governing body that creates normative boundaries for behavior, resources (i.e. land, economic currency, manpower etc.) and focuses these toward certain social, and in the models of thirteenth century Tibet, religious, ends.⁷

The Buddhist monastery by the time of Tropu Lotsawa's life exhibited all of these capacities. Behavior was regulated through boundaries of orthodoxy, prescribed behaviors that helped tame behavior and created a system that encouraged certain behaviors and practices while discouraging others. Monasteries were often a center of interactions and formed an integral part of communities, their economics and commerce.⁸ Buddhism itself was frequently involved in inter-regional economics and spread from India along trade routes by merchants. It was not only the interactions of the affluent, the merchants and traders that would have interacted at the monastery, but also the locals of each community. As Yamamoto notes, farmers and nomads would do seasonal festivals and exchanges at monasteries.⁹ The social, economic and religious well being of a community was intertwined with the functionality of a monastery, which was under the auspices of select individuals.¹⁰ These monasteries continued to grow and gained the patronage of wealthy donors.¹¹ As a result the monasteries accrued land and wealth.¹² The abbots and leaders of various Buddhist sub-sects, the throne holders of these monasteries, were at the center of this growth, acting out religious functions as shapers of tradition and practice and secular functions through governance and economic control. Monasteries administered power not only in the religious realm but exerted authority in secular affairs evidenced by the creation of different positions for different social faces and functions.¹³ These new offices collected taxes, controlled armies and exerted symbolic and physical force over territory.

By the thirteenth century, royalty-based rule in Tibet had been displaced by the authority of Buddhist monks in what formed a religio-political system where religious leaders served the dual role of temporal and spiritual leader.¹⁴ The clan system persisted in many ways, however morphed to form the basis of the different lineages and sub-sects of Tibetan Buddhism.¹⁵ An inverse formulation of this relationship is equally true. It was not necessarily monks rising to power but those in power seeing a life of religion, even one regulated by the vows of a monk, as not restricted or contradictory to a life of land ownership and political authority. This idea of familial lines, belonging to certain clans, was a source of validation even in the religious world.¹⁶

This system of hereditary self-justification was a process at work in Tropu Lotsawa's life. Although little is known about his parents, he was from a young age given to his uncles for education and to later serve as the heir to the monastic throne at Tropu monastery.¹⁷ According to the *Lho rong chos 'byung*, Tropu Lotsawa was born to Jophen, his father, and mother, Segmo Salje.¹⁸ According to the *Lho rong chos 'byung* at the age of ten, he took novice vows from Gyaltsa and Kunden Repa. At the age of nineteen Gyaltsa, mentioned as the abbot of Tropu monastery, along with a certain Tsang kar, and his other uncle Kunden Repa gave him full ordination. It was these same two that gave him a name that would stay with him his whole life, Jampapel. He continued to study under these two, receiving from them various precepts. Prior to his travel to India, at the age of twenty-four he performed the funeral ceremony for Gyaltsa, showing the special place he held under his uncle.¹⁹

His two uncles, Kunden Repa and Gyaltsa had achieved some degree of religious notoriety but their clan affiliation continued to be an epitaph explicating their social prominence.²⁰ They were part of a precious lineage, the Nubs clan.²¹ Following the fragmentation of 842 CE, various local lords who managed estates formed hereditary clans named after the geographical area of their land holdings. These clans traced their lineage back to a common ancestor often making marital alliances with neighboring clans. The Nubs clan was an example of one of these lines, which would create an important link between Gyaltsa, and a consanguine link to Tropu Lotsawa's, a yoke with a hereditary line of historic prominence in Tibet. Van der Kuijp calls Tropu Lotsawa "a scion of Tibetan Landed nobility."²² The lineage of Tropu Lotsawa from a noble family would further be enhanced by his forging of a link to three prominent Indian masters, a building of a lineage that would assure his place as a member of Tibet's religious aristocracy.

While its Buddhist activities have lived on in the histories of Tibet, the place of Tropu did not come into existence with the building of a monastery. Located near Puntsok, west of Shigatse, little is known about the types of daily economic activity and social life of Tropu. One brief discussion of the later Sakya period's division of Tibet into various administrative districts called Tri kor does shed a little light on how such areas functioned in secular matters and later came to be administrated.²³ When the Mongols arrived in Tibet around 1247 CE, it was Sakya Paṇḍita who was appointed by the Mongol Godan to govern Tibet. Following the political ascendancy of Sakya Paṇḍita, different parts of Tibet were divided - most likely for purposes of taxation and governance. In a further sub-division from each Tri kor were two groups of Tong kor, or "communities of 1,000."²⁴ The place Tropu was considered a Tong kor subdivision of Chumik. According to Roberto Vitali, a Tong kor was a "monastic community of one thousand, with which secular functions were evidently associated."²⁵

By the time of the Sakya rule, only slightly after the death of Tropu Lotsawa in 1236 CE, Tropu monastery and its community of monks was large enough to participate in the activities of Tibet as a functioning socio-religious institution.

Despite the secular functions mentioned by Vitali, the community of Tropu was founded on and perpetuated through religious practice and activities. The religious history of Tropu monastery started with the maternal uncle of Tropu Lotsawa, Gyaltsa (1118- 1195 CE). Gyaltsa's teachers were a mix of Kargyupa and Nyingma.²⁶ Gyaltsa mastered many teachings, Mahamudra, the Chöd system from a student of Machik Labdron, Lam skor and more. Gyaltsa's main teacher was Phagmo Drupa. Previous to his full time entrance into the religious world, Gyaltsa had worked with traders and barterers as a merchant.²⁷ It was the networking of his life as a trader that brought him into contact with influential figures, the most so for Gyaltsa being Phagmo Drupa. The wealth accumulated by Gyaltsa's exploits in trade allowed him to become a patron to the community of Phagmo Drupa. Landowners such as Gyaltsa, who purchased plots of land for religious training and practice, were wealthy nobleman who often came from long lines of hereditary wealth. The life of Gyaltsa as a trader turned monk, is indicative of a larger trend of the period. His resources were invested in religious ends, first as a patron of the Phagmo Drupa community and then as a purchaser of land for religion practice. The first monastic community at Tropu included about twenty monks who focused on mind concentration.²⁸ At the age of fifty-four, just prior to his purchase of the land at Tropu, Gyaltsa took full ordination.²⁹

What began as small group of monks at Tropu monastery flourished into a thriving, eclectic and dynamic community. Another important presence in the early stages of religious practice at Tropu monastery and also impactful in the life of Tropu Lotsawa was Kunden Repa (1148-1217 CE). A brief biography found in the *bka' brgyud chos 'byung nor bu'i phreng ba* describes some events of Kunden Repa's life.³⁰ He is called the younger sibling of Gyaltsa and was born in 1148 CE. According to this text Kunden Repa cultivated the urge to take up a life of religious devotion after hearing the biography of Milarepa read aloud. He then made a vow to live his life as a replication of Milarepa's. The rest of his life and exact teachings he was responsible for are sparse. Like his brother Gyaltsa, he seemed to have had a strong relationship with Phagmo Drupa, his primary teacher. He became a mahasiddha while learning under Phagmo Drupa and even oversaw the construction of the monastery that held the monastic seat of Phagmo Drupa. There are also brief mentions of miracles associated with Kunden Repa. One tells of a famine that struck Tropu monastery. Using his hand-staff he made food appear at the threshold of the monastery at Tropu, making the famine subside. Alongside Gyaltsa he ordained the young Tropu Lotsawa. At the age of seventy, in the year 1217, he died.

Aside from the well-respected teachers Gyaltsa and Kunden Repa, there were also other religious practices at Tropu. In the same vein of famous women teachers such as Machik Labdron was Machik Rema, a student of Mitrayogin.³¹ During Mitrayogin's eighteen-month stay at Tropu monastery, sometime around 1197 CE, she learned from Mitrayogin the lineage of the "Cutting the Flow of Saṃsāra."³² She was a direct disciple of Kunden Repa and was described as, "A great yogini who clearly did realize the way things are, emptiness."³³

She is chronicled to have great powers such as clairvoyance.³⁴ She raised Chegom Dzungpa Sherab Dorje, another figure who had great success from his start at Tropu.³⁵ According to the *Chos rje khro phu* Machik Rema died when Tropu Lotsawa was fifty-one years old, which would make the approximate year of her death 1223 CE.³⁶ According to one source, referring to her as the consort of Tropu, she died when she was sixty-eight years old.³⁷

Tropu Lotsawa was an inheritor of this rich history and built on it in substantial ways, responsible for in his own way changing the course of Buddhism in Tibet. One product of the resurgence of Tibetan culture, in what has been called the Tibetan Renaissance, was the rise of Buddhist translators to a new height as rejuvenators of religion, bringers of political prosperity and agents of power.³⁸ The translators formed what Davidson calls a new Tibetan aristocracy.³⁹ As the agents of transformation, an alchemist of sorts of Buddhist doctrine, they were in essence a concrete actualization bringing Buddhism from India to Tibet. This gave the translators a unique position as the mediators of important teachings and allowed them to be in possession of some of the most important texts in Tibetan Buddhism. This process of standardizing certain practices and texts as authenticated by these translators allowed Buddhism in Tibet to shape the behavior of its adherents and to build institutions, a pivotal role in organizing Tibet politically and socially.

Tropu Lotsawa walked a path worn and well traveled by translators before him.⁴⁰ Sometime after turning nineteen, he began to cultivate an intense desire to become a translator of Buddhist scriptures. This was prompted from his personal interactions with a relatively unknown translator, Kar Lotsawa. Not much is known about Kar Lotsawa other than his abilities in Sanskrit and possibly a different Indian vernacular. According to Tropu Lotsawa's autobiography Kar Lotsawa stayed at Tropu monastery learning from Gyaltsa, Tropu Lotsawa's uncle, and meanwhile telling Tropu Lotsawa stories from India. Most likely these fantastic tales of exotic travels would have incited his desire to travel to India. A conversation recorded by Tropu Lotsawa between Kar Lotsawa and Gyaltsa tells of Kar Lotsawa mentioning Tropu Lotsawa's coming from a noble family, it would make sense for the young man to travel to India to learn how to be a translator. For non-specific reasons, Gyaltsa is unenthusiastic about the prospect and says that Tropu

Lotsawa is needed to stay at the monastery and teach religion otherwise he could go. It may have been the tumultuous situation of India causing Gyaltsa's reticence, as will be discussed in a later section. Tropu Lotsawa bided his time until he was able to travel to India and sought out a local Sanskritist. Accompanied by three personal attendants, he studied with Zhang Lotsawa in Tibet. However, the situation in northern India made it impossible for him to get further than the Kathmandu Valley.⁴¹

While learning under Zhang Lotsawa, Tropu Lotsawa's curriculum was rigorous, including Smṛtijñānakīrti's *Vacanamukhāyudhopama*, the *Sabdāvatāra*, the *Vyākaraṇālaṅkāra* and the *Amarakoṣa* amongst others. Tropu Lotsawa was involved in the later transmission and handing down of these texts and more amongst the literati of Tibet during his life. According to van der Kuijp, the very important *Amarakoṣa* text was first mentioned in Tibetan literature in an autobiography of Tropu Lotsawa, signaling him as one of the first Tibetan translators to work with the text.⁴² As will be discussed, aside from hereditary and teacher lines, facilitating verifiable teachings was an important process of centering power in the monastery.⁴³

The Blue Annals recounts a bout of sickness battled by Tropu Lotsawa while in India marked by a severe fever.⁴⁴ The young Tibetan survived the illness but this illustrates sacrifices in becoming a translator were great. The roads between India and Tibet at this time were often unsafe, prone to robberies and bandits. Furthermore, traveling into the very situation from which great Buddhist masters such as Śākyaśrībhadrā were fleeing would have made his safety no guarantee. Yet, most likely fueled on by the travel tales of Kar Lotsawa, the magnificent epics of those before him like Marpa, the risk was seen as a worthy one. Tropu Lotsawa, a member of Tibetan hereditary nobility had a strong desire to above all else become a religious exemplar, a translator of the dharma. This is a task he would spend his entire life trying to fulfill. Through his passing of important and valid teachings, both directly from India, as well as those he translated in Tibet during his time as the translator of Śākyaśrībhadrā and others, he was an agent of transformation.

The examples of Gyaltsa, Kunden Repa, Tropu Lotsawa and Machik Rema were individuals of great religious accomplishment that were active at the community of Tropu. This is only part of the story, however. These mainstays at Tropu monastery discussed above were supplemented and further validated by the presence of three visiting Indian Panditas. These individuals played a pivotal role in the creation of lineages. One way that Tibetan monasteries functioned as a cogent institution with a shared institutional heritage rather than a series of unrelated individuals was through the creation of lineages. On a basic level lineage formation creates distinction, belonging to one teacher or clan rather than another.

A lineage holder exists “...not only as a person who holds the main teachings (secret precepts and the like) from a particular teacher, but one who also passed them on in a significant for posterity.”⁴⁵ Thus it is relational and transactional, a mold of relationships and representative of communal continuity, a link of the present to the past. This idea of lineage tracing has a special place in the Tibetan understanding of history. Yamamoto quoting David Jackson says:

The fastidious care paid by generation after generation of Tibetans to recording actual lineages... is, as far as I can judge, special within the Asian Buddhist cultural realm. Though rooted in Indian concepts of the guru lineage, these Tibetan expressions of lineage have few close parallels known to me elsewhere in the world.⁴⁶

Group identification to some degree depends on its pedigree fully, without it an identity incomplete and lacking validation.⁴⁷ An inextricably important part of the formation of the lineage process was the ability to trace one’s religious understanding back to authenticated teachers. Individuals who became authenticated were able to facilitate authenticity to others and their communities, which had real economic and authority implications. Tropu Lotsawa forged the greatest link in the process of authentication through his invitation and hosting of three great Indian masters to Tibet: Śākyaśrībhadrā, Buddhaśrī and Mitrāyogin. Each of these masters, as will be discussed individually, had a special impact on Buddhism in Tibet. They established teachings, were active fundraisers, and left behind equally powerful tangible and non-tangible legacies. They were themselves mobile institutions, transplanting authentic Buddhism from its nascent home, an India under attack, and sowing new seeds in Tibet. The Indian masters that fled to Tibet at the invitation of Tropu Lotsawa would be amongst the last of their kind to make the trip to Tibet, which was indicative of the perilous future of Indian Buddhism and situated Tibet firmly as a new center of Buddhism for the future.

At the time of Tropu Lotsawa’s invitation, India was a difficult place for Buddhism. The conflicts in northern India created a “geo-religious shift” in which Tibet became the center of the Buddhist world.⁴⁸ From 1197–1199 CE, Muhammad Baktiyar Khilji had raided and destroyed the great Buddhist universities of Nālandā, Vikramaśīla, and Odantpuri.⁴⁹ This was not the first time Buddhism in India had been under attack, as it was a continuation of attacks that predecessors such as Mahmud of Ghazni had started. In 997 CE, Mahmud succeeded his father Sabuktigin and led frequent raids on India, making seventeen between the years 100-1027.⁵⁰ Many factors led to Buddhism’s eventual dissipation from north India but the advancing Muslim forces delivered a final blow, sacking monasteries, burning libraries, and slaughtering monks.⁵¹ Those who were able to escape fled to neighboring countries such as Nepal and Tibet.

This diaspora of great Indian Buddhist Paṇḍitas fleeing India launched an influx of new teachings to Tibet. These masters left India carrying with them precious texts and relics to avoid the destruction done by the invading an-iconic Muslim armies. This influx of Indian ideas encouraged the existence of a diversity of Buddhist schools and sub-sects.⁵²

The most influential of the three figures, both in Tibet as a whole, and to Tropa Lotsawa's efforts in Tibet as an individual, was Śākyaśrībhadrā, the great Kashmiri Paṇḍita. In the transmission of Buddhism to Tibet, Śākyaśrībhadrā can be argued to be one of the most important Indians to visit Tibet, comparable to the great Atīśa.⁵³ In his publication of two works focused on Śākyaśrībhadrā, one eulogy composed by Tropa Lotsawa and the second a commentary by a lesser-known [Basöd nampal zang po](#), David Jackson brings to light some significant events in Śākyaśrībhadrā's life.⁵⁴ Jackson says during his ten year stay, there were four major contributions that the Kashmiri Paṇḍita made to Tibet.⁵⁵ First, he re-introduced a famous Vinaya ordination lineage and with it a fully functioning monastic community. He most notably did this at Sakya through one of his pupils and the great Tibetan scholar, Sakya Paṇḍita. He established at Sakya a full ordination line, the Mūlasarvāstivāda.⁵⁶ This spread of an authentic ordination line would be a valuable continuity between generations, tracing back to India itself. Secondly, in conjunction with Sakya Paṇḍita, he revised and translated a new teaching line of the *Pramāṇavārttika*, the greatest work of Dharmakīrti. Third, based on new calculations he revised Buddhist chronology of the historical life of Śākyamuni Buddha. His calculations differed from earlier Tibetan accounts and in fact come much closer to calculations reached by modern scholars. This may not seem significant, but in light of the importance of precise lineages in Buddhism, especially so in Tibet, this helped solidify historically a most important link to India. And finally, working in conjunction with Tropa Lotsawa, he helped raise the necessary resources and funds to construct the great Maitreya statue housed at Tropa monastery.⁵⁷

In the 1204 CE the Kashmiri Pandita, Śākyaśrībhadrā arrived in Tibet.⁵⁸ Accompanied by a retinue of learned Indian teachers, he left behind a hostile environment torn by conquest and conflict through a pass at the Chumbi valley, an important route in trans-Himalayan trade and travel.⁵⁹ The Kashmiri left behind the lush forests of India for the snowy mountains of Tibet, arriving at Tropa monastery at the invitation of a young Tropa Lotsawa. *The Blue Annals* recounts Śākyaśrībhadrā's acceptance as a result of being impressed with the young Tibetan's knowledge of Buddhism, "It is wonderful that in Tibet there should exist such speakers on religious subjects!"⁶⁰

Perhaps more convincing than Tropa Lotsawa's religious acumen was the impending threat of invading armies in India. But the young Tibetan would have

needed to make an undoubted impression to lure the esteemed Buddhist teacher to make the long trip to Tibet.

In India Śākyaśrībhadrā had enjoyed success, serving as the last abbot of the famed Bihar universities of Nālandā, Vikramsila and Odantapuri, a position held earlier by prominent figures such as Atīśa before him.⁶¹ However, by 1204 CE, north India would have no longer been safe for Śākyaśrībhadrā or Buddhism in general. Śākyaśrībhadrā was in a trade market when Tropu Lotsawa encountered him, reaching the market via the Chumbi Valley. It was there that Tropu Lotsawa had extended an invitation for the great Indian Paṇḍita to accompany him back to Tibet.⁶² With the great monasteries of Bihar destroyed, the uprooted abbot would have little reason to stay in an area that had become so hostile. The year of his arrival to Tibet (1204 CE) coincides with the final overtaking of the region by Muslim forces making his sojourn to Tibet likely an absconding from danger.

