

The Venerable Sangharakshita
Lecture 62: the Future of Tibetan Buddhism

As you've just heard, today we come to the eighth, and also the last lecture in our first winter series – Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism. And those who have attended this series from the very beginning, or who might have joined us as it were en route, will perhaps have appreciated already the fact that, in the course of this series, in the course of the lectures given so far, we have covered quite a lot of ground. We started off by trying to understand something about Tibet, the country itself, as well as about the people of Tibet, these very colourful and nowadays rather unfortunate people whom we call the Tibetans. We traced the history, stage by stage, of the introduction of the Buddha's teachings into Tibet. We saw how Buddhism came to Tibet. We tried to understand something of the work of the three great religious kinds and the kind of Western Tibet, under whose auspices, with whose help and co-operation and support, the Buddha's Teachings were gradually made more and more known in the Land of Snows. And we saw at this stage, we saw that despite all these efforts, despite religious kinds and great teachers, great pundits, it took not less than 500 years, five whole centuries, to establish properly Buddhism in Tibet. And we saw that this establishment, this full and final establishment, of Buddhism in Tibet, after initial setbacks and difficulties and reverses, entailed a very great deal of devotion and determination and even self-sacrifice on the part of those concerned.

From here we went on, you may remember, to study the schools of Tibetan Buddhism. We saw that there are in the main four different schools; The Nyingmapas, the old-style ones, the traditionalists; the Kagyupas, those who transmit the ear-whispered teachings; the Sakyapas, renowned for their scholarship; and the Gelugpas, the virtuous ones, those who follow the great reformer Tsongkhapa. We traced the history of these four great schools, not in detail but at least in general outline. We tried to understand their general characteristics, We had also at the same time in passing just a few glimpses into the lives of the great founders of these schools; Padmasambhava, Milarepa, Tsongkapa, and so on.

The Gelugpa school, or consideration of the Gelugpa school, led us straight on to the subject of the Dalai Lama and his – what we've no better word for than – his reincarnations. And we tried to understand what the Dalai Lama represents for the Tibetan people, who he is in their eyes, and so on. And then from the Dalai Lama and his reincarnations, we passed to the more general subject of monks and laymen in Buddhist Tibet; and in the course of this talk we tried to explode the old myth that there were no bhikshus, no properly ordained monks, in Tibet. We saw that, on the contrary, there are in Tibet, or there were in Tibet, not less than six grades of the monastic life; from the genye (sp?), the lay brother, right up to the kenpo or the fully trained and authorised abbot.

We also, the course of this talk, tried to clear up certain misunderstandings which appear to have arisen in the West about the meaning of the word lama, and we saw it means a spiritual teacher, who may be a monk but may not be a monk. We went on then to speak of the place of the laity. We tried to appreciate their sincerity and devotion. We saw that the Bodhisattva Ideal was a common bond amongst all Tibetan Buddhists, whether monks or laymen, and so on.

From here we rather changed our course. We left behind the historical and the institutional; we went on to the more religious, the more artistic, the more inspirational, and we studied first of all the symbols of Tibetan Buddhist art; we saw that Tibetan Buddhist art was mainly a blending of Indian and Chinese elements; we saw that it was traditional; we saw that it was religious; and we saw that it comprised four main categories of architecture, painting, ritual objects and decorative arts; and we saw that each of the departments of Tibetan Buddhist art had its own symbols. In architecture we found the symbol, the great symbol, was the stupa or chorten.

From here we went on to something even more practical – to the four foundation yogas of the Tibetan Buddhist Tantra; these four great practices, these four great disciplines if you like, which underlay the whole practice of the Vajrayana in Tibet. First of all, the Going for Refuge with prostration, a much more elaborate practice in Tibet than in any other part of the Buddhist world; then the development of the Bodhichitta, the aspiration after Supreme Enlightenment for the benefit of all living beings; thirdly, the meditation and mantra recitation of Vajrasattva for purification, for the realization of one's own innate primordial purity of mind, on the highest Transcendental level; and then finally the offering of the mandala, the offering to the Buddha and Bodhisattvas and lamas and great teachers generally of a symbolical representation of the entire universe.

And then finally, last week, we came on to the great, the all-embracing and the supremely important topic of Tibetan Buddhist meditation. And we saw last week that this Tibetan Buddhist meditation, so well known in the world by reputation but about which people know in fact so very very little, we saw that this was mainly Tantric or Vajrayanic. And inasmuch as it is Tantric or Vajrayanic, we saw that it involves by its very nature, by virtue of its very definition, wong or abhisheka or Tantric initiation: the passing on from the guru to the disciple of a charge, as it were, of spiritual power, a sort of Transcendental electric shock, if one may so call it. We saw that there are two forms of Tantric initiation, broadly speaking: the great wong, the great initiation, and the small wong, the small initiation. But to give just an example of Tibetan Buddhist, that is to say, Tantric, meditation as practised according to the outer Tantra by many hundreds of thousands of Tibetan monks and laypeople, a description, a brief description, was given of the meditation on the Green Tara in ten successive stages of practice and realisation.

So this is where we've come so far; this is the ground that we've covered so far; this is the material which we have surveyed, and I think you will have agreed with me that, in the course of our seven lectures, we have surveyed a very rich, a very vital, a very dramatic, field in a way, and covered a very great deal of ground. But so far we have focussed on the past and present – or at least recent past. What about the future of Tibetan Buddhism? Having heard about the wonders and the glories of Tibetan Buddhism, after hearing about all its great traditions, spiritual disciplines, learned monks and masters, its wonderfully highly organized monastic life, when one contemplates the spectacle of a whole country organised around its religion, this is very inspiring. Other countries have had their whole national life geared either to commerce or to politics, to conquest or to the arts; but in the case of Tibet, the whole of life – economic, social, political, artistic – was all geared ultimately to religion. So naturally we cannot help wondering what is going to happen to Tibetan Buddhism. It has such a glorious past, such an enthralling past; the past of Tibetan Buddhism has so many lessons to teach us; but what about the future? One can't just rest contented with the past, or even with the present. The human mind naturally looks to the future.

But having asked what is the future of Tibetan Buddhism, we have to face at once – and we might as well face it at once – a very unpalatable fact. That is that, so far as human eye can see, Tibetan Buddhism has in fact no future. It has had a very great and very glorious past, but so far as we can see it has, we must confess with regret, no future. This great form of Buddhism in its integrity, in its fullness, in its completeness, as it has existed for hundreds upon hundreds of years in Tibet, has no future. This is the first fact which we have to come to terms with.

