

The disaster of Toyo not only ended the possibility of the conquest of Tibet, but also precipitated yet another revolt in Ladakh, Purig and Baltistan. With the help of a 3,000 strong Tibetan force from Gar, the Ladakhis rose up once again against the Dogras in an assault on Leh which was brutally put down by the Dogras. Thousands were put to the sword, and the rest fled out of Leh. All the blacksmiths lost their lives in an attempt to test fire a locally made cannon. The destruction of a Hindu temple provoked the destruction of Buddhist shrines all over Ladakh. As the revolt spread, the Maharaja of Jammu sent reinforcements to Ladakh, and about 6,000 soldiers marched to Leh via Kashmir and Dras, defeating all opposition in their way and generally causing havoc. The Tibetans sent a force of 6,000 to Tanchey and Lhung Barma; and in the battle of Durbuk, the Dogras suffered heavy casualties. However, the Tibetans also had their problems, after Nurla Thangpa Joldan had the idea of diverting a water canal into their camp at night. The Tibetans offered to make peace, and the treaty between the two sides was signed on September 17th, 1842. This was the final document recognising Ladakh to be part of the Kingdom of Jammu: the Dogras restored to the Tibetans those territories which had been annexed from them, while Raja Jigmet Namgyal, who had fled to Tibet with his mother, came back to Leh, but without any hope of ever regaining the Kingdom.

Thus ended the monarchy of Ladakh.

POWER AND TERRITORY IN THE KINGDOM OF LADAKH¹

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In the kingdom of Ladakh as it existed until its collapse under the Dogra invasion in the 19th century the king's power was not absolute. As the head of a feudal society the king was on top of a pyramid. This pyramid consisted of hierarchical relations of interdependence. The society was structured by four classes: the nobles, including the royal family, the clergy, the common people, mainly dependent farmers and cattle-breeders, and at the bottom the unpure. Members of the nobility could by privilege be invested with an office. To this office they then had a right. This right they could only forfeit if misconduct in office happened and could be proved. Members of the clergy were not invested with an office. Nevertheless they could gain great influence on politics.

The foremost duty of the king and his ministers was the protection of the Buddhist religion, and the promotion of its prosperity, thereby guaranteeing the welfare of the subjects. This was connected with the perception of belonging to the land of snow where alone Buddhism in its special form of *Mahāyāna* had survived in an unbroken and uncorrupted tradition and where *Mahāyāna* was

1. This article is mainly based on my research about the treaty between the kingdoms of Ladakh and Purig in 1753. Under the title *Ka-thog-rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang-nor-bu's diplomatic mission to Ladakh in the 18th century* I have given a detailed summary of the treaty's content in English. It will be published in the forthcoming proceedings of the sixth colloquium of the IALS in Leh 1993. A monograph under the title *Teilung und Reintegration des Königreichs von Ladakh im 18. Jahrhundert* including an edition and translation of the treaty will be published in 1996. See also Schwieger, Peter, *Die Hindernisse auf dem Weg zum Staatsvertrag zwischen Purig und Ladakh 1752/1753*, in: Tibetan History and Language, Studies dedicated to Uray Géza on his seventieth birthday (Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 26), ed. Ernst Steinkellner, Wien 1991, pp. 435-440.

I express my gratitude to Neil Howard for having corrected my English. But errors are only mine.

almost the only religion accepted by all its inhabitants. In Ladakh it was especially the king who was responsible for the creation and maintaining of the outer conditions so that this unique heritage was handed down to the coming generations.

In Max Weber's ideal classification of the different forms of rule as those with rational, traditional and charismatic character, hereditary monarchy is described as a case of traditionalised charismatic rule. The charisma became - so to say - a "quality of the blood" so that now a certain lineage had a unique qualification to rule. No longer qualified to rule by his own exceptional actions, the man is legitimated by the actions of his ancestors. These actions of the ancestors which established the culture now have the character of a standard. And compared with this standard new rules and regulations which differ from the manners and customs of the country are not at all legitimate.²

The determining elements of kingship were the belief in an uninterrupted dynastic tradition and the venerable origin from the first Tibetan *dharmakings* and their descent from the Indian *Śākya Licchava* and *Mahāsammata*, the first king of this world.³ By this last element the kings were seen as being connected by genealogy with *Buddha Śākyamuni* himself. These elements formed the prestige of a special competence for power which was able to guarantee the prosperity and protection of the Buddhist religion and the welfare of the people. The authority of the ruler - so to say - was based on the power of a magical participation in the efforts of the heroes of the past who had established the Tibetan civilisation. According to Tibetan Buddhist ideology those heroes were seen as incarnations of heavenly *bodhisattvas*. Through them kingship was founded on the transcendental. This idea provided the king with exceptional skills and qualities which - in the eyes of the subjects - qualified him to rule. These skills and qualities found expression in the transmitted extraordinary achievements and actions of the first Tibetan kings. On them custom, religion and law were based.

