CHAPTER EIGHT

RELIGION AND LAMAISM

Religion is the most important aspect of the cultural system of a society. It significantly interacts with many other cultural and social institutions of a society, such as material culture, behaviour, morals, ethics, systems of family organization, marriage, law, economics, politics, medicine, science and technology (Walefijt, 1968:1). Religion is acquired by a person as a member of his society through socialization or enculturation.

The essential function of the religion lies in the regulation, maintenance and transmission of sentiments on which the society depends. Religious rites unite the members of a society in common group and enforces the social interaction. It thus promotes the establishment and maintenance of social patterns outside its own immediate field. Religion also has provision of authority for the belief and action. It has one of its most important functions in the provision of meaning for social action. It gives pattern and order and also interprets them in terms of ultimate ends.
Emile Durkheim (1961:62) defines religion as 'a system of belief and practices pertaining to the sacred'. Religious beliefs are always group beliefs, shared by members of a society and preserving their unity. Everywhere religion has a "church", a place where people come together for shared social action; while there is no church of magic (Ibid:60).

Radcliffe-Brown (1932) who draws heavily upon analogies between social life and organic life says religious ritual is an expression of the unity of society and that its function is to affirm and strengthen the sentiments upon which social solidarity and therefore the social order itself depends. In his study on the Andaman Islanders, Radcliffe-Brown (1904:404) observes, 'through regular expression in ritual, these important principles are kept alive and passed from generation to generation'.

Malinowski considered society as something that can survive only if its basic needs are fulfilled. In his view the religious rituals such as the magical ones, are carried out in situations of emotional stress. Among the Trobrianders the death of a member breaks the
normal course of life and shakes the moral foundations of a society (1960:53). However, the society steps into lead the stricken individuals through the comforting experiences of religious ceremony (Ibid:62-63). Thus the religious dogma contains the value structure upon which the proper functioning of society depends, and the society's doctrines are regularly acted may be safeguarded and transmitted to succeeding generations (Ibid:67-68).

The religion thus forms an important aspect in the cultural system of a society. It holds the individuals in the social, cultural and the physical relations. It maintains the individuals in the moral characters and binds one into the right path giving the ideas of good and the evil and thus helps to run the society smoothly. The religious rituals unite the family as well as the community members by binding them into a group holding the obligations of the rituals and the socio-ritual functions towards one another. The magic is said to be the part of the religious activity which fulfills the personal problems and is unable to serve the ends on the social system as a whole. Thus magic cannot bring the social solidarity. But the
religious beliefs are the common beliefs held by the entire community as a whole and serve to fulfill their ends. Lobsang Lhalungpa (1976:10) views religion, mainly considering Buddhism as a religion as 'a belief in psychological realignment with sets of principles and practices which lead to the realization of the ultimate truth'.

Buddhism came to Tibet in the seventh and eighth centuries and found flourishing system of popular beliefs and practices loosely identified with Bon, the pre-Buddhist religion. Certain aspects of this early religion were absorbed, facilitating the change of faith. This successful blending, as Lobsang Lhalungpa (1976:10) says, was an indication of Buddhism's ability to adapt to local conditions while retaining its innate doctrinal purity. Even today the pre-Buddhist customs and their symbolism have remained in Tibetan society. It can be observed in the belief of the Tibetans that the roof top and the hearth are considered sacred and incense sticks are offered regularly. The walls of the houses are decorated with auspicious figures and signs representing the deities of old religion. The symbols of four elements, the tiger, lion, eagle and dragon, are still used in the Buddhist philosophy. The practice of
selecting high places (rey) to perform worship to spirits is also an age-old practice belonging to Bon religion. Erecting the prayer flags on the roof tops etc., also indicate the elements of Bon religion incorporated in Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhism also has many more practices from the Bon religion, namely oracular priests, local divinities and a notion of divine kingship (Tucci, 1974:402).

Buddhism originated in India in the 5th century B.C., in an area that extended roughly from Varanasi to Gaya, Rajagaha and Pataliputra. Buddhism developed in two directions. One usually called Theravada – the true tradition of the Buddha’s teachings – is also called as the Hinayana. The other called as Mahayana, “the means of salvation adapted to a larger number of people.” Both lead to Nirvana – the salvation. Currently still one more branch – the Tantrism is added to the former two. Each branch however has several sub-groups.

Tibetan Buddhism is unique in what it contains both the traditions known as Theravada and Mahayana. Its other distinctive features are the institution of the
incarnate Lamas, the presence of married lamas, and the spiritual and temporal powers invested in the person of Dalai Lama (Lobsang Dhargyal 1976:12). The distinctive form of Tibetan Buddhism developed in Tibet and it also includes the Vajrayana thought. Vajrayana is called Tantric or the Mantrayana. It holds the Mahayana concept of Nirvana as the base. Nirvana or the Voidness is seen as the passive wisdom which is like a diamond beyond all duality.

Tantric believes in attaining enlightenment through one's own body. To achieve the goal of enlightenment one must follow the instructions of his master or the teacher who guides him in controlling his physical and the mental processes. Hence every monk whose aim is to attain Nirvana or the Voidness, should be initiated by a recognized teacher — Rhen-no, the Abbot of the monastery.

The pre-Buddhist Bon religion was largely magical, a defence against the invisible powers present at every place and every mountain, the spirit at every place and every mountain, the spirit Blu — dwelling in water, the Sa-hoog — dwelling in the ground, and the Lha in the sacred mountain etc. Bon religion also had
many animistic magical rites of sacrificing animals and
even humans in the ancient times, and the practices of
black magic to bring the bad effects on enemies. Yet
the Tibetans without a cultural heritage, slaves of
century-old superstition, suddenly awake and also
translated, comprehended and explicated the most difficult
works of Mahayana speculation, carrying on the tradition
of the most famous monasteries of India (Giuseppe Tucci,
1974:339). Mahayanists have two choices—the Sutra,
the exoteric course; and the other Tantra, the esoteric
course. Both the courses are contained in the Tripitaka,
which in Tibet is classified into two collections, the
worlds of Buddha (Kan-Gyur) and the commentaries of
others (Ten-Gyur). Tibetans as Mahayanists follow the
esoteric course rather than the exoteric course.

Buddhism was given recognition in Tibet during
the reign of Srong-brtsan-Sgam-po from 620 to 649 A.D.
The warlike king was able to establish his authority
over the other wild clans of Central Tibet and whose
son the Srong-brtsan-Sgam-po, harassed the western borders
of China; so the Chinese Emperor Taizong of the Tang
dynasty gave this young prince the princess Wen-cheng of
the imperial house, in marriage. Two years earlier to
this Srong-brtsan-Sgam-po had also married Bhrikuti Devi
a daughter of the King of Nepal, Amruvaman. Both these
queens were effective in turning their husband to the Buddhistic principles, and sent people to India, Nepal and China for Buddhist books and teachers. The religion received active encouragement from Khri-Srong-lde-btsan and during his reign (775-797 A.D.) the first monastery was built at Samye and the Tantric master - the Padmasambhava, was invited from India. There was another Indian monk Santirakshita, whose disciple Kasalasila, represented the Indian point of view in the debate at the council of Samye (792-794 A.D.), as to decide whether the Indian or the Chinese forms of Buddhism, should be followed in Tibet. The Indian side emerged the winner. Buddhism also received the encouragement from Ral-pa-can's reign (616-636 A.D.), the third of the religious kings, but after his assassination in 636 A.D. it suffered a period of suppression. Again at the time of King Srong-Tsen Gom-po, Tho-mi Sa-mbo-ts'a was sent to India. After a stay for several years in India, he studied under Lipidatta, and returned to Tibet, carrying several books on Buddhism and the so called "Tibetan" alphabet. Later it was he who gave a script to the Tibetan language and composed grammar for this purpose.

The founder of Lamaism, saint Padmasambhava or the "Lotus born one", is usually called by the Tibetans as Guru Rin-po-che or the precious Guru or simply the
Lo-pon, the Tibetan equivalent of the Sanskrit "Guru". With the help of learned lamas Buddhism was again revived in the 10th to the 11th century and the ruling nobleman in western Tibet helped them in their struggle. Many travelled to India in search of books and masters. A great many books were also translated into Tibetan language. Atisa, the Mahayana master enabled the Buddhism to strike the deep roots in Tibet. By 14th century the Tibetans had translated all of the Buddhist literature and they produced their own canon, the Skra-gyur (Sanskrit or Kagyu — Translation of the Buddhist world and the Stong-gyur Tangyur — Translation of teachings). Slowly it led to the formation of separate orders of monks developed around particular masters. The head of the Dge-lugs-pa sect, who is believed to be a reincarnated Abbot, known by the honorific title of Dalai Lama — appealed to the Mongol chieftain Gushrikhan, for help in the struggle against the rival Karma-pa sect. The Gushrikhan after conquering Karma-pa forces awarded Tibet as religious gift to the heads of the Dge-lugs-pa sect. From 1642 A.D. until the communist invasion in the year 1959 the Dge-lugs-pa had been the dominant sect in Tibet and the Dalai Lama the effective ruler.

There are four main sects in Tibet — Sa-Skya-pa (named after a place, 1054 A.D.), Skra-bzang-yud-pa (black
hat sect, 1012 A.D.), Rgying-ma-pa (red hat sect, 810 A.D.) and Dge-lugs-pa (Yellow hat sect, 1357 A.D.). The Dge-lugs-pa (Gelugpa - the virtuous), constitute the reformed sect in Tibet; the members of this sect are called Yellow Hats; from the colour of their head cover.

The sect was founded by Tsang-Kha-pa, who attended the most important schools in 14th century - the Seskya-pa and ka-dam-pa. He was the first to invite the reform of monastic discipline by the general laxity of morals, less rigorous observance of monastic rules and so on.

