CHAPTER II

Introduction of Buddhism into Tibet

Any concentrated study on the nature of Tibetan Buddhism requires a previous knowledge on Buddhism itself, i.e., on the nature of Buddhism that was imported by the Tibetans from its Homeland. Though Buddhism in Tibet was not seeded from India or by Indians, it came into Tibet by the patronage of Chinese and Nepalese princes.¹

Like other religions Buddhism also is not a dogmatic religion. It does not teach us that such and such things are and such and such things are not, rather, it can be compared with a rivulet which taking different forms and directions reaches us to the ocean i.e., in the state of Nirvana,² which is the end to all Buddhist irrespective of their special identity. Again there is a misconception specially among the European scholars that Tibetan Buddhism or Lamaism, as Waddell preferred to call it

1. See chapter III Royal patronage to Buddhism.
2. See F. N. No. of chapter I.
is a radical transformation of Indian Buddhism by Tibetans. Such misconception is surely due to the lack of first hand knowledge on the subject. In detail discussion we will find that Lamaism is nothing but the form of Buddhism that was prevalent in India at the time exactly when it was exported to Tibet by the famous Indian monks. Here we should bear it into mind that though Buddhism was seeded there in Tibet by the two pious wives of Sron-btsan, but it was nurtured and nourished by the famous Indian monks. The above does not again imply that a mere study of Indian Buddhism from the 7th century onwards is synonymous with a study of Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhism had its peculiarities and to realise it properly and a scientific explanation of those peculiarities will be easier if we study the Indian origin of Tibetan Buddhism in detail.

So let us concentrate ourselves in the study
of the development of Buddhism.

What actually Buddhism mean? Derivatively it comes from the Sanskrit work Buddha, which means awakening or enlightenment. The Indian prince attained at that stage and assumed the title Buddha. Buddha or Gautam or Siddhartha was a Hindu by birth. Being the son of Suddhadhan he was living a princely life from his very birth. But mere princely affluence could not satisfy him. A discontent grew within him from his very boyhood. When he was young the true nature of worldly pleasures appeared before him to be full of sorrows and sufferings in disguise. He also realised that these pains and sufferings are unavoidable. Three painful sights helped him to understand the true meaning of life, they were the sight of old age, disease and death. The sight of an ascetic gave him pleasure. He felt that a life free from worldly attachment can avoid the worldly pains and sufferings. So he left his home and became an -
ascetic in order to found out the true meaning of life. As an ascetic he sat under meditation.
At the age of thirty five he become Liberated, i.e. reached at the stage of Nirvana.

From then on wards he preached through his followers the truths, that he had learnt. So that mankind can understand the true meaning of life. In this way he lived upto 20 years and he attains the stage of Mahapari Nirvana.

3. Mahapari Nirvana - It is a Buddhist conception and is the last stage of Nirvana, which means the end of all suffering. But Mahaparinirvana differs from Nirvana on the ground of the bodily state of Nirvana. In simple Nirvana body remains but in Mahapari Nirvana the body also destroys. Buddha lead active life after his attainment of Nirvana. But after this attainment of Mahapari Nirvana his bodily existence perished.
Though Buddha died but his teaching survived. Today it represents the largest field of thought known to mankind. Buddhism became, with the active help of his supporters a system of doctrines and practices which were Buddha's teachings in order to reach a man to the state of consciousness known as enlightenment.

We do not know precisely what Buddha taught for nothing was written down, but his words were committed to memory by those trained to remember. So what is Buddhism is still then shrouded in mystery. Because of this a gulf of difference has already been raised between what Buddha actually said or realised and what is available to us in Buddhist scriptures. Work of writing down the teachings of Buddha started at least after four hundred years after his death. Today we get some main schools of Buddhism who proclaim their views as to what is Buddhism. But in spite of their proclamation of the nature
of Buddhism in their own way, fortunately enough, all of them try to keep the basic elements of Buddhism in tact i.e., the truth of suffering, the origin of suffering, of the effacement of suffering. They also recognised the doctrine of dependent origination.

4. Four Noble truths are respectively the following:

- There is suffering.
- There are causes of suffering.
- There is cessation of suffering and lastly there are ways to stop suffering.

