WATERFALL OF YOUTH

BY DONDURU GYAL

TIB SHELF
TRANSLATE | PRESENT | PRESERVE
The sky, blue and clear
   Sunlight, warm and gentle
   Earth, vast and wide
   Flowers, beautiful and charming
   Mountains, high and mighty...

_Ema—_
Yet what’s even more wonderful still
   is this waterfall, cascading
       off the steep cliff face, right in front of us
Look!
   Its bubbly waves, pure and pristine
   With spheres of light, the eyes of a peacock feather
       the tuft of a parrot
   patterns of silk brocade
       the rainbow-like bow of Indra¹
Listen!
   The sound of its current, clear and euphonic
       the melody of youth, the songs of the gandharvas²
       the voice of Brahma
       the voice of Sarasvati
       the tune of the cuckoo
_Kye—this is not an ordinary, natural waterfall, no
   a mighty and majestic expression
a fearless heart
undaunted courage
flourishing and thriving body
elegant and lavish adornments
pleasant and beautiful songs

This is—
the waterfall of youth, the youth of snowy Tibet

This is—
the courage to be creative
the expressions of struggle
the music of youth
within the Tibetan youth of the nineteen-eighties

*Kye! Kye!*  Ah, youthful waterfall
waterfall of youth
How did such fearless courage
—undaunted self-confidence
—unimpaired splendor
—and inexhaustible strength blossom within you?

Indeed,
the rains falling from the heavens during the three months of spring
the springs gushing forth from the earth during the three months of summer
the essence of frost and hail during the three months of autumn
the quintessence of the ice and snow during the three months of winters

and yet still

glacial water—mineral water—slate water—water from forests
marshes—mountains—valleys—ravines—and gullies

In brief,
—water of auspiciousness
—water of goodness
—water of wishes fulfilled
—water with the eight qualities
—water of abundance
One hundred and eight different rivulets
   Hundreds of thousands of different types of water
      As you are the one river of their unity
         You dare to cascade off craggy precipices
            As you are the one river that gathers them all
               You are brave enough to jump off cliffs into gorges
With your courage to collect the different waters of innovation
Your intellect is vast, your body strong, and your splendor great
With your lack of arrogance and freedom from conceit
Your flow is long and current fierce
As you have removed impurities and possess the capacity to extract the quintessence
   Your body and mind are pure while the glorious qualities of your youth flourish
O waterfall,
   You are the witness to history
   You are the guide to the future
      Within each of your crystal-clear drops of water
         The highs and lows of snowy Tibet are inscribed
            And inside each droplet of your spray
               The rise and fall of the cool land of snows are contained
Without you,
   How are we to temper the steel of the sword of grammar?
Without you,
   How are we to sharpen the razor of craftsmanship?
Without you,
   The tree of medicine cannot flourish,
      The flowers of logic and fruit of the inner sciences cannot possibly ripen
Perhaps—
   Within this crystal-like mind of yours
      The wounds of history
         The ailments of battle
            The boils of blind faith
               And the dust of conservatism might possibly be found
Nevertheless,

Since you possess the majesty of youth and naturally present glory
The frost of the three months of winter will never
—have a chance to place your mind within the recess of glaciers
The razor blazes of stormy winds might slash
—your stream a hundred times, yet how could it ever actually be severed?

The reason—

The head of your river is linked with the snows
And your river’s mouth mixes with the oceans
Thus, your long flow of history

Has granted us splendor and honor
The beautiful sound of the flow of your generations

Has granted us encouragement and strength

Have your heard—O waterfall!

Of these questions of the youth of snowy Tibet?

When the stallion of poetry is suffering of thirst, what shall we do?
When the elephant of composition is suffering of heat, what shall we do?
When the lion of poetic synonyms is oppressed by malevolence, what shall we do?
When the young child of drama is left behind as an orphan, how shall we take care of him?
When the paternal inheritance of astrology is left behind, empty, who will uphold it?
When the young man of science is taken as a groom, how will he be welcomed?
When the daughter of craftsmanship is taken as a bride, who will be the husband?

Yes, indeed—O waterfall!

Your answers which come from music, clear and pristine, beautiful and charming,

—We hold in our hearts, like an image carved in stone

Surely

It is not suitable for the past that blazed with thousand brilliant lights to substitute the present
And how could yesterday with its taste of salt ever quench the thirst of today?
When the life-force that is ripe for the times
Does not fit the lifeless corpse of history, difficult to find,
It’s impossible for the pulse of improvement to beat
And the heart blood of advancement cannot flow
Even more so are the steps on the way forward

Hey, waterfall!

From your waves shimmering and glistening

And from your spray scattering to and fro—

Our strength

—The strength of the new generation of snowy Tibet has been symbolized

From your gurgling, flowing current,

And the bubbling sound of your flowing water

Our dreams,

—the dreams of the new generation of snowy Tibet, are manifest

Conservatism, cowardice, blind faith, and laziness... ...

These have no place whatsoever in this generation of ours

Backwardness, barbarism, darkness, backwards customs... ...

There is no room, whatsoever, for these in our century

Waterfall, O waterfall!

Our mind flows with your movement and

Our blood, as well, courses alongside your currents

Although on the path of the future

The twists and turns may be greater than before,

Nevertheless, there is no chance for the youth of Tibet to be afraid

We will certainly forge a new path forward

For each and every one of our people

Look!

The squadron lined up, those are the new generation of Tibet

Listen!

This steady song is the footsteps of the youth of snowy Tibet

A great, luminous path

Responsibility with glory

Joyful livelihoods

Songs of struggle

Have not vanished within the youth of the waterfall,

And even more so, the waterfall of youth does not decline
This—

This is the waterfall of youth emerging from the voices of the young generations of snowy Tibet!

This—

The waterfall of youth flowing in the minds of the youth of snowy Tibet

BIBLIOGRAPHY


1 The bow of Indra (dbang po’i gzhu or brgya byin gzhu) is a poetic synonym for a rainbow.
2 The gandharvas are a class of being in the Indo-Tibetan cosmology and are said to be the musicians of the god realms.
3 Water possessing the eight qualities is traditionally said to be sweet, cool, smooth, light, clear, pure, soothing to the throat, and beneficial to the stomach.