

THE
LAND OF THE LAMAS

NOTES OF A JOURNEY THROUGH
CHINA MONGOLIA AND TIBET

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

WILLIAM WOODVILLE ROCKHILL



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VI

ORIGIN OF THE TIBETAN PEOPLE, AS TOLD IN THE "MANI
KAMBUM," CHAPTER XXXIV

(Translation.)

Om mani padmé hum.

Then the greatest of all the Bodhisattwas, P'apa Shenräzig Wang-ch'yuk, came to the Realm-of happiness (*Déwa-chan*), and the Buddha Nangwa t'ä-yä (*Amitayus*) spoke to him, saying: "Merciful Bodhisattwa, the Buddha Sachya t'upa (*Shakya-muni*) did not convert the Realm of snow (*i. e.*, Tibet), he did not set his foot upon it, did not illumine it with the light of his word, did not show it his bounty. It is for thee to gather together the low-lived creatures of the Abode of snow and bring them into a fit state for receiving the holy truth."

So then the Bodhisattwa P'apa Shenräzig Wang-ch'yuk repaired to the many-jeweled dwelling on the top of Mount Potala,¹ and looked at the living creatures inhabiting the Abode of snow, and saw that they in their ignorance of the religion of the Buddha were plunged in darkness like the black darkness of night; they were like the snow which falls on the surface of a lake and which can rise no more and must keep on going downward, for they were ever getting lower in the evil way. And he saw how there was no freedom for them; they moved as it were in a tightly closed iron coffer.

Then he caused a ray of bright light to come out of the palm of his right hand, and from out it appeared the king of the monkeys, the Bodhisattwa Hilumandju. Bethinking him of making mankind in the Abode of snow, he asked the monkey-king, "Wilt thou be able to give thyself to deep meditation in that snowy realm of the north?" "I will," he replied. Then he bound him by the oath of the five highest duties, and expounded to him the deep and far-reaching doctrine, after which the monkey transported himself by supernatural means to the Abode of snow, and, sitting down on a rock, was soon plunged in profound abstraction.

¹ At Lh'assa, where now lives his incarnation, the Talé lama. This hill is also called Marpori, "Red hill." This god's favorite abodes are Pu-t'o shan, in

the Chusan archipelago: Adams Peak, in Ceylon; Potala, near the mouth of the Indus, and Lh'assa.

Now at that time *Peu-yul* (*i. e.*, Tibet) was divided into nine regions. The first three, called *Rinpoch'é od-gi ling* ("the jeweled light region"), reaching to the highest peaks of slate and ice, were held by elephants and deer. The *Ru-dzi sog-pé ling* ("the region of the four horns") comprised the three middle zones of rocks and alps, and was held by rock-ogres (*drasinpo*) and monkeys. The *Ma-jya od ling* ("the peacock-light region"), comprising the three lowest zones of forests and valleys, was occupied by ogres (*sinpo*). So it was that the very name of man was unknown in that land.

Some time after the advent of Hilumandju, it happened on a day that a rock-ogress, burning with lust, took the semblance of a she-monkey and went near unto the monkey-king, lost in profoundest meditation, and endeavored by every kind of blandishment and lascivious gesture to excite his passions, but though for seven days she thus bedeviled him she could not arouse him from his abstraction.

So she thought within herself that perhaps her failure was due to the ugliness of her face and form; so she transformed herself into a lovely woman, gorgeously arrayed in jewels, and with bare bosom, and again she tried to arouse his passions. Then the monkey-king stole a glance at her out of the corner of his eye, and she, seeing her opportunity, moved near him and said, "Be mine." "I am a follower of P'apa Shenräzig," he replied, "and I may not be yours."

Then spoke the rock-ogress, saying: "Alas, monkey-king, I love thee passionately. Listen to me: my destiny has made me what I am, an ogress, but I pine for thee with all the force of love, and I would clasp thee in these arms. If thou refusest to be my husband I will call together all the ogres of the realm, and daily we will kill creatures by the tens of thousands, and nightly we will devour them by the thousands. And the ogresses will bear young, and they will be many; and this Abode of snow will be the kingdom of ogres, and they will devour the world. If death overtakes me while in this mind, my punishment will be to fall into the depth of hell. But thou, sin cannot overtake thee, shielded with the power of deep abstraction; fear not, lest it gradually forsake thee. Think of me kindly and spare me, that the voice of love be not changed to that of lamentation."

Then the monkey Bodhisattwa's heart was moved with commiseration as he considered the ogress, and he thought, "If I, in ignorance of possible consequences, take unto myself a wife, my

powers of meditation may become impaired. On the other hand, if I do not take this woman as my wife, and she dies, great will be my sin!" So he resolved to go and question the Bodhisattwa, the knowing P'apa Shenrāzig, and, having transported himself by his power of magic to the dwelling on Mount Potala, he did obeisance to the knowing Shenrāzig, and thus addressed him: "Alas, Lord of creatures, Merciful One, I am thy disciple (*gényen*), and my strength lies in my power of deep meditation, but an ogress of the devil's race, with mind filled with lechery, has assailed me, and my power of abstract meditation is about to depart. What shall I do to preserve my power of meditation? Merciful One, instruct me, I beseech thee. The ogress has said: 'Thou must be my husband; if thou wilt not, I will fling away my life, and it will be counted unto thee as sin.' Tell me, is it proper, or not, that I take her to me as a wife?"

