

# THE TIBETAN BOOK OF THE GREAT LIBERATION

OR THE METHOD OF  
REALIZING NIRVĀṆA THROUGH  
KNOWING THE MIND

EDITED BY W. Y. EVANS-WENTZ

COMMENTARY BY C. G. JUNG



# The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation

Edited by W. Y. EVANS-WENTZ

This volume, the fourth of Dr. Evans-Wentz's noted Tibetan series, contains teachings of paramount importance from illustrious *gurus* of Tibet and India. Unknown to the Western world until its first publication in 1954, *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* expounds the quintessence of the Supreme Path, the Mahayana, and reveals the *yogic* method of attaining Enlightenment by means of knowing the One Mind, the cosmic All-Consciousness, without recourse to the postures, breathings, and other techniques commonly associated with the lower *yogas*. In a thirty-five page commentary, Dr. C. G. Jung, the eminent psychoanalyst, discusses differences in Eastern and Western modes of thought, and equates the "collective unconscious" with the Buddhist Enlightened Mind.

The original text of this *yoga* belongs to the Bardo Thödol series of treatises concerning various methods of attaining transcendence. The whole series is part of the Tantric school of the Mahayana. This particular work is attributed to Padma-Sambhava who, by invitation of a Tibetan king, journeyed from India to Tibet in the eighth century. An account of this great *guru's* life and secret doctrines precedes the text itself. The last part of the volume presents the testamentary teachings of the *Guru* Phadampa Sangay, translated by the late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup, who also translated the other books in the series.

"In this volume Dr. Evans-Wentz has brought to the Western reader another treasure from the storehouse of Tibetan Buddhism and has edited and expounded it in his usual exact and ample fashion."—*The (London) Times*

The late Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, formerly of Jesus College, Oxford, is the editor also of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (GB 39), *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines* (GB 212), and *Tibet's Great Yogī, Milarepa* (GB 294).

# THE TIBETAN BOOK OF THE GREAT LIBERATION

OR THE METHOD OF REALIZING *NIRVĀNA*  
THROUGH KNOWING THE MIND

PRECEDED BY AN  
EPITOME OF PADMA-SAMBHAVA'S BIOGRAPHY  
AND FOLLOWED BY  
GURU PHADAMPA SANGAY'S TEACHINGS

According to English Renderings by  
Sardar Bahādur S. W. Laden La, C.B.E., F.R.G.S.  
and by the Lāmas Karma Sumdhon Paul  
Lobzang Mingyur Dorje, and  
Kazi Dawa-Samdup

Introductions, Annotations and Editing by  
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Jesus College, Oxford  
Author of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*  
*Tibet's Great Yogī Milarepa*  
*Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, &c.*

With Psychological Commentary by  
DR. C. G. JUNG

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF  
THE *GURUS*  
WHO INSPIRED THE  
TRANSMISSION OF THIS BOOK AND  
THE TWO PRECEDING BOOKS  
IN THIS SERIES  
TO THE PEOPLES OF THE  
WESTERN WORLD

DEDICATED  
TO THOSE  
SEEKING WISDOM

# *Bondage and Liberation*

## I: BONDAGE

Upon Ignorance dependeth *karma* ;  
Upon *karma* dependeth consciousness ;  
Upon consciousness depend name and form ;  
Upon name and form depend the six organs of sense ;  
Upon the six organs of sense dependeth contact ;  
Upon contact dependeth sensation ;  
Upon sensation dependeth desire ;  
Upon desire dependeth attachment ;  
Upon attachment dependeth existence ;  
Upon existence dependeth birth ;  
Upon birth depend old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair. Thus doth this entire aggregation of misery arise.

## II: LIBERATION

But upon the complete fading out and cessation of Ignorance ceaseth *karma* ;  
Upon the cessation of *karma* ceaseth consciousness ;  
Upon the cessation of consciousness cease name and form ;  
Upon the cessation of name and form cease the six organs of sense ;  
Upon the cessation of the six organs of sense ceaseth contact ;  
Upon the cessation of contact ceaseth sensation ;  
Upon the cessation of sensation ceaseth desire ;  
Upon the cessation of desire ceaseth attachment ;  
Upon the cessation of attachment ceaseth existence ;  
Upon the cessation of existence ceaseth birth ;  
Upon the cessation of birth cease old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair. Thus doth this entire aggregation of misery cease.

The Buddha, *Samyutta Nikāya*, xxii. 90<sup>16</sup>  
(based upon H. C. Warren's Translation).