In general traditional rule bases its legitimacy on the transmitted social order which since long ago was of value. The tradition itself

2. See Weber, Max, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 1. Halbband, Tübingen 1956, pp. 124, 131, 140-144.

3. Compare Haahr, Erik, *The Yar-lung Dynasty*, Copenhagen 1969, pp. 171-212.

became the orienting line for determining what is rightful. For instance in the Ladakh-Purig-treaty of 1753 precedents are presented again and again as a help for the argumentation and as patterns for the solution of the problems.

In this context it is also the analogy of the kingship and the noble's estate which was used to demonstrate the legality or illegality of titles to rule. The traditional rules for the hereditary succession which were binding for private landed property preserved the estates from endless partition. In the treaty of 1753 the analogy of kingship and estate is therefore used as an argument against claims on dividing the dynasty or on the segmentation of power and territory. From the point of view of this analogy such claims were not legitimized by the customs of the country. If nevertheless such segmentation happened it had to be according to the exceptional cases of the partition of an inheritance for which the model of the noble's estate showed detailed criteria. For example it is said in the above mentioned treaty:

"Since in Ladakh kingship was established during many generations of kings the eldest son always held the royal dignity. The younger ones for the most part entered a monastery. If one or the other didn't exercise the religion a small share of the property for his living was granted and he entered the ranks of the ministers. From beginning there has never been another custom than this one. This is known to everyone. Further: In Ladakh among all high-ranking and common people as well the eldest son inherited the estate of the ancestors. Except something was by chance recently acquired or bought during the father's life there existed from beginning onwards no custom that the younger received older (parts of the property) from earlier times. Since then most (younger ones) entered a monastery. This is the greater part."

According to this quotation we have to differentiate carefully when we hear about the indivisibility of the kingdom. Like the estate the territory of the kingdom had no uniform character. It was not so easy to separate those territories which since many generations belonged to the kingship and deliver part to a younger prince as his hereditary portion. Nowhere an exact period of time is mentioned.

The measure was relative. The longer a territory belonged to the central kingship the more it was seen as an inalienable part of the central country which constituted the actual kingdom.

The idea of territory in the kingdom of Ladakh was not one of a mere territory of state. Similar to what has been stated about Medieval European countries⁴ we can't just talk of a group of persons who ruled over an abstract area. The country was more of a group of fiefdoms governed by the lords of the manor. These lords were able to be members of this group only because they owned landed property which they got cultivated or which was used for cattle-breeding. Therefore power was determined especially by personal relations and obligations.

In such a society in which power - estate and also kingship - and territory were bound to single families, conflicts in the relations of power were never just conflicts between different institutions but always at the same time conflicts between single personalities. Therefore in a conflict it was not the institution that became the object of criticism but the representatives of certain families in power.

The above mentioned custom for the inheritance of landed property was not special for Ladakh alone. As Rolf A. Stein has stated it was distinctive for the area of the Tibetan culture in general. And Stein quoted a statement which is attributed to king *Khri-srong-lde'u-btsan* from the *Padma-thang-yig*: "If there are many sons, let them take the estate successively in order of seniority, and the younger enter religion!" But Stein also stated that junior "wives and their clans may try to transfer the succession to their sons, particularly in the nobility."⁵

Such efforts of junior wives we also find in the history of the royal family of Ladakh. And it could also be the reason for the division of the dynasty. When a minor kingdom was split off the central kingdom of Ladakh it remained under its suzerainty. This was the

case for instance with the small kingdoms of *Zangs-dkar* and *He-na-ku*. Their rulers were offshoots of the *rNam-rgyal*-family. Every year they personally delivered a symbolic duty in the great castle of Ladakh to confirm their subordination. When later Purig was split off the Ladakhi kingdom it was seen to be on the same level as the two other minor kingdoms. But the king of Purig tried to set his rank above the kings of *Zangs-dkar* and *He-na-ku* and so he picked a quarrel with the king of Ladakh himself who saw his own supremacy threatened. As is expressed in the treaty of 1753:

"Although the kings of Zangs-dkar and He-na-ku are actually also brothers of our paternal ancestors with whom they had both parents in common there is - because of the custom of the country, existing from the earliest times - no possible suggestion that the king and the minister of Ladakh do not possess the higher rank. This is obvious. The uncle [the king of Purig] broke this custom."

The Ladakhis perceived the efforts of the Purig king not only as a threat to the supreme position of the king of Ladakh but also saw the danger that Purig could shift under Mughal suzerainty because in their eyes Purig hardly could stand on its own. The Ladakhis suspected the king of Purig of regarding the Mughal emperor as his master.

So at the end when the conflict between Ladakh and Purig was solved the result was a renewal of the links which bound Purig to the central kingdom of Ladakh. It is important to note the statement that in future only a true son of the Purig-king was to be accepted as successor to the throne. Adoption - elsewhere common among Tibetan nobles - was refused as a possibility for succession. It is known from Tibet that a younger brother could refuse such an adoption to put forward his own claims.⁶ But in this special case the sons of the elder brother tried in this way to avoid the total split of a satellite. Obviously they regarded an adoption as a threatening loosening of family ties.

Another aspect which was important within the relationship between the minor kings and the king of Ladakh was the position of the local

4. Brunner, Otto, *Land und Herrschaft, Grundlagen der territorialen Verfassungsgeschichte Österreichs im Mittelalter*, Wien - Wiesbaden 1959, p. 187.

5. Stein, Rolf A., *Tibetan Civilization*, London 1972, pp. 97f, 101.

6. Ibid., p. 98.

chiefs, the so called *jo-bo*, in the minor kingdoms. When their position was unclear they became the source of a conflict typical for a feudal society. The question was to whom they were loyal primarily: to the minor king or to the king of Ladakh? If their loyalty was primarily towards the king of Ladakh the king of Purig for instance could not rely on an independent power base. The chiefs were able to render great military services by sending a lot of soldiers. Having no great number of soldiers under his direct command every military engagement of the minor king then would require the consent of the king of Ladakh. So finally in the treaty of 1753 it was decided that the chiefs of Purig were to be loyal firstly to their own king in Mulbekh, the minor one. To him they had to deliver their annual duties. And he then in person delivered them in the great castle of Ladakh.

The relations between the kingdom of Ladakh and the minor kingdoms under its suzerainty were determined by the close ties which consisted of the personal loyalty of a vassal. In addition this loyalty was based on family ties. As members of the *rNam-rgyal* family they had the obligation to protect and promote the reputation and the territory of the Ladakhi kingdom as the mother country and the actual seat of the *rNam-rgyal* dynasty. Therefore the king of Purig underlined his importance for guarding the frontiers of Ladakh. And regarding a possible successor on his throne it is explicitly stated that he should stand by the king of Ladakh as his ally.

Although the minor kingdoms were under the suzerainty of Ladakh the king of Ladakh had no absolute power over the satellites. Just like the lords of manor within the country itself these minor kings had an own right which the king of Ladakh could not just take away from them. This right was hereditary. For instance it was expressed explicitly in the above mentioned treaty that it would be illegal to take away, transform or reduce the dominium which once was granted to the minor king of *He-na-ku*.

The relations with the other kingdoms of the region were seen mainly as personal relations too. Therefore marriage alliances were an essential part of the diplomatic activities. They linked the royal family of Ladakh with the rulers of other petty kingdoms in the

region. It is interesting to note that diplomacy by marriage was used in the relations with Muslim rulers as well.

