CHAPTER IV

Influence of Indian Democracy over Tibetans
Tibet, which is situated along the border of India, has shared historical developments not only through religion and cultural symbols but also. Development of democratic institutions in the monasteries occurred in Tibet through spread of Buddhism. Tibet is strongly influenced by Buddhism which originally founded in India. In both the spiritual and temporal realms, Tibetans have been grateful recipients of gifts from India: their Buddhist heritage and their new-found experience of democracy. Upon arriving in exile almost forty- four years ago, the present Daila Lama brought with him the seeds of a democratization plan which would now have the opportunity of flourishing within the world’s largest democracy. One might ask how this could be possible, given the isolation and lack of political experience of this religion leader. It must be understood that the concepts of modernization were not totally new to the educated elite of Tibet. Although the rural Tibetan herder might be ignorant of the outside world and far removed from formal education, this was not true of the Dalai Lama, especially the thirteenth and fourteenth in the twentieth century. They were not only exposed to Western ideas, but with the imperialistic designs of early twentieth century Russia, China, and Britain. Thus these leaders became more accustomed to dealing with the representatives of such nations.

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Origin of Indian Buddhism

Initially, Buddhism remained one of the many small sects in India. The main breakthrough came when King Asoka 270-232 BC was converted to Buddhism. He did not make it a state religion, but supported all ethical religions. He played an important role in spreading Buddhism across India and beyond, most importantly Sri Lanka. The idea of the religion propagated by Asoka mentioned in the second Minor Rock Edict is as follows:

Father and Mother must be obeyed; similarly respect for living creatures must be enforced; truth must be spoken. For spread of Buddhism, Asoka himself went on tour of the country to explain the tenets of Buddhism to the people. He organized Dharma Yatras and declared his policy as one of Dharma Vijaya and Dhamma Ghosha. He engaged his officers like the Yuktas, Rajukutas, Purushas and Pradeshkas to preach the Law of Piety besides furnishing their official duties. Buddhism laid great emphasis on the Law of Karma its working and the transmigration of souls. The condition of man in this life and the next, he argued, depends upon his own deeds. We are born again and again to reap the fruits of our Karma. This is Law of Karma.

The Buddha had two kinds of dispels monks (Bhikshas) and lay worshipper (Uparikas). The former were organized into the Sangha or congregation, the number of which had increased with spread of Buddhism. The membership of the Sangha or the religion order was open to all persons, male or female above 15 years of age and who were free from leprosy, consumption and other infection diseases. Persons who were in the service of kind or an individual or who were indebt or had been branded as robbers or criminals were refused admission in to the Sangha.

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3 Ibid.
Asoka's Conversion to Buddhism

As the legend goes, a day after the end of the Kalinga war, Ashoka ventured out to roam the city and all he could see were burnt houses and scattered corpses. This sight made him sick and he lamented "What have I done?" The brutality of the war transformed him. He adopted Buddhism and used his power and position to propagate the relatively new philosophy far and wide, sending missionaries as far as ancient Rome and Alexandria in Egypt. Asoka, who had once been described as "the cruel Ashoka" (Chandashoka), started became "the pious Asoka" (Dharmashoka). He made Buddhism his state religion around 260 BC. He propagated the Vibhajyavada school of Buddhism (from Vibhaajja, “analysis”; and vada, the precursor of Theravada Buddhism discussion.\(^4\) Buddhist missionaries in Egypt led to speculation that similarity between the teaching of Jesus Christ and Buddha might be due to Jesus Christ's encounter with these monks. The pre-Christian ascetic known as the “Therapeutic” is believed to have been derived from Theravada.

Influence of Buddhism over Tibet

Indian democratic institutions wield considerable influence over Tibetans through religion which became the basis for developing Tibetan democratic institutions. Historically, Buddhism spread to Central Asia from India. Various seats

\(^4\) Ibid.
of Tibetan Buddhism in Nepal are generally the subsidiaries of those in Tibet. The High Lamas of the Himalaya border countries, Central Asia and Siberia who were dependent on Tibet for religions education and training always played an important role in shaping the destiny of their peoples and guided their political relations with India, Russia and China. The concept of democracy is not alien to the Tibetans. At the heart of Buddhism lies the idea that the potential for awakening and perfection is present in every human being and personnel efforts are required to realize that potential. The Buddha proclaimed that each individual is a master of his or her own destiny, highlighting the ability that each person holds the capability to achieve the enlightenment. In this sense, there is recognition of a fundamental sameness of all human beings in the Buddhist worldview. Similar to these fundamental Buddhist concepts, modern democracy is based on the principle that all human beings are essentially equal that each of us has equal rights to life, liberty and happiness. We desire happiness and seek to avoid suffering. Each of us has an equal right to pursue these goals. Thus, Buddhism and democracy are not only compatible, but also have roots in the same understanding of equality and the potential of the individual.

Democratic reforms are on the rise around the globe, from the Czech Republic to South Africa to Mongolia to Taiwan, is testimony to the strength of the ideals that democracy embodies. These global trends illustrate the universality of the desire for a democratic form of government, which respects human rights and rule of law. As

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5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
more and more people becoming educated as to their individual potential, they seek to express themselves through democratic system.\(^7\)

As Tibetan Buddhists strongly believe that they must have a human approach to democracy, an approach that recognizes the importance of the individual but does not sacrifice the sense of universal responsibility. At the same time, when Tibetans focus on the potential of individual, Buddhists harp on the purpose of a meaningful life.\(^8\)

Buddha on the whole, declared metaphysical questions irrelevant and emphasized the importance of a simple moral life in accordance with four noble truths that are: the world is full of sufferings; sufferings are caused by human desires; renunciation of desires is the salvation (nirvana); and salvation is possible according to eight principles, i) right views, ii) right resolves, iii) true speech, iv) right conduct, v) right livelihood, vi) right effort, vii) right recollection, and vii) right meditation and the middle way which would avoid the extremes of sensual indulgence and asceticism.

Moreover, Buddhism adopted a rational position, namely, that human life is governed by casual principles and not left to divine intervention. This law describes that man should follow the eight-fold path. Attachment to the world is irrational and should be suppressed. The only virtuous way is one which allows withdrawal from the

\(^7\) Ibid.

Buddhism rejects the hereditary basis of caste system in India, and since it considers the world becomes irrelevant, caste also becomes irrelevant.

In the context of political development, there is no full fledged treatment of political ideas in Buddhist literature. Some hints and suggestions are contained in 'Digha Nikaya' and the 'Jatak' stories. Early Buddhists termed politics as a necessary evil.

Two features stand out very clearly to the origin of the state. First, Buddhism subscribes to the Social Contract Theory of the origin of the state. It is not difficult to see the connection between this and the association of Buddhism with the responsibilities of the period. According to it, everything was well in the beginning. But with the origin of property and family, began the fall of man as it led to the feelings of mine and thine, to conflict, rule and subordination. There is an eternal law to govern the behaviors of individual. In the absence of a ruler to enforce it, it is not followed at this point and people then decide to enter into contract with each other and entrust power to a king who governs them in accordance with Dharma. Dharma stood for principles which brought about order in these elements.

The second important principle that politics far from being the condition of all other activities which became an abode of delusion, an obstruction to righteousness, contrary to the practice of dharma which demands quietude. This is well brought out in Asvaghosa’s Life of Buddha, while the Mahabharata admitted the importance of connecting morals with experience in the establishment of order in the state. Buddhist

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9 Ibid, p.11.
literature tended to emphasize the absolute value of non-violence as well as the importance of moral principles in the governance of society. It did not recognize the autonomy of public or political morality and declared ‘a King is unrighteous if he does not follow dharma’. The consequences of such a rule would be that all his subjects and ministers would become unrighteous; nature would not follow its course; there would be no rain, so no crops. Sometimes Buddhism also conceded that it is necessary to practice evil but the general impression one gets is that there is contempt for politics which is considered a game of deceit and treachery. The ‘Sadharna Pundrika’ went to the extent of saying that the Buddhist monks must not enjoy the position of kings or princes, and royal officials.\(^\text{10}\)

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 national culture behavior, law, economics, politics, medicine, science and technology. Religion acquires a person as a member of its society through socialization or culturalisation.\(^\text{11}\)

Emile Durkheim 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. However, there is no church of magic. Thus religion forms an important aspect in the cultural system of a society. It holds the individuals in the social, cultural and physical relations. It maintains the

\(^{10}\) *Tibetans in India; The uprooted people and their cultural transplantation* – Saklani, p.247.

\(^{11}\) Ibid.
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.12

Buddhism originated in India in the 5th century BC in an area that extended roughly from Varanasi to Gaya, Rajagarh and Pataliputra. Buddhism developed in two directions. Known as Theravada, the true tradition of Buddha’s teachings is also known as the Hinayana. The others called as Mahayana, ‘the means of salvation adapted to a larger number of people’. Both lead to Nirvana through salvation. Currently, one more branch, the Tantrism, is added as a school of Buddhist thought. Each branch, however, has several sub-groups. Tibetan Buddhism is unique because it contains both the traditions known as Theravada and Mahayana. The distinctive form of Tibetan Buddhism developed in Tibet in seventh and eighth centuries, is identified with Bon, the pre-Buddhist religion. It includes the institution of the incarnate Lamas, the presence of married Lamas and the spiritual and temporal powers invested in the person of the Dalai Lama.13 It also includes Vajrayana though it is called Tantrism or the Mantragama. It holds the Mahayana concept of Nirvana as its main basis. Nirvana or the voidness is seen as the passive wisdom which is like a diamond beyond all duality.

Tantrism 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 physical and mental process. Bon religion had many animistic magical rites of sacrificing animals and even humans in the

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12 Ibid., p.21.
ancient times, besides the practices of black magic to humans and the practice of black magic to bring the bad effects on enemies.

Tibetans who were without a cultural heritage and were slaves of century old superstition, suddenly awoke to welcome the new religion. They translated, comprehended and explicated the most difficult works of Mahayana speculation, carrying on the tradition of the most famous monasteries of India. About the seventh century AD, when Europe was still in the Dark Ages, India and China enjoyed an intensely intellectual, artistic and religious life. The Buddhist system of education brought about basic change in India’s education scene from ancient Vedic tradition, which was based on an individual teacher with his small group of disciples in ‘gurugriha’ (the teacher’s house). The Buddhist system was characteristic in the form of large educational federations controlled by a collective body of teachers. This system gave birth to large-scale monastic universities with thousands of teachers and students.

There are four sects in Tibet-Sa-Skya-Pa (named after a place, 1034 AD), Bka-Brg-Yud-pa (Black Hat sect, 1012 AD), Ringing-ma-pa (Red Hat Sect, 810 AD) and Dye-lugs-pa (Yellow Hat sect, 1357 AD). The Dge-Hgspa (Gelugpa-the virtuous) is a reformed sect in Tibet, the members of which are called yellow Hats, from the color of their headgear.