In Tibet itself, there were many ancient prophecies about the future of Tibetan Buddhism, about the Dalai Lama, and so on. One of the prophecies, which was quoted very much among Tibetans just a few years ago, was to the effect that the fourteenth Dalai Lama, the fourteenth of this very distinguished line, would be the last. So Tibetans who were versed in the history and traditions of their own country and religion, were not surprised when in 1959 the Dalai Lama had to flee from Tibet and seek shelter as a refugee in India. They said among themselves: 'It's unfortunate, it's a tragedy; but it has been prophesied that the fourteenth Dalai Lama will be the last.' And this,

of course, does not just mean that everything will be the same in Tibet except that there will no longer be a Dalai Lama. This is impossible, just like saying, well, the queen bee may not be there, but the life of the hive will go on. The Dalai Lama is central to the whole system. The Dalai Lama summarized or embodies in his person, the whole of Tibetan Buddhism. And if the Dalai Lama goes, well, the system as we know it in Tibet for so many hundreds of years, this also goes. So, according to these prophecies, the fourteenth Dalai Lama will be the last, and this does really seem likely, so that the whole way of life which he represents, which he incarnates if you like, will come to an end.

Since 1950, Tibet has been under Chinese domination. If I may strike a personal note, I remember that year 1950 very vividly. I'd just arrived in Kalimpong, in March, and all during that summer there were rumours of war from Tibet, from the borderlands between Tibet and China. We heard that the Chinese armies were on the march; that they were building roads, bringing up reinforcements. We heard that monasteries had fallen, that monks had been massacred. And then week by week, month by month, we watched almost breathless as they advanced ever nearer and nearer to the sacred city of Lhasa. Eventually they were there; the Chinese communists were in Lhasa. When they reached Lhasa it was as though for many people, the end of an epoch had come.

So they have been there, in Tibet – the Chinese communists have been in Tibet – ever since. Time enough for a whole new generation to have grown up in Tibet. And during this period many changes have taken place. Material changes have taken place, some them, we must admit, for the better; roads have been built, schools have been opened, and we may say that on the whole perhaps the material lot of the people, probably has been improved. Great psychological changes have also taken place during this time in the outlook of the Tibetan people, especially the young. This is partly due, no doubt, to Maoist indoctrination. But it's also partly due to the inevitable march of time. The industrial revolution to which Asia has largely succumbed, has at last caught up with Tibet. Tibet we may say, is one of the last major civilisations of the traditional type to succumb to the onrush of industrialism.

In some part of Tibet within living memory, they didn't even have the wheel. There were no wheeled vehicles, there were no carts, in some parts of Tibet. Now you can live perfectly well without wheels, but technologically speaking that some parts of Tibet were still in the Stone Age; this was not very long ago. Now not only do they have the wheel; they have the wheel in some of its most complicated forms. They have the motor car and the aeroplane.

So this has resulted in a tremendous culture shock. It is difficult for us to appreciate the force of this. Supposing you were living say, at the time of the Norman Conquest – just imagine how you would have been living at that time. And suppose you were living in your village, with your priest, with your farm work and so on, and suppose suddenly, by some sort of miracle, you were snatched up from the middle of the eleventh century, and you were plonked down in the middle of the twentieth. You can imagine what sort of shock you would have experienced when you saw things so changed, so industrialised, so mechanised; everything different. And this is in a way what has happened to many Tibetan people: they've been lifted up from a very simple, though spiritually profound, type of civilisation, and landed right in the middle of the twentieth century, exposed to all the technological and materialistic winds that blow. And in many ways it is a very great pity that the traditional culture of Tibet, has been disrupted, has been broken up, in this way, but great a pity as it is, we can be pretty sure that it would have happened anyway, even if the Chinese had not invaded Tibet. It might have happened in a less dramatic manner, but it would inevitably have happened.

I remember many times in Kalimpong seeing young Tibetans fresh from Tibet, very often from Lhasa. When one first met them, they were obviously new arrivals. You can always spot the new arrivals because they look around them, and they take notice of things that others would take for granted. I remember the first time I took a party of my Tibetan students to Darjeeling – they were

very fascinated by the station and the railway engine, because they'd never seen one before. They were men of about forty, all of them, but they were fresh, they were newly arrived, and they hadn't seen a locomotive before. To them it was just like a great iron dragon. I took them on to the Darjeeling railway station platform, and there was what to them would have been a great monster standing beside the platform. It was a very tiny little engine, actually – the railway which goes up to the hills is called 'the toy Himalayan railway' – but they were much impressed by it and they were very excitedly looking at it and peering underneath it and tapping the wheels, and just chatting among themselves and gesticulating, and wondering what it was all about. And suddenly it let out a great hoot, and they sprang back wondering what was going to happen – whether it was going to bite them or something of that sort. And they were very interested indeed.

Also I remember that a lot of Tibetans when they first arrived in Kalimpong were typically Tibetan. They wore their hair long as Tibetan males traditionally do, into a braid which goes round their head. And if they were of good family they'd wear a long earring, usually of turquoise. They'd be wearing their Tibetan dress, the chuba, a sort of dressing-gown-like affair, and tall boots. And of course they'd have a mala or rosary in their hand – every single Tibetan. So this is the sort of picture that one saw when these young Tibetans, some of them only eighteen or twenty, came first of all to Kalimpong. Bear in mind that Kalimpong is just a little town of 15,000 inhabitants – it's rather backward from the standpoint of the West. Not everybody in Kalimpong has electricity or running water, it's a very simple quiet little place. So you wouldn't think that there was much there to corrupt the innocent young Tibetan.

But just wait. Just wait six months, and then take another look at those same young Tibetans – I've done this myself many a time. After six months you find they're completely changed. They've cut off their long hair; that usually goes first, they become crew-cut. And they start wearing – they're very fond of this sort of thing – sharkskin suits. And then they give up their rosary, and you see them carrying around a transistor radio. And then you find they get interested in pop music, they want to learn to dance the twist and all that sort of thing. These are young Tibetans who six months before had been living in the Middle Ages.

But we mustn't think it's all due to the Chinese communists. This is the march of time. It may not be progress – I'm sure, in a way, it isn't progress – but this change happens inevitably. And even had the Chinese not come, Tibet also would eventually have undergone this sort of process.

