

Contributions to the Cultural History of Early Tibet



EDITED BY
MATTHEW T. KAPSTEIN AND
BRANDON DOTSON

Contributions to the Cultural History
of Early Tibet

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Matthew T. Kapstein

Brandon Dotson



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Cover illustration: Miniature of the bodhisattva Nyi ma rab tu snang ba adorning a 12th century Prajñāpāramitā manuscript preserved at the 8th century temple of 'On Ke-ru. Photo courtesy of the Tibetan and Himalayan Digital Library (www.thdl.org).

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PREFACE

Six decades ago, when *Documents de Touen-houang relatifs à l'histoire du Tibet* was released, Jacques Bacot remarked in his foreword that in 1922, when he had first attempted to translate the texts now known as the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* and the *Old Tibetan Annals*, he judged his efforts to be too insufficient to merit publication. The study of an important Tibetan lexicon of archaic terms, the *Li shi gur khang*, together with the progress realized by F.W. Thomas in the investigation of the Dunhuang manuscripts in London, as well as Ch. Toussaint's recognition of archaisms in the *Padma bka' thang*, permitted the three scholars to launch a fruitful collaboration, resulting in the first sustained interpretation of a key collection of Old Tibetan historical texts. Though many aspects of their work have been by now superceded, *Documents de Touen-houang* remains a landmark in the study of early medieval Tibet.

The considerable progress realized since that time has been due to the patient labours of Tibetanists in Europe and Japan, and increasingly in the Tibet Autonomous Region, China and the United States as well. With the application of new digital technologies to the reproduction and analysis of early Tibetan documents, what began as a slow trickle of research has grown into a stream, and matters that were formerly obscure to the point of unintelligibility have gradually come to be elucidated.

With this development of the field, scholars are increasingly attending to the social and cultural milieux of the early period. This can be seen in the painstaking work of Tsuguhito Takeuchi in his investigations of letters, contracts and related documents dating to the imperial period.¹ Attention to detail in the investigation of such quotidian matters adds depth and dimension to our understanding of a period that has all too often served as a pristine ground onto which scholars, both inside the Tibetan cultural area and beyond, have projected their idealizations of a heroic past, be it Buddhist or otherwise. The contributions to the present volume exemplify the concern for minute detail that is essential for progress in this area, but at the

¹ T. TAKEUCHI 1995. *Tibetan Contracts from Central Asia*. Tokyo: Daizo Shuppan.

same time engage many of the larger questions facing historians of early Tibet.

In part one, 'Social and Political History', the contributors examine key aspects of Tibetan imperial administration and post-imperial affairs. The first chapter, by Brandon Dotson, applies a social-historical approach to Old Tibetan legal documents, encoded within which the values and practices of the Tibetan Empire, and its rigid social stratification, are revealed. They also shed much light on such topics as Tibetan marriage and exchange patterns, loan contracts, corvée labour, the legal status of Buddhist temples and monasteries, and the conscription system of the Tibetan military. Strong centralization appears to have been the rule under the empire of the *btsan po*, and the diffuse 'galactic polity' that came to characterize later Tibetan regimes is hardly at all in evidence. One of the most intriguing aspects of Dotson's chapter is the revelation that legal cases were often resolved with recourse to divination dice. Divination was a popular and widespread practice during the imperial period, and is discussed in Old Tibetan ritual texts in which ritual specialists known as *bon* and *gshen* employ *mo* divination in their healing rites.

With the empire's disintegration in the mid-ninth century, power devolved upon local authorities and strongmen, who took charge not just of the governance of their domains, but equally of their external relationships. Tibet, in effect, became for a time a cluster of independent principalities. Bianca Horlemann's chapter focuses upon the Inner Asian connections of one such realm, that of Tsong-kha in the northeastern region of Amdo. Though far removed from Tibet's traditional central districts of Dbus-Gtsang, the effort to recapitulate aspects of Tibet's earlier imperial configuration is evident in the later claim that Tsong-kha's rulers were descended from the Yar-lung kings and the attribution to them, accordingly, of the title of *btsan po*.

As prior studies have shown, the rise of the Tibetan Empire occasioned not only changes of power relations, but equally changes of knowledge, requiring new technologies associated with the spread of literacy:² the redaction of legal procedure considered by Dotson offers a case in point. The ways and means of the transmission of knowledge during this period, however, are still but poorly under-

² For instance, M.T. KAPSTEIN 2000. *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism: Conversion, Contestation, and Memory*. New York: Oxford University Press, esp. 10-17, 54-56.

stood. The two chapters of part two, 'Literary and Oral Transmissions', take up several dimensions of the question.

Yoshiro Imaeda's reconstruction and translation of the Dunhuang Tibetan text, *History of the Cycle of Birth and Death*, is already well known through its original French publication in 1981. In presenting it here in a revised English version, it is to be hoped that it will reach a larger readership than it had previously. As with Dotson's discussion of the close relationship between administrative and ritual functions, early Tibetan ritual is also central to Imaeda's chapter in its consideration of funerary practices. The study of Old Tibetan mortuary rites, an especially interesting subfield within the overall cultural history of early Tibet, was essentially pioneered by M. Lalou, whose treatment of PT 1042, concerning royal funerals, paved the way for the documentary investigation of such issues as the rivalry of *bon-po* and Buddhist, and the competition of ritual specialists for royal patronage.³ Nevertheless, research in this area has often rested on the problematic assumption that the *bon* and *bon-po* found in Old Tibetan literary texts were more or less identical to the adherents of the Bon religion, as systematized in about the early eleventh century.⁴

Among the Dunhuang manuscripts, we find several texts concerning, or related to, funeral rites. Most of these contain narratives in which the dead are attended by ritual specialists known as *bon* or *gshen*, and often involve the sacrifice of sheep and horses as psychopomp animals that guide the deceased to the land of the dead.⁵ While some of these texts display no apparent Buddhist influence, others do, and one Buddhist text famously co-opts and transforms early Tibetan funerary rites in order to do away with such practices

³ M. LALOU 1952. Rituel Bon-po des funérailles royales. *Journal Asia-tique* 240, 339-61.

⁴ Here we follow Stein's custom of employing the capitalized term 'Bon' to refer to the organized religion, which took shape in approximately the early eleventh century through the work of Shen-chen Klu-dga' and his disciples (D. MARTIN 2001. *Unearthing Bon Treasures: Life and Contested Legacy of a Tibetan Scripture Revealers, with a General Bibliography of Bon*. Leiden: Brill, 92), and of referring to the ancient Tibetan priests with the italicized, lower case '*bon*' or '*bon-po*'. These conventions are not intended, however, to prefigure the outcome of the debate concerning the continuity between the earlier and later traditions.

⁵ See R.A. STEIN 1971. Du récit au rituel dans les manuscrits Tibétains de Touen-Houang. In A. MACDONALD (ed.), *Études Tibétaines Dédiées à la Mémoire de Marcelle Lalou*. Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 479-547.

as animal sacrifice.⁶ This dialogue between Buddhism and local traditions is a common theme throughout Buddhist history, and is particularly pertinent to its Tibetan permutations, where issues of religious identity are so often bound up with dialogic evolution and mimicry.⁷ Situated within the context of these competing funerary rites, Imaeda's text, the *History of the Cycle of Birth and Death* is, he argues, a purely Tibetan composition inspired by one of the masterpieces of Mahāyāna literature, the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, a work that enjoyed tremendous success in medieval China. As such, the *History* is based not on the transformation and co-opting of existing non-Buddhist rites, but takes Buddhist canonical tradition as its point of departure, and then popularizes this for a Tibetan audience. The transposition of its story into a Tibetan verse-narrative offers particularly striking evidence of the processes whereby Buddhist ideas and literary motifs were assimilated into the Tibetan cultural milieu.

Imaeda's work is based upon a number of Dunhuang manuscripts, all of which are incomplete. And where they overlap with one another, although the texts generally correspond quite closely, one notices numbers of variants that cannot be readily explained with reference to scribal practice alone. How are we to think about the variation that we find in the extant Old Tibetan documents? It is this question that is taken up in Sam van Schaik's chapter, applying the conclusions of investigations of medieval oral and literary transmission to the study of early Tibetan texts. Van Schaik argues that the simple dichotomy of the oral versus the literary fails to do justice to the complexity of the Tibetan situation, where, just as in medieval Europe, oral practice and writing in various ways were mutually informed and conditioned. In the scenario that van Schaik envisions as having given rise to some of these texts—students taking down the words of their teachers either in person or from memory—the patterns of variation in early Tibetan texts are seen to resemble somewhat those that we find in English traditional ballads. And considering the structured repetitions characterizing a work such as the *History of the Cycle of Birth and Death*, studied by Imaeda, the comparison with Western ballad traditions seems a compelling one.

Though the transmission of Indian Buddhist traditions to Tibet, both under the empire and for many centuries after, has long been a

⁶ This is PT 239, discussed in R.A. STEIN 1970. Un document ancien relatif aux rites funéraires des Bon-po Tibétains. *Journal Asiatique* 258, 155-85.

⁷ Refer to Z. BJERKEN 2002. Hall of mirrors: Tibetan religious histories as mimetic narratives. *Acta Orientalia* 64, 177-223.

key theme in the representation of Tibetan cultural history, we know that Chinese learning, religious and secular, reached imperial Tibet as well. Part three, 'Chinese Trends in Tibetan Buddhism', explores this east-to-west movement of texts and ideas.

Matthew T. Kapstein's chapter, 'The Tibetan *Yulanpen jing*', supplies a textual study of the ninth-century Tibetan translation of a famous Chinese Buddhist apocryphon, thus extending a line of research pioneered by the late R.A. Stein. As a close comparison of the Chinese and Tibetan texts reveals, the translator, the famed 'Gos Chos-grub of Dunhuang, gave to this short sūtra, which concerns rites to be performed for the salvation of deceased parents and ancestors, an almost impeccable Indian veneer. Nevertheless, the work's Chinese antecedents remain evident in several key turns of phrase. The transmission of the *Yulanpen jing* to Tibet, moreover, suggests that Chinese 'popular' Buddhism, and not only the more rarified traditions of learning and meditation, may have played some role in the Tibetan adoption of the foreign religion.

As with the *History of the Cycle of Birth and Death*, in connection with which the question of 'apocryphal' Buddhist scriptures is also raised, the action in the *Yulanpen jing* is driven by the death of one's parents. The orientation of the two works is similar as well: as Imaeda notes in his conclusions, the *History of the Cycle of Birth and Death*, in common with the other early Tibetan funerary texts, appears to have been concerned more with transcendent rebirth than with enlightenment and 'precious human birth'. The same can be said of the *Yulanpen jing*, in which the Buddha prescribes the proper rites for securing the rebirth of Mulian's parents and ancestors in heavenly abodes.

In Carmen Meinert's contribution, however, we turn to the refined meditations of Chinese Chan, and their plausible connections with the Tibetan Great Perfection, or Rdzogs-chen. Although this issue has aroused considerable speculation in recent decades, only slight progress has been made in grounding the discussion in solid philological evidence. It is this that Meinert begins to accomplish, through the careful comparison of selected Chan and Rdzogs-chen documents from Dunhuang, demonstrating precisely their complex relationships. Meinert's analysis, like that proposed recently by S. van Schaik and J. Dalton, describes the creative evolution of religious practices between China and Tibet in multi-ethnic

Dunhuang.⁸ Here, trends such as Chan, Mahāyoga and Rdzogs-chen enjoyed a degree of fluidity prior to their codification as distinct systems of teaching. Meinert's doctrinal analysis is complemented by van Schaik's observations on oral tradition, which allow us to imagine a time of creative exuberance when, as in van Schaik's phrasebook, one adept might meet another and exclaim, 'I like Vajrayāna. Teach it!'

For facilitating the present publication, we are grateful for the encouragements of Albert Hoffstädt at Brill, and those of Henk Blezer, Alex McKay, and Charles Ramble, the editors of Brill's Tibetan Studies Library.

Matthew T. Kapstein

Brandon Dotson

⁸ S. VAN SCHAİK AND J. DALTON 2004. Where Chan and Tantra meet: Tibetan syncretism in Dunhuang. In S. WHITFIELD (ed.), *The Silk Road. Trade Travel, War and Faith*. London: the British Library, 63-71.

ABBREVIATIONS

IOL Tib	India Office Library Tibetan (now preserved in the British Library)
ITJ	IOL Tib J
<i>P</i>	<i>The Tibetan Tripiṭika: Peking Edition, Kept in the Library of the Otani University, Kyoto.</i> Edited by Daisetz T. Suzuki. Tokyo/Kyoto: Tibetan Tripiṭika Research Institute, 1961.
PT	<i>Pelliot tibétain</i> (Bibliothèque Nationale de France)
<i>T</i>	<i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō</i> 新編大藏經 [The Buddhist Canon Newly Compiled during the Taishō Era]. Edited by Takakusu Junjirō 高木俊之助 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡辺海旭 100 vols. Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924-1935.

Abbreviations used in only a single chapter will be found listed at the end of the chapter in question.

PART ONE

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY

DIVINATION AND LAW IN THE TIBETAN EMPIRE:
THE ROLE OF DICE IN THE LEGISLATION OF LOANS,
INTEREST, MARITAL LAW AND TROOP CONSCRIPTION*

Brandon Dotson

Suppose two men at cards with nothing to wager save their lives. Who has not heard such a tale? A turn of the card. The whole universe for such a player has labored clanking to this moment which will tell if he is to die at that man's hand or that man at his. What more certain validation of a man's worth could there be? This enhancement of the game to its ultimate state admits no argument concerning the notion of fate. The selection of one man over another is a preference absolute and irrevocable and it is a dull man indeed who could reckon so profound a decision without agency or significance either one.—The Judge in Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian, or the Evening Redness in the West*, p. 249.

During the period of the Tibetan Empire (c. 600–c. 850), Tibet developed a complex bureaucratic and legal system that supported the paired trends of centralization and the assimilation of conquered territories and peoples. This legal and bureaucratic system also facilitated the levying of troops, the collection of taxes and the legislation of the empire in general. As foreign peoples and their

* This chapter is based on a paper presented at the conference 'Institutions religieuses, civiles et militaires du Tibet: Documents d'Asie Centrale, de Dunhuang et de Mustang', convened by Prof. Cristina Scherrer-Schaub at the Collège de France, 12 and 13 May 2005. I recognize with gratitude financial assistance received from the Oriental Institute and Wolfson College, both of Oxford, and from the Collège de France for facilitating my attendance at the conference. I would like to offer my thanks to all those who offered comments on my presentation. Particular thanks are due to Dr. Charles Ramble and to Dr. Kazushi Iwao, whose remarks significantly aided the development of my analysis. Further thanks are due to Dr. Bianca Horlemann and Dr. Fernanda Pirie, who commented on early drafts of this chapter, and to Prof. Matthew T. Kapstein, whose insightful comments improved its final form. I am also grateful to Burkhard Quessel at the British Library for his assistance in making the scroll available to me and to Dr. Sam van Schaik of the British Library for providing photographic reproductions of the second half of the scroll.

territories were subjugated, so too were their territorial divinities. This gave rise to a ritual centralization that embraced a growing ‘national’ pantheon of deities, which, together with the cult of the divine emperor and the seasonal *sku-bla* rituals performed for the well-being of the emperor and the empire, constituted a major part of the ‘state’ religion. The paired trends of political centralization and ritual centralization are evident in a remarkable, hitherto unpublished Old Tibetan legal document from Dunhuang, IOL Tib J 740.

This document consists of two texts, the first a *mo* divination manual, the second a set of questions and answers concerning legal processes. In this chapter I will demonstrate the relationship between these two texts, and situate them within the Tibetan legal tradition. The bulk of the analysis will focus on the second text, and its contribution to our understanding of the social and political organization of the Tibetan Empire.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part offers a brief introduction to Old Tibetan law in order to locate the document within this tradition. Part two treats the physical features of the document, its orthography and structure. It also underlines the relationship between the divination manual and the legal text, and considers briefly the role of divination in Tibetan law. The third and final part of the chapter is a thematic analysis of the legal text. The main themes under consideration are debt, loans, interest and corvée labour, women and marriage, the legal status of religious estates and the Tibetan system for drafting and provisioning soldiers.

LAW IN THE TIBETAN EMPIRE

Before moving on to an examination of this document, it will be useful to briefly consider what we know about the legal culture of the Tibetan Empire. The *Old Tang Annals* (*Jiu Tangshu*) states of the Tibetans:

Their punishments are most severe, and even for small crimes the eyes are scooped out, and the nose cut off, or stripes inflicted with a leather whip. They differ according to caprice, there being no fixed code. They imprison men in holes several tens of feet under the ground, and release them only after two or three years (BUSHELL 1880: 411).

While it would be hasty to dismiss this Chinese account altogether, it may be said that this statement is either an uninformed and

chauvinist account of a barbarian people or describes a very early stage in Tibetan legal culture. Fragmentary Old Tibetan documents from Dunhuang paint a far more complex picture of legal practices in Tibet.

Law, and the ‘good law’ in particular, was a key element of the Tibetan Emperor’s divine inheritance and his earthly legitimation. Simultaneously, Tibetan imperial law, assisted by bureaucracy and a large corps of officials, codified and legislated the emerging foundations of the Tibetan polity.

Legislation and the imposition of political order were regarded as essential values in a Tibetan ruler long before they constituted part of the legacy of the religious kings of the empire as eulogized in Tibetan religious histories. Many of the earliest surviving Old Tibetan documents concerning the Tibetan ruler, the Btsan-po, glorify him because of his practice of ‘good (religious) customs and great art of government’ (*chos-bzang gtsug-lag che*).¹ Such considerations are present in numerous passages of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, an epic history whose political imperatives were to eulogize the Tibetan royal line and to idealize and glorify the principles by which the emperors ruled. This entailed a presentation of the Tibetan Emperor as an ordering principle instantiating the ways of heaven upon the earth, and bringing law and order to the Tibetan people. This is evident in the victory songs exchanged by Khri Srong-brtsan (later known as Srong-btsan Sgam-po) (c. 605-649), and his prime minister, Mgar Stong-rtsan, after their defeat of Zhang-zhung.

Above, the profound lord, Khri Srong-brtsan. Below, the wise minister Stong-rtsan Yul-zung. Endowed with all the conditions of great majesty (*mnga'-thang*), the lord, [acting] in the manner of the heavenly mountain gods, and the minister, [acting] in the manner of the earthly majesty (*ngam-len*), externally increased the polity in the four directions. The internal welfare (*kha-bso*)² was abundant and undiminished. They created parity between the high and the low among the black-headed subjects [Tibetans]. They reduced tax fraud and created leisure. They swore [oaths] in the autumn and spring and adhered to this cycle. They gave to the needy and cut out the harmful.

¹ For a discussion of these topics, see STEIN 2003 [1985]: 534-39, 560.

² The term literally means, ‘to nourish mouths’, which translates well enough the English ‘welfare’. The term ‘welfare’ (*kha-bso*) may also be related to the term *khab-so*, which is found in the *Old Tibetan Annals* and other legal and bureaucratic sources, where it is most often taken to mean ‘revenue office’ in a broad sense. Alternatively, *kha-bso* may just be an error for *kha-bsod*, meaning ‘good fortune’.

They employed the powerful and degraded the insolent (*sdo-ba*). They quashed the frightened and allied with the truthful. They praised the wise and respected the heroic. They employed the devoted. The customs being good and the polity lofty (*chos bzang srId mtho ste*), all men were happy.

Previously in Tibet, there was no writing, but it was during the time of this Btsan-po—from the reign of Btsan-po Khri Srong-brtsan—that the entire good basis of Tibet's customs (*bod kyi chos kyi gzhung bzang-po kun*) was created: Tibet's great legal and governmental system (*bod kyi gtsug-lag bka'-grims ched-po*), the [system of] ministerial rank, the division of ranks (*dbang-thang*) into both great and small, the rewards for the good, the punishments for the wicked and deceitful, the equal division of fields and pasturelands into *thul-ka*, *dor-ka* and *slungs*, and the standardization of the weights and measures *bre*, *p[h]ul* and *srang*, etc. All men felt a great gratitude for his kindness and in return they called him 'Srong-brtsan the profound' (Srong-btsan Sgam-po).

*bla na rje sgam na / khrl srong brtsan / 'og na blon 'dzangs na stong
rtsan yul zung / rje nI gnam ri pywa 'I lugs // blon po ni sa 'I ngam len
gyi tshul // mnga' thang chen po 'i rkyen du / jI dang jir ldan te / pyi 'i
chab srid nI pyogs bzhIr bskyed // nang gl kha bso ni myi nyams par
lhun stug / 'bangs mgo nag po yang mtho dman nI bsnyams / dpya'
sgyu nI bskyungs / dal du nI mchis / ston dpyid nI bskyal // 'khor bar nI
spyad / 'dod pa nI byin / gnod pa nI pye / btsan ba nI bcugs / sdo ba ni
smad / 'jigs pa nI mnan // bden pa nI bsnyen / 'dzangs pa nI bstod /
dpa' bo nI bkur / smon par nI bkol // chos bzang srId mtho ste // myI
yongs kyis skyid do // bod la snga na yI ge myed pa yang // btsan po
'di 'I tshe byung nas // bod kyi gtsug lag bka' grims ched po dang /
blon po 'i rim pa dang / che chung gnyis kyI dbang thang dang / legs
pa zin pa 'I bya dga' dang / nye yo ba 'i chad pa dang / zhing 'brog gi
thul ka dang dor ka dang / slungs kyi go bar bsnyams pa dang / bre pul
dang / srang la stsogs pa // bod kyi chos kyi gzhung bzang po kun //
btsan po khri srong brtsan gyi ring las byung ngo / myi yongs kyis bka'
drin dran zhing tshor bas // srong brtsan sgam po zhes gsol to (PT
1287, 446-455).³*

As is evident from this passage of the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, there was a tradition in early Tibet that ascribed legal and bureaucratic reforms to Srong-btsan Sgam-po. The measures described in this

³ For the Tibetan text, see CD2: pl. 574. For transliteration, see CD3: 33-34. For a French translation of this passage that differs considerably from my own, see BACOT *et al* 1940-46: 160-61. See also Kapstein's analysis of the second paragraph of this passage (KAPSTEIN 2000: 55).

passage as ‘the entire good basis of Tibet’s customs’ (*bod kyi chos kyi gzhung bzang-po kun*) would have been codified in legal and bureaucratic manuals (*dkar-chag/rtsis-mgo*).⁴ Indeed the existence of such manuals is mentioned in the *Dbā’ bzhed*: Srong-btsan Sgam-po, after admonishing his subjects that if they did not follow his newly codified system of laws, then Tibet would become like the twelve minor kingdoms (*rgyal-phran*) that were defeated due to their internal chaos and lawlessness, announced to them the complete manuals (*rtsis-mgo*) and the good law (*chos-lugs bzang-po*) (WANGDU AND DIEMBERGER 2000: 28-29).

Beyond its insights into Tibetan political theory, the above passage from the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* may be related to the measures laconically described in the best-known reference to the creation of Tibetan law and administration. This is found in the *Old Tibetan Annals*, the single most reliable source for early Tibetan history. The entries for the years 654 and 655 are as follows:

[654] The year of the tiger arriving. The Btsan-pho resided at Merkhe and Prime Minister Stong-rtzan convened [the council] at Mong-pu Sral-’dzong. He divided the military (*rgod*) and the civilians (*g.yung*) and made the manual of the great administration (*mkho-sham chen-pho*). So one year.

[655] The year of the hare arriving. The Btsan-po resided at Merkhe and Prime Minister Stong-rtzan wrote the texts of the law (*bka’-grims*) at ’Gor-ti. So one year.

/ : / stagI lo la bab ste / btsan pho mer khe na’ bzhugs shIng / blon che stong rtzan gyis / mong pu sral ’dzong du’ bsduste / rgod g.yung dbye zhing / mkho sham chen pho bgyl ba’I rtsis mgo bgyl bar lo gchlg /

/ : / yos bu’I lo la bab ste’ // btsan po mer khe na bzhugs shing / blon che stong rtzan gyls / ’gor tlr / bka’ / grlms gyl yi ge brIs phar lo gchig / (PT 1288, ll. 26-29.)⁵

This passage states unequivocally that the Tibetan Empire developed legal and administrative texts in 654 and 655. While the contents of these texts are not revealed, this testifies to the fact that Tibet possessed a codified system of law at a very early date in its development.

⁴ The passage itself may refer to a textual source for ‘the entire good basis of Tibet’s customs’ (*bod kyi chos kyi gzhung bzang-po kun*), if we take *gzhung*, which I have translated here as ‘basis’, instead to mean ‘fundamental texts’.