Tsang-kha-pa attached great importance to the study of the logic and instituted the regular holdings of debate at the monasteries. Various ranks of monks were established on the basis of examinations, the highest being that of Ge-she. Tibet enjoyed its independence with the head from the Geluk-pa, H.H. the Dalai Lama.

The Geluk-pa sect has three monasteries - Dge-Pung, Se-Pa and Gan-Dam and all the three are in Central Tibet. These three sub-sects are further subdivided as follows:

1. Dge-Pung:
   1. Loseling
   2. Gomang

2. Se-Ra:
   1. Serji
   2. Sermai
The other sect Rgya-ma-pa, the "ancients", trace their origin to Guru Rin-po-che - the Padmasambhava of the eighth century A.D. They favour the deeper practices of Yoga and believe that the yoga and meditations lead to the purity of men. The Milarepa school took its birth in 11th century and practices the Hatha-yoga exercises - called as Kargyu-pa. Lamaism, therefore, cannot be seen as a single religious current. It contains many trends. They are set out from the same premises and have sprung from the same concern with salvation. "The Tibetans recognise the plurality of schools but rightly insist on the fundamental unity of inspiration and aims, wherein different methods are used to reach the same end - salvation, by rebirth in some paradise or final escape from rebirth with the attainment of nirvana" (Giuseppe Tucci, 1967:67).

Despite many differences on the points of doctrine, all Tibetans accept the law of the Buddha and describe themselves as Nangka, those who are all within the laws of Buddha. And the word lama refers to the teacher who is well educated and can guide the pupils.
in the spiritualistic way. Tibetans have been able to retain their most traditional religion with its own traditional fundamental concepts, laws, beliefs and practices. Monastic life of the Tibetans is hard with strict discipline and demands the sacrifice of life, learning thousands of ecclesiastical pages by heart, and cultivating a better mind by mediation for attaining the nirvana.

In 1953 a Buddhist association was set up under the presidency of Shes-rab rgya-mtsho who affirmed that Buddhism was a doctrine of revolutionary character and hence not opposed to the new democracy. Thus monks were directed to participate in reforms, to become reactionaries and help to adopt their religion to the new situation (Giuseppe Tucci, 1974:401).

In 1959 the Chinese authorities in Tibet proclaimed to weaken the Buddhism gradually and ultimately suppress it. In the same year the Dalai Lama fled to India, and many temples were destroyed, monks were forced to work and were forced to teach and to work with secular persons.

Presently at Mundgod there are two lama villages. The Village No. 1 has monasteries for Shartse and
Shengtse (of Gan-Den sect) and Nying-ma-pa sects and Village No. 2 has monasteries for Loseling and Gomang (of Dre-pung sect) and Sakya-pa sect. Devotees belonging to Se-Ra sect do not have their monastery in the Mundgod Settlement. For their religious activities they go to Byalskoppa settlement in Mysore District, in the state. There are six hundred monks and lamas settled in the two lama villages in Mundgod Settlement. Their rehabilitation is financed by the United Nations Refugee Rehabilitation Organization, Geneva. They have been provided with 400 acres of cultivable land for their subsistence. This land is distributed to them in groups, of lamas and monks, who belong to one particular sect or sub-sect. All the members of a particular sub-sect work in common and eat in common. It was, however, observed that a few monks have taken lands on lease individually, from the local Indian farmers and, have earned additional money. They also lend money to needy Tibetans and Indians on a high rate of interest. This has further helped them to increase their capital. The money thus earned is said to be donated to different monasteries to get merit (Gewa). A part of it is also kept aside to meet the expenditure of their funeral rituals. With all the stresses and strains the monks and lamas settled in Mundgod are successful in re-establishing their religious order. They have taken
pains to construct monasteries, prayer halls, and schools in both the lama villages.

In Tibet the monasteries were exempted from paying taxes and services to the Government. They were independent lords of their lands with serfs attached to them. These yielded them wealth and services in plenty. The monasteries also supplied officials to the Government and for this they received titles in accordance with the hierarchical order. Social hierarchy was maintained within the monasteries. Monks coming from one family, village or district shared houses in common in the monasterial village. In the non-reformed orders that allowed marriage, the married monks lived in their native villages and tilled the family farm. The lower clergy who could not finish a lengthy course of studies and reach the highest monastic position and often remained illiterate, served the monastery in cooking food for the monks, helped in playing music and in preparing offerings, etc. A few of them also served as warrior monks (Stein, 1972:140-141).

On entering the monkhood candidates had to take vows from the Abbot, regarding the rules of discipline. They were allowed to drink tea, milk and eat grain and butter. They were also allowed to wear an under-robe
and a red-robe. It is strictly obligatory for them to stay always in monasteries. They were prohibited from drinking chhëng, eating meat and excessive food. Those who act beyond the bounds of the religious law were punished heavily by the Royal Law.

Now the monks in the Settlement have changed considerably and have also adopted many new ideas and customs. It is observed in the monks of younger generation that though they lead a religious life and lived in a holy environment most of them do not follow the religious laws strictly. They even eat meat and a few even drink chhëng, etc. They are even attracted by profitable ways of earning money such as taking land on lease and lending money on high rate of interest and have bought worldly and luxury articles such as radios, bicycles and watches. A few go to see cinemas and dramas for recreation and even talk and move freely with women; and now women are allowed to visit lama villages. All these were strictly prohibited while they were in Tibet. In Tibet monasteries were far away from the villages of common men, and were situated on hills and had minimum possibilities of violating the Royal Laws. At Mundgod as the monasterial villages and buildings are surrounded by the houses and villages of
commoners, the monks always come in contact with the commoners and the women folk.

The candidates who are intended to be made monks are brought to the monasteries at a very young age of five or six. In Mundgod monasteries it is observed that the candidates have come from distant places in India. Parents can send their children to any monastery they like and no discrimination of sect is made at this level. Candidates are left to the care of a teacher (Lama) who gives them spiritual education and their maintenance is paid for by their parents. The poor and orphan candidates are maintained by the monastery, and the teacher. In a few cases the grown-up monks students have left the monasteries to accept the life of householder and to help their parents in maintaining the family. The Tibetans say now-a-days the student monks are drawn more towards the worldly matters than spiritual ones and so more and more of them are leaving monkhood.

Life in a monastery is very rigid and disciplined. The first prayer starts at 5.00 a.m. and lasts for an hour. After the prayer they take tea and tempe or the fried breads. The higher lamas engage classes to students and the lower order may go to fields for work. In Tibet there was no need for the monks and lamas to work in the
fields. The serfs attached to the monasterial land worked for them. The monks, who have been now assigned with secular duties such as preparation of food, cleaning the monastery and prayer hall and so on in addition to their religious duties also work on the farm.

Debates on religion, philosophy, etc., also take place between the monks who belong to different sects and who stay in the Mundgod Settlement. These debates usually take place at the time of big festivals and are presided over by the senior most lama, the Abbot. Commoners and monks from the Settlement attend the debates to enrich their knowledge. Such debates are also arranged for lamas coming from other settlements in India. On such occasions the lamas of both the Drung and Gon-Den monasteries jointly face such debates. Sometimes both the senior tutor (Yong-tsen Ling Rim-Po-chi) and the junior tutor (Yong-tsen Trijang Rim-po-chi) arrive in Mundgod Settlement, between December and February, and arrange for common prayers and teachings. The commoners who will have finished their harvest work by now, will also conveniently attend these sessions.

Monasteries play important roles in the life of Tibetans. Being the seats of religious activity, they attract commoners at the time of major festivals
and celebrations. The worship conducted by the Abbots and the senior lamas provide them with an opportunity to visit the monastery and receive blessings from the lamas. Commoners visit monasteries on their own also to offer food, money, prayers, etc., when their vows are fulfilled. The monks from the monasteries attend to the life cycle rituals performed by the householders. They are also invited to conduct worship before they start any socio-economic activity. Their services are also taken in curing diseases.

There is also a belief among the Tibetans that if they contribute their self earned money to the monasteries they get merit in life. So old people at the end of their life collect all their savings and give it to their eldest son or to a village leader, to distribute it to different monasteries throughout India. In two cases it was noticed that an old man and an old woman from the Old and Infirm village gave a lumpsum amount which they had saved over years to be spent on their funeral rituals and to donate the remaining amount to different monasteries. Likewise after their death, their wish was fulfilled by the village leader.

Monasteries and the rituals conducted in them also provide an opportunity for the Tibetans to come
together. The differences of sects which prevailed in Tibet is now gone and the Tibetans feel that they are one people. H.H. the Dalai Lama also advises his people to forget the old order and adopt to the new situations. In Tibet the different areas had different sects. A lama or a scholar who was effective introduced his own philosophy and influenced people to follow him, thus founding a new sect. Those sects had their own traditions, beliefs and practices which were made to be followed by their following. Owing to lack of easy means of communication and transport in Tibet, the society was much isolated and the people also readily accepted the ideas preached by a lama. In a way it is only after coming over to India that the different Tibetan sectarian groups have come in contact with one another. For example the Settlement has monasteries of all sects and they are open for all Tibetans. The Geluk-pa, the dominant religious sect under the headship of the temporal head of the Tibetans - H.H. the Dalai Lama, is the sole authority of all the Tibetans at their present refugee situation. This has made the Tibetans to focus their attention on him for their protection in India and to plan their future in India or in Tibet. This has made the Tibetans to think that they are one and belong to one religion — Buddhism. However, the monks and lamas in the monasteries strictly follow the rules
Table 33: Sect-wise Distribution of Tibetan families in Mundgod Settlement
(1977 - 78)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Sects</th>
<th>Geluk-Pa</th>
<th>Ny羡慕ma-Pa</th>
<th>Sakyu-Pa</th>
<th>Kargyu-Pa</th>
<th>No specific</th>
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<td>I</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>III</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>108</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>208</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>VI</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>IX</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>112</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1015</td>
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</table>

Percentage 58.14 11.08 7.69 16.48 4.93 1.67 100.00
of the sectarian division. The common people who are just concerned with the good life, the life away from committing any sins and meditate only to purify one’s soul (Tso rgyan), are not much concerned by the sectarian divisions.