"Highly proper," replied P'apa Shenrāzig, "though it may not be that thou and thy wife become human beings; in the days to come, when thy children's children have multiplied in the Abode of snow, they will become human beings, and the Holy Truth will be diffused among them and it will be mighty in the land."

Then the Lady Drolma (*Jo-mo Drolma*) added, "When men kind shall have multiplied (in Tibet), they will be pillars of religion."

"So be it (*Laso*)," he made answer. Then the monkey Bodhisattwa, fearing lest the rock-ogress should destroy herself, departed in all haste for the Abode of snow, and as soon as he arrived he took her unto him as his wife. When the space of nine months had elapsed she bore him six sons, who participated of the nature of the six classes of sentient creatures subject to birth and death. As their father was a monkey, so their bodies were covered with hair, and as their mother was a rock-ogress, so they had tails;¹ their faces were reddish and they were most unsightly. From the mortal gods, one had gentleness and patience; from the mortal (lit., subject to birth and death) Asuras (*lh'a-mayin*), one of them derived angry passions and quarrelsomeness. One of them had in part great lusts, and love of worldly riches, which qualities he owed to mortal man. One of them owed to hell's mortal fiends, hate, and anger, and great hardness. One partook of the mortal Préta's (*yidag*) characteristics in being deformed,

¹ The text says "no tails" (*mjug-ma mbd-pa*), but the context does not bear out this reading, and a little farther on we find that "their tawny tails disappeared" (*mjug-ma skya-ica bdrin-du song*).

from his cravings for food (lit., bad stomach), and his avariciousness. One partook of mortal brute beasts in not being able to distinguish right from wrong, and in having neither comprehension nor cleverness. When born they were ruddy-faced, had a taste for flesh and blood, and hair covered their heads and bodies, and, moreover, they knew how to speak.

Now when the little ones and their mother, the rock-ogress, became ahungered and in want of food, their father, the monkey Bodhisattwa, took them to a forest in the south, called "The Peacock woods," where there were monkeys for them to live with. And they lived with the female monkeys. After the space of a year the father visited them to see how they fared, and he saw that they had increased by five hundred, and their offspring were neither monkeys nor yet men, and they were exposed to the rain and the sun's rays in summer and to the snow and the wind of winter, and they had neither food nor raiment. Then the monkey Bodhisattwa, their sire and grandsire, was filled with anguish, and the five hundred young monkeys came to him, holding out beseechingly their helpless hands, exclaiming: "Father, what shall we eat? with what shall we clothe ourselves?"

And the monkey, when he saw this the great distress of his progeny and that there was neither food nor clothing for them, was afflicted, and filled with compassion. They had already devoured all the edible fruits, etc., but he got fruits and other things and brought them to them; but hardly had they eaten them, than they were racked with pain, and all the hair on their bodies fell off, the briars pricked their hands and feet,¹ and their tails shriveled up and disappeared. Then the old monkey in anguish and dire distress bethought him, "Why am I in such sorrow and misery? and these young monkeys, why has this befallen them? and the rock-ogress, my wife, why has this come to her, when there is the prophecy of the Knowing One Shen-räzig and of the Jomo Drolma? Alas, it is doubtless on account of my former wickedness. The Venerable One cannot have been mistaken in his forecast. It is not right for me to be angered and disturbed in mind; I will question the Venerable One, himself."

So by magical means he repaired to the palace on Mount Potala, and, having done obeisance to the Venerable One, he

¹ That is, as I understand the text, briars could prick their hands and feet, which were no longer protected by a covering of hair.

stood before him, and spoke as follows: "If I, moved only through compassion and regardless of the poison leaf of passion, have unwittingly brought myself into the prison of the Devil, and have beguiled the woman into the toils of the Evil One, my children and grandchildren into the orb of Māra, and we have all sunk in the mire of lust and are weighed down under a mountain of misery; if we have become wrapped in the smoke of the misery of sin and struck down by the plague of evil deeds; if I myself have been seized with the disease of misery, it is only I who have brought us into the world of transmigration, and have been caught in the net of dark ignorance; protect my (sinless) children and grandchildren. What has happened to me has been at the word of the Venerable One, and I shall without a doubt fall hereafter into hell. But be merciful to me, I beseech thee. Knowing One, I and the rock-ogress, our children and children's children, have moreover nothing to sustain life on, and I have sought thee in deep anguish to know what to do."