⁵ For text, see CD2: pl. 580. For transliteration, see CD3: 40. For Bacot and Toussaint’s French translation, see BACOT *et al* 1940-46: 31.

Moving beyond theoretical concerns and the origins of Tibetan legal culture, several Old Tibetan documents shed light on legal practice. From the fragmentary legal texts that survived in Dunhuang, it is evident that the Tibetan Empire developed a highly codified system of law that meted out punishments according to the social class of the complainant and that of the defendant in a given case. This is seen most explicitly in PT 1071, a document dealing mainly with blood money or restitution when someone is accidentally shot with an arrow during the course of a hunt. RICHARDSON (1998 [1990]) outlined this text in some detail, and the gradations of punishment according to class are clearly given in his work. The table below is a simplified account that shows the amount of blood money due to each victim according to the victim's rank. These ranks also include certain of the victims' kin relations, but this is too complicated to detail here. It should be noted that blood money is not always acceptable: if one of the four great ministers, for example, is killed by someone in ranks eight through ten, the killer is executed, his male descendants are put to death, and his property is confiscated according to the *sgor-rabs-gcad* death penalty (RICHARDSON 1998 [1990]: 151). Punishment therefore depends both on the class of the assailant and that of the victim. For the sake of clarity, the compensation prices listed in the table below correspond to the price that is paid when the assailant is of an equal or higher rank in relation to the deceased victim.

Table 1: Blood money/ compensation price (*stong-mnyam/ myi-stong*) according to PT 1071.

	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Compensation Price</i>
1	Four great ministers ⁶	10,000
2	Turquoise rank	6,000
3	Gold rank	5,000
4	Gold-plated silver (<i>phra-men</i>) rank ⁷	4,000

⁶ The four great ministers are: the prime minister, the great minister of the interior, the Btsan-po's maternal uncle in charge of political affairs (*btsan po'i zhang drung chab srid la dbang ba*), and the deputy prime minister (DOTSON 2004: 81).

⁷ DUNG-DKAR (2002: 1359) considers *phra-men* to be an 'alloy of silver and gold', but it can be translated more precisely with reference to a passage in the *New Tang Annals* (*Xin Tangshu*) regarding the order of rank. BUSHELL (1880: 442) translates the passage as follows. 'The officers in full costume wear as ornaments—

5	Silver rank	3,000
6	Brass rank	2,000
7	Copper rank	1,000
8	<i>Gtsang-chen</i> , royal military subjects, bondservants attached to the fields of an aristocrat or a commoner, governor's attaché (<i>rgyal-'bangs rgod-do-'tshal dang zhang-lon [dang] dmangs kyi bran rkya la gtogs-pa dang mngan gyi mngan-lag</i>) (ll. 247-51)	300
9	Civilian royal subjects, bondservants attached to the fields of an aristocrat or commoner, barbarian prisoners (<i>lho-bal btson-pa</i>) (ll. 288-89)	200

As I have written elsewhere, the main divide in Tibetan class society is between the ministerial aristocracy (*zhang-lon*, *dku-rgyal*, *yi-ge-pa*), represented by groups one through seven, and the commoners (*dmangs*), represented by groups eight and nine (DOTSON 2004: 81-82). The break begins with the *gtsang-chen*, which, like other designations such as 'silver rank minister', describes a rank, and not a post. However, *gtsang-chen* does not appear to indicate a type of insignia. This is evident from PT 1089, where a man appointed 'great official of fields in general' (*spyi'i zhing-pon ched-po*) is described

those of the highest rank *ze-ze* [□ □ *sè sè*], the next gold, then gilded silver, then silver, and the lowest copper—which hang in large and small strings from the shoulder, and distinguish the rank of the wearer.' Cf. PELLIOU 1961: 80. The description corresponds exactly to those found in PT 1071, PT 1072 and PT 1073, save for the omission of brass (*ra-gan*) between the ranks of silver and copper, and it further indicates that the Tibetan insignia (*yig-tshang/ yi-ge*) can be considered to be akin to epaulets. We can note that *se-se*, meaning something like 'aquamarine', probably indicates turquoise. Here 'gilded silver' (□ □ □ *jīn tú yín*) means 'silver coated with gold', and should therefore be rendered more accurately as 'gold-plated silver'. This corresponds to the Tibetan *phra-men*, thus clarifying an obscure term. On the close correspondence between the precious metals employed in both Tibetan and Chinese insignia of rank, see DEMIÉVILLE 1952: 284-86, n. 2.

as having the rank (*thabs*) of a *gtsang-chen*.⁸ PT 1071 goes on to deal with other issues arising from the hunt, such as a case where someone is trapped under a yak, and this again is decided according to the rank of the victim and the rank of the bystander (RICHARDSON 1998 [1990]: 156-59).⁹

Similar standardized payments of blood money according to class are recorded in the ‘Section on Law and State’, a chapter found in several post-dynastic histories, which purports to describe the legal and administrative practices of the Tibetan Empire (*Lde'u*: 264; *KhG*: 378).¹⁰ Subsequent Tibetan administrations, such as those of the Dalai Lamas, followed a similar model of standardized payments, but their legal stratification of society differed significantly from the earlier models, due in part to the influence of Buddhism (FRENCH 1995: 114; CASSINELLI AND EKVALL 1969: 178).¹¹

The actual form of the trial in the case of these hunting accidents is very interesting, as ‘jurors’ (*gtsang-dkar*) play a prominent role. In the legal document PT 1071, when one from the rank of the turquoise, gold or gold-plated silver ministerial aristocracy (ranks 2-4) is accused of shooting, while hunting, one among the highest rank in the ministerial aristocracy (rank 1), the trial proceeds as follows:

Whether [the victim] is killed or not, and there is enmity and it is said that punishment shall never be excused, twelve jurors (*gtsang-dkar*), with he [the complainant?] himself making thirteen, swear an oath, and the case is decided according to the law of homicide (*thong-myi*) in the various manuals (*dkar-chag*). It is not granted that one repay blood money [at this point]. The jurors try him, [and if] the man hit by the

⁸ ‘LI pu hwar is appointed the great official of fields in general. He is of *gtsang-chen* rank.’ (*li pu hwar spyi'i zhing pon ched por bskoste// thabs gtsang chen mchis pa/*) (PT 1089, l. 61).

⁹ For an analysis of rank and status in Tibetan imperial society that relies mostly on PT 1071 and the *Mkhas pa'i dga' ston* of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag phreng-ba (hereafter, *KhG*), see GNYA'-GONG 2003.

¹⁰ The ‘Section on Law and State’ as it is found in its three main versions in the *Rgya bod kyi chos 'byung rgyas pa* of Mkhas-pa Lde'u (hereafter abbreviated *Lde'u*), the *Chos 'byung chen po bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan* of Lde'u Jo-sras, and *KhG*, explicitly claims to be related to the legal and administrative reforms of Srong-btsan Sgam-po. As TUCCI (1956: 76), URAY (1972: 67-68), UEBACH (1989: 831) and GNYA'-GONG (2003: 227) have each pointed out, large parts of the ‘Section on Law and State’ relate not to this emperor's reign, but to the reigns of several other Tibetan Emperors. The comparison of the ‘Section on Law and State’ with Old Tibetan sources forms the basis of DOTSON 2006.

¹¹ For similar traditions of blood money among Tibetan nomads, and comparable social hierarchies, see EKVALL 1954.

arrow was killed, then they impose blood money (*myi-stong*) of 10,000 *srang*, and half is the share of the complainant (*yus-bdag*), the other half that of his associate (*'dam-po*). If there is no associate, 10,000 *srang* is the share of the complainant. If the one hit by the arrow does not die, then they impose blood money of 5,000 *srang* and half is the share of the complainant, the other half that of his associate (*'dam-po*). If there is no associate, 5,000 *srang* is the share of the complainant. When one is hit by an arrow and the accused says, 'it was not my arrow,' and his denial is not accepted, whether the person hit by the arrow was killed or not, the law of homicide is applied. If the denial is upheld, as it is also slander (*skur-pa zan*), it becomes a case of false accusation of homicide.

gum yang rung ma gum yang rung/ mkhon mchis te chad/ kar 'phangs re zhes/ gtsang dkar bcu gnyis dang kho na bdag dang bcu gsum/ bro stsaldog/ dkar chagsna/ thong myi/ dang khrims gcig go/ stong 'jaldu yang myi gnango/ dkar gyis changs tang/ mda' phogs pa' gum dang/ myiI stong/ srang khri babste/ yus bdag dang/ 'dam po phyed mar dbango/ 'dam po ma mchis na/ srang khri yus bdag dbango/ mda's phogs pa/ ma gum na/ gson stong srang lnga stong phabste/ yus bdag dang 'dam po phyed mar dbango/ 'dam po ma mchis na/ srang lnga stong kun yus bdag dbango/ mda's phogste/ nga'I mda' ma yIn ces snyon snyon ma changste/ mda's phogs gum yang rung ma gum/ yang rung/ thong myi dang khrims gcig/ snyon snyon pa tshangs¹² dang/ skur pa zan kyang/ thong myi'i skur pa zan dang khrims gcig du dbango/ (PT 1071, ll. 8-15).¹³

The ceremony involved in this trial, like those of the other types of trials mentioned above, involves the swearing of an oath. Though oaths of loyalty to the emperor and oaths to uphold the Buddhist religion are quite common in Old Tibetan sources, their frequency should not be taken as an indication of triviality. Sacrifice was a key element of Tibetan oath taking rituals, and, if the *Tang Annals* are to be believed, this sometimes involved the sacrifice of a human being (BUSHELL 1880: 441). This would make such oaths a terrifying experience. In the case above, those who take the oath are the twelve 'jurors' (*gtsang-dkar*), and 'he himself, making thirteen' which likely refers to the complainant. This is significant, because the numeric formula 'twelve plus one, making thirteen' signifies totality, and thus marks off the 'jurors' as an explicit microcosm of Tibetan

¹² Read *changs*.

¹³ See also RICHARDSON 1998 [1990]: 150.

society.¹⁴ Though the outcome of the trial will be compensation from one party to the other, it is tempting to see in the structure of this trial the concept of a crime against society. In this case, the ‘jurors’ are the ones who decide the case and award the requisite blood money. Further, they also seem to have the power to accept or reject any denials of guilt. This case may differ from the others as it occurs during the context of the hunt, which was a state affair sometimes involving thousands of people. However, in as much as the hunt reveals itself as a sort of meta-society involving all strata of Tibetan society in a performative event, the legal clauses may be quite consistent with those found elsewhere.¹⁵

¹⁴ This same numeric formula of twelve plus one making thirteen is employed in the catalogue of minor kingdoms (*rgyal-phran*) in PT 1286: ‘The twelve minor kings, with Se-re-khri makes thirteen. The twenty-four ministers, with Skyang-re-nag makes twenty-five. The twelve strongholds, with Dbu-lde Dam-pa makes thirteen. The twelve territories, with Byang-ka Snam-brgyad makes thirteen.’ (*rgyal pran bcu gnyis na / se re khri dang bcu gsum / blon po nyl shu rtsa bzhi na / skyang re gnag dang nyi shu rtsa lnga / mkhar bcu gnyis na / dbu lde dam pa dang bcu gsum / yul bcu gnyis na / byang ka snam brgyad dang bcu gsum*. PT 1286, ll. 22-24, in CD2: pl. 555, CD3: 14). The same formula is found in the recitation of the (twelve plus one equals) thirteen kings in PT 1060, a ritual recitation dealing mainly with horses. ‘The twelve kings, with Se-ra-gri makes thirteen. The twenty-four ministers, with Skyang-re-nag makes twenty-five. The twelve territories (read *yul* for ‘*a yu*), with Hod gyi Se-mo gru makes thirteen. The twelve strongholds, with Dbu-ste Ngam-pa-ra makes thirteen.’ (*rgya po bcu gnyis na se ra gri dang bcu gsum blon po nyi shu rtsa bzhi na’ // skyang re gnag dang nyishu rtsa lnga ‘a yu bcu gnyis na’ hod gyi [se] mo gru dang bcu gsum // mkhar bcu gnyis na’ dbu ste ngam pa ra dang bcu gsum*. PT 1060, ll. 94-96, in CD2: pl. 371, CD4: 29). These thirteen minor kingdoms were a vision of the totality of the known world, and were usually invoked as such in a ritual context.

The scheme was also used in the formulation of the border taming temples, in which the Jo-khang was supported by three groups of four temples in the cardinal directions (SØRENSEN *et al* 2005: 172). For more on the significance of the numbers twelve and thirteen as symbols of totality, see DOTSON forthcoming a; STEIN 1961a: 9-10 and EKVALL 1959.

¹⁵ The miscellanea at the end of the document also concern the proper butchering and distribution of the animal. The act of dividing the kill and partitioning it among the community reveals which parts of the animal were considered most desirable. This is reminiscent, of course, of sacrifice, where different quarters of the animal are invested with a highly stratified sense of meaning and are matched with the various members of the community according to status. The sacrifice of the animal and the distribution of its body thus establishes commensality, while it also reinforces the social hierarchy. Just as in one of Sad-mar-kar’s songs in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* the fallen yak is a symbol of Zhang-zhung, the killed animal and the protocols for its proper distribution are foundational metaphors for Tibetan society and its hierarchies (ALLEN 1978 and MACDONALD

Another fascinating element of the legal clauses in PT 1071 is the role of the complainant's 'associate' (*'dam-po*). In his reading of this same Old Tibetan document, Btsan-lha Ngag-dbang Tshul-khrims defines the *'dam-po* as 'one who reveals hidden crimes' (*lkog tu nyes skyon ther 'don byed mkhan*), or, in other words, a prosecutor (BTSAN-LHA 1997: 363). Whether Btsan-lha reads too far into this or not, this passage does confirm the existence of legal professionals during the period of the Tibetan Empire. The 'associate', who is entitled to half of the compensation payment, would likely not have been a mediator, but someone with knowledge of the law who was able to make a case before the jurors and influence the proceedings through his *savoir-faire* and eloquence. This is not to say that the 'associate' held the occupational equivalent of a modern lawyer or barrister; he may well have simply been an important and influential local figure with some knowledge of the law.

Another legal document involving animals, this time of the domestic variety, concerns the protocols for punishing those whose dogs attack passers-by. This text, PT 1073, has also been studied by Richardson, and like the laws surrounding the hunt, it decides punishment according to the social classes of the accuser and the defendant (RICHARDSON 1998 [1989]: 136-37). The only difference is that the document also mentions cases in which the defendant is a woman. Lines 14-15 set out the legal punishment for a woman from silver rank to copper rank who sets a dog on a person holding the more prestigious gold-plated silver (*phra-men*) rank:

If a married woman sets a dog [on someone of gold-plated silver rank] and it kills him, all of whatever was given by her own original paternal family will be awarded as compensation for the killed man. (*bud myed khyo mcis/ pa' zhig / khyi sbod sbod de/ bkum na/ mo 'da' gdod ma' / pa mying gyIs/ cis brtsangs*¹⁶ *pa' / kund gum pa'I stong du stsald do*).¹⁷

Here it is evident that the woman must give the accuser the bride-wealth that was bestowed on her by her paternal family when she left her paternal home to live with her husband. This of course serves the same end as deciding a case according to social class, as women from upper class families most likely possessed more bride-wealth than those from lower class families. Further, this is but one of the

1980). Like sacrifice, the hunt is a ceremony encoded with the structures of Tibetan society (HAZOD 2000: 218-21).

¹⁶ Read *brdzangs*.

¹⁷ See also the translation in RICHARDSON 1998 [1989]: 137.

many instances where Old Tibetan legal texts reveal important information concerning the social structure of the empire. Aside from adding more weight to the assumption that virilocal marriage was common practice in imperial Tibet, this valuable passage also indicates that the *p[h]a-mying*, that is, father and [elder] brothers, as wife-givers, gave bride-wealth to be taken with the bride to her new husband’s family. That such bride-wealth was still available to the woman to pay the compensation price for her crime indicates that the bride-wealth was likely her own inalienable property and not a gift to her husband or to his family.

Two Old Tibetan documents, PT 1075 and IOL Tib J 753, detail the proper punishment for theft. Here the punishment depends not upon the class of the thief (who, as a thief, is probably assumed to be of low class), but upon the class of his victim and the amount stolen. According to IOL Tib J 753, a document edited and translated by THOMAS (1936), a thief was met with banishment or death depending on the value of his haul. The following table shows the punishments that apply when thieves are caught red-handed trying to take riches from a treasury.

Table 2: Punishment for a thief caught in a treasury according to IOL Tib J 753 (ll. 12-32)

<i>Amount (srang)</i>	<i>Punishment</i>
100 and upwards	Thief and all accomplices are killed
99-80	Three ringleaders (<i>rab mgo</i> [sic?]) are killed; others are banished to a hinterland (<i>pho reng du spyug go</i>). ¹⁸
79-60	Two ringleaders (<i>ra bgo pa</i>) are killed; others are banished to a hinterland.
59-40	One ringleader is killed; others are banished to a distant place (<i>shul ring-por spyug go</i>).
39-20	Ringleader thief is banished to a distant place; others are banished to a middle road

¹⁸ THOMAS (1936: 283) translated *rab-mgo (pa)/ ra-bgo (pa)* as ‘principal heads’, a reading supported by GO-SHUL (2001: 388, n. 2). Thomas’ translation of *pho-reng du spyug* as ‘to be banished, after castration’ can probably be disregarded. My provisional translation of *pho-reng* is uncertain, however, as it is based mostly on analogy with the following clauses and taken therefore to refer not to a condition, but to a degree of distance. The classical Tibetan meaning of *pho-reng* is ‘bachelor’, so an alternate translation, reading *pho-reng du* adverbially, would be ‘they banished him alone.’

	(i.e., an outlying area, <i>lam 'bring-por spyug go</i>).
19-10	Ringleader thief is banished to a middle road. A <i>rkud</i> of two <i>srang</i> is levied on the accomplices. ¹⁹
9 and downwards	Whatever thieves are caught receive a <i>rkud</i> of two <i>srang</i> .

#/// phyag mdzod do 'tshald gyi nang du/ rkun po zhugs pa las / lag tu ma thob par zin pa'i khirms la//// bla'i pyag mdzod do 'tsald gyi nang du / rkun po zhig zhugste / dkor lag du ma tob par zind na dkor srang brgya yan chad gyi khra zhig / mcis pa'i nang du / zhugs te zind na / rkun po mang gtogs nyung gtogs pa / kun dgumo /// srang dgu bchu dgu man chad / brgyad chu mchis pa yan chad // gyi nang du zhugste zind na rkun po du gtogs gyang rung / rab mgo gsum dgumo/// gzhan ni pho reng du phyug go /// srang bdun chu dgu man chad // drug chu yan chad mcis pa zhig gi nang du zhugste / zind na' / rkun po du gthogs gyan²⁰ rung/ ra bgo pa gnyis dgumo // gzhan ni pho reng du spyugo /// srang lnga bchu dgu man chad / bzhi bchu mchis pa yan chad chig yi nang du zhugs te // lag du ma thob par zind na / rkun po du gtogs gyang rung ra bgo pa gchig dgumo /// gzhan ni shul ring por spyug go/ srang sum chu dgu man chad // nyi shu yan chad mchis pa'i nang du // zhugste / zind na / rkun po ra bgo pa gchig shul ring por spyugo// gzhan du mchis pa lam 'bring por spyug go // srang bchu dgu man chad / bchu yan chad mchis pa'i nang du zhugs te lag du ma thob par zind na / rkun po ra bdo pa gchig ni / lam 'bring por spyugo// slad na [bos ro] rkun po du mchis pa la / srang nyis gyi rkud da dbabo / srang dgu man/ chad mchis pa'i nang du / zhugs te / lag du ma thob par zind na / rkun po du mchis pa la / srang chig gyi rkud dbab 'o /// (IOL Tib J 753, ll. 16-30; THOMAS 1936: 278-79).

This section of the text closes by stating: 'In accordance with the law (*bka'-grims*), the riches and wealth of the executed or banished thief is granted as a reward to the one who caught him.' (*'dzin 'dzin pa'i bya dgar ni rkun po bkum ba dang spyugs pa'i nor pyugs dang / chal phab pa las / bka' grims bzhin du stshald to / phyag rgya'o //*) (IOL Tib J 753, ll. 30-32). Here again, as in the case of the trials following from hunting accidents, the complainant has a vested interest in

¹⁹ THOMAS (1936: 283) translated *rkud* as 'penalty', which, along with 'fine', seems an acceptable provisional translation.

²⁰ Read *gyang*.

prosecuting the defendant, because success will result in economic reward.

The distinction in the above clauses between the ringleader (*ra bgo pa*) and his accomplices, and the according differences in punishment, are also found in subsequent Tibetan legal traditions (CASSINELLI AND EKVALL 1969: 169-70).²¹

The text goes on to detail the punishments for those who steal items of wealth from the authority (*bla*) down to the ministerial aristocracy (*zhang-lon*) and commoners (*dmangs*) (ll. 33-42); punishments for those who steal from the authority (*bla*) itself (ll. 57-63); and punishments for those who steal from the wealth of an empress, royal lady, princess (*btsan-mo lcam-sru dang jo-mo*), or ministerial aristocrat, down to that of a commoner (ll. 64-72).

The language in the clauses of PT 1075 is almost identical with that of IOL Tib J 753, but the clauses generally deal with much smaller amounts. As this text is so similar in character to IOL Tib J 753, it is not necessary to describe it in any detail here. Both texts are particularly interesting in that they mention a group of royal ladies, the *btsan-mo*, *lcam-sru* and *jo-mo*, apparently in descending order of rank.²² Here again the Old Tibetan legal fragments reveal their sociological value.

Aside from these cases that were decided either by a ‘jury’ or according to a legal code, there appear also to have been what one might call ‘capital offenses’. These were decided by the Btsan-po himself. This is demonstrated by the entry in the *Old Tibetan Annals* for the sheep year 695. Mgar Gung-rton, a member of the Mgar clan with whom the emperor will soon be openly at war, is found to be disloyal, and the text states: ‘They held Mgar Gung-rton’s trial (*zhal-ce dbyangs*) at Sha-tsal, the Btsan-po made a pronouncement at Nyen-kar Lcang-bu, and Gung-rton was killed’ (*sha tsal du mgar gung rton gyI zhal ce dbyangs nas / nyen kar lcang bur btsan poe bkas bcade/ gung rton bkum*) (IOL Tib J 750, ll. 69-70; BACOT *et al* 1940-46: 18, 38). While this demonstrates that the Btsan-po could decide a trial directly, this probably only occurred in cases of particularly great importance. Further, this particular case may be seen as an attempt by Emperor ’Dus-srong (r. 676-704) to demon-

²¹ See also the discussion of this practice in Old Tibetan law in HOR-DKAR 2003 [1989]: 314-15.

²² On these terms and their possible rank order according to their employment in the *Old Tibetan Annals*, see UEBACH 1997: 54-55.

strate his authority by not allowing the Mgar clan to decide the case internally.

In reading these documents and establishing a typology of legal culture in the Tibetan Empire, it must be borne in mind that these fragmentary documents do not reflect reports or minutes of actual cases. They tell us about Tibetan legal theory, which may not necessarily correspond to legal practice. We cannot say how these laws and practices were implemented and to what extent they pervaded the entire empire. Reading these various legal fragments and noting their consistency, however, one wonders if they were taken from a larger legal manual of the type mentioned in the *Old Tibetan Annals*, or if, perhaps, they were compiled in order to create such a manual for the local area of Dunhuang.

With the benefit of just this cursory look at a few fragments of Old Tibetan legal literature, it is evident that the Tibetan Empire possessed a codified set (or sets) of laws and that many of the elements of subsequent Tibetan legal culture were already present at a very early stage. In the case of compensation for injury and blood money, legal cases take the form of a dispute between two parties that proceeds according to the norms of the relevant legal statutes concerning both the form of the trial and the proper punishment. Likewise, in the case of theft, the legal statutes decide the appropriate punishment, and the thief's or thieves' apprehender, in this case the victim, receives the monetary reward of the thief's or thieves' wealth after execution or banishment. While it is fair to assume that the government carried out the punishment of the guilty, whether execution or banishment, this is not made explicit in the clauses themselves. In some cases, such as the trial of Mgar Gung-ton, this is explicitly not a dispute between two parties, but a punishment handed down by the emperor himself. Most of these legal practices, particularly blood money, compensation money, and punishment according to the social class of those involved in a dispute, are taken up in later Tibetan legal traditions. As will soon become evident, early Tibetan law shared another common feature with subsequent Tibetan legal systems: trial by divination.

CHANCE AND DIVINATION IN EARLY TIBETAN LAW: IOL TIB J 740

The present legal document, IOL Tib J 740, sheds further light on legal practices in imperial Tibet. In particular, it reveals that legal

decisions were made in a centralized, systematized arrangement of chance. Before moving on to the contents of the text itself, I will first comment on the form of the text and some of its more interesting orthographic features.

