CHAPTER - IV

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OF “DAH” AND KHARBOO:

Renaissance and enlightenment associated with evolutionary explanations in natural and social phenomenon, resulted in revolutionary changes in modes of production, Communication, the triumph of reason and science over faith, superstition and dogma and emergence of a strong belief that the days of religion as a pivotal social institution are numbered; that it will gradually but surely be outmoded and replaced. By explaining many a myths about natural phenomenon, long held and strongly believed throughout most of the human history, the very foundations of many a religion were shaken. On the other hand a frontal attack was launched by Marxists in erstwhile Soviet Union, China and East European states, forcefully and brutally promoting withering of the institution. Surprisingly despite these efforts, religion as a tradition and constituent of culture has not only withstood the dormant and manifest processes of withering, but risen again and again with new explanations, notwithstanding serious disabilities and short comings. In one form or other it [religion] has a profound influence in shaping human lives and groups moulding attitudes by providing valued desired goals and giving a meaning to life of an individual and his outside world. Its significance is more evident in the social groups which are still at the threshold or takeoff stage of modernization.

The significance of religion in such societies becomes more important because i) In absence of other explanations, the religious explanations give meaning to one’s outside world, ii) by providing a series of rules defining correct and desired behavior a prerequisite for functioning of social and group life iii) by conformity measures, assuring strongly held religious belief that socially approved behaviors are supernaturally rewarded and deviance supernaturally punished, therefore, contributing towards the maintenance of social system vi) and the relationship it bears with other social institutions like family, marriage, economy, power, prestige and status. In these societies like
Dah and Kharboo there is hardly any categorizing of beliefs as religious, economic, political or social. Such categorizing of beliefs is a new custom\(^1\). In two sample villages of Dah and Kharboo, religion is embedded in almost every aspect of daily life.

Islam in Kharboo and Buddhism in Dah villages of Ladakh are living faiths defined as those faiths, which have withstood the test of time and must therefore correspond to some fundamental needs in man, social, psychological or both. These two traditions fall into two well organized categories which appear to have very little in common except the explanatory and regulating functions these provide for their adherents.

**Dah Case (SSA):**

In Buddhism, theoretically the absence of God or godhead is more than compensated by the evocation of unbounded love for mankind, *ahimsa* deep concern for life and human salvation. In popular practice Lord Buddha and a host of godheads, are glorified and deified as supreme, attributed with supernatural powers, and miracles, therefore propitiated and worshiped. In addition, the other essentials of religion, like faith in a supreme supernatural, holy literature, reverence payable to scripture, doctrine, myth, ritual, prayer, offerings, cosmology and pantheon are well developed. Concepts of sin and merit, hell and heaven, hope of afterlife and well organized institution of clergy (Lamaism) have been developed and incorporated in the Ladakhhi Buddhist system. Besides there is a highly developed, practised and enforced ethical and moral code to regulate human conduct of both monks and laity. Many a popular phrases of Buddhism such as reverence to Lord Buddha’s images and relics, almost reduced to idolatry, the frequent invocations of the name of Amitabha, hopes about Mertriya (future Budha) seem to conflict with original highly rationalistic character of Buddhism\(^2\). However, in every form of Buddhism the path leading to the attainment of salvation (*Nirvana*) lies always through contemplation of the four noble truths and the pursuit of eight fold path. If we examine the Tripitaka\(^3\) of three great schools and a host of small sects, we find that there is a central body of *sutras* (dialogues) similar in all

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\(^1\) See the list appended to the chapter for reference.
known versions including Ladakhi *Tripitaka (Kanjur)* therefore, *sutras* are considered as the primary source of Doctrine. The religion, the fountain head of value system of Dah village is viewed along a continuum which places Buddhism practised in Ladakh at one end and old Bonpa at the other. Dards of Dah although claiming to be Buddhists of red-hat sect are practically polytheists and animists with an assortment of gods and spirits outside the canopy of Buddhist Pantheon. Everyone of them is a well defined personality in matters of power, attribute and sex. The conversion of Dah Dards to Buddhism is a recent phenomenon (19th century) occurring as a very slow process. Instead of revitalization, the Dards of Dah opted for syncritization, insulating, blending and reformulating Bon cultural elements with tenets of Buddhism. The Buddhism of Dah is discussed under the subheads of i) Scripture and doctrine ii) Faith, iii) Ritual and vi) Moral and ethical codes.

**Scripture And Doctrine:**

Buddhist canon in vogue in Ladakh including sample village Dah is a Tibetan translation of Buddha's word (*Tripitaka*) with tantric additions. As Buddhism was introduced in Tibet in phases, the sacred books were also brought at different times by different personalities, therefore, there is a great variation in their interpretations. These teachings are a mixture of Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana or Tantrayana traditions. Buddhists in Tibet and Ladakh hardly separate these teachings. The Tibetan translations from Sanskrit were made in the ninth to eleventh centuries and represent the literature esteemed by the medieval Buddhism of Bangal. These translations have a long tradition from 7th to 12th century under great Indian teachers and Tibetan translators. The faithful accuracy of these translations shines forth wherever the Sanskrit originals are available for comparison and endows them with a great value and authenticity till today. A first collection of all the Tibetan translations was made in 13th century and deposited in Snarthang Monastery. The compilation and the codification is associated with Bu-Ston - the most voluminous Tibetan writers. (1290-1364). The scripture is known as Kan-gyur (Kanjur) and the translated commentaries as Tanjur. The former contains 108 volumes, the latter numbers no less than 225 volumes. The Kanjur is regarded by Tibetans and Ladakhis as the Tripitaka, containing like any other versions of Tripitaka, three
Dah Village inhabited on Indus River gorges. Small terraces type land holdings and lush green apricot, willow and poplar trees.

A typical isolated Farmhouse pattern of Dah and other Buddhist Dard villages, reinforcing individualism.
Investigator with Miskin Tswering, the Mokhdam of Dah in front of Rogna. Mokhdam has a passion for moving over to Manali.

Lush green buckwheat fields of Miskin Tswering
Investigator with some of the respondents. Respondent from SSAG29 group in western clothing, rest in their traditional dress.

