

# The Necklace of gZi

## A Cultural History of Tibet

NAMKHAI NORBU

NARTHANG PUBLICATIONS

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Dharamsala.

First Published: 1981

Reprinted: 1984

First Narthang Edition: 1989

Published by Narthang Publications,  
Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamsala-176215  
Printed at Indraprastha Press (CBT),  
New Delhi 110 002

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

*Necklace of gZi* is a thought-provoking book in which the author discusses various historical controversies that plague the writing of Tibetan history. Drawing upon his many years of traditional studies in Tibet as well as his experience in modern research methodology in the West, Prof. Namkhai Norbu analyses Tibetan history with penetrating insight.

Originally the text of a speech given by Prof. Norbu at the invitation of the Tibetan Youth Association in Europe in 1976, *Necklace of gZi* was first published in Tibetan by the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Dharamsala, in 1981. It was later translated into English and published by the Office of Information and International Relations, Dharamsala, in the same year.

Narthang Publications takes pleasure in bringing out this edition of *Necklace of gZi*.

July, 1989

Narthang Publications  
Dharamsala

## INTRODUCTION

It is most welcome to have an English translation of the short but extremely interesting recent work on Tibetan culture and history written by Rev. Namkhai Norbu. The English translation provides rapid access to the work for non-Tibetan students who are not yet fully acquainted with the written Tibetan language. The translation inevitably has lost much of the original flavour and charm, but is fairly accurate and faithful to the original work.

Rev. Norbu is an important incarnation of the Nyingma-pa school. He was one of Tibetan scholars invited to Rome in 1961 by Professor G. Tucci to assist him in his research at the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente. He worked at this institute for several years and later moved to the University of Naples where he teaches Tibetan language and civilisation. He is also engaged in giving instruction on *Dzog chen* meditation in various Tibetan Buddhist centres in Europe and America.

His work is entitled in Tibetan: *Bod rigs gzhon nu rnams la gros su 'debs pa gzi yi phreng ba*—‘The Necklace of gZi: being counsel to the Tibetan youth’. It is written in a style which indicates deep reflection on the subject and at the same time invites the reader to join in and examine the problem with the author.

It must be pointed out that Rev. Norbu is the first Tibetan Buddhist who questions the value of his own Buddhist historical tradition. Armed with Bon historical records Rev. Norbu delves deeply in quest of the origins of Tibetan culture. He does not agree with the Tibetan Buddhist historians who have always maintained that Tibetan civilisation had its inception only at the beginning of the 7th century A.D. The importation of Buddhism, according to him, into Tibet only contributed to enrich the existing Tibetan culture. But, he continues, unlike China in the past and Japan today where the indigenous culture and religion hold a position superior to the imported one, in Tibet Buddhist historians and writers took little interest in what could be described as Tibet’s own culture. The indigenous traditions came unfortunately to be esteemed of little value and therefore unworthy of attention. In short, Rev. Norbu points out that Tibetan Buddhist historians made the Tibetan civilisation look as young as 1,300 years old when in fact it stretches back more than 3,000 years. He is of the opinion that Tibetan civilisation is as old as Indian or Chinese civilisation, if not older.

1. RACE. The origin of the Tibetan race, according to Buddhist sources, goes back to the original couple of a monkey and a demoness and is situated in a period later than the Buddha’s lifetime. Rev. Norbu considers this impossible from the viewpoint of both space and time. (This is of course a question of legend embodying ideas specific to the Tibetan people and the question of time does not enter into it.)

2. LANGUAGE. Before the reign of King Srongtsen Gampo (d. 649) according to the Tibetan Buddhists, Tibetans had no writing system and therefore no written language. (Early Chinese sources express the same opinion.) Rev. Norbu rejects this account and considers that the country Zhangzhung possessed a writing system from which the Tibetan alphabet and grammar developed long before the reign of King Srongtsen Gampo. What the *Lo-tsa-ba* Thonmi would have done was to improve the existing system on the model of Sanskrit grammar.

3. RELIGION. Before the introduction of Buddhism from India, Tibet had its own religion, Bon. Rev. Norbu explains that even before the coming of the Bonpo Master, Shenrab Miwo, there was a certain religious belief already known as Bon in Tibet and that this was improved upon and new doctrines added to it by Shenrab Miwo, and that it is this re-organised religion that we now have and call the Bon religion. Rev. Norbu goes further in suggesting the possibility that the origin of *Dzogchen* meditation goes back to *Shenrab Miwo*, at least in its primitive form (*gna' bo'i lugs*). (If this is so, it must be added that such ideas might cause the very ground on which the *Dzogchen* teaching of the *Nyingmapa* school stands, to crumble.)

4. GEOGRAPHY. According to Rev. Norbu Tibet was originally the country known as *Zhangzhung* by which name only Western Tibet, *Viz. Ngari kor sum*, is now known in historical works. *Zhangzhung* was therefore the previous name for Tibet before it became known as Bod.

Rev. Norbu has opened up a new perspective in the study of Tibetan history and civilisation by Tibetans themselves. Such an approach is not only important but of vital necessity for Tibetans who tend to be content with the orthodox historical tradition. To survive in this world we must find and demonstrate our own identity. Let us hope that more work of this kind will appear in the near future so that the young Tibetans will have a chance of recognising themselves and thereby be able to preserve the identity of their own civilisation.

*Samten Gyaltzen Karmay (mKhar rme'u)*  
Paris, September 1980

## CHAPTER I

### THE TIBETAN PEOPLE

THE Tibetan people is classified among the yellow or the Mongoloid race. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, for any scholar to prove anything about its origins. But the close resemblances between Tibetans and American Indians and South Americans show that the Tibetans belong to a very ancient race of the world.

In Burmese historical accounts there are theories that the Burmese people descended from the Tibetans. Even in Burmese language there are many words—like *mi* for man (Tibetan: *mi*), *lag* for hand (Tib: *lag*), *tsa* for salt (Tib: *tsa*), *mig* for eye (Tib: *mig*), *lan* for age (Tib: *lo*), *nga* for I (Tib: *nga*), *na* for ear (Tibetan: *rNa-na*), *tet* for one (Tib: *gcik*), *nyit* for two (Tib: *gNyis*), *nga* for five (Tib: *lnga*) and *kehrug* for six (Tib: *drug*)—which show close affinity and similarity with the Tibetan language. Though there is no proof that the Burmese people descended from the Tibetans, such theories in the Burmese history show that the Tibetans are an ancient people.

gZi (pronounced zee) is one of the most precious stones found in Tibet. The reason why gZi is considered precious is not only because it belongs to the class of precious stones but also because even in this age of advanced technology, no one has succeeded in manufacturing gZi. Neither has anybody discovered how the markings on the gZi were made.

gZis are of different and many types, including the one with *chu-mig* or “water eyes.” Though it is difficult to be definite that people used gZi ornament and decoration in ancient times, it may be assumed that gzi commanded the same value as money in our age because of the different type of art-work on the gZis and the number of the “water eyes.” Judging from the fact that all gZis have holes it is possible that the people in ancient times used them as ornaments.

gZi is a rare stone unique to Tibet. Some of the gZis are from the store-houses and treasures of ancient Tibetan families. Many are found underground or in ruins and fields, and sometimes from the remains of once high mountains and hills. Yet there is nothing astonishing in these discoveries because most of the palaces and even the empires of reputed Zhangzhung kings, who lived over three thousand years ago, are today either in ruins or extinct.

As in other countries, the ancient towns and palaces of Tibet have undergone natural and climatic transformation, destruction and extinction. Generally, distinct geographical features like hills, plateaus and valleys are transformed by natural forces and earthquakes into meadows, and forests, thus giving the whole landscape a different and sometimes an entirely new geographical feature. As similar geographical forces have shaken Tibet, the riches and treasures of the ancient Tibetan families scattered and misplaced during the early centuries of Tibetan history were later discovered and recovered from high hills, valleys and ruins. These facts prove that the Tibetans, like the Chinese and Indians, had a geneological and cultural history and tradition originating from the earliest centuries.