The Physical Features of the Document

IOL Tib J 740 consists of a long scroll (849cm X 26cm) containing Chinese on the *recto* and Tibetan on the *verso*. The Chinese text is the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtreṇḍrarājasūtra* in 473 columns. The Tibetan side of the scroll contains two separate but related texts, both of them complete. The first, which comprises the first 237 lines, concerns *mo* divination, and the second consists of 122 lines containing various replies given to legal questions arising from the implementation of a new legal edict. Both texts appear to have been written by the same hand and both employ the same style of punctuation. The text is written in *dbu-can* script in faded black ink, with no ornamentation, and there is some creasing and fraying near the edges of the scroll. It bears no official seal. The divination text is far more tattered than the legal text, revealing that it was consulted more frequently. The Tibetan texts cover only about three quarters of the *verso*, while the Chinese takes up nearly the entire *recto*. There is no Tibetan on the *recto*.

A Note on Orthography

Before moving on to a treatment of the contents of this document, I would like to point out some of its orthographic peculiarities. Alternation between aspirated and unaspirated consonants, the use of *pe'i* or *pe* in place of *pa'i*, and the use of the *ya-btags* are all common, as is the use of reverse *gi-gu* and the indiscriminate *gi-gu* (transliterated 'i').²³ The text employs only *gi/gis* and *gyi/gyis* as genitive, instrumentive and agentive particles; there is no use of *kyi/kyis* following *d*, *b* or *s* suffixes, which are instead followed by *gyi/gyis*. Another feature of the text is a duplication of syllables appearing at the end of the line: the last syllable of a line is often repeated as the first syllable of the next line where there is no

²³ This is described in MILLER 1966: 264. Miller transcribed it 'i?' and took it to be a result of laziness on the part of the scribe. On the possible phonological value of the Old Tibetan *gi-gu* and reverse *gi-gu* see also Ulving's review article of MILLER 1966 (ULVING 1972: 209-15) and Miller's subsequent rebuttal (MILLER 1981).

grammatical reason to do so. This is merely a formal practice, and should not be read as a grammatical duplication. Also, it is very difficult to distinguish the *ba* from the *pa*, since the *ba* is never completely closed at the top. These are all rather commonplace in Old Tibetan, but the use of the *tsheg* in this text, both double and single, warrants comment. The double *tsheg* predominates throughout the text, but the single *tsheg* is usually employed after *ng*, *d*, *n* and *r* suffixes. Examining the text with this in mind, it is evident that the use of double and single *tsheg* in the document was not due to the whimsy of the scribe, but followed a specific pattern. This is obviously due to space considerations: those letters with long ‘tails’ are followed by a single, instead of a double *tsheg*, because the ‘tail’ gets in the way of the lower of the two dots in the double *tsheg*. This is particularly evident in a few cases where the scribe has placed the two dots of the double *tsheg* on either side of the ‘tail’ of an *n* suffix. One problem in transcribing the pattern concerns the *ng* suffix: since the scribe ends his stroke at the end of the ‘tail’, this creates an ink dot that appears to be a shorthand way of writing the lower of the two dots in the double *tsheg*. Other samples of early Tibetan writing, such as the Zhol Inscription, employ the double and single *tsheg* according to a similar pattern. Here, too, this is probably for space considerations, but the writing in IOL Tib J 740 follows the pattern more closely than do most other Tibetan texts. The single *tsheg* is employed approximately 75% of the time after *ng*, *n*, *d* and *r* ‘suffixes’, but is used only about 5% of the time otherwise. This is either due to the peculiarities of our scribe’s writing, or it suggests that such a punctuation system had been systematized within certain corners of bureaucratic practice, in which case it may prove to be a useful tool for dating Old Tibetan writing.

In presenting the Old Tibetan text, I have transliterated it as it appears in the original documents and made as few corrections as possible in order to retain the older orthographies and irregularities. I have not bothered to correct some of the more obvious liaisons, such as *stagi* for *stag gi*, *be’i* for *ba’i*, or *lagste* for *lags te*. Likewise, I have left untouched most variants between aspirated and unaspirated consonants and also retained attested variant spellings such as *sla* ~ *zla* or *brtsad* ~ *brtsan*. Glosses that are not otherwise obvious are given in the footnotes, along with unclear readings. The original punctuation is retained in the transliteration of the second text in IOL Tib J 740 at the end of this chapter, but has been removed from the quotations in the body of the chapter for ease of presentation.

Further editing conventions are as follows:

I Reverse *gi-gu*.

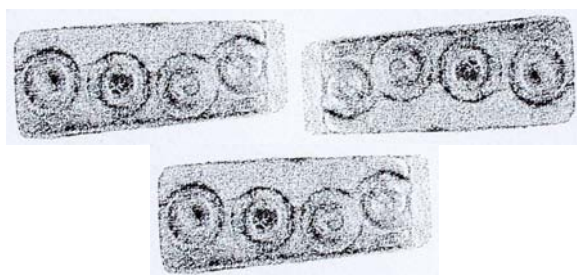
î Indiscriminate *gi-gu*.

[abc] Intentional deletions in the original.

abc_{abc}abc Text intercalated below line.

The Structure of the Document

In the past, most researchers have concentrated on one or the other text in IOL Tib J 740, but never both. Though most of the present analysis concerns the legal text that forms the second part of the document, I wish to demonstrate that the two texts contained in this document are in fact related. Let us turn first to the *mo* divination manual. To my knowledge, F.W. Thomas was the first to comment on the text, but he mentioned only the first half of the text dealing with *mo* divination (THOMAS 1957: 140).²⁴ Thomas recognised the structure of the text and its similarity to the other divination documents he analysed: each paragraph was preceded by three sets of small circles, each set containing between one to four circles, indicating the scores of three dice rolls. These dice rolls resulted from throwing three four-sided dice, of the rectangular variety that were found in Miran and Mazar Tagh (STEIN 1907: pl. LXXIV, n. xv. 004).



This creates 64 possible combinations, each of which corresponds to one of the entries in the divination book consulted. The *mo* divination manual could also be consulted with recourse to pebbles, and this is evident in the introductory formula to several passages that begin ‘if the pebble jumps.’.. (*rdi phur te*) (l. 115).

²⁴ The divination text has since been treated in greater detail in GESANG 2005.

Thomas stated that the *mo* text in IOL Tib J 740 consisted of 63 paragraphs in 236 lines (THOMAS 1957: 140). In point of fact, there are 62 paragraphs: the *mo* for the combinations 4 1 2 and 4 3 2 are missing. Further, the text consists of 237 lines, as is evident from the critical editing of Nishida and Ishikawa for OTDO.²⁵

The types of prognostications found in the various paragraphs in IOL Tib J 740 are consistent with those in other Old Tibetan divination texts.²⁶ These were usually consulted for a specific purpose, such as a medical prognosis. The substance of the divination results themselves is rather vague, being generally good or bad, but rarely specified with reference to any given set of circumstances. This is presumably by design, as it gives the diviner some leeway to interpret the results according to the situation. A translation of two examples should suffice to demonstrate the general character of the divinations.

4 1 4:

From the mouth of the road god (Lam-lha): You, human! The gods look upon you with compassion! If you have cast this [divination] for a legal trial (*zhal-ces*), you will be free. If you go trading, your trading will prevail. Not thinking in [your] heart, 'I am clever,' you should honour the gods and your heart's desire will be fulfilled. This is a good prognosis (*mo*). (4 1 4 : // *lam lha 'I zhal nas myI khyodlhas thugs rje gzI gste / zhal ces btab na yang / thar /tshong bya na yang tshong rgyal / snyIng la bdag 'dzangs snyam masem par lha la phyag 'tshol [dang?] snyIng la bsam ba 'bzhIn 'ongste mo bzango /*) (IOL Tib J 740, ll. 40-43).

3 4 3:

From the mouth of the god 'O-de Gung-rgyal: when the king acts as a god, he raises his visage; when a royal subject acts as the lord, he raises his face. When they make a fire in the land of gods, they sing in the land of men. Human—not finding wealth in your house, take to the road, and you will meet with wealth. This is a good prognosis. (3 4 3 / *lha 'o degung rgyal gyI zhal nas rgyal po lhas mdzad na zhal mtho*

²⁵ The edited text can be viewed via the website of Old Tibetan Documents Online at <http://www.aa.tufs.ac.jp> and in the first volume of the OTDO monograph series, IMAEDA AND TAKEUCHI *et al.* 2007: 334-45.

²⁶ For a typology of the prose and verse employed in Old Tibetan divination texts, along with a brief mention of the present text, see STEIN 1971-1972: 440-50. It is interesting to note the similarity between the verses of *mo* prognoses in Old Tibetan divination texts and those of the dice calls used in games of dice (cf. BDE-CHEN 2003: 2ff.). Both genres contain anecdotes relating to gods and famous events or people, and a mutual influence is not unlikely.

*/rgyal rgyal*²⁷ 'bangs rjes mjad na go mtho lha yul na mye 'bar myI yul na glu len myI khyim na nor myI rnyedelamdu zhugsne²⁸ nor dang phrade mo bzango / (IOL Tib J 740, ll. 69-72).

As in the case of each of these examples, every prognosis (*mo*) in the text ends with a short statement declaring the quality of the prognosis. This is usually either 'good' or 'bad', but sometimes 'very good', 'very bad' or 'average' (*'bring*). The balance is tipped well in favour of a good prognosis, however, with 36 'good' prognoses against only thirteen 'bad' prognoses. This is evident from the following table, which presents the text in a simplified form. Though numerous entries name divine beings, the only such beings listed in the table below are those from whose mouths the prognoses come.

Table 3: The prognoses (*mo*) of IOL Tib J 740.

<i>Line Numbers</i>	<i>Dice Rolls</i>	<i>Source of Prognosis</i>	<i>Quality of Prognosis</i>
1-4	4 4 4	Lhe'u rje Zin-tags	Good
5-9	4 4 3	Lha Gangs-po Shon-gangs	Good
10-12	4 4 1	Lha-myi La-rgyung	Good
13-16	4 3 1		Good
17-20	4 4 2	Ltang Spu rje btsan-ba	Good
21-25	4 3 4	Lha Thang-lha Ya-bzhur	Good
26-29	4 2 4		Good
30-33	4 3 3	Rma-kho Rmo-snying	Good
34-39	4 2 1	Lha-myi La-rgyung	Good
40-43	4 1 4	Lam-lha	Good
44-47	4 2 3	Lha Ma-bar	Good and

²⁷ This duplication is of the formal (i.e., non-grammatical) type, where words at the end of one line are repeated at the beginning of the next.

²⁸ Read *na*.

			Excellent
48-51	4 1 3	Myi lha chen-po 'dra'	Very bad
52-54	4 2 2		Bad
55-58	4 1 1		Very bad
59-61	3 3 3	Mu-sman	Good
62-65	3 3 4	Lha Btsan-po	Good
66-68	3 1 4	Srog Stam-chen	Good
69-72	3 4 3	Lha 'O-de gung- rgyal	Good
73-79	3 4 4		Very good
80-84	3 2 4		Good
85-90	3 4 2	Lha Dbyar-mo- thang	Good
91-93	3 1 2		Good
94-99	3 3 2		Good
99-102	3 3 1		Good
103-106	3 1 3	Lhe'u-rje Zin-tag	Good
107-109	3 2 3		Good
110-113	3 4 1		Bad
114-117	3 2 1	Phyug-lha Snyer- 'bum	Good
118-120	3 2 2	Lha Mu-tsa-med	Good
121-124	3 1 1	Gar-the Chos-bu	Good
125-128	2 2 2		Bad
129-132	2 4 4		Good
133-138	2 2 4	Lam-lha	Bad
139-141	2 1 3	Yul-lha Pom-ting	Good
142-146	2 3 3		Good
147-150	2 4 2		Bad
151-153	2 4 3	Lha Rgyung-tsa	Good
154-157	2 4 1	Lhe'u-rje Zin- tags	Good
158-162	2 1 4		Good
162-164	2 3 2	Yar-lha sham- pho	Good
165-168	2 3 4	Rma Sha-bo	Good
169-171	2 2 3		Bad

172-174	2 1 2	Myi btsan Tsom-po	Bad
175-176	2 1 1		Average ('bring)
177-180	2 3 1	Ltang-ring	Basis (gzhi)
180-183	2 2 1	Srog-lha Stam-chen	Bad
184-186	1 1 1	Srin-mtshan Dgu-po	Bad
187-189	1 3 4		Average
190-193	1 1 4		Good
194-196	1 2 3		Average
197-200	1 4 3	Dpal-mo Mthong-chen	Good
201-204	1 3 2	Yar-lha Sham-pho	Good
205-207	1 1 2		Below average ('bring-smad)
208-211	1 4 4	Sha-med Gangs-dkar	Good
212-215	1 4 2	Ngo-sa Khu-bar	Average
216-218	1 3 1		Average
219-221	1 2 2		Bad
222-224	1 1 3	Lha Byi-rje	Bad
225-227	1 3 3	Sla-bo Sla-sras	Good
228-230	1 2 4	Lha Thun-'tsho	Good
231-234	1 4 1		Bad
235-237	1 2 1		Bad

One of the most interesting features of this divination manual is that the prognosis often comes from the mouth of a divinity. The divinities mentioned are striking in that they tie together the gods of the centre with those of the periphery. The territorial divinity of the 'On region, 'O-lde Gung-rgyal (l. 70) is listed, as is that of Yar-lung, Yar-lha Sham-po (ll. 163, 202). So too is Thang-lha Ya-bzhur (l. 22), the mountain deity of 'Phan-yul and the areas surrounding the Gnyan-chen Thang-lha range. These are all well-known mountain gods in central Tibet, but some lesser known gods such as Sha-med Gangs-dkar (l. 209), Lhe'u-rje Zin-tags (ll. 2, 104, 155) and Sla-bo Sla-sras (l. 226) also deliver prognoses in the text. The first two of

these lesser deities are called upon as witnesses in the song of Emperor 'Dus-srong (reigned 685-704) in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (BACOT *et al* 1940-46: 119, 164), and these two mountain deities were later incorporated into the pantheons of the 'twelve protectors of the doctrine/chthonic goddesses' (*brtan-ma bcu-gnyis*) and the 'thirteen mountain deities associated with the Btsan-po' (*mgur-lha bcu-gsum*), respectively.²⁹ The god Sla-bo Sla-sras is mentioned as 'lord' (*rje*) Bla-bo Bla-sras in the Dunhuang ritual text IOL Tib J 734 (ll. 88, 100, 165; THOMAS 1957: 64-67, 80-85). He is also known from later sources: in *KhG*, Lha-bo Lha-sras was among the twelve 'intelligent ones' (*shes-pa can*) who saw the first Tibetan Emperor, Gnya'-khri Btsan-po, descend from the peak of Lha-ri Gyang-tho and arrive at Lha-ri Rol-po Btsan-thang Sgo-bzhi (*KhG*: 159). In a parallel narrative in *Lde'u*, the god Sgam Lha-bo Lha-sras welcomes the new Tibetan sovereign on one of the stages of his journey from heaven to earth (*Lde'u*: 236; KARMAY 1998 [1994]: 302. The other deities mentioned in the divination manual are lesser known or unattested, but special mention must be made of the god Dbyar-mo-thang (l. 86), no doubt connected with the site of the same name in eastern Tibet.³⁰

As detailed by MACDONALD (1971: 271-87), Old Tibetan divination texts vary greatly: while some show a marked Buddhist influence, with prognoses coming from the mouths of *bodhisattvas*, other texts seem to reflect an ancient Tibetan tradition with little or no discernible Buddhist influence. The current text seems to fall into the latter category. The text explicitly mentions *bon-po* four times (ll. 14, 54, 111, 206). In one example, the prognosis states 'it is inappropriate for one skilled in *bon* not to perform *bon*; this is a bad prognosis' (*phon mkhas pas bon ma byas na myi rung te mo nganto*/, l. 54). This does not necessarily identify the author(s) of this divination text as *bon-po*, but at least suggests that it came from a

²⁹ For the *brtan-ma bcu-gnyis*, see NEBESKY-WOJKOWITZ 1998 [1956]: 181-98. According to Nebesky-Wojkowitz's lists, Sha-med Gangs-dkar is located either at Lha-phu gangs, Rdo-rje Brag-dkar, or Rdo-rje Brag-dmar. According to GNYA'-GONG (1993: 390, n. 15), Lhe'u-rje Zin-brang is one of the thirteen mountain deities associated with the Btsan-po (*mgur-lha bcu-gsum*). On this class of deities, see NEBESKY-WOJKOWITZ 1998 [1956]: 223-24.

³⁰ On the possible locations of this site, which is connected with the treaty of 821-823 between Tibet, China, the Uighurs and Nanzhao, see UEBACH 1991: 516-22, and KAPSTEIN 2004: 106-8.

‘*bon-po* milieu’, or at least was authored by someone well disposed to this class of Tibetan ritual specialists.³¹

A Problem of Interpretation: Dice or Tax?

Aside from Thomas, la Vallée Poussin also noted the existence of IOL Tib J 740. In his Catalogue of Tibetan texts in the Stein collection of the then India Office Library, LA VALLÉE POUSSIN (1962: 234) characterizes the first part of the document as *mo* divination, and the second part as a ‘document about taxes’. IOL Tib J 740 then seems to have gone all but unnoticed until Richardson remarked on the second part of the document in his 1989 article, ‘Early Tibetan Law Concerning Dog-Bite’. There he rightly states that the document ‘gives details of the proper decision, according to a new set of regulations, in cases concerning such matters as loans, taxation, marital disputes and so on’ (RICHARDSON 1998 [1989]: 135). Richardson studied the document in further detail, but only a partial translation is found in his papers.³²

The second part of the document is entitled *StagI lo'i bka'I sho byung be'i sho tshIgs gyI zhus lan*, or ‘Replies concerning *sho*-*tshigs* from the tiger year *sho* edict’. The text contains replies given to questions that concern property, loans, interest, marriage, monasteries and the conscription of troops. These issues are spread out over eleven ‘clauses’, or sets of questions and answers, and 122 lines. In each clause, the structure is the same: a question is submitted from the minister of the exterior (*phyi-blon*) to the judges of the court retinue (*pho-brang 'khor gyi zhal-ce-pa*), who report back with their decisions. In each case, it is always a question of whether a matter can be decided ‘by means of *sho*’. The final words of the petition thus typically end, ‘Do we decide by means of *sho* or not—how do you command?’ (*shos gcad dam myI gcad ji ltar 'tshal*) (IOL Tib J 740, ll. 7, 69-70).

This underlines the pivotal issue concerning the interpretation and translation of this text: the definition of the term *sho*. While the most common meaning of the word is ‘dice’, Richardson, perhaps due to the repeated mention in the text of loans (*bu-lon*, *skyin*), interest

³¹ On my use of the terms Bon and *bon-po*, refer to n. 4 of the Preface.

³² Drafts of a partial transliteration and partial translation are kept in the Richardson papers at the Bodleian Library under the catalogue number MS. Or. Richardson 44.

(*gyur*, *skyed*), fines (*chad*), judicial punishment (*kh rin*)³³ and repayment (*sbyang*), read *sho* as ‘tax’. In doing so, he may have had in mind compound terms such as *sho-gam* (JÄSCHKE 1998 [1881]: 563) and *sho-khral* (ZHANG *et al* 1998 [1984]: 2866), both meaning ‘customs’, ‘duty’, or, in a looser sense, ‘tax’. While I initially applied this reading in my own attempts to translate the text, it became apparent that this reading of *sho* was untenable.

The language of the document is quite obscure due not only to its antiquity, but also to its legal milieu. It employs a specialized legal vocabulary, and includes phrases in a legal jargon that is very difficult to translate. Nonetheless, the grammar is generally consistent. In the phrase *shos gcad*, *sho* is in the instrumentive case, so the petitioners are asking whether or not they should *gcad* (cut, decide) by means of *sho*. To read *sho* as tax would render the phrase ‘to cut/decide by means of tax’. For this to make sense in context, it would have to mean ‘to apply tax’. This would be a rather unusual turn of phrase, and such a translation stretches the bounds of Tibetan grammar far more than the obvious reading, ‘decide by means of dice’. The veracity of this reading can be further demonstrated in the context of some examples from the text.

Clause IV (ll. 251-58) concerns the legislation of loans and interest. The passage is first given in transliteration, with only minor editing, and then translated in two separate ways. The first translation reads *sho* as ‘dice’, and the second translates *sho* as ‘tax’.

bla 'ogI bu londu gyur pe'i rnams shos myi gcado zhes byung na / bu lon gyi / gyur ded pe'i mchid nas nI gyur yang bu lon shos myI gcad pe'i nang 'du 'du /kh rin ma lags / pas bka' shos myI gcad par gsol ces mchI / chags pe'i khungs po'i mchId nas ni bla 'ogI bu lon shos myI gcad par 'pyung gis / gyur shos myi gcad par yang myi 'pyung la / gyur ces bgyI pa' bu lon dngos sho ma lagste / sngar bu lon dusu ma phul pe'i nongs pe'i chad par gyur pas / 'dI yang nyes che phra [pa] 'dra pas / chad pa 'gum spyug man cad la thug pa / thugs dpag mdzad pe'i bka' shos bcad par gsol ces 'byung 'ba'di rnams gang ltar 'tshal / kha mar las byung ba' shos gcad par 'tshol cIg // (IOL Tib J 740, ll. 251-58).

Translation one: *sho* as dice.

[Question:] Where it is said that interest on those loans that come under the authority (*bla 'og*) is not decided by means of dice, and the one

³³ On the meaning of this term, see COBLIN 1991: 73 and DOTSON forthcoming b.

pursuing the interest on the loan (*gyur ded-pa*) [the lender],³⁴ requests that the interest should be included within those [cases] of loans that are not decided by means of dice, and that [the interest] should not be a legal punishment (*kh rin*), and therefore should not be decided by means of the dice edict, and the source of the loan [the borrower] requests that since it is the case that a loan under the authority is not decided by means of dice, but it is not the case that interest cannot be decided by means of dice, that there be no dice for the loan itself, but that they do it for what is regarded as interest, and that we kindly decide by means of the dice edict the punishment, from death and banishment on down, according to the severity of the crime, for outstanding previously unpaid loans that have since become punishable offences, how do you command [we resolve] these [matters]?

[Answer:] According to the red notch [instructions], decide by means of dice!

Translation two: *sho* as tax.

[Question:] Where it is said that interest on those loans that come under the authority (*bla 'og*) is not taxed, and the one pursuing the interest on the loan (*gyur ded-pa*) [the lender], states that both the interest and the loan are included within those [cases] that are not taxed, and requests that the tax edict not be applied on account of it not being a legal punishment (*kh rin*), and the source of the loan [the borrower] requests that since it is the case that a loan under the authority is not taxable, but it is not the case that the interest is not taxable, that there be no tax for the loan itself, but that they do it for what is regarded as interest, and that we kindly decide by means of the tax edict the punishment, from death and banishment on down, according to the severity of the crime, for outstanding previously unpaid loans that have since become harmful offences, how do you command [we resolve] these [matters]?

[Answer:] According to the red notch [instructions]: apply the tax!

The reading of *sho* in this passage determines the manner of loan repayment. Reading *sho* as dice, the lender (*gyur ded-pa*, lit. ‘the one pursuing the interest’) wants to be repaid without recourse to dice, while the borrower (*chags-pa'i khungs-po*, lit. ‘the source of the loan’), wants the interest to be decided by means of dice. This is obviously to the advantage of the borrower, as interest, which is generally applied to late payment, is usually decided according to a

³⁴ The use of the verb *'ded* in this construction seems to be parallel to its use in the modern nominalized compound *bun 'ded*, short for *lo-bun 'ded-pa*, meaning ‘loan collector’ (GOLDSTEIN 2001: 723).

contract (TAKEUCHI 1995: 46-91), and a good roll of the dice could conceivably free the borrower from having to pay any interest at all.³⁵ Further, the debtor requests that his punishment for criminally overdue loans be decided in the same manner, perhaps also in hopes of the dice setting him free.

On the other hand, if one reads *sho* in this passage as ‘tax’, and *shos gcad* as ‘to tax’, then the debtor’s request is exceedingly odd, since he is asking to be taxed for the interest he owes. It further beggars belief that he should request to be punished for his outstanding debts according to a tax code that may have him banished or executed. This being the case, if we assume that the borrower is not voicing self-destructive impulses, but is acting in his own self-interest, then the context stands together with the grammar to support the translation of *sho* as ‘dice’, and *shos-gcad* as ‘to decide by means of dice’.

