

## THE ATTRIBUTES AND VALUES OF FOLK AND POPULAR SONGS

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"Recalling the music competition at the clock tower on the eve of His Majesty's Birthday, it was so wonderful to see our young talents actually singing pure traditional songs called the *Zhungdra*...But as the *rigsar* turn came, it was a total disaster - tunes were either English or Hindi, the music was unharmonised and totally off beat...it was a very sad trend. What's happening to our culture, have our youngsters run out of tunes and words?"<sup>1</sup>

"The Thimphu crowd displayed the worst of urban stupidity when they ridiculed *Zhungdra* singers representing rural Thimphu during a music festival competition in 1995. Drunken youth booed and shouted down some very good classical artists".<sup>2</sup>

### Introduction

Popular songs and music, which came to be known as *rigsar*, began to develop in Bhutan in the late 1960s, and they have gradually become part of a new entertainment culture. There has been an unprecedented growth of lyricists, singers, musicians and composers who have, within a short period of time, created a market for themselves. However, the development of *rigsar* songs is not a logical continuation of the folk song tradition. There is an abrupt rupture between the nature and treatment of subject, theme, form, style, tune and music of the traditional folk song and *rigsar*. Greatly influenced by non-Bhutanese songs and music from the very beginning<sup>3</sup>, *rigsar* songs are not differentiated as culturally representative. They are very popular particularly among the urban youths. Young boys and girls in rural areas are increasingly learning and singing them. Most of the music studios are specializing in producing them and therefore, they are much more available than traditional songs.

Songs and music are integral parts of Bhutanese culture not only as mere forms of entertainment but also as highly refined works of art reflecting the

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values and standards of society. *Rigsar* songs and music however, lack the artistic depth and seriousness of traditional songs. The most significant trend in the development of modern songs is the abrupt break away from religious themes, which permeated most traditional songs to very secular and urban concerns. In their similarity and association with English pop songs and songs of Hindi films, *rigsar* songs no longer function as a repository of and a medium for transmitting social values.

This paper is divided into three sections. The first will critically analyse the various attributes of folk songs and draw some comparisons with *rigsar* songs. The second will trace the development of *rigsar* and look at institutions that promote it. It will also briefly discuss limitations of institutions concerned with promotion of folk songs and dances. In the third section, some of the religious, social and environmental values of folk songs, and, those promoted by *rigsar* will be studied. The paper will conclude by arguing that the popularity of *rigsar* songs and the specialization of music studios in producing them are gradually challenging the sustainability of the culture of traditional folk songs and music.

### **Section I: Attributes of Folk Songs**

#### **Twin Purpose of Songs and Dances**

Songs and dances are considered primarily a medium of entertainment and celebration. But they have deeper spiritual significance; the accumulation of merit at two different levels. First, by virtue of merely singing and dancing, and consequently bringing joy and happiness, it is believed that one would be reborn in the realm of the gods. Second, songs and dances, like mask dances, are hymns and forms of offerings to the gods. If a singer or dancer is fully conscious of the spirituality of the songs and dances, they can serve as means of liberation and attainment of ultimate happiness. The great lamas and Buddhist scholars who composed lyrics always thought that songs and dances must ultimately contribute to human happiness. Therefore, the lyrics dwell mostly on religious themes. This, however, does not imply that there are no songs, which are very secular in subject and theme. Songs mostly assume the form of prayers, hymns, and dances like

that of the *Zhungdra*<sup>4</sup>, are performed by forming a line facing the altar and lamas or guests of honour, in a gesture of respect and worship.

### **Classification of Songs**

The conventional classifications of songs into *Zhungdra*, *Boedra*<sup>5</sup> and *Rigsar* completely exclude a wide genre of other songs. These three may actually be broadly categorized as Traditional Songs and *Rigsar*. *Zhungdra* and *Boedra* are traditional songs but there are many more songs that fall under this category. Songs may be further categorized into those that are dance oriented and those, which are purely vocal. *Zhungdra*, *Boedra*, *Yuedra*<sup>6</sup>, *Zhey*<sup>7</sup>, *Zhey*<sup>8</sup> are all examples of songs that can be danced while others like *Tsangmo*<sup>9</sup>, *Alo*<sup>10</sup>, *Khorey*<sup>11</sup>, and *Ausa*<sup>12</sup> are only sang. Songs can also be classified into religious and ordinary songs. *Tshoglu* and *Gurma* (religious songs), for example, are not intended for social entertainment but for prayers and rituals. Composed by saints like Milarepa and Dudjom Rimpoche, their lyrics and melodies are designed to arouse the faith of people in religion. All the songs can be generally classified into eight categories: i) *Lama choetoed ki lu* (songs of prayer and worship of lamas); ii) *Choe dang choed drel lu* (religious songs); iii) *Gylapoi toed lu* (songs of praise for the king); iv) *Gyalkhab ki toed lu* (songs of praise for the country); v) *Ga lu* (songs of happiness); vi) *Dza lu* (love songs); vii) *Thrul lu* (songs of sorrow); and viii) *Tashi moen lu* (songs of good wishes)<sup>13</sup>.

Unlike folk songs there is no diversity and richness of popular *rigsar* songs. At best they could be classified as *Dza Lu* given the singularity of theme they treat. In fact, *rigsar* songs are synonymous with love songs.

### ***Lozey* and *Tsangmo* - Ornaments of Speech**

Although many people do not consider *Lozey* as song, it belongs to one of the three *Zorig* (Arts), called the Ngag gi *Zorig* (Art of the Speech). *Zorig* is one of the five major sciences. While *Lozey* is mostly recited, some stanzas and paragraphs from a few well-known *Lozeys* have been sung and also recorded in a few instances. *Lozey* is of two kinds: one, a narrative of a story or a narration, usually of epic dimension; the other, an exchange of feelings, either of love or difference of opinion. The musical quality of

*Lozey* cannot be overlooked. It is poetry in its own right and is transmitted orally. Its remarkable aspect is the usage of spoken *Dzongkha* as the language of poetry and verse; *rigsar* songs have not accomplished this. *Lozey* and *Tsangmo* are different genres of songs, but they share two major similarities: they (except of the first kind in case of *Lozey*) must engage an opponent and cannot be recited or sung alone. The subject would either be one of love or challenge, of engagement to abuse and ridicule. Depending on the type, the opponent will respond and the debate will continue until a winner or a draw is declared. In both cases, messages will be conveyed through articulate usage of metaphors and symbols. They are never direct. *Lozey* and *Tsangmo* have their differences as well. There is no regular structure for *Lozey*. A recitation may be short or very long. On the other hand, *Tsangmo* is very well structured. It consists of four lines or a quatrain with two couplets. Each couplet is self-contained. The first usually makes a statement or describes a situation. The second one makes a statement or a conclusion based on the first. The beat of each line of the quatrain is iambic hexameter.

### **Origin of Songs**

*Zhungdra*, which literally means Melody of the Centre or The Principle Melody originated in the *Dzongs* and spread to villages. *Dzongs* were and still are the centres of civil administration and religious activities. Two explanations are given for the origins of *Boedra*. The first one claims that they were popularised by *Boed Garps*<sup>14</sup>, who travelled through villages on official assignments. The songs they sang were called *Boedra* or the Melody of the *Boed Garps*. The second explains that pilgrims and traders who travelled to Tibet composed songs by imitating and adapting Tibetan songs, and therefore the name, *Boedra* which also means, the Melody of Tibet<sup>15</sup>. This second explanation is unlikely as the language, rhythm and tune of Tibetan songs are very different from Bhutanese folk songs.

*Zhey* are very regional in character. The composition of *Zhey* is normally identified with the coming of Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal to Gasa in 1616<sup>16</sup>. Songs were also composed in different localities in Bhutan. For example, *Alo* is sung in the dialect of Kurtoe and its origin is ascribed to that region. *Zhetro Yarchoed*, which, like the *Alo* is an oral folk song, is common to Trongsa valley. *Khorey* is a type of song unique to Dungsam, *Ausa* to Haa, *Aulay* to Laya, *Achay Lhamo* to Ura and Omo Omo Pad Lung to Kheng.

The *rigsar* songs, on the other hand, originate mostly in urban centres of Bhutan. Thus we can say that their origin is sociological rather than political or geographical. The very difference in their origin influences the nature and concerns of the songs.