The reign of Srong-brtsan-sgampo from 620 to 649 AD patronized Buddhism in Tibet. He had married princess Wencheng, the daughter of the Chinese Emperor

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Taitsung, and also Bhrikuti Devi, that daughter of the King of Nepal, Amsuvarman. Both these queens were effective in turning their husband to the Buddhist principles and sent people to India, Nepal and China for Buddhist literature and teachers.

Buddhism also got a patron in Khri-Srong-Ide-Btsan, during whose reign (77-797 AD), the first monastery was built at Samye and the Tantric master – the Padmasambhava from India arrived in Tibet. Another Indian monk Santirakshita, whose disciple Kamalasila, represented the Indian point of view in the debate at the Council of Samye (792-794 AD) to decide whether the Indian or the Chinese forms of Buddhism should be followed in Tibet. At the time of King Srong-Tsan Gam-po, Tho-mi Sa-mbo-ta was sent to India, who after staying several years in India, studied under Lipidatta, and returned to Tibet with several literatures on Buddhism and the so called ‘Tibetan’ alphabet. It was he who gave a script to the Tibetan language and composed grammar for this purpose. Depankara Srijnana, who was the head of the Vikramashila University (1034-38 AD) arrived in Tibet at the behest of a Tibetan King and led a movement to reform Buddhism in Tibet.

A few centuries later, Dipankur went to Tibet from Vikramshila and gave the religion which in Tibet was known as second diffusion of Buddhism in Tibet. In this way, Buddhism spread from royal households to laymen and women. The outflow from great ancient Buddhism not only spread the knowledge in India and other Asian nations, but also was instrumental through scholars who graduated from here in

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15 Ibid. pp.251-52.
17 Ibid.
bringing historic reforms in their countries. It created a great wave of humanization originating from India.

With the help of learned Lamas, Buddhism got a facelift in between 10th to the 11th century and the ruling noblemen in western Tibet helped them in their struggle. Many traveled to India in search of books and masters. A great deal of books was translated into Tibetan language. Atisa, the Mahayana master, enabled Buddhism to strike the deep roots in Tibet.

From 1642 AD till the invasion of communists in 1959, the Dye-lugs-pa was the dominant sect in Tibet and the Dalai Lama was the de jure ruler. In 1953, a Buddhist association was set up under the leadership of Shs-rab rgya-ktsho who affirmed that Buddhism was a doctrine of revolutionary character and hence not opposed to new democracy. Monks were directed to participate in reforms, to become reactionaries and to make their religion adapted to the new situation. In 1959, it is alleged that the Chinese authorities in Tibet tried to weaken Buddhism and ultimately suppressed it. After the Dalai Lama fled to India, many temples were destroyed and monks were forced to work with secular persons. Yuan Chwang took home many manuscripts and devoted the rest of his life translating these into Chinese. He founded one of the important schools of Chinese Buddhism.

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18 Shakabpa, pp.252-53.
Ashoka's New Imperial Policy (Dharma)

Emperor Asoka undoubtedly has to be credited with the first serious attempt to develop a Buddhist polity, thus putting into practice the Buddha's own advice on kingship and government contained in the *Dasa Raja Dharma*, including the following ten precepts:

**Buddha’s Ten Precepts**

- Be liberal and avoid selfishness,
- Maintain a high moral character,
- Be prepared to sacrifice one's own pleasure for the well-being of the subjects
- Be kind and gentle,
- Be honest and maintain absolute integrity,
- Be kind and gentle; lead a simple life for the subjects to emulate,
- Be free from hatred of any kind,
- Exercise non-violence,
- Practice patience, and
- Respect public opinion to promote peace and harmony.
Asoka published the following 14 edicts which formed the basis of his new policy:

1. No living beings are to be slaughtered or sacrificed.

2. Human beings and animals are to be provided medical care in his Kingdom.

3. Every five years, his monks would tour the empire teaching the dharma.

4. All should respect parents, priests and monks.

5. Prisoners must be humanely treated.

6. Concerns regarding the welfare of his people must be reported to him at all times no matter where he is or what he is doing.

7. Since all religions desire self-control and purity of heart, all are welcome.

8. He prefers to give to monks and Brahmans and to the needy than to receive gifts from others.

9. Reverence for the dharma and a proper attitude towards teachers is better than marriage or other worldly celebrations.

10. Glory and fame count for nothing if his people do not respect the dharma.
11. Giving the dharma to others is the best gift anyone can have.

12. Whoever praises his own religion, due to excessive devotion, and condemns others with the thought "Let me glorify my own religion," only harms his own religion. Therefore contact (between religions) is good.

13. Conquest by the dharma is superior to conquest by force but if conquest by force is carried out, it should be 'forbearance and light punishment'.

14. He has written his edicts so that people might act in accordance with them (summary of the 14 major rock edicts based on Dhammika's translation, 1993).

Ashoka replaced conquest by force with what he called "conquest by righteousness" (dhammavijaya). He was possibly the first monarch to renounce violence.

Propagation of Buddhism

The Great Stupa at Sanchi, India, a Buddhist monument, was built by Asoka the Great in the third century BC. Silver punch-mark coins of the Mauryan empire bear Buddhist symbols such as the dharma wheel, the elephant (previous form of the Buddha), the tree under which enlightenment happened, and the burial mound where the Buddha died (third century BC)
Ashoka is mainly remembered in the ancient texts as a patron of Buddhist missionary endeavor. His son Venerable Mahinda and daughter Sanghamitra, a Bhikkuni (whose name means "friend of the Sangha"), were instrumental in establishing Buddhism in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and taking copies of the Pail canon of Buddhist scripture (the Tripitaka) with them, which was formalized at the third Buddhist Council convened by Asoka.²⁰ Bhikkunis in Sri Lanka today trace their lineage right back to Asoka's daughter and her cohorts who traveled to Sri Lanka. Although the order had a thousand-year absence in Sri Lanka, it was preserved in Korea and Japan and re-introduced into Sri Lanka in the last century. Sri Lanka remains one of the most important Buddhist societies today and a center of Buddhist scholarship. There are stories of one of Ashoka's missionaries visiting China. The revival of interest in Buddhism in India is also attributable to Ashoka, since it was the rediscovery of his edicts that helped to stimulate interest. Asoka built thousands of stupas and viharas (monasteries/temples) for Buddhist followers.

During the last leg of Asoka's reign, he pursued an official policy of non-violence (ahimsa). Wildlife was protected by the king's diktats against sport hunting and branding; even the unnecessary slaughter or mutilation of animals was abolished. Though limited hunting was permitted for consumption reasons, Asoka preferred and promoted the concept of vegetarianism. Asoka showed mercy to the imprisoned, allowing them freedom to move outside the prison at least for one day every year.

He attempted to raise the professional ambition of the common man by building universities for study (including provisions for women to study) and water transit and irrigation systems for trade and agriculture. He treated his subjects as equals, regardless of their religion, political leanings or caste. The kingdoms surrounding his, so easily overthrown, were instead made to be well-respected allies. Asoka also built hospitals for animals and renovated major roads throughout India. Ashoka defined the main principles of dharma (dhamma) as nonviolence, tolerance of all sects and opinions, obedience to parents, respect for the Brahmans and other religious teachers and priests, liberality towards friends, humane treatment of servants, and generosity towards all. These principles suggest a general ethic of behavior to which no religious or social group could object. Indeed, from his twelfth edict, Asoka appears to have pioneered not only inter-religious dialogue but also the concept that all religions share common truths and values.

Ashokan inscriptions and edicts demonstrate that he was familiar with the Hellenic world (some were written in Greek) but he was never in awe of it. Some of his missionary monks might have been Greek. His edicts, which talk of friendly relations, give the names of both Antiochus of the Seleucid Empire and Ptolemy III of Egypt.\textsuperscript{21}

The fame of the Mauryan Empire was widespread from the time that Ashoka's grandfather Chandragupta Maurya defeated Seleucus Nicator, the founder of the Seleucid Dynasty. Some of the information we have on Mauryan history is from the

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
work of Greek historians and writers. As a result of Alexander the Great's imperial and cultural project, the world of India and the Hellenic world were now linked—and to a certain degree, shared a common view of the wider world both inhabited.

A fragment of the sixth pillar of Ashoka is now in the British Museum. Ashoka's first rock inscription at Girnar, Ashoka the Great's symbol, the Ashoka chakra, is featured in the center of the flag of India. The pillars of Ashoka at Sarnath are the most popular of the relics left by Ashoka. Made of sandstone, these pillars record the visit of the emperor to Sarnath, in the third century BC. In translating these monuments, historians have learned the bulk of what is assumed to have been true fact of the Mauryan empire. It is difficult to determine whether certain events ever happened, but the stone carvings depict clearly how Ashoka wanted to be thought of and how he wanted to be remembered. Most of the pillars on which his edicts were inscribed are between 40 and 50 feet tall and weigh up to fifty tons each. They have been found in about thirty locations in modern-day India, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Ashoka's own words as known from his edicts are: "All men are my children. I am like a father to them. As every father desires the good and the happiness of his children, I wish that all men should be happy always."

Certainly, Ashoka's dharma was intended to be a polity around which all in his heterogeneous kingdom could unite. Moghur ruler Akbar the Great's sulh-i-kull policy resembled the above policy.
The conversion account contained in the *Ashokaavadaana* does not refer to the Battle of Kalinga and appears more mythical than the aforementioned account. However, it contains interesting details about Ashoka's practice of Buddhism. In this text, a Buddhist monk named Samudra appears at what he thought was a palace in Ashoka's capital, but was in fact a new building dedicated to the "art of execution," "asking for alms" only to become potential victim of a strange transaction that allowed the palace's builder, Chandagirika, to kill whoever was first to step through the door. This young man had always delighted in torturing and killing and had already callously dispatched his own parents.

*Samudra* was the unfortunate person. *Chandagirika* agreed to a seven-day delay when the monk, who feared death, begged him for mercy. Meanwhile, a youth and one of the women of the royal household caused some offense to *Chandagirika*, who ordered their execution. He then had their bodies "ground with pestles in an iron mortar before Samudra." Witnessing this horrible execution, Samudra suddenly realized the truth of the Buddha's teaching of impermanence and gained enlightenment, becoming an *arhat* (liberated being). The next morning, when he was about to be executed, he was calm and fearless, detached from his physical self. He told *Chandagirika*, "True, my night of ignorance has cleared and the sun of my good fortune is at its height. You may do as you wish, my friend." The executioner was quite unmoved, and threw Samudra into a cauldron of water and blood. However, as hard as *Chandagirika* tried to light a fire underneath the cauldron, he could not do so. Looking into the cauldron, he was amazed to see Samudra calmly sat on a lotus. He immediately went to find *Ashoka*, so that he too could see this miracle, which
hundreds of people also came to see. Samudra realized that the time was ready for Ashoka to become a Buddhist, which the text explains:

Miraculously, Samudra floated up in the air and stunned the monarch. From half of his body water poured down; From the other half fire blazed forth; Raining and flaming, he shone in the sky.