In the beginning, according to Bon legends<sup>1</sup>, the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and space, fused into one massive Cosmic Egg. Gradually, eighteen Cosmic Eggs emerged from the colossal Cosmic Egg and the Tibetan Strain originated from one of these eighteen Cosmic Eggs.

Though we cannot regard the theory of Cosmic Eggs as the beginning of the human race or take this theory as the beginning of the Tibetan race, the very fact that the Tibetans who lived over three thousand years ago had the capacity to expound such cosmic concepts and theories shows that the Tibetans, besides being an ancient stock, at the same time possessed a culture of their own.

In most of the widely accepted Tibetan historical works, it is recorded that during His lifetime Lord Buddha predicted that the Tibetan people will originate from the union of a monkey<sup>2</sup> (incarnation of Avalokiteshvara) and rock-ogress (incarnation of Tara). Such accounts clearly show the overinfluence and domination of religion on Tibetan history.

As accepted now, only 2,500 years have passed since the death of Lord Buddha while the history of Tibet dates back to over 3,000 years. And to say that during the lifetime of Lord Buddha, when neighbouring countries like China and India had attained high-level cultural accomplishments, Tibet was an empty region, devoid of life and waiting for the monkey-god and the rock-ogress to issue the first progenitor of the Tibetan people is ridiculous.

In the Tibetan histories relating to Nyatri Tsenpo, there are several theories that Nyatri Tsenpo, the “first” Tibetan<sup>3</sup> was a descendant either of the Shakya kings of India or of the royal lineage of Ogyen. The reason why Tibetans believed in such a theory is the strong loyalty and faith in Dharma and the feeling that a king coming from a foreign country must be of a different and higher descent. This is the only reason why the Tibetan historians trace the origin of Tibetan kingship to India or Ogyen; which theory is, in fact, neither significant nor reasonable.

From a religious point of view, Lord Buddha has said that “caste is not important, lineage is not important.” Moreover, the fact that Lord Buddha himself renounced the royal life to become a homeless monk shows that caste or lineage is insignificant.

From the secular point of view, the kings who ruled India were chosen from among the Indians and Ogyen kings from the people of Ogyen. If the Indians and the people of Ogyen are capable of choosing their own kings from among themselves there is no reason why the Tibetan kings could not have been chosen from among the Tibetans.

Generally, whether one is called a king or not if the person is able to conquer territories and control and administer people, such a person is considered king; and it was natural in the life of an ancient society for such personages to arise. As such, it is easy to explain the origin of kingship in Tibet as in any other nation, without having to attribute the first king to India or Ogyen.

But, as the Tibetan scholars are extremely devoted to Dharma there are many cases where we have neglected our own country and race and belittled ourselves and relied upon and referred to India for many things. For example, if a scripture was written by an Indian scholar it was considered authoritative and if written by a Tibetan scholar it was called *Bod-ma* (Tibetan manuscript) and used to be automatically looked down upon and neglected.

In the biography of Milrepa<sup>4</sup>, there is an account of Milarepa and an Indian Arhat, Pha Dampa Sangay, competing in performing miraculous transformations. In the course of competition, each of them sat still in the Buddha posture on the top of a blade of grass. It is written that the blade of grass on which the Indian Arhat sat stood straight while the one on which Milarepa sat bent a little. It is explained in the biography that though Milarepa and the Indian Arhat were equal in their capacity to perform miraculous transformations, the origin and holiness of their respective birthplaces made the blade of grass on which the Indian Arhat sat stand straight while the one on which Milarepa sat bent a little—as Milarepa was born in Tibet, a less holy land than India.

It goes without saying that India is considered a very holy land because of the birth of Buddha. But the real reason why we consider India to be a holy land is not only because it is the birth-place of Lord Buddha but more because of the compassion and blessings which Lord Buddha brought to the world. Though India and Tibet have a boundary from the geographical and political point of view, there can never be a boundary for the compassion and blessings of Lord Buddha, which can reach each and every corner of the world. Therefore, such confused and unnecessary assumptions as the one cited above, which have no historical foundation, cause irreparable damage to the true history of Tibet, which is very important and useful for maintaining Tibetan culture.



## Chapter II

### THE TIBETAN LANGUAGE

THE identity of the Tibetan people and the nation is closely linked to the survival of the Tibetan culture. The value and importance of a culture depends on whether that culture has an autonomous history; and at the roots of the cultural phenomena are the language and writing of that culture. Therefore, it is important to study the origins of Tibetan language and writing.

Most of the ancient Tibetan scholars have, facing many hardships and great danger to their lives, brought the Dharma (Buddhism) from Ogyen and India to Tibet. This established a deep-rooted tradition of referring to India as the source and origin of Tibetan culture. Needless to say this tradition developed as a mark of gratitude and in praise of the Dharma and the kindness of the early religious kings and the numerous Indian scholars who brought the Dharma to Tibet. Yet, this tradition of referring to India as the source of origin of Tibetan culture has made it seem that Tibet lacked its own original culture.

Tibetan scholars and historians used to say that Tibet had no writing system till the year 1184 (from Lord Buddha's death), that is, 640 A.D., when Srongtsen Gampo ascended the throne and sent his minister Thonmi Sambhota to India, where Thonmi Sambhota learnt the Indian language and script from India scholars, returned to Tibet and created the Tibetan writing system closely modelled on the Indian script, besides composing the Tibetan grammatical texts of *Sum-chu-pa* and *Tag-gyi-jug-pa* based on Sanskrit grammar and translating many religious texts into Tibetan.

Based on this theory, it is clear that Tibet did not have any writing system before King Srongtsen Gampo. As Tibet did not have a writing system, it goes without saying that Tibet did not have culture. Since Tibet did not have a culture before Srongtsen there was no way but to adopt India as the obvious source and origin of the Tibetan culture which developed with the introduction of the writing system and Dharma from India by Thonmi Sambhota during the reign of King Srongtsen Gampo.

It is a fact that India is the holy land where the Lord Buddha was born and turned the Wheel of Dharma. Therefore, it is fitting and authentic to trace the origin of the Dharma to India; various aspects of culture developed from contact with Indian Buddhist culture. But it is wrong to deprive the Tibetan people of the importance of their culture and original history out of excessive and exaggerated loyalty and devotion to Dharma and its source, India.

In both China and Japan, the Dharma flourished and greatly influenced the development and enrichment of the cultures of the respective nations. But nowhere have these nations sacrificed the uniqueness of their own culture and history for the sake of Dharma. There would be nothing wrong if the Tibetans would view the relation between Buddhist religion and their cultural history in such a perspective.

Tibetan historians record that beginning with Nyatri Tsenpo, Tibet had seven kings known as *gNam-gyi-Khri-bDun*; two kings known as *sTod-kyi-sTeng-gNyis*; six kings known as *Bar-gyi-Legs-Drug*; eight kings known as *Sa-yi-Ida-brGyad*; three kings known as *Wog-gi-brTsan-gSum* and five more, the first of whom was Lha Thothori, the 28th King. In short, they used to say that there were 32 kings before Srongtsen Gampo and provided brief histories of these kings.

Tuan-Huang documents<sup>5</sup> related to Tibetan history, reputed to be authoritative by all contemporary scholars, also record these Tibetan kings, their brief histories and a quite detailed history of King Drigum Tsenpo

If Tibet had no writing system at all before King Srongtsen Gampo, it would not have been possible to record the histories of all the 32 kings. When we do not have written records of our own family it is not possible for us to recite the family history of even the past three generations from our memory. Likewise, there is no ground for us to suppose that the early Tibetans had the requisite memory power to recite from memory the history of the 32 kings beginning with Nyatri Tsenpo. Therefore, the belief that Tibet had no writing system before King Srongtsen Gampo is unfounded and unreliable.

It is true that the Tibetan writing system was greatly improved after the ascendancy of King Srongtsen Gampo during whose reign Thonmi Sambhota modified the writing system by modelling it closely on the Indian Sanskrit script and composed the grammatical texts for convenience. But such cultural developments are not peculiar to Tibet but happen in other nations also. The modification of the Tibetan writing system by Thonmi Sambhota shows that the previous system was relatively obscure and complicated, and had grammatical rules which were not adequate for an accurate translation and rendering of the profound and vast teaching of Lord Buddha into Tibetan.