H.H. the Dalai Lama has written a few verses which are compiled in the form of a book (Nga ring Chezo) and these are read by all the Tibetans. These verses are also sung by the children regularly in the schools. All these have made them to understand and believe in the ultimate end — the Buddhism. Though they possess the photos of the heads of their own sects in their homes and regularly worship them and they do not exhibit it in public. So it was a real problem for the investigator to collect the names of sects to which they actually belonged. Table No. 33 shows the distribution of Mundgod Tibetan population according to sects.

Sacred Objects

Flags

As one enters a Tibetan settlement or village, he first comes across sacred flags tied to long poles and fixed at the entrance. He also comes across lines of thread with small paper flags stuck to them, on
these are printed the pious sentences, charms and prayers and tied across the road over head. Individual families also hoist such flags in front of their houses. The paper prayer flags are printed on unglazed paper brought from Banaras and available with the lamas. In general the Tibetans use the following four kinds of flags:

(1) *Lung-ta* is a six inches, square shaped flag. In the centre the figure of the sacred horse is printed on it with the mystic jewel - *Norbu*, in the background. It is usually hung on the ridges of the houses. (2) The second type is a luck-flag called *Chö-zen*. It is long, narrow and oblong shaped and is about ten inches in length and six inches in breadth. These flags are tied to branches of trees, and bridges. Sometimes they are placed on tops of hills. When a person is in trouble, he is advised by a tantric lama to put a number of such flags on bridges, near water pools, on hills or on the branches of trees near a spring. The Tibetans offer these flags usually on the third day of the lunar month, along with incense sticks. A small quantity of maize flour and *chāng* are also offered to the spirits by sprinkling them towards sky. While offering the flour and *chāng* they utter *so sū*, meaning relieve us from the troubles brought by the evil spirits and also drive them away.
A much wider form of this luck-flag (gval-team dag-po) contains larger number of holy texts and also the eight glorious symbols — the golden fish (gsar-ta), the umbrella (rgyas), conch shell trumpet (dun), symbol for good luck (gral-ba), victorious banner (rgyal-atam), vase (bum-pa), wheel (khor-lo) and finally the lotus (padma), at the base. It is supposed to bring good luck to man in all aspects — health, wealth and power.

There are also other type of wider flags known as glon-po stobs-rgyes. These flags are made by drawing pictures on pieces of wide cloth using oil paints. They are hung from the walls of houses and covered with a thin sheet of cloth so as to protect them against dust and smoke. There are many varieties of flags with different designs of paints, showing the family deities, divine emblems, and the symbols. They are arranged to be drawn by a Tibetan artist in the memory of a dead family member. It is also believed that by offering these flags, the gods and goddesses will be satisfied and lift the soul to heaven. The artist is paid for that. These flags are also drawn to raise the wealth and also to protect oneself from the harmful spirits. A few Tibetans, in order to fulfill their wishes during their life time or after their death, arrange for drawing a few sacred
syllables such as Om Mani Padme Hum, or the sacred texts on stone slabs and put them on hill tops, which are considered to be auspicious places by the Tibetans.

In every home a well cleaned room is reserved for the family altar. There we can find many pictures of gods, and goddesses and the senior lamas of the different sects, arranged.

The three popular deities are the Bodhisattvas - Chenresi, Jampeyang and Chandorje. The white coloured Chenresi is the embodiment of compassion. He is expressed with six syllable formula — Om Mani Padme Hum. He is also a mean of compassion and higher knowledge — the Voidness. The symbols 'mani', the jewel, he possesses indicates that he is male (dorje), the symbol for means or light; and Padme, 'lotus' with the bell (female) standing for emptiness. He is the great protector of Tibetans in the spiritual and physical dangers.

Chenresi is shown with four arms. Two of them are joined, with right palm placed in the left. Of the other two hands, in the right one he holds a rosary and a lotus flower in the fourth. This form is sometimes replaced by another in which he has eleven heads. The upper half of the body is shown dark blue and the face with
an expression of anger — a symbol of disapproval to evil doers. The Tibetans say that his eyes and hands are so many and also so quick that no evil doer can escape and so also no merited person is allowed to suffer. The Tibetans also say that the image of Avalokitesvara, the Chenresi, is modelled after the Hindu God Brahma.

The Jumpeyang is red in colour and is the symbol of knowledge. The book in his hand is the indication of knowledge, and he is expressed by the syllable — 'Om Ara Pacho Nadi'.

The Chandorje is the god of battles. He holds a sword in his right hand. He protects the religion from the spiritual foes. He is expressed by the syllable — 'Om Bensar Pani Hum'.

The female Bodhisatwas, the energies, are the Tārā and Marichi. Tārā, Drol-ma in Tibetan, is the most popular deity. She is the goddess of mercy. She is shown in two forms — the white and the green Tārā. It is said the two wives of Song-ten Gampo, the King who introduced Buddhism in Tibet; are the incarnations of the Drol-ma in white and green forms. The deity holds a lotus in her left hand. The right hand is held in the giving position.
The other deity Marici, has three faces and eight hands. Various weapons, including an axe and snare, are held in her hands. She sits in an enchanting pose upon a lotus which will be on the back of seven pigs.

The Guru Rin-po-che is the great teacher of the 'ancients', the Nyingsma-pa sect. But everyone regards him as one of the most authoritative manifestation of the law regarding the miracles. He is the strongest propagator of Buddhism in Tibet, defeating the power of the old Bon-po religion.

Though most of the Buddhas and the Bodhisats are the protecting gods, Vajra Shairava of the rDo-rJe (Jigs-byed) - a form of Siva, the Hindu God of destruction, is conceived to carry the same function in the Tibetan religious belief.

The other defender gods of the faith are the Tam-din and Pal-Lden Lha-mo. Tamdin's picture depicts him with horse's head and neck and with bow and arrow in his hand. The Goddess Pal-Lden Lha-mo is equated to the Ḵáli-devi or Durga of Hinduism. She is surrounded by flames and also splitting the flames and riding on a white faced mule, upon a saddle of her own son's skin.
She is covered on all sides by the human skulls and she wields in her right hand a trident rod. She is considered the most important deity and is accepted by all the Tibetans as the favourite deity. She protects the Tibetans from all the evil spirits. The Tibetans, therefore, worship the deity for seven days during the New Year festival. The cake offered to her will have ingredients such as the fat of a black goat, blood, wine, dough and butter. All these are placed in a bowl made of human skull. After the spread of Buddhism these Bon-po practices of offering animal and blood is replaced by the offerings of products prepared out of grain in the forms symbolizing the animals and their flesh. A red liquid is also put on the offerings prepared out of tsampa to signify the blood.

The Tibetans in Tibet had domestic Gods whose head resembling the head of a pig and wearing flowing robes. They were believed to occupy a different positions at different seasons or months in a year. When these Gods were disturbed or angered, to appease them, worship and offer them with their necessities, lamas were called. It was said, after the introduction of the Buddhism and establishment of monasteries, in all the places the conception towards the old deities was changed and they were accepted as favourite family deities. After coming
to Mundgod Settlement, it is observed, most of the Tibetans have lost their ties and affinity with their family deities who are now left in Tibet. In their place they have now taken the protective deities like Pal-loden Lhamo, Shungden, Chenresi, Gombo as their family deities. In all 61 family deities were listed among the Mundgod Tibetans. *Pal-loden Lhamo* the protective deity is being accepted as the family deity by 638 (63.94%) families. Next comes to *Gombo* who is claimed as the family deity by 41 (4.06%) families and another 40 (3.95%) families claimed the *Shungden* as their family deity. The remaining 296 families claimed as many as 78 deities as their family deity.

While in Tibet the Tibetans considered that each and every place was considered to have housed a spirit or a deity. Owing to their deep religious belief the Tibetans believed that all good and bad things in life occurred because of their family deities. To perform any tantric or the magico-religious practice, preference or involvement of family deity was most essential. Now the change of their residence has brought changes in this belief system also. Gradually the old Tibetan deities and beliefs connected with them have been disappeared. Only the older people are able to tell
the names of their family deities and others have totally lost them since no elderly person belonging to these groups is present here. Now most of the Tibetans have adopted the protective deities such as Pal-lden Lhasa, Gombo, etc., as their family deities and thus the gap is filled.

Rites, Rituals and Festivals:

A Tibetan morning starts at about 5.30 a.m. with a homage offered to the family gods. After washing her hands the housewife fills holy cups (Ting) with holy water. These cups which number seven or eleven, are arranged in a line, on the altar in front of the family god. In the middle of which is kept a holy lamp, a short pedestal bowl, with a socket in the centre and with a cotton wick. It is fed by butter. On the altar a silken or cotton parasol painted in five colours — yellow, red, green, blue and white is hung in the centre. This is the symbol of royalty. On the altar the pictures of all household deities and lamas are arranged in an hierarchy. The images and pictures of lamas are kept in the centro since the Tibetans view lama as the actually existing reincarnations of god. Next to them come the protecting deities (Yidam), the gods of wealth (Khānda), the god of the defenders of faith or the
Dharma-pala (chodkung) and lastly the S Bloomberg the family deities. All these deities protect the people from the attack of evil spirits and also uplift the householder to heaven.