5. The doctrine of Dependent Origin is the Buddhist theory of causality, which according to Buddha, works automatically without the help of any conscious guide. This doctrine states that whenever a particular event (the cause) appears, it is followed by another particular event (the effect) therefore the existence of everything is conditional dependent on a cause.
The present shape of Buddhism is no doubt a phase of long line of development. In different parts of the world it took different shape. Though the fundamental elements remained the same, i.e. freedom of mankind from the worldly sufferings. As Buddha himself was not aware that he was announcing a new religion, and as he was born, lived and died as a Hindu so in his thought also the spiritual condition prevalent at that time gave an important impact. In later times also other religions specially Hinduism also infiltrate within it, which made Buddhism itself to take different shape.

Buddhism actually started as a new and independent religion only when it got the Royal patronage. It is a common feature to almost all the existent religions. Untill they received royal patronage they

6. We learn from the life of Buddha the above truth.
did not have even a footing. Aoka is regarded as the first, great Royal patron of Buddhism. From the thirteenth rock-edicts we learn that in his invasion of Kalinga, modern Orissa, where a heavy loss of life made the great emperor to adopt a new life. From then instead of a military victory he preferred dharmavijaya. In this way he became a zealous follower of Buddha and took upon the task of making known to the people the teachings of

7. Aoka - is one of the Greatest kings of India. He was the grandson of Shandra Gupta. He defeated the Greek army and established Indian empire. He conquered many bottles with the help of his military might and courage. But later on he revolted against war and being influenced by the message of Buddha became an upasaka. After then as a head of the Buddhist Church he helped Buddhism to become a popular religion.
the lord and it was not only limited within his own territory but also to distant lands. In this way Buddhism got the real missionary character in the land of Asoka. He sent his son and daughter in some (Ceylon, Java, Sumatra) foreign countries to preach the new religion. The expansion of Buddhism due to its missionary nature resulted different sects. Detailed discussion on the formation of sects has been done in the 5th chapter of this work. Their origin were not always due to any doctrinal difference, rather the geographical factor played a vital role as its 

Lack of co-ordinating organisation within the sects raised different traditions, but some of them vanished within a very short time for the absence of any principle. But as days went on a process of crystallisation began within the survived sects which resulted in very few organised sects with
widely different and sometimes even opposed blows in many ways to its parent system. This historical development of Buddhism is eventoday under obscurity.

But what we have learn up to new is that during this time Buddhism spread throught the whole India and also in some parts of asia. And two main school arose, Hinayana and Mahayana. Mahayana Buddhism,.

9. Hinayana & Mahayana - Buddhism may be looked upon as path leading to Nirvana, which means the end of the constant succession of rebirths. Among the Buddhists there is a lot of controversy about the way that lead us to that end. Hence the existence of different yanas in Buddhism. The earlier Buddhist had advocated some ways which has been named Hinayana. While the latter Buddhist rejected that way and had found out another true great and profound way of Salvation called Mahayana.
quite contrary to primitive Buddhism extended salvation to the entire universe. It is called Mahayana for its large capacity as vehicle—(yana)—for easy, speedy and certain attainment of the state of a Bodhisat or potential Buddha.

The primitive Buddhist did not join this innovation, they took the name Hinayana—because to them nirvana state is restricted to selected few—the Mahayana doctrine seeing to have development one hundred years after Buddha's death, i.e., within the great congregation, and Asvaghosha, is credited with the authorship of a work entitled on raising faith in the Mahayana and the expounder of this doctrine is Nagaryana said to have the pupil of Asvaghosa. "This Mahayana doctrine was a sophistc Mahilism and

10. Asvaghosha— is well known as the author
under it the goal Nirvana, or rather pari-
Nirvana, while ceasing to be extinction of
life, was considered a mystical state which
admitted of no definition. By developing the su-
er Natural side of Buddhism and its objective
symbolism', by rendering solvation more accessible
and universal and by substituting good words
for the good deeds of the earlier Buddha
the Mahayana appealed more powerfully to the
Multitude and secured ready popularity.

10. (cont.) of Buddha charita. He was very
learned man and had composed many other
Buddhist literatures on metaphysics and
religion. He was a contemporary of kaniska.

11. See L. A. Waddell, The Buddhism of Tibet or
About the first century of our era Kanishka's council affirmed the superiority of the Mahayana system. And with the Royal support of Kanishka, this Mahayanaism spread throughout the greater part of India, and from there penetrated to China and Northern Asia. This Mahayanaism took the name of Madhyamika or the system of the Middle Way.

12. Kanishka was an Indo-Scythian king of Northern India and Afghanistan, who played the part of a second Asoka in the traditions of Buddhist schools of S. India Tibet, China and Mongolia.