According to Bon historical records the original source of the Tibetan writing system is the *sMar-Yig*<sup>6</sup> (Mar Script) of Zhangzhung, There are many evidences to support this. In the libraries of very old monasteries in Tibet there used to be many ancient manuscripts, hand-written in a script referred to as *sMar-Tsugs* which is just like Tibetan *u-med* (Headless Characters) writing in which the consonants are large and the vowels small.

When I was in my hometown in Derge, I used to take lessons in the writing of Tibetan *U-chen* (With-Head Characters) and *U-med Tsugs* from a reputed calligrapher named Gen Zopa who was over eighty years old. One day he taught me a Tibetan *tsugs* known as *Lha-bab Yige* (heaven-descended script). Later when I read the very ancient manuscripts written in *sMar-Tsugs* I was able to observe and conclude that the *Lha-bab Yi-ge* is the real *sMar-Yig*.

It can also be proved that the origin and source of the *sMar-Tsugs* and the *U-med* which we use today are one and the same. The writing of Tibetan *U-med Tsugs* and *U-chen* have wide differences, which establishes clearly that the *U-med* writing system has been derived and modified from Zhangzhung script and that of *U-chen* from the *Legs-byar* (Sanskrit).

The Tibetan Zhangzhung script known as *sMar-Yig* must have been in Tibet slightly before or during the reign of King Nyatri Tsenpo. It is recorded in Bon histories<sup>7</sup> that during his reign many Bonpo scholars from Zhangzhung came to Central Tibet and translated many Bon treaties into Tibetan. If the *sMar-Yig* was not used for translation during King Nyatri Tsenpo's time nothing from Bon could have been translated into Tibetan. As there is no record which credits King Nyatri Tsenpo with the creation of the *sMar-Yig* it is safe to assume that the Tibetans used *sMar-Yig* during and before the reign of King Nyatri Tsenpo.

King Nyatri Tsenpo's reign closely coincides with the time of Lord Buddha in India. But before the reign of Nyatri Tsenpo there were 18 well-known Zhangzhung kings. It can be known from the Bon records that the first of the eighteen Zhangzhung kings, known as Triwer Sergyi Jaruchen (Khri-wer gSer-gyi Bya-ru-cen), ruled Tibet about 500 years before King Nyatri Tsenpo.

During the reign of Triwer Sergyi Jaruchen, Lord Shenrab Miwo, the founder of the Bon religion, visited Central Tibet<sup>8</sup> and while at the place known as Mount Bon in Konyul he taught the tenets of the Bon of the Swastika to the numerous Bon tribes living in Central Tibet. It is possible that these Bonpos used the Tibetan Zhangzhung script known as *sMar-Yig*.

The diverse Bon communities practised *mDos-gTong-pa* (a ritual for casting away evil spirits from a sick person), *Sre-dul-wa* (ritual for interrupting the chain of misfortunes), *sMan-dPyod* (curing

by medicine and surgery), *gYang-'bod-pa* (calling on the auspicious forces of nature for prosperity, fame and protection) and *Ju-thig-gi mo-gyab-pa* (knot sortilege or prognostication through knots). Though the *mDos*, *ju-thig* and *sMan-dPyod* of that period may not have been as elaborate and advanced as they later became, it would not be possible for the Tibetans of that period to know everything by heart without the help of a writing system as even today it is impossible to memorise such intricate knowledge without the help of written notes.

Let us consider the formation of a Tibetan word like *brKyangs*. We notice that the consonant *Ka* has a surmounting *ra* on top, a subjoint letter of *Ya-'dogs* from below, with a prefix *ba* in front, a suffix *nga* from behind and a post-suffix *sa* after the suffix, which altogether form the letter *brKyangs*. Likewise, adjectives like *yag-po* (good) and *chen-po* (big) can be used directly after nouns like *mi* (man) and *khang-pa* (house) giving complete sense such as *mi-yag-po* (a good person) and *khang-pa-chen-po* (a big house), characteristics which are peculiar and unique to the Tibetan and ancient Zhangzhung language. Also, there are many words in the Tibetan language meaning the same thing. For example, *blo*, *sems*, *yi*, and *rNam-sbes* are synonyms for mind. A few of such words were created from *Legsbyar* (Sanskrit) for the translation of Buddhist terms but the majority of such words are from the ancient Zhangzhung language and from ancient Tibetan.

In grammar too, *gu*, *chu*, *da*, *du*, *tu*, *au*, *su*, *tur*, *sur*, the *Lhadon Kbras* (dative locative) of the ancient Zhangzhung grammar<sup>9</sup> have been modified and reduced to *su*, *ra*, *ru*, *du*, *tu*, the five *Lhadon Kbras* of the *BodYig* (Tibetan). And *na*, *la*, *lu*, *le* from Zhangzhung reduced to *na* and *la* of *Bod-Yig* grammar. In the same way *gi*, *gyi*, *kyi*, 'e, *yi*, *chi*, *te*, *ne*, *pe*, *ba*, 'tse, *re*, *se*, the 'brel-sGrakbras (genitives) from Zhangzhung into the five *gi*, *kyi*, *gyi*, 'e and *yi* (genitives) of the *Bod-Yig*. Such derivations and modifications will become clear by a close and comparative study and research of the ancient language of Zhangzhung.

It is stated in *Be-roi Drag-bag-chen-mo* (Biography of Bero Tsana), which is an authoritative and original source for Tibetan history, that “during the lifetime of King Srongtsen Gampo, the Indian Pandit Legyi was invited and Thonmi Sambhota modified or changed (“*bsGyur*”) the Tibetan writing system.” This proves that before the reign of King Srongtsen Gampo, there existed, from ancient times, a unique and precious Tibetan Zhangzhung culture, and a writing system to which Tibetan history is linked.

It does not suffice to know that Tibet had a script from very ancient time. It is important to recognize and understand the origin of the language and literature associated with the writing system, the history of the race and the other related cultural aspects. To have a true understanding of the origin and development of the Tibetan language, literature, race and culture, it is necessary to undertake a thorough and painstaking study and research in the Bon tradition which has a profound and far-reaching relationship with the development of the Tibetan culture and history.

### Chapter III

## BON AND BONPOS

*BON* is an ancient Tibetan term. In contemporary usage it denotes the same meaning as that of the word, *bZla* (to recite mantras). In ancient records and usage there have been times when the word *bon* has also been substituted by the word, *gyer* (invoke).

The term *Bon* owes its origin to the practice of the ancient Bonpos who recited mantras (*sNgags*) to send away from themselves and from others the cause of disturbance and obstacles (illness, etc.) and to obtain the capacity for fierce actions such as reciprocating injuries. This is the reason why the Bon were called by this name.

During the invasion of Tibet by the Dzungars in the year 1727 A.D. many Nyingmapas and Bonpos were executed. When Tibetans went to meet Dzungar officials they had to stick out their tongues to show that they were not Nyingmapas or Bonpos, most of whose tongues due to repeated recitation of magic-mantras had turned black or brown. This habit stayed with the Tibetans who usually stick out their tongue as a mark of respect whenever they meet and talk to a high lama or a Government official. From this we know that Bonpos recite or invoke (*Bon, bZla, gyer*) many mantras.

All persons who performed different rites and rituals, recited different mantras and practised magic actions, before the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet were known as *Bonpos* and their practices were known as *Bon*. Therefore, it is wrong to trace the origin of Bon to one particular source.

When Shenrab Miwo, the founder of Bon, came into this world there were already in existence groups of Bonpos who based their beliefs on *bDud* (Devils) and were known as *bDud Bon* (Devil Bon), and on *brTsan* (a kind of spirit and deity) known as *brTsan Bon*, etc. There were various groups of Bonpo who used to offer animal sacrifices, thus destroying living beings, a practice to which Shenrab Miwo strongly objected. As substitutes for the animal sacrifices, *mDos* (a ritual using statuettes rather than sacrificed animals) and *Yas* (a minor rite of offering *gTorma* or sacrificial cakes) were expounded and introduced by Shenrab Miwo. These developments are recorded in authentic Bon texts and scriptures<sup>10</sup> dealing with such rituals and rites.

