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THE TIBETAN BOOK OF THE GREAT LIBERATION

OR THE METHOD OF REALIZING *NIRVANA*
THROUGH KNOWING THE MIND

PRECEDED BY AN
EPITOME OF PADMA-SAMBHAVA'S BIOGRAPHY
AND FOLLOWED BY
GURU PHADAMPA SANGAY'S TEACHINGS

According to English Renderings by
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and by the Lāmas Karma Sumdhon Paul
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With Psychological Commentary by
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THE GREAT *GURU* PADMA-SAMBHAVA

Described on pages xv-xvi

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF
THE *GURUS*
WHO INSPIRED THE
TRANSMISSION OF THIS BOOK AND
THE TWO PRECEDING BOOKS
IN THIS SERIES
TO THE PEOPLES OF THE
WESTERN WORLD

DEDICATED
TO THOSE
SEEKING WISDOM

Bondage and Liberation

I: BONDAGE

Upon Ignorance dependeth *karma*;
Upon *karma* dependeth consciousness;
Upon consciousness depend name and form;
Upon name and form depend the six organs of sense;
Upon the six organs of sense dependeth contact;
Upon contact dependeth sensation;
Upon sensation dependeth desire;
Upon desire dependeth attachment;
Upon attachment dependeth existence;
Upon existence dependeth birth;
Upon birth depend old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair. Thus doth this entire aggregation of misery arise.

II: LIBERATION

But upon the complete fading out and cessation of Ignorance ceaseth *karma*;
Upon the cessation of *karma* ceaseth consciousness;
Upon the cessation of consciousness cease name and form;
Upon the cessation of name and form cease the six organs of sense;
Upon the cessation of the six organs of sense ceaseth contact;
Upon the cessation of contact ceaseth sensation;
Upon the cessation of sensation ceaseth desire;
Upon the cessation of desire ceaseth attachment;
Upon the cessation of attachment ceaseth existence;
Upon the cessation of existence ceaseth birth;
Upon the cessation of birth cease old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair. Thus doth this entire aggregation of misery cease.

The Buddha, *Samyutta Nikāya*, xxii. 90¹⁶
(based upon H. C. Warren's Translation).

PLATE II



THE TRANSLATORS AND THE EDITOR
Described on page xvii

PREFACE

IN this volume, the fourth of my Tibetan Series, I have placed on record, in a manner intended to appeal equally to the learned and to the unlearned, to the philosopher and to the scientist, some of the most recondite teachings of Oriental Sages. In doing so, I have had the right guidance of an original text, heretofore unknown to Europe, the authorship of which is attributed to Tibet's Precious *Guru* Padma-Sambhava, the illustrious master of the Tantric Occult Sciences, of whose life-history an epitome is herein presented.

Inasmuch as this volume sets forth the very quintessence of the Great Path, the Māhāyana, it not only supplements the three previous volumes, but is, in some respects, the most important member of the Series. At the time of the publication of *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, I did not, however, foresee that it was my destiny to be the transmitter of this additional volume.

In the General Introduction and the textual annotations there have been incorporated, to serve as a very necessary commentary, complementary teachings which were orally transmitted through a long line of *Gurus* of the Kargyūtpa School to my own Tibetan *Guru*, the late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup. Also, in Book III, the teachings of the *Guru* Phadampa Sangay supplement those of the other *Gurus*.

Thanks to the kindly assistance of Lāma Karma Sumdhon Paul and Lāma Lobzang Mingyur Dorje, the first two successors of the late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup in the University of Calcutta, Book II, the essential part of this volume, has been rendered into English.

All who read this volume will join with me in offering homage to the late Sardar Bahādur S. W. Laden La, whom I had the great joy of assisting, in my capacity as scribe and editor, when he translated the excerpts from the Lotus-Born One's Biography, upon which the epitome of it, comprising Book I, is based.

I am especially grateful to Dr. C. G. Jung, the distin-

guished dean of Western psychologists, for his erudite Foreword, which serves as a bridge between the best thought of Occident and Orient. Today, even more than in the days of the Greek philosophers, East and West not only are meeting, but are recognizing their inherent and inseparable oneness. Only the vulgar notice and advocate racial and religious differentiation. To the clear-seeing, Humanity is One Family, eternally transcending geographical demarcations, national limitations, and every fettering concept born of the unenlightened mind.