Asoka folded his hands and asked to be initiated into the mysteries of the Dharma. Thus, Asoka was converted to Buddhism, becoming a lay-devotee (upasaka). Samudra also informed Ashoka that the Buddha had predicted that a king would arise who would build 84,000 stupas to contain his bodily relics, but instead the emperor had built a Palace of Execution. Ashoka then begged for forgiveness, and took the three “refuges” by which one becomes a Buddhist (refuge in the Buddha, in the dharma and in the sangha). He also promised to build stupas to preserve the sacred relics. Then, the monk vanished. As Ashoka was about to leave himself, his executioner challenged him that his boon had not been granted and that he still had the right to execute the first person who had entered the Palace. Surprised that his servant apparently intended to execute his king, Ashoka replied that since Chandagirika had in fact entered before him, it should be him who dies. Chandagirika was duly executed (he was not last man to be killed by Ashoka's orders, but later Ashoka forbade all executions) and the palace of horrors (described as hell in the text) was destroyed.

The text continues with the story of how Ashoka recovered the relics from eight previously built stupas and constructed the new ones as he had promised.
one occasion, in order to earn some merit (to recover from some sort of ailment), he travelled as a mendicant experiencing the life of a monk. The phrase *yam me samghe upeti*, which translates as “going to the Sangha”, has led some scholars to claim that Ashoka became a full-time mendicant, but it probably implies that he visited and spent time listening to the monks. It is said that Ashoka venerated monks, which his retinue thought inappropriate for a king. He donated generously to the Sangha. Both conversion stories record that Ashoka underwent a change of heart that involved repudiation of slaughter and a new commitment to peace and introduced to the precepts and teachings of Buddhism.

Ashoka combined personal and state ethics and tried to bridge divides in his multi-cultural empire. He wrote,

"You Are True to Your Own Beliefs If You Accord Kindly Treatment to Adherents of Other Faiths. You Harm Your own Religion by Harassing Followers of Other Creeds" (Emperor Ashoka, Rock Text 3).

He believed that his code of reverence and compassion was based on universal values:

His fourteen-point code aimed at holding inner morality and outer action in harmony. He turned away from the kingship of power, compulsion and self-interest, and dared to believe that he could construct a different kind of kingdom based on causing no one harms. It has been suggested that no greater or better kingdom has yet been known among men.
In *Kalinga Rock Edict* one, he instructed his judicial officers, warning them that they would not be promoted unless they furthered his desire:

‘All men are my children. What I desire for my own children, and I desire their welfare and happiness both in this world and the next, that I desire for all men. You do not understand to what extent I desire this, and if some of you do understand, you do not understand the full extent of my desire’. 

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**The Buddhist Councils**

*First Buddhist Council*

Three months after the Buddha's Mahaparinirvana (passing away), his immediate disciples convened a council at Rajagriha. Maha Kassapa, the most respected and senior monk, presided over the Council. Two very important personalities who specialized in the two areas of the teachings:

**The Dharma:** Ananda, the closest constant companion and disciple of the Buddha for 25 years. Endowed with a remarkable memory, Ananda was able to recite what was spoken by the Buddha.

**The Vinaya:** Upali remembered all the Vinaya rules. Only these two sections - the Dharma and the Vinaya - were recited at the First Council (no mention was made of the Abhidharma yet). Though there were no differences of opinion on the Dharma there were some discussions on the Vinaya rules.

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22 Ibid.
Before the Buddha's Parinirvanana, he had told Ananda that if the Sangha wished to amend or modify some “minor rules”, they could do so. But Ananda forgot to ask the Buddha what the “minor rules” were. As the members of the Council were unable to agree as to what constituted the “minor rules”, Maha Kassapa finally ruled that no disciplinary rule laid down by the Buddha should be changed and no new ones be introduced. No intrinsic reason was given. Maha Kassapa did say one thing, however:

"If we changed the rules, people will say that Ven. Gautama's disciples changed the rules even before his funeral fire has ceased burning."

At the Council, the Dharma was divided into various parts and each part was assigned to an Elder and his pupils. The Dharma was then passed on orally from teacher to pupil. The Dharma was recited daily by groups of people who regularly cross-checked with each other to ensure that no omissions or additions were made.

Second Buddhist Council

According to the Theravadin School (Rahula), about one hundred years after the Buddha's passing away, the second Council was held to discuss some Vinaya rules, and no controversy about the Dharma was reported. The orthodox monks (Sthavarivada) said that nothing should be changed, while the others insisted on modifying some rules. Finally, a group of monks left the Council and formed the Mahasanghika - the Great Community. (The Mahasanghika should not to be confused with Mahayana). According to another version (Skelton), the second Council had two
parts: initially in Vaishali, some 60 years after the Buddha, and 40 years after that, a meeting in Pataliputra, where Mahadeva maintained five theses on the Arhat. The actual split may have occurred at Pataliputra, not Vaishali over details of the Vinaya. In the non-Theravadin version of events, the Mahasangha followed the original Vinaya and the Sthaviravada (the Elders) wanted changes. The first split in the Sangha was the outcome of this Council.

**Third Buddhist Council**

During the reign of emperor Asoka in the 3rd Century BC, the third Council was held to discuss the differences of opinion among the bhikkhus of different sects. At this Council, differences of opinion were not confined to the Vinaya, but also concerned the Dharma. The President of the Council, Moggaliputta Tissa, compiled a book called the Kathavatthu which refuted the heretical, false views and theories held by some sects occurring at the time. The teaching accepted and approved by this Council was known as Sthaviras or Theravada, "Teaching of the Elders".

The AbhidhammaPitaka was included at this Council. After the Third Council, King Asoka sent missionaries to Sri Lanka, Kanara, Karnataka, Kashmir, the Himalaya region, Burma, even the present-day Afghanistan. Asoka's son, Mahindra, brought the Tripitaka to Sri Lanka, along with the commentaries that were recited at the Council. These teachings later became known as the "Pali-canon".
**Fourth Buddhist Council**

The Fourth Buddhist Council was held under the auspices of King Kaniska at Jalandhar or in Kashmir around 100 A.D, where 499 monks of the Sarvastivadin School compiled a new canon. However, this council was never recognized by the Theravada school.

**Fifth Buddhist Council**

The fifth Buddhist Council was held from 1868 to 1871 in Mandalay, Burma where the text of the Pali Canon was revised and subsequently inscribed on 729 marble slabs.

**Sixth Buddhist Council**

The sixth Buddhist Council was held at Rangoon, Burma in 1954-1956. Prior to the Third Council, several schools were developed from the *Sthavarivadin*: *Vasiputriya/Pudgalavadin/Sammitiya* (three names for the same school), *Sarvastivadin* and *Vibajyavadin*. Later on, the *Vibhajyavadin* school was divided into the *Mahisasika* and the Theravada. The *Sarvastivadin* developed sub-schools known as *Vaibasika and Sautrantika*. The importance of *Sarvastivadin* School stems from the fact that it formed the basis for the later development of Mahayana.

With the conversion of King Asoka, Buddhism, which had just been one of the many sects, suddenly came to prominence in India. After death of King Asoka, there
was a period of persecution for Buddhism under Pusyamitra Sunga (183-147 BC). The second royal patron for Buddhism was Kaniska (1st to 2nd century), under whose auspices, the Fourth Council was held.

According to legends, Nagarjuna was the person preordained by Buddha to recover and explicate the Perfection of Wisdom texts. The first of these texts was the 'Perfection of Wisdom in 8,000 Lines'. After one of his lectures, some nagas approached him and told him of the texts hidden in their kingdom. Nagarjuna travelled there and returned with the sutras to India. He is credited with the founding the Madhyamaka (Middle Way) school of Buddhist philosophy, which highlights the centrality of the doctrine of emptiness. Nagarjuna's philosophy is usually connected to the emergence of Mahayana around this time. Chandrakirti was one of the most influential commentators of Nagarjuna.

Two centuries after Nagarjuna, a new Mahayana school arose in India, which is commonly known as the Yogachara (Yogic Practice School). The main scriptural source for this school is the Sutra Explaining the Thought (Samdhinirmochana-sutra), which consists of a series of questions put to the Buddha by a group of bodhisattvas. The name "Yogic Practice School" may have been derived from an important treatise by Asanga entitled the "Levels of Yogic Practice" (Yogachara-bhumi). Along with his brother Vasubandhu, Asanga established this school and developed its central doctrines. Yogachara emphasizes the importance of meditative practice, and several passages in Yogachara texts indicate that the founders of the school perceived other

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Mahayana Buddhists as being overly concerned with dialectical debate while neglecting meditation.

The Yogachara school is commonly referred to in Tibet as "Mind Only" (sems tsam; Sanskrit: chitta-matra) because of an idea found in some Yogachara texts that all the phenomena of the world are "cognition-only" (vijnapti-matra), implying that everything we perceive is conditioned by consciousness.

From around the 4th century BC, Vajrayana (Tantrayana) Buddhism started to develop in India as part of the Mahayana tradition. In addition to the developments in philosophy, a new trend in practice developed in India, which was written down in texts called tantras. These texts purported to have been spoken by the historical Buddha (or sometimes by other Buddhas), and while they incorporated the traditional Mahayana ideal of the bodhisattva who seeks Buddhahood for the benefit of all beings, they proposed some radically new practices and paradigms. The central practices of tantra include visualizations intended to foster cognitive reorientation, the use of prayers (mantra) to Buddha that are intended to facilitate the transformation of the meditator into a fully enlightened Buddha. 24

In the 5th century BC, a Buddhist monastic university was established at Nalanda, India, which went on to become the largest and most influential Buddhist center for many centuries to come. In the following years, a number of syncretic schools developed. They tended to mingle Madhyamika and Yogachara doctrines.

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The greatest examples of this syncretic period are the philosophers Shantarakshita and Kamalashila who are among the last significant Buddhist philosophers in India.\textsuperscript{25}

It has split into two Sects - \textit{Mahayana (Greater Vehicle)} and \textit{Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle)}. By the time the fourth religious council was held, the religion had vertically split up into two schools. One school had elevated Buddha to the status of a God and introduced worship of the Buddha's image (idol) and also evolved elaborate rituals which were derived largely from Hinduism. This school gave up the rigorous ascetic life in monasteries, discarded Pali and accepted Sanskrit as the literary medium. These changes had far-reaching effects in narrowing the breach between Buddhism and Hinduism, but at the cost of departing from the essence of the way of life that Buddha established. This school was called the \textit{Mahayana} (Greater Vehicle) school or the northern school of Buddhism. On the other hand the \textit{Hinayana} (Lesser Vehicle) school stuck to the original character of Buddhism with its emphasis on rigorous and simple living although idol worship gradually made its way into \textit{Hinayana} also. This school, also known as \textit{Theravada} (from \textit{Sta}\textit{ieryavada} i.e., principle of stability), is mainly prevalent in Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand.