It is possible that *bDud Bon* and *brTsan Bon* came into existence centuries before the birth of Lord Shenrab Miwo. But the principal Bon tradition which has come down to us was founded by Lord Shenrab Miwo, who improved and modified the existing tradition of Bon and introduced new elements which gave it a more refined shape.

Some of the Western scholars and Tibetologists who have studied and done research in Bon in recent years have claimed that the widely known system of Shamanism, which according to them means the system of Shen, originated from the Bon tradition and the appellation "Shamanism" itself is a corruption of the word "Shen", the name by which the stock of Shenrab Miwo was known.

This claim is not without its justification. As the stock into which Shenrab Miwo was born was known by the name of Shen, it is clear that the Shen stock was in existence even before the birth of Lord Shenrab Miwo. But, as the Bon tradition of Shenrab Miwo was yet to be introduced, the only traditions in existence were *bDud Bon* and *brTsan Bon*, etc. Likewise, Lord Buddha was born into the Shakya stock of India. But before the birth of Lord Buddha the Shakya stock followed the religious tradition prevalent in ancient India of that time and not Buddhism, which was yet to be introduced.

Therefore, the claim that Shamanism derived its tradition from Shenrab Miwo because of the simple reason that the stock of Shenrab Miwo was known as Shen reveals lack of knowledge of the origin and development of the history of Bon.

Lord Shenrab Miwo was Zhangzhung-pa or Bod-pa (Tibetan) born in the country of Zhangzhung. The Bon which he expounded established itself not only in Tibet but also reached Tagzig (Iran or Takzhistan), India and China. In basic Bon historical texts it is recorded that the different schools of Bon, e.g., *Phya-Shen*, *snang-Shen*, *Phrul-Shen* and *Srid-Shen*, known as the *Lha Bon sGo-bZhi'* (The Four Doors of Heaven Bon), *bShos-kyi Lha Bon* (Divine Bon of Dorma), *Grong-gi Dur Bon* (Bon Which Overcomes Evil Spirits in the Villages), *Yang-dag-pai Sems Bon* (Bon of the Pure Nature of the Mind), the three Bon of Lower Heaven, were translated by the Tagzig (Iranian) scholar, *dMu-tsa-dra-be*; the *Sum-'ba* scholar, *Hu-lu-spa-legs*; the Indian scholar, *Lha-bDag sNag-rDo*; the Chinese scholar, *Legs-thang rMang-po*; and *Khrom* scholar, *gSer-thog lCe-'byams* into their own languages and the tradition spread far and wide.

But just as the Tibetan Buddhists traced the Dharma to Indian and Ogyen origin, looked upon the Indian and Ogyen teachings and manuscripts with respect, and belittled and neglected the native Tibetan texts and teachings, the later Tibetan Bonpos followed the Tibetan Buddhists by tracing the origin of Bon and the location of Wol-mu-lung-ring, the birthplace of Shenrab Miwo, to Tagzig. However, it is very clearly stated in the ancient lineage-manuscripts of Bon, known as *Srid-rGyud*, which was first propounded and established by the Bonpo scholar, Drenpa Namkha, during the reign of the Buddhist King Trisong Deutsen, that the tradition of Bon and its founder both first started in Zhangzhung. Later Bonpo scholars have claimed that Lord Shenrab Miwo incarnated as the Shakya King, the Buddha, and expounded Dharma in India and expounded astrology in China by incarnating as the King Kong-tse-'khrul.

Such accounts resemble the story, Ten Miraculous Deeds of Lord Shiva (*Khyab-'jug-gi Jug-pa bchu*), and have little historic basis. But, it is clearly established that Lord Shenrab Miwo did propound the *Yang-dag-pai Sems Bon*, and ancient *Dzog-pa-chen-po* teaching, which has been kept alive by the uninterrupted lineage of the oral tradition of the *Dzog-pa-chen-po Zhang-zhung sNam-br-Gyud*<sup>12</sup>. And if Lord Shenrab Miwo propounded the *Dzogpa-chenpo*, the essence of the profound teachings of the Lord Buddha, it goes to prove that Lord Shenrab Miwo was undoubtedly a remarkable person.

The founding of *Dzog-pa-chen-po* tradition in Tibet by Lord Shenrab Miwo proves that Tibet not only was in possession of an advanced culture and a cultural history but also possessed a profound and magnificent science of *Nang-don Rig-pa* (Inner Philosophy or Philosophy of the Mind).

Some scholars might object to the statement that Lord Shenrab Miwo propounded the *Dzog-pa-chen-po* since it originally came to Tibet from Ogyen. This objection is valid. The origin of *Dzog-pa-chen-po* is generally traced to Lord *Ga-rab-lDe* from Ogyen. Not only that, but all the *gSang-ba bLa-na med-pai rGyud-sDe* (Unsurpassable Secret Mantra or Anuttara Tantra, highest level of Buddhist Tantra) are supposed to have originated from Ogyen. But it has become difficult to locate and conclude that this or that place is Ogyen. Many scholars are seeking the exact location and identification of Ogyen. Some Western scholars identify Ogyen with Swat in Khotan and all the records of antiquity agree that Ogyen is to the North-West of India.

Similarly, *Shambala*, despite its history, defies exact geographical location. Judging from the real sense of the history of Shambala and of Ogyen, it appears probable that they are the same country. These famous places of ancient Tibetan legends—Shambala and Ogyen—where the Indian Arhats retire after countless penance, may have been a part of Zhangzhung empire. Even if these famous places were not within the Zhangzhung empire, these countries undoubtedly bordered on Zhangzhung.

Therefore, it is possible that the ancient Dzogchen which Lord Shenrab Miwo propounded gradually developed into the Ogyen Dzogchen as it is clearly recorded in the *Bon Dzog-chen Zhang-zhung sNyan-rGyud* that after the 12th lineage of the disciples from Lord Shenrab Miwo, there came a Dzogchen teacher named Zhang-zhung *dGa-rab*<sup>13</sup>. This teacher, known as *Zhang-zhung dGa-rab*, may have been *dGa-rab rDo-de*, the universally accepted teacher of *Dzog-chen*. And the twelve *Dzogchen* masters<sup>14</sup> recorded in the history of *Dzog-chen* as existing in ancient times may have been the twelve Zhangzhung masters who came before *Zhang-zhung dGa-rab*. Such a reversal of accepted ideas will amaze and annoy many Tibetan scholars. Nevertheless, it is necessary to reason and reflect on the origin of the Tibetan culture and religion.

In the most widely known Tibetan histories, it is written that during the reign of King Srongtsen Gampo astrology was introduced in Tibet and China. As China is regarded the source of astrology, it goes without saying that many principles of Chinese astrology did come into Tibet during the time of King Srongtsen Gampo. But according to the biographies of Shenrab Miwo, the Lord Shenrab had eight sons of whom the youngest, Prince *Phrul-bu-chung*<sup>15</sup>, introduced and spread the Tibetan astrological system.

Moreover, it is recorded in the Bon historical text *Byams-ma*, a hidden-treasure text believed to have been unearthed by *Kbro-tsang Brug-lha* in the year 1500 after Buddha's death (956 A.D.), that "twelve *rGyu Bon* scholars lived during the reign of King Nyatri Tsenpo."

They were:

1. *mGon-sbes Lha-Bon* (Bon of the divinity who has knowledge of salvation)
2. *g Yang-sbes Phya-Bon* (Bon of the glory which has knowledge of fortune)
3. *Gro-sbes gLus-gTong* (He who with an offering repels negative influences)
4. *Dur-sbes Sred-Shen* (Shen of the existence which overcomes the negative)
5. *gTsang-sbes Sel-'debs* (He who purifies disturbances through knowledge of destruction)
6. *sGrol-sbes rTa-Bon* (Bon of the horse with knowledge of destruction)
7. *Phan-sbes sMan-dPhyod* (Physician and surgeon who knows how to benefit others)
8. *sKos-sbes rTsis-mKham* (Astrologer who knows how to face all events)
9. *sMra-sbes gTo-dGu* (He who through practice of the nine types of magic rites knows how to manifest power)
10. *IDeng-sbes Sha-wa* (He who knows how to make a deer fly in the sky)
11. *'Phur-sbes Ju-thig* (He who knows how to make objects fly in the sky)
12. *'Gro-sbes 'Phrul-Bon* (Bon of the miracle which can crush all negativity)

From this text also we can learn that there was astrology in Tibet before the reign of King Srongtsen Gampo.