Śākyaśrībhadrā had many students while in Tibet, though Tropu Lotsawa would end up being one of his best known. The *Lho rong chos 'byung* calls Tropu Lotsawa the one who had become the greatest of Śākyaśrībhadrā's pupils.⁶³ During the entirety of his ten-year stay in Tibet, Tropu Lotsawa was the personal translator of Ūākyaśrībhadrā and the two translated a great number of works together.⁶⁴ This relationship even extended past the temporal life of the great Kashmiri Paṇḍita. Remains from his lifeless body were stored in a stūpa that Tropu Lotsawa built for this purpose.

While Śākyaśrībhadrā made great contributions to the religious and intellectual life of Tibet, he also accrued and distributed wealth and bestowed religious authority and authenticity. While in Tibet, he ordained many important figures; Sakya Paṇḍita, Jigten Gönpö, whom he named an incarnation of Nāgārjuna and Tropu Lotsawa himself.⁶⁵ In 1213 CE, the king of Purang in western Tibet, Tagtsa, became a patron of Śākyaśrībhadrā who was on his back to Kashmir.⁶⁶ During his time in Purang, Śākyaśrībhadrā served as the personal lama to Tagtsa, who was called a Buddhist king.⁶⁷

Gonpode, the ruler of Gung Thang was ordained in 1212 CE by Śākyaśrībhadrā and Tropu Lotsawa.⁶⁸ During his ten-year sojourn to Tibet, he traveled extensively receiving offerings and praise throughout. When first arriving in Tibet to the region of Pakri, large crowds of people came to hear the doctrine of the great Kashmiri Paṇḍita as well as make him offerings.⁶⁹ Much of this accumulation of wealth, as will be discussed, was used toward the creation of Tropu Lotsawa's Maitreya statue. Before his departure from Tibet he gave to Tropu Lotsawa gold and precious stones on two occasions.⁷⁰

Śākyaśrībhadrā's presence in Tibet had an impact on the religious and political landscape. As a great Indian master, holder of important thrones at famed Buddhist universities in India, he represented a truly authentic living vessel of tradition.

While in Tibet he taught, created lineages, had countless students, accumulated wealth and left an indelible mark.

Another great master invited by Tropu Lotsawa was Buddhaśrī. His impact in Tibet was not as extensive as Śākyaśrībhadra, but he also was an authentic living vessel of Buddhist doctrine and an important source of authentication for the community of Tropu. Sometime between the years 1200-01 CE Tropu Lotsawa invited Buddhaśrī to Tibet.⁷¹ At the time Buddhaśrī was 61 years of age.⁷² Buddhaśrī made his own contributions to the Maitreya statue that would come to stand at Tropu, helping sketch out the measurements and face.⁷³ His interactions in Tibet with Tropu Lotsawa was not the two's first. It is said that in Nepal while studying with Buddhaśrī, Tropu Lotsawa first had the inspiration to construct the statue, prompting him to make a cloth painting of Maitreya.⁷⁴ After the death of Gyaltsa, Tropu Lotsawa traveled to the Nepal Valley to learn sutras and tantras under Buddhaśrī.⁷⁵

While it is not said why Buddhaśrī was in Nepal rather than India at the time, one can imagine that the tumultuous environment of India created for Buddhaśrī a similarly dangerous environment, the same environment that sent a dispersal of other Indian masters at the close of the twelfth century. Tropu Lotsawa's travels to Nepal would prove fruitful in many ways as he also met Mitrāyogin, another great Indian master that he invited to Tibet.

Although Buddhaśrī's presence in Tibet was much shorter than Śākyaśrībhadra, his stay was not without impact. James B. Apple in his article on *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* literature in Tibet contextualizes the late tenth century onward as a period when Indian Buddhist texts were rapidly being assimilated into Tibet.⁷⁶ Buddhaśrī and Tropu Lotsawa completed the last translation of the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* commentary included in Butön's canon.⁷⁷ All of the authoritative commentaries included in Butön's canon of Buddhist texts were from well-known scholars.⁷⁸ According to Apple, the expansive translation projects seen in Tibet during this time such as the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* commentaries, created a cultural environment where "...importation of Indian Buddhist knowledge in literature intertwined with a number of economic, social, and political factors to create great prestige, power, and capital for those who could transmit and receive this knowledge."⁷⁹ Buddhaśrī's presence in Tibet contributed to this transmission. After two years in Tibet where Tropu Lotsawa served as his translator, Buddhaśrī left, probably around the year 1203 CE.⁸⁰

In 1198, when Tropu Lotsawa was twenty-six years old he invited Mitrāyogin, a third Buddhist from India to Tibet.⁸¹ Mitrāyogin is a shadowy figure, one whose biography is often cloaked in miracle stories. It is known though that he was responsible for many teachings.⁸² *The Blue Annals* contains some information on Mitrāyogin's life. He was born in Eastern India, though no date is given.⁸³

He soon became renowned for his meditational practices and spent twelve years in extreme meditation at Kharsarpan.⁸⁴ Most of the stories relating to his life are in the form of miracles, a testament to his power cultivated through austere religious practice. Through these miracles he was seen as a fierce protector of the dharma. For example, two occasions tell of large armies trying to invade monasteries only to be stopped by an angry Mitrayogin:

During the reign of king Sultan Khan troops from Varanasi, the dust raised by (their marching feet) almost shrouding the sun, attempted to destroy the Doctrine of the Buddha in Magadha. (Mitrayogin) naked shouted (at them) and the Earth shook, and all men, and animals stood motionless. The king begged to be forgiven ...⁸⁵

His life was said to be full of magical feats, a true paradigmatic wild yogin of Indian Buddhism. The meeting of Mitrayogin and Tropu Lotsawa was in Nepal while the Lotsawa was learning under Buddhaśrī.⁸⁶ Tropu Lotsawa heard the feats of Mitrayogin and approached him with gifts hoping that he would visit Tibet.⁸⁷ The tale is dramatically recounted; Mitrayogin's uncertain commitment to follow Tropu Lotsawa back to Tibet caused an attempted suicide by the young translator. As Tropu Lotsawa leapt from a building, Mitrayogin caught him. Seeing such dedication from Tropu Lotsawa, Mitrayogin agreed to accompany him back to Tibet. He stayed for eighteen months at Tropu monastery.⁸⁸ One important impact Mitrayogin had while at Tropu monastery was his teaching of a famed woman Machik Rema. This particular line of teaching was brought to Tibet by Mitrayogin and known as "The Great Seal for Cutting the Stream of Saṃsāra."⁸⁹ According to *The Blue Annals*, this teaching was passed to Mitrayogin by Śrī Saraha, who passed it to Machik Rema.⁹⁰

Although he most likely never saw the completed Maitreya statue at Tropu monastery, he blessed the foundation where the statue would be built.⁹¹

These three figures, all with unique relationships to Tropu Lotsawa, forged in Tibet an authentic link back to India. It was through Tropu Lotsawa's invitations that the future of Tibetan Buddhism was forever changed. His invitations helped solidify Tibet as the new center of Buddhism. Their approval of different individuals and their choice to bless and be involved in certain projects held very real weight, and manifested itself as a currency of sorts. These lineages formed a temporal consolidation, authoritative links to the past.⁹² Much like Tibetan clans that were often built on hereditary heirs inheriting from those before them, the lineage was its own family, spiritual heirs to monastic thrones and all that came with this. According to Yamamoto, "A religious sect without a history, a practitioner without a confirmed lineage, was an illegitimate child, had no spiritual pedigree."⁹³ Therefore, the lineage, in this case a connection to three masters

from India was the forging of a rich link, a pedigree that brought with it wealth, notoriety and authority.

The individuals, both those from India and the Tibetans at Tropu created a thriving religious community. There is some evidence what sorts of practices were being done. Based on the writings of Tropu Lotsawa, as well as the creation of a towering statue, it seems that there was an active following of Buddha of the future, Maitreya (Tib: Byams pa). According to Yamamoto, acts such as the building of religious monuments, which is seen at Tropu monastery, were ways of establishing dominion over a physical area, a marking off of sacred space.⁹⁴ Again in an example of thirteenth century Tibet's intertwining of religion and governance, these great monuments were the goal of pilgrims, a focus of religious activities and considered an endeavor worthy of financial investment; they formed religious and political control over geographical areas. Yamamoto describes how charismatic religious heads would bind "space and time into unities of territory and tradition."⁹⁵ Thus, by setting an area off as owned by certain sub-sects and certain individuals and their particular brand of religious practice – institutions were being built. These areas and monuments often had trans-national appeal, people hailing from all over Asia to share in the blessing found at these power places. According to Yamamoto various objects of religious material culture were facilitators of continuity, linking generations of a lineage to one another.⁹⁶ This is demonstrated in two ways in the life of Tropu Lotsawa: first, his creation of a large Maitreya statue and second, his construction of a large stūpa that housed the relics of Śākyaśrībhadrā. By creating a place of power, an individual captured sacred space and sacred experience. The place sought was not anywhere, but somewhere specific, at certain geographical locations designated so and created by exemplary individuals, an unseen boundary with seen implications. As will be shown, both of Tropu Lotsawa's creations served as inspiration for later generations, seeking to emulate this construction in their own creations and seeking Tropu Lotsawa's monuments out for religious experience. These examples show the intertwining of two phenomena; the ability of sub-sects under particular religious exemplars to accrue wealth, employ and allocate resources toward mammoth religious undertakings and how these monuments were axes of religious experience.

Tropu Lotsawa's construction of an 80-cubit Maitreya statue is perhaps what gained him fame more than any of his other accomplishments. According to Dan Martin, the statue was probably destroyed sometime in the 18th century by invading Dzungar Mongols.⁹⁷

In a testament to its fame, according to Martin, Tropu Lotsawa's statue was an inspiration for a similar one built by the First Dalai Lama.⁹⁸ It was while he was in Nepal that Tropu Lotsawa was first inspired to construct the statue, most likely

when he was studying under Buddhaśrī⁹⁹ Buddhaśrī after arriving to Tibet traveled to the famous Phagspa Wati statue in Kyirong where in the presence of it he sketched out the face of the Maitreya statue.¹⁰⁰ The planning of the statue continued on as he traveled to Drikung where he sketched the lotus posture of the statue.¹⁰¹ It was Śākyaśrībhadra that blessed the land where the statue would be made, subduing the place through the invocation of Tantric deities.¹⁰² This again demonstrates the link between land and statue consecration and the real implications of it. In Central Asia it was customary to erect large Maitreya statues along trade routes to symbolize that each country was bound over to the millennium of Maitreya.¹⁰³ This signifies the marking of actual territory, binding it to Buddhist cosmology, but also individuals who held religious authority that extended to lay communities. Śākyaśrībhadra's activities continued to embody this link, staying in Tsang for four years in which time he did many blessings for the Maitreya statue and established Tuṣita heaven, the abode of Maitreya, throughout.¹⁰⁴ This abode is one that Buddhist pilgrims had traveled to in Buddhist literature to seek the authentic teachings that Maitreya represented.

Maitreya as a religious presence in Tibet was not an isolated religious practice but a pan-Tibetan phenomenon. Historically Maitreya is evidenced to have been a part of religious practice since the 7th century when many temples had Maitreya as their central deity, including the first Buddhist temple built in Khadruk.¹⁰⁵ There is also evidence of Guge kings, notably King Trashigön constructing a large Maitreya statue, along with numerous stūpas and thangkas devoted to the deity.¹⁰⁶

Various kings of Tibet were supportive of the cult of Maitreya and various bronze images have been found with their names and inscriptions in what is a clear example of kingship aligning itself with the divine.¹⁰⁷ A literary example of Maitreya related practices in Tibet is found in the *Scholar's Feast*.¹⁰⁸ The text recounts a group of religious practitioners known as "Arhats with hair-knots" engaged in activities surrounding a Maitreya statue. The members of this group were a fusion of lay and monastic practices, going directly from a three months of summer retreat back into married life. These individuals had been elevated to a supreme status by the king and even garnered a pseudo-cult following after them.

The most common epitaph of Maitreya is that he is the Buddha of the Future. In the context of Tropu Lotsawa's own statue, Maitreya is described as the "Buddhist Chariot of the Future."¹⁰⁹ In all cases of Buddhist literature, Maitreya is an object to seek out to gain a religious understanding not found since Śākyamuni.¹¹⁰ Perhaps the most famous story involving Maitreya is that of Asaṅga. In a revelatory vision of Maitreya, Asaṅga was asked, "Now, what is thy desire?" He replied, "I am searching for instructions, how to expound the Mahayanist

doctrine.”¹¹¹ At this, Maitreya whisked Asaṅga up to Tuṣṭita heaven to give him the teachings he desired. *The Prophecy of Maitreya* talks of a period of idyllic prosperity where lives are long, Buddhist practice thriving, and disease and pain is scarce.¹¹² After the death of Śākyamuni life will gradually decline until the eventual disappearance of all Buddhist practice.¹¹³ During this period, a monk named Maitreya will be born who will restore proper practice. Maitreya will descend from Tuṣṭita heaven where he sits waiting for the opportune time to take his rebirth. Maitreya will be 80 cubits high, teach the dharma for 60,000 years and usher in an area of prosperity.¹¹⁴ The measurement of 80 cubits has its parallel in Tropu Lotsawa’s statue.

The notion of the dharma’s decline is important to a discussion of Maitreya as well as in contextualizing the period of Tropu Lotsawa and the pre-eminence of Buddhism as a vessel of social prosperity and political restoration. By linking religious practice to social prosperity, as will be shown in the following short accounts, the religious institutions of the thirteenth century came to be viewed as vessels of social cohesion with authority. Cosmologically Maitreya is often representative of a form of eschatological hope, a restoration following the times of denigration after the death of Śākyamuni. However, this cosmological hope represented by Maitreya also had social and economic impacts on a community. The Maitreya of Tropu Lotsawa attracted financial and material donations from Tibet as well as China, India and Nepal. According to Davidson there emerged during the thirteenth century, “a strong sense that the revival of Tibetan civilization depended in some essential manner on the temples once again being occupied by real monks, not the keepers of the keys who practices when the spirit moved them.”¹¹⁵ In the periods leading up to the thirteenth century there was perceived to be a lost diligence in practice, which resulted in widespread behavioral problems that resulted in non-Buddhist practices. Groups were believed to be practicing some un-tame, wild rituals; sex rituals, corpse reanimations and killings.¹¹⁶ All of these non-religious practices were seen to spill over into the social well-being of Tibetan society.

Within this framework social and political difficulties are met with renewed conservatism and a clinging to Buddhist doctrine, trying to practice more diligently, or what Jan Nattier calls an “impulse of preservation.”¹¹⁷ An eventual disappearance of practice is anticipated but the age following Śākyamuni is seen as one of gradual, not abrupt decline. This gradual movement is one that can be slowed. In this view of time and decline practitioners are not merely flowing with an inevitable current of denigration. The following brief accounts and historical situation seeks to demonstrate that despite the expected decline of religious practice and subsequent disharmony of society, certain religious practices could combat it. This association also ensures that those who are viewed

as being religiously accomplished, the holders of lineages would also have a mirrored power in the realm of politics and social authority.

Tibetan writers often refer to the period following 842 CE as a period of “political fragmentation” or a cosmological epoch of “dharma decline.”¹¹⁸ During this time there existed a perception that religious practice was no longer being done with vigor, before a renewal in practice starting around 950 CE. This has led many to divide Tibetan history into two periods, an earlier and later spread of Buddhism.¹¹⁹

An example of this is in the writings of Butön (1290-1364 CE) who had his beginnings at Tropu monastery. He breaks the history of Buddhism in Tibet into two periods.¹²⁰

The thirteenth century falls under what he calls the “subsequent propagation of the doctrine in Tibet.”¹²¹ Butön describes the subsequent propagation, a renewal in practice, “Thus, 70 years after the church had ceased to exist in Ü, and Tsang, it was introduced by the 10 men...”¹²² Butön also gives an account of the decline preceding the renewal.¹²³ Each of these tales varies slightly in how the dharma will disappear, when the dharma disappears and what the remedies are. In perhaps Butön’s most succinct understanding of the dharma’s decline he concludes his chapter with a poem:

Now the Doctrine will not abide for long, Human life is unsteady like a torch exposed to the wind, the consequences of former deeds, the passions, and the Lords of Death are full of power, Therefore, be devoted to the Doctrine and secure its treasures!¹²⁴

Butön sees the dharma as deteriorating and eventually disappearing and in light of this situation prays to be reborn soon in the presence of Maitreya.¹²⁵ He exhorts people to remain true to the doctrine and in the case of error, turn back to the dharma:

This history of Shakyas’ descent, who is in the power of this age and deprived of true concentration, Butön with the large mouth and resembling a parrot has written down. May he by virtue of this soon come to see the countenance of the Invincible (Maitreya).¹²⁶

Here Maitreya according to Butön is a source of renewed and proper faith that he hopes to soon be near.

Another account is given by a predecessor of Tropu Lotsawa, the famed Machik Labdron (1055-1149 CE). Machik Labdron would have been known in the Tropu community through her Chöd lineage that was practiced by the famous woman of Tropu monastery, Machik Rema, as well as Tropu Lotsawa’s uncle, Gyaltsa.¹²⁷ In response to a question posed by a student, she prophesies about the future of the

dharma.¹²⁸ Both state and religious law will decline. Ultimately, conflict will spread and ethical codes will disappear. Machik Labdron continues:

The people will delight in unwholesome activities, war and conflict. The laws of the state will be crooked, the devils of wrong view will proliferate, the end of the Buddha's doctrine will be at hand, and degeneration will spread.¹²⁹

Although Machik Labdron does not give a specific figure, she does say that there will be a redeemer of sorts, "That bodhisattva will come as a monk in the degenerate age and clarify the Buddha's doctrine."¹³⁰

Aside from the presence of a redeemer figure, one remedy of the declining dharma by Machik Labdron is that it will be her practice, Chöd that will act as a restorative force.¹³¹ However bleak Machik Labdron's understanding of the future may seem, there exists a glimmer of hope that practice, here Chöd, and even particular figures, can stop this degeneration. However, what is most interesting is that her idea of the decline links civil malaise, war, conflict and disease with the end of the dharma. This again is another demonstration of the inextricable link between social prosperity and religious practice. Therefore as seen in both accounts, for Tibet to prosper the monasteries must as well. The hope placed in religious practice and doctrine was a motivational force of religious figures, a cultural impetus that seems to have existed in Tropolu Lotsawa's time and place. This linking of religious practice to social harmony elevated individual vessels of religion to the cultural elite. If those who brought proper religious practice brought with them social, even political harmony, the power entrusted to them would extend outside the monasteries. The possibility of the dharma's decline was not just a tale of Buddhist mythology for Tropolu Lotsawa's time but a real-life scenario acting itself out in India and growing closer to Tibet. Tropolu Lotsawa himself was unable to make it past Nepal in his travels due to the raging wars in Bihar, monasteries under assault. It is also not unreasonable to think Śākyaśrībhadrā and other Indian Panditas fleeing from India would have brought with them to Tibet tales of what he left behind at Nālandā. A great throne-holder displaced from their throne would have affirmed and reiterated that Buddhism's future in the world was not a certainty. This backdrop of decline, in light of Maitreya as a redeemer figure and the historical climate Śākyaśrī, helps explain some of the possible motivations behind Tropolu Lotsawa's statue and the religious practices surrounding it. The building of a great statue of Maitreya highlights how Buddhist sub-sects during the time viewed its dual responsibility of creating religious and social prosperity.