Typical sharp Aryan featured Drokpa sisters at Beemasant, ploygenously married. Traditional dresses with Chinese jackets make a regular feature.
sections namely ‘Dulva’ (Vinaya in Pali) The Mdo (Sutta in Pali) and ‘chos-nono-Pa’ (Abhidharma in Pali). Besides it contains whole Mahayana literature and Tantra.

Unlike Kanjur, the second great collection ‘Tanjur’ or the translation of the text books contains philosophical and exegetical works of the great scholars of Buddhism dealing with aesthetics, science grammar, medicine, poetry, theories of creation, mathematics and the like. The Kanjur consists of 13 volumes of Dul-va (Vinaya) the compilation attributed to Upali, sixty six volumes of ‘Mdo’ (Sutta) compilation attributed to Ananda; and twenty one volumes of ‘chos-non-Pa’ (Abhidharma) attributed to mahakeshyppa. From Mdo section of Kanjur are culled out the Indian mystic formulas deemed most patent as charms, but not used in worship. These are incantations in the treatment of disease, death, birth, luck and misfortune. Small pocket editions are available in every house hold instead of the voluminous Kanjur or Tanjur. Only monasteries are entitled to house them. Besides there is a host of pocket editions of prayer books (mNom-lum) and hymns (tod-sogs) used by laity.

The most fascinating but controversial part of the Tibetan (Ladakhi) Buddhist scripture is ‘gterma’ designating ‘a text of religious content ascribed to Padmamsambhava (Guru lama) concealed by him in different regions during the first missionary period of Buddhism in Tibet, predestined to be rediscovered by some qualified person (gter-sto) literally meaning discover and the teacher of the gterma (the hidden treasure)’. gterma tradition makes Buddhist scripture a consistent and continuous revelation. Every other new sect discovering new gospels in caves and secret places alleged to have been concealed by Gurulama. About thirty of such new gospels have been discovered and incorporated in Tibetan version of the scripture. Almost all different sects are differentiated from one another on the basis of g-terma. The texts and scripture, therefore are rather a series of compilations and amplifications not produced by one author, but a series of authors over a period of centuries together.
Buddhist doctrine of Kanjur is based on the understanding of 'Four Noble Truths': i) Truth of misery (Dukha), ii) Truth: that misery or suffering originates within from a person's craving for pleasure, iii) Truth: that this misery can be eliminated and iv) Truth: that this elimination is the result of treading on a methodical Eightfold path that must be followed. Technically refuting existence of god, need of prayer and ritual, Buddhism propounds instead the power of Karma where a man's thoughts and deeds performed in the past determine new state of existence i.e., man, animal, demon or ghost which is neither the same nor entirely different from it. That actions are inevitably followed by their consequences as a cart follows a horse. The endless chain of Karmic causation perpetuates the cycle of rebirths accompanied by sufferings. Therefore, Liberation from this endless suffering demands an understanding of spiritual purification that leads to complete extinction of desire and hence to the end of Karmic rebirths. This state of salvation (Nirvana) is obtainable through understanding, love, self discipline and meditation. Buddhist doctrine in all its versions including Tibetan refutes self indulgence and self mortification. For Buddha self indulgence is low, vulgar, ignoble while as self mortification is painful and harmful. The former retards one's spiritual progress, the latter weakens one's intellect. Avoiding both extremes, the doctrine asks his followers to take a middle path (majjumapatipaddha) which bestows understanding and leads to higher wisdom to enlightenment. This middle way is a philosophy of life, a way of self conquest leading to the ultimate salvation and is eightfold.

1. Right thought
2. Right understanding
3. Right speech
4. Right Action
5. Right livelihood
6. Right effort
7. Right mindfulness
8. Right concentration

Faith dimension:
The first division of eightfold path i.e. Right understanding and Right thought, belief, view or faith constitutes gospel of Buddha. This belief consists in the faith of the world and the man as they really are. Although Buddhism in essence denounces blind faith and proclaims "Don't accept anything because
of report, tradition, here say, the handing on in sacred texts, or as a result of logic or inference or as paying respect to a teacher. The tradition, however demands a faith in Trisarna or three refuges. The Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha. This refuge aspect has developed in to an incantation ritual prayer called skyabsagro in Ladakhi which goes as:

We living beings take refuge in the doctrine, in the Buddha through the intercession of Lamas, in Sangha, these three precious ones. We further take refuge in the host of gods (Lha) and their following of protective deities, demons and defenders of faith who live in the heavens.

Protective deities and defenders of faith encompass whole Mahayana vajriyana Pantheon. The Pantheon is anthropomorphic and implies a divine hierarchy. In this hierarchy the term supreme is applied to Lord Buddha. Padmasambhava (Gurulama) stands only next to Lord Buddha. Dalialama as an incarnation (Hu-Tuk-Too) popularly known as hiro-fo (Living Buddha). Then faith demands firm belief in a whole host of gods and goddesses, bodhisattvas, sect founders, spirits and ghosts reincarnated in a dizzying collection of Bodhisattvas. Belief in Karmic causation, life beyond, rebirths, hell and heaven, transmigration, Meitriya of Tushita, parinirvana and nirvana and above all belief in lama are essential elements of faith dimension of Dah Dards. Faith in lama is rooted in the common man’s realization that even the most worthy of man can not achieve his own salvation, resulting in a belief in divine helper. Lama solemnize births, initiations, marriages, deaths and other essential occurrences. Lamas in literal sense are La-Mo (insiders of faith) and lay Buddhist nan-Po (with in fold).

Shadowing this lamaist version of belief system is a belief system of BonPa, characterized by shamanism, animism, devil charming necromantic cult with a cosmic order expressed in the hymns of trinial Bon-na-na festival, entirely different than that of Buddhism. Although most of the Bon deities, spirits and demons found a place in enormously enlarged, syncretic lamaist pantheon. Unfortunately Dard Bon gods and goddesses found no place in such an enlarged schema. However, in their belief system, Lha, sapadak, Doglus,
Lha-na-harn (war god) phaspoon lhas and goddess of power and beauty 'Shiring' find the second highest place with Budha, Sangha and Dharma. On many occasions they over shadow Buddhist gods and spirits.