The origin of Tibetan medicine is also very similar to that of astrology. According to the historical sources, among the eight sons of Lord Shenrab Miwo, the oldest, Prince *dPyad-bu Kbrisbes*<sup>16</sup>, was mainly responsible for the introduction and spread of Tibetan medicine. It is recorded that during the reign of King *Tagri g-Nyan-gZhigs*, physicians from *Sum-ba* were invited to cure his eyes. *Sum-ba*, which belongs to Zhangzhung, is part of the present-day Amdo province of Tibet.

The recognised source and origin of Tibetan medicine is Yuthog Yonten Gonpo<sup>17</sup>; the fact that Yuthog Yonten Gonpo himself states that he unified the Indian system of medicine or *Ayurveda*, the Chinese system of medicine and the western Tibet system of medicine proves that Tibet had its own medical system.

Westerners today refer to the treatment of cauterisation known as *Me-gTsa* with the term *Moxa* and regard it as of Chinese origin. But as the Chinese language has no word pronounced as *Moxa* and as the Tibetan word, *Me-gTsa*, is a common word meaning “spark of fire”, it is clear that the word *Me-gTsa* corrupted slightly into *Moxa*. This also goes to prove that Tibet had its own medical system from ancient time.

Even in Tibetan medical vocabulary, there are many Zhangzhung words like, *aru-ra*, *ba-ru-ra*, *da-trig*, *sLa-tres*, etc., which proves that Tibetan medicine has an autonomous origin because, otherwise, there was no reason for later Tibetan physicians to use Zhangzhung words in medical texts and scriptures. From all this, we can conclude that Bon is the true source of Tibetan culture and that within Bon there is an extensive and profound Tibetan culture.

Unfortunately, there developed in Tibet a tradition of neglecting and looking down upon Bon and Bonpos. This has injured Tibet’s own culture to a considerable extent. When I was in the monastic school I had among my friends a Bonpo named Changlung Trulku, a very simple and learned scholar. I developed a close friendship with him but my other friends did not conceal their dislike for my friendship with the Bonpo Trulku. Some of my friends warned me that Bonpos while doing the *Pbo-wa* ritual withdrew the soul of the deceased from the rectum instead of the head. They also said that the Bonpos, before the altar of their deity ‘*Od-gSes*, pray: “*Od-gSes*, the Fiery Tiger god stands on top, with Lord Buddha and Padmasambhava as mattress”. I heard many comments like this, made to ridicule and look down upon Bon and Bonpos. After hearing such tales, I also began to have slight dislike of Bon and Bonpos for some time. However, later when I studied and did research on Bon I came across clear proof that these tales had no substance and were unfounded.

Authentic Bon must have originated from Lord Shenrab Miwo. When Lord Shenrab Miwo came into Zhangzhung, Lord Buddha and Guru Padmasambhava were yet to appear on the world scene. So it is impossible for ‘*Od-gSes Tag-lha-Me’bar* to have Lord Buddha and Padmasambhava underneath his feet as mattress. Such unfounded tales created among Tibetans doubt and suspicion toward Bonpos.

## CHAPTER IV

### TIBET: ZHANGZHUNG AND BOD

TODAY, the name Zhangzhung refers to the area in and around Tod-Ngari (in Western Tibet) and the principal district of Guge.

But during the reign of the Zhangzhung, like Triwer Sergyi Jaruchen, there was a tradition of referring to the whole kingdom of Zhangzhung as the three regions of Zhangzhung, *sGo*, *Phugs* and *Bar*<sup>18</sup>. At that time the present area of Tod-Ngari, including Ladakh, was referred to as Zhangzhung *Phugs*; U and Tsang (Central Tibet) as Zhangzhung *Bar* and Amdo and Kham provinces as Zhangzhung *sGo*.

The Annals of Lake Manasarvar (*mTso Mapham Lo-rGyus*)<sup>19</sup> give the names of the 18 famous kings who ruled over the Zhangzhung empire. They were:

1. Triwer Laje Bulang Sergyi Jaruchen, king of Zhangzhung, protector of 18 large countries and of 18 tribes.
2. Loechen Chungi Jaruchen, king of Zhungzhag *Zil-gNon*.
3. Kangka Shelji Jaruchen, king of *Hri-do GyersPungs*.  
The residence of these three kings was the Castle of *rGyang-ri gYu-lo-lJon-pai*, near Mount Kailash.
4. Rinchen Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *sLas-Krta* Guge.
5. Zhatson Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *rGyung-yar-Mu-kebod*.
6. Uchen Dungj Jaruchen, king of *Khyi-li* Guge.  
These three kings resided at (*Gyalwa-mNyas*) in the Valley of the Eagle.
7. ———Jaruchen, king of *Pungs-rGyung-Gyer*.
8. Hramon Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *Nyelo-rBer-ya*.  
These two kings resided at *Pumar-Kbrang* in Zhangzhung.
9. Zomshang Chagkyi Jaruchen, king of *sTag -rNa gZhi-brjed*.
10. Mipung Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *Zo-dMar-thes-sPungs*.  
The residence of these kings was *Chi-na* in Zhangzhung.
11. Nyeshel Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *bDud-'dul-dWal*.
12. Dashed Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *Li-wer-Gyer*.  
The residence of these kings was *Ta-irog* in Zhangzhung.
13. Zomar Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *Shel-rGyung-Hri-do*.
14. Bhedue Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *Leg-mur-Namkha*.  
The residence of these two kings was *sTa-Go* in Zhangzhung.
15. Gajang Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *Mu-wer-Nor*.  
His seat was the *Kha-sKyor* region of Zhangzhung.
16. Udpal Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *Sad-bri-Gyer*.  
His seat was the *Kha-yug* region of Zhangzhung.
17. Namchag Walgyi Jaruchen, king of *Nye-lo-Wer-ya*.  
His seat was the *La-dags* (Ladakh) region of Zhangzhung.
18. An Odkyi Jaruchen, king of *Mu-mar-Thog-rNod*.  
His seat was the *Ru-thog* (Ruthok) region of Zhangzhung.

Research in the periods in which these Zhangzhung kings lived show that the first king, Triwer Laje Sergyi Jaruchen, ruled Zhangzhung more or less during the last part of the life of Lord Shenrab Miwo. Senthang Mawongyal, the true disciple of Lord Shenrab Miwo, was the tutor of Triwer Laje Sergyi Jaruchen.



Dangwa Yidring, the true disciple of Senthang Mawongyal, was the tutor of King Jeru Odki Jaruchen of *sPungs-ru-Gyer*. Gungrum Tsungphud, the true disciple of Dangwa Yidring, was the tutor of King Gajang Odki Jaruchen of *Mu-wer-Nor*. Zutrul Yeshe, the true disciple of Gungrum Tsungphud, was the tutor of King Tridhe Chagkyi Jaruchen of *sTagrNa-gZhi-brjed*. Shenpo Yetsue, the true disciple of Zutrul Yeshe, was the tutor of King Ula Odki Jaruchen of *Sad-bri-Gyer*. Shenpo Yungtsue, the true disciple of Shenpo Yetsue, was the tutor of King Rinchen Odki Jaruchen of *sLas-krTa* Guge. Tsungbul Gyalwa, the true disciple of Shenpo Yungtsue, was the tutor of King An Odki Jaruchen of *Mu-mar-Thog-rNod*.

According to the history of the Shen lineage<sup>20</sup>, Lord Shenrab Miwo had eight sons. Of these, Yungdrung Wangden, born to the wife of Kongza Tricham, fathered Drugi Gyalpo. Drugi Gyalpo's son Mubon Yewuden fathered Mubon Thangdol, Mubon Thangdol's son Kyelo Tsal fathered Shen Drolwa. Shen Drolwa fathered Mukha Pomipo.