To the late Dr. R. R. Marett, Rector of Exeter College, and formerly Reader in Social Anthropology in the University of Oxford, whose encouragement of my anthropological research is well known to readers of other books bearing my name, I am indebted for his having critically examined the matter herein contained before it took final shape. I owe a similar debt to Dr. F. W. Thomas, Emeritus Boden Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford, more particularly for his assistance with certain of the Tibetan transliterations and place-names; and to Mr. E. T. Sturdy, translator of the *Nārada Sūtra*, for his no less timely help with the Sanskrit transliterations. I am, also, very greatly indebted to Mr. R. F. C. Hull, translator of the forthcoming Collected Edition of the works of Dr. C. G. Jung, for having constructively read the proofs of this book as a whole.

My thanks are likewise due to each of the translators who in Germany and in France have made the results of my Tibetan studies available in their several languages. In this connexion I cannot omit the names of Madame Marguerite La Fuente, of Paris, who, under the extreme stress of economic conditions, arranged for the production of *Le Yoga Tibétain et les Doctrines Secrètes* (Paris, 1938); and of Miss Constant Lounsbury, author of *Buddhist Meditation in the Southern School* and also President of *Les Amis du Bouddhisme*, of Paris, who aided Madame La Fuente in the arduous task of making the translation.

I acknowledge, too, the encouragement and aid rendered by many other helpers, friends, and correspondents hail-

ing from all the continents—who, like myself, are earnestly striving to overthrow every barrier born of Ignorance that separates race from race, nation from nation, and religion from religion.

May this book afford added courage and strength to those many helpers and friends. May that Universal Good Will of the Great Teachers of Wisdom, such as is herein set forth, speedily prevail, so that mankind may recognize their divine at-one-ment.

W. Y. E.-W.

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

All Saints' Day, 1952

It Were Better to Live One Single Day

'It were better to live one single day in the development of a good life of meditation than to live a hundred years evilly and with undisciplined mind.

'It were better to live one single day in the pursuit of understanding and meditation than to live a hundred years in ignorance and unrestraint.

'It were better to live one single day in the commencement of earnest endeavour than to live a hundred years in sloth and effortlessness.

'It were better to live one single day giving thought to the origin and cessation of that which is composite than to live a hundred years giving no thought to such origin and cessation.

'It were better to live one single day in the realization of the Deathless State than to live a hundred years without such realization.

'It were better to live one single day knowing the Excellent Doctrine than to live a hundred years without knowing the Excellent Doctrine.'

The Buddha, from the *Dhammapada*, vv. 110-15
(based upon N. K. Bhagwat's Translation).

The Buddha's Sermon on What is True Blessedness?

Praise be to the Blessed One, the Holy One, the Author of all Truth.

Thus I have heard. On a certain day dwelt the Blessed One at Sāvastī, at the Jetavana Monastery, in the Garden of Anāthapindika. And when the night was far advanced, a certain radiant celestial being, illuminating the whole of Jetavana, approached the Blessed One and saluted Him, and standing aside, and remaining so, addressed Him with these words: 'Many gods and men, yearning after good, have held diverse things to be blessings; declare Thou, What is true blessedness?'

'To serve wise men rather than fools, to give honour to whom honour is due; this is true blessedness.

'To dwell in a pleasant land, to have done virtuous deeds in a former existence, to have a heart filled with right desires; this is true blessedness.

'Much wisdom and much science, the discipline of a well-trained mind, and right speech; this is true blessedness.

'To wait on father and mother, to cherish wife and child, to follow a peaceful calling; this is true blessedness.

'To give alms, to live piously, to protect kinsfolk, to perform blameless deeds; this is true blessedness.

'To cease doing evil, to abstain from strong drink, to persevere in right conduct; this is true blessedness.

'Reverence and humility, contentment and gratitude, the hearing of the Law of Righteousness at due seasons; this is true blessedness.

'Patience and pleasing speech, association with holy men, to hold religious discourse at fitting moments; this is true blessedness.

'Penance and chastity, discernment of the Four Noble Truths and the realization of peace; this is true blessedness.

'A mind unshaken by the vicissitudes of this life, inaccessible to sorrow, passionless, secure; this is true blessedness.

'They that observe these things are invincible on every side, on every side they walk in safety; yea, their's is the true blessedness.'—*Maṅgala Sūtra*.¹

¹ A recension by the Editor, based on Professor Childer's Translation and on that by Irving Babbitt in *The Dhammapāda* (Oxford University Press, New York and London, 1936), page 76.

DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIONS

I. THE GREAT GURU PADMA-SAMBHAVA *Frontispiece*

A photographic reproduction (about one-fifth of the original size) of a modern Tibetan painting in colour, on cotton cloth, acquired in Nepal, representing Padma-Sambhava, robed in his royal robes as a King of Sahor, India, sitting in kingly posture on a lotus-lunar throne. The *dorje* (described on p. 107¹), in his right hand, is held in the posture (or *mudrā*) called in Tibetan the *Dorje Dik-dzup* (*Rdo-rje-sdigs-mdzub*), i.e. the Indomitable (or *Vajra*) Finger-pointing *Mudrā*, to guard against all evils which might affect the *Dharma*, and to place the Three Realms of Existence (described on p. 205¹) under his dominion. The human-skull cup in his left hand is filled with the nectar of immortality (Skt. *amrita*); and superimposed upon the nectar is the urn of longevity and immortal life, also filled with the ambrosia of the gods, of which his devotees are privileged to drink. The skull cup itself symbolizes renunciation of the world. The trident-pointed staff (Skt. *trishūla*) which he holds in the folds of his left arm is highly symbolical. The trident at the top symbolizes the Three Realms of Existence (in Sanskrit, the *Trailokya*), and suggests his dominion over them and over the three chief evils, lust, anger (or ill will), and sloth (or stupidity). It also symbolizes the Three Times, the past, present, and future. The flames emanating from the middle point of the trident are the Flames of Divine Wisdom which consume Ignorance (Skt. *avidyā*). The skull underneath the trident symbolizes the *Dharma-Kāya*; the first of the two human heads below the skull symbolizes the *Sambhoga-Kāya*, and the second the *Nirmāṇa-Kāya*. (The Three *Kāyas* are described on pp. 3-4, 178¹). The golden urn below the heads is filled with the essence of transcendent blessings and perfections. The golden double-*dorje* below the urn is described by the *lāmas* thus: the southern (or lower) point represents Peace; the western point Multiplicity; the northern (or upper) point (hidden by the urn) Initiatory Power; the eastern point Fearfulness; and the centre the at-onement of all spiritual endowments and perfections. The white silk ribbon-like banner below the double-*dorje*, resembling a Banner of Victory, of which it is an abbreviated form, symbolizes the Great *Guru's* Victory over the *Sangsāra*. The staff itself symbolizes the Divine *Shakti*.

The Great *Guru* wears as his head-dress what Tantrics call the lotus-cap. The crescent moon and the sun, on the front of it, signify, as does the lotus-cap itself, that he is crowned with all initiatory powers. The feather surmounting the lotus-cap being that of a vulture, regarded as the highest and mightiest of fliers among birds, symbolizes that his Doctrine of the Great Perfection is the most aspiring, noblest, and

loftiest of spiritual doctrines. His blue and purple and priestly yellow inner dress is the dress of a Tibetan *Nyag-pa* (*Sngags-pa*), or one who is a Master of Tantric Occultism.

Kneeling on a smaller lotus-lunar throne, to the left of the Great *Guru*, is the figure of Bhāsadhara, his Queen when he was the King of Sahor, offering to him *amrita* in a bowl made of a human skull; and on his right, similarly enthroned and kneeling and making a like offering, that of Mandāravā, his most faithful and beloved disciple.

Immediately above the head of the Great *Guru* is shown the Buddha Shākya Muni, sitting in *Padmāsana*, or Buddha posture, on a lotus-lunar throne, holding in His left hand the begging-bowl, symbolical of His being a religious mendicant, and with His right hand touching, and thus calling, the Earth to bear witness to the truth of His Doctrine. The Buddha is so placed above the Great *Guru* because He is his spiritual Predecessor and Ancestor; the Great *Guru* representing on Earth the Tantric, or Esoteric, Emanation of the Buddha.

On either side of the Buddha, posed as He is, but on the simpler throne of a disciple or *Bodhisattva*, are two *Arhants*, each holding a mendicant's begging-bowl and alarm-staff. The Sun (red) to the left and the Moon (white) to the right of the Buddha, the clouds, the blue sky, the land and mountains and waters below, the blossoms and the fruits, signify, as in other of the Illustrations, the *Sangsāra*, and, therefore, that the Teachers are still active therein and ever striving for the salvation of mankind.