Ritual dimension:

Rituals, whether periodic or non periodic represent the major link between social and supernatural; are expected to be effective, reflecting the qualities attributed to the supernatural. Whatever ritual practices a man as an individual or as a member of a group performs, the deity, the god and spirits are supposed to listen and like them. Prayer and worship practices are the most important element of ritual dimension. In Dah case ritualism has become a second nature marked by elaborate ritual practices demanding expertise of specialists like lama and onpo, rotation of prayer mill of the gompa or personal prayer mill (choskhor) an indigenous device for multiplying a man's prayers. As a devotee walks into the gompa or comes across a (choskhor) on road side, he sets them in rotation by the gentle motion of hand.

Raising of chortens and mani walls is second most essential ritual practice in Buddhist Dards of Dah. Chortans are the white washed pagoda erections, graves of remains of good ones (Lamayin) Their ashes being mixed with clay, baked into big biscuits and stamped with the images of Buddha. Mani walls are massive stone walls plastered and inscribed with well known mantra "Om, mani, Padme Hum" and Om, vajra pani. Hum. repeated thousands of times. Who ever passes these massive stone structures, must pass on the left hand side. By doing so a devotee gains merit.

Prayer is the major form of verbal communication with supernatural attended by ritual gestures. The most significant verbal prayer of Dah Dards is the incantation of Om, mani, padme, hum, literally translated 'the jewel In the lotus'. The formula is the magical phrase of Avilokita, the ruler of the western paradise. The prayer is nonperiodic and is so patterned through repetition that it has become a second nature of Buddhist character of Ladakh. The prayer secures the help of this powerful demi god deity for all possible earthly requirements, and assists one to enter the paradise. These are the first six
syllables the child is taught to utter and the last words gasped by the dying. Rosaries with 108 beads are employed for counting and recording prayers.

Rituals associated with initiation, births, marriages and deaths demand specialization, hence regulated by lamas. Recitation of scripture is also done by lamas and monks, laymen neither have knowledge nor the nerve to know the intricacies of scripture. Its sheer volume discourages any effort on part of a layman. The recitations are a periodic ritual having a communal impact, serving to mark agricultural cycles, starting and ending of harvests, the marking of the founding of the sect or group etc.

After every fourth month a ritual called Rim-a-gro is organized in households or in village monastery where whole scripture is recited by lamas in a continuous sing song tune. Three categories for such recitation are in vogue in Dah Dards, depending upon the economic strength of the household or the village. The categories are i) Ara-bs; the first class rim-a-gro when all the scripture is recited, ii) Ab-rim; second class Rin-a-gro when half or twelve volumes are recited and iii) Adus-Orm-ta, third class Rin-a-gro when only small portion or a few extracts of scripture is recited. Reciting for lamas and listening for Buddhist is a source of gaining merit besides refreshing faith.

In the ascending first half of each month there is a household ritual held in Lha Khong (a room on ground floor specifically spared). At least three monks are invited to recite some portions of scripture to appease gods, demons and spirits. Listening such recitation is a source of gaining merit. The most holy portion in Dah Dard household is a small room adjacent to the kitchen called ‘Chotkhong’ where early in the morning and in the evening local gods of Lha, sapdak, shiring and doglus are regularly propitiated along with Buddha, Padma Sambhava and other Buddhist godheads.

Pilgrimage to holy places are a part of Dah ritual where pilgrims are supposed to circumambulate round the sacred place. Each circumambulation is assigned a fixed number of merit. The title of gnas-abor-pa is bestowed on the pilgrim who has made pilgrimage to sacred places in India.
Sacrifice and offerings are a regular feature of ritual dimension, occurring in the form of exchange of goods and services. These are periodic and non-periodic as well. However offerings and sacrifices are not to be confused or used interchangeably. The former usually denotes food items incense, candles, flowers and the like and the latter denotes slaughter of animals. As Buddhism holds all forms of life inviolate, therefore, the other ethnic groups in Ladakh or Tibetan plateau have been sacrificing substitutes of living animals made of dough, but Dards of Dah offer real sheep and goat in order to express; i) Gratitude, ii) Token of thanks giving, iii) Mark special occasions like laundron, child birth and marriage, iv) To pay homage to founding father of the community Gyal Singh and v) to expiate wrongs and to establish good relations with these deities. The laxity with regard to Buddhist precept of “Not to kill”, often results in the ridicule of their own gods by other ethnic groups of Ladakh. Offerings constitute corn, grapes, apricots fruits, incense, flowers, candles and Khataks (ceremonial scarf). Offerings too are periodic and nonperiodic. Among important periodic offerings are morning offerings na-mood and evening offerings pi-mood. Ritual performances associated with ancestor cults are a feature of Dah Dards wherein rituals tend to promote interaction between the living and the dead. Dead cult heroes like Gyal Singhe in Dah demand special rituals. The dead in the community are regarded as active members of the group: living are after all the reincarnated dead.

Moral and Ethical Codes:

Moral and ethical codes are essential part of consequential Dimension of the religion. Consequential dimension of a religion is defined as what people do or are expected to do as a consequence of their religious scripture doctrine and belief in everyday life activities. Based on ethical commandments laid down in scripture to regulate human conduct, the Buddhist version purports a two-tier organization: Sangha and laity, monks and laymen. Sangha, although technically is taken to denote the assembly of enlightened disciples known as monks and nuns (Bhiku and Bhikunis) However in its broader sense the Sangha (community) encompasses whole body of Buddhist faithful. The typical relationship of monks and laity makes it imperative to include in
Sangha, the whole body of faithful. Laymen are termed as *upasaka* and lay women as *upasika*. Lamas belong to a section of society where they are relieved off from day to day needs, and the laity in pursuit of obvious and easy method of acquiring merit, are duty bound to provide them with food, clothing and everything which they might lawfully possess. Ironically a Lama or a monk does not beg for food, nor thank for what he receives. On the other hand he gives a layman a chance of doing good and acquiring merit. The donor, not the recipient should be thankful and they are\textsuperscript{18}. Through long history of Buddhism, governed by the separate sets of precepts, monks and the laity have lived in a symbiotic relationship. The laity providing material support while monks and lamas provide locus for the laity to accumulate merit. In the Maha and Kalla-Vagga suttas of Vinaya Pitaka, there are a large collections of regulations ascribed to be issued by lord Buddha for the guidance of the order. In addition, there is a continuous occurrence of suttas in Digha Nikaya and other sections of Tripitaka. In Kanjur (Ladakhi Tripitaka) there are 253 rules to be strictly observed (Chos-non-Pa, vol. 5, 6, 7, 8, : 30\textsuperscript{th} Leaf) (Mdo vol. 20, Book 3\textsuperscript{rd} Leaf 39-46) (Mdo : vol. 22 Book 20\textsuperscript{th} leaf 85-92). The right conduct of laymen is especially described in several famous suttas like Sagolavadda. Sutta Nipata (Pali). In many sermons of Buddha, the taking of precepts is considered as a pre-requisite for treading on eight fold path, not for ethical reasons but for its bearing on mind development and attainment of higher cognition. Right thought, right understanding and fourth step right action demands a peculiar mode of behavior moulded by regulations and precepts\textsuperscript{19}. Secondly the taking of precepts is considered as better than perpetual alms giving, better than the gift of dwelling places or better than accepting guidance (Samana-pah-ala-Sutta 25, 26, 27) \textsuperscript{20}.