The veracity of this reading is further underlined by a passage in clause VII (ll. 269-86), where disputes concerning an unmarried woman’s chastity are decided by means of dice (*infra*, 42-46). Reading such a passage in terms of tax would render it nonsensical.

We can therefore return to the title of the text, which is ‘Replies concerning the dice statutes (*sho-tshigs*) from the tiger year dice edict (*bka’-sho*)’. It is evident from the text itself that the dice statutes indicate when it is appropriate to use dice to resolve a legal matter. The questions and answers that comprise the second part of IOL Tib J 740 concern those matters that were left sufficiently unclear in these statutes so as to warrant a formal petition. This could be confirmed, of course, were the text of the tiger year dice edict ever to come to light. It should be noted here that the clauses of ‘Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict’ do not imply that dice were employed only in instances where the facts of the case were disputed or unclear. The clauses plainly include instances where dice decided disputed facts, the final

³⁵ Takeuchi noted the formula according to which failure to pay on time doubled the amount to be paid: ‘in case [the borrower] should fail to repay by that time or if he tries to conspire [not to pay, the amount of payment] shall be doubled’ (*dus der ma phul lam gya gyu zhig ’tshal na / gcig la gnyis su [-] bsgyur te*) (IOL Tib J 1141, ll. 5-6; TAKEUCHI 1995: 199, 200). This formula is often followed by a statement to the effect that the lender can then foreclose on the borrower’s possessions. The statement usually begins, *dngos bsgyur dang bcas-pa* or *dngos gyur dang bcas-pa*. Takeuchi went some way towards defining this phrase (TAKEUCHI 1995: 52), and it is evident that it means ‘[the loan] itself, with that which it has become (*bsgyur*)’. In other words, ‘the loan, with interest (*gyur*)’.

outcome of the case, and the punishment of a guilty party. In every clause of the text, the local magistrates ask how to decide a case or a point in a case according to the dice statutes of a dice edict. Therefore they had access to legal norms that prescribed dice as a legal means, but the norms were insufficient in these particular cases due either to their complexity or to the inadequacy of the dice statutes in the tiger year dice edict. That the magistrates had access to such norms is evident in their references to previous dice edicts, so the confusion seems simply to have been with the new edict.

Having demonstrated that this legal text does indeed concern whether or not to decide cases, and aspects of cases, according to the roll of the dice, its connection with the *mo* divination text is now evident: when a case was decided by means of dice, it was done with recourse to the *mo* divination text in the first part of the scroll. It is unclear, however, whether or not the *mo* divination text, like the replies to questions concerning the dice edict, was issued from the court (*pho-brang*). Though they appear to be written in the same hand, the document bears no seal, and is most likely the copy of an official document. Therefore, the possibility remains that the divination manual was not a standardized set of prognoses (*mo*) issued from the centre by imperial officials. This conclusion seems all the more likely considering the fact that the manual's prognoses are supremely generic, and that they refer also to pebbles, which, like dice, were used for divination. It seems, then, that in deciding cases, the local magistrates pragmatically employed a generic divination manual, and not an official manual issued from the court. In either scenario, however, the Tibetan Empire did create a standardized method of deciding the guidelines for punishment. Furthermore, whether the gods in this divination manual who give voice to the various prognoses were assembled on an ad-hoc basis as a sort of organic, informal pantheon, or represented a standard set issued from the centre, this divination manual unifies many of the telluric deities of Tibet for the purpose of governance and the rule of law, and stands as a witness to a process of ritual centralization whereby Tibet created a 'national' pantheon.

On Dice and Divinity

The use of dice and other games of chance in deciding legal matters is well-known in the more recent history of Tibet. In his study of homicide disputes in Sakya, for example, HENDERSON (1964: 1103) mentions a case where the accused was forced to roll dice on the skin

of a freshly killed yak, and, winning the roll, was allowed to go free. CASSINELLI AND EKVALL (1969: 176-77) apparently describe this same trial, but in their analysis it appears that the case was only decided in this manner because the facts of the case could not be established with certainty. FRENCH (1995: 134-35) also mentions two cases, one in Lhasa in the 1930s concerning inheritance, the other in southwest Tibet concerning a loan, where the disputed facts of the case were decided by rolling dice. In the modern legal cases mentioned by Henderson and French, both state that recourse to dice was not considered to be a matter of mere chance, but was believed to reveal the will of the gods.

There are numerous other instances where chance is employed in order to resolve what might be viewed as official matters. One well-known procedure for choosing between candidates for a given office is to write the candidates' names on pieces of paper, sometimes within a ball of dough, put them into a bowl or urn and pick one at random to reveal the successful candidate.³⁶ In some instances, as in the selection of the caretaker of Khra-'brug Monastery, the name was chosen in front of the image of a divinity (SØRENSEN *et al* 2005: 109-10, n. 282), and in other cases various gods were called upon as witnesses. Ramble analyzed a similar process in the Tibetan-ethnic village of Te in Nepal's Mustang district, whereby the village headman is elected by means of an elaborate ritual game that effectively randomizes the outcome (RAMBLE 1993: 292-95). In a brilliant analysis of this 'game' of chance, Ramble reveals that the role of divine intervention in the selection, according to the participants themselves, was secondary at best. RAMBLE (1993: 297) concludes that the 'evidence leaves us with no option but to conclude that it is the *game itself* which decides. People nominate certain candidates, and the gods are called as witnesses to the decision, but the selection is made by nothing other than the game.' A similar process may be at work in the legal procedures revealed in the present document: although the general prognosis and legal decision (but not the specific sentence or terms) often comes from the mouth of a divinity, the prognosis, whether it comes from a divinity or not, is always the result of the roll of the dice. Approaching this from a functionalist perspective, there is little difference whether one attributes the agency in such a procedure to the gods or to random

³⁶ See RAMBLE 1993: 295-96 for two relevant examples relating to the selection of the abbot of Sman-ri Monastery and the junior tutor of the Dalai Lama, respectively.

chance. In either case, it is a mechanism through which figures of authority legitimate their decisions by means of placing agency outside of themselves. The role of the local magistrate who presides over the decision is therefore that of a caretaker or assistant who mediates the decision handed down by the dice.

THE CONTENTS OF THE LEGAL TEXT

Having discussed the nature of the two documents comprising IOL Tib J 740, demonstrated their relationship, and located them in relation to Tibetan legal practice, we can now examine in some detail the contents of the second text, 'Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict'.

As mentioned above, the legal document contains eleven sets of answered questions and 122 lines. The contents are important not only for what they tell us about Tibetan imperial legal procedure and the law itself, but for the assumptions they reveal about the nature of Tibetan society at the time. Some of the clauses, in particular the clause treating the legal status of monastic estates and monastic property and the clause dealing with the provisioning of soldiers, clarify important issues relating to the day to day functioning of the empire, and will therefore be analyzed in some detail.

The text's eleven sets of questions and answers may be summarized as follows:

'Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict'.

- I. (ll. 239-42) Relates to the precedence of the statutes of the tiger year dice edict over earlier dice edicts.
- II. (ll. 242-46) Relates to the applicability of the dice edict to land, persons and households that were previously not subject to [decisions through] dice edicts.
- III. (ll. 246-51) Relates to the correct procedure for compensating a husband when a woman breaks off a marriage and returns to her natal home.
- IV. (ll. 251-58) Relates to a dispute between lender and borrower.
- V. (ll. 258-63) Relates to loans that have been secretly re-lent or resold by the borrower.
- VI. (ll. 263-67) Relates to deposited securities (*bzhag-btam*).
- VII. (ll. 268-86) Relates to the proper legal procedure when a married woman is stolen from her husband or when an unmarried woman is kidnapped.

- VIII. (ll. 286-303) Treats the proper procedure for punishing a messenger who loses horses, wages, etc., entrusted to him.
- IX. (ll. 303-20) Relates to loans made by a monastic estate and the legal status of the property of a temple or monastery.
- X. (ll. 320-31) Concerns proper legal procedure when an estate loses its harvest to hail and cannot fill its quotas to the army or to a garrison.
- XI. (ll. 331-59) Concerns the proper provisioning of soldiers by the estates, and punishment for their failing to send the required provisions.

The structure of each clause is the same: in the first part the problem is summarized and a question submitted, and in the second part an answer is given. The text is composite in nature, since it consists of answers given by judges of the court retinue (*pho-brang khor gyi zhal-ces-pa*) to numerous questions submitted by petition through the minister of the exterior (*phyi-blön*). The only continuity in these questions and answers is that they all relate to the correct implementation of the statutes of a new edict issued in a tiger year. As a result, the topics addressed are far ranging, and move from matters of debt, loans and interest to wife capture, monastic estates and troop conscription. Far from being a set of ‘frequently asked questions’, these clauses appear to have arisen organically from numerous disputes. The manner in which these decisions are taken is instructive, as it demonstrates a high degree of legal and administrative centralization. Two ‘addenda’ (*yan-lag/yal-ga*) in the text clarify the process by which these sets of questions and answers were created. In both cases, they precede the text of the decision dispatched from the court.

From a supplement (*yan-lag*) to the dice statutes: decision in response to a petition dispatched (*dgyigs*) from the place [seat] of the exterior minister to the place of the judge[s] (*zhal-ces-pa*) of the court retinue: (*sho tshigs gyI yan lag las / pho brang khor gyi zhal ces pe sar [nas] zhus pa / phyI lon sa nas dgyI gste zhus pa / mchId gyis bcade zhus pe'i zhus lan /*) (ll. 268-69).

From a supplement (*yal-ga*) to the dice statutes of the tiger³⁷ year: decision dispatched from the place of the judge(s) of the court retinue to the place of the minister of the exterior: (*[rta'I] sta lo'I sho tshigs gyI yal ga' las pho brang khor gyI zhal ces pas / [phyi blon sar] zhal*

³⁷ ‘Horse’ (*rta*) was crossed out and replaced, below the line by *sta*, presumably for tiger (*stag*).

ce'i pe'I sa nas zhul las / phyI blon sar dgyigste mchId gyis bcad pa /)
(ll. 273-75).

These clauses locate the decisions contained in the text at the Tibetan court (*pho-brang*), the (mobile) centre of the Tibetan Empire. Therefore the clauses can be taken to represent the legal positions of judges of the central Tibetan imperial government, and cannot be dismissed as representative only of the local area from which each legal query arose. Presumably these cases were brought first to local magistrates, who had trouble with the cases and submitted them to the minister of the exterior, who in turn submitted the case to the judges of the court retinue for a final decision. The clauses in the text are composed of these decisions, which, as is often the case in such official correspondence, open with the original question before moving on to the decision.³⁸ The document is therefore a testament to the legal and bureaucratic centralization of the Tibetan Empire: matters arising on the periphery are decided at the centre.

The nature of the decisions is important as well. In most cases, the correspondence has to do with the applicability of the dice edict to specific legal cases. Here, as mentioned above, the local magistrate probably had some room to negotiate the terms of a given legal sentence, as the dice presumably decide only who wins a case, or determine a certain point in the case, and not the terms of the settlement. One is tempted to see here the sort of dynamic between centralization and decentralization that held sway in early twentieth century Tibet, where the central administration was content to devolve nearly all legal authority to local administrators, provided that taxes arrived on time (GOLDSTEIN 1971b: 180). In other clauses among the 'Replies', however, the judges of the court retinue hand down full legal decisions. Further, these decisions do not concern only murder or treason, but include more mundane affairs such as marriage and separation (ll. 246-51). This demonstrates a very high degree of legal centralization that was never again matched by any subsequent Tibetan administration. Further, it demands that we rethink to some extent the theory that the exercise of 'soft power' and devolution of authority to the periphery by subsequent Tibetan governments was due to long-standing Tibetan ideology, rather than to straightforward impotence.

This discussion brings up another important question: who were the local magistrates who made these decisions according to the

³⁸ See, for example, PT 1089, an answer to a petition concerning the order of rank in Sha-cu, i.e., Dunhuang (LALOU 1955).

guidelines relayed by the minister of the exterior from the judges of the Tibetan court? Their identity or rank is never mentioned explicitly. It is worth noting, however, that in their recourse to *mo* divination they employ technologies taken directly from a ritualist milieu: the methodology of the diviner in making a prognosis, medical or otherwise, and that of the local magistrate in deciding a legal case were virtually identical in form and content. Considering *mo* divination, in which the prognoses often issue ‘from the mouth of a god’ (*lha’i zhal nas*), Macdonald contends that the prognoses came from mediums in whom the gods and spirits incarnated, and through whom they spoke (MACDONALD 1971: 275, 285). Whether these divinations truly involved possession or not, the question remains: was the use of *mo* divination in a legal context an administrative appropriation of ritual technology, or evidence that ritualists occupied administrative positions as local leaders? Whether the overlap in ritual technologies between the *bon* or *gshen* diagnosing an illness and the local magistrate deciding a legal case indicates that these roles were united in one person is far from clear. That the roles of ritualist, healer and administrator should overlap in a Tibetan context, however, is by no means a radical proposition, and warrants consideration.

The questions and answers in some clauses can be very straightforward, but problematic in those clauses where multiple issues are addressed by more than one authority. The decisions issued from the judges of the court retinue most often open with the phrase *kha-mar las* or *myig-mar las*, and this reveals that the medium through which these decisions were issued was a wooden slip. The *kha-dmar/kha-mar* or ‘red notch’ refers to the type of notched wooden slip in which instructions concerning judicial decisions were sent. This is made clear in a passage of the ‘Section on Law and State’ in *Lde’u* that concerns the types of wooden slips appropriate to various legal judgments:

As for the three legal slips (*zhal-lce’i byang-bu*),³⁹ the ‘good undefiled’ (*zang-yag*) adheres to the testimony of the complainant (*blo-yus*), and states that he is honest. The striped middle (*sked-khra*) [slip] judges the lawsuit as false, and states that the complainants’ wealth is to be confiscated. The red-notched (*kha-dmar*) slip states that instructions are attached (*kha-dmar ’dogs*). Those are the three slips.

³⁹ The corresponding Classical Tibetan term, *zhal-lce*, may be a folk etymology of the Old Tibetan term *zhal-ce/ zhal-ces*. Here the *zhal* in the term *zhal-ce/-ces* may well be related to *’jal/bcal/gzhal/’jol*, ‘weigh, assess, ponder, judge’.

(zhal lce'i byang bu gsum ni/ zang yag bya ba blo yus kyi shags dang sbyar nas drang por gcod pa la zer ro/ sked khra ni zhal lce yon por gcod gcod pa la zer te/ blo yus kyi nor za ba la zer ro/ byang bu kha dmar ni kha dmar 'dogs pa la zer te/ byang bu gsum mo. *Lde'u*: 262).⁴⁰

It is evident that the red notched slip and the attendant instructions are used only in cases where there is no clear verdict for or against a complainant, but a more nuanced decision. The same passage from *Lde'u* also mentions a black dot (*mig-nag*) wooden slip, but unfortunately has nothing to say on the topic of the 'red dot' (*mig-mar*) slip. The 'red dot' that is also mentioned in some clauses of 'Replies' is most likely also a type of slip used to relay instructions regarding a legal decision, but I can observe no qualitative difference between the type of content in the red dot instructions versus the content of the red notch instructions. In any case, both 'red notch' and 'red dot', though ostensibly names of the types of wooden slips themselves, appear to be used metonymically to refer to the information the slips contain and perhaps even to the offices that issue them.

Turning to an analysis of the clauses themselves, since the document is rather long and unwieldy, it will be preferable to summarize the document's more interesting aspects by theme rather than offering here a full translation.

Loans, Interest, Debt and Corvée Labour

Many of the clauses in the document deal with loans and interest and whether or not they are subject to a decision by dice. The above translation of clause IV (ll. 251-58) already demonstrated a case in which the borrower wishes the interest on a loan to be decided by means of dice, while the lender, presumably favouring the terms of

⁴⁰ Despite the fact that *KhG* relied heavily on *Lde'u* as a source for its 'Section on Law and State', the passage on legal slips quoted above is left out of the 'Section on Law and State' in *KhG*, and placed further on in *KhG*'s narrative in a chapter devoted to the reign of Khri Srong-lde-brtsan (reigned 756-c.800). There it makes up one of the reforms created by minister Mgos Khri-bzang Yab-lhag. The passage is evidently lifted from *Lde'u*, but contains an explanatory gloss on the meaning of *kha-dmar*. 'The [slip] that adheres to the complainants' testimony, and finds it to be honest is called the 'good undefiled' (*zang-yag*). The one that finds it false is called the 'striped middle' (*sked-khra*). The slip that has attached instructions (*kha-dmar* 'dogs-pa) concerning [who is] right and wrong is called the 'red notch' (*kha-dmar*). Those are the three legal slips.' (*blo yus kyi shags dang sbyar nas drang por gcod pa la zang yag zer/ yon por gcod pa la rked khre zer/ bden rdzun gyi kha dmar* 'dogs pa la byang bu kha dmar zer te zhal ce'i byang bu gsum mo. *KhG*: 378).

the contract, does not want the case to be so resolved. As remarked already, adjudicating such a case with dice is obviously to the advantage of the borrower, as interest is usually decided according to a contract, and a good dice roll could conceivably free the borrower from having to pay any interest at all. While in clause IV the judges' decision went in favour of the borrower, and allowed the case to be decided by dice, in clause V (ll. 258-63) the judges side with the lender by honouring the terms of the original contract.

[Question:] [Where] there are crimes and violations, or one subsequently parcels [a loan] (*'og-dum bgyis-pa*) and so forth, and the lender (*bu-lon chags-pa*)⁴¹ makes an accusation, based on [the contract with] a swearer's seal (*dam-rgya*), [that the borrower] made a subsequent sale [of the loan], but the borrower (*chags-pa'i khungs-po*) requests that it be decided by means of dice because he has sold [the loan] or loaned the item itself, and the lender (*ded-pa*) requests that, as the [contract with a] swearer's seal is confirmed, it not be decided by means of dice, what is to be done with these two positions?

[Answer:]—Addendum (*bu*)—according to the red notch [instructions], do not decide by means of dice the interest on the loan.

nongs skyon mchls pa dang / 'og tum bgyis pa lastsogs pa / 'og tu tshongsu bgyis pa bu lon chagspa snyadu dam rgya las khungs po'i mchld nas nl / tshongsu bgyis pa[s] ma [lagste] 'am bu lon dngos chags pa chags pa ma lagste⁴² pas shos gcad par gsol / [line break] ded pe'i mchid nas nl / dam rgya brtsan shos myi gcad par gsol ces mchi 'dl nyis gang ltar 'tshal / bu/ kha mar las dpyong bu lundu byur⁴³ na shos ma gcad cIg /

Here the judges of the court retinue reject the defendant's plea for recourse to dice. This is perhaps due to his blatant violation of the loan contract. Similarly, in clause VI (ll. 263-67), which deals with deposited securities (*bzhag btam*), the judges do not allow the dice edict to interfere with a contract drawn up between two parties.

[Question:] In regard to deposited securities (*bzhag btam*), [if] it is said that they are not decided by means of dice, and men, animals (*rkang-gros*), wealth, cattle, horses and so forth were accounted for and put in

⁴¹ This nominalized form appears to conflict with Takeuchi's 'type 1' formula for the opening of a loan contract, where a nominalized form would presumably indicate the borrower (TAKEUCHI 1995: 48)

⁴² Some apparent (aborted?) efforts to delete *lagste*.

⁴³ Read *gyur*.

an official document, and the depositor (*bzhag-pa*) asks, if one does not apply the dice edict to this, and [the deposit] itself (*dnegos*) is not there [i.e., has vanished], concerning punishment of debt (*skyin khrin*), is it carried out (*dgum*) by means of dice or not? How do you command?

[Answer:] According to the red notch [instructions], as it is the case that the loan is not decided by means of dice, do not decide by means of dice!

bzhag btam [s] lta po shos myI gcad ces 'byung ba' / myi dang rkang 'gros dang nor rdzas gnag rta lastsogs pa / btams pa las/ bka' shogdu blangs nas / bzhag pe'i mchId nas 'dI / bka' shos nI myI khums na / dngos ma mchIs na skyin khrin lta po shos dgum gam myi dgum//jI ltar 'tshal / kha mar las bu lon shos myi gcad par 'byung bas shos myI gcad par 'tshol cig /

This decision probably came as a great relief to the depositor, who otherwise might have lost his entire deposit to a roll of the dice despite having recorded it in a contract.

One difficulty regarding loans in the text is the phrase *bla-'og gi bu-lon*, provisionally translated 'loan under the authority'. Alternatively, *bla-'og gi bu-lon* could indicate 'a loan, [whether between those of] high or low [rank]', and indeed TAKEUCHI (1995: 148-49, 264-65) interprets *bla-'og* in this way in two of the contracts he translates. Another possibility is that the phrase means 'a loan [from] a superior [to] an inferior'. Due to the fact that *bla-'og gi bu-lon* is used not only in general descriptions, but apparently to describe the quality of a particular loan, only the first or last of these three interpretations can be correct. And if it is indeed the first interpretation that proves correct, this 'loan under the authority' is not a direct loan from the Tibetan administration, but a loan between two parties where the administration has jurisdiction. This jurisdiction is exercised in the present document by deciding whether or not the interest on a loan can be decided by means of dice, and not according to the terms of the original loan contract. This is also apparent in the case of a debt incurred by a man when he loses horses and goods entrusted to him, apparently for corvée labour, as in clause VIII (ll. 286-303). The first part of the clause describes a situation in which a man has lost goods entrusted to him, and asks how he is to be punished. The first part of a long reply is as follows:

[Answer:] According to the red dot (*myIg-mar*) [instructions], [the debt] is incurred by the messenger, and although according to the replies of the horse year the legal punishment for the debt from his loan

is decided by means of dice, according to the official law (*bka'-khrims*) debts up until the present having been repaid (*sbyang*), if there is interest on something lost or destroyed, as it is interest on a loan under the authority (*bla 'og*), it is proper that it not be decided by means of dice.

According to the reply made by the judge, concerning the so-called 'there being nothing but that in the summary' [statute], even if what is lost reappears (*yong*), it is not there [i.e., 'it does not matter'] (*ma mchis*). Concerning the dead, even if it is given up by the waters (*chab gyis 'tshal*), or by the jackals (*khyI lchang gIs 'tshal*), and even if what is lost is there [present], whether there is interest or not on what is dead or lost, summarize it in what is to be repaid (*sbyang-ba*), but it is not necessary to investigate whether or not it is in the summary (*mdo-ris*).

myIlg mar las phor phog pa dang g.yar pe'i skyIn khrIn / rta'i lo'i zhu lan las shos gcad par 'byung / gIs gyang/ bka' khrims gyis skyin ba'i 'da' bar 'byung pas sbyangste gum stordu gyur na / bla 'ogI bu londu 'gyur pas / shos myi gcad pe'i rIgs / zhal ce pas zhus pa las mdo rIs mchis mchIs pa ma mchIs zhes bya ba' nI stor pa la nI yong yang ma mchIs / gum ba' la yang chab gyls 'tshal pa dang / khyI spyang gIs 'tshal pa dang / stor pa yang mchIs pa zhîg mchIs na / gum stordu gyur tam ma gyur pa' nI spyang be'i nang du 'du bas mdo rIs mchIs ma mchis pa myI rma be'i rIgs // (IOL Tib J 740, ll. 295-302).

This is an interesting passage, as it demonstrates that the 'official law' (*bka'-khrims*) held precedence over the statutes of the dice edict. Here it is a matter of compensating someone whose goods and horses were lost after he entrusted them to a messenger. The application of the dice edict would allow the messenger the possibility of not having to repay his debt, but the 'official law' effectively prevents that, and therefore sides firmly with the complainant. Here the refusal to use dice may be due to it being a 'loan/ debt under the authority', namely, as administration-sponsored corvée labour over which the authorities wished to exert full legal control. This meaning is also supported by the opening to clause IV: 'Where it is said that interest on those loans that come under the authority (*bla 'og*) is not decided by means of dice.' (*supra*, 28). Of course that decision goes on to prescribe dice to settle the matter, but, as detailed already, the cases that make up this document are all by nature less than routine.

In dealing with the man's punishment for losing goods and horses, clause VIII specifically states that punishment applies even to cases where the loss is accidental: 'concerning the loss, even if it was not

the fault of men.’ (*stor lta bo myIs nongs pa yang ma lags*. l. 291). This clause therefore serves as an example of how those providing corvée labour were held responsible for any losses of transport animals or merchandise, a practice echoed in early twentieth-century Tibet, where villagers carrying out corvée labour had to pay for any breakage or loss to the goods they carried (GOLDSTEIN 1971a: 17).