### **Commentaries on Society and Historical Events**

An important aspect of folk songs is the social and historical information they contain. Some are commentaries on, and descriptions of *dzongs*, monasteries, *lhakhangs*, and sites of pilgrimages and as well as of ordinary houses. A few are travelogues. In one of the sub-episodes of the eleventh episode of Goen Zhey<sup>17</sup> and in the eighth episode of the *Aulay* song of Laya, a detailed explanation of the process of the creation of the universe is given. During the tenure of the ninth Jêkhembo Gäwa Shaca Rinche (1744-

55), a "tax" known as the *tsunthrä* specified that one male offspring from each household was to enter monastic life. Sumd'a Trashi of Shanyishokha village who, although already a married father, was compelled to enter monastic life because he was an only son. His melancholic verse narrative of the genre known as '*loze* was sung in the vernacular and is still a popular *Dzongkha* poem today. During the reign of the 37th Desi or "Deva Raja Trashi Dorji (1847-51), a servant to the Gâsa 'Lam by the name of Singge, betrothed a young maiden named Galem, but their parents denied them the right to marry. The grief-stricken Galem took her own life, and her moving song of lament of the genre known as *co'lu* is sung in *Dzongkha* to this day. Similarly, the *Dzongkha* '*loze* of the *zimbö* of 'Wangdi Phodr'a, Pemi Tshe'wang Trashi of Shâkazhi, commemorates the tragic war between Trongsa and Bumthang during the reign of 43rd *Desi* Nâdzi Pâsa (1861-64). The vernacular '*loze* of Jami Tshe'wang Padro of Shaphang U village commemorates the skill and distinction of Bhutan's first hereditary monarch 'Ugä 'Wangchu during his performance as arbiter in the Tibetan-British negotiations of 1904'.<sup>18</sup> Like the *Lozey* of Sumdar Tashi, the folk song titled Gelong Zhen Phen Daw also gives detailed insight into the tradition of the *tsunthrä* or monk-tax.

### Festivals and Songs

*Zheys* are a different genre of folk songs. They contain elements of both *Zhungdra* and *Boedra* in tune, melody and rhythm of dance. But the subject is more sublime and elevated. *Zheys* are the longest of songs. Unlike other songs, they are sung and danced only during specific local festivals, although shortened versions of the *Zheys* are now performed on other occasions. Goen Zhey is performed at Gasa during a three-day festival beginning on the 10th day of the 8th month, and must be completed within the three days of the festival. The performance of Layapai Aulay begins on the 15th day of the 8th month. Cha is performed in the village of Ney, Lhuntse only during the festival of that village. Although most *Zheys* like Wang Zhey, Nub Zhey, Talopai Zhey and Paropai Zhey developed subsequent to the coming of Zhabdrung<sup>19</sup> from Tibet in 1616, Goen Zhey was performed during the coming of Zhabdrung. Its origin has mythical basis as well. Nub Zhey is one of the longest *Zheys* comprising of twenty-five different episodes, each lasting a minimum of five minutes. Goen

Zhey consists of twenty-one episodes and the Layapai Aulay of over fifteen episodes.

### **Lyricists and Lyrics**

As with painters, relatively little is known about lyricists in Bhutan. Of hundreds of songs composed, there are no records identifying a song with a lyricist. Social memory is able to identify a few lyricists. Therefore, we can make only general comments about indigenous composers and lyricists. Lyricists of traditional songs were lamas, monks and scholars who had and have undergone monastic education and are highly learned persons. The 57th *Je Khenpo*, His Holiness Ngawang Gyeltshen, the late *Je Khenpo* Geshe Gedun Rinchen, Ashi Wangmo, the daughter of the first king and disciple of His Holiness the Je Karmapa, the Late Dasho Gaydon Thinley, and *Lopen* Nado were some of the greatest lyricists. Contemporary lyricists like the present *Je Khenpo*, His Holiness *Trulku* Jigme Choeda, *Lopen* Jampa Chogyal, *Dasho* Shingkar Lam, and *Lopen* Pemala are among the accomplished scholars who were educated in monasteries and Rigzhung institutes. *Lopen* Kunzang Thinley is one of the most prolific contemporary lyricists and has composed over 180 songs. Religious themes dominate most of their songs. A few of them have also composed *rigsar* songs.

*Rigsar* songs are composed by students, college graduates and teachers. Unlike lyricists and composers of folk songs, the singer, lyricist and musician of *rigsar* songs can all be identified. These informations are available on the flap of the audiocassette. Their limited association with the monastery and religious curriculum is noticeable in the themes and tunes of these songs.

### **Language of the Songs**

The text of traditional songs are mostly verses, and poetry in their own right. Written mostly in *Chökey*, they constitute the Performing Arts and Poetry under *Rigney Chungwa Nga* (five minor sciences) and as a skill at Oral Excellence, a part of the *Zorig* (Arts) under *Rigne Chewa Nga* (five major sciences)<sup>20</sup>. Since *Chökey* is the classical language of Bhutan, it can be understood only by a very limited section of the population. Students are not able to understand since it is no longer the medium of education. One of

the reasons for the popularity of modern *rigsar* songs is their composition in *Dzongkha*, which is more colloquial<sup>21</sup> and easier to understand.

### **Mode of Narration**

Songs are also narratives, of, for example legends, stories, human dilemmas, relationships. While first person narration is usually common in songs that address a beloved or implore a lama for salvation and refuge, most songs are narrated in the third person. The emphasis on 'we' rather than 'I' is also a recurrent feature of first person narrative songs.

Most *rigsar* songs are monologues, delivered by a lover to a beloved. However, they do not attain the depth and seriousness of traditional monologue songs in language, images, metre and style. The emphasis on individual thoughts and feelings dominate *rigsar* songs.

This shift in emphasis from collective social consciousness to individual consciousness is also representative of the growing urban culture where the traditional social fabric and networks are gradually weakening.

### **Musical Instruments**

Musical instruments are not always played at singing and dancing sessions in villages and at informal gatherings. They are mostly used during formal public celebrations, and songs and dance competitions. They are intensively used at the Bhutan Broadcasting Service Radio and by private firms that specialize in producing audio cassettes. While some firms attempt to balance the production of modern and traditional music, most prefer to specialize in modern electronic and pop music.

Dramnyen (lute)<sup>22</sup>, chiwang (fiddle)<sup>23</sup> and lingm (flute)<sup>24</sup> are the three main folk music instrument. Yangchen (Dulcimer) is not an indigenous Bhutanese instrument and came to be used only in the 1950s. The materials used for making traditional musical instruments are very elementary and natural. Wood, bamboos, silken thread and horse tails are used. The kind of materials used have deep implications for the kind of music they are capable of producing. Most oriental music is based on the pentatonic scale,



and Bhutanese music intensively emphasize the perfect octave, perfect 4th and the tonic which are three of the pentatones.

### **Learning Songs - An Oral Tradition**

Songs were rarely written down and documented. Even today, very limited numbers of songbooks are published. The first one titled *Folk Songs of Bhutan*, was published in 1985 by the Department of Education and contained 280 folk songs. Kunzang Thinley's *gLu deb 'blo gsar dga' ston* published in 1996 and *A Treasury of Songs of the Kingdom of Bhutan*, published in 1997 by the Special Commission are the only comprehensive song books available. Bhutan was an oral society and therefore, the transmission of songs through memory and oral recitation constituted, and continues to constitute, an important part of the learning process. This oral tradition was based, however, on a teacher-student relationship. The teacher was a lama, monk, lay monk or any person who knew a song and taught it to others. There must have been instances of writing songs in long hand, but they were never published for mass circulation. *Gup* Mani of Gasa, who died over 30 years ago, is believed to have possessed a book which contained the lyrics of Goen Zhey. No one has been able to trace it.

Lyricists do not always compose tunes and develop choreography. Dancers may perform choreography they find comfortable. A song may be sung in a few different tunes. There are variations in tunes and even in lyrics of the same song across different regions. However, most of them do have one particular tune. Like the lyrics themselves, the tune has also been learnt, taught and transmitted orally. Learning of lyrics is accompanied by learning the tune. They are hardly separated.