Having taken the Vow of three refuges, the Buddhist takes upon himself to observe five precepts (*Panca-Sila*). But in many cases they are extended to eight or even ten precepts.

First Precept commands its adherents to abstain from taking of life virtually meaning abstinence from destroying, caused to be destroyed or sanctioning the killing of living beings; recognizing the man's relationship
with all living beings. The Karmic result of the killing different living beings vary, according to the mental development and status of the killed. The Chief reason to practice Dharma is to escape from suffering then why should one inflict it upon others. The injection of not to kill in Buddhism is different from the injection of Jews, Christians, or Muslims. They have allowed so many exceptions that the injection has become almost non existent. The significance of this Buddhist precept lies in its entirety. It applies not only to humans but all living being and is akin to ahimsa with its counterpart – kindness to all (Digha Nikaya, Brama Galla Sutta, 8, Surangama Sutta, Mdo; vol 30, Sutta 19).

Second Precept commands to abstain from taking what does not belong or that one not given. For laity the precept means leading an honest life according to right livelihood. Any sort of thieving even at the risk of one’s life is denounced. There are two modes of thieving i) Appropriating to anything to another person without his consent, ii) Comprising fraudulent deeds and cheating. Such acts are done by speech also. No matter how much a man may be able to practise (dhyana) right understanding, unless he refrains from stealing, he will fall into the realm of heretics. Stealing while practising dogma is like trying to fill a leaking pot with water. The Karmic results of such acts comes as a rebirth in human body for the payment of debts of previous lives, (Dig Nikaya Brahmagalla Sutta; No 8. Surangama Sutta, Mdo Vol 30 Sutt 19 leaf 84-105).

Third Precept commands to abstain from unlawful sexual intercourse. The precept forbids to have unlawful sex with such persons who are still under the protection of father, mother, sister or relative: nor with married woman, nor female convicts, nor even with flower decked (engaged) girls (Dul-va; Vol 10 Sutt 176) The most important of the allurements are the temptations to yield to sexual desire and indulgence followed by suffering. Unless a man frees from this bondage, unless the sexual lusts are wholly annihilated. The karmic result is rebirth in lower realm of existence inhabited by evil ones (Mara) demons and female fiends. For the lamas and monks chastity means complete abstinence, for the laity it means being faithful to one’s own spouse (Mdo: Vol. 30, sutta : 19-dul-va: vol 14, sutta 3-9 leaf 34-74)
Fourth Precept covers the acts of telling lies: covering of the truth in such a manner as to convince another person that untruth is truth and the use of exaggerated language. In short, everything that is in any sense a departure from a reliable sober statement of fact is a lie. The precept not only forbids from speaking untruth, lying and deceitful speech but also applies to the intentions to deceive. In Bramagalla sutta Buddha includes slander, rudeness and frivolous talk in the precept. Tibetan masters insist that one should use discretion in applying this precept. The precept should benefit other beings and should not become the cause of suffering for themselves. The Karmic punishment results in the sinking into the sea of suffering and a long postponement of salvation. The liar loses not only his own seed of Buddha hood, but destroys the seeds in others as well. A liar is like a man moulding human dung instead of carving sweet smelling sandalwood. They are poverty stricken people pretending to be kings or wealthy merchants.

Fifth precept commands abstinence from intoxicating drinks, causing foolishness, induces to commit evil, gives distorted pictures of the reality and loosening of self-control. The intoxicating drinks include alcohol, hooch, hashish and uncontrollable excitement leading to delirium. Addiction leads to habitual behavior whereby the addict attempts either to produce exhilaration or a pacification, bypassing the correct understanding. The pursuit of right understanding by means of attention, self-control, observation and reflection demands clearness of mind. Anything that produces morbid excitement to senses or mind is to be avoided.

Eight Precepts (Athanga Sila) also known as upasatha Sila as they are usually observed on uposatha. Besides aforementioned five precept there are three additional precepts: i) To abstain from, taking untimely meals, ii) To abstain from enjoying vulgar shows and instrumental music and iii) To abstain from the use of high seats and luxurious beds. The observation of these additional precepts, besides five constitute a form of temporary renunciation. Therefore, it is meritorious. Pious layman observe them on the occasions of
upasatha and often make a vow to observe them for a specific period (Dul-Va vol. 10, 11 leaf 11, 64-66, Dig Nikaya: Bramgala Sutta 10, 12, 13, 14)

Ten Precepts, *(Dasa Sila)* In addition to eight precepts laid for both monk and laity, common budhist can take them for a specific period or life long. In Dasa Sila the seventh precept of Athonga Sila is divided into two regulations. The first forbids dancing, watching Vulgar shows, music and singing , and the second forbids from the use of garlands, perfumes and personal adornments. The ninth precept is again forbidding high seats and luxury beds. The 10\textsuperscript{th} commands not to accept gold and silver as gifts or alms. (Dul-va vol 10, 11 leaf 11, 64-66, Mdo : vol 16 sutt 3 leaf 127-132)

Besides these ten fundamental precepts, there are innumerable codes governing the conduct of monks and nuns and a comprehensive system regulating secular activities from cradle to cremation. The breach and non conformity results in an unease and a fear psychosis with regard to rebirths, long periods of suffering in the lower realm of existence and a delayed salvation. In Dah Dards there is another set of normative system embedded in ancient Bon Pa, although outwardly defeated by Buddhism, never the less filling all the spiritual and secular channels of the community life. There are innumerable precepts regulating daily life cycle in taboo form. Two of them are very strong and exhibit i) Bon precept to abstain from Bath and washing and ii) Bon Precept to abstain from cow’s milk and its by products. Both precepts in the form of taboo are strongly held and enforced. fraught with mystic damages. The breach is supposed to cause skin diseases, misfortune, lost of wealth, painful protracted child births, polluting hearth god and defecating crop spirits.

