

the neighbourhood of Tashi Lhunpo, whom we consulted about all your questions. The extraordinary asceticism which struck Marco Polo so much is of course not to be understood as being practised by all members of the sect, but exclusively, or more especially, by the *priests*. That these *never* marry, and are consequently more strictly celibatary than many sects of the Lamaitic priesthood, was confirmed by our Lama." (Mr. Jaeschke then remarks upon the *bran* to much the same effect as I have done above.) "The Bonpos are by all Buddhists regarded as heretics. Though they worship idols partly the same, at least in name, with those of the Buddhists, . . . their rites seem to be very different. The most conspicuous and most generally known of their customs, futile in itself, but in the eyes of the common people the greatest sign of their sinful heresy, is that they perform the religious ceremony of making a turn round a sacred object *in the opposite direction* to that prescribed by Buddhism. As to their dress, our Lama said that they had no particular colour of garments, but their priests frequently wore red clothes, as some sects of the Buddhist priesthood do. Mr Heyde, however, once on a journey in our neighbouring county of Langskar, saw a man *clothed in black with blue borders*, who the people said was a *Bonpo*."

[Mr. Rockhill (*Journey*, 63) saw at Kao miao-tzū "a red-gowned, long-haired Bönbo Lama," and at Kumbum (p. 68), "was surprised to see quite a large number of Bönbo Lamas, recognisable by their huge mops of hair and their red gowns, and also from their being dirtier than the ordinary run of people."—H. C.]

The identity of the Bonpo and Taossé seems to have been accepted by Csoma de Körös, who identifies the Chinese founder of the latter, Lao-tseu, with the Shen-rabs of the Tibetan Bonpos. Klapproth also says, "Bhonbp'o, Bhanpo, and *Shen*, are the names by which are commonly designated (in Tibetan) the Taoszu, or follower of the Chinese philosopher Laotseu."* Schlagintweit refers to Schmidt's Tibetan Grammar (p. 209) and to the Calcutta edition of the *Fo-kouè-ki* (p. 218) for the like identification, but I do not know how far any two of these are independent testimonies. General Cunningham, however, fully accepts the identity, and writes to me: "Fahian (ch. xxiii.) calls the heretics who assembled at Râmagrâma *Taossé*,† thus identifying them with the Chinese Finitimists. The Taossé are, therefore, the same as the *Swâstikas*, or worshippers of the mystic cross *Swasti*, who are also *Tirthakaras*, or 'Pure-doers.' The synonymous word *Punya* is probably the origin of *Pon* or *Bon*, the Tibetan Finitimists. From the same word comes the Burmese *Pungyi* or *Pungi*." I may add that the Chinese envoy to Cambodia in 1296, whose narrative Rémusat has translated, describes a sect which he encountered there, apparently Brahminical, as *Taossé*. And even if the Bonpo and the Taossé were not fundamentally identical, it is extremely probable that the Tibetan and Mongol Buddhists should have applied to them one name and character. Each played towards them the same part in Tibet and in China respectively; both were heretic sects and hated rivals; both made high pretensions to asceticism and supernatural powers; both, I think we see reason to believe, affected the dark clothing which Polo assigns to the *Sensin*; both, we may add, had "great idols and plenty of them." We have seen in the account of the Taossé the ground that certain of their ceremonies afford for the allegation that they "sometimes also worship fire," whilst the whole account of that rite and of others mentioned by Duhalde,‡ shows what a powerful element of the old devil-dancing Shamanism there is in their practice. The French Jesuit, on the other hand, shows us what a prominent place female

* *Shen*, or coupled with *jin* "people," *Shenjin*, in this sense affords another possible origin of the word *Sensin*; but it may in fact be at bottom, as regards the first syllable, the same with the etymology we have preferred.

† I do not find this allusion in Mr. Beal's new version of Fahian. [See Rémusat's éd. p. 227; Klapproth says (*Ibid.* p. 230) that the *Tao-szu* are called in Tibetan *Bonbò* and *Youngdhrongpa*.—H. C.]

‡ Apparently they had at their command the whole encyclopædia of modern "Spiritualists." Duhalde mentions among their sorceries the art of producing by their invocations the figures of Lao-tseu and their divinities in the air, and of *making a pencil to write answers to questions without anybody touching it*.