Buddhism began to decline in India later on and became increasingly a tradition of elite scholar-monks who studied in great monastic universities like Nalanda and Vikramashila in Northern India. Buddhism failed to adapt to the changing social and political circumstances and apparently lacked a wide base of support. The religion suffered a fatal blow when Turkish Muslims, who invaded India

\textsuperscript{25} Sham Lal "Life and Letter, How Secular Are We?" The Times of India, March, 2 1985.
several times in between ninth and twelfth centuries, destroyed many great north Indian monastic universities and killed prominent monks. In 1193 AD, the Moslems attacked and conquered Magadha, the heartland of Buddhism in India and destroyed Nalanda (1200 AD).

Only some small remnants of Buddhist communities, like in the Himalayan areas, Buddhism prevailed. Apart from the Muslims, most Indians are Hindu and to them Buddhism is an old, dead branch of Hinduism, not a separate and independent religion.

During the British Colonial Rule, there was a resurgence of Buddhism in India for a short period. In the 1890's, for example, Dammapara of Sri Lanka founded the Mahaboddhi Society and Ayoti Daas founded the Buddhist Society of South India. Besides, there were other unrelated Buddhist activities in Bengal and other places in India. The effects of these activities were localized, never widespread.

In 1956, in the state of Maharashtra, in the city of Nagpur, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar held a conversion ceremony, and converted 500,000 untouchables to Buddhism. One of the underlying thoughts of this re-introduction was to reduce the influence of the Hindu caste system in India and its detrimental influence on people of the lower castes. The number of Buddhists in India, as per Indian Census, 1981, was 4.65 million, and as per 1991 Census, it was 6.32 million. About 80 per cent of this population live in the state of Maharashtra, mainly in the city of Nagpur.
Growth of Tibetan Buddhism

Buddhism laid great emphasis on the Law of Karma, which believes in the transmigration of souls. The condition of man in this life and the next, as per the Law of Karma, depends on his own deeds. The essence of this Law is that "we are born again and again to reap the benefits of our Karma." If an individual commits sins no more, he dies no more and thus he comes to live the life of the Final Bliss.

In Tibet, there are two kinds of Buddhist disciples: monks (bhikshas) and lay worshipper (Uparikas). The former were organized into the Sangha or congregation, the number of which has increased with the spread of Buddhism. The membership of the Sangha or the religion order is open to all persons, male or female above 15 years of age and who are free from leprosy and other contagious and infectious diseases. Persons who are in debt or are being branded as robbers or criminals are refused entry into the Sangha.

The history of Buddhism in Tibet is still considered as a classical one. Dharma - Svamin and Tarnatha, the two Buddhist monks from Tibet of 13th century and 16th century AD respectively had disseminated information on the history of Buddhism in Tibet.26 Buddhism entered Tibet not only from India but also from the present day Afghanistan and Gilgit region, which were located along the caravan routes between Central Asia and China. Buddhism has never refused to accept the reworking and transformation of ideas of other people. In these territories bordering Tibet, there

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Pranabananda Jash (ed) "Perspectives of Buddhist Studies" in "Giusepp Tucci and Tibetan Buddhism" p.60.
existed a number of religious forms in a picturesque juxtaposition favoring exchange and reciprocal borrowings.27

Buddhism was introduced in Tibet during the lifetime of Sron-btsan-sgam-po, who died in 644 AD. He was considered by all schools to be the founder of the Tibetan royal dynasty.28 Vajrayana (gnostio) Buddhism developed hand in hand with Saivism. The ideas of alien to Buddhism were incorporated in it and gradually merged into a doctrinal structure.29

Tibetan Buddhism as it exists today is one of the major forms of Buddhism in this subcontinent with its influence extending beyond the geographical region of Tibet. This religious tradition may be designated as Tibetan Buddhism rather than Lamaism.

The term ‘Lama’, which means the “Superior one”, corresponds to Guru who can administer initiation (Dbang, Sanskrit, and Diksh). A Lama is thus not necessarily an incarnate (Sprual-sku=Sanskrit Nirmanakaya), while any incarnate is not ipso facto a Lama. The word Lama meaning preceptor or priest was prevalent in Tibet before the advent of Buddhism and the priest in the pre-Buddhist Bon religion was also called Lama. Thus Buddhism in Tibet begins with Guru (Lama) and the savior of Buddhism in Tibet.

27 Ibid.
28 Ibid. p.61.
29 Ibid.
Padmasambhava, who is remembered as the Guru, was summoned to Tibet from *Udyana (Kafinistan)* in the 8th century AD. In 11 century AD, Pandit Atisa introduced reforms in what must have been a strange mixture of Buddhist magic and animism. As a result, the religious scenario in Tibet took a new form which was the outcome of an admixture between the *Bon po* and the new religion Buddhism.

Indian Buddhism had exercised considerable influence over the Tibetan Buddhism in the literary and philosophical spheres. The practice of *Tantrika* process and mystic mandalas of Indian Buddhism, the worship of deities like *Aparajita, Khasrpana, Avolokitesvara, Remata and Blue Achata* and the study of *Paramita* works like *Ahtasahasrikas* and *Panchavimsato Sahasrikas* were very popular in Tibet.  

Although various sects of Tibetan Buddhism derive their monastic regulations from the Indian school known as the *Hinayana* (Lesser vehicles), all schools of Tibetan Buddhism identify themselves with the *Mahayana* (Great vehicles), both in practice and philosophy. Pehus, the most famous feature of *Mahayana*, emphasizes Bodhisattva. Bodhisattva, a person who makes the compassionate vow to become a Buddha in order to protect the humans from suffering and to embark on the bliss of enlightenment. The term Bodhisattva was rendered into Tibetan as “One who is heroic in his or her aspiration to enlightenment”.

The Avalokitesvara is an incarnation of Bodhisattva who takes successive human births as the Dalai Lama. Buddhist Tantra is said to be the “the diamond
vehicle" (Vajrayana), because wisdom and method are joined in an adamantine and individual union bestowing Buddhahood. This is the generally accepted meaning of the defection of second union. Avalokitesvara i.e. Dalai Lama had established Buddhism. He became the temporal authority over all sects besides being the spiritual authority over the people of other sects like the Gelugupa or the Yellow Hat sect. In fact, there has been little development or transformation of Tibet Buddhism in the realm of philosophical ideas but the political domination that the monasteries gradually obtain was without precedent. The immense power and authority of the Lama in society and government regarded as ‘one with none above’. It is reflected in the religious doctrine of Tibetan Buddhism where ‘Refuge in Three gems’:

“I take refuge in the Lama”

“I take refuge in the Buddha”

“I take refuge in the Dharma”

“I take refuge in the Samgha”

It thus incorporates the Lama as the first star. The Dalai Lama as the incarnation of Avalokitesvara became the real refuge or precious protector for all Tibetan Nang-po (the Buddha). 

31 Biography of Dharmasvamin (hag lo-tsa-ba chos-rje-dpal,a Tibetan Monk pilgrim by Dr.G.Kocrich, K.P.Jayaswal Institute Patna, p.iii.

32 Ibid.
Indian Buddhist Influence on Tibetans

In the eighth century, one of the rulers of Tibet while hearing the biography of Srong-tsan-gam-po developed an interest in the teachings of the Buddha. He invited Shantarakshita, a famous Buddhist scholar, to Tibet. Shantarakshita, the abbot of the University of Nalanda in India, travelled to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, where he taught the Dharma for several months. However, many powerful people at the Tibetan court, opposed Buddhism, put pressure on the king to expel Shantarakshita. The king intimated the matter to Shantarakshita, who then decided to go to Nepal. Meanwhile, Shantarakshita suggested the king that Padmasambhava, a famous master of meditation, be invited from India. Padmasambhava was instrumental to remove all opposition against Buddhism in Tibet. Padmasambhava and Shantarakshita, who returned to Tibet later, together preached the teachings of the Mahayana and Vajrayana in Tibet.33 Both of them represented the best of the Buddhist scholarship and meditative practices of India at that time. Although Padmasambhava did not remain in Tibet for long, the Tibetans remember him as the "Precious Master" without whom Buddhism might not have been established in Tibet and Shantarakshita continued to preach Buddhism in Tibet until his death.34

During the time of these two great masters, great monasteries were established and the first Tibetans were ordained. Many of the first Tibetan monks achieved outstanding meditative powers. In the next half century after both masters left Tibet, many more translations of Buddhist texts were made and the earlier translations

33 S.C Das “Indian Pandits in Tibet”, Journal of Buddhist Texts Society of India.
34 Ibid.
revised. A catalogue of the translations was also prepared. Indian and Tibetan monks worked together to accomplish all this. India thus became the primary source of Buddhist culture for the Tibetans.\(^{35}\)

**Transmission of Buddhist Teachings from India**

In the ninth century, there was a short-lived persecution of Buddhism in Tibet. Many Tibetans even felt that the purity of the Buddhist teachings originally brought from India was lost. Many Tibetans travelled to India to study. Many Indian scholars on Buddhism were invited to Tibet. In eleventh century, contacts between Tibet and India grew which led to increasing Buddhist activities in Tibet. Famous Indian scholar, Atisha and the great Tibetan mediator and poet, Milarepa played a very important role in this regard. Atisha was a very learned person before he became an *abbot* of one of the great monastic universities of India. He had even spent more than a decade in Srivijaya, one of the notable Buddhist centers of Southeast Asia. He came to Tibet in the later part of the eleventh century and remained there for thirteen years until his death. He had considerable influence on the later development of Tibetan Buddhism. Many of his teachings were included in various Buddhist traditions of Tibet.\(^{36}\)

Milarepa, who had a humble background, studied diligently under one of the noted Tibetan teachers and translators who had returned from India. Milarepa came to


\(^{36}\) Ibid.

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be recognized as an outstanding mediator who had gained extraordinary insight into the nature of things. He put his meditative experiences into songs, which are remarkable both for their beauty and for the depth of their wisdom.

Over the years, not only did many outstanding Indian masters visit Tibet, but also many Tibetans made the difficult journey over the Himalayas to study the Dharma in India. They brought back with them the Buddhist philosophy of India and also the knowledge of music, medicine, logic and art. Within a relatively short period, Tibetan society, which had once been a primitive nation, underwent a transformation and became an important seat of learning and wisdom. The entire collection of Buddhist literature from India was translated into Tibetan. Hundreds of monasteries were established and numerous Tibetan works on Buddhism were written. By the thirteenth century, when Buddhism began to decline in India, Tibet preserved Buddhism and spread it to other regions.

In the fourteenth century, a Tibetan Buddhist teacher Tson-kha-pa enriched Buddhism in Tibet. Born in the northeast of Tibet, Tson-kha-pa adhered to the code of monastic discipline and produced numerous qualitative writings. He attracted many followers and even after his death, his sect gained a very large following in Tibet.