**Kharboo Case (SSB):**

After Muslim invasion of Ladakh in 14\textsuperscript{th} Century, Dards who were settled in small hamlets in Drass valley surrounding Drass River embraced Islam\textsuperscript{25}. Kharboo Dards along with other Dard brethren passed through total revitalization. Consequently they cut themselves off from the traditional primitive Bon and Buddhist cultural practices; abrogated all norms and values
associated with it. A brand new order of things replaced the old structure altogether Islam established itself as a dominant religion partly because it had a single founder, partly because it had a firm foundation – doctrine and document the Quran and partly having a political aspect. The religion in practice in sample village (B) Kharboo is of prophetic tradition. Characterized by the worship of Lord God (Allah) as Omnipotent, Omniscient lord of the Universe connoting all attributes of perfection and beauty; beyond any conception of anthropomorphism; the only creator taken as an objective reality; dealing with his creation here and now; telling them what to do and what not to do. Allah legislates for man through his revelations by the chosen prophets. Through revelations. He makes His will known to His creation and that His sovereignty is absolute. Therefore, submission to His will in toto is the cardinal ideal of Islam as a tradition. Islam, at least theoretically claims whole of man-the individual and the society. The division of life into sacred and profane, spiritual and mundane is rather unachievable in the Islamic system. Faith in Islam is not a mere intellectual assent to proscribed dogma, but a state of total commitment to the realization of the Gods’ will on earth. In this complete surrender nothing is profane. By virtue of conversion Kharboo Dards adopted new scripture, doctrine, ritual and new ethical and moral codes to organize their affairs.

Scripture And Doctrine:

The chief ultimate primary source of the doctrine is the Quran. The faithful look upon the document as true scripture, canonical, treated as revealed by the God through the Arch-Angel Gabriel to the prophet Mohammed (P.B.U.H). The Universal authority of the written Quran dates from its publication by the third Caliph (Uthman, who received it from Hafsah). He ordered four secretaries to write as many copies of the manuscript as there were big towns in the then Islamic state. From that time Uthman edition has been the only one in use in the Islamic world till date. Quran consists of 114 chapters (Surah) of unequal length, divided into verses (Ayat) totaling 6360 in number. Considered by the faithful as the greatest miracle, was revealed over a period of twenty three years, reflecting the evolution of Islam in Mohammed’s (SAW) life time. The faithful never failed to record the message as they were
immediately (after revelation) written down by the scribes, learned by heart, and repeated in every prayer. In its oral tradition it is called Quran i.e. recited and in its written form it is called Al-Kitab or scripture.

Quran's chief message is the formulation of a community of mankind into one brotherhood called "Ummah" under one omnipotent God; furnishing detailed guidance with regard to divine attributes; commanding the faithful to equip themselves with His knowledge and regulate their lives accordingly so as to make themselves the manifestation of the divine attributes to the fullest extent of their capacities. 'Divine creator brings into being all Universe, and then created a being, who should exercise domain over and bring into his service, and use all that is in the earth and heavens in accordance with divine attributes' (Su : 11, Ayt 29).

Islam unlike Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism does not see man born in sin and in need of salvation. Instead man in Islamic tradition is active in his relationship with God. Far from escaping this world, he is expected to transform and refashion it by building a community in accordance with the revelation of God. To build such a community is the main theme of Islamic doctrine.

Faith (Aqidah):

The unity in Islam is shown in the acceptance of six articles of faith i.e., belief in one omnipotent God, Angels, Prophets, revealed scriptures, the day of the judgement and the destiny of man for good and for evil. The first, third and fifth articles - are the principle articles. The second (Angels as servants, messengers and worshipers of God) is a corrective and the fourth (belief in scriptures) is supplement to the third one. The triad of God – Prophet and the day of judgment constitute the most essential belief system of Islam. The more elaborate statements of faith are the product of polemical environment of the period within half a century of Mohammed's (SAW) death.
Open air primary school with their teacher Dolma. The open yard of the school is the venue of famous Bonana festival.

Londrop, the first and the only graduate of Dah Dok posing before ritual Chaskhor (Prayer mill). Londrop has occasional visits to the village.
Village Gompa at Rigous, the Centre of religious activities.

Young Lama with investigator and Anchuk (extreme left), Wildlife Ranger. Lama is young and alien to the village, has complaints about the typical Drokpa language & Laxity in sexual behaviour of villagers.
Investigator interviewing the Buddhist Dard woman, who makes no secret of her being polyandrously married to three brothers at Dah Dok.

Obsessed with flowers, a widow at Lasting with traditional wool weaving instrument. She proudly admits that Lha and Sapidak are more powerful than Buddha and Guru Lama.
The foremost in faith dimension is a declaration of bearing witness to the truth that "There is no God but God and that Mohammed (P.B.U.H) is His Messenger. This first confession of faith (Shahadah) is proceeded by the second phase which implies and recognizes a sequence of prophets since the creation of the world, including Adam, Noah, Ibrahim, Moses And Jesus, but Mohammed (SAW) is the seal of the prophets and the bearer of the last and final message. This belief in prophets implies belief in scriptures like the Zaboor (The Psalms) the Taurat (Torah) the Ingeel (Bible) and above all the Quran. The second central point on which all revealed religions are agreed is that of prophet hood. As God reveals His will through prophet, who in turn communicate and interpret, it to the people. The reception of (revelation) communication to and interpretation is circumscribed by the status, personality and character of the prophet as the prophet is the ideal that a religion presents to its adherents to look upon to and imitate. However the faith and belief in prophet is not a belief in super natural, for they are men with the same human nature that any other men have, differing only in that they have been selected by Allah to receive and teach (doctrine). Such a selection preserves them from error in all that they proclaim of his divine message (Sur XX Ayt 17-18, Sur XL Ayt. 13, Sur XVIII Ayt 110). The function of the prophet in Islam and other prophetic traditions is limited to guiding and educating the people through revelation. Therefore, they are worthy of highest respect and honor but prophet is in no way responsible for unbeliever, nor have they power to confer any benefit, or any punishment on themselves or any fellow being (Sur XVII Ayt. 54, Sur VI Ayt. 66, Sur VII Ayt. 188)