The arrangement of pictures of deities on the altar of a house in the Settlement is as follows:
(1) Jamyang Chenrezig - the God of mercy, (2) Yongjem - deity which is equalled to the Hindu deity - Saraswati - the deity of knowledge, (3) Chenrezi Lampa considered by Tibetans as equivalent to the Hindu deity Ganapati - remover of obstacles, (4) Chejun Drakpa equalled with the Hindu deity - Lakshmi - the goddess of prosperity and wealth, (5) Semdrakshing - the incarnation of Chenrezig in the form of monkey, (6) Palden Lhamo - the protecting deity, (7) Gyeltshen Ganden Drakpa - the disciple and the nephew of the Tsong-kha-pa (reorganiser of the Atisa’s reformed sect and altered the title to the virtuous order— the Gelug-pa) who was the first reincarnated Dalai Lama, (8) Natung Chokey - the oracle god of Tibet, (9) Chongo gye Lamjoe - an oracle lake which indicates the birth place of Dalai Lama and other reincarnated lamas, (10) Nyenjorwa - female deity, the worship of whom brings good luck, (11) Tare Mipoche - the female reincarnate showing the path of salvation, (12) Tsong Trulku - 13th reincarnation of Drepung, (13) Kyapto ling
Apart from these the Tibetans also place the pictures of many Hindu deities such as the Ganapati, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Krishna, Shiva, and the Jamuné. On enquiry they said that they were not aware of these deities while in Tibet. They came to know about them through their youngsters who have more contact with outsiders. Others said that they learnt about them through the Hindu religious books which are available to them now. A few of them witness movies and dramas which are mythological in nature and also listen to the radio and learn about them in the form of songs and stories. A few Tibetans can recount stories about the Hindu gods and goddesses. The pictures of Mahatma Gandhi, Vivekananda, and others, are also found and are worshipped as the incarnations of Hindu gods.

Holy Scriptures:

The five sacred books of Tibet known as Shangchen Kagyu are placed on the domestic altar and worshipped. These books are believed to be very
tough to understand and only the teachers of the Dalai Lama — the men of wisdom and knowledge can do that. The other books commonly read by the commoners are: (1) Langring Chatt — which professes the oneness of all the five sects (shuinyu — the four Buddhist sects and the Bon-po religion) and also states that these sects are only the different paths to attain Nirvana. The book, irrespective of the sects followed by them also states the first means to achieve Nirvana are the reading of sacred books (Dwema) and the second means being the meditation (Ngā). (2) Langring Chatt — gives the people the rules of meditation, good qualities and the moral character. (3) Kyentse Thaye Rima-cho Namdak — Autobiography of junior teacher of H.H. the Dalai Lama. (4) Khirsang Tengpa — the book written by Lobang Rimpoche, in which everything about the Tibet's future is written. (5) Jagen Pala — The book containing the rituals to be performed for the family deities and spirits which help to bring fertility to the householder. The family deity is always kept decorated with flowers, maize and paddy stocks and the fruits, to get good luck and fertility to the family. On both the sides of altar are placed the flower notes.
Every day early in the morning, the womanfolk of the family lighted the sacred lamp and filled the cups (jing) with fresh holy water, and chanted mantras 'Om Mani Padme Hum'. She also sprinkled holy water throughout the house. Then men and women in the house started reading the sacred books. After this, the ritual food — a mixture of five varieties of foods like tsawpa, chönpa, milk, ghee and food grains is mixed and put on the oven fire, kept outside the house, as an offering to the god. The smoke which raises from this is believed to go as food to the deities and also the evil spirits. It is only after these activities the fast for the day was broken with the tea. Now this routine is disturbed owing to the new environment and new occupations followed by the Tibetans. Now the Tibetans also get much less free time. So they simply repeat the sacred mantra for some time and start their day.

It is observed that a few older Tibetans read the sacred books for about two hours in the morning and again for another two hours in the evening. Rest of the time though they will be busy with their household duties, they will be chanting the sacred mantras. Very old men and women who cannot read and write, count the
beads from the rosary and recite mantras in a low tone. It is observed that the middle aged and the younger generation are devoting comparatively less time to religious affairs. They also criticise the old for the show they make of their devotion. Some argued that they too were religious but they do not make a show of it and that they did not have much free time to spend on worshipping. Unlike in Tibet here they have to struggle hard to earn a comfortable living, whereas while in Tibet by working for a few hours they got enough income to make a comfortable living and so rest of their time was devoted for religious activities.

Rosaries:

Rosaries are not only used by the lamas but also by every Tibetan layman and woman. The Tibetan name for rosary is tsen-wa, and commonly it is known as mala since it contains beads in it. Customarily the rosary should have only hundred beads. As it is moved counting the beads, mantras are also uttered and thus making one hundred mantras for full one round. But actually there will be one hundred and eight beads in a rosary. The extra eight beads are added to make up any omission of beads while counting. The two ends of the strings
of beads are knotted in such a way each passes through three of the extra beads. The middle one will be larger than other beads. These extra beads are called mdo-gdin, which means the "union holders", and they indicate the completion of one cycle of the rosary while counting and chanting mantras.

Attached to the rosary is a pair of strings of ten small pendant metallic rings which serve as counters. These rings help to count the cycles of the beads. Regarding the material used for the beads, in Tibet, Waddell (1974:205) says, it varies according to the wealth of the wearer. The Abbot of the large and wealthy monastery may have rosaries of pearl and other precious stones and even of gold. Turner (1800:201) in his book "Embassy to Tibet" writes that "the Grand Taahi Lama possessed rosaries of pearls, emeralds, rubies, sapphires, coral, amber, crystal and lapislasuli". It is also noticed that different sects use beads of different colours and materials. Waddell (Ibid:207) says Tibetans of Geluck-pa sect used yellow beads (Gor-ten) prepared from the deep yellow wood of the Bodhi tree. The rough brown seeds of a tree which grows in the outer Himalayas is used for preparing the rosaries by the Sying-ma-pa sects. The white conch shell rosary -
Tsun-tea, which consists of cylindrical perforated discs of the conch shell and is specially used in the worship of Avalokita, is a special rosary used only by the nuns. There were also rosaries with beads made of plain crystal or uncoloured glass, red sandal wood, used in worshipping the protective deity — Tag-din. In a few cases discs of human skull were used as beads in a rosary and this was used only while worshipping the fearful deities like Vairo Thairawa.

Prayer Wheels:

Tibetans also turn prayer wheels and prayer cylinders while meditating. In a Tibetan settlement, it is a common sight to see old men and women moving their prayer wheels with the right hand and counting the beads in the rosary by the left. The prayer wheels are made of wood and lined with silver or copper and fixed with a wooden handle. They are tied with a weight so that when rotated it turns on the axil in hand. In the inner space of these prayer wheels are put the sacred syllables — Om Mani Padme Hum. Heavy sacred cylinders fixed to tables or cots in the houses, are also turned by very old and disabled Tibetans who stay in one place. Tsung-Lien Shen and Shen-Chi Liu
(1953: 141-142) describe the prayer wheel (Khor) as follows: The world rotates in a Khor around Mount Sumeru; the sun and the moon around the earth; all living beings around the wheel of transmigration. Life rotates around some holy object like a lake, holy pagoda, a holy wall or a holy man. The beads whirl around the fingers, and the prayer wheels around the sacred formula. Like this there are wheels turned around by fingers, by hand, by winds, by the hydraulic power, etc. Tibetans, muttering scriptures, counting beads and turning prayer wheels continually walk around the monasteries. This scene is common in all parts of Tibet. A much similar picture will be seen by any one who visit Hundgod Settlement and especially the old and infirm peoples village.

**Sacrificial Objects and Offerings:**

The form of offering depends on the nature of the god or the spiritual deity who receives them. Nebesky-Wojkowitz (1956: 343) says 'a wrathful deity is given a stupa-ma consisting of meat and bone, a libation of blood and bile, small drums and high bone trumpets are played for its entertainment, etc., while a peaceful protector of religion is presented with such gifts as medicines, sweet and tasty food, fragrant incense and
pieces of silk. The deities of both groups are further symbolically presented with arms they carry, and dresses they wear and the animals to ride, etc. He (Ibid:343-345) further says that in the magical processes, the Tibetans consulted texts. According to those texts blood was used in magico-religious practices of Bon-po. The blood may be taken out from a dead body suffered from dangerous diseases, the menstruation blood of a widow or a prostitute, or the blood of a young healthy man killed in a fight or the blood of an eight year old child of an incestuous union, etc. Also the blood of animals like that of black horses, or grayish dogs, mad dogs, black bears, blood of cows died of cattle-disease, sheep, yake, wolves, goats, and pigs was used. When Tibet came under the spell of Buddhist these practices were replaced with liquids signifying blood were also used in rituals. They are the ordinary water added with red colour or the water from 108 different springs, water from a glacier (cencha chu) or from a state mountain (g-va chu), milk (g-me), Tibetan beer (chhang) or the alcoholic drinks.

With the total introduction of the Buddhistic principles in Tibet these Bon-po practices were left
Their values and concepts however remained in the traditional Tibetan society. Though the Tibetans discarded the offerings of animals and human beings, they replaced them with vegetarian materials and these objects were sacrificed in the same old fashion. Under the vegetarian practices the three sweet substances — sugar (dpe-sras), honey (sbrangs rtsi) and trandolo were offered. Milk, butter and curds are also offered to the peaceful deities. The typical gifts which are presented to the wrathful deities are the black and radishes peas, onions, garlic and the yeast for making beer. All these are called as midga rgsas, the unpleasant eatables. The ston-ma are prepared with the help of wooden moulds (zan-gnar). Most frequently the barley flour was mixed with water, milk, blood or alcohol to make the dough. Today, in Khadgod, they use water and also put red colour over the ston-ma to symbolise blood. There are also some weapon like structures made of the dough, butter and sugar and are placed around ston-ma. They are known as zar and are thrown away after the ritual, and thus the evil spirits are made to move away.