13. Madhyamika school is the name of a system of Buddhist Philosophy, the system of the middle way. The founder of this school is Nagarjuna. According to this school Universe is regarded as Sunya or devoid of all reality. In true sense it denies the phenomenal world and by sunya they actually mean indescribable nature of things.
Middlepath because it was a compromise between the extreme views then held on the nature of Nirvana.

The development of Buddhism in later stages was influenced greatly by Hinduism. As a result of this Hinduistic impact we see the idealization of Buddha and his attributes lead to the creation of metaphysical Buddhas and celestial Buddhas, and to the introduction innumerable demons and deities and objects of worship. Buddha himself was against such practices. The actual worship of Buddha has own image seems to date from the period of the first century of our era. Historians are unanimous of the point that the development of this stage of Buddhism was facilitated by the Grecoart prevalent at that time in northern India.

The third stage of the development of
Buddhism actually stated about 800 A.D. In this stage we find the Buddhist importation of pantheistic cult of Yoga\(^4\) or the aesthetic union of the Individual with the Universal spirit. It was also a Hinduistic element introduced by Patanjali\(^5\).

14. Yoga. The word yoga has two meanings in India. (i) Contemplation raised to a formal art and, (ii) The system to be treated below which is entirely taken up with it, gives it a philosophical basis, and ranks as one of the six systems of Brahmanic philosophy. Contemplation exercises for the attainment of higher states of consciousness and faculties are very old in India and Yoga in this sense had a great influence at the foundation of Buddhism.

15. Patanjali - is regarded as a great Indian Saint who composed yogasulas, and as the founder of yoga system. Patanjali as a grammarian who composed Mahabhasya is considered to be one and the same.
about 150 B.C. This practice received the recog-
nition of Buddha himself and those who followed
this line were named Yoga Gaya Buddhists. 16

With the importation of Yoga practice in the Bu-
ddhism tantrik elements were also imported. In
a favourable situation it took its own shape.

In latter parts of sixteen century A.D.
Tantrism developed properly infiltrate both within
Hinduism 17 and Buddhism. In Buddhism it took the

16. Yogacara (cont.) person, but there is difference
of opinion on this issue.

16. Yogacara school - is a school of Buddhism acc-
ording to which mind has independent existence.
They agree with the Madhyamikas about the un-
reality of external objects, i.e., existence of -
every thing is mind dependent.

17. Hinduism - is the Title applied to that form
of religion which prevails among the vast majority
name Mantrayana or Vajrayana.\textsuperscript{18} Attainment of
Nirvana to them requires mere uttering of
the appropriate magic formula. The Vajrayanists

17. (contd.) of the present population of the Indian Empire Brahmanism, which is the term
generally used to designate the higher and
more philosophical of modern Hinduism, is more
properly restricted to that development of the
faith which under Brahman influence. Succeeded to
vedism or the animistic worship of the greater
powers of nature.

18. Mantrayana or Vajrayana - Is one of the form
of Tantrism. It is not mere sorcery. It is
considered as a yana, by some of the Bud-
hist, which reaches us to the state of Nirvana.
The word vajra has two meaning, according to
one it means vijnana or Intelligence. In another
sense it means the male organ. With these two
interpretation two fold development of vajrayana is
visible.
in this way became mere sorcerers, excepting very few whose esoteric teachings sought an esoteric with the absolute.

From the above discussion, we get a detailed picture of the historical development of Buddhism in India. And it (the above discussion) is essential to understand the total situation which the nomadic Tibetan people had to face. We have seen in the 1st chapter that the primitive religion of Tibet was a form of Shamanism, Anunnian. The primitive religion existing in the adjacent lands influenced the people of Tibet to adopt that form of natural religion. Similar was the condition in case of Lamaism i.e. Tibetan Buddhism. The existing religion of 6th Century

19. See F. N. No. of chapter I.
in the adjacent lands of Tibet i.e. in China, Nepal, Angalia come also in Tibet. Through a matrimonial link, the great warrior king of Tibet married two pious daughters of two prominent Buddhist kings and with them Buddhism also came into Tibet.

The above is the story of 6th Century A.D. But before at least two hundred years of this a supernatural event ensured the coming of Buddhism in the land of snow. In the reign of the 5th predecessor of the great Tibetan king, Sron-btsan saga-po, i.e. in the reign of Lha-tho-tho-ri 20 a chest containing Buddhist

20. Lha-tho-tho-ri - A prominent Tibetan king. He is often quoted in Tibetan History in connection with a dream which he visited. Actually during his regime
sacred books and a golden Chaitya fell from the sky on the roof of the Tibetan kings palace, the old king worshipped this heavenly gift and lived up to 120 years. He also learnt in a dream that his fifth successor would come to know the meaning of this sacred text. There is no historical basis of the above legendary story some opines it to be a subsequent adoption of an old Bon legend, "the Historical records of blue treasury states that actually a pandit, Lo-sem-tso and a translator Li-te-za, brought the books. But the kind being illiterate, could not understood their purport". This seems to be a pure truth. 21.