The second paragraph of the reply, which applies a very literal and legalistic approach to the summary (*mdo-ris*) of the lost goods, seems to serve as a protection against messengers who steal the goods entrusted to them. Though this is a very difficult passage containing a few obscure metaphors, the meaning seems to be essentially this: once the legal proceedings concerning lost property have begun, no further evidence may be admitted, and the court will only consider the original claims. This appears to serve two purposes: it prevents the complainant from continuously adding to the list of lost goods, and, perhaps more importantly, it establishes that the case will proceed as before even if the man who initially lost the goods somehow finds them. The latter presumably occurred in a number of cases where men stole goods entrusted to them, and later, facing legal proceedings, succumbed to fear and handed them over.

A passage in another Dunhuang document, PT 1290, also concerns the proper conduct of messengers and the types of seals that they employ. Both MACDONALD (1971: 325) and STEIN (1984: 263-64) analyzed this difficult passage and noted its relevance to the Tibetan Empire’s system for relaying information. Of particular interest to the above clause, the passage in PT 1290 states that messengers can be put to death (*sod du rchugste*) for misconduct (STEIN 1984: 263). The above clause and the passage in PT 1290 indicate that the Tibetan Empire operated a sophisticated system for relaying both information and goods.

In summary, it appears from the clauses reviewed above that the Tibetan administration generally did not apply the dice edict to those cases where there was already a firm contract between two parties detailing the terms of the loan. In matters ‘under the authority’ (*bla-’og*) of the Tibetan administration, such as corvée labour, the judges, as one might expect, acted in the interest of the administration and the transportation network.

Women and Marriage

‘Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict’ contains two clauses that deal with women and marriage. The first,

clause III (ll. 246-51), is short and particularly illuminating on the legislation of marriage.

[Question:] According to previous dice edicts, when a girl breaks off a marriage (*bag-rgod*)⁴⁴ and until now resides in her paternal home and stays there, and the husband (*khyim-thab*) asks that she not be sent [back], and the parents and [the girl] herself at first agree but it now comes about, however, that they do not agree and he requests that a substitute (*glud*) be given, how is it to be given?

[Answer:] According to the red notch [instructions], no fine should be paid for the desertion up to the present, and [the girl] herself shall be given to her husband.

*bka' sho 'i sngun / rol du pud med pag rgod bgyIste/ da' ltar pha myIng
la gnas [pa] zhIng mchIs pa/ khyIm thab gyis nI [drung] myi btang par
gsol/ pha ma dang dngos gyls nI thog ma yang mchId mjal⁴⁵ pas da' /
rung yang mchI mjal par myI 'byung gis / glud 'tshal par yang gsol ba'
mchIs na ji ltar 'tshal // kha mar las / pardu rang reng 'tshal pe'i chad
pa ni ma mchIs / dngos ni khyIm thab / stsol cig/ /*

In this passage, the law falls heavily on the side of the husband. His request for a substitute wife is analogous to an investor's demand to be 'made whole' following an unexpected loss. The legal resolution—that his in-laws need not supply a substitute, but must return him his wife—suggests a 'for better or for worse' approach to marriage. This approach to a man's wife as inalienable property is not so surprising, given that we have records from Dunhuang of marriage by sale (*gnyen-tshongs*) (TAKEUCHI 1995: 162-63).

Among Tibetan nomads there are also legal customs that govern such situations. Describing legal customs among Tibetan nomads in Rdza-chu-kha, Mgo-log, Gser-thang and elsewhere, Nam-mkha'i Nor-bu notes the custom of 'restitution for *mo-sha*'. This term, *mo-sha*, is used to refer to a situation where a girl breaks off a marriage and returns to her parents, generally after three days. Nor-bu attributes this mainly to the nomadic custom of arranged marriage, which leads to situations where the bride and groom have never met before their marriage. As recompense for *mo-sha*, the bride's family

⁴⁴ This meaning is not entirely certain, but is suggested by the context. One reading would be *bag bgod*, 'to separate the marriage'.

⁴⁵ There is a small circle over the *ma* prefix.

is required to give the groom a good young horse and to pay back nine-fold any bride price given them.⁴⁶

Another section of ‘Replies’, clause VII (ll. 268-86), deals with the proper legal procedure when a married woman is stolen from her husband or when an unmarried woman is kidnapped. This is one of the most difficult clauses in the text, and it should be stressed that the translation is provisional. A major part of the clause concerns *’tsho* and *’tshos-pa*, which I have rendered in terms of its sexual denotation, and not as ‘livelihood’, or any of its other possible meanings.⁴⁷

From a supplement (*yan-lag*) to the dice statutes: decision in response to a petition dispatched (*dgyigs*) from the place [seat] of the exterior minister to the place of the judge[s] (*zhal-ces-pa*) of the court retinue: in previous dice edicts, if a married woman is stolen or captured by another, as regards her sexual activity (*’tshos-pa*) up to the present, is she returned to the care of her previous husband (*bdag-po*), or, not being separated from her [present] sexual activity, is a human loan to be given (*myi skyin stsal*)? How do you command?

According to the replies concerning the dice statutes of the horse year, if the woman’s husband and owner are unable to secure her sale, and the thieves and abductors and so forth are unable, the judicial punishment of her present defilers (*’tshos-pa rnams*)⁴⁸ will be decided by means of dice. As for the woman herself, do not subsequently separate her from her sexual activity, but leave her with her defilers. There are no dice for men, fields and houses, but (*gyis*) if they give a human loan (*myi skyin na*), they must each give one that is commensurate.

⁴⁶ Nor-bu’s work is excerpted in BSOD-NAMS TSHE-RING 2004: 381.

⁴⁷ For the range of meaning of *’tsho* and related words, along with examples from Old Tibetan texts, see STEIN 1973: 422-23.

⁴⁸ While ‘defilers’ is an unfortunate translation due to the considerable baggage it carries, ‘sexual partners’ ignores the fact that the woman has been kidnapped, and ‘rapists’ would be indicated by another Tibetan term, *byi-ba*. This may be a case where vulgarity is not a failure to communicate, but an accurate translation of the Tibetan. In point of fact, another Old Tibetan document, a wooden slip from Miran, reveals that there was a law for punishing rape committed by soldiers, and that justice was administrated directly by the general (*dmag-pon*) and the ‘inspector’ (*spyān*). The slip reads, ‘rapist dispatched to the general and inspector to try according to the great law’ (*byi ba bgyis pa khrims che la thug pa // dmag pon dang/ spyān gis dbyongs dkyigs [la] gsol cig*. TLTD2: 455). Reading this same fragment, CHAB-SPEL (1989: 139-40) glosses the final *gsol* as *gsod*, and thus interprets this slip as sending the rapist to his death.

According to the red dot (*myig-mar*) [instructions], the precedent (*dpe*) of the dice statutes of the horse year is not really clear. Therefore, even if she is one who has no husband, and someone accuses (*sun-pas*) her of subsequently having sex and coupling (*'du-pa*), this being harmful, it is proper to act in this way according to the replies concerning the dice statutes of the horse year: concerning her sewing and weaving (?), (*kha-tshem dang phang-tshem pa*),⁴⁹ and concerning her sexual activity up until now, if there has been none whatsoever, it will be decided by means of dice between the woman herself and the one who disputes the validity of the claim (*tha-snyad 'dog-ma*).⁵⁰ It is appropriate that she herself be returned.

If one decides by means of dice the legal punishment for the men who forcibly stole her and abruptly (*thugs thub-tu*) sold her, is she herself to be separated from her sexual activity/ defilement or not? If it does not appear clearly according to the dice statutes, what is to be done?

According to the red dot [instructions], the judge replied that if a woman with[out]⁵¹ a husband is abducted and stolen and so forth by others, this is summarised (*'du 'du*) in the above example by the red dot [instructions].

According to the red notch [instructions], act in accordance with the replies concerning the dice statutes of the horse year.

*sho tshigs gyl yan lag las / pho brang khor gyi zhal ces pe sar [nas]
zhus pa/ phyl lon sa nas dgylgste zhus pa / mchld gyis bcade zhus pe'i
zhus lan / bka' sho'I nghan rol du pud med khylm thab mchls pa gzhan
gyi brkus phrog nas / da' ltar 'tshos pa lta bo / bdag po snga ma [stsa]
ngo lendu stsal tam / 'tshos myI dpral bar myI skyin stsal tam jl jl⁵²
ltar 'tshal / rta'I lo'I sho tshigs gyl zhus lan las 'pyung ba' / bud med
bdag po dang / dpang pos⁵³ 'tshong la dpang⁵⁴ pa' / ma lags pa /*

⁴⁹ This may have to be interpreted in the sense of marriage, where, as in many other ritual contexts, the spindle (*phang*) symbolizes the woman. In this sense, *kha-tshem* may have to do with one who is betrothed according to oral agreement, while *phang-tshem* may have to do with one who is betrothed by means of ritual. This, however, is pure speculation.

⁵⁰ For an explanation of this phrase, see TAKEUCHI 1995: 161.

⁵¹ Though the negative *ma* is crossed out here, it should have been left to stand, as the present sentence refers back to a line above that clearly refers to unmarried women.

⁵² Formal (i.e., non-grammatical) duplication from end of line to beginning of next; see note on orthography.

⁵³ Read *dbang-pos*.

⁵⁴ Read *dbang*.

*phrog pa dang brkus pa lastsogs pa myi / dpang⁵⁵ pas 'tshos pa rnams
 khrIn ni shos chod / bud med dngos nI slad gyis / [slad] 'tshos pa dang
 'tsho myI dpral par gzhaḡ / / myI zhIng khyIm la sho ma mchIs gyis /
 myi skyin na tshad 'dra re re phob shlg / / mylg mar las rta'I lo'I [lo]
 sho tshlg gyi dpe 'a gsel ba' lagste / 'dI lta bu khyIm thab ma mchIsu
 lags gyis gyang / khong ta sun pas slar 'tsho zhIng 'du pa' la myI phan
 bas / rta'I lo'I sho tshlg shus las⁵⁶ 'dI bzhIn mdzad / pe'I rigs / kha
 tshem dang phang tshem pa lta bo da' ltar 'tshos pa lta bo nI/ cang ma
 lags gyls / tha snyad 'dog ma' dang / mo reng nI shos chod par yang
 bas / dngos nI lendu stsal pe'I rigs / myI dpang⁵⁷ par brkus pa dang /
 thugs thubdu btsongspa'i rnams / khrIn ni shos chod na / dngos 'tshos
 dpral 'am myI dpral sho tshigs las gsang las gsang bar myi 'byung na
 jI ltar 'tshal / mylg mar las zhal ce pas zhus pa / bud med khyim thab
 [ma] mchIs pa las / gzhan phrog pa dang brkus pa lastsogste / sngar
 mylg mar gong du gsol pe'i nang 'du 'du zhIng mchIs // kha mar las
 rta'I lo'i sho tshigs gyi zhu lan las 'byung ba' [tsho] bzhIn 'tshol cIḡ //*

In the first part of this clause, the judges agree to decide by means of dice the punishment for the married woman's captors. Pragmatically, perhaps, the judges do not attempt to forcibly reclaim the woman for her husband, as he has already failed in this. They hold out the possibility of a repayment in kind, a 'human loan', as recompense for the husband. Incidentally, this type of practice was also followed in early twentieth century Tibet when a man and a woman belonging to different lords were married. In such a case, if the woman went to live with the man, the man's lord was expected to give her lord one of his own female bondservants in return as a 'human trade' (*mi brje*) (GOLDSTEIN 1986: 106). I know of no such examples, however, where such a 'trade' between lords resulted from a marriage by capture.

The second part of the clause is more interesting, as it deals with unmarried women who are captured, and therefore appears to stand witness to the practice of marriage by capture at an early stage in Tibetan history. This type of marriage is known today in many parts of the Himalayas among Tibetan ethnic groups.⁵⁸ The second part of the clause is not as clear as the first part, and the translation is uncertain. One of its most striking aspects is the apparent concern it

⁵⁵ Read *dbang*.

⁵⁶ Read *zhus-lan*.

⁵⁷ Read *dbang*.

⁵⁸ See, for example, VINDING 1998: 225-27, and KIND 2002: 285.

shows with chastity, where dice are prescribed to resolve a dispute of this nature.

The mention of a woman being forcibly kidnapped and sold is echoed in other Old Tibetan documents concerned with marriage. One famous document, PT 1083, contains a sealed, official reply to a petition by the Chinese residents of Sha-chu requesting that the Tibetan and Sum-pa ministers no longer take Chinese women as brides (*mchis-brang du 'tshal-ba*), particularly because they take them under false pretexts (*snyad-bthags*) and make them serve as bondservants (*bran*). The Chinese express a desire to be like the Mthong-khyab people, and 'not allow their women to marry others' (i.e., maintain racial endogamy) (*mthong khyab gyi bu sring lta bu / gzhan du gnyen 'tshal du myi gnang ba dang sbyar zhing*. PT 1083, ll. 5-6). The Tibetan minister contemptuously rejects the request, and the title on the back of the dispatch reads, perhaps sarcastically, 'the seal [of the dispatch] granting the Chinese good marriages'.⁵⁹ Beyond showing how women could be horribly mistreated after marriage, this document paints a fascinating picture of interracial marriage relations in Sha-cu under Tibetan rule. It reveals that the Mthong-khyab, an ethnic group identified perhaps with the Tongjia people (RONG 1990-1991), practiced racial endogamy. It also reveals that there were marriages between Tibetan and Sum-pa men and Chinese women, and that the Chinese were uncomfortable with this arrangement, and particularly with the servitude of their women to their new overlords.

The clauses in 'Replies' that concern the legal status of women partly confirm the approach to women found in Old Tibetan marriage by sale documents. A man's wife was viewed, legally at least, as his property, and he was referred to as her owner (*bdag-po*, *dbang-po*). It appears from clause III that a woman did not have the right to break off a marriage without her husband's consent. Further, should she wish to break off the marriage and return to her natal home, it was incumbent upon her family to provide the husband with a suitable replacement (*glud*). In the case of a married woman being kidnapped, she is literally 'robbed' (*phrog*) or 'stolen' (*brkus*) from her husband. This case is parallel with the last in that the husband is due a replacement, but this time as a 'human loan' from his wife's captors. In addition, the captors face legal punishment, decided by means of dice. The final section of the second clause, where a

⁵⁹ TAKEUCHI (1990: 177-78) reproduces this document in the course of his analysis of its structure.

dispute over an unmarried woman's chastity is decided by means of dice, can also be read as a matter concerning the integrity of a woman as a marriageable commodity, though traditionally this has never been a major concern in Tibetan society.

The Legal Status of Religious Estates

Clause IX (ll. 303-20) concerns not only the legal status of loans made by a monastic estate, but the legal status of religious estates and their subjects in general. The clause is quite remarkable, as it demonstrates that the Buddhist monastic estates and temples enjoyed little, if any, legal protection over and above that accorded to other Tibetan subjects. As this clause necessitates a rethinking of the Tibetan Empire's approach to monastic estates, it will be useful to first review the state of our knowledge on the imperial legislation of Buddhist monasteries and temples.

Our most reliable knowledge about the legal and tax status of the Buddhist community in imperial Tibet comes from inscriptions. The most important of these is of course the Bsam-yas Pillar inscription and the documents that accompanied it. These were composed by Khri Srong-lde-btsan (742-c. 800) around the year 779, after the foundation of Bsam-yas Monastery. The pillar inscription itself is very brief, and on the topic of government support for the temples of Ra-sa and Brag-mar and so forth it only states: 'as to the provisions allotted, they will be neither reduced nor diminished.' (*yo byad spyard/ pa' yang/ de las myi dbrI myi bskyung bar bgyl'o/*) (LI AND COBLIN 1987: 188, ll. 7-9). The specific nature of these provisions is explained in the first of the two edicts (*bka'-gtsigs*) that accompanied the Bsam-yas Pillar. This is essentially a more detailed version of the carved inscription on the pillar, and lists the names of those who swore to uphold the edict. The passage in question states:

The estates (*rkyend*) allotted to provision the three jewels at those temples are of a suitable amount, and having been bestowed by the authority (*bla*), they will be neither reduced nor diminished. (*gtsug lag khang de rnam su dkond mchog gsum gyi yo byad sbyord ba'i rkyend kyang ran pa 'ong par dpags te bla nas phul ba las/ nam zhar kyang mi dbri mi bskyung bar bgyis so/ KhG: 371*).⁶⁰

⁶⁰ See also the translation in RICHARDSON 1998 [1980]: 92.

As is most often the case with Old Tibetan texts of this nature, there is little detail about how the monasteries were actually supplied and administrated. This, however, is elaborated in post-dynastic sources, in particular the *Sba bzhed*.

The system for supporting the religious estates (*lha-ris*), according to the *Sba bzhed*, was set up almost entirely by Ye-shes Dbang-po, the first Tibetan abbot of Bsam-yas Monastery. In fact, the narrative suggests that the abbot went too far in his support of the nascent monastic community, stating that he fled to Lho-brag because of opposition to his plans for reform. Among the reforms we find those listed in the following passage:

Thereafter, through Ye-shes Dbang-po's foresight, and in order to establish the supports of the church (*dkon-mchog*) in perpetuity, one hundred subject households were allotted to the church, and three subject households to each monk. The subjects of the religious estates (*lha-ris*) were no longer controlled by the authority (*bla*), but control over them was entrusted to the *samgha*. (*slad kyi ye shes dbang po mngon shes dang ldan pas/ dkon mchog gi rten yun du gnas pa'i ched du/ dkon mchog gi rten la 'bangs mi khyim brgya/ ban de res la 'bangs mi khyim gsum gsum du bcad/ 'bangs lha ris phal bla nas dbang mi bya bar chad nas/ dbang dge 'dun la bskur nas*).⁶¹

A similar passage is found in the *Dbā' bzhed*, which goes into considerably more detail about how the legislation actually worked. The passage is somewhat clearer in the form in which it is preserved in *KhG*, however, so I will quote this passage here instead.⁶²

[Ye-shes Dbang-po] requested that two hundred subject households be allotted to the Three Jewels, and three subject households be allotted to each monk, and that authority being entrusted to the *samgha*, the subjects, men and fields of the religious estates should not be controlled by the authority (*bla*), and that this should be so in perpetuity... Considering from whom the subjects of the religious estate should be taken—the military (*rgod*), autonomous fiefs (*rang-rje*),⁶³ those in possession of an internal tax document (*khab-so nang-yig can*),⁶⁴ close

⁶¹ See transcription in STEIN 1961b: 53-54. See also the translation in HOUSTON 1980: 66.

⁶² For a rough translation and commentary on this passage in the *Dbā' bzhed*, see WANGDU AND DIEMBERGER 2000: 75-76.

⁶³ This reading of *rang-rje* follows Wangdu and Diemberger's reading of *rang-rje'u* (WANGDU AND DIEMBERGER 2000: 75, n. 278).

⁶⁴ The term *khab-so* appears to refer in general to the tax office/revenue office (*khab-so*) and its functionaries (*khab-so-pa*, *khab-so dpon-sna*) (LI AND COBLIN

relatives (*thugs-gnyen*)⁶⁵ or the good estates—[they decided] that the lord's estates (*rje'i-zhing*) were suitable, and the overseer (*gnang-chen*),⁶⁶ 'Bri Khri-'jam Gung-ston, took it in sections and completely divided it.

dkon cog gsum la 'bangs khyim nyis brgya gang zag ban dhe re la 'bangs khyim gsum gyi thang du gcad de dbang dge 'dun la bskur nas lha ris kyi 'bangs mi zhing la bla nas dbang mi mdzad par bgyis na nam du yang brtan zhing legs zhes gsol ba dang. . . rkyen ris kyi 'bangs ni rgod dang rang rje dang khab so'i nang yig can dang thugs gnyen dang gzhi bzang po 'tshal las su sa bzung/ rje'i zhing ni gang zag do 'tshal las gnang chen 'bri khri 'jam gung ston gyis bus bzung ba bzhin du bcad/ (KhG: 382, ll. 6-10, 12-15).

This passage suggests that the religious estates enjoyed functional legislative autonomy under Khri Srong-lde-btsan, and also states that their land grants issued from the emperor himself. The fact that the monasteries enjoyed legislative autonomy tells us little, however, about the legal and tax status of the monastic estates.

The Skar-chung Pillar and accompanying edict, which are essentially Khri Lde-srong-btsan's ratification of his father's Bsam-yas edicts, offer further insight. They both appear to date to the latter half of his reign (c. 800-815),⁶⁷ and RICHARDSON (1998 [1977]: 71)

1987: 123-25). The present clause, therefore, refers to one in possession of an internal document (*nang-yig*) issued by the revenue office. Such document would presumably exempt its bearer from unwanted ad-hoc taxes and tithes such as those in support of establishing a monastery.

⁶⁵ *Thugs-gnyen*, literally 'heart relative', perhaps refers to the hereditary aristocracy, or more explicitly to the near relatives of the Tibetan Emperor, but its definition is far from certain. The phrase *khab-so'i thug-nyen* appears in the entry for 722 in the *Old Tibetan Annals* (BACOT *et al* 1940-46: 23, 46).

⁶⁶ Translating the *Prophecy of Samghavardhana*, Thomas renders *gnang-chen* 'important personages' (TLTD1: 60, n.6). In this case, however, it clearly refers to a specific position or post. The spelling and abbreviation make it doubtful that this refers to the great minister of the interior (*nang-blon chen-po*), and the name 'Bri Khri-'jam Gung-ston appears nowhere in the list of ministers of the interior in the Bsam-yas edict preserved in *KhG*. The *Dbā' bzhed*, however, clarifies the term considerably. In a passage where Ye-shes Dbang-po dissuades Khri Srong-lde-btsan from allotting seven households to each monk in favour of three, he argues that 'some *gnang-chen* would be abandoned by their *sne-bran*' (WANGDU AND DIEMERGER 2000: 75). Reading *sne-bran* as a type of bondservant, it is clear that the worry is that they would abandon their estates. As seen from the passage above, the estates are managed by the *gnang-chen*, but owned by the emperor. Therefore 'overseer' seems an adequate translation.

⁶⁷ On the dates of his reign and the chronology of events surrounding his succession, see DOTSON forthcoming c.

proposes c. 812 as a likely date for the inscription. The following passage is from lines 48-51 of the Skar-chung Pillar inscription.

According to the custom upheld by my forebears and my descendants of neither debasing nor destroying the estates designated for the Three Jewels, they are administered according to what appears in the earliest (*mgo-nan*) register of households (*// yab mes dbon sras gang gl ring la yang rung ste/ dkon mchog gsum gyI rkyen bcaḍ pa'i rnams kyang ma dma's ma zhlḡ pa'i chos su// lha rIs kyi khyIm ylg gl mgo nan las 'byung ba bzhlIn du chis mdzad do//*)⁶⁸

This passage suggests that the religious estates were subject to government administration (*chis*),⁶⁹ but that they enjoyed a discount in as much as they were administered according to their original allotment of subject households and not the current tally, which would presumably include a greater number of households. In this way they seem to have enjoyed a privileged tax status in that their growth was not factored in to their tax obligation. The passage also reveals that estates kept records of their subject or tenant households, and that these records were called 'household registers' (*khyim-yig*).

The Skar-chung Edict, preserved in *KhG*, goes into considerably more detail regarding the status of the Buddhist clergy and their property.

Monks shall not be awarded as the bondservants (*bran*) of others. They will not be punished with suppression, and [if] they are involved in a household's legal punishment (*khrin*), the charge (*gyod*) shall not include them. We, the father and the son, have indeed so granted to those officiant-donees (*mchod-gnas*).⁷⁰ Never will we eschew or renounce the offerings and the established supports of the Three Jewels at the emperor's court. Never will they not act as officiant-donees. In short, in the emperor's court and in the realm of Tibet, there will never be any manner of renouncing or going without the Three Jewels, whether in the reigns of my ancestors or my descendants. Never will those estates (*rkyen*) allotted to the Three Jewels deteriorate, be destroyed or not practice the Dharma.

⁶⁸ From transliteration in LI AND COBLIN 1987: 320, ll. 48-51. For translations, see LI AND COBLIN 1987: 328 and RICHARDSON 1985: 81.

⁶⁹ On the meaning of *chis* and *tshis*, see RICHARDSON 1998 [1969]: 224 and IMAEDA 1980.