Sacred Objects:

Another important item used in all the ceremonies
in the divino arrow (da'dar), the symbol of male el©cent. The presence of a divine arrow is a must to secure divine rites. The application of the da'dar in the rites of the Tibetan Buddhist clergy has been accepted from the usage of the Bon-pos' (Rene De Neboky- Sojkwitz, 1956:365). In Tibet a variety of da'dar were used in the rituals in honour of deities. The important ones are: (1) Cha'sruch ada'dar — the point of this arrow is made of iron and its shaft has five ends; each bearing three vulture feathers, pointed in five different colours — white, yellow, blue, red and green. A silk cloth is attached to these five ends of the respective colours. These arrows are used in ceremonies performed in honour of Tse-ma'ne (Amitayus). (2) K-yang Sarub ada'dar — is a simple arrow with an iron point and a single shaft bearing three feathers. A conch shell and three or five pieces of silk cloth are suspended from its shaft and all of them will be of only one colour. This type of da'dar is used in the ceremonies performed for ensuring luck and prosperity. This type of an arrow is also used in the Tibetan marriage ceremony, when it is put into the collar of the bride. The third variety is same as that of second da'dar except the silken streamers here are of five different colours — white, yellow, red, blue and green.
In Mundgod the third variety of *dārā* is more commonly used. The present day *dārā* are more simplified and wooden shafts are used instead of iron shafts and cotton streamers are used instead of silk. It is observed that many families do not even possess any of them though it was considered to be a most essential and auspicious object for Tibetans. Now when they need it at the time of rites such as marriage, it is borrowed from others.

Waddell (1974:424) says there are seven recognized stages in any Tibetan rite. They are:
(1) the invocation — calling to the feast or sacrifice;
(2) inviting the deity to be steady;
(3) presentation of offerings — sacred cake, rice, water, incense, flowers, lamps, music;
(4) hymns in praise;
(5) repetition of the special spell or the mantra;
(6) prayers for benefits already present, and to come; and
(7) benediction. All these steps are carefully observed to get the desired ends.

On social or festival occasions sacred food (*tsomar*) is prepared by mixing *tsampa* — the roasted flour with sugar and ghee. This offering for the gods is specially placed in a wooden box — thrashe-Chamol.
Over this are put a variety of sweets. During New Year Festival, friends and relatives who visit the family take a pinch of *tseča* and throw it towards the altar. This is repeated three times as an offering to the gods (*tsača bywa*). Lastly a pinch of it is put into their own mouth and utter *Tshi Belela* — meaning good luck to all family members. This is an act to show their affinities towards the family members whom they have visited. The fried *nomas* — the offerings made to the gods and goddesses, called Kama, are distributed to all the visitors for eating.

Apart from the worships conducted at home and monasteries the Tibetans also go round Chortens. Jaddell (1974:262) describes a Chorten as 'receptacles for offerings'. Tibetans attend them daily — both in the morning and evening and turn the prayer wheel and also go around the Chorten, as many times as possible. They count the rounds they finish by keeping a marble or a piece of stone in a place and finally count the rounds for the day. The Chortens are solid domelike structures, convex shapped upwards and crowned by a square capital surmounted by umbrella, the symbols of royalty. Chortens contain more plinths and are considerably elongated. Above the square capital
are the bluntly conical or pyramidal spire of thirteen step like segments representing the thirteen Bodhisattva heavens of Buddhists. Over this is placed a tapering pinnacle. They are mostly built as Stupas in memory of Buddha or a high lama. A few Chortens in Tibet were tombs built for high lamas. The bodies of high lamas were first buried in the earth and salt was put around the body and left for some days. After one or two months, when all the organic matters were removed the skeletal remainings were collected and coated with mud and painted to give live appearance of the lama. This effigy was then placed in the Chörten built for him and the door was closed.

Waddell (1974:263) says the shape of the Tibetan Chörten is like those of the Japanese symbolic of five elements into which a body is resolved upon death. The lowest section, a solid rectangular block, typifies the solidarity of the earth, above it is the globe representing the water; fire by triangular tongue; air by a crescent the inverted vault of the sky, and other by an asuminated circle, the tapering into space. Near those Chörten are built rooms to deposit the small clay structures (taṇḍi) prepared as offering after the death of a person.

Tibetans in
difficulty, pray to the god to relieve them from it and in return they take a vow to donate stone slabs carved with sacred syllables, which are placed around the Chorten or on the hill (Norbu ray). In Mundgod this hill is known as Norbu ray, named after 14th the Dalai Lama. The Norbu ray is a high sacred place where important rituals such as shémo - spirit controlling rituals, are performed by senior monks; and all the people of the settlement assemble here during the rituals. Chorten is considered a sacred place and people go round it when they have leisure time in the mornings and evenings.

Tibetan Festivals:

The Tibetan years are cyclic in nature and are named after the twelve animals and five elements. The name of a year changes every year. The twelve animals are: (1) Mouse (Pawu), (2) Ox (Lenc), (3) Tiger (Tal), (4) Hare (16), (5) Dragon (Druk), (6) Serpent (Dul), (7) Horse (2a), (8) Sheep (Luk), (9) Monkey (Jae), (10) Bird (Oma), (11) Dog (Khow), (12) Pig (Pukhā). The five elements are (1) wood (shinc), (2) Fire (rey), (3) Earth (Sa), (4) Iron (Chak), and (5) Water (Chül).
The Tibetan year begins in the English month of February. The Tibetan months (S5Wa) are named as first month (Đaw Thango-ba), second month (Đaw Je-wa) and so on upto twelfth month (Đaw Chu-nsi-wa).

Similarly a week is divided into seven days (Es), the names of each day are adapted from the Indian system. They are Nyima (Sunday — after the celestial body — the Sun), Demo (Monday — after the Moon), Klammar (Tuesday — after the Mars), Lāng-po (Wednesday — after the Mercury), Par-bu (Thursday — after the Jupiter), Pē-son (Friday — after Venus) Pen-bu (Saturday after the Saturn).

A few new festivals are being observed by the Tibetans. The change of place made them to include a few more festivals into their list of festivals. These festivals are celebrated according to the Tibetan calendar and the dates are not fixed and so cannot be exactly correlated with Christian Calendar.
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<td>2nd</td>
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<td>Expulsion of the demon of bad luck and The uprising day of Tibet (nonga Shireetse).</td>
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The New Year festival is celebrated in the month of February, the 1st Tibetan month, which comes after the harvest. This festival is mainly a merry-making one and people pass the time in eating, drinking, singing, dancing and playing games. In Tibet this festival was celebrated for one full month and now it is limited to only three days. This festival promotes closer affinity and friendship among the Tibetans and the people have an obligation to visit each other to exchange greetings and share chang. Friends, relatives and even people belonging to a common tribe or ethnic group assemble in one place - a house, prayer hall or a monastery and sing and dance. During this period the lamas at the monastery arrange for special worships and rituals. All the people irrespective of their class, sect and status mingle and perform worship and listen to the preaching of the lamas.

For the New Year festival the houses are cleaned and white washed. The household materials like bedding
and furnishings are also cleaned. New prayer flags are hoisted. The womenfolk fry cakes (Kapae) in plenty, in butter or vegetable oil and exchange them with friends and relatives. While in Tibet a community meal was arranged by each and every family on rotation. In Mundgod Settlement such communal feasts are not observed. However, people belonging to an ethnic group or a district meet at one place to drink chëng, sing, dance and enjoy; this goes on for three to fifteen days.

The New Year festival celebration lasts for three days. On the day previous to the New Year day, all men and women take oil bath. On the first day of the festival they put on new clothes and traditional ornaments which are not usually worn on other days. Later all the family members visit the monasteries to offer presentations to the deities and to receive blessings from the senior lama. They also request them to excuse them for the sins they have committed during the year and to get their souls purified (Kespera). Small gifts of cash and kind are also made to the monasteries. The gifts in the form of materials will be the idols of the deities and oil lamps (Teugung) and cups to fill holy water (Chu-thing). These cups will be made of silver or even gold, if the family can afford. Along with these
gifts they carry the incense sticks, flowers, and ghee - to offer to the burning lamps at the monastery; and the Kha-ta. They bow to the deities from feet to head (Tanka). Those who have taken a vow to the deity will prostrate around the monasteries. The Tibetans said that in Tibet they had plenty of resources and so they also made offerings to the deity in plenty both in cash and kind. Now they are not in a position to offer much since they themselves do not have in plenty.