Buddhism continued to flourish in Tibet right from fourteenth century right to the present century. Learned scholars continued to teach the Dharma and write commentaries. They also wrote original works on Buddhism. Monks and lay followers continued to have command over extraordinary levels of meditation. In the middle of the twentieth century, when Tibet came under the rule of the People's
Republic of China, Buddhism was repressed. Many Tibetans fled to India and the West to preserve their religion. Through the Tibetan refugees, many people in the world came into contact with Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Today, there are Tibetan Buddhist centers teaching the Dharma across the globe. Recently, China’s liberalization policy towards religion in China has permitted a revival of Buddhism in Tibet.

Tibetans first came into contact with Buddhism when they occupied the oasis cities of Central Asia. In 8th century AD, the first of many missionary monks arrived and the country’s first monastery was established in 787AD. Despite some early success, Buddhism suffered a blow due to opposition from Bon, the indigenous religion and political turmoil. In 10th century, monks from India and Tibetans going to India re-introduced the religion together with many aspects of Indian civilization and it soon began to flourish. Tantra, the main type of Buddhism in India at the time, was established in Tibet. The six syllables, *om mani padme hum*, which means that independence on the practice of a path which is an indivisible union of method and wisdom, you can transform your impure body, speech and mind into the pure exalted body, speech and mind of a Buddha. It is said that you should not seek for Buddhahood outside of yourself; the substances for the achievement of Buddhahood are within you. As Maitreya says in his Sublime Continuum of the Great Vehicle (Uttaratantra), all beings naturally have the Buddha nature in their own continuum.

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We have within us the seed of purity, the essence of a 'One Gone Thus' (Tathagatagarbha) that is to be transformed and fully developed into Buddhahood.

Although other places like Khotan had come under the influence of Buddhism even before the beginning of the common era, Tibet and Mongolia remained virtually untouched until much later. There were two reasons for this: firstly, Tibet and Mongolia lay off the main caravan routes along which merchants and pilgrims traveled between India and China; and secondly, the Tibetan and Mongolian people who were nomads and warlike, were generally indifferent to the teachings of Buddha and the higher level of culture that came with it.38

There were four schools in Tibetan Buddhism. In 17th century, the head of the country's most powerful sect, the fifth Dalai Lama (1617-82), became a king and his successors ruled the country until 1951. Although living in a sparsely populated and geographically isolated region, the Tibetans gradually evolved one of the richest and most sophisticated forms of Buddhism. However, the powerful and conservative clergy refused to allow any form of modernization or contact with the outside world, which made Tibet an easy target for communist China. Between 1959 and 1977, almost all traces of Buddhism were destroyed and hundreds of thousands of people were driven into exile in 1960s, who have been equally successful in founding Buddhist monasteries and learning centers outside Tibet, even in the West.39


The reformed Tibetan Buddhism is an innovative movement now. Propelled by external forces, it was transformed from a passive movement into an active one. Today, the management of Tibetan religious affairs is entering a new phase of monastic self-management that differs from traditional governmental administrative control. Monastic organization and the power of self-management in accordance with the law have been strengthened. All these changes benefit the normal development of the Tibetan religion and promote a new type of monastic administrative system compatible with the development of socialist society. They strengthen Tibetan Buddhism’s capacity to adapt to society. The relationship between monasteries and communities is being forged and will also become more harmonious. Tibetan Buddhism has become highly developed not only in the Tibetan area, but also in central and eastern China.

Democratization of Monastic Managing System

The monastic administrative organization has been transformed from a centralized monastic managing committee to a decentralized democratic managing committee. The functional structure of the monastic managing organization has become more complex and the division of labour within it has become more effective and clear. The Committee of Tibetan Buddhism Monastic Administration (CTBMA) was set up as early as the times of democratic reforms in Tibet. Since 1982, the CTBMA as of various monasteries in Tibet have been restored. However, as the restored CTBMAs are centralized organs arranged by the government, they have been
short of voluntary participation in dealing with internal affairs. In 1996, Tashilunpo monastery in Shingaste resuscitated the CTBMA and set up the Democratic Committee of Monastic Administration (DCMA). Since then, three major monasteries of Tibet in other areas have established their own DCMAs.

The DCMA is an administrative body of the whole monastery, comprising 6 special groups responsible for religious services, political study, public security, relic preservation, production and management and financial supervision. The Director, Vice Director and the committee members of the DCMA are elected by all the monks attached to the particular monastery. Since the establishment of DCMA, the power of the new authoritative organ to manage internal monastic affairs has been strengthened. As per its policies and rules, DCMA formulates various regulations that are enforced by special functional groups. These regulations deal with: (i) the system of job responsibility for the DCMA; (ii) the monastic study programme of politics and law; (iii) the monastic financial administration; (iv) relic preservation and public security; (v) the system to check on the monks' attendance and the registration system for the transient monk; and (vi) the system to access the work of each monk at the end of the year.

The supervision mechanisms in democratic decision-making are being introduced into the management of internal monastic affairs. As a monastic administrative system, the DCMA has introduced democratic elections, democratic participation, supervision in the management and decision-making of monastic

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internal affairs. In Tashilunpho monastery, while dealing with important affairs concerning the opinion of all the monks and seeks the approval and support of a solid majority. For instance, in the year 2000, a Director of a certain DCMA in Shigatse stole some important antiques from his monastery, and when the incident came to light, an all-monk conference was held and the monks voted to expel him from the Monastery.\textsuperscript{41}

Further, cooperation is being fostered between the monastery and the local government to deal with monastic and religious affairs under the principle of geographic affinity, specifically to clarify the respective responsibilities and duties of the government and the monastery, to solve some practical difficulties for the monastery and to guarantee normal religious services in the monastery.\textsuperscript{42}

Namgyal Tibet and India

*Namgyal Monastery*, a Buddhist Study Center, was established in Tibet in 16\textsuperscript{th} century by the second Dalai Lama, Gendun Gyatso. Since its inception, the Namgyal monks have been assisting the Dalai Lamas in public religious affairs and performing ritual and prayer ceremonies for the welfare of Tibet.\textsuperscript{43} The monastery was established as an esteemed center of learning, contemplation and meditation based on the vast and profound Buddhist treatises.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid, p.68.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.

As a result of the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1959, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and 100,000 Tibetans including 55 monks from Namgyal monastery fled to India and Nepal. After His Holiness the Dalai Lama was granted asylum in Dharamsala, Namgyal Monastery was reestablished nearby the new residence of His Holiness. Nearly fifty years after, Tibetan religious, artistic and intellectual traditions are being preserved and maintained through the efforts of the Dalai Lama and the Namgyal monks.

The curriculum and the rigors of monastic life have been meticulously maintained throughout the journey from Tibet into exile. The novice monks of today must first pass a series of challenging entrance examinations and, if accepted, undertake the traditional years of philosophical study.

The Namgyal monks are to assist His Holiness the Dalai Lama and are frequently traveling with him. They require a more streamlined course of study focusing on the essentials of sutra and tantra. His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has modified the tradition which is a model for other Tibetan monasteries. A Namgyal monk's average day consists of two hours of ritual, two hours of sacred arts, three hours of philosophy classes, two and half hours of debate, and several hours of meditation and personal study. Each monk is required to complete meditation retreats for each of the principal deities and protectors as well as to receive training in ritual activities including the making of ritual cakes, the construction of mandalas, the performance of sacred music and dance, and other traditional Tibetan Buddhist

\[\text{Ibid.}\]
rituals. These traditions are imparted both orally and according to texts. The cycle of retreats required for the study and practice of rituals performed by the monastery takes five to six years to complete, after which a monk is free to pursue whatever personal retreat practice he chooses.

Influence of Indian Secularism over Tibetans

Secularism has been a critically important development in the modern times. In India, secularism acquires added significance keeping in view the crucial fact that Indians have been deeply wedded to religious considerations in the past, and even today. In the parlance of modern political thought, the secular society implies that there is no state support for religious bodies, no religious teaching in state schools, no religious tests for public office or civil rights, not even any legislative protection for any religious dogma and no penalty for any questioning of or deviation from religious belief. In this context, a secular state is defined as one which sees individuals as equal citizens of a society where no religious or social stratification are recognized as the basis for exercising political rights.

The Indian constitution guarantees ‘equality to all citizens, irrespective of their religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth’. The constitution provides protection to the cultures and the languages of the religious and linguistic minorities. There is no religious teaching in state schools. The law of the land does not protect any dogma nor penalize any hearsay. However, it is a different story when it comes to support of religion. The state does not profess or propagate any particular religion. It, however,
patronizes all religions. It can be noted here that in India the state is neither irreligious nor anti-religions, and it may be called non-religious. When the state is viewed as a positive instrument for the realization of collective aims, such a policy in practice gives rise to the policy of appeasement on the one hand, and mutual mistrust on the other. The problem of building a secular society in India has to be seen in all its complexity. Secularism in practice in India is assumed as equal status to all faiths.

According to Paul Brass, “it soils down to simple proportion that people pursue their interests in society by forming groups and selecting identification that maximize their advantage in the competition for scarce job and economic resources and for political power”. The most glaring examples of this are the attitudes towards personal law and low protection.

Tibetan Constitution, on the other, has no secular concept. It is based on Buddhist principles. The Dalai Lama controls all religious powers and has absolute sovereignty. In this context Lord Acton rightly said the absolute power leads to absolute corruption.

Religion plays a major role in Tibetan history. Tibet is a center of Buddhist monks. Tibetans, who have drawn on both Mahayana and Tantrayana in developing their own religion, disseminate the dharma, the teaching of Buddha. The growth of Buddhism in Tibet took place step by step at different times by different teachers. Their respect for the Law of Karma tends to neutralize envy. Traditional Tibetans

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were averse to modern practice and vehemently opposed any change in their life styles.

Tibetans have no tradition of secular concept. Critics branded the Dalai Lamas as theocratic leaders. Though the rights were constituted in Tibetan Constitution, they argue, the entire process is under the absolute control of the Dalai Lama, which clearly shows that there is no guarantee of rights to Tibetans in practical sense.

Secularism in the western countries was the result of the movement of Renaissance and reformation, development of science and technology and the emergence of liberal democracy in the 19th Century. The well established connection between secularism and scientific spirit has rendered separation of religion and state. It implies the existence of legal status, public law, education and politics, independence of religion or creed. The Asian societies in this regard are totally different. These societies build up tradition, culture and religion and spirituality form the several facets of the society.

Tibetan crisis demanded a new model of society - a society based on full respect for human liberties, pluralism and a better social deal for all. In order to meet effectively the challenge of modernized and meet the demands of expanding participation, the leadership has to have the will and capacity to absorb and sustain continuous transformation. The Tibetan leadership, however, has failed in this regard. On the one hand, the ambivalent attitude towards secularism and nationalism question and on the other, the commitment to rapid economic growth and transformation
through a model based on the postulates of capitalism and class reconciliation has resulted in growth of parochial sentiment.