According to some Bonpo historians, King Mutri Tsenpo, son of King Nyatri Tsenpo of Bod, invited Mukha Pomipo from Zhangzhung and received Bon teachings.

Lord Shenrab Miwo and King Nyatri Tsenpo were separated by a gap of about seven generations (*mi-rabs*). The descendants of Shen were Bonpos endowed with exceptional tantric powers and strength, due to which many of them had long lives.

According to the genealogy of the *Zhangzhung sNyan-brGyud* (Secret Oral Lineage of the Dzogchen Zhangzhung), Lord Shenrab Miwo has as descendants, the following 25 masters: Yongsu Dagpa, Lubon Banam, Mibon Tridhe Zambu, Banam Kyopo, Trisho Gyalwa, Rasang Samdrub, Darma Sherab, Darma Bhodhe, ZhangzhungTriphen, Muye Lhagyud, Mashen Legzang, Gyonshe Taglha, Rasang Yungdrung Sey, Rasang Yungphen, Gephur Dhondrub, Gyerpung Gephen, Gegyal, Zhangzhung Namgyal, Mugyud Karpo, Horti Chenpo, Donkun Drubpa, Rasang Phengyal, Gureb Seyga, Dawa Gyaltsen and Gyerchen Nangzher Lodpo. Gyerchen Nangzher Lodpo, the 25th in the lineage of Bon spiritual teachers who descended from Lord Shenrab Miwo, lived during the reign of the Zhangzhung King Ligmigkya. King Ligmigkya is known to have lived at the time of King Srongtsen Gampo's reign in Bod.

A systematic chronological and comparative study of these histories shows that more than 500 years elapsed from the beginning of the historical records of Zhangzhung to the rise of the Tibetan Bod kingdom. It can also be known that over 1,000 years passed from the beginning of kings in Bod till the reign of King Srongtsen Gampo.

It is difficult to know if the kings of Zhangzhung ruled according to the administrative and political traditions known to us today. But it is clear that the whole of Tibet as known in recent times was known by the name of Zhangzhung in ancient times.

Now, regarding the origin of the name, *Bod*, the native name for Tibet today, the great Tibetan scholar and historian, Gedun Choephel (1905-1951) said that *Bod* and *Bon* may have the same meaning. According to him, in ancient Tibetan writings, *Bon* is sometimes written as *Bond*, with the post-suffix *d*. Later some of the words with the post-suffix lost their post-suffix and in many cases the *d* (*da-drag*) was modified into the suffix *d*. Hence, it is possible that due to such modifications in the writing system words like *bTsan-po* came to be written as *brTad-po* and *Bon* as *Bod*. Moreover, since Bon was established in all parts of Tibet, the whole country may have been referred to as *Bon-gyi-yul* or Land of Bon. This explanation by Gedun Choephel for the origin of the name Bon seems to me very logical and plausible.

The kingdom of Bod first came into existence at the time of King Nyatri Tsenpo at the Yarlung and *PhyongrGyas* (Chongyal) valleys.

During my studies in college in Tibet, on reading the phrase, "*Bod skad du*" (in the language of Tibet) at the beginning of a text I was often told a story about the origin of the word *Bod*. It was said that since Bod "is not a big country like India, and had only a very small population, each person

lived within calling distance of the other and hence the whole country derived its name from the word 'bod (to call) which came to be written as *Bod*'. Such an explanation is due to the Tibetan habit of exaggerating Indian cultural influence. This makes it seem that the Indians gave a name to Tibet, before which the country did not have any name!

However, in fact the ancient name of the whole of Tibet was Zhangzhung, and from the reign of King Nyatri Tsenpo, Tibet became separated into two kingdoms: Zhangzhung and Bod.

During King Drigum Tsenpo's reign (the eighth successor to King Nyatri Tsenpo), he suppressed and weakened the Bonpos. Bod was then a new kingdom, and the Bon religion and culture of Bod was unable to differentiate the kingdom from Zhangzhung. Moreover, the Bonpos of Bod were powerful magicians and had full support from the Zhangzhung king. Therefore, King Drigum Tsenpo fearing that his government would fall into the hands of the Bonpos, suppressed and punished them. According to ancient Bonpo historical documents<sup>21</sup>, Drigum Tsenpo said: "In this country there is no space for my kingdom and your Bon religion. Therefore, all the Bonpos must leave."

The proof that in those times the culture of Zhangzhung was widespread in Bod is that the early Tibetan kings had Zhanzhung names: Mutri Tsenpo, Sorti Tsenpo, Asholeg, Thesholeg, Guruleg, etc. Even during the reign of king Trisong Deutsen, when Buddhism was already established in Tibet, his son was given the Zhangzhung name of Muni Tsenpo, which means Namkha Tsenpo or Sky King.

Tibetans usually used to say, "King Srongtsen Gampo, the incarnation of Avalokitesvara, brought the Divine Light of Dharma into the Dark Land of Tibet." This is true. There need be no doubt about King Srongtsen Gampo being the incarnation of Avalokitesvara. But, we cannot then conclude that this was the reason why Srongtsen Gampo introduced Buddhism in Tibet.

According to Tun-huang documents relating to Tibetan history, King Srongtsen Gampo gave his sister, Sadmarkar, to the Zhangzhung king, Ligmikya, in marriage and established friendly relations with the Zhangzhung kingdom. According to Bon historical records<sup>22</sup>, the first Queen of Srongtsen Gampo was the Zhangzhung Princess Lithigmen. The great Tibetan scholar and historian, Desi Sangay Gyatso, author of numerous books on history, medicine and astrology and the Regent of Tibet during the reign of the Fifth Dalai Lama has also recorded this fact.

From the beginning, King Srongtsen Gampo established firm friendly and diplomatic relations with the Zhangzhung King Ligmikya. Then, he obtained the Balza or the Nepalese Consort, Tri-zun, in marriage and established a new bridge of religious and cultural and other ties with India. After that, he obtained the Gyalza, or the Chinese Consort, Gonjo, in marriage and opened a new bridge of religious and cultural and other exchanges with China.

With these new cultural, religious and other ties and exchanges, the Kingdom of Bod developed and progressed independently of Zhangzhung. Bod also acquired cultural and religious base of its own.

Finally, King Ligmikya of Zhangzhung, while on his way to *Sum-ba* (Amdo province) was ambushed and killed by King Srongtsen Gampo's soldiers. As a consequence, the Zhangzhung kingdom was annexed to Bod. Thereafter, the new kingdom born of the unification of Zhangzhung and Bod was known as *Bod rGyal-khab*.

The enterprise of conquering Zhangzhung, achieved by King Srongtsen Gampo was not a new project but had been attempted by earlier Tibetan Kings like Drigum Tsenpo, who failed in the attempt. These facts show that King Srongtsen Gampo's religious, cultural and matrimonial relationships with India and China were not entirely prompted by reasons of religious faith, nor by Tibet lacking an original culture of her own, but that his actions were dictated by the precise political conditions and political necessities.

## CHAPTER V

### RELIGION AND POLITICS A Note on Tibetan Theocracy

“THE Harmonious blend of religion and politics”, *chos-srid-zung-'brel*, is a concept well-known since ancient times. I clearly remember a discussion on this theme among some progressive Tibetan youths last year (1975)<sup>23</sup>.

When we consider it in the context of early Tibetan history, the development of the concept of the “harmonious blend of religion and politics” cannot be explained by the faith of Tibetan kings and ministers in religion. Nor can it be explained by considering the period after the disintegration of the Central Government (following the assassination of King Wudum Tsen or Lang Darma) when Tibet was ruled by the Priest-Kings such as Drogon Choegyal Phagpa (1235-1280 A.D.), Tai Situ Jangchub Gyaltzen (1302-1364 A.D.) and the Great Fifth Dalai Lama Lobzang Gyatso (1617-1682 A.D.).

Generally speaking, there is not a single aspect of the Tibetan culture which is not related to Bon or *Chos* (Dharma). Every country, whatever it may be, has to be administered and governed, taking into consideration its culture. Therefore, also the Tibetan system of government characterised by the “harmonious blend of religion and politics” has its origin in such necessities. Also the presence of rules of moral conduct, like the Law of the Ten Virtuous Actions<sup>24</sup> in the Royal Tibetan Constitution must also have similar reasons.