The Great *Guru*, the Buddha, and the two *Arhants* are enhaloeed in rainbow-like radiance. The Great *Guru* and the Buddha have nimbi of green, indicating the eternity of the Bodhic Essence manifested through Them. The nimbi of the other four figures are orange-red, suggestive of their possessors not yet being wholly free from worldly or *sangsāric* bondage.

Directly below the Great *Guru* are the insignia of the Five Objects of Enjoyment, offerings made to him by his devotees: (1) luscious food substances, symbolical of pleasing taste, in the blue receptacle at the centre surmounted by a red *chorten*; (2) the white conch-shell filled with perfume, symbolical of pleasing smell, resting on two sweet-smelling fruits; (3) the mirror on the opposite side, symbolizing pleasing form or sight; (4) the pair of cymbals (resting against the mirror), symbolical of pleasing sound or hearing; and (5) the red Chinese silk (binding the two cymbals together), symbolical of pleasing touch or feelings. In the Hindu system, whence they appear to have been derived, these Five Objects of Enjoyment correspond in symbolism, in their order as here given, to the Sanskrit *Rasa* (Taste), *Gandha* (Smell), *Rūpa* (Form or Sight), *Shabda* (Sound or Hearing), and *Sparsha* (Touch or Feelings).

II. THE TRANSLATORS AND THE EDITOR *facing p. vii*

Upper: A reproduction of a group photograph, showing the Editor in the centre, in Tibetan dress, holding a copy of the *Bardo Thödol* block-print series of texts containing the text employed in producing the translation of the 'Yoga of Knowing the Mind in Its Nakedness'; to the Editor's right the Lāma Karma Sumdhon Paul, and to the Editor's left the Lāma Lobzang Mingyur Dorje. This photograph was taken during October 1935 in front of the Temple of the coming Buddha Maitreya, which appears in the background and forms a part of the Ghoom Monastery, Darjeeling. Three Tibetan prayer-flags (*Dhar-chok*), mounted on tall poles, appear to the left of the Temple. Such prayer-flags, made of cotton cloth printed on both sides with Tibetan prayers and *mantras*, usually bear verses ending with 'May the Doctrine of the Buddha prosper'.

Lower: A reproduction of a photograph of the late Sardar Bahādūr S. W. Laden La, of Darjeeling, in the yellow silk dress of a Tibetan Peer (*Dzasa*) and wearing the black travelling-hat called *Chhok-sed* (*Mchhog-sred*) and some of the insignia of the various high honours conferred upon him by the British Government and the Government of Tibet.

Brief biographies of the late Sardar Bahādūr and of the two Lāmas are given on pages 86-92.

III. MAÑJUSHRĪ'S BOOK OF DIVINE WISDOM *facing p. xxix*

A reproduction of a photograph of a rare manuscript copy of the *Phak-pa-Jam-pal-gi-Tsa-way-Gyud* (*Hphags-pa-Hjam-dpal-gyi-Rtsa-wahi-Rgyud*): Skt. *Ārya Mañjushrī Mūla Tantra*: Eng. 'The Original [or Root] Treatise [or Book] of the God of Wisdom', concerning the Kālachakra Doctrine as taught originally by the Lord Buddha, and forming a part of the *Kanjur* (*Bksh-gyur*), 'The Translated Commandments', the canon of Tibetan Buddhism. The exposition and guardianship of this Doctrine, because of its profound esotericism, is entrusted to the Tashi Lāma, who is otherwise known, among the Tibetans, as 'The Precious Great Doctor', or 'Great Gem of Learning' (*Pan-chen Rin-po-ch'e*), and also as 'The Precious Lordly Victor' (*Kyap-gön Rin-po-ch'e*). The text is written in gold and silver on lacquered Tibetan-made paper, each folio of which measures $25\frac{3}{8}$ inches by $6\frac{1}{8}$ inches. The first page of the text is shown underneath the volume.

In order to safeguard it, the manuscript was given over to the custody of one of the officials accompanying the late Tashi Lāma at the time His Holiness fled from Tibet. It was then seized, along with other goods of the fleeing Tashi Lāma, by the Tibetan Government and sold, and afterwards came into the possession of Mr. Tharchin, editor of *The Tibetan Newspaper*, Kalimpong, from whom we acquired it. The manuscript was probably one of the Tashi Lāma's most