Incidentally, my remarks apply only to young Tibetan males. The women, even the young women, seem to be much more conservative. You don't see them cutting their hair, and you don't see them changing their dress. They may give up their rosaries and prayer wheels, but they don't go much further than that. In fact, one may say that, anthropologically speaking, it's a well-known fact that culturally - the female is the much more stable sex where any question of culture or religion and so on is concerned.

So even if Tibet does succeed, as one hopes it will succeed in regaining independence, if they manage to shake off the Chinese control, if the Dalai Lama returns and takes up his residence again in the Potala, it will nevertheless be impossible to put the clock back. Tibet will never be again what it was before, what it was for so many hundreds of years; and it's in the sense that I say that Tibetan Buddhism has no future.

Now perhaps we shouldn't be too upset by this. It's a very great loss, no doubt; but as Buddhists, we have to remember that the law of change, anitya, governs, dominates and controls all human affairs whatsoever; and the institutional forms of Buddhism itself are no exception to this law. Buddhism began in India; the Buddha lived and taught in India, and Indian Buddhism endured for 1500 years; but in the end it disappeared. Nowadays, apart from a few modern revivals, we do not find in India any trace any longer of Buddhism. That being the case, we should not be surprised if Buddhism was to disappear from Tibet after a similar period.

Now does that mean that Tibetan Buddhism will disappear completely? That no vestige will remain? Personally, I don't think so. As I've said, Tibetan Buddhism, as the way of life of a whole nation, has in fact already come to an end, and I do not believe that there can be any question of its revival. But Tibetan Buddhism will survive to a limited extent in at least two ways. It will survive among the Tibetan refugees in India and elsewhere; and it will survive as an integral part of Buddhism in the West.

Now for us, the survival of Buddhism in the West is the more important. Most Tibetan refugees – there are about 100,000 of them altogether – are found in India, mainly in the hill areas. Quite understandably, the Tibetans, coming from a very high country, haven't been very happy settling down in the hot plains of India; as far as possible they've clung to the hills, they settled down around the Himalayas – places like Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Sikkim, Dalhousie and various other places in the Punjab even as far up as Kashmir. There are some, of course, in Europe, especially Switzerland, where there's a concentration altogether 1,000 Tibetan refugees – the biggest Tibetan community outside India itself.

Amongst the 100,000 who re refugees, whether in India or in the West, there are perhaps some 2,000 monks of various grades – lay brother, fully ordained monks, novices, geshe, abbots, and so on; altogether, so far as one can estimate, about 2,000 refugee monks amongst a total of around 100,000 refugees in general.

For refugees everywhere, the first question is that of physical survival, and this obviously the first consideration that the Tibetan refugees have to attend to; first of all they have to eat. For many of them that is quite a difficult business. But as conditions are improving, something is beginning to be done to preserve the Tibetan culture and Tibetan form of Buddhism. In several places, Tibetan temples and monasteries have been built. I remember in the course of my own tour I visited one at Sarnath, and another at Buddha-Gaya – temples, monasteries, built fairly recently by the Tibetans, especially by the refugees. At one particular place in West Bengal, called Baksar, 1,000 Gelugpa monks are staying together. You might be wondering how on earth they managed to find a building big enough for 1,000 monks. But they aren't staying in a building – they're staying in an old army camp; and they've got an army man, a military man, as commandant of the camp, and he runs it more or less along military lines; and that is not dissimilar to the way in which monasteries are, or were, run in Tibet and I'm told the monks get on with him very well indeed.

Again, in Dalhousie, the two Tantric colleges have been re-opened in a number of small bungalows, and about 200 monks are there. And there are up and down India, but especially in the north and especially in the foothills of the Himalayas, quite a number of smaller settlements. So, as I've said, here temples, monasteries, are being built, monks are residing, so there's some hope of the culture and the religion of the Tibetan people surviving. A number of handicraft centres have also been opened by the Tibetan refugees and these centres are producing paintings, carpets, metalwork, woodwork, and so on, along traditional lines. Inevitably, there's been some corruption in the matter of colour and design, but something is at least being continued, and no doubt improvements will be made.

So there's no doubt that Tibetan Buddhism, like the Tibetan refugees themselves, will survive in exile. In India, the position of Tibetan Buddhism in time will probably be not unlike that of Zoroastrianism among the Parsis of Bombay. I don't know if many of you have heard about the Parsis of Bombay, but they are a flourishing Indian community whose ancestors fled from Persia (now Iran) about 1000 years ago and came to India. They fled because at the time when Islam was invading Persia, it was a question of being converted to Islam or perishing; so a number of Zoroastrians, followers of the ancient teaching of Zoroaster – the great Persian prophet – decided that they neither wanted to embrace Islam nor perish, so they fled. They came by sea from Persia through Arabia to Bombay and the Indians received them kindly, as the Indians usually do receive

refugees, especially religious ones. They were given land in and around the area which is now Bombay.

They settled down, and engaged in trade, and now 1000 years later there are some 30,000 of them, and they are probably the richest community in the whole of India. 30,000 of them, they don't have a poor person amongst them. Their social arrangements are so good, you never find a poor Parsi; you never find a Parsi beggar. And of course in India, that is really something. You can find brahmin beggars, you can find Hindu beggars, you can find Muslim beggars; you can find Christian beggars, even; but you won't find a Parsi beggar because every individual Parsi is so well looked after by the community. When they die, very often they leave their money – and sometimes they are very wealthy indeed – to be distributed amongst the entire community. Their community keeps a register of all Parsis, and if someone dies and leaves say two million, the that's distributed amongst the entire Parsi community; everybody gets Rs10 or Rs12 or Rs15 per head. This is their system. It's not obligatory, but it is very often done.

So the Parsi community is enterprising, highly educated and very charitable – they put up lots of dispensaries and lots of hospitals in Bombay. Above all, they preserve their ancient Zoroastrian faith. Zoroastrianism has virtually perished from Persia; you find hardly a trace of it in Iran, just one or two areas in the hills, you find a few Persians clinging on to the ancient Zoroastrian faith in the midst of the all-pervading Islam. But in Bombay you find this strong and resilient Parsi community, preserving their Parsi faith, when it has perished, practically elsewhere in the world.