The second day of the New Year festival starts with a meeting with their friends and relatives and exchange of Kha-ta and sharing of Chang and arrack. It is the obligation of every man to visit their kin to maintain his good relation with them. In Kunagod Settlement apart from their friends and relatives the people visit all those who came from their district in Tibet, to maintain the bondage of unity. During night these people with such common background, come together to sing and dance. It is common that those who are in sectarian or regional minority will join the major groups in their villages in celebrating this festival.
The third day festival activity starts with a worship to the family deities, spirits in nature and offering of foods to them. All the Tibetans in the Settlement collect on the top of the hill (lorbu rgyal) where the worship for these gods (lamps) takes place. This hill is away from the village site. At the officially announced time, in the morning, the monks, lamas and commoners from all the villagers assemble here. First they offer chang and tea to the nature controlling spirits. They also chant mantras in honour of benevolent deities from the sacred book Gâbo Kunse Pokhan Thãngmo Nöchik Pelâ and a sacred book for worshipping the pal-lden lhâmo is read. The rectangular or square shaped flags (tharick) - of thin cloth of 10" - 12" size, printed with the sacred syllables, are tied to the threads and tied to the poles erected on the hill. Tibetans believe that these holy flags will even flow through the wind and take away the bad spirits which troubled men. They also offer tsampa (flour of the roasted maize or wheat) food to the god of fire. At the completion of the recitation of the syllables all the people assemble and stand in a circle and throw tsampa towards the sky so that the spirits in nature who control it, will receive them. By the dawn of this day the old flags from the poles in front of their houses, will be replaced with new ones and a worship is performed for it.
On the fifteenth day all the monks and lamas assemble in the monastery of Lama Village No. 2 and observe the Great prayer or Mon-lam festival. Regarding the celebration of this festival the Tibetans tell a story, of deity of Pa-Ma-Sha, the oracle deity of Se-Ra monastery. Ra-Ma-Sha, the oracle deity of Le-Ra monastery was holding his position as the oracle deity of Se-Ra monastery at the time of fifth Palai Lama. It is said with the increase of importance to Dre-jung, the Pa-Ma-Sha became jealous. So he misled some poison to the tea used by Dre-jung congregation. But the Naichung - the oracle of the Dre-jung monastery, hurled a knife from Dre-jung monastery to Lhasa and wounded the deity Pa-Ma-Sha in his leg. From that day the Dre-jung monastery started celebrating the occasion of expelling the Pa-Ma-Sha from the monastery as the Great Prayer festival.

Rituals also take place for the chastisement of devils. After the end of the services the lamas and monks followed by their Khen-Ro - the Abbot, go round the monastery. In Tibet this function was celebrated as follows: The column of men behind the Abbot, carried a huge effigy of skull, raised on a stand painted with designs. The Khen-Ro executes a mystic
dance. Then the monks and lamas came to the southern suburb. After them comes the oracle Nai-Chung, in a trance, with his attendants. On coming within the sight of the suburb, where two pyres are standing, Nai-Chung shoots an arrow in the direction of the pyres. The pyres are then immediately lighted and the skull effigy was thrown into the fire amid volleys of shots by the foot soldiers. Across the river, towards a hill, a black tent stands with a black sheep — symbol of a demon, chained inside. Burning the effigy spread to the public the news of the defeat of the demon and shouts spread to the public news of the defeat of Buddha's enemies (Tsung-lieh Shen and Shen-chieh Liu, 1953:185-186). Over here these rituals have been considerably simplified. The Abbots with the lamas and monks simply go round the monastery with burning lamps in their hands. This is followed by competitions in weight lifting, running, cycling, foot races, etc. After the celebrations are over all the monks return to their respective monasteries.

Tibetans have still maintained the practice of staging traditional Tibetan dramas (Temo). For staging the dramas the artists use masks. The dramas
are mostly historical and mythological depicting life of a king or a senior lama or the gods and the goddesses. Both men and women take part in the dramas. Dramas contain for the most part songs and dialogues accompanied with music and action. Singing will be of very high and very low tunes. Usually most of the people of the Settlement assemble to watch the dramas. They also stage small plays depicting the life of nomads in the Tibetan mountains, Tibetan animals, etc. After the show is over the participants are honoured by the village leaders by presenting them with 'hā-tā.

While in Tibet festivals were also observed to mark the change of seasons. Tibetans recognise only winter and summer seasons. They celebrated rites to mark the change in their dresses according to these seasons. The Palai lama also changed his living quarters from Loyala to Norbu Ling-ka in summer. This change of residence was observed as a festival.

The fourth month is a blessed month, for the Buddha was born and attained Nirvana and Buddhahood in this month. Tsung-Lien Shen and Shen-Chi Liu (1953:159) says this whole month was considered as a meatless month and people also observe penance. A few
observe fast from Sunrise to Sunset, and also a few observe silence, for eight days, fifteen days and so on. Tsung-Lien Shen and Shen-Chi juiu (Ibid, 160), said further that a few sat quietly beside the monasteries turning their prayer wheels and muttering scriptures. While others sat beside a running stream, dipping their water prayer wheels into the current. Still others went around the monastery by measuring their body length by prostration.

In Hunegod, the fourth month is a very busy in terms of agricultural operations such as sowing and weeding. So the people do not devote much time for festive activities except lighting oil lamps near the family altar, attending important rituals arranged in monasteries and inviting monks to perform rituals at their homes.

Water festival is another important festival. Waddell (1974: 509) says it is thanks giving feast. On the festival day, after the pooja (蝾) on the Morba ray, the devotees run to the nearby streams and canals and take a bath. Though
Tibetans are not habituated to taking bath regularly, on that day they take cold water bath and request the water spirits to give them the sacred water. On the last day of the festival one member from each family assembles near the village gate. Under the leadership of the village headman they go around the village fields carrying sacred books, photos of reincarnated lamas, etc. It is believed that the sacred objects drive away evil spirits and the crop will be blessed by these sacred lamas and lands will yield good crops.

The Tibetans have added a few more festivals to their traditional list. For example they celebrate the 10th March as the Uprising Day. On that day all the Tibetans - monks and lay, young and old, men and women, line-up under their leaders. The Tibetan national flags are waved and slogans against China and Chinese rule in Tibet are shouted and they march to Village No. 3, where the office of the representative of the Dalai Lama is located. A meeting starts with prayers for the freedom of Tibet and for the protection of H.H. the Dalai Lama. Important leaders of the Settlement, both secular and expenses were born by either the appointed family or the community as a whole. In case if the head of the family is dead, the responsibility of giving the feasts
to the community at their turn was taken over by the other members of the family or the widow. But in some other festivals the villagers contributed equally both in cash and kind and also actively participated in it. Feasts given to helping spirits are the other celebrations. Tibetans never missed these occasions to give a feast and earn the good will of the community people and also of gods and spirits.

Today many of the community level festivals are not celebrated since they have lost their significance. Above all the people coming from different districts and regions do not consider a particular rite to be essential and so no unanimity is found with them. A few families who still believe in these rites observe them at only family level.

Life Cycle Rituals:

All human beings have to pass through certain stages of life prescribed by their society. At every stage of social recognition certain rituals are performed. They are called the life cycle rituals or the rites of passage as termed by Van Gennep. The individual thus is recognised by the society and is
accepted by the members in it. For example an individual does not become a member of his society merely by being born; as an infant he is named publicly and presented to his kins and the members of his society. The individual enters into a new relationship with his community and the world with new responsibilities by passing through these life cycle rituals at the certain stages of his life. Birth, marriage and death bring adjustments and readjustments in the social structure of a society. For example after the marriage of one person he passes off from his childhood to adulthood bringing him a new status and new roles to be performed not only in his family but also as a member of his society. This also brings change in the status and roles of other members of his family. The individual is not only elevated in his social status but also in ritual aspects. The rituals generally include religious purificatory rites, and ceremonies for sanctifying the body, mind and intellect of an individual. These rituals are significant throughout the life of an individual.

Tibetans with their Buddhist influence, view life in two separate ways – the life of a householder and the spiritualistic one. Among these again the
latter is more important than the first, where societal good is stressed. So social recognition rather than the ritual process is important in Tibetan life cycle rituals. At the time of celebration of these rituals, the role of a lama or a monk, the priestly group, is less significant. But, a few families who can afford costly rituals, invite one or more monks and conduct the rituals for the future worldly benefits of that individual. But these rituals do not have any importance in the social acceptance of the individual.

It is noticed that death has ritual significance among the Tibetans and monks are invited to conduct rituals for the benefit of the soul. In this way the religious rituals performed by the monks can be distinguished from the ones performed for social gains and since they differ in their aims and values. Social rituals are performed for one's acceptance in the society and the religious rituals are celebrated to get spiritualistic path which ultimately ends in Nirvana. So every individual to get himself into the ecclesiastic group has to undergo an initiation ceremony, consisting of a series of rituals and taking of certain oaths to keep himself away from the worldly life. Thus
Birth Ceremony

Child birth always takes place in the conjugal home of the woman. Child birth is viewed as a polluting incident and so it always takes place in a tent erected away from the living quarters. Child birth also defies both the mother and the child and so for three days in case of the birth of a male child and four days in case of a female child, they are segregated from the group. On the third or the fourth day as the case may be, the mother and child are given a holy bath and brought inside the house. Certain rituals are performed to the family deity to bless the mother and the child and to keep them away from evil spirits. Now due to lack of space and facilities these customs are rarely observed. The only room available for child birth in the house is the room where the family altar is put. Due to pollution involved in birth, ideally
this room cannot be used. But a curtain is put to separate symbolically the altar from the area where birth takes place. The mother, who will be in the state of ritual impurity will be provided with a separate bed and other things for personal use. She is also prohibited from entering the kitchen and touch the hearth.

On the day of purification a rite is celebrated for which kinsmen and friends come with presents - three sacred scarfs, one each to the father, mother and the newly born child, together with Chang, and some amount of cash or a piece of new cloth to the child. Those who held a very close relationship bring valuable gifts such as gold ornaments to the child. A few may even bring new clothes for the parents of the child. The maternal grand parents of the child are to bring not only the golden ring (or any other ornaments) to the child but also new clothes to the parents and the child. Community members present tea, ghee, eggs, mutton, fruits and tsampa. This ceremony of presenting gifts is locally known as Tshem-dil. On the same day the naming ceremony (pham-ng En-ng) is arranged in which the parents give a temporary name
to the child. After one month a lama is consulted to choose a permanent name to the child, considering the day and time of child birth. The guests are treated with a heavy meal and chānā.

No puberty rites are performed for girls among the Tibetans. Women in their menstruation period are considered polluted and so for three days they are prohibited to go near the family altar and to enter a monastery. After three days and after taking an oil bath she is considered ritually purified. However, a woman who stays alone in her house is exempted from these ritual observations because without anybody to assist in the house she will have to miss her daily worships and food.