⁷⁰ The term *mchod-gnas* could be translated more literally as 'person worthy of offerings'. It signals a ritual relationship that marks off the religious preceptor as the receiver of prestations, generally from a lay ruler or benefactor (*yon-bdag*). See, most recently, SEYFORTH RUEGG 2004.

rab tu byung ba'i rnam gzhan gyi bran du mi sbyin/ nan gyis mi dbab/ khyim pa'i khrin la gtags te gyod la mi gdags shing / nged yab sras kyis mchod gnas su gnang ba bzhin du byas te/ btsan pho'i/ pho brang na dkond cog gsum gyi rten btsugs cing / mchod pa yang gud du spang zhing bskar re/ mchod gnas su myi bya re/ mdor na/ btsan pho'i/ pho brang dang bod kham na/ dkond cog gsum myed pa dang spang ba'i thabs ji yang bya re/ yab mes dbon sras gang gi ring la yang rung ste/ dkond cog gsum gyi rkyen bcad pa'i rnam kyang / ma dams ma zhig pa'i chos mi bya re/ (KhG: 411).⁷¹

This passage reveals that the grants allotted to the Buddhist clergy were given in perpetuity and at a fixed rate that could not be lowered. Further, it reveals a certain level of legal immunity on the part of monks in that they were exempted from legal punishments (*khrin*) involving their houses. This passage is also interesting because it suggests that monks did not necessarily live only in monasteries, but could, and indeed did, live as householders.

The Lcang-bu Inscription, issued by Khri Lde-srong-btsan's son, Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan (reigned 815-841), is essentially a charter for Lcang-bu Temple. On the topics of legislation and tax, the edict states:

He arranged for four monks to reside there and fully apportioned servants of the estate, fields and pastures, religious accoutrements, wealth, cattle and so forth. It serves as a perpetual gift of Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan. Even the name of this temple was given by the Btsan-po's order. He attached it to the back of his tutelary temple, 'On-cang-do, and ordered that it be administrated by the authority (*bla*). The wealth and subjects of the religious estate will not be taxed, and they are not subject to fines, punishments and so forth. They are granted the status of a great religious estate.

dge slong bzhi gnas par sbyar nas// rkyen kyi bran dang/ zhing 'brog dang/ lha cha dang/ nor rdzas dang/ rkang 'gros las stsogs pa/ tshang bar bcad de// btsan po khri gtsug lde brtsan gyi sku yon rgyun myi 'chad par byed do// gtsug lag khang 'dli'i mtshan yang// btsan po'i bka' zhal gyis btags ste/ 'on cang do'i thugs dam gyi gtsug lag khang chen po'i mjug la gdags shing/ chis kyang/ bla nas mdzad par// bka's gnang// lha rls kyi 'bangs dang/ dkor la/ khral myi dbab pa dang/ khwa dang/ chad ka myi bzhes pa las stsogs pa yang// lha rls chen po'i thang du// bka's gnang ngo//⁷²

⁷¹ See also the translation by TUCCI (1950: 53-54).

⁷² From transliteration in LI AND COBLIN 1987: 302-03, ll. 17-31. See also the translations in LI AND COBLIN 1987: 308-09 and RICHARDSON 1985: 97-99.

This very insightful passage reveals the precise nature of the material support necessary for the establishment of a Buddhist temple and it also reveals a good deal about the temple's tax status. It demonstrates that the religious estate was tax-exempt (*khral myi dbab*), and enjoyed immunity from fines (*khwa*) and punishment (*chad-ka*). This may be due to its status as a particular class of religious estate, namely a 'great religious estate' (*lha-ris chen-po*), though this connection is not made explicitly in the edict.

The 'Inventory of Yu-lim Gtsug-lag-khang', in PT 997, contains a 'record' (*thang-yig*) of the religious estate's holdings. Records such as these were deposited in an inventory (*dkar-chag*), which was copied and kept by various authorities (RICHARDSON 1998 [1992]: 280-82). PT 997 also reveals that Yu-lim Gtsug-lag-khang, and presumably other religious estates, fell under the jurisdiction of a number of petty functionaries, and that while the temple received gifts (*yon*), it also received fines (*khwa*), punishments (*chad-ka*) and reprimands (*bla-snon*) (RICHARDSON 1998 [1992]: 280-82). This obviously contrasts with the 'great religious estate' of Lcang-bu, and suggests that there was a hierarchy of privilege concerning religious estates.

Having reviewed these sources on the legal and tax status of religious estates in the Tibetan Empire, it is evident that the general picture is that the church was heavily supported by the emperor, and through this support enjoyed a certain degree of administrative autonomy, tax exemption and immunity from fines.

The evidence from 'Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict' generally complicates this picture. Clause IX (ll. 303-20), like all of the clauses in the text, reflects a legal decision made by a judge at the Tibetan court (*pho-brang*).

[Question:] In earlier dice edicts, legal punishments determined in judgments pertaining to the wealth of the church (*bkon-mchog*) were decided by means of dice. If the valuable object itself is paid back (i.e., returned), but there are also requests up until the present by various leaders of the religious estate (*lha-ris*) concerning previously unpaid debts, and if it does not appear clearly [what is to be done] according to this dice edict also, shall we decide by means of dice or not? How do you command?

[Answer:] According to the replies concerning the dice statutes of the horse year, where common subjects take loans from the property of the church and the clergy, or where subjects take a general loan from the church and the clergy, if one relies on the texts of the *dharma*, it is

inappropriate to apply the dice edict, so offer it as an offering (*sog*) or replace the object itself.⁷³ If the item itself is not given, offer its price. As for accrued interest, decide by means of dice. The articles of a monk and subjects of the religious estate are [liable to be] decided by means of dice just like common subjects. Legal punishments (*khrin*), from legal cases or otherwise, concerning the church on downwards, are decided by means of dice. Concerning loans (*bskyls-pa*) from the wealth of the church (lit. ‘Three Jewels’) and interest on a loan (*bun-skyed*), the ‘gift’ (*btang*) itself is not decided by means of dice. Concerning interest on a loan and fines and legal punishment, they are decided by means of dice. The personal subjects of a monk are [dealt with] like common [subjects].

[Answer:] According to the red dot (*mylg-mar*) [instructions], taking as an example the dice statutes of the horse year, accrued interest and legal punishments pertaining to the wealth of the church are decided by means of dice. As not deciding [the loan] itself by means of dice accords with the tax statutes from elsewhere (*gud-las*), it is fitting to do this without deciding by means of dice.

According to the red notch (*kha-mar*) [instructions], act in accordance with the replies concerning the dice statutes of the horse year.

bka' sho'i sngun roldu bkon mchogI dkor pa las zhal ce brtsad bzung pa'I khrin nI shos chod [rkanga'] dkor gyI dngos 'jal pa' sngar ma phul pe'I skyin pa' lha rI 'da' par lha ris gyi dpon snas gsol ba' dag gyang mchIste / sho tshlgs 'di las gyang gsang par myi 'byung na shos gcad dam myi gcad ji ltar 'tshal / rta'i lo'I sho tshlgs gyi zhu lan las 'byung ba' / mgon mchog dang dge' dun gyi dkor las 'bangs phal la chags pa dang / 'bangs gyI bu lon bkon mchogs dang / dge 'dun sbyl [las] / chags pa dar ma'I gzhung dang gdugs na / bka' shos gcadu myI rung par 'byung gls sog 'tshal dngos [rting]⁷⁴ su phul clg / dngos dngosu myi 'byor na rindu phul clg / gyur dang skyed nI shos gcado / dge slong gl rdzas dang lha 'bangs rnams [gyI] nI 'bangs phal dang 'dra shos gcado / zhal ce lastsogs pa khrin du rma'o 'tshal bkon mchog man cad gyi shos gcado / bkon mchog gsum gyI dkor las bskyls pa dang bun skyed btang dngos nI shos myI gcado / bun skyed dang chad khrIn nI shos gcado / dge slong sgo sgo'I 'bangs phal dang 'dra'o // mylg mar las rta'I lo'i sho tshlgs gyI dpe 'ang gsol pa lagste / bkon

⁷³ This presumably alludes to the protocols for lending on interest set out in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*, for which see SCHOPEN 2004 [1994]: 47-49, 58-61.

⁷⁴ There is a blue inkspot on this word, and what looks like a *na-ro* above it. Richardson transcribed this as *gting* in a partial transliteration found in his papers at the Bodleian Library.

*chogi dkor gyi [d]gyur skyed dang khrin ni shos gcad / dngos ni shos
myi gcad par sho tshigs gud las [gtug par 'ang] thun par 'byung bas
'dl yang shos myi gcad par mdzad pa'i rigs / / kha mar las rta'i lo'i
sho tshigs [las 'bya] gyi zhu lan [sa] las 'byung ba' bzhin 'tshol clg /*

The first part of the clause deals with loans taken from the church and the proper method of repayment. Here it appears that the interest can be decided by means of dice. The statement that according to the texts of the Dharma it is inappropriate to apply the dice edict to the loan itself is particularly interesting. On the face of it, it may seem that the *saṃgha* is strictly against making a profit from such loans. However, the next sentence states that interest will be decided by means of dice. As mentioned already, the divination manuals used for *mo* divination in IOL Tib J 740 reflect a *bon-po* or *bon-po*-friendly milieu. Is it possible, then, that the *saṃgha* objects to having their cases decided in such a manner? If so, the authorities have ruled against the *saṃgha*, since the clause goes on to state that in the event that the church is punished due to a legal case or another matter, the punishment is decided according to dice. These considerations, however, are secondary.

The clause also states unequivocally that the property and subjects of a monk are treated in exactly the same way as those of a commoner. This is in full agreement with Uray's observations, based on separate documents, that not only the subjects of a religious estate, but the monks themselves, were subject to military service (URAY 1961: 229).⁷⁵

It is difficult to resolve this with the information from the edicts and other sources reviewed above. One possibility is that the edicts record only those most privileged of religious estates—the temples of the nobles and the personal projects of emperors—and that they therefore enjoyed a tax and legal status quite separate from common religious estates. This is hinted at in Khri Gtsug-lde-btsan's designation of Lcang-bu Temple as having the 'rank of a great religious estate' (*lha-ris chen-po'i thang*). It appears to be the case, therefore, that there was a stratified system whereby monastic estates, like imperial administrators, carried graduated ranks to which certain benefits were attached.

In conclusion, we must revise the simplified narrative popularized by later histories such as the *Sba bzhed*. According to this narrative, Dba' Ye-shes Dbang-po dissuaded Khri Srong-lde-btsan from allotting seven subject households to the support of each monk by

⁷⁵ See also BECKWITH 1987: 169-70, n. 174.

arguing that it would lead to the destruction of Buddhism in Tibet and the degradation of the royal lineage. Within the narrative, this serves to foreshadow the disastrous consequences brought on by Ral-pa-can's overzealous allotment of seven households to each monk roughly half a century later. As we can see from the above analysis, there was far more nuance to the Tibetan Empire's approach to monastic estates. There were probably various 'ranks' (*thang*) of monastic estates, with the 'great monastic estates' (*lha-ris chen-po*) enjoying the greatest benefits. These were the personal projects of the Tibetan Emperors or the temples of those with favour at the court. Lower rank temples and monasteries presumably did not enjoy the same type of lavish support, exemption from fines and so on that these great monastic estates did, and so were subject to the types of procedures detailed in clause IX above.

The Provisioning and Conscription of the Tibetan Imperial Army

Beyond being the period in which Buddhism first took root in Tibet, the Tibetan Empire is perhaps best known as the time of Tibet's greatest military prowess. During this age, Tibet vied with China for control of the Silk Route, did battle with the Turks, the Türgis, the Arabs, the Nanzhao Kingdom and the Uighurs. To do so, they required a massive army and a system for requisitioning and supplying their soldiers. While numerous articles have been written about the structure of the Tibetan military, and contribute greatly to our understanding of the Tibetan Empire, none to date have shown how the Tibetan army was constituted and supported. Our only knowledge of how troops were levied comes from one terse statement in the *Old Tang Annals* that states: 'For collecting warriors they use gold arrows.' (BUSHELL 1880: 440).

The longest and most detailed clause in 'Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict', clause XI (ll. 331-59), concerns precisely the conscription and provisioning of troops, and describes the system in some detail. It reveals how the Tibetan army was levied and supported, and how provisions were effectively distributed to the troops. The clause, which becomes an enlightening discourse on the policies of imperial Tibet's army, arises out of a dispute concerning provisions, specifically on what is to be done with the surplus bales of provisions sent by an estate-holder for his bondservants who were conscripted as soldiers.

[Question:] From a supplement (*yal-ga*) to the dice statutes of the tiger⁷⁶ year: decision dispatched from the judge(s) of the court retinue to the minister of the exterior: in previous dice edicts, [when people] were gathered in the fields (*skyar btus*) for official duty (*rje-blas*), the estate holder (*gzhi-bu*) provisioned them (*brdzangs-pa*) and they were assigned to official duty as soldiers. Concerning soldier punishment itself, it also arises from the statutes of the dice edict that no legal punishment is meted out. Concerning provisioning soldiers to war, a separate soldier having received [the provisions] (*dmag god thob*), when they are gathered afterwards and the provisions are given, are they [still] given, or are they given back [to the estate holder]?

[Answer:] According to the red notch [instructions], have the minister of the exterior dispatch [a letter] asking whether gathering them like this is permissible or impermissible.

[Answer:] According to the red dot [instructions], if one adheres to the manual/ code (*rtis-mgo*) for gathering soldiers (*mun-dmag*) and the pronouncements of the authority (*bla'i bka'-gsung-ba*), all other soldiers are gathered. Concerning their provisioning through planting the harvest, and their provisions falling to someone else, they are put in bales (*ltang-bu bab*), and, under the soldiers of the thousand-district (*stong-sde so'i 'og*), they become internal affairs (*nang-srid*). They then go to be sent as provisions by the group of ten (*bcu-tshan*) and the tally group (*khram-tshan*).

Now, as for pursuing the soldiers' provisions by deciding the soldier fines by means of dice, generally many are also like this. As for the military fine, though his own punishment itself is decided by means of dice, concerning the provisions sent by the estate holder (*gzhi-bu*), according to the law, the soldiers own them. From when they were first levied from the estate and given in perpetuity (*gtan-du stsal*), they were the soldiers' possessions (*nor*). Although this was so even before the dice edict was issued, when the military punishment (*dmag chad*) is death or banishment, the judicial punishment extends to one's entire family (*bu-smad kun*), but [if] the estate holder does not evade (*bda'*) provisioning [his soldiers], and if this accords with what is seen (*rmyig*), interest does not accrue on the loan either. Since an estate holder who up until now evades [provisioning soldiers] will anger all subjects, it is fitting to proceed by deciding by means of dice the provisions as well. If one proceeds by deciding by means of dice in accordance with the above request, an estate holder's soldiers'

⁷⁶ 'Horse' (*rta*) was crossed out and replaced, below the line by *sta*, presumably for tiger (*stag*).

[provisions] would not be used up elsewhere (*god du ma chud-pas*), and whatever of the [estate holder's] servants (*bu-bran*) who are suitable to be levied will indeed become soldiers. The provisions will also be gradually paid back, and whether they lose or win, concerning the military punishment, which is like the official punishment, banishment and death and serious legal punishment will be resolved by means of the dice edict. The crop fields (*rkya*) being resolved by means of the dice edict as well, is it permissible or impermissible not to add [soldiers] to the crop fields?

[Answer:] According to the red notch [instructions], do not grant the military punishments to separate crop fields, but add the soldiers to the estate. Concerning the provisions, do not decide by means of dice the interest on the loans, but return them to the estate holder.

[*rta*'I] *sta lo*'I *sho tshigs gyl yal ga' las pho brang khor gyl zhal ces pas* / [*phyi blon sar*] *zhal ce*'i *pe*'I *sa nas zhus las* / *phyi blon sar dgyigste mchId gyis bcad pa* / /*bka'* *sho*'i *sngan roldu* / *rje blas skyar btuste* / *gzhl bus brdzangs pa las dmag myl rje blas gcad pa dmag chad dngos nI khrin myi rma bar bka'* *sho*'i *tshigs las gyang* 'byungs *na* / *dmagmag rdzangs lta bo* / *dmag god thob pas* / *thus slad ma*'i *tshe* 'ang [*za*] *rdzong* 'tshalte / [*sla*] 'tshal tam / *slar* 'buldu *stsal* / *kha mar las* 'di *lta bsdu be*'i *rIgs sam myi rIgs* / *phyi blon gyls dbyigste gsol cig* / *mylg mar las* 'byung *ba*' / *mun dmag btus pe*'I *rtsis mgo dang bla*'I *bka'* *gsung ba*' *dag dang* [*ga*] *sbyar na* / *mun mun*⁷⁷ *dmag gzhan kun bsdu* / *rkyar btab pe*'i *sgos rdzong* 'dI *lta bo rdzang gzhan la dbab par nI ltang bur bab pas da*' *ltar* / *stong sde so*'i 'og *nang srId du bgyis nas bcu tshan dang khram tshan gyls rdzong ba*' *du mchis da*' *dmag chad shos khums pe*'i *dmag rdzong ded pa nI spyi mangdu mchis pa yang* 'dra / *dmag chad dngos gyl bka'* *chad nI shos khums par yang bas na* / *gzhl pus brdzangs pe*'i *rdzangs lta bo khrims gyls dmag myis dpangste*⁷⁸ / *thog ma gzhl bo las* 'gug *pe*'i *tshe yang gtandu stsal pas dmag myl nor lagste* / *bka'* *sho ma byungdu lags gyls gyang dmag chad* 'gum 'am *spyugs na* / *bu smad kun yang khrIn gyl bka'* *chad la* / *thug pas* / *gzhl bus rdzangs bdar*⁷⁹ *ma mchIs pa lagste* 'dI *yang rmyig dang sbyar na* / *bu lundu yang myl* 'gyur *la* / *da*' *ltar gzhl pus bda*' *ba*' / *yongs* 'bangs *khrog par* 'gyur *pas rdzangs gyl rnam gyang shos gcad par mdzad pe*'i *rIgs* / *gong du gsol ba gzhlIn shos gcad par mdzad na* / *gzhl po*'i *mun dmag gyang godu ma chud pas* / *bu bran btu pe*'i 'os *mchIs pa mchIs nI dmag myi* 'ang *bab* / *rdzongs gyang nyl rimdu du*

⁷⁷ Formal (i.e., non-grammatical) duplication from end of line to beginning of next; see note on orthography.

⁷⁸ Read *dbangste*.

⁷⁹ Read *bda*'.

'jalte pham yang rab na / bka' chad dang 'dra bar gyur pa dmag chad lta bo 'gum spyugs a thug pa yang khrin chen po yang bka' shos/ khums / rkya 'ang bka' shos dgum zhIng rkya yuldu ma bsnan pe'i / rIgs sam myi rIgs // kha mar las dmag chad rnams rkya god stsal par myI gnaug gIs dmag nI gzhi la snon cig rdzangs [gva] ni bu londu gyur pas shos ma chod gyis gzhi bo slar stsol cig /

The long response from the red dot instructions reveals a highly organized system for provisioning the soldiers. When the Tibetan army came to levy troops from an estate for official duty (*rje-blas*) as soldiers, the estate holder (*gzhi-bu*) was not only forced to allow his bondservants (*bran*) to be taken as troops, but was also expected to provision them with the crops from his fields. A certain amount was likely required for each bondservant, and it is this that was sent to his thousand-district (*stong-sde*) in a bale. There, the 'group of ten' (*bcu-tshan*) and the 'tally group' (*khram-tshan*) recorded its receipt and sent it along. Holding the individual estate holders responsible for the provisioning of bondservants conscripted from their estates as soldiers meant that, theoretically, every soldier would be provided for. Further, as the system would not work unless enough bondservants were left to work the fields, it seems, on the surface at least, to be a sustainable model.

The clause also reveals that it was not uncommon for estate-holders to evade the conscription tax, and that punishment for doing so was the death or banishment of an estate-holder's entire family. This implies that the tax was viewed as an onerous one, and that it depleted the estate holder of valuable labour.

The system of troop conscription and provisioning described in this document is highly sophisticated and goes some way towards explaining how Tibet managed to levy and support such a large and successful army. Without the requisite bureaucratic infrastructure, and without the threat of official punishment for those evading these taxes, such a system would have been impossible. PT 1089, a Dunhuang document dealing with the order of rank (*gral-thabs*) in Sha-cu (Shazhou □ □, i.e., Dunhuang), lists several officials who presumably would have been involved in these and other affairs. These are the great minister in charge of pastoral estates of the upper and lower regions (*stod smad gyI phyug-ma'I gzhIs-pon chen-po*) (l. 37), the great tax official (*khral-po[n] chen-po*) (l. 38), the inspector official of estates (*gzhIs-pon spyan*) (l. 41), the deputy official of estates (*gzhIs-pon 'og-pon*) (l. 42), and the tally official (*khram-pa*)

(l. 43). The document also names the appointment of one man as both district tax official and as official in charge of estates' provisions (*gzhi-rdzongs*), a combination of offices that makes perfect sense given that provisioning, as demonstrated by clause XI of IOL Tib J 740, can be regarded as an onerous tax.⁸⁰

The document also sheds some light on the nature of the administrative units *stong-sde* and *tshan*, which have been discussed by URAY (1961, 1982), UEBACH (1994) and TAKEUCHI (1994). Particularly, the clause above confirms that thousand-districts (*stong-sde*) were not concerned only with military matters, and cannot be regarded as brigades. They levied provisions, processed them and sent them along. Further, these tasks were assigned to units within the thousand-district, in this case the 'group of ten' (*bcu-tshan*) and the 'tally group' (*khram-tshan*).

In his study of *tshan* as the subordinate units of the thousand-districts, TAKEUCHI (1994: 856) distinguished two types of *tshan*: the twenty subordinate units of a thousand-district made up of about fifty households each, and the various types of 'compound *tshan*' units. The former unit, Takeuchi argued, was the equivalent of the Chinese unit *jiang* 江. Among the latter, Takeuchi identified *dog-tshan*, *khram-tshan*, *brgya-tshan* and *dar-tshan*. He was not entirely clear of the relationship of these latter types of *tshan* to the former subordinate unit *tshan*, and stated that it 'may be the case that these units in compound terms were selected and formed from the members of each *tshan* for particular purposes' (TAKEUCHI 1994: 855). Among these functions, he noted that the *khram-tshan* and *brgya-tshan* seem to own property.⁸¹

⁸⁰ 'Cang mdo tse was appointed tax official of one district and [official in charge of] estates' provisions (*gzhi-rdzongs*).' (*cang mdo tse sde gcIg gi khral pon dang gzhi rdzongsu bskos so*. PT 1089, l. 59; LALOU 1955: 177-78, 182-84).

⁸¹ Takeuchi arrived at this conclusion based on the appearance in numerous Old Tibetan boundary documents of phrases such as 'to the west it borders on the juniper field of the *khram-tsan* of Da myi bong tshe' (*nub da myi bong tshe khram tsan kyi shug zhing la thug*. IOL Tib J 1410; TAKEUCHI 1994: 854). If we proceed with the generally safe assumption that the Tibetan ruler enjoyed at least nominal ownership of all the land, then these *tshan* groups cannot be regarded as landowners, but must be seen as usufructuaries. Alternatively, it is possible that these boundary documents list neighbouring fields not by their usufructuaries, but by those whose authority they fell under in terms of thousand-district accounting. The latter possibility would make sense in the context of an official document dealing with the jurisdiction of the tally.

The explicit mention in IOL Tib J 740 of a ‘group of ten’ (*bcu-tshan*), along with the ‘tally group’ (*khram-tshan*), and the *dog-tshan*, *brgya-tshan* and *dar-tshan* mentioned by Takeuchi, suggest how these ‘compound *tshan*’ units differed from the ‘standard *tshan*’ units of fifty households. Though also subordinate to the thousand-district, the compound *tshan* units were made up of various numbers: we have seen already the ‘group of ten’ (*bcu-tshan*) and the ‘group of one hundred’ (*brgya-tshan*). This indicates that *tshan* in these compounds does indeed mean ‘group’, or ‘team’. Whether or not members of these groups came also from the same ‘standard *tshan*’ or *jiang* □ is probably secondary, though in the case of a team of one hundred, this is obviously impossible. This partly resolves the relationship between the ‘standard *tshan*’/*jiang* □ and the ‘compound *tshan*’ teams or groups.⁸²

CONCLUSIONS

The Old Tibetan document IOL Tib J 740, comprising a *mo* divination text and a legal text entitled ‘Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict’, is of great importance for a number of reasons. The connection between the divination text and the legal text reveals that local magistrates employed divination dice and divination manuals to decide legal disputes. In doing so, the method by which cases were decided overlapped significantly with ritual technologies employed by ritual specialists for healing and prognostication. Whether such ritual specialists indeed had a role in the administration of legal justice in these and other cases is unclear. The content of the divination text reveals a truly ‘imperial’ pantheon of deities from whose mouths the prognoses come, in that the text names territorial deities of several different regions. This reveals the creation of a pan-Tibetan pantheon of divinities called into existence by the Tibetan Empire’s expansion and its administrative centralization.

⁸² This essentially confirms one of Takeuchi’s reservations: ‘we still have to hold as a possibility that *tshan* in these compound terms have no direct connection with the administrative units *tshan* and was simply a common word meaning ‘group’, because there is a case where *tshan* was apparently used as a common noun...’ (TAKEUCHI 1994: 860, n. 32).