So probably something like this will happen with regard to Tibetan Buddhist refugees, and no doubt Tibetan Buddhism will be preserved amongst them, especially as they have amongst them at least 2,000 monks. In Tibet itself, if the Chinese communists remain a few more generations, then very likely Tibetan Buddhism will entirely disappear. We don't like to think that religion can be wiped out; but it can. Manichaeism – the teaching of the prophet Mani. At one time, Manichaeism – a sort of universalist, all-embracing religion- spread from France to China, right across Europe and Asia. But now it doesn't exist; it was simply wiped out. It was stamped out by Persian kings, by the Roman Catholic church, by Chinese emperors. It was a very offensive faith – this is perhaps why people didn't like it – it believed in complete non-violence, it believed in love and so forth. But it wasn't very popular and was stamped out.

So sometimes a religion is stamped out – this can happen. We mustn't think 'no, Tibetan Buddhism is so great, so glorious, God won't allow it to be stamped out'. Well, even if there is a God, clearly he is able to allow a religion to be stamped out. This has happened with Buddhism in Mongolia – about China we don't know very much, but we do know quite a lot about Mongolia. Mongolia was an even more staunchly Buddhist country than Tibet. As I think I mentioned in the course of one of these talks, the Mongolian geshees are even more learned than their Tibetan counterparts. But from about 1920, communism was introduced into Mongolia under Russian auspices, long before it came to China; with the result that nowadays Buddhism, Mongolian Buddhism, which is a form of Tibetan Buddhism, cannot really be said to exist. Yes, a few temples, a few monasteries, are preserved as museums; a few old monks still potter around on state pensions; but that's about all. Buddhism in Mongolia was virtually ceased to exist. And the same may well happen in Tibet. So one isn't being unduly pessimistic, one isn't being unnecessarily gloomy, one is just trying to face facts.

In fact, this would seem to be part of a general tendency in Asia. If one looks all over Asia, if one looks over the East, it's as though Buddhism is capitulating right and left. China is lost to Buddhism, for all intents and purposes; so is Tibet, so is Mongolia; Burma is threatened; Thailand will probably be threatened; Japan isn't threatened from without, but is threatened from within, by over-industrialization. Buddhism does still exist there, but not as it did in the past. And in other parts of the East, Islam swept Buddhism away several hundred years ago. So for a long time, Buddhism has been on the defensive, and in many areas, communism is giving the last touch as

it were, and it is finally crumbling. This is one of the reasons why it is so important for us in the West to study, to practice, and if possible, to preserve Buddhism. It might seem a fantastic thought, but it may be that one day there will be very little Buddhism in the East, but perhaps something at least here in the West. Bigger changes than this have taken place in world history. We mustn't think that because the East was Buddhist for 2,000 years it's going to be Buddhist forever. So far as we can see, in all Buddhist countries of the East, Buddhism is in retreat, if not actually vanquished, if not actually obliterated.

So these are the sort of facts that we do have to face. So it may well be that Tibetan Buddhism survives in India, just as Zoroastrianism has survived in India too. This is of course not going into the question of India's own fate, which is quite another question; but into that I don't propose to enter. There is, of course, the danger that even if, or even when, Tibetan Buddhism does succeed in surviving on a reduced scale in India, there's the danger that it becomes a sort of museum piece, a sort of bit of archaeology, like the Red Indians in the United States, and so on; but perhaps I need not speculate about that at present.

Now for the survival of Tibetan Buddhism as an integral part of Western Buddhism – indeed we may say, of world Buddhism. At present, Buddhism is in process of being introduced into the West, as indeed are many other Eastern teachings. This is one of the great characteristics of our times. All sorts of dreadful things are with us; the atom bomb is with us, the hydrogen bomb is with us, but at least are one or two brighter and more hopeful developments, and one of these is that Eastern teachings, whether Buddhist or Hindu or Daoist or Confucian, these are percolating, penetrating, perhaps even eventually permeating, the whole Western world.

Now Buddhism is being introduced into the West in many different forms including the Theravada from Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand; Zen from Japan. Now it's already evident that Western Buddhism will not follow any one Eastern tradition exclusively. Sometimes Buddhists from the East are rather hopeful that their particular brand of Buddhism will take root in the West and that all Western Buddhists will be strict Theravadins or staunch followers of Soto Zen; But as far as anyone can tell this is not going to happen. It certainly isn't happening at present. Western Buddhism is learning and will continue to learn from all the different oriental traditions of Buddhism. We shall make the acquaintance of all of them – Theravada, Zen, Tendai, Mahayana, Madhyamika, Tantra – there are so many. They will all be introduced and become known. But what will happen is that in the West people will try to extract the essence of the teaching, the Buddha's real message, from all these different and differing traditions; and this essence, this ultimate and vital element in the teaching will be adapted to the psychological and spiritual needs of Western people.

In the West, people who are interested in religion, who are interested in philosophy, have become very weary of orthodoxies; have become very weary of too much importance being placed on things which are basically not essential, which are even quite unrelated to the essence of the teaching. So it's quite unthinkable, that people in the West who take up Buddhism are going to pay very much attention to the inessentials of the trappings of the various Buddhist traditions, as they have been handed down in the East. Westerners who turn to Buddhism, who turn to any sort of spiritual teaching emanating from the East are too much concerned with ultimates, with real human problems, to be able to waste their time on accidental things and the trimmings and trappings of Eastern Buddhism; these things are just going to go down very well, I feel, here in the West. So we need to try to come to grips with and to encounter if you like, as quickly as possible, the essence of the Buddha's teaching, what he was really getting at, which was nothing, basically other than Enlightenment and the way to Enlightenment, mainly through ever-increasing awareness. This is what the Buddha was really talking about and this we see reflected and echoed in all the different ways. And it's to this main, essential theme that we shall pay more and more attention, trying to adapt it to our own lives and to the lives of those around us.

When we speak of adaptation, it should not be thought that there's any question of compromising the Teaching or watering it down. On the contrary, we are concerned with the effective communication of the essentials of the Teaching. Much of what passes for Buddhism in the East has no connection with the Teaching whatsoever. In Burma, for instance, there was once a very bitter dispute as to whether monks, when they went out from the monastery, should have the left shoulder covered and the right uncovered, or whether they should cover the right shoulder also. This dispute went on in Burma among different sections of the monks for one hundred years, and many books were written about it. The controversy engaged practically the entire energies of the Burmese monastic community for a whole century – and even now the question is not settled.

