

THE
LIFE OF THE BUDDHA
AND THE
EARLY HISTORY OF HIS ORDER
DERIVED FROM
TIBETAN WORKS IN THE BKAH-HGYUR AND
BSTAN-HGYUR
FOLLOWED BY NOTICES ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF
TIBET AND KHOTAN

W. W. ROCKHILL

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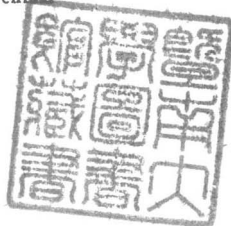
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TIBETAN WORKS IN THE BKAH-HGYUR AND BSTAN-HGYUR.

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OF TIBET AND KHOTEN.

TRANSLATED BY
W. WOODVILLE ROCKHILL,
SECOND SECRETARY U. S. LEGATION IN CHINA.



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INTRODUCTION.

ANY one who has glanced at the analysis of the Tibetan Bkah-hgyur by Alexander Csoma de Körös, published in the 20th volume of the "Asiatic Researches," must have been struck with the wonderful patience and perseverance of this extraordinary scholar. Some idea of the extent of the researches which are embodied in his analysis of the Dulva, about the tenth part of the whole Bkah-hgyur, may be had when it is known that it occupies more than 4000 leaves of seven lines to the page, each line averaging twenty-two syllables. But notwithstanding all that Csoma did to make known to Europe the vast Buddhist literature of Tibet, his work is hardly more than an index of the Tibetan Tripitaka. Moreover, when he wrote it, Buddhist studies were in their infancy, and many important subjects on which the Bkah-hgyur furnishes answers, which, if not always acceptable, are still plausible and interesting, had not been investigated by scholars, and their importance was as yet ignored.

Csoma's premature death prevented him examining as fully as we could have desired the Tibetan Bstan-hgyur, in which may be found many important works which help to elucidate the difficulties which so frequently beset the canonical works in the Bkah-hgyur.

From what has been said we may safely assert that it is not impossible to extend the analysis of the Bkah-hgyur

far beyond the limits reached by Csoma. So numerous, however, are the materials which are supplied us, that it is beyond the power of any one scholar to examine them in their entirety, and he must necessarily confine himself to one special subject or branch of research.

In the first part of this work we have endeavoured to give a substantial and connected analysis, and frequently literal translations, of the greater part of the historical or legendary texts contained in the Tibetan *Dulva* or *Vinaya-pitaka*, which is unquestionably the most trustworthy, and probably the oldest portion of the *Bkah-hgyur*.

By frequent reference to the pages of the original (the East India Office copy of the *Bkah-hgyur*), we hope we will have facilitated researches in the cumbrous Tibetan volumes, to which no indices are attached.

Some of the passages of this volume have been analysed by Anton Schiefner in his *Tibetische Libensbeschreibung Çakyamuni* (St. Petersburg, 1849), but as the work from which he translated them was composed by a Tibetan lama of the seventeenth century, it could hardly be considered as authoritative, and it has been thought advisable not to omit these documents in their original Tibetan form.

The Tibetan *Vinaya* (*Dulva*) is not solely devoted to recording the rules and regulations of the Buddhist order, as is the Pâli work of this name, but it contains *jâtakas*,¹ *avadanas*, *vyakaranas*, *sûtras*, and *udânas*, and in that it resembles the Sanskrit *Vinaya*, which Burnouf tells us presents the same peculiarity. A few of these texts have been introduced in this work, because they appeared of sufficient interest to justify their presence in a volume

¹ The third volume of the *Dulva* contains 13 *jâtakas*, and the fourth volume 39, some of which I have not met with in the Pâli *jâtaka*.

which is intended to give an idea of the Tibetan Vinaya literature.