However, some Tibetan youths say that as the main aim of religion is the good of others while that of politics is triumph of oneself and defeat of others, religion and politics are contrary and cannot blend harmoniously. I feel that this is very good and advanced thinking. The ways of religion and politics are different. If it were true that the ways of religion and politics were one it would have been pointless for the Lord Buddha to renounce his throne and family life and become a monk. However, it is said<sup>25</sup>:

If the thoughts are good  
The fruits and path are good  
If the thoughts are bad  
The fruits and path are bad  
As everything depends upon the thoughts  
Always strive to cultivate good thoughts.

Therefore, as “everything depends upon the mind” of human beings it cannot be categorically judged that religion and politics are entirely mutually exclusive and opposed to each other.

If we understand clearly the essence of *Chos* (religion) and the virtuous actions which are generally considered religious behaviour, then we will be able to understand how and why there arise contradictions between religion and politics and in what conditions they do not contradict each other.

As religion and culture in Tibet blend to such a great extent since very ancient times we did not have a political system independent of religious influence as in other nations. Had Tibet been able to aspire to a purely political form of government, the population and power of Tibet would have been greater than it was. At the same time, the spiritual development and advanced philosophic research of Tibet, in which one may justifiably take pride, would not have been possible.

As the conditions and structure of the present Tibetan society have undergone radical change, at times religion and politics do not harmonize and for this reason contradict each other. But it should be understood that the contradictions are created by men and not by religion.

The conclusion of Dharma (religion) was stated by the Lord Buddha thus:

sDig pa ci yang mi bya zhing  
dGe wa phun sum tshogs par spyad  
Rang gi sems ni yongs su 'dul  
'Di ni Sangs-rGyas bsTan-pa yin.

Not committing any negative action,  
Acting perfectly in virtue,  
Completely conquering one's own Mind:  
This is the Buddha's Teaching.

To completely conquer one's mind means to have full control over it. If every person has such control of his own mind then there would not be oppression and contempt among men. In particular, among Tibetans there would not happen what instead does happen: the various coalitions and factions, and sectarian strife among the Sakya, Gelug, Kagyu, Nyingma and Bon schools, all phenomena without value which only create useless and harmful problems. Thus, whatever form the teaching takes, and whatever the behaviour linked to it, these are relative to the condition of the individual and are not something imposed from outside. It is necessary that the young Tibetan progressives understand this very well.

Politics has to be recognized as the behaviour of society. The behaviour of society is established, not by the society, but by the individuals of which it is composed. What we call society is the union of individuals, starting with oneself. Nothing can be found that is known by the name of society other than this. Therefore, as the relationship between man and society arises automatically, so does that between religion and politics.

The societies in existence today are mostly materialistic. The viewpoints of materialists and the spiritually-minded have grown ever further apart. The materialists work for the progress of the world using the resources and might of society. Thus they increase physical power. This also has its drawbacks. The materialist, getting their strength from matter, will one day have man dependent upon matter. And, no matter how much society progresses, we will never be free from the contradictions between people, parties and subject and object and the free human mind will not be able to exist. When the mind is not truly free, then freedom, peace and equality remain only empty words.

Thus, there is nothing more important and significant than the development of the mind and human nature. With the right development of human mind and nature, society will take a new turn and a new form. This development will contribute towards the happiness and welfare of humankind. Such a phenomenon could then be truly termed "the harmonious blend of religion and politics".

## NOTES

1. Namkhai Norbu, *Bod kyi lo rgyus las 'phros pa'i gtam nor bu'i do shal*, p. 9.
2. *Ma ni bka' 'bum*, etc.
3. *Hor chos 'byung*, p. 80 (edition by Hashimotokoho); *La duags rgyal rabs*, p. 69 (ed. by E. Schlagintweit).
4. *Mi la'i mgur 'bum*, p. 539 b, 1.1 (ed.?): rje btsun gyi 'jag ma rnams cung zad mgo gug 'dug pa la/rje btsun gyis dam pa la/'o cag gnyis dung bum pa can la ni khyad med/bdag gi 'jag ma mgo gug pa ci lags gsungs pas/dam pa' i zhal nas/'o cag gi spangs rtogs kyi yon tan la khyad mi 'dug ste/khyod bod du skyes pa'i khyad du 'dug/
5. J. Bacot, F. W. Thomas, Ch. Toussaint. *Documents de Tonenbouang relatifs 'a l'histoire du Tibet*, Paris 1940.
6. Khyung yo Blo gros rgyal mtshan (c. 14th century), *rGyal rabs bon gyi 'byung gnas, Three sources for a history of Bon*, Delhi 1974, text No. I, p. 107; Shar rdza bKra shis rgyal mtshan (1859 - 1935), *Legs bshad mdzod*,
7. *rgyal rabs bon gyi 'byung gnas*, p. 100 gyna: khri btsan po' i ring la/rgyu' i bon shes pa can bcu gnyis kyi bon dar te/mgon shes lha bon/g.yang shes phyha 'dod/'gro shes glud gtong/'dur shes srid gshen/gtsang snes sel 'debs/sgrol shes lha byad/phan shes sman/Ito shes rtsis mkhan/smra shes gto dgu/lding shes sha ba/'phur shes ju thig/'gro shes 'phrul bon/de rnams la shes pa can bcu gnyis zer ro/shin tu dar che ba byung ngo/de nas nam mkha'i snang ba mdog la bon spyi spungs zhos nasso/-de'i sras mu khri btsad posb slab pa'i don go/bsgrubs pa'i don grub/ bsgom pa'i don rtogs nas stag gzig la sogs 'dzam bu gling gi lo tsa bsgyur/zhang zhung nas mkhas pa chen po brgya dang bco brgyad gdan drangs/bod du bon gyi 'du gnas chen po bzhi bcu rtsa lngs btsugs/
8. *gZer mig*, Delhi 1965, Vol. Kha, f. 51.4: gshen rab kyis bod kyi bon po la/bon du lha gsol ba dang 'dre bkar ba gnyis kyi lungphog/yas stags su rtsi shing ban bun dany/zhung shang dang gser skyems bstan/da lta bod kyi lha 'dre thams cad kun bon gyis bos na mgon la/mchod na 'gro zhing/brdung na thub pa/stong pa'i zhal mthong dus su/dbang du bsdu pa' rtags yin/
9. Zhu Nyi ma grags pa, *sGra yi don sdeb snang gsal sgron me*, Delhi 1965, (*The Zhangzhung language, a grammar and dictionary of the unexplored language of the Tibetan Bonpos*, E. Haarh, Copenhagen 1968).
10. On *Srid pa'i spyi mdos*, see Namkhai Norbu, *Bod kyi lo rgyus las 'phros pa'i gtam nor bu'i do shal*.
11. bsTan 'dzin nam dag, *rGyal gshen rnam thar*, Delhi 1971. p. 729; dPal ldan tshul khriims, *g.Yung drung bon gyi bstan 'byung*, Delhi 1972, p. 190a.