One of my own teachers – the Theravadin Bhikkhu Jagdish Kashyap, who was a rather liberal minded sort of person, found that when he went to Ceylon, people wanted to find out which nikaya – which sub sect of the Sangha – he belonged to. In Ceylon there are three different groups among the monks: there are the shama-nikaya people, then there are the ramaniya-nikaya, and then there are the amarapura-nikaya. So the shama-nikaya people, they follow the traditions of Thailand, and the amarapura and ramaniya, the follow traditions of Burma. But one of these schools covers the shoulder when going out, the other doesn't (the Thai school doesn't cover). So my teacher, when he arrived in Ceylon, he was asked: 'To which nikaya do you belong?' This is the burning question, as it were. So he was a broad-minded man and he didn't like this sort of question. He said: 'Nikaya? Oh, Buddha-nikaya, of course!' So they weren't satisfied with this, and they wanted to trap him. So they said, 'Well, all right, but when you go out of the monastery, do you cover the right shoulder or not?' So Kashyapji, who was not only a great scholar but also has quite a sense of humour, he said: 'When it's hot, I keep one shoulder covered,' and he said: 'When it's very hot, I go so far as to uncover both shoulders.'

But there are very few who adopt this more rational sort of attitude. Eastern Buddhists are very often excessively preoccupied with completely trivial matters and attach tremendous importance to these things.

Now amongst the various forms of Buddhism with which we are currently becoming acquainted in the West is Tibetan Buddhism. So two questions arise in this connection – one theoretical and one practical. First of all, what can we learn from Tibetan Buddhism? And secondly, what can we do about Tibetan Buddhism?

First of all, Tibetan Buddhism represents Indian Buddhism at the height of its development. I think we've gone into this before: that in India, Buddhism passed through these three great stages of development – the Hinayana, the Mahayana, the Vajrayana and at the end of 1500 years, Indian Buddhism was a very rich and a very many-sided thing. It wasn't just one yana or the other, it was Hinayana plus Mahayana plus Vajrayana. And it's this unified, this triyana, sort of Buddhism which went from India to Tibet and was preserved there. So we may say that Tibetan Buddhism is the nearest that we can get to Indian Buddhism as a living tradition. It's all very well to read about ancient traditions in books, but you want some sort of contact, however indirect, with living traditions. So Tibetan Buddhism, which is still a living tradition, albeit on a reduced scale, is the nearest that we can get to Indian Buddhism as a living tradition; not just that, but to Indian Buddhism at the height of its development. And this is very important.

Dr. Conze had in this connection a rather interesting theory. He maintained that the nearer one is to the geographical centre of a religion, the nearer one is to its spirit; and conversely, the further away you are from the geographical centre of a religion, the further you are away from its spirit. According to Dr. Conze, some forms of Japanese Buddhism – of course we tread on very delicate ground, but I think he had the Nichiren school in mind – are about as far away as you can get from the spirit of Indian Buddhism. And he also pointed out that even Ceylon is pretty far. It's near India but it's 2,000 miles away from North India, which was Buddhist India. Conze says Tibet

is geographically nearer to India, nearer to the original centre of Buddhism than any other form of Buddhism; and is therefore nearest to the spirit of Indian Buddhism.

Whatever the merits may be of Dr. Conze's theory, it does seem to be borne out by the example of Tibetan Buddhism. The spirit of Tibetan Buddhism seem remarkably close to the spirit of Indian Buddhism during the last stages, indeed at the height, of its development in north-eastern India.

A further advantage of Tibetan Buddhism is that we can learn from it about all three yantras. And in the context of Tibetan Buddhism, we don't learn about them as it were side by side and unrelated; we learn about the three yantras as successive stages of a single path. This idea that the Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana, constitute successive stages of a single path is mentioned first of all in the Hevajra Tantra, and it's worked out in greater detail by Atisha, who of course visited Tibet, in his Bodhipatha Pradipika, which means 'Lamp of the Way to Enlightenment'. And this same doctrine, is the basis of Tsongkhapa's Lam-Rim or Great Stages of the Path. In fact, we can say that in certain respects this idea of the three yantras being not just three different forms of Buddhism but three successive stages on the path to Enlightenment. This idea constitutes the leading idea of Tibetan Buddhism. It's common to all the schools – they all believe that one progresses to Enlightenment through a course of training in the course of which one recapitulates the Hinayana, the Mahayana, and the Vajrayana.

Now this sort of combination, this synthesis of all three yantras, is not found elsewhere in the Buddhist world. If you go to South-east Asia, you find only the Theravada, which is one form of the Hinayana. If you go to China or Japan, you find both Hinayana and the Mahayana and here and there you find the outer Tantra. But though you find them, in China and Japan – these different forms of Buddhism, even they are usually constituted into mutually exclusive, sometimes rival, schools. In China, for instance, the school of the Vinaya, the discipline, which is a Hinayana school, is a separate school by itself. The different Mahayana schools are separate schools by themselves. In Japan this is even more the case. Japanese Buddhism is more sectarian than any other form of Buddhism. By sectarian I mean that all the different schools are sects, in the Western sense. They are mutually exclusive in organisation and even sometimes in doctrine – and there has been a certain amount of rivalry between them.

But the Inner Tantra is found only in Tibet, and it's only in Tibet that you find all three yantras – Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana – existing not independently, not as separate sects, but as stages of the one path leading to Enlightenment. SO this is a very great and remarkable feature of Tibetan Buddhism.

Tibetan Buddhism is also fully developed in several other ways. It is highly intellectual. I've mentioned a little earlier on that Tibetans in some parts of Tibet (until recently) didn't even have the wheel. But this doesn't mean that they're primitive. It doesn't mean that they're uncivilised or uncultured. It certainly doesn't mean that they're stupid. Tibetan Buddhism is perhaps the most highly intellectual form of Buddhism that we know today. Tibet is the only part of the Buddhist world incidentally where Indian Buddhist logic is a living tradition. Ancient Indian Buddhism was a very highly intellectual tradition, and amongst other things, they developed logic. Well, in the West we've had logic – logic was started, as you all know, by Aristotle, and it was continued and developed during the Middle Ages, and then again in modern times. So there's a great logical tradition in the West. Similarly, there was a great logical tradition in India, and Buddhism did more to develop this than any other religion or any other single influence. This tradition of Indian logic passed to Tibet. It didn't go to China. For some reason or another, the Chinese didn't take to logic. It didn't go to Japan. But it went to Tibet, and the Tibetan Buddhists are traditionally very, very fond of Buddhist logic. This goes to show that intelligence and

understanding, in the real sense, are not necessarily correlated with any particular degree of technological or material civilisation.