20. (cont...) some Buddhist scriptures came into Tibetan soil.

So we learn from the above story that during the time of Lha-To-To-ri the religion was first met with. Few religious books were brought to him, and there ends the whole effort because of the absence of knowledge to reveal the meaning of the texts. Keeping consistency with the dream of the king Lha-tho-tho-ri, the aron-otsan-agam-po, the fifth successor of the former felt the need of a cultural renaissance. He attained the throne when he was only thirteen. His father Gnam-ri-aron-btsan gave him a strong united kingdom. 22 Aron-btsan with the help of his might and courage expanded it within the Chinese ex-territory at the time of Sui dynasty. Because of his feared mill 22 Because before the reign of Gnam ji-aron-btsan Tibet was under the rule of some provincial rulers. It was the above-mentioned king who by his might gave the Tibetans an united kingdom.
military power the Chinese king made aron-btsan as his Son-in-law giving marriage with his daughter won-chang. At that time Buddhism was prevalent in China. Same thing happened in the fate of the Nepalese princes Vrikuti who also was the daughter of the Buddhist king of Nepal Anusvarman. He offered his daughter to Sran-Otsan as his wife. The princes did not come along with their great warrior husband. They also brought with them apart from their Buddhist heart same - Buddhist images viz., the images of Aksabhya Maitreya and Sakyamuni as gifts of their respective homes.

23. Aksabhya - One of the form of Celestial Buddha Maitriyi - or the loving one in Tibetan Byams-pa is usually represented adorned like
But all the above facts did not give us any real clue as to what made Aron-Btsan to invite Buddhism in his own soil. It is very difficult to believe that warrior kind like Aron-Btsan becoming a Buddhist from his wedding night—only some other reason is bound to be there and these are probably following.

28. (cont..) a prince and sitting on a chair teaching the law. He is at present believed to be in the Tushita Heaven.

His image is frequently rock carved or built in colossal form several storeys high in Tibet.

Sahya Muni — Is the Siddhartha, Gautama or the founder of Buddhism. He is so named because he was born in sakyā family.
Sron - btsan - sgam - po as a great warrior had a free movement in the neighbouring kingdoms who were no doubt culturally Buddhism more advanced than Tibet. He was an honoured just because of his might, but he was neglected because he was no more than a savage savage king. Sron - btsan was not only straight and strong he was also deep, so he rightly felt his shortcomings, i.e. a sense of inferiority grew within him and out of this he felt the urgent need of cultural advancement, and at that time all cultures were religion oriented so he adapted Buddhism.

24. The Tibetan meaning of the name of the king Sron - btsan - sgam - po is straight - strong. Deep.
which was ready just before him.

One more reason might be there which made the great warrior king a Buddhist and that is the same reason which made Chandasoka as Dharmasoka, the constanline of Buddhism, the bloody struggled that he conducted throughout.

25. Chandasoka & Dharmasoka - are the two different stages of the same Asoka Maurya. Before his faith Buddhism, i.e. while he was engaged in battles in which he killed his enemies mercilessly he was known as Chandasoka. But influence of Buddhism made him a different man. In accordance with the teachings of Buddha he devoted himself completely in the promotion and development of that Religion and became Dharmasoka.
this life disgusted him and to get real peace of mind he was attracted to Buddhism. But this opinion perhaps is not correct because we do not get any evidence in Tibetan History which can confirm the above opinion that sron-btsan was changed into Buddhist from his very nature, as we find in case of Asoka, sron-btsan actually used Buddhism as an instrument for the social upliftment of the Tibetan mass and to please his Buddhist wives. The noble living, which I have already mention, of his two Buddhist wife, and their indirect influence made him great patron of Buddhism.

However, all these above mentioned factor played their respective roles to let Buddhism to come and to get its proper place in Tibet. In this way Buddhism was introduced into the Tibetan soil and later on with the patronage
of various prominent Tibetan royalties and common people and also of the active help of some Indian teachers it got a firm footing in that land.

What sort of Royal patronage Buddhism received and how the great Indian teachers (Buddhist) preached Buddhism there are different stories and all these will be discussed in the following chapters of this book.

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