By comparing the following notes on the life of the Buddha with other works on the same subject, but derived from different sources, it will be seen that two periods of the life of Gautama are narrated by all Buddhist authors in about the same terms (probably because they all drew from the same source their information), the history of his life down to his visit to Kapilavastu in the early part of his ministry, and that of the last year of his life. All the events which occurred between these two periods are with difficulty assigned to any particular year of his life, and we have been obliged to avail ourselves of any incidental remarks in the texts for arranging our narrative in even a semi-chronological order. Thus the oft-recurring phrase that Adjatasatru was king of Magadha when such and such an event took place, suggested the idea of taking the commencement of his reign (five or eight years before the Buddha's death) as a dividing-point in the Buddha's life, and of putting in the same chapter all the texts which are prefaced with this remark.

The histories of the councils of Rājagriha and of Vaisali, contained in the eleventh volume of the *Dulva*, are here translated for the first time, and they differ in many respects from the versions of these events previously translated from Pāli or Chinese.

The authenticity of the council of Rājagriha has been doubted on insufficient grounds, and, without examining the merits of the case, we cannot help thinking that it was much more rational that a compilation or collation of the utterances of the Master and of the rules of the order should have been made shortly after his death, than that his followers, however united they may have been, should

have allowed a century to elapse before fixing in any definite shape the sacred words and ordinances. Moreover, both Pâli and Tibetan works only credit the council of Vaisali with having settled some unimportant questions of discipline, and do not mention any revision of the sacred works performed by this synod.

In the sixth chapter will be found a literal translation of the greater part of a work on the Buddhist schools of the Hinayâna by Bhavya, an Indian Buddhist of great renown. His work is especially interesting, as it differs materially from that of Vasumitra on the same subject, which has been translated by Professor Wassilief. Both of these works, unfortunately, are far from being satisfactory, and though Bhavya often appears to quote Vasumitra, he has not made use (at least in the Tibetan translation) of terms which might enable us to better understand the frequently enigmatical explanations of Vasumitra.

A few words are necessary to explain the presence in a volume of translations from the Tibetan sacred writings of a chapter on the early history of Tibet. What little information we possess of the early history of this secluded country is scattered about in a number of works not always accessible, and frequently unsatisfactory on account of the defective transcription of Tibetan words. It was thought that an abstract of the greater and more reliable part of the works bearing on this question might prove acceptable to those who may desire to have some knowledge on this subject, but who are unwilling to look over all the different documents which treat of it. We have endeavoured to supplement the researches of our predecessors in this field with what new facts we have been able to derive from a somewhat hurried examina-

tion of the Tibetan Bstan-hgyur and some other books which have come under our notice.

The extracts incorporated in chapter viii. are quite new, and it is believed that no scholar has heretofore called attention to them. The texts from which they have been taken, with the exception of one, belong to a class of Buddhist works called Vyakarana or Prophecies. In them the Buddha predicts to his disciples the events which will occur in days to come in such a country or to such an individual. In this case these Predictions are all corroborated by the statements of the Li-yul-lo-rgyus-pa or Annals of Li-yul, the most important of the works on this subject which I have met with.

This last-named work seems to have been compiled from documents unknown to Northern Buddhist writers in general, and from the particular form in which certain proper names have been transcribed (such as *Yāco* instead of *Yācas* or *Yasheska*, which is always met with in Northern texts), we think its author had access to some Southern documents on the early history of Buddhism. This supposition is still more strengthened by the fact that this work does not confound the two Açokas, as do all Northern Buddhist ones, but gives about the same date for his reign as the Dipawansa and Mahâwansa. Still it is strange, if it was inspired from these Pâli documents, that it does not give exactly the same dates as they do. These extracts are interesting, moreover, in that they show with what care and precision the great Chinese traveller Hiuen Tshang recorded the traditions of the different countries he visited.

My most sincere thanks are due to Dr. Ernst Leumann and to Mr. Bunyiu Nanjio for the notes they have kindly furnished me, and which are reproduced in the

Appendix. Dr. Leumann's translation from the Bhagavati will prove of great assistance in elucidating the very obscure passage of the Samana-phala Sûtra relative to Gosala's theories, and Mr. Bunyiu Nanjio's parallel translations of two Chinese versions of the Samana-phala Sûtra tend to prove the existence at an early date of several distinct versions of this very interesting sûtra.