Again, the tradition of the exegesis of the Prajnaparamita, the Perfection of Wisdom tradition, has been continued and elaborated even, in Tibet. The Perfection of Wisdom sutras are among the grandest and sublime in the whole field of Buddhist canonical literature. They were produced in India and they went to all other Buddhist countries of the Far East – China and Japan especially. But it's only in Tibet that they really continued to be studied. It's only in Tibet that you get – or at least you did get – the tradition of the exegesis, the teaching and the explanation of the Prajnaparamita.

I remember in this connection another story about Dr. Conze. Dr. Conze spent several years in the United States of America. He's just come back to this country, because he let fall, I gather, a rather unfortunate remark about the Vietnam War, so he was out in a matter of weeks. And here he is again, back in England. But Dr. Conze once related – and I heard him relate this myself at Oxford – that he met in New Jersey a Shakyapa lama – a lama of the Shakya sect. As I said a little while ago, the Shakyapas are very learned. Now Dr. Conze is a man who has devoted nearly thirty years of his life to studying and translating the Perfection of Wisdom sutras which is no mean task. He's done it single-handedly. So to translate the Perfection of Wisdom sutras and Abhismaya (?) Lankara and a few odd works like that, it naturally required tremendous understanding, tremendous knowledge, tremendous scholarly equipment.

But there were just a few points, a few knotty points, that even Dr. Conze couldn't clear up by himself. So he told us one day that he was to see this Shakyapa lama, who was then residing in New Jersey, in the United States, and he just put to him – he knew a bit of Tibetan – he put to him some of these knotty points, some of these difficulties. The Shakya lama started explaining and expounding and then Dr. Conze said when he'd been going on for a couple of hours 'I felt I knew nothing about the Perfection of Wisdom. I became aware of the existence of vast stores of knowledge of these things, the existence of which I hadn't even suspected.' Dr. Conze was not the sort of person, I can assure you, who handed out unnecessary compliments. But this is what he said. So this goes to show that in Tibet there was this tremendous intellectual tradition, this tradition of Buddhist logic, of the exegesis of the Prajnaparamita teachings and so on.

Yet at the same time, Tibetan Buddhism is very highly devotional. All Tibetan Buddhists, including these very learned geshe who are up to their necks as it were in logic and the Perfection of Wisdom – they've all got very strong devotional feelings for the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas. They are not one-sidedly intellectual. They have developed the intellect – perhaps as far as it's humanly possible to develop it, but not one-sidedly. Their emotional side, the devotional side, has been developed too, and this shows itself in all sorts of small ways. One notices it in the way in which Tibetans handle for instance, images. If you hand a Tibetan an image, say a Buddha image or Bodhisattva image, he takes it, accepts it very, very reverently and treats it very carefully. As like as not he'll put it to his head or forehead as a gesture of respect. It's the same for the sacred writings – to a Tibetan, it's unthinkable just to fling a book aside. They think that's awful or disgraceful, especially the sacred scriptures – and they've very few books which are not sacred scriptures.

They have this profoundly reverential and devotional approach. In fact, one may say, that in Tibetan Buddhism, whether it's the ordinary Buddhist or the learned monk, the abbot – the intellectual and the emotional aspects of the religious life are not really divided at all. This is another thing that we can learn from Tibetan Buddhism. Their intense intellectuality is combined with profound and intense devotion and emotion. For them, there's no question of what T.S. Eliot has called in a different context 'dissociation of sensibility'.

Alongside this beautiful balance between the intellectual and the emotional or devotional, one finds in Tibetan Buddhism a similar balance between study and meditation. One may say without any hesitation that some of the most learned men in the Buddhist world are or were to be found among the geshe and lamas of Tibet. They often have absolutely encyclopaedic knowledge.

I remember once when I went to see Khyentse Rimpoche, from whom I afterwards received certain initiations. He was very interested in various aspects of Indian literature. In the course of conversation I was expecting to hear something about meditation or something like this, but this lama said to me without any sort of preamble (through an interpreter): 'Do you know anything about dancing?' So I said, 'Well, no, not really.' So I wondered what he was getting at. He paused and said: 'Have you read any books about dancing?' I said, 'Well, sometime Indian classical dance, I've seen that.' He said: 'Oh, you haven't happened to read any books about Indian classical dance?' So I said: 'No, I've heard that there are such books, like Nacashastra (?) and so on, but I haven't actually read them.' SO he said: 'Aah!, I've read fourteen books on Indian classical dance. There are a few knotty points I want to clear up.' He had come from a remote corner of eastern Tibet, and here he was studying texts on Indian dance in Tibetan translation – they were all in the Tangyur – and wanting to clear up a few knotty points. I subsequently came to understand that these texts were the basis of the famous lama dances, so it wasn't unconnected – and he was very interested in this. And I believe subsequently, with the help of Indian scholars, he did follow it up and he did procure a few more treatises on that particular subject. But this is just an illustration of their many-sidedness, their encyclopaedic interests. And he was exceptional. He was remarkable even among Tibetan lamas.

So amongst Tibetan lamas, amongst the Tibetan monks, you find, as I say, some of the most learned men in the whole of the Buddhist world. But at the same time you find, amongst these same monks and lamas, some of the greatest yogis – the greatest mediators, in the Buddhist world. What is still more remarkable is that occasionally you find the two combined in one. Think of Malaria. Milarepa is Tibet's greatest yogi. He is also Tibet's greatest poet. Just think what that would mean, say in the context of English literature. Suppose the man who wrote Hamlet, the man who wrote King Lear, had also written the Cloud of Unknowing. Suppose you get that sort of combination in one person – this is what we have in the case of Milarepa. There are a number of other instances of this sort of thing in Tibetan Buddhism – people who are great scholars, with wonderful intellectual understanding, but at the same time great yogis, profound mediators, understanding not only the theory but the practice of the spiritual life. This great lama that I've just mentioned – Khyentse Rimpoche – he was one of this type. He wasn't just a dry-as-dust bookworm by any means. He was always reading, he was always studying, but he was also always meditating. He was a great yogin as well and he was famous as a combination of these two. And I'm told among the Gelugpas in Dalhousie there's another lama who is of the same type. I haven't met him, but I've heard about him – a great scholar, a very great scholar, but at the same time, a great yogin.