Likewise Angels are considered as the ambassadors of the revelation. They are mentioned in the Quran as individuals as well as a group. Sur 53 Ayt. 1) They may intercede with the God but only with his permission (Sur 53 Ayt 25) Individual Angels have specific functions assigned by the God like carrying messages, guarding hell and heavens, death Angel, some recording human actions, some interviewing dead about faith. There is also an Angel who will blow the trumpet to awaken all the dead and living on the day of judgment and so on. However Angels are creations of Lord God like prophets and other creation. They are neither gods no small or subgods nor even
auxiliary gods. Although the very nature, composition and functions of the Angels are supernatural, but they are neither to be appeased, and propitiated nor worshiped. The concept and the names like Jibrael, Mikael, Israfil, Izrail and the like are related to larger semitic tradition and words (malaik) appears to be a loan from Hebrew or Aramaic. Associated with concept of Angels is the belief in jinn, another kind of supernatural creation. Some jinn are virtuous, others are wicked. Although supernatural, the jinn share with humans the responsibility of hearing and believing Islamic teachings. On the day of the judgment both men and jinn will be called and be responsible in the same degree, therefore, subjected to the same treatment (Sur 5 Ayt. 129) but angels do no share such responsibility.

The belief in the Day of judgment and 'afterlife' is two related concepts in Islamic eschatology. Death is not considered as a man's final condition but only a temporary phase. The soul being immortal, every individual will be held to account by God for what he has done and left undone during life time. Belief in the day of judgment connotes about the same picture presented in the Torah or Bible (Sur 99 Ayt. 82) Associated concept is the belief in afterlife with inevitable resurrection and eternal division of righteous and wicked into heaven and hell. Heaven is described in Quran in beautiful language while as hell in horrifying language Sur 3 Ayt. 190-199, Sur 22 Ayt. 19-20, Sur 36 Ayt 47-57). The concepts of day of the judgment are replete with concepts of "Dajjal" the deceiver often equated with 'anti Christ' and the 'Mahdi' the rightly guided one with messianic significance in an age of injustice, proceeding the end of the world.

Ritual:

Acceptance of aforementioned doctrine further demands performance of action governed by five precepts commonly known as pillars of faith (Rukun). They are i) Kalima or article of faith, compulsory for all Muslims ii) Five specific prayers, iii) Fasting in the holy month of Ramdan; compulsory for all persons above the age of twelve years, iv) Zakat, the obligatory tax, payable only by well to do and v) Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca and other holy places is
obligatory for the persons financially capable of the journey with certain concessions for the sick, infirm and disabled.

Immediately after the birth of the baby it is recommended that someone should whisper the call to prayer (Adan) in his ear. After two weeks it is suggested to sacrifice a sheep or goat and distribute it among the poor and needy. Within seven days the baby is given a name. Boys are proscribed to be circumcised for the sake of purification. By the age of nine parents are urged to teach the children the articles of faith, how to offer prayers including proper ablution to be done before prayers.

Prayer (Salat) was prescribed on the night of ‘Isra’ (ascension) (Sur : 17) when Mohammed (SAW) was taken by Gabreal to the highest heaven. Prayer has to be offered five times a day at appointed times. By this repeated act Muslims publically demonstrate his membership in Muslim community. The ritual becomes a distinctive Muslim practice. The ritual consists of a series of simple seven bodily actions. Ritual purification through ablution (Wadu) or (Tyamum) is a pre-requisite for offering prayers.

Prayers are often said in congregations in a mosque and can be said at home, office, or anywhere so long as the place in clean. Collective prayers are led by a prayer leader (Imam) unlike Christianity and Buddhism there is no established clergy. Very few basic requirements are needed for leading a prayer. Friday and Idd prayers are big collective congregations with special sermons. Idd and Funeral Prayers are offered without a prayer call (Adan). The scripture says, ‘Surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest (force) and Allah knows what you do (Sur : 29 Ayt 45)

Alms (Zakat):

The giving of Zakat, a compulsory contribution for the welfare of the poor, is repeatedly confirmed in scripture (Sur 57 Ayt 11-13, Sur : 73 Ayt 20, sur : 2 Ayt 177, Sur : 8 Ayt 3, 22, 41, Sur :98 “Ayt. 5) along with the
observance of prayer. Zakat is an obligatory offering, assessed as a tax on the possessions of the believer. In principle, however, it is a loan paid to God, made over to local political or social authority for the relief of the poor and needy or for other religious objectives. In most Islamic societies including Kharboo Dard community it has been left to individual conscience and has turned into personal obligation.

Fast (Soum). Kharboo Muslims like all other Muslims all over the world believe and practice fast as an obligatory injunction. The Muslim fast means complete abstention from food, drinks and sexual intercourse; and refraining as much as possible from profane deeds, speak or even thought between dawn to sunset in the holy month of Ramdan. The Muslim fast has an exalted aim that you may be guarded against evil (Sur : 2 Ayt. 183). Ramdan falls as a ninth month of Muslim lunar calendar year. Those, who being sick or on journey at this appointed time are exempted to make compensation by fasting on equal number of days.