### **Songs and Their Context**

Different songs are meant for different occasions and for different purposes, not for mere entertainment. As stated in *Shey Zoed Yid Zhin Norbu*<sup>25</sup> - a text that discusses, amongst others, some aspects of songs and dances are given; 'Don't sing sad songs at celebrations; don't sing happy songs at mourning; don't sing war songs at marriage, don't sing love songs while an enemy is being subdued and don't sing songs at times of sickness and death'<sup>26</sup>. The context in which songs are sung is an important

consideration. *Alo* is usually sung at the point of departure of a friend or a relative. *Zheytro Yarchoed* is sung only when monks and lay monks are served refreshments during prayer ceremonies and rituals. Tashi Laybay is sung at the time of Chibdrel (a ceremonial procession of receiving guests of honour) and also toward the conclusion of festive and public celebrations. Different songs known as Tashi are sung to conclude a singing and dancing session on a positive note<sup>27</sup>. There are songs sung at the work place, and songs sung only on particular religious or social occasions.

### **Composition of Lyrics**

Traditional guidelines for composition of song lyrics are neither understood nor observed by lyricists of *rigsar* songs. Making incompatible comparisons where symbols and metaphors are inflated to convey a small point, or where they are incapable of conveying deep meanings are technical faults in composition. What is not permissible while composing lyrics is elucidated in a religious text called Melongma. According to it,

All composition for oral art  
Should not be displeasing, such as  
To write, 'the moon is white as the swan  
The sky is pure like the ocean  
Revere heroes like dogs  
Fire flies illuminate like the sun'  
Avoiding such incongruity, the learned composed  
So compose keeping these in mind.

### **Vocal Quality and Practice**

Vocal and behavioural discipline is necessary to sing and dance within a certain acceptable standard. There are four vices that must be avoided during singing and dancing. They are: i) singing at very high vocal pitch ii) singing with very sharp and piercing voice iii) frowning while singing and dancing and iv) asking/waiting for others to sing and dance<sup>28</sup>. The emphasis on singing at an acceptable pitch of voice underscores the need for vocal training. There is no formal training, but continuous practice can enhance intrinsic voice quality and ability, especially for singing *Zhungdra*. Traditional folk songs are usually sung at a certain vocal amplitude which will not be drowned out by the music.

Although the quality of voice is regarded very highly, the meanings of the songs traditionally receive more emphasis. A traditional proverb reads, 'Consider the tune, not the voice; consider the words, not the tune and consider the meaning, not the words'.

### **Compatibility of Songs and Dances**

One crucial distinction between traditional and modern songs is the compatibility of songs and dances. When traditional lyricists compose songs, they are usually conscious of the choreography and the sequence of steps that will be compatible with the tune of songs. Singers who compose tunes are even more conscious of the choreography for the song. So, in addition to songs like *Tsangmo* and *Alo*, all others are compatible with some sequence of movements that are generally performed. When *Dasho Gyonpo Tshering* was compiling the lyrics of *Goen Zhey*, many people in *Gasa* whom he approached had to perform the dance in order to remember the lyrics. Composition of lyrics, tunes and the dance are closely inter-related.

Singers line up in a single row to sing and dance *Zhungdra*, while a circle is the most popular formation for dancing *Boedra* and *Zhey*. Although the style and steps of dancing are gradually changing in institutional entertainment programmes, the original steps and movements are the most preferred ones in informal social gatherings and celebrations. Most Bhutanese are familiar with the generally accepted choreography and easily connect with the rhythm of the movements in a dance. While some of the *rigsar* songs can be danced in traditional steps to a limited extent, most of them are incompatible with the traditional choreography. Given the speed, rhythm and tune and the accompanying instrumental music, modern songs can either be sung as solos or danced like pop American songs as depicted in some recent Bhutanese films<sup>29</sup>. The compatibility of songs and dances has deep implications for the nature and possibility of popular audience participation in singing and dancing that are important in enhancing socialization of the community.

### **Social Participation**

Group participation is one of the distinguishing features of traditional songs and dances. One person does not perform a dance on his own. Of course dancers basically perform the same step and movements. People unfamiliar with the tradition may think it possible for any individual to perform the dance. However, dance is conceived not in terms of an individual but of group. Dancing is always a collective performance. By virtue of their participatory nature, traditional songs directly engage the audience they entertain.

Dancing does not discriminate and is socially cohesive. Irrespective of their status, people from all walks of life can join a dancing session. It is not unusual to find the king and queens or ministers dancing with ordinary people.

On the other hand, modern songs can be very limited in accommodating group participation. More often than not, they are monologues and songs per se. Lyricists neither visualize nor are conscious of a choreography that would harmonize with their songs. *Rigsar* songs developed on stage and were performed to a sitting audience. The use of the microphone further impeded any initiative to develop choreography. Besides, *rigsar* songs are mostly solos about a person, usually a lovelorn lover singing to a beloved making very blunt statements about their love.

*Rigsar* songs are commercial packages, sung and recorded in the isolation of studios and targeted for sale to an audience at a price. The audience is reached through a mechanical medium.

## **Section II: Emerging Changes- The Development of *Rigsar* Songs**

### **Origin of *Rigsar* Songs**

The first instance of the composition of *rigsar* songs dates back to late 1960's. Zhendi Migo was the first modern Bhutanese song. Its tune was directly imitated from that of Sayonara, a song in a Hindi film, 'Love in Tokyo'. It must have been very popular then. Choreography was developed for this song by the artists of Royal Academy of Performing Arts (RAPA) and performed during the Trongsa *Tshechu*<sup>30</sup>. Lhamo Drukpa, a pop *rigsar* singer produced a remix of this song in her album 'Ney Rio Tala' released in 1998. It is also included in Norling Drayang's album Ausphalay and in Nazhoen Phuntshog Drayang's Lokhor. Another historical event in the development of *rigsar* song occurred in 1979-80, when *Dasho* Thinley Gyamtsho composed Dorozam and sang it at a school function. In the 1980s, when the National Council for Social and Cultural Promotion coordinated summer and winter scouts programmes for school children, most of the songs sung in the camps were in Hindi, Nepali or English. Of course a *rigsar* song or two had been composed a bit earlier, but they were more or less translation of Hindi songs. They were direct and easy to understand. *Dasho* Thinley, then a teacher at Samchi thought that songs would be a useful educational tool to teach students from southern Bhutan. They found *Dzongkha* readers which contained stories translated from *Chökey* hard to understand. Compositions of songs in *Dzongkha* would not only generate interest in songs but also facilitate learning the language. Therefore, the first *rigsar* songs were composed as means to fulfil educational purposes.

Besides songs, composers like *Dasho* Thinley and *Lopen* Tashi also composed nursery rhymes. A few of them are still aired on the Bhutan Broadcasting Service Radio. A youth organization called the Nazhoen Thrabten Tshogpa founded in 1984 by a few graduates of Semtokha Rigzhung Institute<sup>31</sup> later began to produce and sing *rigsar* songs in public. The composition of *rigsar* songs underwent a change in concept and purpose in the mid-1980s beginning with Shera's<sup>32</sup> performance of a song and music programme called Ngesem Ngesem<sup>33</sup> in 1986 at Mongar. This represented a point of departure, especially in terms of purpose and choice

of subject, from the kind of songs composed in the preceding five years. Entertainment, rather than educational values, was emphasised. Another feature of Ngesem Ngesem was the use of the electronic keyboard by Shera's band. It was very influential, introducing rhythms and beats that would not have been possible in traditional songs. However, Norling's production of a music album called Pangi Shawa<sup>34</sup> in 1995 marks the beginning of a new breed of songs and music, which anticipated the development of popular songs in the subsequent years. Most of the albums released after 1995 have similar musical compositions, choices of subjects and themes. They associate more with English, Hindi and Nepali music. It is evident that *rigsar* songs developed only after modern socio-economic development began in Bhutan in 1960. The first song was composed eight years later, after the establishment of the first cinema hall at Samdrup Jongkhar in 1960.

### **Songs in Vernacular Languages**

The development of song writing in vernacular languages in tandem with the growth of *rigsar* songs is a very interesting feature. Presumably, many songs in vernacular languages existed. But only a few are sung today. There are few songs in Khengkha and Bumtapaikha, dialects spoken in central Bhutan. Bumei Karma Wangzom, Kampai Jaling Beto Gaidee, the most popular song in Khengkha is believed to have been presented to Zhabdrung when he arrived in Bhutan.