12. *History and Doctrine of Bonpo Nispanna-yoga*, Satapitaka Series. Vol. 73, International Academy of Indian culture, New Delhi 1968.
13. *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud nam thar*, (text Ka in *History and Doctrine of Bonpo Nispanna-yoga*, (see note 12), p. 20: gsum pa rdzus skyes cir yang sprul pa.i ston pa gsang ba 'dus pa des/lha bon thod dkar la gdams/des ye gshen bsam grub la gdams/ des gyer spungs legs grub la gdams/des rgyung yar bstad po la gdams/des khri sras rgyal ba la gdams/des des zhanga zhung dga' rab la gdams/des ra sangs bsod nams brtsegs la gdams/des zhang zhung bkra shis rgyal mtshan la gdams/des snang bzher lod po la brgyud do/
14. dPa bo gtsug lag phreng ba (1504-1566), *Chos 'byung mkhas pa'i dga ston* , Sarapitnka Series Vol. 9, Part 3, p. 200.
15. Bra to sgom nyag, *rTsa rgyud nyi sgron*, Delhi 1965, f. 114a: sras ni kong tse 'phrul chung 'khrungs/'phrul bsgyur rtsis kyi bstan pa bzhag/
16. bsTan 'dzin nam dag, *rGyal gshen nam thar*, p. 760: yang btsun mo hos bza' rgyal med las/sprel lo ston zla tha chung gi tshes bco lna la/mtshan dang ldan pa'i sras shig 'khrungs te/de yang bram zes mtshan brtags bzang bar bcad pas /'jig rten gyi dbang po che rnams kyi zabs nas btegs so/mtshan yang dpyad bu khri shes su btags so/sras de dgung lo gsum bzhes nas yab la bon zhu ba'i spobs pa dang ldan pas/ston pa la bla na med pa'i mchod pa bshams nas phul te/g.yung drung bon gyi 'khor lo bskor bar zhus/dpyad rgyud nyi khri chig stong gtan la phab nas/dpyad bu khri shes la gnyer du gtad do/
17. sPa btsun bsTan rgyal bzang po, *bsTan pa'i nam bshad dar rgyas gsal ba'i sgron me* (written in 1345), *Sources for a history of Bon*, Delhi 1972, text No. 22, p. 649: dus de tsam na/rgya gar na chos yod/rgya nag na gtsug lag yod/khrom na sman dpyad pod/bod dang zhang zhung na bon min pa med/gtsug lag dang sman gnyis kyang bon gyi cha lag du yod de/de i dus na grub pa thob pa'i gshen dgus ni'gro don mdzae/*Yutbok's treatise on Tibetan Medicine*, edited by L. Chandra, International Academy of India Culture, New Delhi 1968, sTong thun, p. 20, L. 16.
18. bsTan 'dzin nam dag, *g. Yung drung bon gyi bstan pa'i byung khungs nyung bsdu. Three sources for a history of Bon*, Delhi 1974, No. III, p. 620: zhang zhung gi yul dang rgyal rabs ni/yul la sgo phug bar gsum du yod cing/sgo phyi ma de la'ang sgo phug bar gsum du yog pa'i/sgo phug pa'i sa skor du dbus kyi mkhar chen bzhi/

1. khung lung dngul mo mkhar/gu ge'i shar rtse la yod/
2. pu hreng stag la mkhar/pu hreng gi dbus/
3. ma pang spos mo mkhar/ma pang gi shar du yod/
4. la shang g.yu lo mkhar/gangs ri'i byang/

kha cig gis gad kyi byi ba mkhar bgrangs 'dug pas/'de ni gro shod yul stod mtshams su yod/phyogs kyi rdzong che ba drug ni/

1. byang smad dang ra zhung chen rdzong/
2. byang stod dang ra bzhi seng ge rdzong/ru thog gi byang sal

3. lho smad mang yul stag mo rdzong/spyi rong/
4. lho stod se rib 'brug mo rdzong/glo dol po'i stod/
5. nub phyog kyi rbal te rta mchog rdzong/
6. shar phyogs kyi gyim rdul glang chen rdzong/

de rnam ming grags che ba rnam yin zhing/gzhan yang mkhar dang rdzong mang po yod 'dug/.....

19. *mTsho ma pang dkar chag.*

20. Kun grol grags pa (b. 1700). *bsTan 'byung, Three sources for a history of Bon*, No . II. p. 411:

dmu rigs gshen gyi gdung rabs ni/  
 lha las grol ba mi yi brgyud/  
 ye smon rgyal dang chu lcam las/  
 sras gsum che ba dmu rje bcod/  
 de dang lha mo 'od gsal mar  
 sras bzhi ' che ba dmu rgyal rigs/  
 de dang phyal lcam ni dangs gnyis/  
 dmu ri smug por stang dbyal tshogs/  
 rin chen sgong zhig bltams pa la/  
 mtshan dang ldan pa'i mi drug byung/  
 che ba dmu rgyal phyal dkar yin/  
 de dang lha za gung grags ma/  
 dmu rgyal btsan pa gyen chen te/  
 de sras dmu rgyal thog rje btsan/  
 de la dmu rgyal them pa skas/  
 de sras rgyal bon thod dkar ro/  
 de la rgyal ba gshen rab ste/  
 sku las sprul ba'i sras mchog drug/  
 chung ltag kon g tsha dbang ldan no/  
 de sras bzhi yi gcen 'og pa/  
 'brug gi rgyal po de yi sras/  
 nam mkha'i snang ba mdog can no/  
 de sras dmu rgyal kham pa dang/  
 dmu rgyal yongs rgyal gnyis su 'khrungs/  
 dmu rgyal de yi sras brgyud du/  
 bod rgyal mu khri man chad nas/  
 khri srong lde'u btsan yan chad du/  
 rgyal rabs bzhi bcu'i bar dag tu/  
 bod rgyal bla yi mchod gnas mdzad/

21. *bsGrags pa rin chen gling grags* (Text no. 1 in the *Source for a history of Bon*), p. 23; blon po bstan gzher me lha bya ba na re/Kye rje gyal bstad po lags/dbu'i zhua ches na lus lus po rtul te mchi/zas zhim po zos drag na skyugs bro/shig 'khyams rkang pa la zhugs na spyi bo'i gtsug rnyog/bon po mgo mthos pa 'dis rje'i mnga' thang 'phrog par mchi'o zhes zer skad do/.....; Khyung po Blo gros rgyal mtshan, *op. cit.* p. 123: rgyal po'i thugs su gdon zhugs nas rdzun

dang khra ma la gsan zhing/sras dbon gyi ring rgyal sa bon la shor gyis dogs te gshen po rnam bsags nas gsungs pa/kye sku gshen rnam gson dang/rgyal po nga ni dregs pa dang ldan/khyed bon po rnam ni mthu yi dregs pa dang ldan pas/yul 'dir nga'i rgyal srid dang/khyed kyi bon srid gnyis mi shong bas/lha bon bzhi dang/ge khod this 'phen dang/gco gyim bu lan tsha rnam bdag gi sku srung du bzhugs 'sthal/gshen po gzhan rnam bod ru bzhi las 'das par gshegs sam/yang na nga i mnga' 'og tu bon ma spyod dam parsdod/khyed bon po rnam'dam kha gyis gsungs/

22. sDe srid Sangs rgya mtsho (1653-1705) , *Vaidurya dkar po* ed .? p. 14a, 1 : 'un shing kong jo sa phag lo/

bal mo khri btsun lcags byi lo/  
zhang za li ti rnam gsum la/  
sras med lo rab gcod dgos zhes/

Khung po Blo gros rgyal mtshan, *op. cit.* p. 141: Zhang chung gi yul nas zhang chung za yig ring sman cig. blangs bas zhang chung gi lha gshen rab bstan pa'i gtso bo dung lo gcig pa'i tshad gdan drangs nas them then lha khang bzhengs; sPa bsTan rgyal bzang po, *bsTan pa'i rnam bshad dar rgyas gsal ba'i sgron me*, p. 669 : rgyal po srong btsan sgam po'i ring la/rgya gar nas chos me stag tsam zhig byung/btsun mo yang/byams ma las/zhang chung nas zhang chung za mig ting sman blangs pas/zhang chung gi lha gshen rab bstan pa'i gtso bo dung lo gcig pa'i sku tshad gdan drangs nas/them then lha khang bzhengs/

23. Tibetan youths in Switzerland gather together every year. In 1975 I attended the meeting. As I was asked to give a talk on the history of Zhangzhung and Tibet I wrote the *gZi'i phreng ba* specially for the young Tibetans. The following year I attended the meeting again and I still remember the questions about the relationship between religion and politics which were put to the learned elder Tibetans.
24. Lus kyi sgo nas/srog gcod pa/ma byin len pa/log g.yem byed pa gsum dang/ngag gi sgo nas/brnab sems/gnod sems/bden don la log par lta ba gsum bcas bcu po ni mi dge ba bcu yin zhing/de las ldog pa'i cha rnam la ni dge ba bcu zhe'o/
25. This is said by Rig 'dzin 'jig med gling pa *alias* Rang byung rdo rje mkhyen brtse'i 'od zer (1729- 1798).