Marriage Ceremony:

Dawn Norbu (1974:94) quoting his mother's words says - 'The duty of the good parents is to prepare their children for the journey through life'. He (Ibid:192) quotes a Tibetan proverb which says 'Girls and garlic should be sold before their most dies'. That means, girls will be given in marriage at an early age. Wedding rites are usually arranged after the harvest season, during the months of December and
February. A Tibetan marriage has no legal or religious implications. The Tibetans being luck addicts an animistic rite would be performed on the roof of the world on the wedding morning.

In the selection of spouse, usually the groom's party approaches the bride's family to ask the girl in marriage (ma-ma). The procedure will be a reverse one in case of a ma-po marriage. In other words it can be said whoever wants a spouse approaches the other party. As a rule matrilocal marriages take place at the bride's residence and patrilocal marriages at the groom's residence. To understand a Tibetan marriage, the ma-po marriage is discussed here in detail. The groom's mother's brother or any other close relative standing in the same kinship relation or a friend (trokh-po) of the groom's father, at the former's absence, approaches the bride's family asking for the hand of the girl. If the bride's party is willing for the negotiation, on an auspicious day selected consulting a lama, the groom's father along with the above mentioned members, approach the bride's father and presents him with new clothes, oba, and the ma-po as gifts. During this visit the quality and the quantity
of marriage gifts (lvgo也随之) to be exchanged are settled. Later the guests are entertained with a heavy meal and chang.

Depending upon the case -  nh-ba or the gyen-pa marriage, bride or groom price is paid to the parents as breast milk price. It varies from one rupee, in case of poor families to one thousand rupees or even more in case of rich families. In Tibet a number of livestock of much more value were given a bridgroom price. Though its importance is lessenend here in India it is still followed as an important custom. At the same time, as we have already discussed, women have equal status with men here. She is entitled for a share in her parental property. Among Tibetan nomads it was a practice to give a number of livestocks - sheep, yak, horse, etc., to their daughters during the marriage. Valuable dresses and ornaments and some amount of cash, were given in case of peasants and traders; and the nobles paid her both. The things given to a girl in her marriage are listed on a piece of paper (mve-nyik). In future if the marriage breaks, the husband has to return all those things enlisted to his divorced wife.
The auspicious day and the time for a marriage is fixed by consulting a lama. Dawn is considered the most auspicious time for celebrating a marriage. People who arranged for the marriage and attended the betrothal ceremony come to the bride's family one day prior to the marriage day, to make arrangements for the rite. The kinsmen and family friends are informed of the marriage day, well in advance. Nearer relatives come well in advance to the wedding family to prepare food, drink and dress for the marriage. They erect tents and arrange for beds for the members of the visiting bridal party.

The people from U-Tsang province brought many types of ornaments, clothes, etc., to present for their brides. Customarily the groom's father's brother presents those gifts to the bride. The Tibetans of Kham-ha province do not give any thing to a bride, except the bride price (nu-xi-ng). Bride's parents depending upon their financial status, give her 3, 5 or 9 types of ornaments. Among these the head ornament (Thæ-Kho-h-a-ba), which is U shaped and made of gold, pearls, and beads, is considered the most important one. As a custom this is given only by the groom's parents.
It is customary that the mother's brothers (real or classificatory) of the groom to be present at the bride's residence one day earlier to the marriage day to bring the bride to the groom's family. Male kin get busy entertaining the men from the groom's party, with chang, glasses after glasses and singing songs. On the other side the female kin prepare the bride for the rite with her new clothes and ornaments. Exchange of Cha-tē and good wishes take place between the Kinsmen - each saying Tha-Shi Da-leigh to the other. A sacred divine dagger (Dā-dar) and a stick covered with five coloured (red, green, yellow, blue and white) silk strips or ribbons is put on the neck of the bride to bring her good luck. This also helps to keep evils and demons away from her way to her conjugal home. In her first journey to her conjugal home the bride is accompanied by one of her closest girl friends (pha-gyo), who consoles and gives her moral support and her mother's brothers. It is customary for the bride and her parents to weep and even loudly at this time of parting.

At the scheduled time the five married women, who are the actual or the classificatory sisters of the groom and his mother wait at the door of their house holding kettles full of Tibetan tea and chang; to welcome the
bride. The groom's mother welcomes the bride wishing her good luck (Ta-shi De-leigh). Now the bride takes the chang with her fourth finger of right hand and sprinkles it thrice towards the sky as an offering to the family deity. She is now asked to enter the house putting her right leg first. In the house she is made to sit on the left side of the groom who is already seated on a cot. The Pho-gyu also sits by the side of the bride. Similarly the bride's mother's brothers sit in a line, to the right of the bridal couple and the groom's mother's brothers sit in a line to the left. At first the groom's parents garland the newly weds and then the maternal uncles of the bridal couple. The nearest kin are served with a full bowl of sweet rice (De-See), prepared mixing sugar, rice and ghee. Later they are served generously with chang till they get drunk. Meanwhile ceremonial songs are also sung. The close kins, both the cognatic and affinals, visit the bridal couple and present them with many types of new clothes. The distant relatives and friends (trok-po) present only cash and chang, and also honour the bridal couple, their parents and their mother's brothers and the pho-gyu with Kha-ti. One Kha-ti is also put over the throsheo-chemoi — a box divided into two equal halves and fixed with sweets and corns in one and tsampa in the other and over these the sugar lumps or chocolates are covered,
Invittees on their arrival, throw little tea-pa towards the altar thrice and then put a pinch of it into their mouth also. Of the ten Kha-tas brought by them one is offered to the family altar and one each to the bride, groom, groom's parents, the kin who brought the girl, bride's mother's brothers accompanying the girl and the phe-gyu. Kha-tas are also presented to other members of the groom's party such as the kins helping the family in conducting the marriage. In a few cases cash is individually presented to all the above mentioned persons.

A Tibetan marriage lasts for three days. All these three days friends and kinsmen who have come together for the occasion eat, drink, sing, dance and enjoy the stay. If it is an inter-district marriage the two bridal parties cannot sing and dance together since they differ much in their culture. So one will watch as the other perform a dance. Since they all belong to one ritual group they drink chang using common glasses and taking from common kettle placed at the centre of the hall. When a low caste guest is part taking in the marriage feast he is provided with a separate glass to drink.

A lavish three day marriage is not the order today. A poor man's marriage ends in a day since he cannot
afford all the luxury. My informants told that here in Mundgod, marriage ceremonies have become very simple and economical. In Tibet rich families celebrated marriages spending lavishly and invited relatives and friends well in advance and also retained them entertaining for weeks and months. A large number of monks and lamas, even higher ones were invited to conduct rituals and bless the bridal couple. The family also spent more on the costly gifts exchanged such as the gold and silver ornaments and clothing. Now all these have disappeared and only essential things are brought and essential persons are invited for the rite.

Death Rituals:

For Tibetans death is not a sorrowful act. They consider it an another chance given to the soul to take rebirth. The Tibetans believe that rebirth is based on the good and bad deeds done in one's previous existences. Depending upon the case a system of rewards and punishments such as sinking down the soul with bad deeds (Dig-pa) through the lower stages of human and animal existence, and lifting the good (Ge-wa) soul to the level of higher birth are given.

A dying person should forget his family, property and followers and concentrate on the lama who leads his
soul. It is believed those who die with desires will take a rebirth and his soul rotates through the cycle of birth and death - the 'Wheel of life'. As Waddell (1974:101) records the wheel of life has six forms arranged in the following form and order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>The Gods (Lha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Titans (Lha-ma-yin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Man (Mi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Beasts (Du-go)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Tantalized Ghosts (Yi-dvag) and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Sent to Hell (Nal-K'ea)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After death each soul is sent to these worlds depending upon the merit he possesses in his previous life. According to the Tibetans the first three worlds are considered good and are known as heaven. The last three are termed as hell. There are eight types of miseries under Buddhism. They are the miseries of:

1. birth, 2. old age, 3. sickness, 4. death,
5. existence, 6. misfortunes and punishments for law breaking, 7. separation from relatives and cherished objects, 8. offensive objects and sensations (Waddel, 1974:101).
It is believed necessary to conduct worship after the death, to releave the soul from the worldly attachment and to wish him a better life than one in any lower animal groups. Worships continue for seven weeks and many relatives and friends work hard for their success. Usually a large number of guests are invited to the first and the last day rites. Close relatives bring food and chang is large quantity. It is believed that for forty-nine days the soul of the departed suspend in a state of "middle being", i.e. intervening between this life and the next. Finally it reaches its destiny - hell or heaven, depending upon its good and bad deeds in life.

When a Tibetan is seriously ill his family members consult a monk-astrologer, to find out the reason and remedies for it. If the suggested remedies prove fruitless they may commission lamas and monks to conduct rites to remove malignant spirits from the house and to recite sacred books for the patient's benefit.

On death the corpse is covered with a sheet of white cloth and immediately words are sent for a lama since others cannot touch it. On his arrival the lama inspects the corpse to determine through which part of the body the soul has emerged. It is believed that a saint's soul escapes through his head and a relatively good man's
through his eyes. Escaping through the nose is an indication of the soul's rebirth in the titans and that which goes out through the mouth will take its rebirth in an animal. The soul which goes out through the lower hole is believed to get rebirth in hell. It is only those souls which go out through the heart and with pain, will take rebirth as human beings.

After his inspection the lama starts reciting a prayer (Pho-giu). He consults an astrological manual (tsi-pi) and a calendar (do-du), to know where, in which manner and by whom the corpse should be disposed off. In considering it, the factors like the year in which the person was born, the day, month and week and the time of death, the constellation of stars at the time of death, the position of Pum-dung - a bird like structure with a human body, are taken into account.