Sharchopkha has become the most popular among vernacular languages for composition and singing *rigsar* songs. While some studios have produced a few sharchogpa songs, Pelvision has been the most active producer of song albums in Sharchop. Most of the songs, if not all, in albums like Kharang Zaley Odo, Otha Zamling Nangka, Deley Deley are in sharchop.

### **Growth of Music and Film Studios**

A remarkable development in the 1990s has been the growth of private music studios, which increasingly specializes in the production of *rigsar* songs. Except for Tashi Nenchu established in 1987, studios like Norling Drayang, Nazhoen Phuntshog Drayang, Melody Drayang, Mila and Pel Vision, which are all based in Thimphu, produce *rigsar* songs using

electronic music. Of course, they also occasionally produce folk songs. Norling Drayang started producing folk songs and music but switched to *rigsar* and modern music. Pel Vision attempts to maintain a balance between traditional and modern music, although their lyrics are mostly *rigsar*. Music firms argue that if they don't use electronic music for their songs, their productions would not sell well. This is an important consideration in the production of *rigsar* songs and music. All these studios were established for commercial purposes.

A few of these music firms also expanded into film production. Film companies are also increasing in number. Of the 24 Bhutanese films produced to date, most contain *rigsar* songs and music. They have become a powerful instrument in popularising *rigsar* songs. As part of a film, they are immediately learnt and sung. Recognizing the popularity of film songs, producers produce dialogues and songs on audiotapes, even before the film is actually released or soon after. The recorded sales of these tapes are very high.

### **Production of *Rigsar* Song Albums**

The production of over a hundred albums in the last ten years is significant. (See Annex 1 for list of song albums produced as of March, 2001). Considering that each album has, on average, ten songs, a total of over one thousand *Rigsar* songs have been produced in the last decade. On the other hand, the number of album traditional songs and music produced is much fewer. And these, in turn, far outnumber the traditional songs composed and recorded in the very few song books that are available. Without a doubt, the number of traditional songs composed over the centuries has been much greater than the number actually available today. Most of them probably have been forgotten over the generations, since there was no system for documenting songs. The Royal Academy of Performing Arts has produced only one song (traditional folk song) and one folk music (instrumental) album. On the other hand, Norling Drayang intends to produce at least one *rigsar* album every month.

### **Songs and Music Programme on Radio and Television**



The volume of production of songs and music albums greatly influence accessibility and listening habits. The market is flooded with *rigsar* music albums. The very fact that they are available on audiotapes is significant. Unlike books of traditional songs, taped lyrics, tunes and music are available in one integrated object. The impact, therefore, is much greater. The learning of songs now does not necessarily require a teacher. Because of limited production of traditional songs in audiocassettes, folk songs are still an oral tradition. The BBS has nearly two hundred *Dzongkha* songs recorded on open spool reels and an equal number in the Sharchop. It selects songs to play on air from these collections. Its Musical Production Group, which no longer exists, used to travel to remote villages, collect songs and air them from Thimphu. This programme could not be sustained due to high cost of production and the transfer of staff to other organizations. Nevertheless, BBS has played a crucial role in preserving and promoting traditional songs and music. Since 1999, it has also begun to play *rigsar* songs on air. While *rigsar* songs are specifically played on Thursdays, they are also played intermittently throughout the week along with other songs. This has become a factor in popularising *rigsar* songs, especially in rural areas where young boys and girls are keen to learn them. BBS television has not made any particular move to popularise either traditional or *rigsar* music. In its daily one-hour telecast, music fillers are used when the programme switches from *Dzongkha* news to English news and then to the half an hour programme. Both traditional and *rigsar* music are telecast. However, this airtime eventually will be sold for commercial purpose. Advertisements will take up this space. Cable TV operators, like KC Cables and Sigma Cables, telecast songs and music of both type on a special channel where they also make announcements and provide information to their customer.

### **Popularity of *Rigsar* Songs**

Two of the most cited reasons for the popularity of *rigsar* songs are the language which makes them much more understandable and the music which is similar to those used for western popular songs. This preference on the part of the youth for *rigsar* songs because of the type of music used is a reflection of their preference for western popular music. The BBS, in its occasional listener survey about its English programmes, finds that the

top ten songs in the US or UK are also among the top ten in popularity among the youth of Thimphu.

The quantity of production of *rigsar* song albums has a direct consequence on its popularity. Customers have greater choice of songs and music, and their choice are more readily available. *Rigsar* music is played in taxis, buses, and other public transport and in restaurants. Recognizing the popularity of *rigsar* songs and their potential to influence passengers, the Health Division has produced a few music albums laden with health and sanitation messages. All the songs are in *Dzongkha*. Electronic musical instruments are used. Norling Drayang employs a full-time musician from Calcutta, India who composes the master rhythm for all the songs they produce.

### **Role of Royal Academy of Performing Arts and Tashi Nencha**

The Royal Academy of Performing Arts (RAPA) is the oldest and the only such institute in Bhutan; it was formally established 'in 1967 with only 10 girls. Today, there are 54 students of which 13 are girls'<sup>35</sup>. Its purpose is to preserve and promote Bhutan's performing arts, especially songs, music and mask dances. It has definitely kept the original songs, music and choreography alive. It has also ventured to compose livelier music and develop different choreography for many songs. A few artists of this academy have been sent to schools and institutes to teach students. But most of them left the institute once they attained their retirement age, which were 25 for women and 35 for men. Today, it is 35 for both men and women. They are trained for four years. There is no formal system of sending the artists, after training, to any other institutes as trainers or teachers, although the current principal is exploring employment opportunities for the institute's graduates. Some artists are sent for a month or two on deputation to different Dzongkhags when they are requested to come and teach before the annual festivals. Schools in Thimphu also request for their service before their annual school concerts. However, they are mostly retained at the institute as performing artists. On the whole, the academy's social role has been limited. Not all of the artists are active or take performing arts as profession. They perform mostly for public events like the National Day, entertain state guests, and also perform during state dinners, official inaugurations and promotions. Lately, they also have

started to provide packaged cultural programmes for tourists. Nevertheless, their role has generally been confined to ceremonial functions. A major limitation for their activities has been the shortage of space and infrastructure, such as class rooms and hostels. The current hostel 'built in the 1960s was not able to accommodate the increase in the numbers of students over the years'. A recent Danish grant of Nu.10 million will help provide funds and support for the institute<sup>36</sup>.

Similarly, the role and performances of Tashi Nenchu, a private music studio has also been limited to these few ceremonial events. Unlike other private music firms, Tashi Nenchu specializes in production of traditional songs and music. All seven song albums that it has produced are unique in comparison to the production of other firms. It has also produced dramas and films and frequently stages public performances. Like the Academy, it has participated in cultural performances outside the country. Tashi Nenchu's most valuable asset is the 87 year-old Aku Tongmi who was one of the most famous singer and dancer of his time. Despite his age, Aku Tongmi is able to teach the artists of Tashi Nenchu original songs and choreography and thereby continue an old tradition. It is only the artists of Tashi Nenchu who knows the choreography of the National Anthem. Aku Tongmi composed the lyrics, tune and choreography of the National Anthem in 1953. The lyrics were edited by the late *Gaydon* Thinley. As a pioneer in establishing private music firm in Bhutan, Tashi Nenchu trained many of the artists who later joined Pel Vision and Norling.

#### **Songs and Music Course at the Institute of Language and Cultural Studies (ILCS)**

Except at the ILCS in Semtokha, songs and dances are not taught as a part of the curriculum in any educational institutes. Of course they are performed in all schools for national and institutional events. Increasingly *rigsar* songs are becoming part of school concerts and group competitions. Students who go home to their villages for holidays popularise *rigsar* songs as they sing them during communal gatherings and annual rituals. Rural youths learn them from the students from their villages. *Rigsar* songs also are sung increasingly for *Dacham*<sup>37</sup>.