Just to institute one or two more comparisons, it's rather as though you've got someone like Bertrand Russell who's also on the quiet a sort of St. John of the Cross. Now to our Western way of thinking this sort of combination is fantastic, it's unbelievable, it's extraordinary, it violates all the precedents, it breaks all the canons, but this is what we do get in Tibet. Even in the Christian tradition in the Middle Ages you don't get this. St. Thomas Aquinas was a great scholar, a great theologian, it's only towards the end of his life that he turned to mysticism and then he gave up theology and died. *[Laughter]* St. Francis, yes a great spiritual soul certainly, but what did he know about theology? He probably didn't know anything, didn't need to know. But suppose you had combined in one person the genius of St. Thomas Aquinas, his intellectual insight, and the simplicity and spiritual experience of St. Francis. What then? But this is the sort of thing that one does find, even today, in Tibetan Buddhism, and this is the sort of thing that we can learn from Tibetan Buddhism, this sort of balanced approach.

And not only in these very important respects but even in respects less important. In Tibetan Buddhism you find a combination, a synthesis if you like, of organisation and freedom. Usually in the West we find these two are antithetical - the more organization, the less freedom, the more freedom, the less organization - they

don't go together, but not with regard to traditional Tibetan Buddhism. In Tibetan Buddhism you had the biggest monasteries in the world. Even those of Mount Athos are insignificant in comparison. Just think whole monastic **towns**, whole monastic cities. Just think in Gandhen three thousand monks, in Dipung five thousand, and in Sera seven thousand, just think of that. And at the time of the new year in Lhasa for one whole month, when the monks take over the administration, thirty thousand monks inhabiting the city of Lhasa. So just think of that. You've got the biggest monasteries in the world, or had, in Tibet. At the same time in Tibet you find the loneliest, the most isolated hermitages. You can find monasteries with thousands of monks, monastic cities, but also you can go miles, hundreds of miles, way out into the wilderness and you can find little caves, little shacks, little temples with just one solitary hermit living. You find this too, and it's not infrequent. So here again you get this sort of balance this sort of synthesis.

In a way Tibetan Buddhism was the most monasticized, if one can use that expression, in the world. You found monks **everywhere**. Just imagine if you were in London and you walked down Oxford Street and every other person you met was a monk, but this is what it was like in Lhasa in the old days, wherever you went, monks, nothing but monks. But at the same time you might think well they were monk dominated, or monk-ridden even [*Laughter*] or you may think there was too much monk-craft and so on, but no. Even though you get so many monks in Tibet, a higher percentage of monks to the population than anywhere else in the world, at the same time, despite this highly developed monasticism, one has full participation by the laity in the spiritual life. No one thinks that you have to be a monk in order to practise the religion. This is the wonderful thing about it. In Theravada countries in Ceylon and Burma they tend to think that you can't be a **real** Buddhist unless you become a monk, but in Tibet, though they've got so many monks, they never think this. In fact amongst the Nyingmapas at least one may say, the laity including the lay lamas, they practically run the show, they've very very few monks in comparison. So this is a sort of contradiction almost, but really it's a synthesis. You get an overwhelming monasticism on the one hand, but full spiritual participation by the laity on the other.

And then again one may say, to generalize even more, Tibetan Buddhists as a whole have their way up in the clouds, way up in the clouds, but their feet are firmly on the ground, firmly on the ground. The Tibetan Buddhists after all have, or try to have, try to follow the sublimest and most rarefied of all spiritual ideals, that of the Bodhisattva. This sort of ideal is - I was going to say common common talk - but certainly current coin in Tibet. Everyone knows this, everyone appreciates this, and to some extent tries to follow it. The ideal of the one who doesn't care for his own individual salvation, but who devotes himself to the spiritual well-being of the whole human race, regardless of the cost to himself. So this is their ideal. Something very high, something very sublime, something very rarefied, but at the same time the Tibetan is intensely practical. This is one of the things which struck me about the Tibetans as compared with the Indians. I'm sorry to have to say this, but the Indians are very often not very practical - they're just a little bit wooly - but not so the Tibetans. The Tibetans are very very practical people indeed, and I've seen myself a number of times Tibetans coming down from Tibet, never having seen a motor car before, but six months later they're experienced motor mechanics. And they're very good at this sort of thing, they're very practical. They like to understand how things work, how they're put together, how they're taken apart, how they go, what makes them go, how they function. They're very very good at this indeed. They're very very practical about all affairs of life, whether it's food or whether it's clothing or building or earning money, making money, engaging in trade, business - they're very very practical people. I might go so far as to say that there's nothing mystic, nothing occult about the Tibetans in the wooly sense of those terms at all. In this country only too often, at least in the past, people tended to think of the Tibetans as wonderful sort of mystical occult figures living behind the Himalayas in an aura of mystery and surrounded by all sorts of miracles and wonderful happenings, and the idea that the Tibetans ever thought of eating or drinking or making money, this was a sort of blasphemy, especially among some occult circles in this country. They speak of 'The masters beyond the Himalaya' and you gather that they were always immersed in meditation and no one thought of anything except religion, and so on and so forth, but this is not really like the Tibetans at all. They **are** mystical in the true sense, they are occultist in the true sense, they do have their heads up in the clouds spiritually, but as I've said their feet are firmly planted on the earth, and this is perhaps something which we too might emulate.

So Tibetan Buddhism we see is a fully developed, a fully articulated, a balanced and a harmonious system or form of Buddhism. There's nothing unbalanced and nothing one-sided in it, and we can also say I think that Tibetan Buddhism is the richest form of Buddhism. The richest in the sense that within that harmony, within that synthesis which is Tibetan Buddhism it includes the greatest number of diverse elements. In the West I think we have only form of religion which can compare with Tibetan Buddhism in this respect, that is to say in respect of richness - and I'm only thinking of richness at the moment when I make the comparison - and that is Roman Catholicism, but there are of course many and very weighty differences between Tibetan Buddhism on the one hand and Roman Catholicism on the other. They are both very very rich systems; one a very rich form of Buddhism, the other a very rich form of Christianity, but they do differ considerably in other respects, and one of the respects in which they differ very much is that in the case of Tibetan Buddhism it is characterized by perfect tolerance. Tolerance is indeed a characteristic of all forms of Buddhism, but one might say nevertheless that the temptations to intolerance, though greater in the case of Tibetan Buddhism inasmuch as its internal differences are greater, but Tibetan Buddhism has never yielded to that temptation. The scholar doesn't look down upon the yogin. The yogin doesn't look down upon the scholar. There's no rivalry between the monks and the laity. There's full co-operation between them. There are four schools, all very proud of their own traditions, adhering to them faithfully, but they all display, at least on public occasions, deep mutual courtesy. There are differences but it never degenerates into criticism. I must say that in all the course of my contact with lamas of all schools I never heard say from a Gelugpa lama a real criticism of the Gelugpa tradition, nor from a Gelugpa lama a real criticism of the Nyingmapa tradition. Of course they are human and sometimes they have little jokes at one another's expense, but it's all in the friendliest spirit and that is about as far as it goes. I remember in particular there's the little Gelugpa joke about the Nyingmapa '*wong*', the Nyingmapa tantric initiation, and the Gelugpas say that the Nyingmapas of course have got very very high, very very esoteric *wongs*, such as we Gelugpas don't have, and one of those is a *wong* that you can give other people without having practised it yourself! [*Laughter*] So to appreciate the point of this one has to know something about the Tibetan attitude towards these *wongs*.