The construction and completion of Tropu Lotsawa's Maitreya statue demonstrates two forces at work, Maitreya as a vessel of religious doctrine and social harmony and also the social and economic power of Buddhism to foster inner-regional economic activity. It cannot be said with certainty whether Tropu Lotsawa expected Maitreya to come soon, to be reborn when Maitreya did come, or whether his statue expressed a grand aspiration of learning true religious practice. Tropu Lotsawa's intangible aspirations, whatever they were, manifested themselves in a very substantially material way.

An 80-cubit statue, even by modern standards, would have stood towering over visitors, approximately 130 feet tall. This would have required workers and vast amounts of resources. There is nothing written about the individuals that actually worked on the building of the statue, they may have been tenants living in the land of Tropu, or skilled workers hired by Tropu Lotsawa using the funds that his monastery accumulated. It is said that it was painted by hand, a further testament to the manual labor involved.¹³² While the details of who the artisans or workers were are unknown, there are many details on who contributed the materials and different parts of the statue. The best example of the large inter-regional effort of the construction of the statue is its so-called thirteen distinctions.¹³³ The *dbus gtsang gnas yig* goes into some detail about thirteen different distinctive attributes that made Tropu Lotsawa's Maitreya statue extraordinary. The text discusses various holy places to be sought out by pilgrims throughout Tibet when the guide comes to the "Great 80-Cubit Maitreya Statue at Tropu."¹³⁴ The author then goes on in a list form to describe the different distinctions that the statue was endowed with. The so-called thirteen distinctive attributes of the Maitreya statue are not just components that made up the object but a demonstration in how activities with religious aim during the time of Tropu Lotsawa was an invaluable tool in forming regional networks between individuals, their communities and their wealth. There were contributions made from different regions of Tibet. For example, the lower body of the statue was given by Drikung, most likely on behalf of the Drikung pa, Jigten Gönpö. From central Nepal the tops of the feet and hands were given.¹³⁵

Perhaps two of the most prominent donors are the gifts given from an unnamed emperor of China and Buddhaúrí. The emperor of China, who is not listed by name, is listed as giving a giant canopy inscribed with a gold seal.¹³⁶ According to van der Kuijp, Śākyaśrībhadrā had forged a relationship with a Tangut emperor while still in Tibet, probably the year before he left.¹³⁷ Van der Kuijp says this unnamed emperor would have been the Xuanzong Emperor (r. 1193-1206). Śākyaśrībhadrā had also received an invitation to China sometime before he had left for Tibet, posited by van der Kuijp to either be the Guanzong (r. 1190-95) or Ningzong Emperor (r. 1195-1225).¹³⁸ Whoever the specific emperor, these

mentions show the power of Śākyaśrībhadrā to form trans-border relations, in this case on behalf of the community of Tropu. By the time of the construction of Tropu Lotsawa's Maitreya statue, Śākyaśrībhadrā would have been known to the Chinese court, as well as throughout Tibet and India. Śākyaśrībhadrā was in this way a mobile institution, bringing with him from India to Tibet his authenticity. The objects he received during his travels had material value but also showed a regional attitude that the construction of Maitreya, a figure of Buddhist cosmology was a worthy investment.

Tropu Lotsawa and his community reaped benefits from the statue. Aside from an underlying cosmological sense of religious achievement and merit making, they benefitted in very tangible ways. This is seen in the gifts given by Buddhaśrī approximately a dozen years after he had left Tibet.¹³⁹ Buddhaśrī made his contribution to the religious community of Tropu monastery, giving 100 umbrellas made of peacock feathers. Other than Buddhaśrī the text does not give the exact names of individuals but instead often by the region that each contribution came from. This linking of geographical places and regions through this process of building up, both a religious monument and a regional network created real links between the various leaders.

The evidence of such an economic network is a prime example of how the various pockets of authority that made up Tibet's wealthy were engaging in the building of religious institutions that became deposits of wealth and power. Religiously, the statue was a site to be visited by pilgrims, and obviously a project that was known by many at the time as evidenced by the extensive donations toward it. This regional effort created a place where religious visions and experiences were had. Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltzen sought out the Maitreya statue, staying at it and making offerings to it.¹⁴⁰ It is recounted that at the statue "...he asked for the biography of Tropu Lotsawa to be read, which caused him to weep for a very long time."¹⁴¹ Thus not only was the statue a place of power, but one that Dolpopa associated with the life and accomplishment of a particular individual.

Another example of a significant material undertaking is the stūpa built at Tropu monastery to house relics of Śākyaśrībhadrā.¹⁴²

Although little is known about the actual construction, there are accounts of the details surrounding the construction of similar stūpas that may shed a little light on the immense wealth and man-power that would have been required of Tropu Lotsawa's stūpa. To revisit Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltzen, he built a stūpa inspired by Tropu Lotsawa's, Cyrus Stearns paints the picture of a vivid and active community working in unison to build the stupa.¹⁴³ According to the account, different skilled workers and laborers from all around Tibet came to contribute to the work. The building materials and food necessary to feed the workers was

brought from all directions. There was a ramp built on one side of the stūpa to allow donkeys to pull earth and stone up to the structure. As people around Tibet heard of the great project they become anxious to contribute; gold, silver, copper, cloth and more appeared from all over. The description of the building seems to paint a work environment that was a Buddhist occupational utopia of sorts, which may be an exaggeration of how willingly everyone would be to spend countless hours hauling large stones. Whatever the case though, the building of such a huge structure would require the cooperation and resources of many.

A description of the stūpa built by Tropu Lotsawa is found in the *dbus gtsang gnas yig*, as well as another source used by Cyrus Stearns.¹⁴⁴ In 1230 CE, when Tropu Lotsawa was fifty-eight years old he began construction of the stūpa.¹⁴⁵ The stūpa stood three stories, was built of stone and surrounded by a total of sixty temples. The purpose of the stūpa was to house some remains and relics of Śākyaśrībhadrā. Two disciples of Śākyaśrībhadrā had brought his remains from Kashmir to be housed in the shrine. Tropu Lotsawa's stūpa inspired the great stūpa at Jonang, built by Dolpopa. Dolpopa was so inspired by the stūpa of Tropu Lotsawa that upon seeing it he prayed that he would someday be able to construct something similar.¹⁴⁶

These stūpas had powerful religious effects on the individuals who encountered them. Dolpopa echoes this as he recounts his intense feelings arose in front of the stūpa of Tropu Lotsawa:

I saw Tropu Lotsawa's stūpa and made many prayers with the force of intense faith. I saw many quotations in many sutras and tantras [which stated] that the assemblies [of merit and gnosis] are perfected if one constructs huge images and stūpas. There is no doubt that anyone who even sees, hears of touches this stūpa will be freed, that the seed of liberation will be planted and that vast benefit for others will occur.¹⁴⁷

The stūpa of Tropu Lotsawa was thus indicative of exceptional virtue; a place where sacred space and sacred experience was captured. Both of these great monuments were markers of space, territory and personal achievement. They were the goals of pilgrims and formed inner-regional relationships economically and religiously.

Buddhism had penetrated deeply into thirteenth century Tibetan society and culture. The sub-sects of the period were fully functioning religious institutions with political and social functions. The heads of these orders are what Yamamoto calls "new cultural heroes."¹⁴⁸ These figures embodied multiple roles, individuals of religious accomplishment, owners of land, and members of an extensive economic network. Yamamoto explains that these members as ruling machines, were individuals that unified space, history, the sacred and mundane in an

institutional narrative.¹⁴⁹ Tropu Lotsawa, and those like him, is representative of more than one life, but is an encapsulation of historical narratives, institution builders; active forgers of the past, present and future. Born into a line of Tibetan nobility, Tropu Lotsawa was a translator of texts, teacher and lineage holder. He built the modest monastery at Tropu into a thriving community that affected the face of Buddhism in Tibet. The three masters he invited to Tibet helped authenticate and solidify Tibet as a new center of Buddhism, an institution of political power and an instrument of governance. His legacy has lived on in the pages of history books, religious texts and in the detailed descriptions of the monuments he built that loomed over the land, a union of the sacred and temporal.

Appendix I: Tibetan Orthographic Equivalents

(Method as found at: <http://thlib.org/reference/transliteration/>) Accessed: 4/1/12.

Basöd nampal zang po = bsod nams dpal bzang po

Butön = bu ston rin chen grub

bütra = sbud bkra

Chöd = gcod

Chegom Dzongpa Sherab Dorje = lce sgom pa shes rab rdo rje

Chumik = chu mig

Dbus = Ü

Drikung = 'bri gung

Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltzen = dol po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan

Gyaltsa = rgyal tsha rin chen mgon

Gonpode = mgon po lde

Gtsan = tsang

Jigten Gönpö = 'jig rten mgon po rin chen dpal

Kagyüpa = bka' brgyud pa

Jopen = Jo phan

Kar Lotsawa = dkar lo tsa ba

Kunden Repa = kun ldan ras pa

Kyirong = skyi rong

Machik Labdron = ma gcig lab sgron

Machik Rema = ma gcig re ma

Minyak = mi nyag

Nubs = gnubs

Phagmo Drupa = phag mo gru pa rdo rje rgyal po

Pakri= phag ri
 Phagspa Wati= 'phags pa wa ti
 Puntsok=Phun tshogs
 Purang= pu hrang
 Sakya Paṇḍita = sa skya pan di ta kun dga' rgyal mtshan
 Segmo Salje =bsregs mo gsal byed
 Shang ge wa= zhang dge ba
 Tagtsa= stag tsha
 Tong kor = Stong Kor
 Trashi Gon = Bkra shis mgon
 Tri kor = Khri skor
 Tropu Lotsawa = khro phu lo tsa ba byams pa dpal gom-pa
 Tropu Sempa Chenpo = khro phu sems dpa' chen po
 Tsang khar = Rtsang dkar
 Yatse war= ya rtse
 Zang ling= zangs gling

Notes

1. I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Paul K. Nietupski for suggestions, guidance and help in translating Tibetan texts throughout. Carl Yamamoto, *Vision and Violence: Lama Zhang and the Politics of Charisma in Twelfth-Century Tibet* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), p.3.
2. For a discussion of this see: Rachel M. McCleary and Leonard W J van der Kuijp, "The Formation of the Tibetan State Religion: The Geluk School 1419-1642. *Harvard University Working Papers no. 154* (Center for International Development at Harvard University, 2007),
3. McCleary & van der Kuijp, p.4.
4. The Tropu Kagyüpa sub-sect was one of eight sub-sects under Phagmo Drupa Dorje Gyalpo. For brief discussions on this and other sub-sects: Gene E. Smith, *Among Tibetan Texts* (Sommerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2001), pp.40-51. Or see: An-che Li, "The Bkha-Brgyud Sect of Lamaism." *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. 69.2 (1949): pp.51-59.
5. Ronald M. Davidson, *Tibetan Renaissance: Tantric Buddhism in the Rebirth of Tibetan Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p. 256.
6. For a discussion on divine kingship in Tibet see: Matthew Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.17.

8. Yamamoto, p.263.
9. Yamamoto, p.263.
10. This same phenomenon was seen in India, who Tibet so often used as a cultural blueprint. Monasteries had served dual roles, great centers of scholasticism as well as Buddhist strongholds. In India, as in Tibet, monasteries controlled land, collected revenue and were regional forces (Davidson, p. 29). In India the destructions of mammoth institutions such as Nālandā, the demise of monastic land-controlling authorities coincided with Buddhism's disappearance from India.
11. For further details of this development see Davidson, pp.61-116.
12. Helmut Hoffman, "Early and Medieval Tibet" in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*. Ed. Denis Sinor (Cambridge, 1990), p.395.
13. Elliot Sperling discusses a position known as a Gompa in the expansion of the community of Drikung founded by a contemporary to Tropu Lotsawa, Jigten Gönpö. See: Elliot Sperling, "Some notes on the Early 'Bri-gung-pa sgom-pa" in *Silver on Lapis: Tibetan Literary Culture and History* (Bloomington: The Tibet Society, 1987), pp. 33-57. This Gompa was even responsible for controlling armies.
14. Davidson, p.3.
15. Davidson, p.3.
18. tshe dbang rgyal. *Lho rong chos 'byung*. Lhasa: Bod ljongs bod yig dpe rnying dpe skrun khang, 1994. p.331.
19. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, pp.331-332.
20. For example see a brief description of the Kagyüpa lineage at Tropu in the *bka' brgyud gsung 'bum mkhyen brtse'i dbang po* (p.439). In this short description it mentions the two founders of the Tropu Kagyüpa sect, Gyaltsa and Kunden Repa, who were parts of the Nubs clan. The text, written sometime in the nineteenth century says that there are no more of the Tropu lineage. It gives a brief mention of the Maitreya statue and says it was hand painted.
21. According to Davidson these clans came to form a stable Tibetan Buddhist institution, and they were active participants and owners in this process. For a detailed discussion of this see: Davidson, pp. 80-83. As a hereditary inheritor of the throne at Tropu monastery – Tropu Lotsawa was part of this system.
22. Leonard van der Kuijp, "On the Vicissitudes of Subhūticandra's Kamadhenu Commentary on the Amarakosa in Tibet" *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*. No. 5 (2009): p.5.
23. Roberto Vitali, "The History of the Lineages of Gnas Rnying." in *Tibet, Past and Present: Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibet* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), p.103.

24. “Lineage” Vitali, p.102.
26. George Roerich, *The Blue Annals* (Jawahar Nagar, Delhi: Shri Jainendra Press, 1988), p.706.
27. Roerich, p.706.
28. Roerich, p.707.
29. Roerich, p.706.
30. The following account can be found in: Bsod nams rgya mtsho, *bka'brgyud chos 'byung nor bu'i phreng ba*. Publisher and date unknown. pp.85-87. Given the large age gap between Gyaltsa and Kunden Repa there is some debate whether they were related as siblings or whether Gyaltsa was actually the uncle of Kunden Repa.
31. Many details about Machik Rema's life, including a chronology are not exactly clear. There are two mentions of women figures at Tropu. According to the *Lho rong chos 'byung*, the consort of Tropu Lotsawa died at the age of sixty-eight. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p. 334. In *Chos rje khro phu*, it also mentions a woman named Machik who died at the age of 68. The woman died in the year of the fire male bird, which corresponds to roughly 1237 CE. This would make the death a year after Tropu Lotsawa's own in 1236. This was also the same year that Tropu Lotsawa's biological son, Tropu Sempa Chenpo was said to be born, however obviously the figure Machik and Tropu Sempa Chenpo are un-related. Leonard van der Kuijp. “Review: On the lives of Śākyaśrībhadrā (?-?1225)” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. 114.4 (1994): p.604). This figure Tropu Sempa Chenpo would succeed Tropu Lotsawa as the abbatial throne holder at Tropu monastery and was one of the very first teachers of Butön, and even recognized Butön as a reincarnated Śākyaśrībhadrā” van der Kuijp, p.604). Who was the mother of this figure is not known, but obviously there was some sort hereditary, male succession happening at Tropu monastery following the death of Tropu Lotsawa. See: *khro phu Lotsawa byams pa'i dpal et al. Chos rje khro phu ba'i man ngag brgya rtsa rg-yas pa*. C.P.N. Catalogue no. 005767(2): fols. 254b-56a
32. Tibetan Title: 'khor-ba-rgyun-gcod
34. “Women” Martin, p.69.
35. Ibid, p.70.
36. “Lives” van der Kuijp, p.614.
37. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.335.
38. For interesting details on being a translator see: Davidson, pp.123-125.
39. Davidson, p.117.
41. Roerich, p.1066.
42. “Vicissitudes” van der Kuijp, p.3.

3. For a list of texts that Tropu Lotsawa translated see: Butön. *The History of Buddhism in India and Tibet*. Trans. E. Obermiller. (Delhi, India: Sri Satguru Press, 1986.) p.222.
44. Roerich, p.1034.
45. “Women” Martin, p. 63.
46. Yamamoto, p. 6.
47. Yamamoto, p.7.
48. McCleary & van der Kuijp p. 4.
49. A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1967), pp.73-74.
50. There are many sources in agreement on Mahmud’s activities in India during this. For one example see: Romila Thapar, *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300* (Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 2002), pp.425-431. Although there may be historical exaggerations regarding the activities of Mahmud in India, his reign certainly had an effect on the region. He accumulated power and gold, many times through attacks on temples in India, both Buddhist and Hindu. See also: Burton Stein, *A History of India* (Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 1998), pp.135-143. As Thapar notes, by 1204 the presence of Buddhism would have already started to subside, however the Muslim armies were aggressive (p. 488).
51. Basham, p. 266.
53. David P. Jackson, “The Early History of Lo (Mustang) and Ngari” *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* 4.1 (1976): p.44.
54. David P. Jackson, “Two Biographies of Sakyasribhadra: The Eulogy by Khro phu Lo-tsa-ba and its ‘Commentary’ by Bsod-Nams-Dpal-Bzang-Po” (Hamburg: Institute for the Culture and History of India and Tibet, 1994), p.1.
55. “Two Biographies” Jackson, p. 4.
56. “Mustang” Jackson, p.44. It mentions in the *Lho rong chos ’byung* that Śākyaśrībhadrashri had played a role in re-instituting the Mūlasarvāstivāda lineage (p.333).
57. Úākyaúrībhadra was also said to be responsible for the introduction of four different traditions of learning: the tradition of exoteric philosophy, oral instructions, the tradition of tantric theory and praxis and the Vinaya tradition (“Lives” van der Kuijp, p.613).
58. According to the *Lho rong chos ’byung*, Śākyaśrībhadra was 65 years old at his arrival, and Tropu was said to be thirty-three years old (p.333). As Jackson notes, there are two primary dates given for Śākyaśrībhadra’s birth, either 1140 or 1120, with a latter date of some time in the 1140s most probable (“Two Biographies” Jackson, p.18).