At ILCS, songs, music and dances are taught right from grade XI to degree classes. Although they are only elective subjects, many students have taken

the courses. The objective and content of the courses are designed not only to teach students traditional songs and music but also to promote creativity and direct initiatives. An introduction to different types of songs, music and dances, a study of their origin, and researches on all folk songs and music orchestras form the theoretical part of these courses. Singing, dancing, learning to play musical instruments, composition of new and different lyrics, and the development of new choreography, all constitute the practical part. The three songbooks published so far are used as textbooks and reference materials, but there is no manual or textbook for teaching various aspects of these courses. The institute is in the process of conducting researches in order to develop comprehensive publications on songs, dances, music and choreography. In the absence of even limited publications of songs, the institute intends to enable each student who takes this course to come up with a publication of songbook when he/she graduates.

### **Section III: Value Analysis of Folk Songs and *Rigsar* Songs**

#### **Songs and Education**

Monastic education in the traditional Bhutanese society was accessible only to monks and lay monks. However, ordinary people learnt about morality, ethics and other basic tenets of Buddhism through performance of rituals, prayer ceremonies, religious festivals, and mass teachings. This medium was nevertheless very informal. In absence of other medium of learning, folk songs have been very influential in educating the ordinary people on social, religious and environment values. As people sang the same songs through generations in almost similar tunes, they continuously reinforced these values, which found expression in the beliefs and practices of the people.

Traditional songs address a large section of the society. The morals and messages inherent in them are not only conveyed to listeners and the people beyond the immediate audience; they also remind the singers themselves about issues like the impermanence of life and relationships, and the importance of religion.

In this section some of the most fundamental religious, social and environment values reflected in folk songs will be discussed.

### **Social and Religious Values**

Bhutanese culture is deeply influenced by Buddhism. Buddhism is the foundation of all social values. Since religious values permeate the morals, ethics and code of conduct of the Bhutanese, cultural and social values are often indistinguishable.

One of the most dominant religious themes treated in folk songs is the value of human life and the need to live it meaningfully.<sup>38</sup> Life is short and unpredictable like 'the lightning' and 'rainbow in the sky'<sup>39</sup>. It is much 'rarer than gold, more precious than even the lives of gods'. It is an opportunity to 'practice the dharma' and 'liberate ourselves from the wheel of suffering'. Phrases echoing these messages recur in most songs in one form or the other.

Impermanence, which is central to the teachings of Buddhism is also treated in folk songs. Everything changes and does not last. Life has no permanence, and the body no fixity. Everyone is reminded about the importance of living a virtuous and meaningful life.

The importance of faith to and worship of the 'three jewels' of Buddhism – the Buddha, Dharma and Sanga is another recurrent theme. Songs sing about merits obtained through prayers, making offerings and seeking refuge in them. Lamas, who are the most important factor in helping attain liberation as teachers, also assume prominent place in songs of various kind.

Many verses from hagiographies of saints and great religious persons are sung as songs. There are repeated messages in them that insist on renunciation of attachment to luxuries of life and aspire for higher spiritual goals. These are tactfully conveyed through many symbols and metaphors<sup>40</sup>.

The inevitability of destiny as a consequence of merit and demerit of one's previous lives is also highlighted in the songs. This is the most fundamental of Buddhist's principle; *Ley Jumdrey* - the belief in interdependence of action and result. What we are, man or woman, rich or poor, happy or sad,

united or solitary, abled or disabled are the consequences of our actions. Songs however, do not merely underline this fact but subtly imply that our future (lives) will depend on how we live our life now.

The concept of *tha damtshig* is one of the most fundamental social values. Literally translated, it reads as 'boundary of sacred oath' and refers to commitment and obligation of love, honour and loyalty in one's relationship with other people. Followers are obliged to respect, worship and be loyal to their masters for teachings and religious initiations. Children must be grateful to parents for their love, care and protection, subjects to sovereign for benevolent rule, peace and harmony in society. This is further condensed in the concept of *Dinlen Jelni*<sup>41</sup> – 'repaying kindness'. It is built on the idea of reciprocity. Dedication of students to teachers, gratitude of children to parents, and faith and loyalty between husbands and wife are extolled as highest of social virtues.<sup>42</sup>

Bhutanese always emphasize on *Tendrel* or good auspices. Every occasion or event has to begin and end on a positive and optimistic note. Whether it is house construction, marriage, promotion, celebrations or inaugurations, the significance of an auspicious beginning or conclusion is a very important social value. Some songs are specifically dedicated to fulfill such a purpose. Singing and dancing sessions always conclude with a song called Tashi Tashi. There are different versions of this song. If it were a public occasion, the song Tashi Labay is sung to conclude the event. While its chorus is always the same, there are different lyrics. These songs echo hopes and wishes for bumper harvest, abundant rainfall, a 'body without illness and mind without worries'. It ends by praying that everyone may once again meet the following year in a spirit of contentment and well-being.

### **Environmental Values**

Folk songs have also served as a medium of emphasizing the spiritual, economic and aesthetic importance of the natural world. This aspect of songs is even more important and relevant to a society that is gradually becoming more urbanized and therefore, developing a very fragmented and economic view of the natural environment.

*Nature - Citadels of Local Gods and Deities*

The natural environment has been the greatest source of inspiration for lyricists of traditional folk songs. Its influence has been so strong that almost all recorded folk songs relate to nature either in their theme, imagery and symbols, or as objects of poetry and worship. In most songs, the sky, streams and rivers, mountains and cliffs, forest groves and even the subterranean have been portrayed as citadels or abodes of local gods and deities. The songs constantly emphasize the need to appease them and respect their citadels so that they reciprocate by blessing communities and villages with abundant rainfall and harvest, protect them from diseases and misfortune. On the other hand, if humans encroach upon their abodes, their wrath is believed to be expressed in the form of hailstorms, gales, landslides and floods that destroy crops, cattle, lives and property<sup>43</sup>.

*Nature - A Living Entity*

Nature is believed to be a living force, a conscious entity possessing all the qualities of life, not an object or a mere biomass. Therefore, the sun, moon, sky, earth, trees, rivers, mountains and cliffs, animals and birds, the landscape are more than often personified in folk songs. They assume human characteristics and present themselves as capable of feelings and thoughts. This is a direct affirmation of the Buddhist belief in nature as living entity and therefore, deserving of love, compassion and respect. The songs continuously reinforce this belief, and it, has been one of the strongest indigenous social force in nature conservation.

*Natural Symbols and Images*

Local deities and gods, protective guardians, natural symbols like the sun, moon, stars, air, fire, rivers, trees, birds, animals, and the landscape are intensively used in traditional songs to build up metaphors and images. Perhaps the most recurring images are the sky and sun, mountain and snow lion, glade and reindeer, lake and fish, village and people. The use of symbols and images is one of the most important distinctions between folk and *rigsar* songs. An interesting feature of folk songs is the technique of conveying a message or emphasising a point through the use of different images. The depth of the song's meaning is built through repeated use of different metaphors in it. Only toward the end of the song is the actual

meaning stated. This is a narrative technique used to build arguments in order to convince the imagined listener. The quality of natural environment is also an indicator of communal prosperity. Woods devoid of wildlife, barren meadows, dried streams... are considered signs of misfortune for the village. They must always be there. Songs therefore, sing of the beauty of green hills, flowers and fruits, bees and birds, underling the importance of maintaining a constant ecological balance.

### **Sociological Concerns of *Rigsar* Songs**

Most *rigsar* songs dwell on the theme of love. Only a few of them differ from this general trend. They are of three kinds: the first kind treats religious and social themes, and reflect values like those contained in folk songs. The music, language, rhythm and tunes are of course different. There is even a sharp contrast in usage of symbols and metaphors. The song Mitshe Thungku<sup>44</sup> sings of the shortness of human life and the importance of cultivating merit through pious deeds. Chuchen Dangmichuna<sup>45</sup> is a song about human ignorance of noble aspirations caused by blind attachment to momentary pleasures. Songs of Kelzang Dorji, a blind singer are very rich in religious themes. He sings about fate, destiny, the sacredness of life...His songs and music, and that of the students of National Institute for the Disabled are very distinct from other *rigsar* songs in the way they blend traditional styles with modern ones in terms of lyrics, tune and music. There are also songs that celebrate the virtue of 'repaying kindness of parents', charity to poor, obeisance to teachers and masters, and of love among friends, siblings and relatives.