One of the most embarrassing parts of reading Tibetan Buddhist works is the habit of those who did these works into Tibetan of translating all the proper names which were susceptible of being translated. It is hoped that the special index of Tibetan words with their Sanskrit equivalents at the end of this volume will prove of assistance to those who may wish to study Tibetan Buddhism in the original works.

Throughout this volume no attempt has been made to criticise the texts which have been studied; they are only intended as materials for those who hereafter may undertake to write a history of the Buddha founded on the comparative study of works extant in the different countries in which his doctrines flourished; and if our labours facilitate this, we will feel fully compensated for all our pains.

LAUSANNE, *June 6, 1884.*

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THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORY OF THE WORLD FROM THE TIME OF ITS RENOVATION TO THE REIGN OF CUDDHODANA, FATHER OF THE BUDDHA.

THE following history of the world's renovation and of the origin of castes is taken from the fifth volume of the 'Dulva, fol. 155-166. It also occurs in the third volume of the same work, fol. 421-430, but several interesting passages are there omitted, although the rest of the text is exactly the same as that of vol. v. In the third volume it is Maudgalyayana who, at the Buddha's request, tells to the Çakyas the story of the world's regeneration, and of the ancient peoples who inhabited it. The Buddha feared that if he himself told the story the tirthikas would accuse him of unduly extolling his own clan (D. iii. 420^b). In the fifth volume the story is told to the bhikshus by the Buddha, to teach them how sin first made its appearance in the world.

"At the time when the world was destroyed, many of its inhabitants were born in the region of the Ábhâsvara devas, and there they had ethereal bodies, free from every impurity; their faculties were unimpaired, they were perfect in all their principal and secondary parts, of goodly appearance and of a pleasing colour. Light proceeded from

their persons; they moved through space and fed on joy, and they lived in this state to great ages for a long period.

In the meanwhile this great earth was mingled up with the waters and with the mighty deep. Then on the face of the great earth, of the water and of the ocean that were mingled together, there blew a wind,¹ which solidified and concentrated the rich surface (lit. the cream); as when the wind blowing over the surface of boiled milk which is cooling, solidifies and concentrates the cream, so likewise did this wind blowing over the surface of the earth, the water and the ocean which were mixed together, solidify and coagulate it.

This rime (lit. essence of the earth, *prithivîrasa*) was of exquisite colour, of delicious taste, of delightful (f. 156^b) fragrance, in colour like unto butter, its taste like that of uncooked honey.

At this period when the world was formed, some of the beings in the region of the Âbhâsvara devas had accomplished their allotted time, the merit of their good works being exhausted; so they departed that life and became men, but with attributes similar to those they previously had.²

At that period there was neither sun nor moon in the world; there were no stars in the world, neither was there night or day, minutes, seconds, or fractions of seconds; there were no months, half months, no periods of time, no years: neither were there males or females; there were only animated beings.

Then it happened that a being of an inquisitive nature tasted the rime with the tip of his finger, and thus he conceived a liking (f. 157^a) for it, and he commenced eating pieces of it as food.³

Other beings saw this being tasting the rime [so they

¹ Cf. Gen. i. 2, and Ps. xxxiii. 6, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water." See B. H. Hodgson, *Essays*, i. p. 43, and p. 55, note 3.

² The first beings were devas, in the Vedic sense of "bright ones."

³ In Scandinavian mythology the renovated human race is fed on dew. So likewise the cow Audhumbla lived on salt that came from the rime produced by the ice-cold streams. See Anderson, *Norse Mythol.*, p. 194.

followed his example] and commenced eating pieces of it as food.

From these beings eating the rime as food their bodies became coarse and gross; they lost their brilliancy and their goodly appearance, and darkness was upon the face of the earth.

For these reasons the sun and moon were created; stars also (f. 157^b) came into existence, as did night and day, minutes, seconds, fractions of seconds, months and half months, divisions of time and years. The beings feeding on this rime lived to great ages for a long space of time.

The complexion of those who ate but little of this food was clear, whereas that of those who ate much of it was dark. Then those whose complexion was clear said to the others, "Why, I have a fine complexion, whereas you are dark!" and thus were established distinctions. They whose complexion was clear were proud of it, and became sinful and iniquitous, and then the rime vanished.