59. Roerich, p.1068.
61. “Two Biographies” Jackson, p. 2.
62. Roerich, p.1068.
63. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.334.
64. Butön, p.222.
65. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.334.
66. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.334. *The source says that in the 6th month of 1213, Śākyaśrībhadrashri became the lama of a ruler named Tagtsha.*
68. See: Roberto Vitali, *The Kingdoms of Gu.ge. Pu.hrang: According to mNga'.ris rgyal.rabs by Gu.ge mkhan.chen Ngag.dbang grags.pa* (New Dehli: Indraprastha Press, 1996). However, as Vitali notes, leaders did not renounce world involvement due to their vows (p.377). These figures continued to produce heirs to their throne and engaged in war. Following his ordination by Śākyaśrībhadrā and Tropu Lotsawa, Gonpode even fought in the first Yatse war (p.473). Tropu Lotsawa may have been known to the ruler prior to this encounter. According to the *Lho rong chos 'byung*, *Tropu Lotsawa had stayed at Gung thang, most likely when he was student under Buddhaśrī* (p.332). *This may have forged a very early link between the translator and Nepal, one that would later be demonstrated by their contributions to his 80-cubit Maitreya statue.*
69. “Two Biographies” Jackson, p.13.
70. “Two Biographies” Jackson, P.16.
71. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.334. See also the *Chos rje Khro phu* in “Vicissitudes” van der Kuijp, p.614.
72. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.334.
73. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.334.
74. Dan Martin, “Tropu Lotsawa Jampa Pel” Treasury of Lives. <http://www.treasuryoflives.org/biographies/view/Tropu-Lotsawa-Jampa-Pel/6405> . Accessed: April 7, 2012.
75. Roerich, p.709.
76. James B Apple. “Contributions to the Development and Classification of Abhisamayalamkara Literature in Tibet from the Ninth to Fourteenth Centuries.” *Journal of the International Association of Tibetan Studies*, no. 5 (December 2009): p.12.
77. Ibid, p.19.
78. Apple, p.20.
79. Apple, p.12.
80. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.334.
81. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.332.
82. See Roerich, pp.1042-1043 for examples.

84. Roerich, p.1030.
85. Ibid, p.1031.
86. Ibid, p.1033.
87. Ibid, p.1034 for following account.
88. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p. 333.
89. Tib. Title: “*phyag rgya chen po 'khor ba rgyun Chöd*” Cyrus Stearns, *Hermit of Go Cliffs: Timeless Instructions from a Tibetan Mystic* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2000), p.181.
91. Roerich, p.1034.
92. Yamamoto, p. 264.
93. Yamamoto, p. 264.
94. Yamamoto, p. 261
95. Yamamoto, p. 3.
96. Ibid, p.10.
98. “Treasury of Lives” Martin.
99. *The Blue Annals* specifically says that it was while learning under Buddhaśrī (Roerich, p. 1065). The *Lho rong chos 'byung* says that it was while he was at Gser khang at Gong thang in Bal yul (Nepal) that it was revealed to him that he would build the Maitreya statue.
100. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.333.
101. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.333.
102. Ibid, p. 334. See also, “Two Biographies” Jackson, p.15.
103. Paul Williams. *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p.230.
104. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.334.
105. Andre Alexander and Sam Van Schaik. “The Stone Maitreya of Leh: The Rediscovery and Recovery of an Early Tibetan Monument” *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*. Series 3.21.4. (2011): p. 434.
107. “Leh” p. 438.
108. Dpa' bo Gtsug lag phreng ba, *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga' ston* (Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrung khang, 1986), pp. 430.18- 431.2. (Often known simply as the Scholar's Feast).
109. *Lho rong chos 'byung*, p.334
110. Butön, p.180. Tropu has a well-known association with the cult of Maitreya, perhaps most so because of his statue. There also exists a liturgy written by Tropu to Maitreya: gnubs lo tsa ba byams pa'i dpal (Khro phu Lotsawa), “Phags pa byams mgon gyi bstod pa” in *zhal 'don gces btus*(Rumtek: Dhorphen Publication, 2009), pp.95-100.
111. Butön, p.139.
112. Cozzens, p.239.

113. Cozzens, p. 238.
114. Ibid, p. 240.
115. Davidson, p.86. Davidson and others break Tibetan history into different periods. There was the first spread of Buddhism prior to 842 CE, a dark age of no practice following 842 CE, and then a renewal of practice starting around 950 CE.
116. For a discussion on these sorts of practices see: Davidson, pp.77-79. Also, for an in-depth discussion on the roles of such practices in the history of Tibet see: Jacob Dalton, *The Taming of the Demons: Violence and Liberation in Tibetan Buddhism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).
117. Jan Nattier's discusses the dharma in detail in her book: Jan Nattier *Once Upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline* (Virginia: Asian Humanities Press, 1991). She puts the cause of decline in two broad categories: either from within the community or from a foreign, non-Buddhist force. Or more exactly whether the demise was an inevitable process due to outside forces or one that was precipitated by erroneous practice, and thus could be prevented (p.119). Word of the assault on Bihar in northern India and the growing Mongol powers would have made this idea of invasion a real possibility to Tibet in the thirteenth century.
118. Davidson, p. 61.
119. Davidson, p. 61.
121. Butön. *The History of Buddhism in India and Tibet*. Trans. E. Obermiller (Delhi, India: Sri Satguru, Press, 1986), p. 201.
122. Butön, p. 211.
123. Butön, pp. 171-179.
124. Butön, p. 180.
125. Butön, p.180.
126. Butön p.180.
127. For information on Machik Rema, see: Dan Martin, "The Woman Illusion? Research into the Lives of Spiritually Accomplished Women Leaders of the 11th and 12th Centuries" in *Women in Tibet*. Eds. Janet Gyatso and Hanna Havenik (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). For more information on Gyaltsa, see Roerich, p. 706. Gyaltsa was said to have learned directly from the son of Machik Labdron.
128. For the following account see: Sarah Harding, *Machik's Complete Explanation: Clarifying the Meaning of Chöd* (New York: Snow Lion Publication, 2003), pp. 252-254.
129. Harding, p. 260.

131. Harding, p. 280.
132. *bka' brgyud. gsung 'bum mkhyen brtse'i dbang po*, p.439.
133. The details about the statue, the 13 distinctive attributes of the statue can be found in: Chos kyi rgya mtsho, *kah thog si tu'i dbus gtsang gnas yig* (Khreng tu'i: si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 2001), pp. 444- 446.
134. For this list see: *kah thog si tu'i dbus gtsang gnas yig*, pp. 444-445.
136. This idea of a canopy over Maitreya's head is consistent with a Buddhist myth about him. According to Roerich, a particular figure was sent to Tuscany to encounter Maitreya. There flowers were showered over the head of Maitreya, and "transformed themselves into a wonderful canopy over the head of Maitreya." (Roerich, p. 98).
137. "Lives" van der Kuijp, p.613.
138. "Lives" van der Kuijp, p.613.
139. Although no direct mention is made of whether he had a relationship with Śākyaśrībhadrashri, it is reasonable to think that Buddhaśrī would have known of the great Kashmiri teacher.
140. Cyrus Stearns, *The Buddha from Dolpo: A Study of the Life and Thought of the Tibetan Master Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1999), p.35. Dolpopa lived from 1291-1361 CE.
141. *Dolpo*, Stearns, p.36
142. For more information on the role of stupas in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism as centers infused with power related to relics see: Yael Bentor, "On the Indian Origins of the Tibetan Practice of Depositing Relics and Dhāraṇīs in Stūpas and images" *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. 115.2 (1995): pp. 248-261.
143. *Dolpo*, Stearns, pp. 20-21. See also *dbus gtsang gnas yig*, p. 446.
144. *Dolpo*, Stearns, p.182. See also *dbus gtsang gnas yig*, pp.445-446.
145. For the following information see: *Dolpo*, Stearns, p.182.
146. *Dolpo*, Stearns, p.16.
147. *Dolpo*, Stearns, p.20.
148. Yamamoto, p.256.
149. Yamamoto, p.275.

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Exploring Ethnicities: A Socio-Cultural profile of Tibetan Community in Indian Kashmir

Adfar Rashid Shah

Introduction

“—Surely, according to principles I uphold, the last voice in regard to Tibet should be the voice of the people of Tibet and of nobody else”.

(Pt. Jawaharlal Lal Nehru, 7th December, 1950, Lok Sabha).

As per oral history and narratives, Islam reached Tibet some 1000 years ago by a group of Muslim traders from Kashmir. These traders settled there, married Tibetan women and converted them to Islam giving rise to a growing Muslim community in the land of Lamas around Lhasa¹, the capital of Tibet. Muslims shared a long history of coexistence with their fellow Buddhists. For centuries, Islam and Buddhism coexisted in peace in the Tibetan society without any communal tensions or bloodshed under the leaderships of the age-old Dalai Lama² Institution. According to the refugee Muslims, the Tibetan government rendered Muslims enough freedom to handle their religious and social affairs, without any interference. This enabled the community to retain their Socio-cultural and religious ethos, while at the same time absorbing traditional Tibetan social and cultural traditions shaping up a rich pluralistic ethos and unity within the diversity. With the growth of the Muslim community during the 17th century, the fifth Dalai Lama Nawang Lobsang Gyatso³ (1617-1682) readily gave Muslims a piece of land in Lhasa to build their first mosque and later few more Mosques were constructed in many parts of Tibet. Muslims had their contributions to the Tibetan society and culture. The first cinema hall in Tibet was started by a Tibetan Muslim businessman. Also Nangma - a popular classical music form of Tibet, is believed to have been brought to Tibet by the Muslims. In fact, the word ‘Nangma’ is said to be derived from the Urdu word, ‘naghma’, which means song. Amidst the cultural strains and encounters Tibetan Muslims have been able to preserve their social and cultural ethos while simultaneously assimilating the new and outer cultural trends. It is pertinent to mention that this community has undergone change and development over times along the lines of industrialisation, modernisation and westernization. Thomas Arnold⁴, in his book, *The Preaching*

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of Islam argues that gradually, marriages and social interactions led to an increase in the Tibetan Muslim population until a sizable community came up around Lhasa, Tibet's capital. Alexander Berzin in his article 'Historical Sketch of the Muslims of Tibet' (2001) says, "Before 1959, there were approximately 3,000 Tibetan Muslims living in Central Tibet. They were the descendents of Muslim merchants who came to Tibet from Kashmir, Ladakh, Nepal and China, mostly between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, married Tibetan women, and settled there. They spoke Tibetan and followed most Tibetan customs. They had four mosques in Lhasa, two in Shigatse, and one on Tsetang, built in Tibetan style architecture. Further, they had two Islamic schools in Lhasa and one in Shigatse for studying the Quran and Urdu." He further writes that as part of a policy of tolerance for all religious factions, the Fifth Dalai Lama granted the members of the Muslim community special privileges. They could elect a five-member committee to supervise their internal affairs; could settle their own disputes independently according to the Sharia laws; could open shops and conduct trade in other Tibetan cities; and were exempted from tax. In addition, they could eat meat during the Buddhist holy month of Sakadawa and did not need to take off their hats to the monk officials during the Monlam prayer festival. Moreover, the Fifth Dalai Lama gave the Muslim community land in Lhasa for a mosque and a cemetery, and invited its leaders to all major government celebrations. Tibetan Muslims trace their origin from immigrants from four main regions: China, Kashmir, Ladakh and Nepal. Islamic influence in Tibet also came from Persia and Turkestan. Muslims are known as Khache among Tibetans. This appears to be because the earliest Muslim settlers to Tibet were from Kashmir which was known as Khache Yul to Tibetans. (Bhat,1994)⁵. The article titled "Identity crisis for Tibetan Muslims" *The Week*; (29 November, 2008) argues that, in Tibet they were known as *khache* (Kashmiri Muslims). In Kashmir they are called Tibetan Muslims. During the critical period in 1959, when China occupied Tibet, the Tibetan Muslims organized themselves and approached the Indian mission in Lhasa to claim for Indian citizenship, referring to their Kashmiri ancestry, to escape Chinese tyranny. Mr. P. N. Kaul⁶ was the head of the Indian mission then. The initial response of the Indian Government was lukewarm. It said only those whose permanent domicile remained in the state of Jammu & Kashmir and who visited India from time to time, whose parents or one of whose grandparents were born in undivided India, are potential citizens of India", and it would , only accept them. But some time later, in later 1959, the Indian Government suddenly came out with the statement that all Tibetan Muslims were Indian nationals, and started distributing application forms for Indian nationality among them (Bhat, *Ibid*). The small Muslim community that fled Tibet after China's invasion in 1959 is in constant search of their identity in Kashmir.

Tibet & Tibetan mass migration: causes and fallouts

Tibet a part of central Asia, commonly known as the Roof of the world, lies in the North of India, Nepal and Bhutan, East of Iran, South of Russia and Magnolia, situated about 16,500 feet above the sea level and an average altitude of 14,000 feet, bearing total land area of 2,333,125 square kilo meters (2.5 million sq. kilometers, which means 26.04 of the total area of present China). Modern name derived from Mongolian word “Thubet”. Lhasa (Land of deities) - the capital city and other major provinces like U-Tsang, Amdo, Kham, Shigatse, etc. Tibet is also known as: “the abode of snow”, “The cool climate land”, “Forbidden land fortified by snow mountains”, “Land of Lamas.” etc. Tibetans in the world are also distinctly defined by the kind of land they live in as the Tibetans. Tibetans national identity has not been created by history not only by religion but has its roots deep in the Tibetan land. Tibetans are people who live and have always lived on the great Tibetan plateau, high above and apart from the rest of the world.

Tibet which once existed as an independent buffer state for more than 2,000 years between the two Asian giants, India and China, was invaded by communist China in 1949 and by 1959 China illegally occupied whole of Tibet, this resulted in the escape of His Holiness the Dalai Lama into exile in India and followed by some 85,000 Tibetans.

The County is a great vehicle of Mahayana⁷ Buddhism with Muslims in utter minority and Buddhism, Bon and Islam are the prominent religions which people adhere to. It is believed that the advent of Arabs, Chinese, Turks, Yemenis, Nepalese, Ladakhi's, Kashmiri's, etc lead to the spread of Islam in Tibet. Merchants from Kashmir entered Tibet in around 12th century A.D, settled in different areas, married Tibetan women and converted them to Muslim faith. During the reign of fifth Dalai Lama Nawang Lobsang Gyatso⁸ in 1617, Muslims got citizenship of Tibet. It is believed that Tibetan Muslims trace their origin from the immigrants from four main regions: Kashmir, Ladakh, China and Nepal. In 1913 Dalai Lama and the Tibetan National Assembly (Tsongdu) proclaimed Tibet's independence, but China withhelded the recognition and on October 7, 1950, about 40,000 PLA troops attacked Chamdo, eastern Tibet's provincial capital and defeated Tibetan army after 12 days of fight. Indian Foreign ministry sent a protest letter to Chinese government. British and the U.S expressed support to the Indian position. In November, 1950, Tibetan National Assembly requested 15 year old 14th Dalai Lama (Tenzin Gyatso born 1935) to assume full political control authority as Head of state of Tibet. On May 23, using military threat, China forced Tibetan delegations in Beijing to sign the famous 17-point agreement which included that external affairs and defense of Tibetan administration will lie with Chinese authorities. In 1956 Dalai Lama visited India to discuss possible asylum and finally on March 10, Tibetan uprising in Lhasa

against the Chinese brutality started and thousands were killed. Here begins the pathetic and woeful tale of a nation, annexed in 1959, its political and spiritual head, an asylum seeker in a neighboring country on 16 March 1959, Dalai Lama left Potala Palace⁹ and came to India, accompanied by his mother, brother, two sisters and latter his 72 companions also.

The communist Chinese oppression took thousands of Tibetan lives, and an ample number of communism preachers were brought in Tibet in the guise of craftsmen, teachers, social and policy makers.

Tibetan community in Srinagar is a homogenous community, consisting of 220 families and settled in three communities in Srinagar, viz. Idgah, Hawal-Badamwari, and Gulshan Mohalla and all the three settlements adhering to Sunni-Muslim faith. This community escaped from Lhasa in late 1959, a group of about 70 families, gradually moved to Kashmir claiming Kashmiri decent¹⁰ and paternal ancestry and believing Kashmir to be their ancestral homeland, though not proved empirically yet. This community was initially settled at Idgah area of Srinagar in three big buildings and was funded by the Tibetan government in exile in Dharamsala, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and few other international organizations. After 28 years of residing at this place (Idgah), keeping its increasing population in view, it was granted some land on lease at Badamwari Hawal area by the assistance of the then Chief Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah¹¹ of J&K and houses constructed in a colony type structure. Around 143 households were granted small quarter like houses at Hawal in 1985 and later in Gulshan Mohalla¹² in 2004, while more than 40 families are still residing in the old settlements at Idgah Srinagar.

The Tibetans living in the Badamwari settlement have constructed a grand mosque, what they argue have been constructed with some assistance from Saudi Arabia. Besides mosque, a school, a dispensary and an organization of Tibetan youth known as Tibetan Muslim Youth Federation (TMYF)¹³ has been formed.

The then Indian Prime Minister Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru let Tibetan's to migrate to India but before that different taxes were levied on them by communist Chinese authorities and much of their property was seized and many of the Muslim religious heads were given life imprisonment and around 120 Muslim families reached Kalimpong in Assam and then Darjeeling in West Bengal and resided there for five or six months. From Darjeeling around 70 families reached Kashmir and IDGAH was the first camping sport and were initially accommodated in two huge buildings of about 40 rooms by the Govt. Masood Butt in his article, "Muslims of Tibet"¹⁴ argues,

Those Tibetan Muslims who were able to cross over into India in the border towns of Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Gangtok in late 1959 gradually moved to Kashmir, their ancestral homeland from 1961 to

1964. They were accommodated in three huge buildings in Idd-Gah in Srinagar by the Indian Government. At that time, His Holiness the Dalai Lama had sent his Representative to inquire about the conditions of Tibetan Muslims.