Now the tolerance of the Tibetans extends also to the non-Buddhists, and sometimes Tibetans are very shocked to hear Christian missionaries - they of course encounter these for the first time when they come to India - and at first they can hardly believe their ears. I remember one Tibetan Buddhist came running along to me one day and said, 'What do you think I heard today? I heard someone criticizing religion', and this is the way they look at it. They don't think of a Buddhist criticizing Christianity or a Christian criticizing Buddhism; they think of someone criticizing religion in any form, and this is something which they just don't like and which they never in fact do. They certainly are not averse to the expression, the free expression of religious differences. Even in Tibetan Buddhism the Gelugpas don't see things in quite the same way as the Nyingmapas. There are different traditions of logic and there are different views about the nature of the syllogism for instance, **but** differences are always expressed courteously, there's never any abuse. And in this respect there's another little story comes to my mind which relates to a young Tibetan who came to see me straight from the Kalimpong bazaar just after all these refugees came into Kalimpong in 1959, and he said to me, 'I made a very interesting discovery today, something I didn't know before.' So I said, 'What was that?'. He said, 'Well I've just discovered that Communism and Christianity are the same thing'. So I said, 'Well how do you make that out?' He said, 'Oh yes, there's just two different names for the same system. In Tibet we call it Communism, here you call it Christianity.' So I said, 'well how do you arrive at that idea?'. He said, 'Oh yes I've just been along to the bazaar'. In Kalimpong there's a bazaar every Wednesday and every Saturday and all the village people come in and they buy and they sell and you get your vegetables there and all that sort of thing, so he said, 'I've just been along to the bazaar and I've heard a Christian missionary preaching', and these good Christian missionaries, and also their local assistants every bazaar day they loyally get up on a soap box quite literally and they stand up there and they preach, and their preaching consists in the denunciation of Buddhism and Hinduism. So the young Tibetan refugee said, 'Yes, I heard the Christian missionary and you know the things he was saying about Buddhism were just what the Chinese Communists say in Lhasa, exactly the same, the same attitude, the same approach, so obviously the two systems are the same. Communism and Christianity the same thing because

they bot say the same things about Buddhism.’ So this is the impact on the mind, the simple mind, of this newly arrived Tibetan, of Christian missionary propaganda.

Now Western Buddhists can certainly learn from all this. As a living religion Buddhism in this country is very recent, in fact very very recent. At first we just had a bit of the Theravada, then a little Mahayana was added including Zen, at least book Zen, mouth Zen - I don't know about any other kind - and more recently we've come to know something about Tibetan Buddhism, including of course a little bit of the Tantra about which everybody seems very interested and very curious. This word 'Tantra' seems to draw people almost as much as the word 'Zen'. But I think it's already become obvious from all that we can see that English Buddhism at least - One can't speak for that of America - English Buddhism at least will not be confined to any one of these traditions. As I said earlier it won't be exclusively Theravadin or Mahayana or Zen or anything else - it'll be a synthesis of them all, but not just a jumble. And from Tibetan Buddhism we in this country can learn how to achieve this synthesis of all these different elements in the total Buddhist tradition, and obviously such a synthesis will not be achieved without mutual respect and mutual tolerance, and this too we can learn. And even in the West we can't possibly hope all of us to see Buddhism in exactly the same way. I'll see it in one way, somebody else will see it in another way and a third person in a third way and we'll just have to accept this fact and work together nevertheless, reconciling all differences ultimately in the one ideal, the one objective which we all accept which is Buddhahood or Enlightenment.

So if we can do this, if we can in this respect follow, however hesitatingly in the footsteps of the Tibetans who have achieved in the past this very glorious, this magnificent, this very rich synthesis of the total Buddhist tradition, then English Buddhism, though it may not be very big, though it may be confined to comparatively few people, will at least be itself a rich, indeed a many splendoured thing.

Now we can learn several other things from Tibetan Buddhism apart from those I mentioned. We can learn depth and sincerity. Tibetan Buddhists are remarkably sincere in the full sense of that much abused word, sincere in their approach to their religion. They really do believe in it, and this has to be seen to be believed, and we can also learn from them thoroughness. They do everything very very thoroughly. It's very difficult to get a Tibetan to commit himself. If you ask a Tibetan will you do this, or will you help in such and such way, he agrees very slowly and very reluctantly. He'll go through every step of it with you - 'right, first I've got to do this, yes? And then I've got to do that, yes?' and then something else, then something else. He'll understand fully, he'll go into it in detail and then he'll commit himself and then he'll say yes. And when he's said yes, once he's said yes, well you can rely upon him then. He is very thorough and he is very reliable.

And we can also learn strenuousness. The Tibetans take their religion very strenuously. I've often heard Tibetans say there's no religion without difficulty or no religious life without difficulty, and they tend to think that if any religious practice is easy it can't be really and truly religion. They think that if it's a real religion it's difficult. They think there is no easy way round, no short cuts, so they're prepared for hardship and for sacrifice for the sake of their religion, and this is one of the lessons which we learned - I hope you all remember this - from 'How Buddhism came to Tibet'. In the course of that talk, towards the end of that talk, we saw how king King Yeshe Oh of Western Tibet literally sacrificed his life for the sake of the Dharma, sacrificed his life so that the Buddha's teaching might be revived in Tibet.

So this too we can learn from Tibetan Buddhism.