

Tsong Khapa (1357–1419)

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Introduction

During my studies at the Faculty for Comparative study of Religions in Antwerp, Belgium, lectures were given by Mrs. Drs. Martine Strubbe on the subject of Buddhism. For the exam at the end of the academic year 2009-2010, she requested her students to prepare a paper in the form of a treatise about a Buddhist scholar.

The scholar I chose, Tsong Kha-pa, lived in Tibet from 1357 until 1419. According to many writers he is considered to be the main reformer of Tibetan Buddhism. He is also seen as the actual founder of the order of the New Kadampa also called the Gelugpa's or the Yellow Cap monks. Both the Tibetan Head of State in exile, the Dalai Lama as well as the spiritual leader, the Panchen Lama, belong to this order.

The colossal Himalayan Mountains form a border between the Indian subcontinent and the rest of Asia. The Himalayas are the world's tallest mountains, towering more than five miles above sea level. Himalaya means “home of snow” because the tallest peaks of the Himalayas are always capped with snow.

The Himalayas include Mount Everest, the tallest mountain in the world. Everest rises 29,028 feet above sea level on the border between India and Nepal. No plant life grows near the mountain's peak due to powerful winds, extremely cold temperatures, and a lack of oxygen. Many adventurous people attempt to climb Everest every year. Often their venture ends in sickness or death. Most people are unable to breathe 20,000 feet above sea level because there is not enough oxygen in the atmosphere. A person will