Bhutan, 1987-1998, publications - Chris Butters

A book about Bhutan’s great saint, Pemalingpa and the «Terma» tradition of hidden spiritual treasures or revelations.

Published by Bibliotheca Himalayica, Kathmandu 1995.

Book chapter (with John Bray) about Jamgon Ngawang Gyaltsen.

Published by Aarhus University Press Denmark 1997

An Eighteenth Century Bhutanese Lama’s Journey to Ladakh

John Bray and Chris Butters
Bhutan, 1987-1998, Chris Butters

**LHASETSANGMA**

Bod rje rmges’ bsdag khris ral pe oen gu sku mdsho lha saas giang mi gu dang byangc bral rabs dang’ baens kyi mi rabs mchog khungs la rgyas gsal ba’i sgyor ma

Translation by: Khenpo Phuntsok Tashi and Chris Butters

Translators’ Note:
The following is a brief summary of the contents of this book compiled by Dasho Tenzin Dorje of Tashigang.

Chapter 1 (pages 1-4): legends relating to the origin of the Yarlung dynasty and events in the time of Langdarma, including the story of the few monks who kept alive the Dharma during the suppression of Buddhism in Tibet.

Chapter 2 (pages 7-10): the story of Langdarma’s brother, Lhasetsangma, his moving from Tibet to Bhutan and the various lines of the descendants in Bhutan.

Chapter 3 (pages 12-22): the Rumpung Dashi Dung families and their descendants.

Chapter 4 (pages 24-26): the families of eastern Bhutan descended from Lhagang Rinpoche Dorje and the clan of Dzal Nko Kempo.

Chapter 5 (pages 26-27): explanation of the classes and clans of Li-Mo. No other, including the descendants of King Zhihutepa in Bhutan, or some notes on sources.

Colophon (page 53):

This translation should be considered as rough only, in many cases, names and place names are recorded according to old spellings and are not to identify. Other parts are unclear. Some modern equivalents, and other notes by us, are given in brackets. This work deserves further research, especially since few such sources exist for Bhutanese history.

The work by Wagshue known as the Dzogchen Dzogpa Chenpo, of which Tenzin Dorje does not have any, from the current text, Dronma, and Tashi Tshering of LYPH, informs us that the Chinese have also recently published a version of the text. But in the original, the work is Unlike many places. There are many differences with MA, which has the copy from the author. MA’s work has important notes, but some parts of the copy he obtained were unclear or missing.

Major lexical and interpretation differences between the texts of TD and MA are noted, in footnotes.

No attempt has been made to correct minor spelling mistakes and orthographic discrepancies. Our translation, though rough only, may be useful as a short version of TD’s valuable work. The versions need to be compared, and also be supplemented by considerably more background research.

Thimphu, September 1992

**EXPLANATION OF THE NEW KHAMSUM YULEY NAMGYAL CHORTEN IN YERPA, PUNAKHA**

Khams gsum rgyal tas mam rgyal gyi mchod shing chen po’i dkar chag

 translation by Chris Butters and Khenpo Phuntsok Tashi

A large Khamsum Yuley Namgyal chorten is being established at Nyelzang in the Yerpa valley of Punakha district. In accordance with the gracious wish of Her Majesty the Queen Ashi Tshering Yangdon, this brief description of the chorten will be in three parts: firstly, its purpose and background; secondly, the way of construction; and thirdly, the benefits of the chorten.

1. THE PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

It is written in the text Phurpa Namshag Pategori Thugdron Sangag’s articles of Thrungthong Druk Rinpoche, Lord amongst the Siddhas and Treasure Revealers: “During the degenerate age, when the time comes to reveal spiritual activity for the people, no deity other than Pachen Dorje Zhenpu will be able to assure peace and prosperity, and the fruits of spiritual practice will be exceedingly difficult to attain by any other deity’s practice”.

And again: “So, in order that fortunate sons in the future may achieve mastery over the Three Realms (the realms of Desire, of Form and of the Formless), I, Rigzin Padma Woodbar, have revealed for the world this chorten with the name of Sangsum...”
The Short Kathang of Padmasambhava, Guru Rinpoche
Environment: West and East

1: Environmental Philosophy

The approach which is being developed in the West is a worldwide scale is probably the greatest threat humanity now faces. Above all it is the risk of global climate change, a process which, as we have seen, is already well underway and can only be slowed down, not stopped. The risk must be conceptualized, or we may be too late. In my view, the effort to conceptualize global climate change should be a central concern for all human beings, because the speed of environmental and climate change will create unimaginable both socially and politically for governments to manage such radical changes smoothly because the consequences will be too high. For example, the case of melting glaciers in Tibet and the possibility of losing the world's highest mountain, the Himalayas, is a clear indication of the problems we face.

The scientific community and the environmental movement have made significant progress in raising awareness about climate change. However, the pace of action is not fast enough, and we need urgent solutions. The importance of interdisciplinary approaches cannot be overstated, and the need for a holistic and systemic approach to environmental problems is evident.

The Buddhist view of environmental philosophy is rooted in the concept of interdependence (interconnectedness). The Buddhist approach, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of all phenomena, promotes a sense of responsibility towards the environment. The Buddhist practice of “Ten Storey Practice in Mind” is a clear example of this.

The West and East are facing similar challenges, but there are differences in approaches and solutions. The West, with its technological advancements, tends to focus on short-term solutions, while the East, with its traditional wisdom, emphasizes long-term sustainability and mindfulness.

Dharma

Kansai June 3, 1989

Bhutan, 1987-1998, Chris Butters
Bhutan, 1987-1998, Chris Butters

An example of Bhutanese / chokey musical annotation for voice (below), and of Tibetan umed script, right

From the sacred dance, Peling yang yig