While in modern Tibetan legal practice it appears that dice, ordeal and chance were employed as a last resort when the facts of a case were disputed or unclear, this is not the case in the clauses of 'Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict'. It is evident from the repeated references to earlier dice edicts, such as that of the horse year, that the government issued norms for how to employ dice in legal cases. The clauses of IOL Tib J 740 arise from issues that were not covered by these norms and required clarification. They plainly include instances where dice decided not only disputed facts, but the final outcome of the case, and the punishment of a guilty party. The use of dice was therefore not a desperate measure, but a standard practice codified by legal manuals.

Whether recourse to dice in such decisions is interpreted as revealing the will of the gods or being simply a matter of chance, in either case the dice act as an accepted authority exterior to the disputants and the court itself. In this, the will of the gods or the luck of the dice stands over and above the legal process itself. This deflects the burden of agency from the officials of the court and presumably diffuses the conflict between the disputants.

The sets of questions and answers found in 'Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict' expand our understanding of several facets of the social history of the Tibetan Empire. In both form and content, 'Replies' emphasizes the centralization of the Tibetan Empire. Faced with legal cases that were not covered by the various legal manuals at their disposal, local magistrates brought their problem to the minister of the exterior (*phyi-blon*), who in turn sent the matter to the judges of the court retinue. The judges then dispatched either a full decision or a set of guidelines for deciding a case, as in the many instances in the text when the judges instruct that a case should be decided by means of dice. The numerous clauses dealing with debt, loans and interest reveal the extent to which the individual was beholden to the legal, fiscal and bureaucratic machinery of imperial Tibet. The clauses dealing with marriage, separation and kidnapping or marriage by capture further reveal important aspects of Tibet's social history. The long clause on the legal status of religious estates reveals that monastic estates, the clergy and their subjects were legislated in virtually the same manner as other Tibetan subjects and estates. This leads to the conclusion that the status of monastic estates, like the status of individuals in imperial Tibet, was highly stratified, and that only the most important monastic estates enjoyed the special treatment that came with royal patronage. The final clause of the

document reveals how the Tibetan army was levied and provisioned, thus partially solving one of the great mysteries of Tibet's success as a major military force.

Taken together with other Old Tibetan legal and bureaucratic documents, IOL Tib J 740 contributes to our understanding of the manner in which the Tibetan Empire constituted itself socially and politically. With a greater understanding of Tibet's social history, we can move beyond simple platitudes about the rapid growth of the empire, and be far more precise in charting the expansion of the empire and its reach into nearly every aspect of Tibetan life. Such inquiries into imperial Tibet's legal and bureaucratic culture, along with research into its military and religious traditions, move us towards a social history of Tibet. Such a history will add some nuance and detail to our understanding of the dynamic processes by which a small kingdom in Yar-lung grew to become one of the dominant empires in the history of Central Eurasia.

TRANSLITERATION

What follows is a transliteration of the second part of IOL Tib J 740, 'Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict'. An edited transliteration of the entire document, including the *mo* divination manual, can be found on the website of Old Tibetan Documents Online and IMAEDA AND TAKEUCHI *et al.* 2007: 334-45. I present my own transliteration here both for ease of reference and to demonstrate the pattern of use of the double and single *tsheg* in the text. As mentioned above, I have edited the text as lightly as possible, adding glosses only where they seemed absolutely necessary. Heavier editing can be found in the OTDO transliteration. To review, editing conventions are as follows:

I Reverse *gi-gu*.

î Indiscriminate *gi-gu*.

[abc] Intentional deletions in the original.

abc_{abc}abc Text intercalated below line.

IOL Tib J 740 (2)

- 238 #:// stagI: lo'I: bka'I: sho: byung. be'i: sho: tshIgs: gyI: zhus: lan./ ngo. prang.⁸³ nas: mchIs_{pa}://
- 239 # :/ stagI: lo'I: sho: tshigs: las:/ / stagI: lo'I: dbyar. sla: ['pyar.] 'prIng: po: tshes: drug: phan. cad./
- 240 nyes: pyung: 'o: 'tshal:/ shos: chod. ces: byung: na./ snga. dro: phyi: dro: dag. las: mchId. myi: mjal: pa: mchi_s. na/
- 241 snga. dro: phyi: phyI: dro: gang. [brtsan.] gI: tshigs: brtsan. par. bzung. par. 'tshal:/ / kha: mar. las: tshes: drugi./
- 242 gtugs: pas: gyI: tshigs: gyIs: zung: shIg:/ sho: tshigs: snga: ma: dag. las: myI: zhIng. dang. khyIm: sho: ma:/
- 243 ma: mchIs: pa: skad: gsang. par. 'byung. na./ myI: zhing. khyim: la: shos: gcad. dam: myi: gcad:/ mchid. myi:
- 244 myI: mjal: pa: mang: na: mchId: myi: mjal: pa: phal: che:/ shos: gcad. dam: myI: gcad. ji. ltar. 'tshal:/
- 245 zhIng. khyim: myI: stagI: lo'i: sho: tshigs: dang. spyor. la: [jI:] zhing. khyim: myi: ji: 'ogdu: song. yang. shosmyi:
- 246 chod. gyIs: slar. bdag. po: stsol: cig:/ par: byung: gIs: de: dang. sbyor. cIg:/ bka': sho'I: sngun:/
- 247 roldu: pud. med. pag: rgod. bgyIste:/ da': ltar. pha: myIng. la: gnas: [pa:] zhIng: mchIs: pa:/ khyIm: thab.
- 248 gyis: nI: [drung.] myi: btang: par. gsoj:/ pha: ma: dang. dngos: gyIs: nI: thog: ma: yang. mchId. mjal:⁸⁴ pas: da'://
- 249 rung. yang: mchI. mjal: parmyI: 'byung: gis:/ glud. 'tshal: par: yang: gsol: ba': mchIsna. ji: ltar.
- 250 'tshal:/ / kha: mar: las:/ pardu: rang. reng. 'tshal: pe'I: chad. pa: ni: ma: mchIs:/ dngos: ni khyIm: thab./
- 251 stsol: cig/ / bla: 'ogI: bu: londu: gyur. pe'I: rnam: shos: myi: gcado: zhes: byung: na./ bu. lon. gyi:/
- 252 gyur: ded. pe'I: mchid. nas: nI: gyur. yang. bu. lon. shos: myI: gcad: pe'i. nang: 'du. 'du./ khrin. ma: lags./
- 253 pas: bka': shos: myI: gcad. par. gsoj: ces: mchI:/ chags: pe'i: khungs: po'I: mchId. nas: ni: bla:
- 254 'ogI: bu: lon. shos: myI: gcad. par: 'pyung. gis:/ gyur. shos: myi: gcad. par: yang: myi: 'pyung:
- 255 la:/ gyur. ces: bgyI: pa': bu: lon. dngos: sho. ma: lagste:/ sngar: bu: lon: dusu: ma: phul: pe'i: nongs:

⁸³ Read *pho-brang*.

⁸⁴ There is a small circle over the *ma* prefix.

- 256 pe'i. chad. par. gyur. pas:/ 'dl: yang: nyes: che: phra: [pa:] 'dra:
pas:/ chad. pa: 'gum: spyug: man. cad.
257 la: thug: pa:/ thugs: dpag: mdzad. pe'i: bka': shos: bcad. par.
gsol: ces: 'byung. 'ba'di: rnam:
258 gang: ltar. 'tshal:/ kha: mar. las: byung. ba': shos: gcad. par:
'tshol: cIg:// nongs: skyon. mchIs: pa:
259 dang:/ 'og: dum: bgyis: pa: lastsogs: pa:/ 'ogdu: tshongsu: bgyis:
pa: bu: lon. chags_{pa}. snyadu. dam: rgya.
260 las: khungs: po'I: mchId. nas: nI:/ tshongsu: bgyis: pa[s:] ma:
[lagste:] 'am: bu: lon. dngos: chags: pa:
261 chags: pa: ma: lags[te:] pas: shos: gcad. par. gsol:/
262 ded. pe'i. mchid. nas: nI:/ dam: rgya: brtsan. shos: myi: gcad.
par: gsol: ces: mchi: 'dl: nyis: gang:
263 ltar. 'tshal:/ bu / kha: mar. las: dpyong.⁸⁵ bu: londu: gyur. na.
shos: ma: gcad: cIg:// bzhag: btam: [s] lta:
264 po:: shos: myI: gcad: ces: 'byung. ba'/ myi: dang. rkang: 'gros:
dang. nor: rdzas: gnag: rta: lastsogs: pa:/
265 btams: pa: las/ bka': shogdu: blangs: nas:/ bzhag: pe'i: mchId:
nas: 'dl:/ bka': shos: nI:
266 myI: khums: na:/ dngos: ma: mchIs: na: skyin. khrin: lta: po:
shos: dgum: gam. myI dgum:// jI: ltar. 'tshal:/
267 kha: mar. las: bu: lon. shos: myi: gcad. par: 'byung: bas: shos:
myI: gcad. par: 'tshol: cIg:/
268 sho. tshigs: gyI: yan. lag: las:/ pho: brang. khor: gyi: zhal: ce_{pe}:
sa_r: [nas:] zhus: pa:/ phyI: lon. sa:
269 nas: dgyIgsste: zhus: pa:/ mchId. gyis: bcade: zhus: pe'i: zhus:
lan./ bka': sho'I: sngan. rol:
270 du: pud. med. khyIm: thab: mchIs: pa: gzhan: gyi: brkus: phrog:
nas:/ da': ltar. 'tshos: pa: lta.
271 bo:/ dbag: po: snga. ma: [stsa:] ngo. lendu: stsal: tam:/ 'tshos:
myI: dpral: bar: myI: skyin. stsal: tam: jI:
272 jI: ltar. 'tshal:/ rta'I: lo'I: sho: tshigs: gyI: zhus: lan. las: 'pyung:
ba':/ bud. med. bdag: po: dang./
273 dpang. pos: 'tshong. la: dpang. pa':/ ma: lags: pa:/ phrog: pa:
dang. brkus: pa: lastsogs: pa: myi:/
274 dpang. pas: 'tshos: pa: rnam: khrIn. ni: shos: chod./ bud. med.
dngos: nI: slad. gyis:/ [slad:] 'tshos:

⁸⁵ Read *dpyod*.

- 275 pa: dang: 'tsho: myI: dpral: par. gzhag:/ / myI: zhIng: khyIm: la: sho: ma: mchIs: gyis:/ myi. skyin.
- 276 na: tshad. 'dra. re: re: phob. shIg:/ /myIg: mar. las: rta'I: lo'I: [lo:] sho: tshIgs: gyi: dpe 'a:
- 277 gsel: ba'. lagste:/ 'dI: lta: bu: khyIm: thab: ma: mchIsu: lags: gyis: gyang./ khong. ta. sun.
- 278 pas: slar. 'tsho. zhIng. 'du: pa': la: myI: phan. bas:/ rta'I: lo'I: sho: tshIgs: shus: lan. 'dI. bzhIn. mdza_d./
- 279 pe'I: rîgs:/ kha. tshem: dang: phang: tshem:⁸⁶ lta: bo: da': ltar. 'tshos: pa: lta: bo: nî: / cang. ma: lags:
- 280 gyIs:/ tha: snyad. 'dog: ma': dang./ mo: reng. nI: shos: chod. par. yang: bas:/ dngos. nI: lendu. stsal:
- 281 pe'I: rîgs:/ myI: dpang. par. brkus: pa: dang:/ thugs: thubdu: btsongs_{pa}'î: rnam:/ khrIn. ni: shos
- 282 chod. na./ dngos: 'tshos: dpral: 'am: myI: dpral: sho: tshigs: las: gsang. las: gsa_{ng}: par.
- 283 myi: 'byung: na. jI: ltar. 'tshal:/ myIg: mar. las: zhal: ce: pas: zhus: pa:/ bud. med. khyim:
- 284 thab: [ma:] mchIs: pa: las:/ gzhān. phrog: pa: dang. brkus: pa: lastsogste./ sngar. myIg: mar.
- 285 gongdu. gsol: pe'i: nang. 'du: 'du. zhIng: mchIs:// kha: mar. las: rta'I: lo'i: sho: tshigs:
- 286 gyî: zhu: lan. las: 'byung: ba': ['tsho:] bzhIn. 'tshol: cIg:// / chIbs: shul: gong.
- 287 spa. dang: sde.⁸⁷ pas:/ zhang. lon. dang. 'tshal: zas: phor. mnos: pa: gum: pa: dang. stor. pa:
- 288 skyIn. pa'. phab: nas:/ bkye: bskyon: pa':/ stor. ba'. dang. gumpe'i: mdo: rIs: blar. ma: phul:
- 289 par. yang: bas: na./ gum: nas: mdo: rIs: ma: phul: pa': lta: bo:/ phor. ['tshel:] 'tshal: pas:
- 290 gsoj: na:/ bkye: bskyon. lta: bu: chad. khrIn. thebs. lags. zhes: bgyi: pa'. 'dI: lags:/ stor.
- 291 stor. lta: bo: myIs: nongs: pa: yang. ma: lags:/ gum: pa': mdo: rIs: phul: ba': bka'. shos: bcad
- 292 par. gsol:/ na./ jI: ltar. 'tshal:/ rta'i: sho: tshIgs: las: byung: ba': mchibs: phor. mnos: pa: dang:

⁸⁶ *tshes?*

⁸⁷ *ste?*

- 293 g.yar. por. btang: ba'. nI: bzhag: btam: pa: dang. 'draste: shos: myI: 'chod./ pho: dang. g.yar. pa: las
- 294 gum: storte:/ chad. khram: btab. dang. phyi: khungs: dang. nang. khungs: las: chad. pa: nI: shos: gcado:/
- 295 zhes: 'byung./ / myI: mar. las: phor. phog: pa: dang: g.yar. pe'i: skyIn. khrIn:/ rta'i: lo'i
- 296 zhu: lan. las: shos: gcad. par. 'byung./ gIs: gyang:/ bka': khrIm: gyis: skyin. ba': 'da':
- 297 bar. 'byung. pas: sbyangste: gum: stordu: gyur. na:/ bla: 'ogI: bu: londu: 'gyur. pas:/ shos: myi:
- 298 gcad. pe'i: rIgs:/ zhal: ce pas: zhus: pa: las: mdo: rIs: mchis: mchIs: pa:
- 299 ma: mchIs: zhes: bya: ba': nI: stor. pa: la: nI. yong. yang: ma: mchIs:/ gum: ba': la: yang.
- 300 chab: gyIs. 'tshal: pa: dang./ khyI: spyang: gIs: 'tshal: pa: dang./ stor. pa: yang: mchIs: pa.
- 301 zhîg: mchIs: na./ gum: stordu: gyur: tam: ma: gyur. pa': nI: spyang. be'I: nang: du: 'du: bas:
- 302 mdo: rIs: mchIs: ma: mchis. pa: myI. rma. be'i: rIgs:/ / kha: mar: las: shos: myI: gcaḍ.
- 303 par. 'tshol: cIg:/ bka': sho'î: sngun. roldu. bkon. mchogI: dkor. pa: las: zhal: ce:
- 304 brtsad. bzung. pa'I: khrin: nI: shos: chod. [rkanga':] dkor. gyI: dngos: 'jal: pa': sngar: ma:
- 305 phul: pe'I: skyin. par. lha: rI. 'da': par: lha: ris: gyî: dpon. snas: gsol: ba': dag: gyang.
- 306 mchIste:/ sho: tshIgs: 'dî: las: gyang. gsang. par. myi: 'byung. na. shos: gcad. dam: myi: gcad. ji:
- 307 ltar. 'tshal: rta'i: lo'I: sho: tshIgs: gyi: zhu: lan. las: 'byung: ba':/ mgon: mchog: dang.
- 308 dge': dun. gyi: dkor. las: 'bangs: phal: la: chags: pa: dang./ 'bangs: gyI: bu: lon: bkoḥ
- 309 mchogs dang:/ dge: 'dun. spyI: [la:] pa:/ chags: pa: dar: ma'I: gzhung. dang. gdugs. na./
- 310 bka': shos: gcadu. myI: rung. par. 'byung: gIs: sog: 'tshal: dngos: [st]ong.⁸⁸ su: phul.

⁸⁸ There is a blue inkspot on this word, and what looks like a *na-ro* above it. Richardson transcribed this as *gting* in a partial transliteration found in his papers at the Bodleian Library (MS. Or. Richardson 44: 130-31).

- 311 cIḡ:/ dngos: dngosu: myi: 'byor: na. rîndu: phul: cIḡ:/ gyur.
 dang: skyed. nI: shos: gcado:/
- 312 dḡe: slong. ḡI: rdzas: dang. lha. 'bangs: rnams: [ḡyI:] nI: 'bangs:
 phal: dang. 'dra. shos:
- 313 gcado:/ zhal: ce: lastsogs: pa: khrin. du: rma'o: 'tshal: bkon:
 mchog: man. cad: gyi: shos
- 314 gcado:/ bkon: mchog: gsum: ḡyI: dkor: las: bskyIs: pa: dang:
 bun. skyed. btang:
- 315 dngos: nI: shos: myI: gcado:/ bun: skyed. dang. chad. khrIn. nI:
 shos: gcado:/ dḡe: slong. sgo: sgo'I
- 316 'bangs: phal: dang: 'dra'o:/ / myIḡ: mar. las: rta'I: lo'i: sho:
 tshIḡs: ḡyI: dpe: 'ang: gsoj
- 317 pa: lagste:/ bkon. chogi: dkor: ḡyî: [d]gyur: skyed. dang. khrin.
 nI: shos: gcad./ dngos: nI:
- 318 shos: myI: gcad: par: sho: tshIḡs: gud. las: [gtug: par. 'ang.]
 thun. par. 'byung. bas:
- 319 'dI: yang. shos: myI: gcad: par: mdzad. pa'I: rigs:/ / kha: mar.
 las: rta'i: lo'I:
- 320 sho: tshigs: [las: 'bya:] ḡyI: zhu: la_n: [sa:] las: 'byung: ba':
 bzhin. 'tshol: cIḡ:/ sho: tshIḡs
- 321 ngos: chad. dang. ḡtIng. chad. lastsogs: pa: ser. la: thebs: pa:
 khram: nag: la: thebs: pa: dang:/
- 322 dmag: myI: lo: bun. ḡyIs: bcad. pa: dang. mkhar. tsud. lo: chags:
 pe'i: rnams:/ shos:
- 323 gcado: zhes: byungste:/ chad. pa: nî: bka': shos: khums: par:
 yang: bas:/ rje: blang: ngo:
- 324 blang: 'tshal: tam: myI: 'tshal/ / kha: mar: las: dmag: dang.
 mkhar: tsud. bcad. pa'i:
- 325 rnams: chad. pa: yang: shos: chod. dngos: gyang: ḡzhI: ḡzhi: la::
 mchIs:/ dper: na. tshI: gu:
- 326 stag: nu:⁸⁹ la: gtogs: pa: lta: bu: lo: rtsis: ma: bḡyIs: pas: ser. la:
 nI: ma: bebs:⁹⁰
- 327 sog: sa: che: chung. da.⁹¹ jag: rongdu. brtsis: pe'i: chad. byang:
 las: byung. ba': ni: sho: tshIḡs
- 328 las: nghan. cad. nyes: byungo. chog: shos: gcado: zhes: byung:
 bas: khrin. yang: bka: shos

⁸⁹ *ru?*

⁹⁰ *thebs?*

⁹¹ *na?*

- 329 chod: gzhI: gzhi: la: yang: mchIs: par. gnango./ [rta] sta 'I: lo'I:
 sho: tshigs: gyI: yal: ga'.
 330 las: pho: brang. khor. gyI: zhal: ces: pas/ [phyi: blon. sar.] zhal:
 ce'i: pe'I: sa: nas: zhus:
 331 las:/ phyI: blon: sar: dgyigste: mchId. gyis: bcad. pa:/ /bka':
 sho'i: sngan.
 332 roldu:/ rje: blas: skyar. btuste:/ gzhI: bus: brdzangs: pa: las:
 dmag: myI: rje blas
 333 gcad. pa: dmag: chad. dngos: nI: khrin: myi: rma: bar. bka':
 sho'i: tshigs: las:
 334 gyang. 'byung. na./ dmagmag: rdzangs: lta: bo:/ dmag: god.
 thob: pas.⁹²/ thus:
 335 slad. ma'i: tshe: 'ang. [za:] rdzong. 'tshalte:/ [sla:] 'tshal: tam:/
 slar. 'buldu. stsal:/
 336 kha: mar. las: 'di: lta: bsdu: be'i: rIgs: sam. myi: rIgs:/ phyi:
 blon. gyIs:
 337 dgyigste: gsoj: cig:/ myIlg: mar. las: 'byung: ba':/ :mun: dmag:
 btus
 338 pe'i: rtsis: mgo: dang: bla'I: bka': gsung: ba': dag: da_{ng} [ga]
 sbyar. na./ mun.
 339 mun: dmag. gzhan: kun. bsdu./ skyar btab. pegi: sgos: rdzong.
 'dI: lta: bo: rdzang.
 340 gzhan. la: dbab. par. nI: ltang: bur. bab. pas: da': ltar./ stong: sde.
 so'i: 'og.
 341 nang: srId. du: bgyis: nas: bcu: tshan: dang: khram: tshan. gyIs:
 rdzong. ba': du. mchis
 342 da': dmag. chad: shos: khums: pe'i: dmag: rdzong. ded. pa: nI:
 spyi: mangdu. mchis
 343 pa: yang. 'dra:/ dmag. chad. dngos: gyI: bka': chad. nI: shos:
 khums: par. yang:
 344 bas: na./ gzhI: pus: brdzangs: pe. 'i: rdzangs. lta: bo: khrim:
 gyIs: dmag: myis
 345 dpangste:⁹³/ thog: ma: gzhI: bo: las: 'gug: pe'i: tshe: yang:
 gtandu: stsal: pas.
 346 dmag: myI: nor. lagste:/ bka': sho: ma: byungdu: lags: gyIs:
 gyang. dmag. chad.

⁹² *las?*

⁹³ Read *dbangste*.

- 347 'gum: 'am: spyugs: na./ bu. smad. kun. yang. khrIn. gyI: bka':
chad. la:/
- 348 thug: pas:/ gzhI: bus: rdzangs: bdar. ma: mchIs: pa: lagste: 'dI:
yang. rmyig⁹⁴
- 349 dang. sbyar. na./ bu. londu. yang: myI: 'gyur: la:/ da': ltar: gzhI:
pus: bda':
- 350 ba':/ yongs: 'bangs: khrog: par: 'gyur. pas: rdzangs: gyI: rnams:
gyang:
- 351 shos: gcad. par. mdzad. pe'i. rIgs:/ gong. du. gsol: ba: gzhIn.
shos. gcad.
- 352 par: mdzad. na./ gzhI: po'i: mun: dmag: gyang: godu. ma: chud.
pa: sa:⁹⁵/ bu: bran.. btu.
- 353 pe'i: 'os:: mchIs: pa: mchIs: nI. dmag: myi: 'ang:⁹⁶ bab:./
rdzongs: gyang: nyI: rimdu.
- 354 du: 'jalte: pham: yang. rab: na:/ bka'. chad. dang: 'dra: bar. gyur.
pa: dmag: chad.
- 355 lta. bo: 'gum: spyugs: a: thug: pa: yang: khrin: chen: po: yang:
bka': shos/
- 356 khums:/ rkya. 'ang: bka': shos: dgum: zhIng: rkya: yuldu: ma:
bsnan: pe'i:/
- 357 rIgs: sam: myi: rIgs:/ / kha: mar. las: dmag: chad. rnams: rkya.
god.
- 358 tsal: par. myI: gnang: gIs: dmag: nI: gzhi: la: snon. cîg: rdzangs:
[gya:] ni:
- 359 bu: londu. gyur. pas: shos: ma: chod. gyis: gzhi: bo: slar. stsol:
cig./

GLOSSARY

Due to the fact that IOL Tib J 740 has been transliterated by OTDO, and added to their KWIC concordance tool, it is unnecessary to present here a full concordance. Below, however, are some key terms, most of which appear in IOL Tib J 740.

dkar-chag

Manual, inventory.

⁹⁴ [r]myig?

⁹⁵ Read *pas*?

⁹⁶ *gang*?