The second kind is composed to promote social advocacy messages. Health and environment have been the most prominent subjects of such songs. They are usually produced under the sponsorship of institutions with similar interests. The Information, Education and Communication for Health (IECH) of the Ministry of Health and Education has produced song albums that convey messages related to health and hygiene, sanitation, abuse of narcotics, sexually transmitted diseases, smoking and alcoholism. The Royal Society for Protection of Nature (RSPN) has sponsored production of a folk song album as a part of its black-neck crane protection strategy. It has made an audio visual of the song Shawa Phomo<sup>46</sup>. This is frequently shown on national television. Another song, Cheden Drugi



Gyalkhab<sup>47</sup> has also been made into an audio-visual for screening on television. It was composed and sung on the occasion of the inauguration of the National Botanical Garden in Thimphu in 1999. 'Save the Tiger/Save Life on Earth' is a song album produced by the Nature Conservation Division in collaboration with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) as a part of their Tiger Protection programme. All songs in it are specifically composed for the programme.

The third kind deals specifically with issues that are indicative of changing social circumstances. They either comment or make objective statements about new trends in society. Pel Vision's latest album is titled Deley Deley meaning '(I) will go' in sharchop. The singer expresses her wish to migrate to Thimphu and stay with her sister and brother-in-law in view of the hard and difficult life in village. Her father cautions her. He cites examples of some of her friends who have gone earlier and become 'worthless'. The song is a direct comment on the consequence of rural-urban migration that is a growing social phenomenon. Another song in the same album highlights pretensions of people in terms of their wealth, status and purpose especially because of their association with urban values. It cautions girls in rural areas against advances from men who go to villages. A simple office peon going to his village in a rural area could pretend to be an officer and beguile girls. A driver would pretend to be owner of the car he is driving. At the core of this song is the theme of an assumed superiority of urban dwellers and workers in comparison to farmers in villages. Everything urban looks attractive, better and worth aspiring for. However, reality is different and even harsh. Life is measured along income levels. The value of money and people's slavery to it is clearly portrayed in a song called 'Oy Tiru' – Oh Money<sup>48</sup>. Quite a few *rigsar* songs ridicule girls who aspire to marry husbands for their wealth and positions. 'True love no longer seems to matter' they sing. While it might appear to indicate degradation of marital values, it actually speaks about how people perceive marriage as source of economic security. However, this is not suggestive of a established social phenomenon but an emerging trend.

Religious and social values that are concerns of folk songs do not engage *rigsar* songs to any considerable extent. Most of them are expressions of love and its fulfilment, frustration of lovers, failure of personal relationships, hope of consummation of an affair, or perseverance of faith

and loyalty. Only a few differentiate themselves distinctively by dwelling on different themes. However, their concerns with social issues do not necessarily qualify them as repository of value-system of a changing society. Rather they project themselves as critique of changes and new developments in society.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has analysed different attributes of folk songs, outlined the development of *rigsar* in the last decade and looked at various values that are promoted by both folk and *rigsar* songs. Although traditional folk songs and dances are still a living culture, they are being increasingly overtaken in popularity by *rigsar* songs particularly among the youths. Most of the music studios specialize in the production of *rigsar* song albums. The availability of traditional songs in audiocassettes is far less than those of *rigsar* songs. They still remain part of oral tradition. Institutional frameworks necessary for preserving and promoting traditional songs and music are limited and may not be in a position to check the proliferation of *rigsar* songs. The development and spread of *rigsar* songs therefore, greatly challenge the values and sustainability of traditional songs and music and, consequently, of traditional Bhutanese values.

### **Note**

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<sup>1</sup> A letter to the Editor titled, *Preserving Our Culture*, by Sonam Wangchuk, Karma Tshering and Pema Namgyel, *Kuensel* (the national newspaper), Dec 2, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> See *Kuensel* editorial, August 21, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Dasho Thinley Gyamtsho, Principal, Royal Academy of Performing Arts and Lop. Gyem Dorji, *Dzongkha* Editor, *Kuensel*, Personal Communications, Nov., 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Classical songs sung in a very long melody.

<sup>5</sup> See *Origin of Songs* in this section for explanations of both *Zhungdra*, *Boedra*, *Zhey*, *Zheym* etc.

<sup>6</sup> Although there is no traditional usage of the word *Yuedra*, Jigme Drukpa, Vice Principal of the Royal Academy of Performing Arts coined it to identify songs that have originated in the villages.

<sup>7</sup> Another genre of classical songs. See section on *Origin of Songs* and *Festival and Songs* for more details.

<sup>8</sup> Unlike *Zhey* which are sung in different regions, *Zheym* is sung only by women, in Tangsibji in Trongsa and Talo in Punakha.

<sup>9</sup> See *Lozey and Tsangmo - Ornaments of Speech* for details.

<sup>10</sup> A long melodious song sung at the point of a departure of a friend or relative to a distant place.

<sup>11</sup> Song unique to villages in Dungsam in eastern Bhutan.

<sup>12</sup> Song unique to Haa valley in western Bhutan.

<sup>13</sup> See author's 'Introductory Preface' in Gyenpo Tshering (1997). *A Treasury of Songs of the Kingdom of Bhutan*, Thimphu: Special Commission for Cultural Affairs.

<sup>14</sup> A category of medieval court servants who functioned as messengers and emissaries of local chieftains.

<sup>15</sup> Lopen Kunzang Thinley (1996). *gLu deb glo gsar dga' ston*, Thimphu: KMT Press, p.21.

<sup>16</sup> See *Festival and Songs* below for details on *Zhey*.

<sup>17</sup> *Zhey* sung in the region of Goen in Gasa district. The song is unique to the region.

<sup>18</sup> Driem, George Van (1994). "Language Policy in Bhutan" in Aris and Hutt (Eds.) *Bhutan: Aspects of Culture and Development*, Gartmore: Kiscadale, p.89.

<sup>19</sup> The founder and unifier of modern Bhutan.

<sup>20</sup> The Five Major Sciences are: sowa rigpa (the science of healing or medicine), dra rigpa (the science of words or language), tshadma rigpa (science of dialectics), zo rigpa (science of mechanical arts) and nangden rigpa (science of spiritual knowledge of the Tri Pitaka). The Five Minor Sciences are ngyen ngag (poetry), debjor (grammar), tsi (astrology), ngon jed (synonyms), and doegar (performing arts).

<sup>21</sup> Rinchen Namgye, Personal Communications, Nov., 2000.

<sup>22</sup> It is believed to be the musical instrument of Lhamo Yangchenma, Goddess of Music, and is one of the most popular among folk music instrument.

<sup>23</sup> A two-stringed hand instrument. Its unfretted fingerboard is attached to a resonating drum with hollow bottom. It is usually made out of horn, wood or bamboo. Horse tail is used for its strings.

<sup>24</sup> An instrument with six finger holes, made out of bamboo. There are two kinds of flutes commonly used: the Dong Lingm or front-blown flute and Zur Lingm or the side-blown flute.

<sup>25</sup> A compendium of Tibetan Lamaist scholastic learning by Don dam smra ba'i senge, Thimphu: Kunsang Tobgay, 1976

<sup>26</sup> *op.cit.* ff.512.

<sup>27</sup> See *Social and Religious Values* in the paper

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<sup>28</sup> Kunzang Thinley, *op.cit* pp.7-8.

<sup>29</sup> The song 'Jarim Dusa' in the film *Raywa* (Charo Entertainments) and 'Zamling Nangi Atsara' in *Shathra Nyingi Yoezer* (Yoezer Visions) are sung and danced just like American and Indian pop songs.

<sup>30</sup> The annual festival held inside the *dzong* (fortress) of Trongsa in Central Bhutan from the 8th to the 10th day of the 11th month of the Bhutanese calendar.

<sup>31</sup> The institute has been upgraded to a degree college and renamed Institute of Language and Cultural Studies.

<sup>32</sup> An undergraduate student then at Bhutan's only college located in eastern Bhutan.

<sup>33</sup> This is the name of his most popular song although other songs were also performed on that occasion.

<sup>34</sup> Literally translated as 'the deer of the glade'.

<sup>35</sup> *Kuensel*, p. 3, December 9, 2000.