## PREFACE

IN this volume, the fourth of my Tibetan Series, I have placed on record, in a manner intended to appeal equally to the learned and to the unlearned, to the philosopher and to the scientist, some of the most recondite teachings of Oriental Sages. In doing so, I have had the right guidance of an original text, heretofore unknown to Europe, the authorship of which is attributed to Tibet's Precious *Guru* Padma-Sambhava, the illustrious master of the Tantric Occult Sciences, of whose life-history an epitome is herein presented.

Inasmuch as this volume sets forth the very quintessence of the Great Path, the Māhāyana, it not only supplements the three previous volumes, but is, in some respects, the most important member of the Series. At the time of the publication of *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, I did not, however, foresee that it was my destiny to be the transmitter of this additional volume.

In the General Introduction and the textual annotations there have been incorporated, to serve as a very necessary commentary, complementary teachings which were orally transmitted through a long line of *Gurus* of the Kargyütpa School to my own Tibetan *Guru*, the late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup. Also, in Book III, the teachings of the *Guru* Phadampa Sangay supplement those of the other *Gurus*.

Thanks to the kindly assistance of Lāma Karma Sumdhon Paul and Lāma Lobzang Mingyur Dorje, the first two successors of the late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup in the University of Calcutta, Book II, the essential part of this volume, has been rendered into English.

All who read this volume will join with me in offering homage to the late Sardar Bahādur S. W. Laden La, whom I had the great joy of assisting, in my capacity as scribe and editor, when he translated the excerpts from the Lotus-Born One's Biography, upon which the epitome of it, comprising Book I, is based.

I am especially grateful to Dr. C. G. Jung, the distin-

guished dean of Western psychologists, for his erudite Foreword, which serves as a bridge between the best thought of Occident and Orient. Today, even more than in the days of the Greek philosophers, East and West not only are meeting, but are recognizing their inherent and inseparable oneness. Only the vulgar notice and advocate racial and religious differentiation. To the clear-seeing, Humanity is One Family, eternally transcending geographical demarcations, national limitations, and every fettering concept born of the unenlightened mind.

To the late Dr. R. R. Marett, Rector of Exeter College, and formerly Reader in Social Anthropology in the University of Oxford, whose encouragement of my anthropological research is well known to readers of other books bearing my name, I am indebted for his having critically examined the matter herein contained before it took final shape. I owe a similar debt to Dr. F. W. Thomas, Emeritus Boden Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford, more particularly for his assistance with certain of the Tibetan transliterations and place-names; and to Mr. E. T. Sturdy, translator of the *Nārada Sūtra*, for his no less timely help with the Sanskrit transliterations. I am, also, very greatly indebted to Mr. R. F. C. Hull, translator of the forthcoming Collected Edition of the works of Dr. C. G. Jung, for having constructively read the proofs of this book as a whole.

My thanks are likewise due to each of the translators who in Germany and in France have made the results of my Tibetan studies available in their several languages. In this connexion I cannot omit the names of Madame Marguerite La Fuente, of Paris, who, under the extreme stress of economic conditions, arranged for the production of *Le Yoga Tibétain et les Doctrines Secrètes* (Paris, 1938); and of Miss Constant Lounsbery, author of *Buddhist Meditation in the Southern School* and also President of *Les Amis du Bouddhisme*, of Paris, who aided Madame La Fuente in the arduous task of making the translation.

I acknowledge, too, the encouragement and aid rendered by many other helpers, friends, and correspondents hail-

ing from all the continents—who, like myself, are earnestly striving to overthrow every barrier born of Ignorance that separates race from race, nation from nation, and religion from religion.

May this book afford added courage and strength to those many helpers and friends. May that Universal Good Will of the Great Teachers of Wisdom, such as is herein set forth, speedily prevail, so that mankind may recognize their divine at-one-ment.

W. Y. E.-W.

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

*All Saints' Day, 1952*

## *It Were Better to Live One Single Day*

'It were better to live one single day in the development of a good life of meditation than to live a hundred years evilly and with undisciplined mind.

'It were better to live one single day in the pursuit of understanding and meditation than to live a hundred years in ignorance and unrestraint.

'It were better to live one single day in the commencement of earnest endeavour than to live a hundred years in sloth and effortlessness.

'It were better to live one single day giving thought to the origin and cessation of that which is composite than to live a hundred years giving no thought to such origin and cessation.

'It were better to live one single day in the realization of the Deathless State than to live a hundred years without such realization.

'It were better to live one single day knowing the Excellent Doctrine than to live a hundred years without knowing the Excellent Doctrine.'

The Buddha, from the *Dhammapada*, vv. 110-15  
(based upon N. K. Bhagwat's Translation).

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## BOOK I

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