Basically there were two large foreign powers the kingdom of Ladakh had to deal with. On one side there was Central Tibet which since the defeat of the Dsungars in the year 1720 was under Manchu suzerainty and on the other the Mughal empire. Besides that after the serious friction in relations with Central Tibet which was brought to light by the Tibet-Ladakh-Mughal war of the 17th century Ladakh was not only still bound to Central Tibet as the center of religion. The leading personalities of the royal Ladakhi family also turned to the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government to send diplomatic support in inner conflicts of Ladakh. But now the Tibetan authorities were more cautious and skillful in their relations to Ladakh. They only acted after they were asked to do so. Moreover they had no power to impose a solution to the opponents in Ladakh, and it was a sign of diplomatic skill that in the 18th century the Tibetan authorities sent a *rNying-ma-pa* as mediator to Ladakh and not a *dGe-lugs-pa*. Compared to the '*Brug-pa bka'-brgyud-pa* and the *dGe-lugs-pa*, the *rNying-ma-pa* had always been few in number and therefore never very important within Ladakhi society.

Tibet had a natural interest in preserving a unique Ladakh as a protection from Muslim influence. But although a Muslim country, the power of the lowland, the Mughal empire, was for the Ladakhis somehow an alternative to play with. Since the Tibet-Ladakh-Mughal war this was an alternative the Tibetan government had to fear, and the Mughal - especially their authorities in Kashmir - had a strong interest in dealing with Ladakh. The Mughals were interested in the maintenance of the pashmina trade and the transit trade routes. Diplomatic activities between Ladakh and its satellites on one side and Mughal Kashmiri authorities on the other regarding trade, and in this context also regarding Ladakhi inner conflicts, are mentioned in the treaty of 1753. In the first half of the 18th century both parties to the Ladakhi internal conflict initiated diplomatic relations with the Mughal authorities in Kashmir, concerning internal affairs; and each party regarded the activities of its opponent with suspicion while always trying to hide its own activities of a similar sort. They well knew that this action could be seen as being

in contradiction to their obligation to protect Buddhism in Ladakh. Not only Tibet, but the Mughals also, sent diplomatic mediators to settle inner troubles in Ladakh. I do not know whether these mediators resulted from the diplomatic approach to the Kashmiris or not. Possibly the Kashmiri Mughal authorities sent them on their own initiative. The Kashmiris themselves - in spite of being part of a waning power at that time - still regarded Ladakh as being under Mughal suzerainty, a claim which originated in the time of Aurangzeb and the Ladakhi kings *Seng-ge-rnam-rgyal* and *bDe-ldan-rnam-rgyal*. They talked of Ladakh as a Mughal *jāgīr*, a fief down. Therefore they regarded it as important to have a permanent representative in Leh.

In Ladakhi diplomacy with the Mughals, and also with Central Tibet, personal relations were of very little importance. They not at all had that importance which they had in Ladakh proper and in the Ladakhi king's relations to other small kingdoms nearby. Only there they did form the distinctive features in the relations of power.

THE ROLE OF INCARNATE LAMAS IN BUDDHIST TRADITION:

A Brief Survey of Bakula Rinpoche's Previous Incarnations

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Leh

It is the Buddhist belief that when a man dies his spirit may be born again in another body. Such reincarnations can be perpetuated involuntarily through the force and agencies of karma, as in the case of ordinary samsaric beings; or it may occur voluntarily as when a Bodhisattva, or fully enlightened being, takes birth in order to help all sentient beings, to compassionately lead them from *duhkha* (Skt: 'sorrow') and show them the path to Buddhahood. Within the Mahayana, the place of an incarnate lama or Rinpoche (precious one) is the highest and most esteemed. He is a spiritual lord who has a high position, both socially as head of a monastic group and leader of lay people, and also as a Bodhisattva removing all obstacles on the way to nirvana.

This is the nature of Kushok Bakula. He is considered *divine* by his people. On the level of ultimate truth (*paramarthasatya*) Bakula Rinpoche is an *emanation* of the Buddha, Amitabha¹ (Boundless Light), inseparable from him - for in ultimate truth there is no distinction between past, present, future and space. However, on the level of relative truth (*samvrttisatya*) he was reborn many times before the appearance of Shakyamuni Buddha striving to attain enlightenment. In these births he became adept in the science of medicine. It is said that he healed two Buddhas of the past and acquired great merit through such actions.

1. This is recorded in the work '*Blo bzang Ye shes brtan pa'i rgyal mtshan*', written by the Venerable Ngag dbang tshul khribs don ldan.

Note: To make the main body of the text easier to read, Tibetan names of people, places, etc., are spelt 'as heard', while a subsequent footnote contains the Tibetan spellings transliterated according to the Wylie system.