Pilgrimage (Hajj). This is the last obligation or pillar. The scripture ordains an annual world congregational pilgrimage to Mecca in the month of Zul-Hijja, the last month of Islamic calendar year. Performance is incumbent on every Muslim, once in a life time provided the individual can financially afford it. The Muslim pilgrimage is unique and consists of a series of ritual proceedings and proscribed rites. The rituals include dressing in a special two unstitched pieces of white cloth, (Ahram) ritual running between Safah and Marwa, two small eminencies outside Kabah, ritual assembling in the desert plain called Arafat; ritual stoning of pillars representing devils, and circumbulation of Kabah for seven times. The pilgrimage also includes ritual kissing of black stone placed at Kabah (Hajra-Aswad) and above all the feast of sacrifice, slaughter of sheep, goat, oxen and camel. Although visiting of the prophet’s (SAW) mosque at Madina and his tomb in not included in the pilgrimage. However this subsidiary is considered a matter of virtue and is frequently combined with Hajj. The pilgrimage is taken as a must by the believers, seeking the intercession of the prophet on the day of the judgment. There is a lesser pilgrimage called umrah performed at Mecca at anytime of the
year except on the Hajj days. Like any other pilgrimage Hajj and Umrah has the sole aim to please Lord God and refresh faith.

**Moral and Ethical Code:**

The fundamentals of consequential Dimension of a religion, are moral and ethical codes, originating from doctrinal and ritual dimensions, incorporated for controlling human behavior. Unlike Buddhism, in Islam there is no separate code for one group or individual and other for priest hood. Scripture furnishes detailed guidance and a Muslim is expected to equip himself with this knowledge and conduct his day to day affairs accordingly. Islamic life has traditionally been controlled by the law or ‘Sharia’, which shapes moral life of an individual and society as well. The five pillars (rukun) as ordained come under the purview of both ritual and ethical canopy of religion because both are proscribed and therefore, demand a particular type of action from the believer. Islam is both belief and legislation which organizes all relationships of man as an individual as well as a member of community. The belief is the foundation of the code of law and the law, the result of belief. The one constitution, the other governing articles and sections. Islamic codes of conduct are codified in four schools of law and all schools adhere to the principle that the Quranic commands and prohibitions are absolute and can not be questioned without incurring the guilt of sin, so are the definite and impeachable commands and prohibitions in the traditions of the Prophet. Each school however has its own systematic law books and applies only its own ruling for the classification of acts; lay down their own versions of codes of conduct and thereby define the moral qualities of a particular action.

A right action (a desired action) is that which confirms the word of Allah. Consequences of an action are taken into consideration not only when an individual has to divide between a right and wrong action, but also when one has to choose the lesser of the two evils or better of the two rights. The principles of nature of action and consequence of the action provide guide line to categorize human action into i) Mubbah (Permissible), ii) Mustahab (Commendable), iii) Fard (Obligatory), iv) Makrooh (Undesirable) and v) Haram (Forbidden). As has been already stated rituals of Islam are
simultaneously rituals and obligations. Ethical codes therefore encompass whole human actions without demarcating between sacred and profane; fusing politics, economy, private and social life into a single whole. The believer is guided in every sphere under the canopy of aforementioned categories of action weighted against scripture and tradition. A few prescriptions regarding sex, marriage, foods and drinks, clothing and adornments, livelihood, abortion, interest, cleanliness and personal hygiene are briefly discussed.

**Sex and Marriage:**

Quran takes good care of the sexual instinct, urging Muslims to marriage and compose families (Sur 24; Ayt 33) strictly for bidding free sex, Islam rejects celibacy and monasticism. Meanwhile the codes try to regulate the satisfaction of this urge by taking an intermediate positive position by facilitating its satisfaction through lawful marriage. Lawful sex is for procreation as well as a means of solace and satisfaction. (Sur 30: Ayt 21). Islam strictly prohibits adultery, fornication and homosexuality like other Semitic tradition. For it leads to confusion of lineage, child abuse, breaking of families and general laxity in morals (Sur: 17. Ayt. 32).

Marriage in Islamic law is formalized as a contract through a Wali (guardian/father of the daughter) with a Muhar (an amount payable to the bride) and an obligatory consent of both husband and wife. Scripture, tradition the sharia deduced from these sources provided a detailed list of woman to whom marriage is permitted or prohibited for example Muslims are forbidden to marry a mushrik (idol worshiper) Sur 2: Ayt 221) and are allowed to marry a Jewish and Christian women (Ahli-Kitab) people of the book (Sur : 5. Ayt 6). But muslim women are forbidden to marry a nonmuslim regardless of whether he be of the people of the book or not (Sur : 60 Ayt. 10) same applies to fornicator and fornicatress. (Sur : 24. Ayt. 3)

Polygamy is permitted with a recommendation for keeping not more than four wives at a time and doing justice among wives being a condition (Sur: 4 : Ayt. 3). Islam places a high premium on life and its preservation. Scripture expressly commands that neither poverty nor hunger should cause
one to kill one's offspring (Sur 17: Ayt. 31). The practice of contraceptive and abortion have been controversial issues for quite sometime now. For many a Muslim schools contraception is permissible for a certain period since there is no hard and fast prescription that forbids this operation. Abortion is not allowed under any circumstances except with valid reason for mother's safety. The practice is considered highly sinful not permitted even if it [foetus] is formed by fornication. However there is significant difference of opinion with regard to the definition of foetus and the exceptions if any to the strict prohibition. Some jurists allow it if it occurs before 120 days after conception if the main aim is to safeguard the life of the mother.

Dress and Adornment:

Traditional and contemporary Islamic dress codes are determined by the confirmation to a general understanding of modesty based on hadith (saying of the Prophet) popular tradition, identity, climate, geography, income and above all personal tastes. The body of male and female Muslim is ordered to be covered in various degrees depending upon whether one is alone or with a spouse, among friends and relations of the same sex or in a mixed setting. Specific parts of the body are regarded as virtue to be protected or as sexual in nature. Pilgrimage demands a special dress (ahram) New garments are considered as mustahab on Friday and Idd occasions. Except ritual coverings the dress codes are urgings and do not reach the limits of obligations. Islam however requires Muslims to be careful about their appearances. The requisition demands both covering of specific parts and adornment (Sur: 7, Ayt. 26-27, 31) whoever has deviated has moved towards path of satan. Gold ornaments and silk are haram (forbidden) for Muslim men while silver rings are mustahab for many jurists. Woman are forbidden to wear cloths which fail to cover the private parts or which are transparent. Dressing for ostentation and pride, going extremes in beautification are forbidden (Sur: 4.Ayt. 119)