During the first two decades of their life in exile, Tibetan Muslims attempted to rebuild and re-organise themselves. Lack of proper guidance and leadership proved to be an obstacle in their development. Also, housing in Idd-Gah was inadequate to meet the requirements of a growing family. In the process, Tibetan Muslims began to scatter, emigrating to Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Nepal as well as moving to other parts of India in search of better opportunity.¹⁵

Tibetan refugees began to enter India in 1959 after communist Chinese invasion and annexation of Tibet. The two phases of displacement have been noted: The first was the displacement in 1959 and the second was the exodus in the early 80's. The first batch of Tibetans crossed over to India on March 16, 1959 when 85 Tibetans followed the spiritual and temporal leader the Dalai Lama. The second exodus started in the early 80's during the period when Tibet was open to trade and tourism between 1986 and 1996. Twenty-five thousand Tibetans arrived in India. In 1999 another 2,200 Tibetans arrived and majority of them have been granted legal residence. Government of India has recognized all of them as citizens of Tibet (annexure 1, white paper no.2, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, 1959). The Tibetan administration based in Dharamsala¹⁶ (Himachal Pradesh, India) declared that the number of refugees had reached (118,000). The Indian Govt. allows the entry of any Tibetan refugee on the Dalai Lama's pledge that they personally abstain from violent and political activities. The democratic administration in exile was setup in Dharamsala; Tibetan schools were established following a modern secular educational model with Tibetan language, literature and religion classes. There are 85 such Tibetan schools in India, Nepal and Bhutan. About 70% of the Tibetan children attend schools. The communist indoctrination started with individuals at two levels. (i) At the physical level and at (ii) the spiritual level, at the physical level it meant that every citizen of the country whether poor or rich or from any religion and ethnic, background is supposed to perform every task by his own hands because every human is equal and no one is preferable over the other. It was simply to degrade Tibetan nobles, riches and spiritual leaders, and to ignorant masses and youth it seemed good and reasonable and led to multiplicity of group formation in Tibet which ultimately led to disintegration. The second level was the change at spiritual level, which led to the loosing significance of religions, natural power, fate, traditional customs and traditions, etc. It was

done by opening schools and colleges where new generation was indoctrinated communist ideology in the guise of modern education.

The phase started by stopping people forcibly to perform religious rituals and rites. On one hand Buddhists were stopped from performing their religious duties and on the other Muslim minority was not saved too. Muslims were not let to perform prayers and mosques were locked and used as party spots, where wine was served and consumed. People realized it and raised slogans and protested, demanding closing of communist based schools and colleges. Political and spiritual leaders were jailed, tortured and humiliated in public. Muslim religious leaders too suffered a lot and were tortured to death in jails. People were forced to break deities and other sacred objects, and who so ever denied, was mercilessly killed which led to mass suicides of people. For Muslims it remained no longer a place to live in as they could hardly afford to renounce their religion. So the Muslim community requested to the then Indian ambassador Mr. P. N. Kaul and by the interruption of the then Prime Minister of India in 1960's and 1970's, India gave preferential treatment to Tibetan refugees over others. This is mainly because His Holiness the Dalai Lama sought shelter for himself and his people: India allowed the Dalai Lama to establish a Tibetan Govt. in exile called the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)¹⁷. It is based at Dharamsala. Yet India has not officially recognized it.

Although no foreigners can own property in India, the Indian Govt. provided land and housing to establish Tibetan farming settlements. The Indian Govt. granted Tibetan refugees, who entered India in the 1970's, Indian residency (or resident status) for purpose of identification, employment and domestic travel.

Tibetan community in Kashmir has now been residing over here since 1959 and have been affected by the Kashmiri community, have learned Urdu, Kashmiri languages, especially youngsters can speak Kashmiri, they also experienced social mobility in terms of education, cultural development, economic development but have been able to sustain and preserve their ethnic, national and cultural identity as well. They do interact with local natives and have developed limited relations also with them. They have from the very on-set faced tremendous problems and difficulties in settlement, like the problem of land, adequate housing, unemployment, low income and poverty, cultural and social encounters, fallen prey to societal hallow and negative stereotypes, discrimination, negligence and ignorance by state governments. They are however despite all these hurdles moving forward and struggling with the conditions to improve themselves in Kashmir (Abu Bakr Amirudin, 2005).¹⁸

Rationale of the study

The primary objective was to explore this ethnic community who are being treated as refugees by locals and struggling for identity in a land which they believe as their ancestral homeland. Moreover, it also aimed to gain a deeper insight into the social structure of Tibetan community and to understand the nature of their adaptation and social transformation. Further to know about their social, economic, religious and other characteristics, lifestyle and patterns of living, occupations and income resources, culture, language and lastly to enlist their problems of survival in the new settled society. This whole sociological survey was also aimed to know their migration, life in new settlements, and interrelationship with local natives, demographic features. Social phenomenon of the migrant community, patterns of their social institutions, etc.

Methodology

The survey was conducted by choosing all the three locations of Tibetan Muslims, i.e, Hawal settlement, Idgah and Gulshan Muhalla settlements for a period of three months. Using the basic participatory approach, and with the help of Structured and Semi structured interviews, Group and informal discussions and observation, the living pattern and change over the times was studied. Moreover, by direct participation in special arranged meetings and programmes the problems and issues beset to the community came to fore.

The paper is based on field survey, follows the hermeneutic methodology of documenting the lived experiences of Tibetans living in Kashmir. The paper is an outcome of a survey conducted in all the three Tibetan settlement colonies. The settlements were selected purposively for the study and random sampling was used for the selection of respondents. The selection of community was done keeping in view the importance of studying their socio-cultural aspects to prepare a holistic sociological profile using the local know-how of Srinagar city. The Oral history, Narratives and In-depth interviews, Focused interviews and Observation were the main tools of data collection during the study.

Thick description of field work

Studying the sociological profile of the Tibetan community with the analysis and classification of various themes like population features, social structure, family, marriage, kinship, occupations, literacy, education, religion, religious practices, etc. with the help of Observation, Interviews, Schedules, Questionnaires, etc. An attempt was made to describe some of the themes highlighting the different aspects and features of Tibetan community. Arguments are based on the facts, and comments have been made after studying the community for more than 5 months. Following are different themes supported by sociological arguments.

Occupation

The main occupation of Tibetan natives is agriculture and trade. Tibetans had their trade with India, Bhutan, Nepal, Mongolia, China, etc. Tibetans used to import mostly wool, threads, camphor, tea, carpets, etc. to its neighboring countries. But now most of the population is in India and other countries. Due to the change in the residence and living patterns, their occupations remained no longer agriculture and trade of such commodities. Now the Tibetans in Kashmir are mostly engaged with embroidery, business and fiber work. Some make hand bags and garment business and some are shopkeepers. This is because of non availability of land and they are dwelling in city, so developed trade as their occupation.

Language

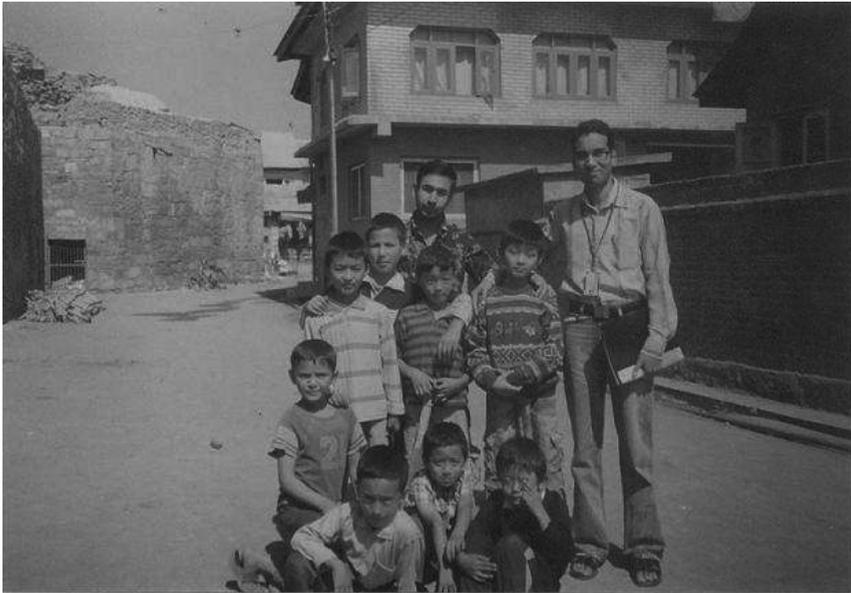
Tibetans in Kashmir have despite a big cultural encounter retained their mother tongue "Tibetan". People usually speak Tibetan at home with each other. Even children born here are socialized in the Tibetan language. Apart from this, men, children, young women and young girls speak Urdu as well. Elderly women speak also a bit. The educated stock which is not too much in number also speaks English and can write and read in Urdu to a great extent. They have a great love for their mother tongue - "Tibetan" and they speak and use it while interacting amongst themselves. Now they have also learnt Kashmiri to a great extent due to prolonged cultural contact except few elderly women. They are in a position to speak Kashmiri to a great extent and have developed a good comprehending power of Kashmiri language. Tibetan educated youngsters and school children have developed English comprehending power as well, which was revealed through observation and interacting in English with them.

The use of Tibetan language amongst themselves and its continuity reflects their attachment to and love for Tibetan culture. Due to various linguistic encounters they have learnt Kashmiri, Urdu and English as well but retaining their mother tongue identity. Cultural assimilation, necessity of interaction in Kashmir, exposure to new environment, and time factor is responsible for their Kashmiri learning.

Culture and dress pattern

The main and traditional dress of Tibetans is gown like with a high collar and long sleeves. It is known as "*chuba*" in Tibetan language and culture. It is tied with ribbon like piece of cloth called "*Kera*". *Chuba* is made of either woolen clothes or other cool clothes depending upon the nature of season. Underneath the *Chuba*, a small shirt like cloth is also worn and sometimes sweaters are used too. It is highly simple and traditional. It is usually purple in color. Not so much

difference in *chuba* of males and females. But the present Tibetan community has to a great extent adopted modern dress patterns. Only some elderly men and ladies are seen in traditional “chuba” now in Srinagar. Jeans, cotton cloths, pants, shirts, *shalwar-kameez*, *dupattas*, etc have been adopted by Tibetans over here. It is because of accessibility and acculturation, modernization, effect of migration, a way to escape identity and personality crisis. New environment has forced them to change. Moreover, youth are vulnerable to every new fashion and adhering to traditional ethos is deemed archaic. The image below shows the modern and changed dress pattern of Tibetan children, playing in the street of their colony. The researcher (Adfar Shah) himself can be seen with the children, standing in the right in 2nd row.



Source: (Adfar Shah, Jamia Journal¹⁹)

Religion and role of religion in social life

The role of religion is prominent as far as the social life of people (Tibetans) is concerned; there is religious influence in elderly men and women to a greater extent. They are simple, honest and humble, highly hospitable. The Tibetan community residing in Srinagar whether at Hawal, Gulshan Mohalla, or Idgah are Muslim believers and belong to the Sunni sect of Muslims. According to them migration from Tibet was purely and solely to save their religious faith, from the communist Chinese oppression. Tibetans as per observation and information available follow fundamental principles of Islam. Caste has no place; marriages are performed as per Islamic *Shariah* and in a simple fashion.

Social stratification

The community is more homogenous in nature as all share the pain of displacement and crisis in the new setting. All the residents have been provided residence and housing and hardly few homes have been constructed on their own. Caste has no significance and not treated as a bar in social institutions like family, marriage, kinship, etc. Occupations too are not so distinguished, majority of the people are either engaged in needle work, embroidery or textile business, etc.

Festivals

The festivals of Tibetan community in Srinagar are not so different from other Kashmiri's. The influence of religion is clear in their lives. They observe Id-ul-Fitr, Id-ul-Azha, Urs of Shah Hamdan and other saints as other Kashmiri's observe, only I have come to know that birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is also celebrated. Festival observations and celebrations are simple and traditional and Tibetan dishes are prepared in homes.

Gender and family

Enculturation is gendered. Gender roles are assigned. Gender Socialisation was also observed. Women generally remain indoors, however now girls go to school mostly to Tibetan public school at Badamwari. Some girls of the community also teach at the school and few Tibetan women work as clerics, peons, etc.. Currenly in all the three settlements, there are 236 households of Tibetan Kashmiri's. Family is a group of people, related by kinship or similar close ties, in which the adults assume responsibility for the care and upbringing of their natural or adopted children. "Family is a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption; constituting a single household; interacting and communicating with each other in respective social roles of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister; and creating and maintaining a common culture" (Burgess and Locke). The family organization is not independent in it but is connected to a wider social network. Historically and comparatively, there have been wide variations in the family form. In order to analyze these differing family arrangements we use the key notions of the "Joint Family" and "Nuclear Family". The Joint family refers to a group of people, related by kinship, where more than two generations of relatives live together or in very close proximity, usually forming a single household. The nuclear family comprises merely parents and their dependent children. Tibetan families are both joint and nuclear. Many of the families are joint where parents live with their married children. Where

as 50% of the families are nuclear, Tibetan families marry amongst themselves, very few marriages have been outside their own community. Men are usually the heads of the families and women are mostly inside the four walls of the house. Constitution of the family is traditional and based on Tibetan culture.

Marriage

The institution of marriage is ritualized in a simple way but within the religious fervor. It is not always endogamous as caste has no specific significance. Most of the marriages are arranged by parents. Usually three dishes are prepared, now-a-days a limited *Wazwan* (Kashmiri cuisine) is served due to Kashmiri cultural encounter and new changes. Local Kashmiri's and other friends are also invited but the feast is arranged at one place arranged by both the families of bride and bridegroom and guests are served at one place. *Nikkah-khani* is conducted in the mosque and bride is accompanied by aunt, maternal aunt and paternal aunt. Bride is dressed in a special traditional bride dress known as 'Chandra'. No dowry, no gold exchange, only some dresses are sewn and marriage ceremony comes to an end. Not more than two cases of Tibetan marriages are outside their community. They marry within their own community, the only criteria is that boy should be hardworking, gentle and religious. Caste and class has hardly importance in the selection of brides and grooms. Marriages by choice, love marriages are also conducted. According to them late marriages are not prevalent but at adequate age youth are married.

Kinship terminology

Formal kinship terminology among them distinguishes between patri - and matri - laterals at the second ascending generation, is bifurcate-collateral at the first ascending generation, and shows a typical Hawaiian generational pattern at Ego's generation level. In practice, this system results in a strong bias toward distinguishing between one's matrilineal and one's patrilineal kin for the purposes of inheritance. For relatives of his or her own level, including cousins, the average Tibetan simply uses the terms "brother" and "sister." There is local and regional variation in terminology throughout the plateau. Tibetans have distinct names for their distinct kins. So their kinship system is descriptive. Father in Tibetan is termed as Abbala, Mother (Amla), Sister (Acha), Brother (Illa), Uncle (Chala), Aunt (Chichila), Grandfather (Pola), Grandmother (Mola), Maternal Aunt and Uncle (Somo, Sumla), Paternal Aunt and her Husband (Anni, Chala), Maternal aunt and maternal uncle (Mamula, Mimila).etc.

Social mobility

Compared to the previous condition, Tibetan community is on the road of development and moving forward. The basic tool which has led to the social mobility of Tibetan community is education and new jobs like textile business, teaching etc. It cannot be wrong to say that due to the problem of inadequate and insufficient resources of income, limited availability of assets and problem of un-employment are the biggest obstacles to the social mobility of Tibetans in Kashmir.

Health and hygiene

The health of Tibetan community is not so bad and concern worthy. They are not facing any specific attack of any particular disease. However medical assistance is primarily provided by a health centre established by the Department of Health of the CTA, Dharamsala.

Talking of hygiene, it is very shabby, the lanes are not well maintained and drainage is very inadequate and faulty. Ignorance of municipal authorities and lack of proper sanitation is the problem faced by Tibetan people. Tibetans deem it as discrimination of state government towards them. They also face problem of regular and pure drinking water supply.

Population features

Official communications between India and Chinese governments reveal that India produced a list of 129 Muslim families of Kashmir origin, who were then repatriated from Tibet in 1960. In Srinagar they are housed in colonies at Hawal and Idgah. Today there are 236 families with a population of about 1,100. After 46 years of their return most of the people here are unaware of their Kashmir origin (Nighat Jabeen)²⁰

According to TDS (Tibetan Demographic Survey), 1998 the Tibetan population is one of the most mobile nations of the world scattered over 93 different points in India, Nepal, Bhutan and other neighboring countries. According to TDS the Tibetan population has reached 118,000 on June 12, 1998 from the initial estimated population of 6 million in 1959, out of which 85,147 live in India, 14,000 in Nepal, 1,600 in Bhutan, 1,540 in Switzerland, rest of Europe 640, 1,000 in Scandinavian countries, 7,000 in USA and Canada, 60 in Japan, 1,000 in Taiwan, 220 in Australia, New Zealand, Arab countries and other regions.

People between 15-25 years of age constitute the majority of the Tibetan population in exile. As for as the population features of Tibetan Muslim community in totality is concerned, as per TMYF (Tibetan Muslim Youth Federation) the total population of Tibetan Muslims outside Tibet is around 2,000,

out of them about 25 families live in Nepal, 20 in the Gulf countries and Turkey, about 50 families reside in Darjeeling and Kalimpong areas bordering Tibet in Eastern India .There are around 1,210 Tibetan Muslims in new settlement in Srinagar consisting of 220 families.

The data provided by TYMF* of population as on March, 1st 2007 and later verified through Door to door survey was as given in the table.

| Age group | males | females | total | households |
|----------------------|-------|---------|-------|------------|
| 0-5 | 53 | 39 | 92 | 236 |
| 6-14 | 79 | 78 | 157 | |
| 15-48 | 327 | 326 | 653 | |
| above 48 | 80 | 86 | 166 | |
| No. of total males | = | 539 | | |
| No. of total females | = | 529 | | |
| Total population | = | 1068 | | |
| Sex ratio | = | 981 | | |

Data provided by TMYF and varified by door to door survey in October 2007.

As per some reports, Chinese statistics estimated there were 5.2 million Tibetans in 1987 but other Chinese statistics for their 1990 census claim them to be 4.59 million. Whichever is nearer, the true figure of the Tibetan population may now be no larger than during the height of the ‘The Terror’ of the early to mid 1960’s.

Education

Education being a non-economic variable is indispensable to the process of development, both in economic and social aspects. The role of education in the course of social and economic change through the intensification of skills and homogenization of society has been widely noted in the literature. Though education by itself does not generate socio-economic development, but the lack of it can certainly be an impediment in the process of development. Years ago Marshall referred to it as a “national movement”; and in our own times, the Education (Kothari) commission identified classrooms as places where the destiny of nation is shaped. A number of studies during the late 1950s and early 1960s by Theodore Schultz, Edward Denison, Gary Becker, Harry Johnson, Robert Solow and others had demonstrated the role of education in accelerating the process of development.²¹

Till the 1950s, physical capital was considered the key button, which, if pressed hard enough, would set the development process in motion. However, the studies

conducted on the nature and causes of economic growth over a long historical period in the developed countries revealed that while physical capital undoubtedly played an important role in economic growth, it was by no means as dominant as many economists had earlier visualised. The economists produced historical case studies of countries which enjoyed superior economic growth as a result of having paid greater attention to raising the educational levels of their people than did other countries. The developments in Japan and Germany after the Second World War are generally regarded as the classic examples of education being deliberately utilised as a contributing factor to rapid economic and social change. Investment in education, therefore, is an investment in the productivity of the population. Like economists, sociologists too maintained that education brings about a change in the individual, promoting greater productivity, modern attitudes, values and beliefs about work and quality of life.

