

### The Twelve Acts

#### Buddha Shakyamuni (6<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> c. BCE) and the Fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet (1617-1682)

\*The twelve acts are used to structure life stories of other important Buddhist figures.

\*The acts are creatively interpreted to meet the needs of particular times and places

\*Writers use the twelve acts to lend authority to contemporary Buddhist leaders by claiming that their subject's life was just like that of the Buddha

<b>Buddha Shakyamuni: Twelve Acts according to Sutras</b>	<b>The Fifth Dalai Lama of Tibet: Twelve Acts according to the life story by his disciple (composed 1690s)</b>
1. Descent from Tushita heavenly realm	Descends to human realm as does bodhisattva of compassion, mother has dream of elephant "just like the Buddha"
2. Entrance into the womb	Entrance into womb: miracles in Tibet
3. Birth	Birth: born on astrologically perfect day (October 21, 1617) in Tibet, reincarnation of Fourth Dalai Lama, manifestation of god of compassion
4. Youthful sports and miracles	Youthful sports: discusses religion as did Fourth Dalai Lama
5. Accomplishment in worldly arts	Ascetic practices (8): persevered against black magic intrigue
6. Life of pleasure	Seed of enlightenment: Recognized as rebirth, 1622 taken to Potala Palace
7. Departure from home	Entering monkhood: takes novice vows age nine
8. Ascetic practices	Mastery of learning (5?): education in philosophy and ritual (collected works 25 volumes)
9. Overcoming demons	Overcoming other sects: armed conflict with rival Tibetan rulers (who are said to adhere to different sects), assumes control of Tibet 1642
10. Enlightenment	Enlightenment: Writer only describes Buddha's enlightenment
11. Turning the wheel of dharma	Teaching: teachings, rituals, temple building, development of government, founding or converting monasteries, printing Buddhist books
12. Death, or final nirvana	Death: April 7, 1682. Body preserved whole in stupa. "As Buddha empowered his son Devendra to rule, so did the Dalai Lama empower me to rule Tibet.