(f. 158^a.) When the rime had vanished from these beings, there appeared a fatty substance (*prithivīparvataka*) of exquisite colour and savour, of delicious fragrance, in colour as a dongka flower, in flavour like uncooked honey; and they took this as their food, and they lived to great ages for a long while.

[This fatty substance vanished after a while, for the same reason as had brought about the disappearance of the rime.]

When the fatty substance had vanished from mankind, there appeared bunches of reeds (*vanalatā*) of exquisite colour and savour, of delicious fragrance, in colour like a kadambuka flower (f. 159^a), in flavour like uncooked honey. Then they took this as their food, and on it they lived to great ages for a long while.

[This food also vanished after a while, for the same reasons as above.]

(f. 159^b.) When the bunches of reeds had vanished from mankind, there appeared a spontaneously growing rice, not

coarse, without pellicule, clean, four fingers in length. There was never any lack of it; for if it was cut down in the evening, it was grown up again in the morning; if it was cut down in the morning, it was grown ere evening; what was cut down grew up afresh, so that it was not missed.

Then they took this as their food, and on it they lived to great ages for a long time.

From eating this rice their different organs were developed; some had those of males and others those of females. Then they saw each other, and conceived love for each other, and, burning with lust, they came to commit fornication.

Other beings (f. 160^a) saw what they were doing, so they threw at them earth, stones, gravel, pebbles, and potsherds, saying unto them, "Thou doest wrongly! thou doest that which is wrong!" But those who had acted wrongly, who had done that which was wrong, exclaimed, "Why do you thus insult us?"

As nowadays when a man takes unto himself a wife, they sprinkle her over with dust, perfumes, flowers, and parched rice, with cries of "Good luck, sister!" so those beings, seeing the wickedness of those other beings, sprinkled them with earth, threw at them stones and gravel, pebbles and potsherds, crying after that, "Thou doest wrongly! thou doest that which is not right!" But they who had done wrong, who had done that which was wrong, exclaimed, "Why do you thus insult us?"

And thus it was that what was formerly considered unlawful has become lawful nowadays; what was not tolerated in former times has become tolerated nowadays; what was looked down (f. 160^b) on in former days has become praiseworthy now.

Now, when they had done wrong one, two, three, even unto seven days, these sinful beings were so possessed by the ways of wickedness that they commenced building houses. "Here," they said, "we may do what is not

allowed ;" and from this expression originated the word "house."¹

Now this is the first appearance in the world of divisions by houses, and this (division) is lawful or not lawful according to the king's decision, and he is the lord of the law.

If these beings wanted rice to eat in the evening or in the morning, they would go and get what was requisite; but it happened that one being who was of an indolent disposition took at one time enough rice for evening and morning. Now another being said to him, "Come, let us go for rice." Then he answered him, "Look after your own rice; I have taken enough at one time to last me morning and evening" (f. 161^a). Then the other thought, "Good, capital! I will take enough rice for two, three, seven days;" and he did accordingly.

Then it happened that some one said to this person, "Come, let us go for rice;" but he answered him, "Look after your own rice; I have taken enough at one time to last me two, three, seven days."

"Good, capital!" thought the other, "I will take enough rice for a fortnight, for a month;" and he did accordingly.

And because these beings took to laying up provisions of this spontaneously growing rice, it became coarse; a husk enveloped the grain, and when it had been cut down it grew not up again, but remained as it had been left.

Then these beings (f. 161^b) assembled together in sorrow, grief, and lamentation, and said, "Sirs, formerly we had ethereal bodies, free from every impurity, with faculties unimpaired, &c., &c. . . ."² Let us now draw lines of demarcation and establish boundaries between each one's

¹ *Khyim* is probably derived from *hyims-pa*, "to encircle," in accordance with this supposition, which derives the Sanskrit *griha*, "house," from *grah*, "to embrace, to contain." This leads us to suppose that the word *khyim*, like a very large class

of other words in Tibetan, was not used with this signification until after the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet.

² Here follows a recapitulation of all the preceding history.