Foods and Drinks:

Concerning vegetarian foods and soft drinks, the people all over the globe have been close to a consensus, but religious traditions differ in their eating and drinking habits as what is to be allowed and avoided especially with
regard to non-vegetarian foods and hard drinks\textsuperscript{36}. For Muslim the dietary prescriptions are setforth in Quran and Hadith based on the principle of pure (Tahir) and impure (najis) and of lawful (Halal) and the unlawful (Haram). Generally a Muslim is allowed to eat anything that is not explicitly forbidden. The scripture allows to eat the good, lawful plants and animals that God has provided (Sur :2 Ayt. 168, 172, Sur 16 : Ayt. 14, Sur 8. Ayt. 25-32). Jurists have tried to reduce ambiguities in dietary rules when scripture does not explicitly allow or forbid. The prescriptions forbid from eating corpse, blood, pork and the food that has been consecrated to any being other than the God himself (Sur : 5 Ayt. 3-6, Sur 6: Ayt. 145). The lawfulness of meat is determined by how it is obtained while ritual slaughter being the first requisite. All schools are in agreement that 'Khamr' is a general term applied to any intoxicating beverage and is Haram (forbidden) (Sur 5 : Ayt. 90-91) Transgression of the prescription temporarily invalidates acts of worship, besides supernatural wrath in life after. Here contact with wine or pork makes a man impure, purified by simple washing. However in dietary regulations necessity dictates exceptions (Sur :2 Ayt. 173)

Livelihood and Interest:

Life is regarded by all Semitic traditions including Islam as being supremely important. It is a time of testing and a preparation for life everlasting. In Islam there is a cheerful evaluation of the world basically to be good but certain reasons expressed in myth and theology, resulted its perversion. Economic pursuits are fundamental to the survival of any group, therefore, all religious traditions attach great importance to economic understanding and often reinforce it with religious definitions and sanctions\textsuperscript{37}. It is not permissible for a Muslim to avoid economic activity for a living on the pretext of devoting life to worship. Unlike Buddhism, in Islam no work except interest and earnings from wine and pork business is contemptible. Muslims are commanded by scripture and tradition to earn their livelihood through agriculture, trade or industry or by any profession or employment as long as it does not involve doing, supporting or propagating anything forbidden. Dignity of work instead of begging and living on alms without a dire need has been repeatedly stressed by tradition. The latter akin to eating fire and a disgrace on
the day of resurrection. Regarding Agriculture unlawful plants like hashish are forbidden. Prostitution besides bagging is wicked and cursed (sur. 24:Ayt. 33) Trade is considered by majority of Jurists as mustahab as Allah mentions traders who travel to seek Allah's bounty side by side with those who fight in his cause (sur 73 Ayt. 2)

Therefore there is no prohibition for any trade except those which involve injustice, exorbitant profits or promotion of something that is considered forbidden. On one hand the capital is accumulated through trade, but Islam blocks the way for anyone who tries to increase it though usury or interest whether it is at a low or high rate (Sur 2 : Ayt. 278, 279). Not only the lender, but the borrower and even the writer of the promissory note and witness to it are the accomplices of the sin. Scripture, further more classifies gambling in the same category as drinking and idolatry. Tradition says that a mere invitation to gambling is a sin (Sur 5 : Ayt. 90-91, 93, 94).

**Personal Hygiene and Purification:**

A famous tradition states “Purity is half of faith”, highlighting the importance of cleanliness and purification. The state of purity is a pre-requisite for any prayer, worship or ritual. As any form of worship is considered as an encounter with the God therefore every ritual purification is a form of preparation for this encounter (Sur 9 : Ayt. 28) The sharia has laid down clear cut rules and regulations for the distinction of pure and impure, real impure and conceptually impure. There are set methods for purifying such impurities as well. Mainly there are three major rituals of purification i. Greater ablution (Gusul) ii. Lesser ablution (Wadu) and symbolic ablution (Tayamum). Greater and lesser ablutions are done by water, that is clean, colourless and odourless and has not been already used for ritual. Greater ablution is obligatory under the condition of impurity caused by i. Sexual intercourse ii. Menstruation or post natal bleeding. It is also obligatory under the conditions like i. Conversion to Islam ii. Fridays and Idd occasions. iii. Pilgrimage and on entering Mecca. Proceeded by an intention to get purified greater ablution is a general thorough washing of every part of the body thrice with water. Besides being in a pure state, less ablution is a prerequisite before every prayer. In absence of water as
well as in exceptional circumstances a symbolic ablution (Tyamum) is recommended, which with some symbolic actions restores the believer to a state of equilibrium of purity.

In addition to above mentioned prescriptions, the whole Muslim life in its minutest detail is ordained by scripture and the tradition so far as the binding character of an act is concerned, the distinction between law and Quranic ethical precepts is rather very subtle. However, Quran declares that Allah likes those who do good, ward off evil, cooperate in righteousness, pay Zakat to the poor, the needy, the orphans and way fares, those who are tolerant, just and equitable, and does not like the mischief mangoes, conspirators, the treacherous, the liers, the hypocrites, the false accusers the backbiters, the aggressor, those who break trust and those who give and take bribes.

Islam in its true spirit purports to give an account of God’s dealing with mankind by postulating both God and man as objective realities while as Buddhism at least in its early stages has no consciousness of God as an objective reality, assigns no purpose at all to human life but an intolerable suffering into a state of being annihilated. Beside, the tradition recognizes no super power therefore no miraculous interference from outside. On the other hand tries to find salvation by means of self conquest through ethical life. However in practice Buddhism’s historical march of 2500 years, schisms, branching into major schools of Theraveda, Mahayana and Vajrayana and many a sects and denominations, has invented, developed and incorporated all that is essential for a immanentistic religion.
References:


3. Tripitaka: The Buddhist scripture popularly known as three baskets.


8. Charles Elliot Ibid. P 22


23. Ibid. P 269
24. Upastha: Buddhist weekly sacred days based on four stages of lunar months waxing and waning Moon namely 1st, 8th, 15th and 23rd of the month.
27. Hafsah: Daughter of second Caliph Omer.
35. Ibid. P 318