Then spoke P'apa Shenrāzig Wang-ch'yuk, saying: "Peu-yul, the Abode of snow, was in utter darkness and in the power of creatures not human, and was not within the sphere of my conversion; but these (thy descendants) have become men, and thou hast, in bringing this transformation about, opened to them the gate to heaven and redemption. Doubt me not, be single-hearted and despair not, for these thy children and grandchildren have finally become men, and will some day enter the fold of my redeemed. Thou hast done no evil, but only made them take a step in the road towards freedom; it is well. Think not to be in anguish, for these thy progeny shall be provided with both worldly goods and spiritual goods. These thy progeny shall be of two kinds: some of them shall be of their grandsire's race, and have great faith and kind-heartedness, great understanding and application, they shall delight in the subtilities of religion and ever thirst after virtue, they shall have broad understanding and Bodhisattwa great-mindedness; some shall be of the mother's race, and shall delight in killing and will like flesh and blood, they will be fond of trade and lucre, strong in body and mind, given to unrighteousness, liking to hear of others' shortcomings, cruel, prying,¹ butchering animals, and eating meat.

¹ I have translated by these two words the following phrase, *rkang lag-gis hdug mi ts'ugs-pa, mig mi-la ka mi ts'ugs pa*, which appears to mean, literally trans-

lated, "hurting man with hands and feet, looking at men with the eye and hurting them," but my interpretation is conjectural.

"And the food portions of thy descendants are these seven varieties of seed"; and he gave him barley, wheat, beans, pease, *soba* (thick-shelled barley), etc., saying unto him, "carry these to the Abode of snow, and these seeds shall fructify and increase. Moreover, to satisfy the longing after riches, which they derive from the rock-ogress thy wife, here are handfuls of precious dust, gold, silver, copper, iron, etc.; scatter them in the Abode of snow, and they shall become treasures in the earth and shall be found in mines, and after a season these thy progeny, become men, shall subsist by this precious gold, silver, etc., and after a time they shall open these precious mines."¹

And he spat in the direction of the Abode of snow, saying: "After a while there shall arise in the land an incarnate Bodhisattwa, who will be a defender of religion, a man exalted above all others."²

Then the monkey Bodhisattwa transported himself to the Abode of snow, where he sowed the seed in a part of the land well suited for the purpose, level and warm, and with every qualification. And after that the monkey Bodhisattwa had gathered together in the summer the monkey children in the Peacock woods, the autumn came after the sowing of the seeds, and it was time to look after them, and they were all ripe and fit to eat. Then he called the monkey children and instructed them, saying: "These P'apa Shenräzig has given you as your food portion; cultivate them; let this be your work. This is the first labor in the land, but later on there shall be treasures found in Tibet, and they will be in mines; these the Bodhisattwa Shenräzig Wang-ch'yuk has also given you." And they acquired worldly goods, after which for the first time they became bound together by religion.³

The narrative goes on to state that Shenräzig caused a ray of light to issue out of the palm of his right hand, and from out it came a youth with all the signs and characteristics of a Buddha, who came among the people of Tibet, described as still being

¹ This is in conformity with the Tibetan idea that minerals grow, that large nuggets are the seeds of which the smaller ones are the fruit as it were.

² An allusion to Srong-tsan gambo, the king of Tibet, in whose reign Buddhism is said to have been introduced into Tibet, and who is the reputed author of this work. He reigned from A. D. 636 to 698.

³ According to East Indian legends given by the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan Chuang, which show some analogy with those here given, the people of Ceylon descended from a lion, who took to wife a daughter of a king of southern India. See "Vie et Voyages de Hiouen-Tsang, trad. par Stan. Julien," I, p. 194.

something between men and monkeys, "with curtailed hind parts and hairy bodies"; and he taught them the profit arising from observing the ten cardinal virtues (*pāramitā*), etc., and they believed him, and the first seeds of the Buddhist faith were sown in Peu-lung-ba (Tibet).

VII

NOTES ON THE LANGUAGE OF EASTERN TIBET

IN the following note I have endeavored to present some of the peculiarities of the pronunciation of the Koko-nor Tibetans, to which I have added a syllabary giving the pronunciation at Lh'asa, Bat'ang, and the Ts'arong, the first being the modern standard of excellence. The pronunciation of the Koko-nor Tibetans is harsher than that in any other section of the country with which I am acquainted, and presents a number of peculiarities which I must leave to philologists to explain. Its vocabulary and phraseology do not differ essentially from those of Lh'asa, nor, for that matter, of any of the other dialects spoken in K'amdo. There are, of course, in each a large number of local expressions, of patois words, many of Chinese, or Turki, some of unknown origin, but so slight are these peculiarities that a native of Lh'asa can master them in a very short time. Prof. Terrien de Lacouperie, speaking of the tribes of eastern Tibet, says: "In the east, near the borders of China, are the numerous tribes called Gyarung or Chen-tui; their language has been studied by Hodgson, who has pointed out its remarkable similarity of structure to that of the Tagals of the Philippines."¹ However this may be, the Mänyak'a from the Chan-tui, like the people of Bat'ang, Ta-chien-lu, Kanzé, and Jyékundo, speak Tibetan; and the educated ones among them endeavor to pronounce as much like the Lh'asa people as they possibly can.

I regret that I was unable to collect a vocabulary of the language spoken by the Golok, for, while I feel sure that it is a Tibetan dialect, I believe that in its pronunciation it is even more archaic than that of the Panak'a of the Koko-nor.

¹ "Encyclopædia Britannica," 9th edition, s. v. "Tibet," p. 344.