As far as the education of Tibetans in exile is concerned, total school enrolments is 85-90 percent of school age. At present there are 106 kindergartens, 87 primary level, 44 middle level, 21 secondary level, 13 senior secondary level schools, with the total enrolment of over 25,000 students. According to 1998 figures by DOE (Department of Education), CTA, Dharamsala, the effective literacy rate of the Tibetan exile population stood at 74.5%. While the general literacy rate is 69.3%, but only 2.6% of total population achieved higher studies with professional courses. As far as the literacy of Tibetan community in Kashmir is concerned, majority of the people are educated, especially religious education is high. About 40% of the people especially youth have received Islamic religious education. Most of them are Hafiz, Aalim, Moulvi's and pursuing other Arabic courses. General academic education is improving too. Tibetan Public School is a big source of imparting education to the Tibetan younger generation. Concluding on the basis of generalizations of educational and literacy inquires, it has been estimated that the literacy rate of Tibetan community in Srinagar is 61.33% in general, literacy rate for males stood at 62.8% and for females it is 59.7%, generalized for 220 families of the Tibetan community.

Living patterns, furnishing and food pattern

Housing and pattern of life style is mostly traditional and reflecting Tibetan cultural identity. House wear is traditional and decorations are all Tibetan in origin. Floors are mostly covered by Tibetan carpets called "*khatten*" and bedding like, usually U-shaped fashion is drawn around covering three corners of a room for guests which is known as "*Satti*" in Tibetan language. Kitchen wear is also the reflection of Tibetan and Chinese culture, consisting of some uncommon vessels like big Tiffin like vessel used to prepare their traditional dish known as "*momo*". As far as the crockery used in houses is concerned, it is Chinese; wall decorations,

pictures, garments, etc are all Tibetan. Their favorite dishes are Tibetan including “momo” *thukpa*, *choumins*, noodles, *shafali*, etc. However due to cultural diffusion, they now take rice also. They are now consuming vegetables as other locals are taking. New generation is now prone to rice and Kashmiri foods and vegetables. On special occasions, Tibetan dishes are prepared and served. Now Kashmiri cuisine (Wazwan) is also famous amongst Tibetan people. They consume sweet dishes like Halwa, mostly prepared from flour.

The community is more or less homogenous in nature and assets. Occupational structure is marked by 70% gender differentiation. Women generally remain inside the four walls of the house. Caste is present and resembles Kashmiri castes like Bhat, Chasti, Shah, Qazi, Malik, Nawajoo etc. but there is no caste consciousness and casteism as such. Food habits are mainly traditional Tibetan, not any specific and different as compared to others. Language is Tibetan but can speak Urdu, Kashmiri and English as well. Most of Tibetan Muslims want to return to their home land along with their Buddhist Tibetan brothers and few of them are slowly migrating to Nepal and other regions from Kashmir and many of them are even now getting married to local Kashmiri girls, and also tying wed knots in Ladakh, to avail state benefits, which they were deprived of till the recent past. Tibetan-Kashmiri Youth feel alienated on all grounds and have more or less failed to adjust themselves in prevailing chaotic atmosphere. Most of them do needlework like embroidery, etc.

Tibetan public schools

It was opened in 1975 in the shape of a *Madrasa* where in Quran and Urdu was taught only. Later it developed and took a shape of a school run by the Tibetan Muslim Youth Federation looking after the education of the Tibetan children. Bearing a total role of 330 in which Tibetan children are around 100 and rest are Kashmiri native students. The preservation of Tibetan culture, tradition and heritage is one of the main aims of the school and about 40% of the teachers are from the Tibetan community. This school acts as a source of employment for Tibetan educated youth as they have not much Employment opportunities due to absence of resident status certificates, etc. About 40% of the Tibetan children are first generation learners. And school has been able to bring dropout rates of Tibetan children to zero. School has a clear manifestation of Tibetan identity by Tibetan national flag, Tibetan wall hangings, maps, etc.

Issues and Problems of Tibetan community

The general worth mentioning issue which Tibetan Muslim community in Kashmir is beset with, are actually the offshoots of their immigration and new set up in an alien atmosphere. The challenge of adjustment, especially at the initial stage of

their arrival was a big issue as far the sociological perspective is concerned. They have, no doubt, to a great extent adopted themselves on many grounds but still their elderly stock and women especially feel difficulty in adjusting in and adopting Kashmir culture properly because of their staunch likeness towards pure Tibetan ethos. They are reserved to speak Kashmiri despite being familiar with the language to a greater extent due to a prolonged cultural contact. They hardly meet and interact with their Kashmiri neighbors, due to the feeling of being Tibetan in ethnicity.

The general problem of the whole community is the problem of adequate land and housing. They have been provided with a small portion of land at all the three locations i.e Badamwari, Idgah & Gulshan Mohalla settlements of Srinagar city. The community consists of more than 220 families but accommodated on a small amount of land with their one story small quarter like houses are constructed. They hardly have a courtyard or parks in front. Even there are no fire gaps between these small houses. Also these houses are too small to provide adequate accommodation to the families. Proper sanitation care is also not provided by the Municipal authorities and drains and lanes are hardly mended and constructed when damaged. Drains, lanes and streets are in a dilapidated condition. Another problem and the main one, which Tibetan Muslims are beset with, is the non-availability of domicile certificate despite they claim to be the state subjects. They have the problem of not having the permanent resident certificate and this core problem has given birth to many other problems like unemployment, lack of access to higher education and other legal and public facilities, etc. They are devoid of a permanent “Rashan card” which is a serious problem of the community and has not been addressed so far.

Also they face the problem of limited resources of income due to unemployment of youth who are not being absorbed in government departments and public sector because of the lack of state subject certificate. They feel alienated on all grounds and have more or less failed to adjust themselves in prevailing chaotic atmosphere.

Children have got caught in identity and personality crisis. They are not able to understand if they are Tibetans or Kashmiris’.

Problems of women mainly include the problem of illiteracy as maximum of Tibetan women are illiterate and remain confined to four wall of the house. Problems faced by them are mainly psychological, as they feel loneliness, emotional instability, not fully able to cope up with the alien setup. More liking for their own cultural features like dresses, jewelry, etc are posing problems of their adjustment. Observations and Interviews revealed that as such there is minimal amount of domestic violence among this community. Educated girls are mostly either working in private schools or helping their mothers at home.

Elder women and elder men are poor and are not provided with old age pensions, funds and other facilities which other elderly are enjoying in the state. The Tibetan community is not able to avail different schemes and provisions of government meant for people. They have a strong feeling of being discriminated on many grounds by the state government.

Local native Kashmiri response to the Tibetan settlement is a mixed bag, while most of the locals speak good about them, a proportion of the populace is not happy of their settlement in Srinagar. People are negating their Kashmiri origin. However native youths are in favor and say that Tibetans are highly polite, hospitable, sociable and more religious in their approach.

Conclusion

Tibetan Muslims have been able to preserve their social, cultural and national identity despite their settlement in a new environment. Simultaneously it may be worth arguing that they have not faced any major cultural crisis while adjusting and adopting themselves and their life pattern according to the local customs as well. They have imbibed the local values, language, dress pattern and cultural ethos without much difficulty. Though among all of them, there is a great urge to return to their home-land still they are very futuristic in their vision for proper adjustment in future. Also they are entering in relationships with the state subjects to firm their roots; they have tied knots mostly with Ladakhi's to sustain their stay and simultaneously to gain access to all the facilities and provisions by the state. Now most of the youth are getting admissions in educational institutions as well. Also it may not be wrong to argue that they have kept pace with the tradition and modernity and simultaneously preserved their ethnic values.

They are extremely hard working people and most of them deal with garments business. Youth are mostly associated with embroidery. Most of the Tibetan youth are in business and stitching work, needle work, brocading and other embroidery works. They have also set shops in different areas in Srinagar. They also carry out business in Nepal, Ladakh and other neighboring regions.

Much of the elderly stock is emancipated and well educated, especially in the area of religious education. The life style is simple and all the occasions are celebrated in religious fervor. Talking of marriages, festivals and other rituals, only those practices are followed which fall in Islamic purview barring the emerging changes now. However the Tibetan community is in transition now, especially youth are vulnerable to every new pattern of change. Despite separate cultural and ethnic identity, the observations reveal that identity crisis and personality crisis, problems of recognition are some of the factors which prompt Tibetan people especially youngsters to change with the advent of modernity and to keep themselves at par with natives and their neighbors.

However, various problems faced by Tibetan Kashmiris have many aspects like governmental administrative consents, issues and suspense on their very origin and ancestry claims. Despite the long Kashmiri cultural encounter, Tibetans passionately feel that they are different in every way, culturally, linguistically, racially and even temperamentally from the native Kashmiris. Though they claim Kashmiri ancestry and origin and in the local context they have proved it by many evidences like resembling of names which are Kashmiri type, castes which are again Kashmiri type like Bhat, Ganie, Wani, Shah etc, some prior relations in Srinagar and the Govt. white paper which contains 129 names of the Tibetan families.

Tibetans have a strong sense of their national identity and retain their cultural identity despite living in an alien environment and even after the settlement of more than 40 years in Kashmir, they still love to speak Tibetan with one another, have Tibetan furnishing at homes, Tibetan dress pattern occupational by new changes, and still retain Tibetan material culture like pictures, utensils, vessels, crockery, bedding, food habits etc.

Young Tibetans are fed up with the word refugee. They never like to be called refugees whether in India, Kashmir or any other place. Youth are very optimistic of freedom of their country. According to them the law of the land shares a very strange and peculiar relation with Tibetans living over here. The Tibetan hope for independence (*Rangzen*) still stubbornly refuses to be crushed, but Tibetan youth in Kashmir are less concerned about the freedom of Tibet as they are ideologically poor and self centered as revealed by observations.

There is to a greater extent the scholarly disinterest to dig out and explore this Tibetan-Kashmiri origin. Although now researches are carried upon this ethnic community but it will take more time to dig out actual facts pertaining to the very community. They live in Srinagar but on the land provided by the government for few definite colonies and are also deprived of various socio-economic benefits. There has been a deliberate ignorance towards looking into the future prospects of this community, keeping in view their growing population, unemployment, shrinking residential space, state subject issue, etc. Also there is a dire need of an exploratory kind of research in this regard and to find facts, which can help in building policy inputs for this ethnic stock.

“.....from the point of view of national interests, the fact that Tibet is being annihilated cannot be for the good of India in the long run” (Atal Bihari Vajpyee, former P.M of India, 17TH March, 1960, Lok Sabha).

Notes

1. Lhasa is the administrative capital of the Tibet Autonomous Region in the People's Republic of China and the second most populous city on the Tibetan Plateau, after Xining. At an altitude of 3,490 metres (11,450 ft), Lhasa is one of the highest cities in the world. It contains many culturally significant Tibetan Buddhist sites such as the Potala Palace, Jokhang temple and Norbulingka palaces.
2. The Dalai Lama is that unique mix of a spiritual teacher and a political leader. Unlike the Pope he is virtually uncontested as a spiritual inspiration. The exiled 14th Dalai Lama was born on July 6, 1935 to a peasant family living in a former Tibetan village. He was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous spiritual leader of his nation at the age of two and enthroned on February 22, 1940.
3. Dalai Lama is a high Lama. Tenzin Gyatso says lama corresponds precisely to the better known Sanskrit word guru.
4. Thomas Walker Arnold, *Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*, (Stosius Inc/Advent Books Division, 1984).
5. "Muslims of Tibet", Tibetan Bulletin (January-February 1994).
E:\tibet article docs\tibmuslim.html
6. *Mr. P.N. Kaul, the head of the Indian mission in Lhasa.*
7. The Mahayana tradition is the larger of the two major traditions of Buddhism existing today, the other being that of the Theravada school. According to the teachings of Mahâyâna traditions, "Mahayana" also refers to the path of seeking complete enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings, also called "Bodhisattvayana", or the "Bodhisattva Vehicle. Mahayana Buddhism is sometimes called Northern Buddhism. It is mainly followed by monks and nuns, and is largely found throughout China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Russia, Tibet, and Vietnam.
8. During the 17th Century, it was the Fifth Dalai Lama Nawang Lobsang Gyatso readily gave Muslims a piece of land in Lhasa to build their first mosque. He was the first Dalai Lama to wield effective over central Tibet and is known as the great fifth Dalai Lama.
9. The Potala Palace was the chief residence of the Dalai Lama until the 14th Dalai Lama fled to Dharamsala, India after an invasion and failed uprising in 1959. It is located in Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region, China.
10. They were known as Khache [Kashmiri Muslims] in Tibet thought to be the descendants of Kashmiri traders who had settled there in 12th century.
11. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah (1905-1982), one of the most important political figures in the modern history of Jammu and Kashmir, termed as Sher-i-Kashmir and who fought against feudalism in the state.

12. A small settlement of Tibetan Muslims near famous shrine of Hazrat Sheikh Hamzah Makhdoom, Hawal Srinagar.
13. The Tibetan Muslim Youth Federation, a body that works for the welfare of the community and sometimes stage marches to show solidarity with their fellow Tibetans.
14. <http://asiarecipe.com/tibmuslim.html>
15. The home of the current Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, and the exile Tibetan government in India.
16. An organization based in India with the stated goals of “rehabilitating Tibetan refugees and restoring freedom and happiness in Tibet”. It was established by the 14th Dalai Lama in 1959 shortly after his exile from Tibet. It is commonly referred to as the “Tibetan Government in Exile”,
17. “Tibet Aur Tibeti Mussalman”, by Dr. Abu Bakr Amirudin Tibeti Nadwi, 2005 .
18. Shah Adfar. Tibetan Muslims in Exile: A Sociological Profile, jamia journal, July 21, 2011, <http://www.jamiajournal.com/2011/07/21/opinion-tibetan-muslims-in-exile-a-sociological-profile/>
19. Reclaiming their Kashmir identity: A story of Indo-Tibetans. Srinagar, Sep. 22, 2006 L Kashmir News)
20. R Bharadwaj and K.K. Balachandram. Planning for social and economic Development. 1992:57, New Delhi. Sage Publications

Some additional notes

- Tibetan refugees first began settling en masse in India in 1959.
- The institution of Dalai Lama has become a central focus of Tibetan society and identity. Dalai Lama is the symbolic embodiment of the Tibetan national character. The Dalai Lama’s have also functioned as principle spiritual guides to their communities. In simpler terms it has also been referred as Grand Lama.
- The Tibetan Muslims, also known as the *Kachee* (Kache), form a small minority in Tibet. Despite being Muslim, they are classified as Tibetans, unlike the Hui Muslims, who are also known as the *Kyangsha* or *Gya Kachee* (Chinese Muslims). The Tibetan word Kachee literally means Kashmiri and Kashmir was known as Kachee Yul (Yul means Country).
- In 1959, as the Dalai Lama and thousands of other Tibetans fled the Chinese occupation of their homeland, an All-India Tibet Convention was held in Kolkata. Following conventions led to the formation of several Indian support groups for Tibet, such as the Tibet Swaraj Committee (formed in 1962) and the Indo-Tibetan Friendship Society (formed in 1978). Indian support groups have generally

maintained the right of Tibetans in exile to return to an independent Tibet, emphasized Indo-Tibetan cultural and political cooperation, and the importance of a free Tibet for Indian polity. (India Review ,Volume 7, Issue 3, 2008 Special Issue: Tibet, India, and China)

- After the invasion of Tibet in 1959 a group of Tibetan Muslims made a case for Indian nationality based on their historic roots to Kashmir and the Indian government declared all Tibetan Muslims Indian citizens later on that year.(Tibetan Muslims at www.tibet.com)
- The United Nations defines “a refugee as every person, who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” (U.N. 1984)
- ‘Social transformation’ is a broad concept used to indicate social dynamics. The ideas conveying the meanings of evolution progress and change on the one hand and the meanings of development, modernization and revolution, on the other, are incorporated within the concept of transformation.
- The literal meaning of the concept is ‘changing form or appearance or character or alter out of recognition’. This concept was specifically used by Karl Marx in his book ‘German Ideology’ (1846) to mean a facet of social change which arises out of contradictions in a society and leading to rapid change or revolution.
- Rajni Kothari (1988) is of that view the modernization and revolution are two models of social transformation.
- As pointed out by Daniel Lerner (1964), modernization is represented by literacy, political participation, urbanization, occupational mobility and empathy. The other characteristics of modernization are free market, industrialization, and modern technology, democratic state and modern education.
- His Holiness the Dalai Lama continued to keep himself informed of conditions of Tibetan Muslims in Idd-Gah. In 1975 he visited Srinagar and raised their problems with the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. Following a request from him, the Chief Minister provided the Tibetan Muslims with land for their resettlement.(Bhat, *Dalai Lama and the Muslims of Tibet*,2005)
- His Holiness also encouraged the formation of a Tibetan Muslim Refugee Welfare Association. This Association began to chalk out projects for the economic and educational upliftment of the community.(Bhat,2005)

- With the seed money from His Holiness, followed by assistance from Tibet Fund in New York, a handicraft centre, a co-operative shop and a school were established. A group of young Tibetan Muslims were invited to Dharamsala to learn the trade of carpet-weaving and marketing (Bhat, 2005).
- For more on “ethnicity,” see Fredrick Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 1969); Richard Handler, “On Dialogue and Destructive Analysis: Problems in Narrating Nationalism and Ethnicity,” *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (1985), pp. 171–82.

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The Tibeto-Mongolian Civilization

Sergius L. Kuzmin

The concept of civilization is very old and ambiguous. There are many meanings of this term. In this paper I use it to designate a society localized in space and time, which has a similar set of geopolitical conditions, similarity in mentality, culture, religion, economic and political systems. Defined by these criteria, civilization may include several countries, or one country, or one country may belong to different civilizations. For example, P.R. China is often considered as a Chinese civilization (often with some neighboring countries); otherwise, it may be attributed to several civilizations: Confucian, Buddhist, Islamic etc.