Influence of Indian Concept of Non-violence over Tibet

It is ironical to talk about non-violence in the age of Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles, hydrogen bombs, nuclear submarines and Weapons of Mass Destruction. But amidst all the dust that is kicked up by the aggravating belligerence between the US and Iraq or India and Pakistan for instance, the word Non-Violence brings to mind the name of Mahatma Gandhi in India along with the other pacifist crusaders in different parts of the world.\textsuperscript{47} Gautama Buddha propounded the philosophy of non-violence, universal love and peace 2,500 years ago. Emperor Asoka gave this pacifist philosophy an official recognition in the 3rd century BC and sent Buddhist missionaries to the Fareast and Central Asia. For this initiative in spreading the message of peace and non-violence, he is remembered not only by Indians, but also by the pacifists all around the globe.

Non-violence (\textit{Ahimsa}) is not only the first human value, but also a perpetual and natural value. It has played a vital role in India's greatness. It is \textit{Ahimsa} that accorded dynamism in the lives of Indians. It directs their day-to-day behaviors in such a manner that they can ensure their own existence and by this their conflicts and tensions, inevitable in daily life, are transformed and resolved. Furthermore, it has

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{47} Donald Swearer,. \textit{Buddhism and Society in Southeast Asia}. Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1981.}
given new dimensions to the process of cooperation, the outcome of which is present in the form of unprecedented and unending development in various walks of life.

In Jainism, *Ahimsa* has been analyzed minutely. The 24th Jain *Tirthankara*, *Mahavira*, gave a unique dimension to *Ahimsa* via his own humanely practices - making it a subject of self-control, pure conduct and discipline. The essence of Jain *Ahimsa* lies in the following words, “Complete aloofness from Himsa (violence) is *Ahimsa*”.48 Clearly, Jainism brings *Ahimsa* within that comprehensive and extensive scope in which the common person's entry is quite difficult. In it, the smallest form of violence is accountable. Every form of violence, big or small, committed by a human being knowingly or unknowingly is worthy of consideration. Therefore, it is not possible for everyone to follow Jainism's brand of *Ahimsa* in the practical sense. Moreover, the Jain *Ahimsa* is completely based upon negative concepts pertaining to it. For this reason, it also becomes impractical for the common people and can only be practiced by an initiator of a new age like *Mahavira* himself.

The *Vedic* (Hindu) Philosophy, which directs day-to-day practices of most Indians on the basis of guidelines, decided by the *Vedas*, especially the *Rig-Veda* itself, considers *Ahimsa* to be an evil-free *Dharma*. Of course, this *Dharma* establishes itself in the form of duty as well as goodness. Therefore, along with not harming anyone by thought, speech, or deed, and not depriving someone of life, not

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48 *Genocide of Hindus & Buddhists in East Pakistan (Bangladesh).* By A. Roy
using violence as a means to maintain order and above all to accord justice is the basis of *Vedic Ahimsa*.\footnote{Richard Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988, page 51.}

Like Jainism, Buddhism also emphasizes self-control, but generally it is not in favor of any such appeal that becomes impractical for the common people, as far as the application of *Ahimsa* in daily routines by common people is concerned. Body-control, word-control, and mind-control are the means of violence-control. They are the means of developing non-violence. Gautama Buddha called upon the humanity to develop non-violence on this basis. He communicated the message of making *Karuna* (compassion), the basis of maximum possible human practices a vehicle through which non-violence can develop in all walks of life. The four common points that we find in the context of non-violence in the four chief philosophies established and developed in India that played vital roles in making India great by strengthening the Indian way are as follows:

1) Within the domain of non-violence are all living beings;

2) In spite of being eternal, natural, and the first human value, non-violence is a subject of practice according to the demands of time and space;

3) It is an active value; it has nothing to do with cowardice, as it is an ornament of the brave; and

4) It is not a subject to be practiced occasionally; in theory and in practice it is all-timely.
Indian writer Gita Mehta (1995) suggests that contemporary nuclear-bomb possessing India can profitably emulate Asokan principles - peaceful coexistence, religious tolerance, social welfare, ecological responsibility, education, impartial justice, respect for all living things. Is it possible that these were practiced over such a huge land mass occupied by so many millions of people two-and-a-half millennia ago, and if they were possible then, why can't they be practiced now, the question is still asked in modern India.

A major international non-governmental organization has also been named after Ashoka. Founded in 1980 by Bill Drayton, an admirer of non-violent activism, reiterates the Asokan principles in the following words;

“...to shape a citizen sector that is entrepreneurial, productive and globally integrated, and to develop the profession of social entrepreneurship around the world, Ashoka identifies and invests in leading social entrepreneurs - extraordinary individuals with unprecedented ideas for change in their communities - supporting the individual, idea and institution through all phases of their career”.

Drayton describes Ashoka as, “a person who was extraordinarily creative, both in social welfare and economic development, very tolerant, very global minded. And we thought that he, with those values and that track record, was a good symbol of what social entrepreneurs do”. 50

50 Prem Arora & Brij Grover selected Western & Indian Political thinkers Cosmos Bookhive (P) Ltd. 1999, Delhi part II pp.10-11.
The Buddha himself, his teachings or dharma, and the community of disciples or Sangha constitute the "three jewels" of Buddhism. Those who joined the Buddha as mendicant formed the earliest Buddhist community or sangha out of which later monastic communities emerged. After Buddha's death, this community of disciples compiled and continued the teachings. The central theme of Buddha's teachings relates to human sufferings and release from misery. The most fundamental teachings of the Buddha are encapsulated in the "four noble truths":

- The normal condition of this world is misery or suffering;
- Suffering stems from desire or attachment to this world that is in its essence impermanent;
- The end of suffering can be attained by quelling attachment to this world;
- Quelling attachment can be achieved through following the eightfold path of right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

Along with this basic analysis of the human predicament as one of suffering, the Buddha gained acute understanding of human psychology and physiology which formed the basis for later philosophical developments of Buddhism as well as the foundation for many advanced meditative practices. Essential to this teaching was the principle of "no-soul" or non-essence to what we consider the "self." In Buddhist world view, the self is momentary and the production of a personality itself is
conditional and impermanent. These basic teachings are framed in a fundamental distinction between *samsara* or "this world," a world of suffering and impermanence, and nirvana, a state defined by one scholar as "transcendence beyond all conceptualization."

Over the twelve centuries immediately succeeding the Buddha's *nirvana*, the early mendicant communities were transformed into permanent monastic institutions in India with the generous support of some patrons. Buddhism also began to spread throughout Asia. From this period of intellectual ferment and philosophical development emerged three major traditions of Buddhism now commonly recognized by Buddhist scholars. Theravada Buddhism or the "the way of the elders" claims a close adherence to the original teachings as passed down by the immediate disciples of the Buddha. Theravada Buddhism thrives in contemporary Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Laos, Cambodia and parts of Southwest China and continues its practice on texts written in the ancient Indian language of Pali.

Royal patronage under Ashoka, Kanishka and Harsh Vardhan promoted Buddhism. It appears that the only aim of Asoka's life was to spread the Law of Piety or Dhamma among his own subjects as well as countries outside India. In the Bhabru Edict, Asoka openly declares his faith in Buddha, Dhamma and the Samgh, and he called the Buddha as Bhagavat. In the second pillar Edict, Asoka declared that Dhamma consists of little impiety, many good deeds, compassion, liberty, truthfulness and purity.

The Dhamma Law of Piety included by Asoka contains the following:
• Samyan or Mastery of senses

• Bhavasuddhi or purity of thought

• Kritajnata or gratitude

• Dridh-Bhakti or Steadfastness of devotion

• Daya or Kindness

• Dana or Charity

• Saucha or purity

• Satya or truthfulness

• Sushrusa or service

• Sampriti patti or support

• Ability on reverence

Non-violent agitation also enabled nationalist Indian leaders to keep alive the struggle for independence in the absence of an armed insurrection. The roots of Indian attitude of non-violence go deep into history. It has been integrated with almost all religions originating in ancient times in the Indian sub-continent viz. Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. However, Vedic literature is silent on the principle of non-violence. The Rig Veda talks of wars, struggles, victories, etc., even animal sacrifices and meat eating. The concept of ahimsa could have first developed in Jainism, which disapproves Vedic rituals of animal sacrifice. It may be observed that the concept of
non-violence (Ahimsa) was practiced in India since ancient times. In the ancient time, Manu, the Law Giver, did not approve of punishment or use of violence for the promotion of personal interest by the kind and asserted that “A king using force to promote his personal ends was bound to collapse very soon.” However, Manu wanted his king to be on guard against treachery by enemies and categorically forbids him to act with guile. He laid down certain code and rules of war for the guidance of Kshatriyas. He permitted a departure from these rules in the interest of the king and the state.

The concept of Jivedaya i.e. equal respect for all life forms seems to have been first enunciated in Jainism. In Jainism, the belief in the concepts of Jivedaya requires a Jain from not being indulged in killing or harming any living creature. The Jain observes restrictions such as covering the mouth to prevent himself from swallowing living creatures that exist in the air, and for the same reason, he does not ignite fire. Even amongst the Hindus this attitude of respect for all living beings (Jivadaya or Bhootadaya) is prevalent as also are vegetarianism and worship of bovine creatures (cow and bull). All these traits in Indian cultures have been nourished by the philosophy of non-violence which in earlier times gave to the world along with the Buddhist religion.

However, Ahimsa is more popularly associated with Buddhism perhaps because this religion was more widespread. This concept was also absorbed into Hinduism where it took the form of worship of the cow and bull, ban on animal sacrifices and vegetarianism. In ancient times, the values of non-violence and vegetarianism were transmitted outside India via Buddhism. This was so because
unlike Hinduism, Buddhism had a tradition of diffusion of its beliefs though persistent missionary activity. Along with this, Buddhism received the unstinted support of powerful Indian kings like Ashoka, Kanishka and Harsha, who encouraged missionaries to visit other countries to spread the message of the Buddha. Buddhism, which itself is a significant contribution of India to world culture, also acted as a vehicle for promoting the philosophy of non-violence.

At one point of time, Buddhism was spread over vast areas from the Volga to Japan. Buddhism continues to be the religion of a majority of the peoples of the Far East. Buddhism has acquired a local character in different countries for instance, Zen Buddhism and Shintoism (which is an amalgam of Buddhism with local beliefs) in Japan, Lamaism in Tibet, etc. It has been able to retain the principal features like non-violence, meditation and renunciation, which were a part of the parent religion. The people of Central Asia also professed Buddhism before the advent of Islam. 51

India is an ancient civilization; its harmonious and composite culture is thousands of years old. India has been a leading nation in the fields of spirituality, science, and arts for centuries; it has been accepted as a Jnana-Guru of the world. India brought the gift of the greatest, unique, and adaptable concept of universal acceptance to the world; it gave the slogan of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam to humanity. Furthermore, India gave so many matchless learned men, the Jagatgurus, representing different branches of knowledge. 52

51 H.H. the XIV Dalai Lama, collected statements, interviews and articles (1986) p.127.
The Light of Asia, Gautama Buddha, and the greatest initiator of Ahimsa, Mahavira, were born on Indian soil. India's greatness also lies in the fact that its land welcomed and offered refuge to all human beings from different parts of the globe. It did not matter if these people had their own religious-community, faith, traditions, or values. After reaching India, they received a permanent abode without any discrimination. The followers of the world's six major religions dwell in India today. Besides the national language, Hindi, 21 regional languages are recognized by the Indian Constitution. However, 1,618 languages are spoken by the people on a local level throughout India. Furthermore, descendants of six ethnic groups are in India. Indian people celebrate 29 major religious festivals.