In preparing the corpse for funeral rites no assistance is taken from any members of the mourning family. Fellow villagers who are experienced in this work do it. The corpse is then tied up in a sitting position with the help of a rope and is covered in a white sheet of cloth and placed, with its back to the wall, near the main entrance to the house. Over its head
is put a printed paper containing many auspicious symbols and syllables to protect the corpse against evil spirits. The torma (the idols made in tsempa) are prepared in accordance with the astrological book - Droma kundrol, to represent the deities to be worshipped.

The lamas recite the mantras for the whole day and night, till the corpse is carried for disposal. While in Tibet the corpse was disposed off only after three, seven or more days, till the auspicious day was found. The cold weather in Tibet slowed down the decomposition of the body and so they could keep the corpse that long. But in Mundgod a corpse is disposed off within one day and that too by cremation and not by any other means. So the act of consulting the astrological book has become insignificant in this respect. Now immediately after the death a few rites are performed and the body is removed to the cremation ground lest it decomposes.

Now only a few lamas are invited to the death rites, depending upon the economic status of the family. While in Tibet many lamas and monks were invited to chant syllables, and to read sacred books. A senior lama guided them in their activities. Owing to loss of this religious significance now the funeral rites have become short,
Kinsmen and friends of the deceased person and the family as a sort of consolation bring KhE-tE to put on the corpse. They also bring chang for the members of the mourning family and also contribute in cash, for the funeral rites. The mourning family on its part entertained them with food, chang and tea for the days till the disposal of the corpse. Whenever the invitees eat and drink some food is also offered to the corpse (later this is thrown away). Even after its disposal the corpse is given food three times a day, for forty nine days. This is because of the belief that the soul of the dead roams around the house during this period to accept food. In a few cases food is offered to the soul through smoke by putting a mixture of butter, barley, sugar, milk and sandal wood, on fire.

Conducting rituals for the benefit of the spirit of the dead is a costly affair since a large number of lamas, kinsmen and friends are invited and fed. To lessen the burden on the mourning family wellwishers and kinsmen come forward with help - both in cash and kind. In Mundgod the funeral rites of Tibetans who are destitu- tutes, is performed by the friends and village members.
By doing this ritual act they believe that they earn merit (Oe-wa) in life. A few such persons save enough money for their same funeral rites and leave it with a favourite lama or a friend, with instructions to conduct their funeral rites properly. A few also leave some amount of money to be donated to different monasteries in the settlement and throughout India. There are cases of two persons from the old and informal blocks who saved Rs. 650/- and Rs. 525/- each towards their death rites. After their death, as per their last wish, their savings were utilized for their death rites and a part of it was also sent to all the monasteries in India. Tibetans believe that their death rituals should be performed using the money saved by them only and not from the contributions of others; or else their souls will not get peace.

Tibetans believe that human body is made up of four elements - fire, water, earth and wind and use one of these elements to dispose off the body. Thus the Tibetans practise all the four means of disposal of the dead body - cremation, burial, floating in water and exposure to wind i.e. feeding to vultures, so that it mixes with the four elements. In Tibet those who died of infectious diseases were buried in the earth. For this a deep pit was dug and a cave was dug in one of
its walls so that the body was placed in it in the sitting posture. Later it was covered with mud. The second mode was cremation which was adopted only for high lamas. The funeral ash was later collected and mixed with clay. This was moulded into hundreds of tiny symbols of pagoda and were finally put into chorten. The most popular mode was the je-tor, feeding the vultures. A group of people known as Ru-ba, took away the corpse along with the belongs of the dead such as his clothing, beds, etc., which served as their fee. In villages where these people were not present, any body kin or friends, except those who were prohibited to touch the body carried away the corpse to a nearby hillock (To-ryo) and cut the body into pieces. The heirs on the corpse were burnt. The pieces were then left to vultures (pro) to feed on. Sometimes it also happened that the vultures did not come readily to eat. In these cases it was believed that the dead person had committed lot of sin in life and so a lama is requested to perform some more rituals at that spot, chant some more syllables and ring the holy bells louder. It was believed it made the vultures to come and feed on. After everything soft was eaten by the vultures, the bones and the skull were powdered and mixed with tsampa, and this was again fed to the vultures. In this way everything which belonged to the dead person was removed from the
sight and this was done with the belief the body without soul has no significance and should be removed completely.

The last mode of the disposal of dead was to throw the corpse into water, by tying stones to it. By this the corpse was allowed to be eaten by fishes.

On their arrival in Mundgod settlement the Tibetans faced some problems in disposing their dead in the traditional modes. Feeding to vultures horified the local people and a few nearby Indian villagers who saw them cutting the corpse into pieces and pounding the bones complained to the local police and health officials to intervene and stop it. On realizing that these Tibetan methods of disposal of dead are hazardous to health now they are strictly prohibited. In this connection the higher authorities of the Tibetan settlement are taken into confidence to see that the cutting and exposing methods are stopped and the settlers adopt local methods.

Now the Tibetans cremate their dead and this is the only mode of disposal of the dead adopted by Tibetans in Mundgod. This brought a few psychological and value problems to the people. Especially the old and the traditional minded and those who had already
expressed their desire to dispose their corpse in one of the traditional methods, got upset when they heard about the prohibition. Even in cremating their dead the Tibetans face a few problems. As of now there is only one cremation ground in the Settlement and the dead from all the villages have to be carried here. The distance and other factors have made it difficult for them to adhere to the auspicious time and place, directions of disposal and so on which all have some ritual and religious relevance. To overcome this problem the Tibetans are forced to perform a few special rites to please the gods, souls and also to secure mental peace for themselves.

Now when a death takes place it is the duty of the headman (Po-mbo) and the sub-leader (Chok-pen) of the village to arrange for the cremation. Immediately after the death, the sub-leader consults a monk-astrologer and arranges for further activities. The kinmen and friends of the dead follow the suggestions and directions given by this leader. This is untraditional since in Tibet it was an elderly person who guided them. The corpse is bent to an embryonic shape and later tied in a sheet of white cloth. The eldest son of the deceased, as his last obligation towards his father, carries the corpse for a short distance from the house. Here he hands it over to another
person who carries it to the cremating place and as a
custom the members of the mourning family will not be
present at the cremation.

The funeral procession is preceded by a lama
who tinkles a bell as he walks. After reaching the
cremation ground the body will be covered with wood.
A distant relative lights the pyre and never a close
relative like the son, father, brother, husband, sister
or wife. The lama present at the funeral, chants spells
and also sprinkles the eight different offerings - wheat,
barley, rice, linseed, buckwheat, grass and mustard seed
to the fire. As a custom the funeral party waits there
till the whole thing burns down to ashes. Later the ash
will be collected and mixed with mud and colour. Out of
this mixture a number of small idols of their family
deity or that of their favourite deity, are moulded.
They are known as tser-di and later they are placed in
a holy place (chörten), a pagoda like structure.

The funeral rites for an adult will be more
elaborate since he will have committed more sins during
his equally longer span of life and children need only
a few and short rituals.
Shrines and Pilgrimages:

Going on pilgrimages to holy places were most common among Tibetans while in Tibet. Tibet had a great number of sacred sites such as places of reputed reincarnated or supernatural lamas, self created images, relics of the Buddhas, holy footprints, sanctified trees etc. The pious persons throng them with gifts of gold and other precious offerings. The Tibetan Buddhists also had many places of pilgrimage outside Tibet, in India, China, Butan, Sikkim and Nepal. The rich and religious minded ones regularly made trips to these places though they used to cost them time, money and sometimes their life.

The pilgrims in Tibet were restricted by the lack of transportation facilities. The rich people, who could afford moved with transportation animals, servants and food and money, to distant places of pilgrimages and often. The poor visited only the nearer ones and that too rarely.

There are two holy lakes in Tibet - Khang Rimpochhe and Tso Rimpochhe, which are very big and situated on the top of hills. Going round these lakes is considered a religious act and it took 1½ to 2 days to complete a
round. A few Tibetans said that they have gone around the lakes many times. The highest sacred place is Lhasa – the seat of H.H. the Dalai Lama. It is the desire of every Tibetan to visit this holy place as many times as possible, especially at the time of New Year festival, to receive blessings from H.H. the Dalai Lama.

There are also many tombs of the departed grand lamas (Stupa) which are considered the holy places of pilgrimage. The famous tomb of Jā-run Ka-sor Cho-rten lying about two miles to the north-east of Khatmandu, was also visited by the Tibetans. The sacred mountain wū-tai, in Northern China, believed to be the birth place of Manjuesi – the God of knowledge, also served as a place of pilgrimage. A few monasteries are also visited on pilgrimage. Among them the famous monastery of the Panchen Lama at Thashi Lumps, is important.

Situations at present have changed a lot and one cannot dream of visiting the shrines in Tibet. The paradox of their life is those shrines which were dearer and nearer have been lost to them and those which were once beyond their reach such as Buddha Gaya have become nearer. Many Tibetans said when they were in transit camps in Northern Himalayan regions, they were able to
visit many Buddhist temples and monasteries which are considered most sacred by the Buddhists. They also told they were very much happy for having a chance to see these sacred places where the founder of their religion—the Gautama Buddha, took his birth, attained Nirvana and preached his disciples. Tibetans who can afford to visit sacred places such as Sarnath, Buddha Gaya, Nalanda, Lumbini, etc., do so once a year. Whenever they go to North India they also make it a point to visit Dharmasala, the place where H.H. the Dalai Lama lives now. A few Tibetans told that by visiting these places they get peace of mind. Others are of the opinion that to some extent, they can even forget their stresses and strains by visiting these holy places.