What about Tibet and Mongolia? Similarity between these two nations is well-known, and no serious researcher will call a Tibetan or a Mongol in China as the Chinese in nation only because of their Chinese passports. The 20th Century brought Tibet and Mongolia great disturbances accompanied with artificial destruction of their centuries-old traditions and religion by communists. However, there is nothing permanent in sansara. Current situation in the independent State of Mongolia, as well as on Tibetan and Mongolian lands occupied by China, represent a “snapshot of screen” of this flow of impermanence. This flow depends on karma, people’s actions with their results, including those in mind. So the perception of ‘who am I?’ is important: am I a Tibetan? am I a Mongol? am I a Chinese? The question of civilization is important for future of the Tibetan nation. There are data that even before our era ancestors of the Mongols: peoples of Hunnu, Xianbi, Kidans and others were acquainted with the Buddhism. This religion penetrated into Mongolia from India and Central Asia, where it was widespread before its destruction by Islam since the 7th Century. At the same time, the State of Tibet was known on the territory of the modern Mongolia: the name “Tibet” (as “Tyobyot”) first appeared in ancient Turkic inscriptions on the Orkhon River. The name of Tibetan clan Tufa might has been a source for this word. The modern Mongolian language utilises the word “Tuvd”. Just from Mongolia the word “Tibet” had spreaded widely through the world. In the first centuries of our era Qiangs, people of the Tibetan-Burman ethnic group, one of possible ancestors of the Tibetans, came under the dominion of the Xianbi tribes, who lived near the Kokonor Lake (Tibetan: Tso Ngonpo). To the 13th Century, Mongolian tribes followed different religions with predominance of Shamanism. The latter had many traits similar to those in the ancient Tibetan Bon religion. However, to the 13th Century, Buddhism prevailed in Tibet—in the version significantly different from that in neighboring China. This Tibetan version, which

was direct continuation of the Late Indian Mahayana tradition, was transferred also to Mongolia. It is incorrect to consider Tibetan Buddhism as a certain “transformed” Buddhism, or a mixture of Buddhism and Shamanism. This concerns both Tibet and Mongolia.

Buddhism became the main religion of Tibet at the time of Yarlung Dynasty (presumably 95 B.C. – 846 A.C.). Some data from biographies of its kings have analogies in biographies of medieval Mongolian khans and princes: probably, resulted not only from an adoption, but also from similarity in mentalities of the Tibetan and Mongolian peoples. In their later history, the Mongols derived the Golden Clan of Genghis from India, from mythical Mahasamadhi Khan, his descendants in India and then in Tibet (from the first seven kings of Tibet, in Mongolian: Sandalit Khaan), but not from China.¹ For example, Mongolian chronicler Sagan Setsen derived the line of great khans of Mongolia from the Yarlung Dynasty. He wrote that junior son of the Tibetan king Jati Tsenpo, after his father had being killed by his minister, fled to the land of Bede people, who lived not far from Baikal Lake, and Burkhan Khaldun Mountain.

Expansion of the Genghis Khan state, his conquest of the Tangut Empire bordered with Tibet, campaigns of Mongolian troops to Tibet etc. promoted deepening of contacts between Mongols and Tibetans. Tibetan lamas of different sects visited Mongolia. In 1247, the head of the Sakya sect, Kunga Gyaltzen (Mongolized: Gunga Jaltsan) met Godan (or Koton), son of Ugedei Khan. Godan expected to get an aid from Tibetans in religious affairs, while Mongols should had assisted Tibetans in secular affairs. This provided the basis of ‘chos-yon’ principle of theocratic rulers of Tibet with Mongolian khans. These relations were strengthened in the Mongolian Yuan Empire since the time of Kublai Khan.² This meant significant dependence of Tibet on Mongols in secular issues, but it can not be described as inclusion of Tibet in the Yuan State. This does not mean also relations between Tibet and China. ‘Yuan dynasty of China’ is a product of classical sinocentric historiography. In reality, it was proclaimed only for better governing of the subdued Chinese by Mongols. Actually, the Great Yuan State was Mongolian Empire, the state of Mongols, with China as no more than one of its parts. China as a state did not exist at that time.

Tibetan lamas carried to Mongolia not only religion but also education, philosophy, Tibetan medicine, astrology, logics etc. In 1268, Phagpa Lama brought to Kublai’s attention an alphabet developed by him for the Mongols, which was based on the Tibetan alphabet (so-called square script). This script allowed him to transmit the phonetics of the Mongolian and Chinese languages. More and more Tibetan words penetrated in Mongolian language. Mongols started to take Tibetan and even Indian names, including religious ones. Evidently, these names were given by Tibetan lamas who gave Buddhist initiations. Some great khans of

Mongola had such names: Ayurbaribada, Suddhibala, Khosala, Rinchinbal, Ayushiridara. Later, according to dispersal of Buddhism among Mongolian tribes, such adoptions appeared more and more often. Now Mongolian versions of Tibetan names (Jugder, Dorj, Rinchin, Sonom, Tseren, Agvan, Dulma etc.) are distributed among Mongols, probably, not less than properly Mongolian names. Names of days of the week, some numerals, traditional calendar etc. were also taken from the Tibetan. In turn, some Mongolian words penetrated into Tibetan language, in particular, those connected with military science, noble titles and ranks. The Mongolian system of the ula in Tibet existed until its occupation by P.R. China.

After China regained its independence from the Mongolian Yuan Empire, the state of Mongols has declined, mainly due to dissention among tribes and fight of senior princes for power. The influence of Buddhism there decreased. However, the Mongols still were strong. Undoubtedly, the Tibetans understood that Mongols are closer to them than Chinese, in terms of civilization. The most intensive contacts were in the Kokonor area, where national composition of mixed Tibetan-Mongolian-Turkic people changed as a result of permanent wars. Influence of Buddhism there was stronger. Lamas of different Tibetan sects visited that area.

In 1530s, a part of Oirats, western Mongols, arrived to Kokonor after several defeats in wars against Moghulistan in the area of Khami (Eastern Turkestan). In 1550s, Anda (1507–1582), the ruler of Tumets, appeared there. He took the title Altan Khan (Golden King). He had the rank of ‘small khan’. Having adopted Buddhism, he wanted to strengthen his power and to spread the faith. Undoubtedly, he considered Godan and Kublai Khan as examples. Mongols sent a big delegation with invitation to Sonam Gyatso, tulku (Mongolian: khuvilgaan) of the Khenpo Lama of Drepung Monastery near Lhasa. In 1577, Sonam Gyatso started from Drepung.³ To meet him, in the area of Tsabchiyal at Kokonor special temple was built. In 1578, Sonam Gyatso and his companions arrived to Mongolia. They were met by envoys of Altan Khan, and several days later the Khan met them personally with a thousand of horsemen. Then they arrived to his capital Kuku Khoto (now Hohhot town in Inner Mongolia). Altan Khan and his people adopted Buddhism, Sonam Gyatso gave them instructions.

After religious services and festivals, Altan Khan unveiled the manifesto, which stated:⁴ “We, Mongols, are powerful because our ancestral race originally descended from the sky, and (Genghis Khan) extended its empire even to China and Tibet. The Buddhist religion first came to our country in earlier times, when we gave our patronage to Sakya Pandita. Later, we had an Emperor named Temur, during whose reign our people had no religion and our country degenerated so that it seemed as though an ocean of blood had flooded the land. Your visit to us now helped the Buddhist religion to revive. Our relationship of patron and lama

can be likened to that of the sun and the moon. The ocean of blood has become an ocean of milk. The Tibetans, Chinese, and Mongols now living in this country should practice the Ten Virtues of the Lord Buddha.” In the manifesto, Altan Khan established rules “for all the Mongolian people”, revoking practices that existed among Shamanists. These included the sacrificial killing of wife, personal servants, horses and cattle that belonged to the newly dead, and the Ongon worship. The latter were instructed to be destroyed and be replaced with an image of Mahakala that was to be kept at home. Sacrificial killings of people warranted the death penalty, sacrifice of cattle – a tenfold penalty, where as Ongon possession warranted the destruction of the offender’s home. People were instructed to respect their neighbours and not to steal from them.

Altan Khan bestowed the title of the Dalai Lama to Sonam Gyatso. ‘Dalai’ is translated from the Mongolian as ‘ocean’, ‘great’. Altan Khan gave this title on the basis of the translation of Tibetan word ‘gyatso’: in Tibetan, it also means ‘ocean’. Two reincarnated predecessors of the latter received the title posthumously. Thus, the title Dalai Lama was granted by a Mongol.

Buddhism has spread over the territory of Mongolia. In 1585, Abatai Khan built famous monastery called Erdene Zuu on the place of the former Mongolian capital Kharkhorin. Later each of his descendants built a temple in this monastery. The 3rd Dalai Lama started to Lhasa in 1588, but died on his way. He was reborn in Mongolia as great-grandson of Altan Khan. Thus, a Mongol became the 4th Dalai Lama under the name Yonten Gyatso (1589–1617). His parents refused to give him to the Tibetan delegation before he was grown up, so the Tibetan monks taught him in Mongolia at first.⁵ In 1601, accompanied by the Mongols, he was brought to Lhasa, where he was educated, enthroned, and lived. He studied at Drepung. His teacher was Lobsang Chogyen (Lobsang Chokyi Gyaltsen) from the Tashilhunpo Monastery. Yonten Gyatso gave his teacher the title of Panchen Lama, “Great Scholar Guru”. Thus, the title of Panchen Lama was granted by a Mongol.

In 1617, the 4th Dalai Lama died in the Drepung Monastery. His body was cremated. A half of his ashes was put into stupa in Tibet, and a half was driven to Mongolia, where it was divided between his father and his secular patron, a prince with title Tumet Taiji. His reincarnation was found in Central Tibet in 1619.

Later Oirats supported Dalai Lamas, providing them aid politically and by military force, within the framework of ‘priest-patron’ relations. Gushi Khan assisted the 5th Dalai Lama to become theocratic ruler of Tibet, with Lhasa proclaimed its capital.⁶ Events of the first half of the 17th Century in Tibet are often quoted as an example of religious wars and intolerance of Buddhism. It is not quite correct. Wars occurred between different forces claimed authority over Central Tibet, with religion as its ideological justification. Most probably,

just the concept of merciful ruler *Bodhisattva* (i.e. the Dalai Lama as reincarnation of *Avalokitesvara*) was the only possible to unite Tibet.⁷ The same concerns Mongols. Just high reincarnated lamas played an increasing role in their political life in the Buddhist time.

At the time of Gushi Khan, the 5th Dalai Lama established 'priest-patron' relations also with Manchu Emperor. Connections of Tibet with Mongolian countries also strengthened; Mongolian nobles more and more often appealed to the authority of lamas. For example, in 1659, the Dalai Lama sent his representative to Mongolia to ask princes to stop internecine strife and preserve unity of the country.⁸ In response, Mongolian princes sent him sealed letters of oath. Dalai Lama repeatedly resolved conflicts between the Mongols and Manchu. From the other hand, Mongols assisted Tibetans with military force. For example, in 1680s, Tibetan-Mongolian troops captured Ladakh after the latter decided to assist Bhutan which had threatened Tibet.

Split among Mongolian tribes in the 16th Century led to their loss of independence. Main causes were internecine strife between khans and nobles and their attempts to get aid from Manchu emperors, who had joined China to Manchuria. In these conditions, the only social layer which could consolidate the nation were Tibetan clergy.

To 17th-8th centuries, majority of Mongols were devoted followers of the Tibetan Buddhism, mainly of Gelug sect. It was important that tulku has no property: the latter belongs to the line of sequence and not to relatives or anybody else.

Among tulkus in Mongolia, the line of Jetsun Dampa Khutuktu, or the Bogd Gegen, had special role. This line came from India to Tibet. One of these tulkus, Jetsun Taranatha Gunga Ningbo (1575–1634) was famous Tibetan religious thinker and historian. He visited Mongolia several times and built there several monasteries. Once he asked his disciples to whom he should reborn next time. One of them, a Mongol, asked him to reborn in Mongolia. Taranatha was reborn in Mongolia as Zanabazar, second son of the Tushetu Khan Gombodorji. He became a monk. Later he visited Tibet, where he was recognized as reincarnation of Taranatha by the 5th Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama granted him the title Jetsun Dampa. In 1651, he returned to Outer Mongolia as the head of its Buddhist church. Mongols called Zanabazar Undur Gegeen (the High Saint). Zanabazar (1635–1724) did much for development of religion in Mongolia: established several monasteries, built temples, brought many religious books, elaborated scripture for Mongols (which was not used due to its complexity). In addition, he was famous religious sculptor established his own school. His sculptures still considered as masterpieces. According to his advice, the Outer Mongols in 1691 have recognized suzerainty of the Manchu Emperor on the assembly at Dolonnor

Lake. This was explained by aggression from Zungar Khanate. Later, in 1755 – 1760, the Manchu conquered Zungar Khanate and conducted genocide against the Oirat population there. Manchu established Xinjiang province on the place of former Zungar Khanate and Eastern Turkestan. Soon afterwards, Tibet became a country dependent on the Manchu Qing Empire – but not a “part of China”. Nevertheless, its contacts with Mongolia continued to spread.

Zanabazar was reborn in Mongolia as Luvsan Damba Donmi (1724–1757), son of the prince Darkhan Chin Wang Dondobdorji. Stories on his miracles preserved.⁹ In addition, he established new religious services and developed Tibetan medicine in Mongolia at his own account.¹⁰ He tried to make peace between the Mongols and Manchu.

Searches for the next incarnation of Jetsun Dampa created contradictions. Mongols hoped that he will be found among them. However, he was found in Tibet, and this was approved by the Dalai Lama. Since the time of Russian researcher A.M. Pozdnev, European researchers consider that this was choice of the Manchu Emperor who feared rebellions in Outer Mongolia at searches of the new incarnation and his subsequent growing influence of the Mongols. However, Pozdnev himself wrote that there is no written directive from the emperor on this regard, but only rumors. Thus, all subsequent incarnations of Jetsun Dampa (at least till the year 2012) were Tibetans. They engaged mainly in religious matters: building of monasteries and temples, producing and import of religious items, books, introduction of new religious services, affairs of the Shavi (department of disciples working to clergy). In particular, they decreased dependence of these disciples from secular courts and state duties.

Spiritual authority of the Jetsun Dampa had embraced all Mongolian peoples followed the Tibetan Buddhism. For example, in the 19th Century Kalmyks (Oirats) and more neighboring Buryats from Russia regularly visited him to worship.¹¹ The Bogd Gegen had the third place in the hierarchy after the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama.

Tibetan Buddhism became inalienable part of the unique Mongolian culture. Religious services were conducted by the Tibetan rites and in Tibetan language. A big settlement of Tibetans was formed in Ikh Khuree, the capital of Outer Mongolia. Mongolia and Tibet kept permanent connection, conducted financial transactions, trade caravans, pilgrims, pupils, officials etc. came to and from Tibet.

In addition to Tibetan words, Tibetan legends, astrology, medicine, food (e.g. tsampa, momo), architecture etc. penetrated into Mongolia. Traditional dress of Tibetans and Mongols, jewelries (e.g. made of silver with turquoise and corals), woman hair-dress etc. have many similarities. Even the modern traditional songs of Tibetans and Mongols are very similar. It's interesting that a Mongol may say

that a Tibetan song is identical to Mongolian song – except for language which is mainly not understandable for a Mongol.

In 1904, military detachment of Colonel F. Younghusband invaded Tibet to impose a treaty profitable for Great Britain. Tibetan troops were defeated, invaders captured Lhasa. The 13th Dalai Lama fled from Tibet to Ikh Khuree via Kokonor. One of his attendants was Agvan Dorjiev, his representative to the Russian Emperor Nicholas II.

The Dalai Lama moved to Mongolia without invitation. When this news reached Ikh Khuree, there held a meeting decided to meet the high guest with respect and settle him in the Bogd Gegen's old palace. Upon his approach, Jetsun Dampa sent forwards yellow stretcher with palanquin and rich yurtas (nomad tents). The 13th Dalai Lama spent almost a year in Ikh Khuree. Rich dratsang Dashchoibol Gungaajaling was in charge of his stay.

Manchu government gave no aid to Tibet to repel the English, but it expressed displeasure with moving of the Dalai Lama to Mongolia: they feared strengthening his contacts with the Bogd Gegen and influence on Mongols. The 8th Jetsun Dampa received an instruction from Beijing to be “not very zealous with reception of the Dalai Lama”.¹² Then Beijing illegally “deposed” the Dalai Lama.

It was difficult for the Bogd Gegen to oppose the Manchu and Chinese. Shortly before, on his behest, the Manchu Amban (civil governor) Deling, who robbed the population, was withdrawn from Ikh Khuree. For exchange, Yangji, the amban of Xining, was sent to the capital city, with the order to the Dalai Lama leave to Xining. The Dalai Lama had refused, then Yangji was appointed amban to Ikh Khuree, then he was ordered to accompany the Dalai Lama to Xining, and another amban was sent beforehand to Ikh Khuree. The Manchu and Chinese spies tracked both hierarchs.

The Bogd Geegen has not left Ikh Khuree to meet the visitor. The official meeting took place only by the fourth day and was short. According to the report of the Russian agent, confidants of the Khutuktu told, that arrival of the Dalai Lama will be unpleasant for him, as it will be interfaced to expenses and problems in relations with Beijing. It was told, that between confidants of the both hierarchs a dispute has flashed when the throne of the Dalai Lama was put in the temple ahead of the Khutuktu's throne. As a result, the throne of the Dalai Lama was removed, and this was attributed to the Bogd Gegen. Russian orientalist F.I. Shcherbatskoi reproduced the story from a certain Chinese, as if under the Khutuktu's offer the special ritual (gurum) has been made for the 13th Dalai Lama somewhat quicker left from Ikh Khuree.

Rumors were those. Facts indicate that relations between the 13th Dalai Lama and the court of the 8th Bogd Gegen have become tense. The Dalai Lama via the Russian Consul asked to bring in the notice of the Chinese officials and the

Khutuktu a word of intercession.¹³ This situation has caused stable rumors on inhospitality in Ikh Khuree and disagreements between the two hierarchs.

Apparently, thereof in the fall of 1905, the 13th Dalai Lama left to the monastery of Wang Khuree for winter, having continued his contacts to the Russian imperial representatives and hoping to get support from Russia. He managed to receive only the moral support, as the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was afraid of spoiling the relations to the Qing Empire and Great Britain. Beijing has achieved its goal: in the summer of 1906, the Dalai Lama directed to Tibet via China.

All this information develops into a picture of intrigues in the entourage of the 8th Bogd Gegen masterminded by the Cixi regime in Beijing, directed towards the splitting of Buddhists and removal of the 13th Dalai Lama from Mongolia to China. As a result, the 8th Bogd Gegen got in a difficult situation. Fragmentary data indicate that he kept normal relations with the Dalai Lama but he was compelled to hide them. He several times met with the Dalai Lama,¹⁴ but the content of these meetings is unknown. Probably, just then it was decided to be separated from the Qing Empire and to form the allied state of Mongolia and Tibet: the lamas and princes of Mongolia could not make such decision contrary to the will of the Bogd Gegen.¹⁵

The Cixi regime broke obligations on the basis of which the Mongols had recognized suzerainty of the Manchu Dynasty. Colonization of the Mongolian lands by the Chinese has began and the threat of assimilation appeared. Mongols decided to separate from the Qing Empire and form their theocratic state. Buddhist clergy and Jetsun Dampa personally played decisive role in this. Mongolia proclaimed its independence with the 8th Bogd Gegen as its Great Khan. Thus,

Tibetan Lama has become the last Great Khan of Mongols.