The Indian soil welcomes all. Indians see the image of God in a guest. Providing hospitality is one of the main characteristics of the Indian way. The one who desired a permanent home on the Indian land not only received permission, but received opportunities to march forward on the way to progress as well. Those who assimilated India's values reached the heights of prosperity. Parsees, the followers of Spitama Zoroaster, who reached India from Iran approximately 1,500 years ago, are the living proof of this. Those who could not fully assimilate Indian values for whatever reason also became part of the Indian way. However, they did find themselves isolated. They still find themselves in this same situation and position today.
Buddhist ideology teaches non-violence. According to Buddhist throughout liberation means any action for greater happiness for the people concerned. The chief contribution of Buddhism was 'Ahimsa' (non-violence). In the contemporary period, it helped to boost the cattle wealth of the country and latter it became one of the cherished values of Indian culture.

**Non-violence and Gandhi**

Most of us are familiar with the term non-violence or *Ahimsa*. During India's freedom struggle, Mahatma Gandhi had forged non-violence into a political weapon to peacefully push out British from India. The technique of non-violent political agitation obtained a mass base for India's freedom struggle without attracting extreme penalties from the British administration. Gandhi's ideas and practices brought a good harmony among all Indian concepts pertaining to *Ahimsa*. Even the Mahatma's worst critics would admit that the non-violent Satyagraha launched by him attracted millions of Indians into India's freedom struggle. This clearly indicates that Gandhian method of non-violence is an excellent introduction to the Indian concept of *Ahimsa* overall. Gandhi declared non-violence to be an active force. Gandhi proved on several occasions that *Ahimsa* is not the meek submission before the will of the wrongdoer, rather it is a fight using soul-force against the will of a tyrant, which ultimately yields victory.

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For centuries, it was the opinion of many in the world that *Ahimsa* was a subject limited to hermits or cave dwellers. They believed that it was an individual matter and could be applied in the religious sphere only. Gandhi, however, shattered this myth. He used *Ahimsa* in the political sphere and proved that it could be successfully applied in all walks of life and at all levels—individual to international—so long as the applier's intention is clear and full of honesty.

For the first time in history, Gandhi added a new dimension to *Ahimsa* in theory and practice by working to unite the common people. He established non-violence as a means that could be most effective in the political sphere. By doing so, he accepted not hurting anyone by one's own thought, utterance, and deed and not depriving of someone of life to be the supreme spirit of *Ahimsa*. He removed the doubt that *Ahimsa* is a subject beyond the reach of the masses. Gandhi clarified the eternality of non-violence and spoke of its naturalness before the common people. He expected the whole world, Indians in particular, to be as warriors and develop non-violence to the maximum possible extent. People should apply *Ahimsa* in their behaviors, ensuring their own personal freedom while securing freedom for all citizens of the world.

Gandhi lifted the principle of non-violence from individual plane and applied it to various walks of life - domestic, institutional, economic and political. His concept of Ahimsa was quite extensive and did not merely imply avoidance of violence. He also included in it avoidance of injury through thought, words and deeds. He considered a harsh speech or thinking bad of others also as violence. Being a positive concept, his non-violence is based on good will towards all. It even included love for
the evil-doer and may even involve conscious suffering on the part of the person who practices it. It imply observe of malice towards the opponent and hate of the evil without hating the evil-doer.

The main reason for India's capability is its people's commitment to non-violence. During the course of his non-violent actions, Mahatma Gandhi too believed this, and on the basis of this he stated, "India attracts me. It has everything that a human being with the highest possible aspirations can want."

Being an ancient civilization India has carved a niche for it in global corridor. Today it has its own identity and role to play. Without a doubt, India must march forward with the eternal and natural value of *Ahimsa* at its vanguard. By playing its role in international affairs, it must lead the world, and on the basis of Gandhi's following message, it must transform the slogan of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* into reality:

"I feel that India's mission is different from that of others. India is fitted for the religious supremacy of the world. There is no parallel in the world for the process of purification that this country has voluntarily undergone. India is less in need of steel weapons, it has fought with divine weapons, it can still do so. Other nations have been votaries of brute force.... India can win all by soul force. Poets have sung about it and seers have described their experiences.

**Origin of Non-violence**

Surprising for us to know, is the fact that the philosophies of Buddha and Mahavir and Ajivika (who was a contemporary of the Buddha and had a limited
following which became extinct in ancient times itself) also came about as a reaction to violent practices of animal and human sacrifice that existed in their days. From the various references in Vedic literature, we find that the Aryans during Vedic times practiced animal sacrifice.\(^{54}\)

Hinduism is not one Religion - it is a Collation of Human Thinking on Attitude towards Worship. The multiplicity of Hinduism also reflected itself in the absence of any terms to identify Hinduism. The term 'Hindu' itself is a result of corruption of the word 'Sindhu' by the Persians who could not pronounce the word Sindhu as the letter 'S' was missing in Pahelavi, the language of the ancient Persians. The reasons; viz. the tribal origin in antiquity, the multiplicity of cults, sects and deities, the absence of a central authority, etc, made Hinduism an assimilative religion which tolerated different sects that mushroomed from itself and even absorbed minor sects whose origins lay outside Hinduism (e.g. worship of the various mendicants like Saibaba at Shirdi in Maharashtra) and when it came in contact with religions from other countries it did not resist their assimilation into itself.

Jawaharlal Nehru was another great exponent of the method of non-violence in the modern times. He extended support to the people struggling for independence in Asia and Africa. He stood for cooperation amongst the various nations of the world to usher in world peace and laid emphasis on the need of bringing about some sort of harmony between nationalism and internationalism. In one of his speeches, Nehru said, "Internationalism demands that each country shall take an intelligent interest in

\(^{54}\) Prem Arora, pp.88.
world affairs and give up desire to live in isolation from the rest. In this age of atomic weapons and sputniks, the only way to avoid the destruction of human civilization is the free association of all the nations in a world federation. Nationalism and internationalism must be balanced and harmonized in the interest of world peace and world unity".55

Today as the leaders of the Tibetan people and as a Buddhist monk devoted to the principles of a religion based on love and compassion. Tibetan people are eager to contribute to regional and world peace, and they are in a unique position to do so.56 Traditionally, Tibetans are a peace loving and non-violent people. Since Buddhism arrived in Tibet over one thousand years ago, Tibetans have been practicing non-violence with respect to all forms of life. Being a Buddhist monk, the Dalai Lama tells people the importance of compassion, kindness and patience, where religious beliefs have played a fundamental role in setting the peace. The Dalai Lama has stated, “in theory, violence and religious views can be combined, but only if a person's motivation as well as the result of his action is solely for the benefit of the majority of the people. Under these circumstances, if there is no other alternative, then it is permissible".57

In the case of Tibet, the Dalai Lama believes that violence would be suicidal. Moreover, the Dalai Lama feels that violence can only bring temporary benefit, and

56 Ibid.
will create other problems. Non-violence may take the Tibetans more time, more patience and more determination and the achievement may be small, but it is real, he argues. In the early 1990s, world has recognized the Dalai Lama for his peaceful approach which has brought more attention to the Tibetan conflict and support are growing for the Tibetan cause. It is difficult to judge whether this support will be shown in government’s political support of the issue. At the same time, military clamp down on demonstration in Tibet has clearly displayed to the exile community that there happening inside Tibet.

The Dalai Lama proposed five basic components for peace plan which might contribute to a future friendship and cooperation with all of our neighbors, including China. The basic points for peace plan are as follows:

- Transformation of the whole of Tibet into a zone of peace.
- Abandonment of China’s population transfer policy which threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people.
- Respect for the Tibetan People’s fundamental human rights and democratic freedom;
- Restoration and protection of Tibet’s natural environment and the abandonment of China’s use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste

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• Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relation between the Tibetan and Chinese people.

The establishment of such peace of zone would be in keeping with Tibet’s historical role as a peaceful and neutral Buddhist nation and buffer state separating great powers of Asian continent. It would also be in keeping with Nepal’s proposal to proclaim Nepal a peace zone, which would have a much greater impact if it were to include Tibet and neighboring areas. This is in everyone’s interest particularly that of China and India as it would enhance their security, while reducing the economic burden of maintaining high troop concentrations on the disputed Himalayan border. 60

**Influence of Indian Democracy over Tibetans-in-Exile**

Since Dalai Lama fled to India on 10 March 1959 when China occupied Tibetan territory, under his leadership, a non-violent freedom struggle began. By adhering to the ideology of non-violence, the Dalai Lama has obtained widespread international respect. In 1960, the Dalai Lama set up his government in exile in Dharmasala. Tibetans have been devising their democratic strategies/models for their future Tibet. Being in Indian territory, Tibetan institutions are influenced by the Indian democratic set up.

The growth of modern democracy in the context of changing ideas. The word democracy emerged in ancient Greek politics; it means ‘rule by the people’.

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60 Ibid.
Influential ideas of the Greek Politics propounded by great political thinkers, like Thucydides (460-399 BC), Plato (427-347 BC) and Aristotle (384-322 BC) and examined the democratic ideas, structure and culture. The Central Source of inspiration for modern political thought is the development of democracy in Athens, According to H. Birch the Greeks gave us only the world, democracy and they did not provide us with a democratic model and he explained ideal democratic models.

During the middle age, there existed a feudal system in which power was based on rank that could be attained only through inheritance or by force. A new model of democracy, based on modern society, did not emerge until nineteenth century, although, as mentioned above, its beginnings can be traced to the renaissance and Viccolo Machiavelli. Actually, in the eighteenth century, Americans like Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) and James Madison (1752-1836) worked on the foundation of the American democracy. Roughly we can say that between the renaissances of modern, industrial capitalist society.

Therefore the emergence of modern democracy has been influenced by the early liberalism. It developed as an attack on divine right theory, where the powerful rule was asserted based on hierarchical and despotic institutions. Unfortunately Afro-Asian experiments with parliamentary democracy have been a story of one failure after another. State after state in the third world has revealed a historical reversal to

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63 Rahul (1969) p.7
authoritarianism or military rule. But surprisingly India with the second largest population in the world and with so many diversities in the linguistic religions and communal terms has successfully combined political stability with parliamentary democracy. The democracy in India, originally conceived and institutionalized and subsequently operated in the political system is the most outstanding deviate case from the stereotype parliamentary democracies of the Western vintage.