<sup>36</sup> *Kuensel*, *Op. cit.*

<sup>37</sup> Dances performed by players during archery matches, especially when the target is hit

<sup>38</sup> For instance, the songs, *Zamling yangpai lingla* composed by Ashi Wangmo and *Ema menlam wangi* dwell on this theme.

<sup>39</sup> Theme of the songs, *Yabchi sendang damze loday* and *Che Nangsa deljor mili di*.

<sup>40</sup> The song *Gang singye yurel gyepa che* is an extract from the biography of Ashi Nangsa, a great Tibetan noble lady.

<sup>41</sup> Theme of the song *Nyima sharchog lingi ling chogna*. In fact, this song directly highlights the value of dedication to one's lama, loyalty to sovereign, gratitude to parents and love to siblings.

<sup>42</sup> For a detailed explanation on Bhutanese values, see Tashi Wangyal's *Ensuring Social Sustainability: Can Bhutan's education system ensure intergenerational transmission of values?* in this Journal.

<sup>43</sup> It is interesting to note that this negative attribute is not mentioned in the songs but implied by stating the benefits of appeasing them.

<sup>44</sup> It was composed and sung by Rinchen Namgye and included in his album 'Love 98'.

<sup>45</sup> Composed and sung by Jigme Ngedup, this song is in his most popular album 'Jigten Dhina'.

<sup>46</sup> It is included in the album 'Tashi Dawa' produced by Pel Vision.

<sup>47</sup> Later produced in Musical 99, by Norling Drayang.

<sup>48</sup> A song in the album 'Boedra Rigsar' produced by Nazhoen Phuntscho Drayang.

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**Table of Equivalencies: Transcription - Transliteration**

Achay Lhamo: A lce lha mo  
Aku Tongmi: A ku krong me  
Alo: A lo  
Ashi Wangmo: A zhe dbang mo  
Aulay: Au legs  
Ausa: Au sa  
Boed Garps: 'bod sgar  
Boedra: 'Bod sgra  
Bumei Karma Wangzom: Bu mo'i Kar ma dbang zom  
Bumtapaikha: Bum thang pa'i kha  
Cha: cha  
Che Nangsa deljor mili di: khyod sNang sa dal 'byor mi lus 'di  
Cheden drugi gyalkhab: chos ldan 'Brug gi rgyal khab  
Chibdrel: chib gral  
Chiwang: sPyi dbang  
Choe dang Choe drel lu: chos dang chos 'brel glu  
Chokey: chos skad  
Chuchen Dangmichuna: chu chen sgra med chu  
Dasho Gaydon Thinley: Drag shos rgyal mgon 'Phrin las  
Dinlen Jelni: drin len 'jal ni  
Dong Lingm: gDong glingm  
Dramnyen: sGra snyan  
Dratshang: grva tshang  
Dudjom Rimpoche: bDud 'joms rin po che  
Dungsam: gDung bsam  
Dza Lu: mDza glu  
Dzong: rDzong  
Ema menlam wangi: 'ema smon lam dbang gi  
Ga Lu: dga gLu  
Gang singye yurel gyepa che: Gangs sen ge gyu rel rgyas pa khyod  
Gasa: dGar sa  
Gasa Lami Singye: dGar sa bla ma'i seng ge  
Gaylong Sumdar Tashi: dGe slong sum dar bkra shis  
Gaylong Zhenphen Daw: dGe slong gzhen phan zla ba  
Geshe Gedun Rinchen: dGe shes dGe bdun rin chen  
Goen Zhey: dGon gzhas

Gup Mani: rGapo ma ni  
Gurma: mGur ma  
Gyalkhab ki toed lu: rGyal khab kyi stod glu  
Gyalpoi toed lu: rgyalpo'i stod glu  
Gyonpo Tshering: mGon po tshe ring  
Jarim dusa: 'ja rim 'du sa  
Je Karmapa: rJe kar ma pa  
Je Khenpo: rJe mkhan po  
Jigten dina: 'Jig rten 'di na  
Kheng: khen  
Khengkha: khen kha  
Khorey: mKho re  
Kuensel: kun gsal  
Kurtoe: sKur stod  
Lama choeted ki lu: bla ma chos stod kyi glu  
Ley Jumdrey: las rgyu 'bras  
Lhakhang: lHa khang  
Lhamo Drukpa: lHa mo 'brug pa  
Lhamo Yangchenma: lHa mo dByangs can ma  
Lhuntse: lHun rtse  
Lingm: glingm  
Lopen Jampa Chogyal: slob dpon 'jam pa chos rgyal  
Lopen Kunzang Thinley: slob dpon Kun bzang 'phrin las  
Lopen Nado: slob dpon gNag mdog  
Lopen Pemala: slob dpon Pad ma la  
Lozey: blo ze  
Melongma: me slong ma  
Milarepa: mi la ras pa  
Mitshe thungku: mi tshe thung ku  
Nazhoen Phuntshog Drayang: na gzhon phun tshogs sgra dbyangs  
Nazhoen Thrabten Tshogpa: na gzhon 'khrab ston tshogs pa  
Ney: gNas  
Ney Rio Tala: gNas ri bo ta la  
Ngagi Zorig: Ngag gi bzo rig  
Ngawang Gyeltshen: Ngag dbang rgyal mtshan  
Ngesem: nge sems  
Norling Drayang: Nor gling sgra dbyangs

Nyima sharchog lingi ling chogna: nyi ma shar phyogs gling gi gling  
phyogs na  
Tiru: ti ru  
Pangi Shawa: sPang gi sha ba  
Paropai Zhey: sPa ro pai' gzhas  
Pemi Tshewang Tashi: Pad ma'i tshe dbang bkra shis  
Punkha: sPu na kha  
Rigney chewa nga: rig gnas Che wa lnga  
Rigney chungwa nga: rig gnas Chung wa lnga  
Rigsar: rig gsar  
Samdrup Jongkhar: bSam grub ljong mkhar  
Semtokha Rigzhung: sems rtogs kha rig gzhung  
Shar chopkha: shar phyogs pa'i kha  
Shawa Phomo: sha ba pho mo  
Shera: shes rab  
Shey Zoed Yid Zhin Norbu: bShod mdzod yid bzhin nor bu  
Shingkar Lam: Shing mkhar bla ma  
Talopai Zhey: rTa lo pa'i gzhas  
Tashi: bkra shis  
Tashi Dawa: bkra shis zla ba  
Tashi laybay: bkra shis legs dpal  
Tashi moen lu: bkra shis smon glu  
Tashi Nenchu: bkra shis snyan cha  
Tendrel: rten 'brel  
Tha damtshig: mtha' dam tshig  
Thinley Gyamtsho: 'Phrin las rgya mtsho  
Thrul Lu: 'khrul glu  
Trongsa Tshochu: Krong gsar tshe chu  
Trulku Jigme Choeda: sprul sku 'Jigs med chos sgrags  
Tsangmo: tsang mo  
Tshoglu: tshogs glu  
Tsuentsrel: bTsun khral  
Ura: 'ura  
Yabchi Sendang Damze Loday: yab chi gsan dang 'bram zas blo gros  
Yangchen: dByangs can  
Yuedra: gYus sgra  
Zamling nangi atsara: 'Dzam gling nang gi a tsa ra  
Zam ling yangpai lingla: 'Dzam gling yangs pa'i gling la



Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal: Zhabs drung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal

Zhendi migo: gzhan 'di men dgo

Zhetro yarchoed: bZhes spro yar mchod

Zhey: gZhas

Zheym: gZhas mo

Zhungdra: gZhung sgra

Zorig: bzo rig

Zur lingm: zur gLingm

**Annex 1: Audio Cassettes Produced by Different Firms and Organizations as of February 2001**

Sl.No	Producer	Title	Production Cost (Nu.)	Year
1.	Jigmi Drukpa	Modern Bhutanese Songs	8000	1991
2.	Jigmi Drukpa	Jigten Zamling Nangka	15000	1993
3.	Jigmi Drukpa	Songs and Music from Bhutan	50,000	1994
4.	Jigmi Drukpa	Milerapa ( <i>Gurma</i> )	100,000	1995
5.	Jigmi Drukpa	Endless Songs from Bhutan	Unknown	1999
6.	Lhamo	Ney Rio Tala	Unknown	Unknown
7.	Lhamo and Suresh Moktan	New Waves	Unknown	Unknown
8.	Adap Pasang and Ngedup Dorji	Tashi Tendrel	Unknown	1998
9.	Melody Drayang	Boomo	32,500	1998
10.	Melody Drayang	Bouydra Rigzar	Unknown	1999
11.	Melody Drayang	Denno Denno	15,000	1998
12.	Melody Drayang	Hello Hello	35,000	1998
13.	Melody Drayang	Meelam Meelam	20,000	1998
14.	Melody Drayang	Melody Drayang	35,000	1999
15.	Melody Drayang	Metho Yum Yum	Unknown	1999
16.	Melody Drayang	Millenium 2000	38,000	1999
17.	Melody Drayang	Sho Sho	25,000	1998
18.	Melody Drayang	Silent Love	30,000	1997
19.	Melody Drayang	Taxi Taxi	25,000	1997
20.	Melody Drayang	Thuendrel	Unknown	2000
21.	Nazhoen Phuntshok	Best of Sonam Dorji Vol. 2	Unknown	Unknown

Sl.No	Producer	Title	Production Cost (Nu.)	Year
	Drayang			
22.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	<i>Boedra</i>	25,000	1996
23.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	Cracktong	38,000	1997
24.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	Lokhor 12	55,000	1998
25.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	Pangtse Kera	50,000	1999
26.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	<i>Boedra</i> Rigsar	30,000	1996
27.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	Semkha Thralamlam	40,000	1998
28.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	Za Daw Za Nyim	45,000	1997
29.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	<i>Zhungdra</i>	Unknown	Unknown
30.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	Ata Khaujay	Unknown	1999
31.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	Drenchen Pham	Unknown	1999
32.	Nazhoen Phuntshok Drayang	Meto Lung	Unknown	1999
33.	Nazhoen	Lopkhang:NID	48000	2001

Sl.No	Producer	Title	Production Cost (Nu.)	Year
	Phuntshok Drayang			
34.	Norling Drayang	Ausphalay	Unknown	1998
35.	Norling Drayang	Bhutanese Songs Vol. 20	Unknown	1995
36.	Norling Drayang	Bhutanese Songs Vol. 67	Unknown	1995
37.	Norling Drayang	Bhutanese Songs Vol. 68	Unknown	1995
38.	Norling Drayang	Bhutanese Songs Vol.80	Unknown	1997
39.	Norling Drayang	Bhutanese Songs Vol.81	Unknown	1997
40.	Norling Drayang	Bhutanese Songs Vol. 21	Unknown	1995
41.	Norling Drayang	Boedra Rigsar	Unknown	1998
42.	Norling Drayang	Boedra Rigsar Vol.2	Unknown	Unknown
43.	Norling Drayang	Boedra Rigsar Vol.3	Unknown	Unknown
44.	Norling Drayang	Hingten	Unknown	Unknown
45.	Norling Drayang	Boedra Rigsar-I	Nu. 42/Copy	1999
46.	Norling Drayang	Boom Boom Boom	Unknown	1996
47.	Norling Drayang	Dhorozam	Unknown	1998
48.	Norling Drayang	Gawai Nyendro	Unknown	1997
49.	Norling Drayang	Hey Bumo	Nu. 42/Copy	1999
50.	Norling Drayang	Instrumental Melodies	Unknown	1998
51.	Norling Drayang	Jalam Jalam	Nu. 35/Copy	1998
52.	Norling Drayang	Jigdrel	Unknown	1998
53.	Norling Drayang	Jigten Dhina	Unknown	1996
54.	Norling Drayang	Karma Mindu	Unknown	1996
55.	Norling Drayang	Love 98	Nu. 42/Copy	1999
56.	Norling Drayang	Namgyal Khangzang	Unknown	1993

<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>Producer</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Production Cost (Nu.)</b>	<b>Year</b>
57.	Norling Drayang	Namkhai Samu	Unknown	1996
58.	Norling Drayang	Ngelam Ngelam	Unknown	Unknown
59.	Norling Drayang	Norling Drayang	0.50 Lakh	1997
60.	Norling Drayang	Norling Drayang-I	Nu. 35/Copy	1998
61.	Norling Drayang	Norling Drayang-II	Nu. 35/Copy	1998
62.	Norling Drayang	Norling Drayang-III	Nu. 42/Copy	1998
63.	Norling Drayang	Oma Tshega	Nu. 35/Copy	1996
64.	Norling Drayang	Pangi Shawa	Unknown	1996
65.	Norling Drayang	Sa Zamling	Unknown	Unknown
66.	Norling Drayang	Sergye Gyeltshen	Unknown	1993
67.	Norling Drayang	Silver Jubilee Hits	Nu. 42/Copy	1999
68.	Norling Drayang	Talop Lepchu 1	Unknown	1998
69.	Norling Drayang	Talop Lepchu 2	Unknown	1998
70.	Norling Drayang	Tendrel Zam	Nu. 38/Copy	1996
71.	Norling Drayang	Thridu Nim	Nu. 35/Copy	1998
72.	Norling Drayang	Yewong Bumo	Unknown	1996
73.	Norling Drayang	Zapai Metto	Unknown	1996
74.	Norling Drayang	Oye Oye	Unknown	2000
75.	Norling Drayang	Wai Tasha	Unknown	2000
76.	Norling Drayang	Tshengoen Ngoenletho	Unknown	2000
77.	Norling Drayang	Semki Lhamo	Unknown	2000
78.	Norling Drayang	Bu Tashi	Unknown	2000
79.	PelVision	Bhutanese Songs, vol. VI	35,000	1997
80.	PelVision	Demi Amai Chalu	20,000	1996
81.	PelVision	Gurma	30,000	1996
82.	PelVision	Instrumental	15,000	1996

<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>Producer</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Production Cost (Nu.)</b>	<b>Year</b>
83.	PelVision	Kharang Zalay Odo	60,000	1998
84.	PelVision	Matog Ngesem	85,000	1999
85.	PelVision	Neten's Remix	20,000	1995
86.	PelVision	Otha Zamling Nangka	Unknown	1997
87.	PelVision	Pemi Tshewang Tashi	Unknown	1998
88.	PelVision	Phuntsho Wangmo	22,000	1996
89.	PelVision	Religious Songs	Unknown	1998
90.	PelVision	Tashi Dawa	Unknown	1999
91.	PelVision	Tsatsi Poktor	Unknown	1997
92.	PelVision	Lugar Thramo	Unknown	Unknown
93.	PelVision	Gaylo Gaylo	Unknown	Unknown
94.	PelVision	Zoom Sex Sex	Unknown	Unknown
95.	PelVision	Oy Bumrog	Unknown	Unknown
96.	PelVision	Songs of Black Necked Crane	Unknown	Unknown
97.	PelVision	Deley Deley	Unknown	Unknown
98.	Tashi Nenchha	Daw Butsu	50,000	1998
99.	Tashi Nenchha	Gawey Gawey	50,000	1998
100.	Tashi Nenchha	Music From the Dragon Kingdom	16,000	1990

<b>Sl.No</b>	<b>Producer</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Production Cost (Nu.)</b>	<b>Year</b>
101.	Tashi Nenchha	Religious Melody	20,000	1992
102.	Tashi Nenchha	Traditional Songs	20,000	1992
103.	Tashi Nenchha	Ya Barna Phurwey	50,000	1998
104.	Tashi Nenchha	Zangdog Pelri	Unknown	Unknown
105.	RAPA	Nangi Norbu	Unknown	2000
106.	RAPA	Yang Gyen	Unknown	2000
107.	NRTI	Yangchen Zam	Unknown	Unknown
108.	National Institute for the Disabled	Muensel	Unknown	1998
109.	IECH, Health Division	Music for Health. Vol. 1	Unknown	1998
110.	IECH, Health Division	Music for Health. Vol. 2	Unknown	1998
111.	Mila	Gawai Rinchen	Unknown	2000
112.	Mila	Milong	Unknown	2001
113.	WWF	Save the Tiger	Unknown	2000
114.	Teacher's Training College	Sherig Chogjur	Unknown	2000
115.	Roy Cameron	Songs from Laya	Unknown	2000