However, leadership of the Chinese Republic (i.e. nation state of the Han) had put illegal claims to the whole “heredity” of the collapsed Manchu Qing Empire, and invented a wrong concept of the “republic of five races”. On April 8, 1912, President Yuan Shikai issued a decree of cancelling the status of Mongolia, Tibet and Eastern Turkestan as vassal territories, and transformation of them into common Chinese provinces.¹⁶ The Dalai Lama XIII and the Bogd Gegen rejected these claims: Mongolian nobles in the past recognized suzerainty of the Manchu Khan, Tibetan hierarchs were connected with the latter by ‘*chos-yon*’ relations. It was nothing to do with the new republic of the Han.

On January 11, 1913, Mongolian-Tibetan Treaty was signed. It stated that Mongolia and Tibet, having separated from China, formed their independent states.¹⁷ The Treaty aimed at strengthening of friendship and mutual aid between the two states. This Treaty was legal international recognition of Tibet as independent state, because Russia earlier recognized Mongolia as an independent

state, having signed bilateral Treaty on November 3, 1912.¹⁸ Later, in 1915, trilateral Kyakhta Agreement between Russia, Mongolia and China recognized Mongolia as an autonomy to China. However, this does not influence the Treaty with Tibet, because it was signed earlier, i.e. when Mongolia was independent.

In 1919 – 1920, the Chinese illegitimately occupied Mongolia, deposed and arrested the Bogd Khan. In 1921 Russian monarchist Baron R.F. von Ungern-Sternberg with his troops liberated Mongolia from the Chinese and regained legal power of the Bogd Khan. The latter was liberated from Chinese arrest by a detachment of Ungern's counter-revolutionaries, consisting of Tibetans, Mongols and Buryats. The Tibetans were led by Saji Lama. Fight against the Chinese was activated in Tibet. Ungern and the Bogd Khan's Government communicated with the Dalai Lama. Ungern received envoys with letters and some religious items from the 13th Dalai Lama.¹⁹ Having been defeated by Bolsheviks, Ungern wanted to move to Tibet, but it was too late: he was captured and shot by the Reds.

Red Government in Mongolia, installed by Soviet troops, followed directives of the Communist International and suppressed religion more and more. Repressions were significantly tightened after the death of the 8th Jetsun Dampa in 1924. Red repressions against Buddhism and "the class of exploiters" caused a broad resistance of people and new repressions in answer, in the same way like in Tibet few decades later. Among counter-revolutionaries, who wanted to depose the Red authority in Mongolia, were also some Tibetans. Saji Lama, one of their leaders, was arrested and shot among others.²⁰ Sometime later the Tibetan colony in Mongolian capital city ceased to exist, and Tibetans left Mongolian People's Republic. However, contacts were not cut completely: caravan movements and pilgrimages continued for a certain time, some Mongols lived in Lhasa etc.

To the middle of 1940s, religion in Mongolia was destroyed under the leadership of Kh. Choibalsan, who followed I.V. Stalin's instructions. Almost all temples were destroyed, religious items stolen or destroyed, a large part of clergy repressed. Connections between Mongolia and Tibet almost stopped, although personal pilgrimages and some attempts of communists to contact Tibet continued during a certain time. After Mao Zedong had taken power in China with the decisive aid from I.V. Stalin, contacts between Tibet and Mongols outside of P.R. China stopped. At present, such contacts are strictly controlled by the PRC authorities. Nevertheless, centuries-old commonalities between Tibetans and Mongols were not entirely wiped out by communists. Common mentality, traditions and religion continue to play their positive role. The contacts between two peoples of the same civilization are continuing.

This brief overview indicated not only very old connections but also significant similarities between Mongols and Tibetans. Actually, they are more similar

between each other than with any other nation. This indicates that they compose the singular Tibeto-Mongolian civilization formed in the course of history. In the 17th – 19th centuries this civilization was in spheres of influence of the Qing and Russian empires. These empires, on the contrast to China and USSR, never aimed at firing class hatred, destruction of religion and traditionalism. Only before the collapse of the Qing Empire its leadership violated the old traditions and agreements.

Even in the beginning of the 20th Century centers of this civilization, Mongolia and Tibet, developed in similar ways: both proclaimed their independence before Xinhai revolution in China, then recongized each other and signed a treaty, then exercised their independence. Further situation was also more or less similar, and revolutions in both Qing and Russian empires made a great harm to Tibeto-Mongolian civilization. Mongolia paid high price for its independence, but support from the USSR and presence of the Soviet Army served a guarantee against the conquest of this country by China. The high price of communist modernization in Tibet had an opposite context: it was a tragic price of occupation and devastation of an independent country by Chinese invaders.

At present, a vacuum, which was formed on the place of old traditions in Mongolia, represents a serious potential danger to national identity of Mongols. In China and Russia Mongols are significantly accepting values of the main nations of these countries. There is a kind of ideological vacuum in the new generation of Tibetans living on occupied territories. Chinese authorities try to fill it with a “socialism with Chinese specificity”, i.e. by sinicization (transformation of Tibetans into Chinese). Tibetans are resisting so far. Tibetan Buddhism, national languages and traditions should remain the cornerstone for preserving the national identities of Mongolian and Tibetan people. At the same time, it is important for them to recall their noble past and realize fully, that they compose one unique, Tibeto-Mongolian civilization.

Notes

1. Lubsan Danzan, 1973, pp. 49–53.
2. See Kuzmin, 2010.
3. Shakabpa, 1988.
4. In: Shakabpa, 1988, p.94.
5. Shakabpa, 2003, p.109.
6. See Kuzmin, 2011a.
7. Elikhina, 2006.
8. Shakabpa, 2008.
9. Korostovets, 2004.
10. Pozdneev, 1880.

11. Pozdneev, 1896.
12. Kozlov, 2004.
13. Kozlov, 2004.
14. Badarchi and Dugarsuren, 2000.
15. This disproves the opinion that during the secret meetings in Urga both hierarchs failed to come to consent and their dialogue was unsuccessful (Magsarjav, 1994).
16. See text in Belov, 2005, pp. 178–179.
17. See text in Batsaikhan, 2008.
18. Batsaikhan and Kuzmin, 2008.
19. See details in Kuzmin, 2011b.
20. Purevjav and Dashjamts, 1965, p.62.

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Buddhism' Lost World- Part II

Ngawang Tsering Shakspo

My visit to Bangladesh coincided with the celebration of the 80th birth anniversary of Suddhananda Mahathero, the sagacious abbot of Dharmarajika Bouddha Mahavira, the biggest Buddhist temple in Bangladesh's capital, Dhaka. The three day long birth anniversary of the Mahathero began with great pomp and show on January 13th 2012 and was attended by the Baruyas and Chakmas, the ethnic Buddhists of Bengal as well as the well-wishers of Mahathero from the country's Muslim community. A sizeable number of foreign delegates were also present, including Dr. Pornchai Pinyapong, the President of the Youth World Buddhist Fellowship, Bangkok.

From my schooling in Varanasi during the sixties, I had gained some sense of the Buddhists of Bengal (known as Baruyas) having affiliation with the Maha Bodhi Society of India, the biggest religious organization of the India with its headquarter at Kolkata. Only during my attendance of the Mahathero's birth celebrations at Dhaka did I realize that the ethnic Bengali Buddhists are known as Baruya while the Buddhist population of the Chittagong hill tracts are known as Chakma. Both the Baruya and Chakmas claim that their ancestors were from Vaishali and Champak districts of present-day Bihar and Uttar Pradesh (the region where Lord Buddha obtained enlightenment, delivered his first sermon and finally attained Mahaparinirvana). It is said that in the past these people migrated to the hills from their ancestral places via the Nepali border towards present-day Arunachal Pradesh in the East, then towards the hills of Mizoram and further southeast to the Akiyab or Arakan region of Myanmar. Later they penetrated into the present Chittagong hills and again moved forward towards the plains of Bengal. The Chakmas, were also known as the Arkon race and choose Chittagong as their domicile place while the Baruya moved to the plains of Bengal, the region which is, according to the ancient Buddhist text, an enormously wealthy place.

The Buddhists of Bengal, particularly the Chakmas, had to face many atrocities in the past. This was particularly true at the time of the creation of East Pakistan on account of the Partition of India in 1947 based on religious grounds, and later with the violent emergence of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in the year 1971.

It is interesting to note that these people were Buddhist from very ancient times and were never detached from their ancient faith and remained attached to the Buddhadharma. Unlike the followers of Tibetan Buddhism these people

remained mixed with their counterpart Hindus and carried teachings of the Buddha in the Theravada tradition.

Bengal must have produced many luminary Buddhists, but the best known to the Buddhist world is Atisha Dipankara, who was a celebrated teacher from Vikarmashila University in the 10th Century. It is said that Atisha was born at a place called Bikramopur in Khulna district of present Bangladesh. Unlike the practitioners of Tibetan (Mahayana) Buddhism, the Theravada Buddhist do not consider Atisha as a Buddha. During the three day long celebrations of the 80th birth anniversary of Suddhananda Mahathero a certain scholar termed the Mahathero as 4th Buddha. On that I wondered who could be the 2nd and 3rd. After inquiring it came to the surface that their second Buddha is Atisha Dipankara and the 3rd Buddha is the mentor of Suddhananda Mahthero, Mahasanghanayaka Visuddananda Mahathero (1909-1994).

It is to be mentioned that both Suddhananda Mahthero and Mahasanghanayaka Visuddananda Mahthero (1909-1994) played active roles in rejuvenating and preserving the Buddhist population and religion during the turmoil of Bangladesh and were turned out to be as the savior of the community. For that reason the Buddhist population of Bangladesh owes much to these two religious teachers and social activists.

Regarding Atisha Dipankara it is said that in the 9th Century A.D. the King Langdarma of Tibet had ruthlessly suppressed Buddhism in the country. Many of the monks had to disrobe and had to flee from their respective monasteries. With that the prince Ye-shes Od of Purang (1025 A.D.) in Western Tibet determined to reinstate the banished priesthood in Central Tibet and to make it more effective than ever. While Ye-shes Od was doing his best to revive Buddhism by appointing Lotsawa Rinchen Zangpo as the spiritual advisor in his country, the ruler of the nearby state captured Ye-shes Od and imprisoned him. His captor set his ransom at his own weight in gold. His nephew Changchub Od tried his best to procure the gold and made all the necessary arrangements for sending it, but Lha-Lhama Od sent him a message from prison saying that there was no longer any point in saving his life as death would be a perfect relief from encroaching old age. Instead the gold was to be used to invite the famous Buddhist teacher, Atisha, from the University of Vikarmashila. Accordingly, Changchub Od sent Lotsahava Gya-tsondu-singe to the plains of India to invite Atisha with gold to Tibet. It is said that in the 11th Century A.D. Atisha had brought the primary creative teachings of the Buddha from India to Tibet and with that Buddhism had been given a great boost in the "land of snow". Among the well known teachings of Atisha are *Boudh Pradeep* and *Chang-chub-lamdon* (The Lamp of the Path of Enlightenment). With that Buddhism got deeply rooted on Tibetan soil and hence forth the indigenous mode of religious and philosophical thought flourish

in Tibet. It was Atisha who founded the Kadampa sect after coming to Tibet which was a reformed Tibetan Buddhist sect in 11th Century.

The main objective of my visit to Bangladesh was to gain some idea of the Chittagong Hill Tract where a sizeable number of Buddhists population reside popularly known as Chakma. I, therefore, gathered some information about the region and also of the Buddhist population through books as well as of people I met during my stay at Dhaka. On this point I must acknowledge the assistance rendered to me by Dr. Kalyan Priya Bhikkhu, the abbot of the Bangladesh Buddhist Temple at Bodh Gaya who at our first acquaintance very kindly extended invitation to me on behalf of the celebration committee of the 80th birth anniversary of Suddhananda Mahathero for my attendance at Dhaka. Prior to that I met Dr. Bhikkhu Sumanapal, who attended the 12th Colloquium of IALS in Leh in the month of August, 2011. While in Dhaka through the courtesy of Dr. Bhikkhu Sumanapal I came into the contact of Panna Bodhi Bikkhu, a student of Dhaka University. He not only proved a valuable resource to me, but also offered to accompany me on a visit to the Chittagong Hill region. I thus gladly accepted his offer and we travelled to Chittagong by bus.

The distance to Chittagong was about six hours by bus and on arrival to Chittagong city, my guide Bhikkhu Panna took me to the Chittagong Buddhist Monastery located in the heart of the city at Buddhist Temple Road. The monk introduced me to Professor Jinabodh Bhikkhu of the University of Chittagong University. I had a fruitful discussion with Professor Jinabodhi on the state of the community and teaching facilities available in different Universities of Bangladesh. As the Bhikkhu was about to leave for Dhaka by a night bus, he offered me his room for the duration of my Chittagong stay and I gladly accepted his kind offer.

Now my visit to Chittagong Hill tract began with Rangamati, a sleepy village 77 km east of Chittagong City. Rangamati is an open Buddhist village on a ridge where a many Chakma and saffron-robed monks manage the tiny and large Buddhist Viharas. There is a town below the hills with the same name. However, my interest was to see and experience the life of the Buddhists residing in Rangamati which extends for about 7 km and serve as a hill station for Bangladeshis during the summer months. The biggest and the most known Vihar at Rangamati is Bana Vihar. Till recent time a 95 years old hermit was in residence at the Bana Vihara known as Bana Bante. Bante is a Sanskrit name for a Theravada Buddhist monk and Bana means "forest". I was very lucky to have a glance of Bana Bante who I saw flanked by three or four of his attendants. About Bana Bante I was told that he is very well known among his community and respected by the followers of Theravada Buddhism and on daily basis a good number of Chakma as well as Theravada Buddhist from Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka and

plains of India (particularly Nagpur) where there is a concentration of a large number of Theravada Buddhists who regularly pay visits to the Bana Bante. Unfortunately, very recently the Bana Bante passed away which I think was a great loss for the residents of Rangamati as well as for the Buddhist community, as the presence of Ban Bante was a zeal for the monks and to the community. Interestingly, during my visit to Rangamati in a Temple close to Bana Vihara I saw around two hundred monks in an assembly in connection with their summer retreat. In Rangamati there were many small and big Viharas but could not avail the opportunity visit except one Vihara in the vicinity of the Bana Vihara at a ridge. As we were to reach Chittagong City by evening, could not see or learn much about their social life but from the little knowledge I gathered about their daily life can say that the Buddhist community at Rangamati is small with lot of pressure from the massive Bengali population but seems to be doing well with their daily activities.

At Rangamati we hired a three wheeler in order to proceed toward the Buddhist village of Chitmorang situated at the distance of four km from the Kaptai Lake and 10 km drive from Rangamati on Kapalai-Chittagong highway. We passed through lakes and forest which were very picturesque and in order to reach the ancient temple we had to cross a river by boat. The old monastery is a wooden structure and has very picturesque surroundings. In the compound there is a Burmese style Pagoda and in one of the temple there is a marble statue of the Buddha which the resident claims is very old, holy and precious. The village has a large concentration of the Marma Buddhist tribe. These people seem racially different from Chakma people of Rangamati. Not only that in the outlook structure of the buildings as well of religious practices and the posters of Buddha statue are more inclined towards the Burmese.

The following day we went to Bandarban, another town of the Chittagong Hill Track. To get to Bandarban the bus passes through forest along a hilly road. The area is also a popular tourist destination and many come there for trekking as the area is surrounded by river with lush green hills and thinly populated compare to the average Bangladeshi towns. The distance to the town from Chittagong city is around 92 km and located on the Sangu River and again the inhabitants are mainly of the Buddhist Marma tribe. The town has some interesting sights including a fish market and a tribal restaurant managed by hard working ladies. The tribal bazaar run by the Marma Buddhist has variety of Burmese style clothing's. In the streets one can see Marma women's in their cultural dresses and engaged in their day to day activities. Here in the market one can purchase religious offering utensils and jewelry. To some extent here it feels as if one is no longer in Bangladesh.

Built on a hill top few kilometers away and not far from the town one can see a large Golden Pagoda or Stupa. Upon entering into the compound area of the

temple one see statues of Buddha in different standing posture and the surroundings of the temple and the outer view of the hills and forest are so grand that one feels like staying there for some time. In fact the Pagoda itself is built on the most impressive site in the area. Not far from the golden Pagoda on the other side of a high ridge another old Buddhist temple and a stupa is in existence. In the ridge construction of a huge Pagoda of Burmese style is in progress.

The last leg of my short visit to Chittagong Hill Trek was Cox's Bazaar. Here again the main purpose of my visit was not for enjoyment or as a beach holiday but to gather some information of the Buddhist population there.

The scenic view of the beach was very beautiful and evening masses of people come here for enjoyment. Interestingly, at the eastern end of the town, at the place called Aggameda Khyang a large Burmese style Buddhist temple is in existence. The wooden structure of the temple looks very old with precious religious object. Just behind the temple there is a small golden pagoda housed under a wooden temple. Next there is the residential house of the care taker monk with a large Buddha temple, again of Burmese style wooden architecture. All together the temple has large compound area and was told that the temple get financial support from the Burmese donors. At the time of my visit only one monk was in residence but appears that several are residing there.

This important and old temple is located not far from the City Centre. In the city centre again one can visit the Marma Buddhist's run shops to buy fancy dresses. Here again the shops are found to be run by the women folk, who look nice in their traditional dresses. Not far from there a new Japanese Buddhist temple is found housed in a private house. With that my tour to Bangladesh came to a close.

There is a Buddhist saying that where ever there are monks, the Buddha's doctrine will flourish. This saying is also applicable in the case of Bengali Buddhists. Although an Islamic country with a handful of Buddhist communities, Bangladesh's growing number of monks is quite encouraging. But it appears that they still do not have many educational institutions where they can obtain higher education in Buddhist studies. Still, I found some well educated Buddhists in the country who are striving hard to keep the Buddha's doctrine alive.

Song and dances are the integral part of Bengali society. In Buddhist temple of Dhaka as well at Chittagong I saw posters there announcing the celebrations of high priests of different temples and monastic institutions. At that time both the Buddhist and Hindus singers band participate. Similarly, on the occasion of marriages both the Buddhist and Hindu come onto a single platform for enjoyment.

On my return back to Varanasi from the Chittagong visit, at Sarnath I visited the Library of Maha Bodhi Society at Sarnath and while going through the old journals of society published in the year 1955, an article under the title Buddhist's

Lost World written by Bhikkhu Anoma Mahinda came into my attention. In the said article the author found some kind of similar expression and the same prompted me to write this article. I quote the last paragraph from the article which read as “This is probably the first article on the subject ever appearing in a magazine and I write it with the hope that others may enquire more into this secluded area or visit them. Close links with the other Buddhist countries will do much to keep alight the lamp of the Dharma which still burns brightly in East Pakistan (nowadays Bangladesh)”.

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