The Indian experiment of a predominantly parliamentary democracy, superimposed on a highly centralized federal state structure in its effort to realize the goals of social and economic revolution through the apparently irreconcilable mechanism of planning for economic development and democratic-decentralization (Panchayati Raj) has carved out a category of its own, offering a new direction and model for the future. The real test of democracy therefore, lies not merely in its concern for safeguards but even more in its success in peacefully resolving serial conflicts and recurring collective participation in a common national endeavor. The hope of founding fathers of Indian constitution that parliamentary democracy would be able to face India's problems successfully and triumph in the end has largely remained unrealized. It is particularly so with regard to socio-economic development and transformation.

Influence of Indian Leaders over Tibetans

India's political leaders over the years also have left their mark upon the present Tibetan Polity and leadership. Certainly the impact of Mahatma Gandhi must
take precedence over all others. His non-violence resistance programme in countering British imperialism found a secure place in the heart of the young fourteenth Dalai Lama. It is the hope of many devout Buddhists to visit the homeland of Buddha during their life time and so it was no different for his Holiness. In the those of the early days of Chinese rule in 1956, Nehru had invited the Dalai lama to visit India. Seizing the moment, and hoping to find a compassionate political ear, His Holiness received permission from the Chinese government to visit India One of his first stops was the site of Gandhi's cremation, Raj Ghat, on the banks of the Yamuna River. Here he prayed with great intensity, feeling that this once great Indian leader would continue to encourage him along the same course of non-violence that had been used by the former Indian cause of independence against their adversary. It would appear that at this moment a deeper commitment to a non-violent approach in dealing with the Chinese was made, one which has lasted almost a life time, since he was only twenty – one years old at the time of the trip. Although not physically present, it was as if the charismatic Indian leader was counseling this young fledgling to follow in his footsteps. Goodman quotes the Dalai Lama as saying:

As I stood there I wondered what wise counsel the mahatma would have given me if he had been alive. I felt sure he would have thrown all his strength and soul and character into a peaceful campaign for the freedom of the people of Tibet. I wished fervently that I had the privilege of meeting him in this world. But, standing there, I felt I had come in close touch with him and I felt his advise would always be that I follow the path of peace.

Another Indian leader who significantly influenced the life of the young Dalai Lama was Nehru, India’s Prime Minister in 1956. He was the first to reach out to
offer a home in exile to the Dalai Lama and his Tibetan community. Although he was unwilling to recognize the new government-in-Exile, his tolerance and material support for Tibetan endeavors was magnanimous, given India’s economic circumstances. His government served as a democratic inspiration and provided the environment for the promotion of a democratic way of life for the refugees. The atmosphere of freedom did not go unnoticed by the Tibetan leadership, although they had to deal with being a political non-entity.

As the Dalai Lama states in his autobiography;

...my wounded feelings quickly gave away to a sense of enormous gratitude as I saw for the time, the true meaning of the word ‘democracy’. The India Government vehemently opposed my point of view (Tibetan independence), but it did nothing to try to prevent me from expressing it, much less holding it.64

As the years in exile became prolonged, the Dalai Lama was able to observe more and more how a democracy functions, even in terms of crises. The administration of Indira Gandhi, who like her father was a great supporter of all Tibetan educational endeavors, became embroiled in a number of domestic troubles. The Dalai Lama was able to see first hand that even potentially autocratic leaders could be ousted from government and democracy could still prevail. He states in his autobiography:

... I note that she relinquished power quite gracefully when the electorate delivered its verdict in March 1977. To me that was a wonderful example of democracy in action: though there was much

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conflict both within Parliament and without, when the moment came for her to leave, she did so without a fuse.

Similarities in Indian and Tibetan Democratic Practices

Thus in the midst of a democratic experiment in an underdeveloped society politicization of new recruits and groups into the political process had been giving rise to the development of new and differential identities and patterns of political cleavage. The elections have played a crucial role in making the government answerable to people at least periodically and had led to an increasing political awareness among the people who otherwise are illiterate, poor immobile and oppressed. In fact mass participation in elections had become a political tradition and cannot be easily reversed.

Tibetan institutions have constructed on hierarchical-structural features. A small group of nobility controls over majority of Tibetans, which clearly implies that Tibetans lives in traditional way of life and are controlled by oligarchy group. According to Ram Rahul, the Dalai Lama does not inherit his authority. “people invest him with it so that they may be governed in accordance with ancient tradition and with prudence and integrity. And for this position of the highest dignity in the country, the Dalai Lama, the supreme head of Tibet, is discovered, newer elected.

Before Chinese occupation of Tibet, there was no democratically organized society. Only in 1963, Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama introduced the main objective to establish Tibetan Government in accordance with the democratic
principles. It is obvious that modern democratic system, whether in Tibetan institutions or in Indian government institution, is supported by majority people. There is no place for monopoly of power of ruling elite. At present, the present Dalai Lama, catered democratic principles to modern Tibet with new experience in India, which were firmly opposed by earlier the Dalai Lamas. His prime objective is to influence national and international policies for Tibetan cause. But ongoing Tibetan-government.-in-exile is still a powerful organ paradoxical to democracy.

In terms of political legitimacy, the Tibetan political authority does not follow the Weberian concept of legal-rational legitimacy. In this context, Max Weber classified the source of political legitimacy in three types which, traditional legitimacy, legal rational legitimacy and charismatic authority. While in Indian context, we can see all three kinds Weberian’s concepts in legitimacy in different period in different place. Hence Indian democratic model is better model for Tibetans than the democratic models of Asia-African societies.

Although still quite young when entering exile in northern India, the Dalai Lama and his new refugee community set upon a democratic path, greatly influenced by the Indian experienced of democracy. Certainly, being surrounded by the world’s democratic state, they saw institutions that could serve as examples. Mr. Dawa Tsering (His Holiness’s representative in New York) shared the following;

The Tibetans in Exile based their new constitution on the Indian Government’s model. All of the rules regarding civil servants, elections, audits and promotions were all drawn from the Indian system.
Not only the present system in exile based on the Indian, but the plan for Tibet's future polity, if and when they return to Tibet, is also based on the same democratic system. According to the International Committee of lawyers for Tibet:

In 1991, the Dalai Lama called for the promulgation of new constitutions, one for government in exile and one for the government of a free Tibet. The charter governing the exile community has been ratified by the Assembly and the constitution for a free Tibet is currently being drafted in consultations with Tibetans in Tibet, Tibetans in exile and constitutional scholars in India and abroad.65

India's democratic government has a federal system, which consists of two levels; the central government, composed of central executive, judicial and legislative branches, and the twenty-five state governments. Both have clearly delineated powers. Normally, there is no overlapping of responsibilities or powers. Therefore those issues which directly affected the nation as whole, such as conducting war, directing foreign affairs, or regulating currency, are the prerogative of the central government. The twenty-five state governments control areas such as criminal and civil procedures, marriage and divorce, education, economic planning, and trade within each perspective state. The central governments are overseen by elected governors.

"The guide lines for the Future Tibetan Polity and the Basic Features of Its Constitution" mirror all of the above:

The legislative, the judiciary and executive organs of the Tibetan Government shall be independent and vested with equal power and authority. In line with this system of parliamentary democracy, a duly elected citizens of Tibet shall become the supreme head of the country, and shall assume the ensuing responsibility. All Tibetans must assume common responsibility to transform the present totalitarian system in Tibet, which actually guarantees no freedom to the people into a genuinely democratic federal system in accordance with the choice of Tibetans as a whole.

In like manner, the Tibetan domain would be divided into province just as India is into states. They will have separate governments. The document continues in this manner;

In each province a provincial assembly consisting of members elected by the people shall be vested with the legislative powers of the provinces: a governor shall be appointed by the president; a cabinet held by the Chief Minister shall be elected by the provincial assembly, and provincial high court vested with judicial power of the province. The provincial assembly shall pass the laws and regulations. In accordance with the requirement of the province. Apart from certain matters of crucial significance, the respective provinces shall have the final authority in all matters which concern it.

India since its independence has followed a parliamentary form of government. This parliament is the supreme and chief legislative body of the country. It is bicameral in form. Elections are conducted and members of various parties run for seats. The party winning the largest numbers of seats has the right to form the
government. The leader of the majority party is then named the prime minister. A cabinet of ministers is elected by the prime minister and these ministers are held accountable to the parliament. These officials are usually in charge of Defence, Finance, the Home offices and the like. Once again the “Guidelines for the Tibet polity” state:

The executive power shall be vested in the president and vice-president elected by the upper and lower chambers of the Tibetan National Assembly in accordance with law. The prime minister shall be elected from the party or any group constituting the majority of the members of the lower chamber of the Tibetan National Assembly actually present. However should this procedure fail, the prime minister shall be elected by the entire members of the Tibetan National Assembly. The powers to exercise executive powers shall rest primarily in the cabinet set up by the prime minister.

Like wise, just as India has judiciary brance headed by the supreme court, which resolve conflicts between the central government and state governments along with citizen conflicts, so too there is a judicial setup for settlements of violence in a new democratic Tibet. The draft constitution states:

An independent supreme court of Tibet shall be the highest appellate court of justice, which shall safeguard and decide by intrepreting the provision of the constitution, all matters brought before it concerning alleged violation of law, whether by the government or by citizens so as to ensure correct and equal dispensation of justice.
Both India and Tibet have a mutual concern for their country’s destitute populations. Therefore another aspect in both India’s constitution and the framework of Tibet’s future polity provides for welfare state. The Indian constitution has provisions for the protection of socially and physically deprived classes. The aim of the provisions to promote a just society. Tibet will follow the same path as the Indian welfare state working toward those same goals. “The Guidelines” continue:

Today in some parts of the world, while there are all kinds of material benefits, human values and freedoms have suffered such a degradation that the people have virtually become a slave of machines. In general, in most countries, the people lack even basic necessities and are impoverished. Tibet shall free of these two extremes and its economic system shall provide for the needs of its people. It shall plan for a just a development, fulfilling all the basic needs of the people.
Table II: Major Tibetan Periodicals in Exile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Periodical</th>
<th>Place of Publication</th>
<th>Starting Year</th>
<th>Periodicity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><em>Bod-mei Rang-dwang</em></td>
<td>Darjeeling</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Tibetan Freedom)</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td><em>Shes-Cbya</em> (Sheja)</td>
<td>Dharamsala</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td><em>Ma-Khyog Drang-thing</em></td>
<td>New Delhi</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td><em>Dmangs-gtso</em></td>
<td>Dharamsala</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Fortnightly</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td><em>Shag-bsma btsegs-pa</em></td>
<td>Dharamsala</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Annual</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td><em>Sjiang-gzhon</em></td>
<td>Dharamsala</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Annual</td>
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<td>K. Dhondup, Kesang Trenzeng Namgyal</td>
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Source: Dawa Norbu’s interviews with party members in June 1998.