<i>bka'-khrims</i>	Law (honorific).
<i>bka'-sho</i>	Dice edict.
<i>rkud</i>	Fine, penalty?
<i>rkya</i>	Crop fields.
<i>rkyen(d)</i>	Estate.
<i>skyin-pa</i>	Loan/ debt.
<i>bskyis-pa</i>	Loan/ debt.
<i>kha-(d)mar</i>	Red notched wooden slip.
<i>khram-tshan</i>	Tally group.
<i>khrein</i>	Legal punishment.
<i>khrims</i>	Law.
<i>dang khrims gcig/ chig</i>	Apply the law, try.
<i>gyur</i>	Interest, usually on an overdue loan.
<i>gyur 'ded-pa</i>	Lender; lit. 'the one pursuing the interest'.
<i>dgum</i>	To carry out, execute. Past tense: <i>khums</i> .
<i>dgyigs</i>	To dispatch?
<i>sgor rabs-gcad</i>	Death penalty involving extermination of family line.
<i>angos</i>	Himself, herself, itself.
<i>bcu-tshan</i>	Group of ten.
<i>chags-pa'i khungs-po</i>	Borrower.
<i>chad/ chad-ka</i>	Punishment.
<i>mchid mjal</i>	To agree.
<i>mchid kyis bcad</i>	To decide.
<i>mchis-brang</i>	Bride, wife.
<i>rje-blas</i>	Official duty.
<i>lta-bo</i>	Considering, concerning; similar to <i>lta na</i> ; topicalizer.
<i>thang-yig</i>	Record.
<i>thugs-dpag</i>	Consideration.
<i>thong-myi khrims</i>	Law of homicide.
<i>bda'-ba</i>	To evade.
<i>'dam-po</i>	Legal associate.
<i>gnang-chen</i>	Overseer/ manager of an estate.
<i>mnos-pa</i>	To entrust.
<i>pho-reng</i>	Hinterland?
<i>bag rgod</i>	To break off a marriage, separate?
<i>bu-lon chags-pa</i>	Lender; lit. 'the one who made the loan'.
<i>bla-'og</i>	1. Above and below, high and low. 2. Under the [jurisdiction of the] authority.

<i>bla'og gi bu-lon</i>	A loan 'under the authority;' i.e., a government-protected loan.
<i>blo-yus</i>	Accuser, complainant.
<i>mig-(d)mar</i>	Red dotted wooden slip.
<i>mun-(d)mag</i>	Soldier. Conscript?
<i>myi-skyin</i>	Human loan/ human debt.
<i>myi-stong</i>	Blood money; amount of compensation for murder or injury.
<i>gtsang-dkar</i>	Juror; similar to <i>gtsang-mi</i> .
<i>gtsang-chen</i>	Rank just below that of ministerial aristocracy.
<i>rtsis-mgo</i>	Manual, code.
<i>rdzang/rdzong/brdzangs</i>	To provision.
<i>rdzangs</i>	Provisions.
<i>zhang-lon</i>	Minister, ministerial aristocracy.
<i>zhal-ce(s)-pa</i>	Judge.
<i>zhal-ce dbyangs</i>	To hold a trial; decide a legal case.
<i>gzhi-bu</i>	Estate holder.
<i>bzhag-btam</i>	Deposited security.
<i>yus-bdag</i>	Accuser, complainant.
<i>sho-tshigs</i>	Dice statutes.
<i>shos gcad</i>	To decide by means of dice.

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- PT 1072 Fragments of laws regulating hunting accidents.
- PT 1073 Laws concerning the dog bite.
- PT 1075 Laws concerning theft.
- PT 1083 Petition by Chinese residents of Sha-cu for racial endogamy.
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- PT 1288 Part one of the *Old Tibetan Annals*, 'civil version'.
- PT 1290 Fragmentary text containing the coronation of Khri Gtsug-lde-brtsan, catalogue of principalities and information about messengers.
- ITJ 750 Part two of the *Old Tibetan Annals*, 'civil version'.
- ITJ 753 Laws concerning theft.
- ITJ 1141 Loan document.
- ITJ 1410 Document recording the boundaries of crop fields.
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THE RELATIONS OF THE ELEVENTH-CENTURY
TSONG KHA TRIBAL CONFEDERATION TO ITS NEIGHBOUR
STATES ON THE SILK ROAD*

Bianca Horlemann

The history of the relations of tenth- and eleventh-century Tibet with Central Asia remains poorly documented in contemporary scholarship. In the case of Central Tibet we mainly rely on very scattered information derived from Tibetan religious sources—in written and pictorial form—which mostly post-date the period with which we are concerned. Chinese sources on Central Tibet from this era apparently do not even exist. However, the prospects for research are slightly better with regard to the Tibetan or Tibetanized areas at the periphery, such as the tribal confederation of Tsong kha to the north-east of Central Tibet. Concerning its history, for example, we possess a fair amount of Chinese documentation pertaining to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, supplemented by later sources.

In the case of the general history of eleventh-century Central Asia, there exist, apart from fragmentary Chinese literary sources, a variety of contemporary local materials. These include written and pictorial religious and non-religious documents on paper or silk, as well as coins, steles and stake inscriptions. However, these sources are not abundant and do not pertain evenly to all the different polities in Central Asia. Furthermore, they are difficult to study because of the great diversity of languages and cultures involved. With regard to the Silk Road states, most of the available sources originate from or concern the areas of Turfan/Gaochang □ □, Dunhuang □ □ /Shazhou □ □ and, to a lesser extent, Khotan. These had all been important realms at certain times, and archaeological research in these areas has been more intensive than in other regions. By

* This chapter is based on a paper presented at the conference 'Institutions religieuses, civiles et militaires du Tibet: Documents d'Asie Centrale, de Dunhuang et de Mustang' at the Collège de France in Paris in May 2005. For technical reasons, only simplified Chinese characters have been used.

contrast, data on eleventh-century Kucha and post-1028 Ganzhou, for example, are extremely scarce. Rarely, if ever, do Central Asian sources refer to Tsong kha, so far as I know. Thus, even though it may be fragmentary and sometimes even misinformed or misleading, it seems worthwhile to study the Chinese material referring to our topic.

The reason why Chinese historiography took an interest in Tsong kha is related to its strategic value for the Song 朝 dynasty in the latter's conflict with the Tangut Empire of Xixia 西夏. Thus, with regard to eleventh-century Tsong kha, the neighbours that figure most prominently are, of course, Song China and Xixia. Since these relations have already been studied in other publications,¹ this chapter will focus on the little known examples of interactions between Tsong kha and the former Silk Road states such as Gaochang, Khotan, Kucha, Ganzhou 高昌 and Liangzhou 凉州. Suzhou 宿州, Guazhou 瓜州 and Shazhou 沙州 will also be mentioned. However, I would like to stress that since our knowledge of the history of these ethnically and culturally very diverse oasis states is still very limited, this chapter aspires to provide no more than a general overview.

INTRODUCTION TO TSONG KHA

Geographically, Tsong kha designates a region in northeast A mdo (in present-day northeast Qinghai 青海 and southwest Gansu 甘肃) that is traversed by the Tsong (chu) River,² including its valley and tributaries.³ In the eleventh-century historical context, however, it indicated the area under the control of the Tsong kha confederation that extended east/west roughly from present-day Lan jo (Ch.

¹ See, for example, ZHU 1988, DUNNELL 1994, IWASAKI 1974, 1975, 1986 and HORLEMANN 2004. The research is almost entirely based on Chinese sources. It seems, in fact, that very little information has been transmitted in either Tibetan or Tangut sources. I have been unable to confirm if Uighur or Khotanese sources exist on this topic.

² Ch. Huangshui 湟水.

³ Short geographical descriptions of the Tsong kha region are also included in Brag dgon Dkon mchog Bstan pa Rab rgyas, *Mdo smad chos 'byung*; see the chapters *Mtsho sngon dpon khag gi lo rgyus 'ga' bshad pa*, p. 27, *Tsong chu'i byang rgyud sogs bshad pa*, passim, and *Tsong chu'i lho dang rma chu'i byang rgyud bshad pa*, passim.

Lanzhou □ □) over Zi ling (Ch. Xining □ □) to Stong skor⁴ and north/south from Gser khog⁵ to Min ju.⁶ (See figure 1: Tsong kha and Adjoining Areas.) At the end of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century C.E. several tribes east of Lake Qinghai (Mtsho sngon po) formed a confederation that, during the eleventh century, was ruled by Jiaosiluo 咼□□ and his offspring. Tsong kha's political centre was located in Qingtang □ □ near today's capital of Qinghai Province, Xining. The confederation played a vital economic, political and military role in relation to its neighbours Song China, the Tangut Xixia Empire and the oasis states of the Gansu Corridor. (See figure 2: Tsong kha and its Neighbours.) Tsong kha not only controlled the southern trading routes between Central Asia and the Song Empire, but it was also an important breeding area for horses that were much sought after by the Chinese military. Furthermore, sharing borders with the rival empires of China and Xixia and with the small oasis state of Liangzhou lent Tsong kha special military and strategic significance and made it an attractive potential ally. Even the more distant Liao □ Empire entertained relations with Tsong kha.⁷ Surprisingly, information on the ties between Central Tibet and Tsong kha, which presumably were quite close, hardly exists.⁸

⁴ Ch. Huangyuan 湟源.

⁵ Ch. Datong 大通. Gser khog is missing on the map. It is located ca. 30 km north of Zi ling/Xining by air.

⁶ Also Men ju, Ch. Minzhou 岷州.

⁷ See HORLEMANN 2004: 46.

⁸ Later Tibetan sources, from the fourteenth century onwards, mention a connection between the rulers of Tsong kha and the royal lineage of 'Od srung, one of the sons of Glang Dar ma. This connection appears, however, rather questionable (HORLEMANN 2005). We also know that Tsong kha played a vital role in the revival of Buddhism in Central Tibet during the tenth century when Dgongs pa rab gsal (c. ninth-tenth centuries) and his disciples were teaching the Dharma in this area. Apart from this, information on the tenth- and eleventh-century Tsong kha region in Tibetan sources is scarce. There is a short reference to Tsong kha in the early fourteenth-century Tibetan hagiographical work, *Jo bo rje dpal ldan a ti sha'i rnam thar bka' gdams pha chos* (attributed to 'Brom ston gzhon nu blo gros; see MARTIN 1997: 48-49, no. 69), which mentions the wealth of the king of Tsong kha during Atiśa's lifetime ('BROM STON 1993: 193). Perhaps there exist similar references in other Tibetan sources.

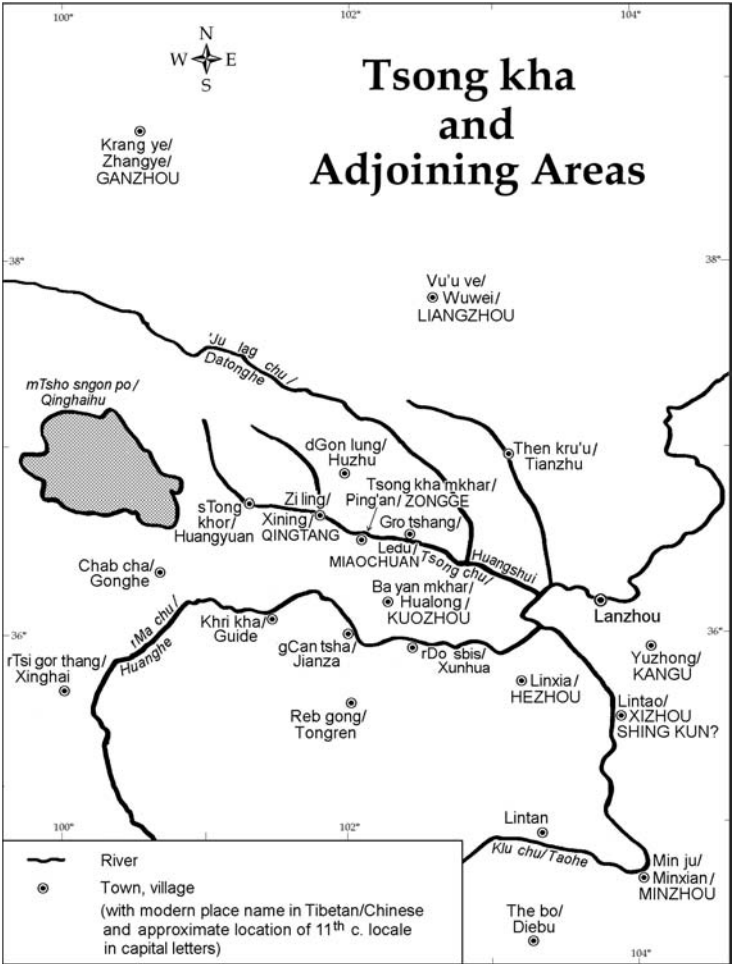


Figure 1: Tsong kha and Adjoining Areas
(B. Horlemann/A. Gruschke)

By the end of the eleventh century, the Tsong kha confederation was gradually disintegrating as the constituent tribes started to form independent alliances with either the Chinese or the Tanguts. With the confederation thus weakened, the tribes were subsequently conquered and absorbed by their former allies.

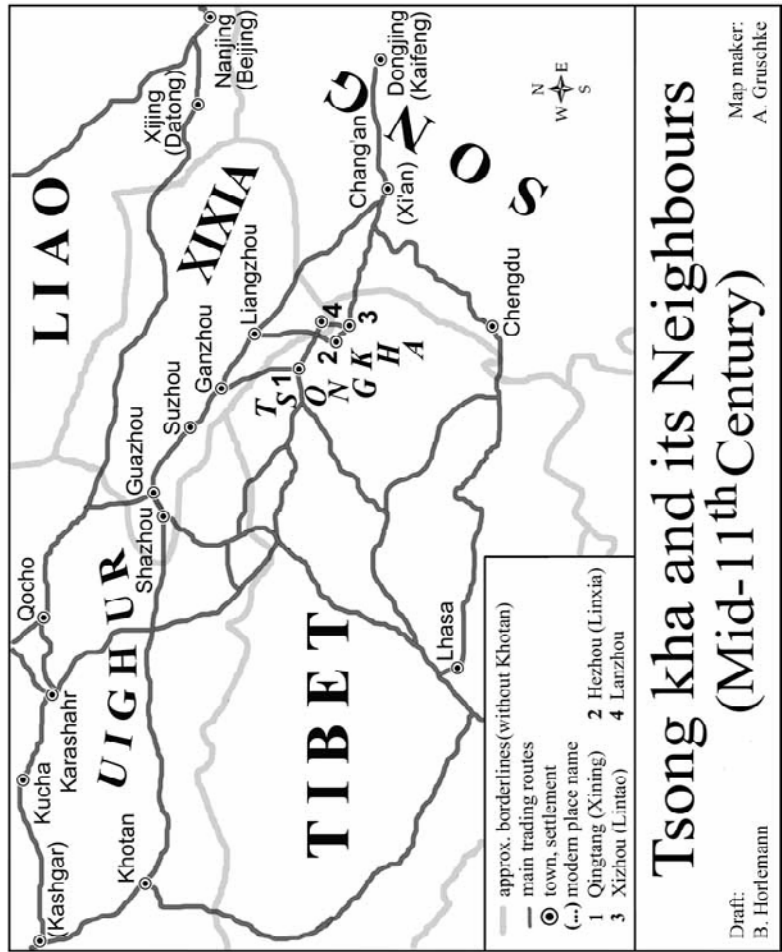


Figure 2: Tsong kha and its Neighbours

TSONG KHA AND THE SILK ROAD STATES

This overview will proceed from Liangzhou at the eastern end of the so-called Gansu Corridor westward to Khotan. Regarding the general nature of contacts between Tsong kha and the Silk Road states, our information is mainly restricted to military affairs, marriage alliances and trade or tribute relations.

1. *Liangzhou* □ □ (*Modern Wuwei* □ □)⁹

Liangzhou is situated at the eastern end of the Gansu Corridor and on the spur of the Qilian □ □ mountains, just north of Tsong kha. It has a long history as a major trading post on the Silk Road and as an important Buddhist centre that dates back to at least the fourth century C.E. Since the mid-tenth century Liangzhou had been ruled by a confederation of different tribes; first under the leadership of the Zhebu □ □ chieftains and later under the leadership of the Zhelong □ □ chieftains. These tribes seem to have been ethnically diverse and probably consisted of Uighurs/Huihe □ □ /Huigu □ □, Qiang □ □, Wenmo 𐰽𐰺𐰍 /Hunmo □ □¹⁰ and Tibetans. Furthermore, Liangzhou also had Chinese inhabitants.¹¹

⁹ Formerly also called Xiliangfu 西凉府.

¹⁰ According to the *Xin Tangshu* the Chinese term Wenmo (also: Wumo, variant: Hunmo) designates groups of people who had been enslaved by the Tibetans in the seventh to ninth centuries and who worked the fields and tended the animals in the newly conquered areas of the Tibetan Empire; *Xin Tangshu* 216b: 6.108. THOMAS (1946: 516) reconstructed Wenmo as Tibetan **(d)mun (d)mag*, a reconstruction that RICHARDSON (1998 [1990]: 173) also adopted, whereas URAY (1988: 517, n. 6) suggested **'od 'bar* without further explication; it seems that Uray refers to HAMILTON 1955, but I could not find *'od 'bar* in HAMILTON, although he has a rather detailed note on the Wenmo on pp. 30-31 as well as on pp. 129-30. According to Brandon Dotson, whose understanding is based on several different Dunhuang texts, *mun dmag* simply designates 'soldiers', possibly 'conscripted soldiers', since estate holders were obliged to provide a certain number of their bondservants as soldiers for the Tibetan army; see DOTSON, in this volume. Thus we might consider 'Wenmo' as a collective term for former serfs of estate holders within the Tibetan Empire who were drafted as soldiers and who, after a military campaign was terminated, served again as farm hands on the newly established estates in the conquered areas. Their ethnic background remains unclear, but most likely the Wenmo were ethnically diverse depending on where and how they became serfs in the first place. However, the Chinese character 'hun 浑' in Hunmo, which is the same as in 'Tuyuhun 吐谷浑', one of the Chinese terms for the 'A zha people, might indicate a connection between these two. This supposition is further supported by the fact that after the collapse of the Tibetan Empire the Wenmo are found all

At the beginning of the eleventh century some tribes that later belonged to the Tsong kha confederation were close allies of Liangzhou in its fight against the Tanguts, which started around 1003. Chinese sources specifically mention tribes from Kangu □ □, Lanzhou and Zongge □ □.¹² When Liangzhou, which was further unsuccessfully attacked by the Tanguts in 1008 and 1015, finally fell around 1032, a large part of Liangzhou's population seems to have fled to the Tsong kha region. The sources speak of about 100,000 people, but this number is most probably inflated.¹³

2. Ganzhou □ □ (Modern Zhangye □ □)

Ganzhou had been dominated by the Uighurs at least since the early tenth century.¹⁴ In the second half of the tenth century, Ganzhou's sphere of influence included not only the oasis of Ganzhou itself, but most likely also the areas of Suzhou □ □ (near modern Jiuquan □ □), Guazhou □ □ (near modern Anxi □ □) and probably even Shazhou □ □.¹⁵ The relationship of Ganzhou to the Uighur Empire of Xizhou □ □ remains obscure; it seems possible that Ganzhou had been Xizhou's vassal. Nevertheless, Ganzhou acted fairly

over Gansu in former strongholds of the Tuyuhun, where they appear to have formed new socio-political entities that became quite influential, with Liangzhou being one such example.

¹¹ For a more detailed account on the history of Liangzhou, see, for instance, IWASAKI 1974 and 1986, as well as the early nineteenth century work by Zhang Shu, the *Liangzhou fuzhi beikao*.

¹² Zongge and the other tribes helped to pursue and punish six former Zhelong tribes that had changed sides from Liangzhou to the Tanguts. See *Songshi* (compiled in the early fourteenth century) 40: 14.157.

¹³ See the eleventh-century work *Longpingji* 20: 10r.

¹⁴ For a more detailed account of Ganzhou's history see PINKS 1968 and HAMILTON 1955.

¹⁵ Ganzhou and Shazhou had struggled for supremacy over the western Gansu Corridor since the early tenth century. In 977, the Ganzhou ruler styled himself *Gan-, Shazhou Huigu Kehan Waisheng* 甘沙州回鹘可汗, the 'Uighur Khan of Gan- and Shazhou, the nephew/son-in-law (of the Chinese emperor)', when sending tribute missions to the Chinese. See *Songshi* 40: 14.114. Regarding the still unresolved question of the relationship between Ganzhou, Suzhou and Guazhou during the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, see PINKS 1968: 73-79.

independently, and, for example, sent its own tribute missions to China on a regular basis.¹⁶

Ganzhou started to come into conflict with the emerging Tangut Xixia Empire at the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century. Furthermore, the Liao Empire also encroached on Ganzhou's territory north of Suzhou/modern Jiuquan. At the beginning of the eleventh century, Ganzhou offered a military alliance to Song China against the Tanguts, but the Chinese court was hesitant because of its ongoing conflict with the Khitan Liao Empire. Thus the Ganzhou Uighurs depended on their immediate neighbours, Liangzhou and the newly-established Tsong kha confederation, for help. Tsong kha was not only already an ally of Liangzhou in its fight against the Tanguts, but it also offered alternative trading routes to China bypassing the Tanguts south of the Qilian mountains. Therefore, the Ganzhou *qaghan* was interested in improving his ties with Tsong kha and so offered a marriage alliance in about 1012/1013. However, the Tsong kha ruler Jiaosiluo refused to pay the bridal price for the Uighur princess and the planned marriage did not take place. Thereafter, Tsong kha also blocked the trading routes for Ganzhou, which caused the *qaghan* to implore the Song court in 1015 to urge Tsong kha to reopen the routes.¹⁷

One Chinese source claims that between 1016 and 1018 the succeeding Ganzhou ruler renewed the offer of a marriage alliance and that thereafter a Uighur princess was married to one of Jiaosiluo's three sons.¹⁸ However, we lack more specific information about this and the source might have confused this marriage with that of either Jiaosiluo's son or grandson to a Kuchean princess, which probably occurred around 1060. (See figure 3: Rulers of Tsong kha and Marriage Alliances.) Nonetheless, Ganzhou resumed its tribute missions to the Chinese court around 1018 and continued to do so until circa 1028.¹⁹

Starting in 1026/27, the Khitan and the Tanguts staged frequent assaults on the greater Ganzhou region. Liao put pressure on the western area and the Tanguts attacked from the east. In Chinese

¹⁶ See *Songshi* 40: 14.114-14.116. Regarding the poorly documented relationship between the Uighur realms of Ganzhou and Xizhou during the tenth and eleventh centuries and the status of Shazhou, see, for example, HUA 2000: 24-26.

¹⁷ See the twelfth-century *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 85: 753 and the eighteenth-century *Ganzhou fuzhi* 1: 179-80.

¹⁸ See *Ganzhou fuzhi* 1: 180.

¹⁹ Ganzhou sent its missions approximately once a year. See *Ganzhou fuzhi* 1: 180-81.

sources, news of the Ganzhou Uighurs stops around 1028, but it might have been a few more years before the Tanguts successfully conquered Ganzhou, since only in 1035 did a great number of Ganzhou Uighurs (approximately 10,000) flee to the Tsong kha territory. Furthermore, only in 1035 did the Tanguts officially incorporate the Ganzhou area into their realm as ‘Zhenyijun’ □ □ □.²⁰

The sources do not mention where in Tsong kha the Ganzhou Uighurs settled, but it seems likely that they took refuge in the area south of the Qilian mountains and north of lake Qinghai. This is the area where we find the so-called ‘Yellow Head Uighurs/Huangtou Huihe □ □ □ □’ starting from the second half of the eleventh century, as well as the ‘Dada □ □ /Tartars’.²¹ When the Chinese court considered enlisting the military help of the Dada and the Uighurs against the Tanguts in the 1080s, they probably referred to these Yellow Head Uighurs and the Caotou Dada □ □ □ □.²² An ethnic group called Sarig Yugur, ‘Yellow Uighurs’, still exists to this day.²³

According to Chinese sources, Uighur tribute missions also occurred in the years 1068, 1073 and 1074; thereafter, the Uighurs rarely sent tribute.²⁴ However, from these sources it is not clear whether these Uighur tribute missions came from the Yellow Head Uighurs or from the Uighurs of the realm of Xizhou.²⁵

²⁰ See *Longpingji* 20: 10r, *Songshi* 40: 14.161 and *Ganzhou fuzhi* 1: 183.

²¹ The latter are said to have sent tribute missions to the Chinese court together with the Ganzhou Uighurs as early as 996, and then again with Tsong kha and the Uighurs starting from about the second half of the eleventh century. See YANG 2003: 34 and *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 341: 3.171. The *Historical Atlas of China* by Tan Qixiang, vol. 6: 40-41, shows a people called ‘Caotou Dada’ 草头鞑鞑 as direct neighbours of the Yellow Head Uighurs. Regarding the tenth-century Dada, see also ZHANG 2003: 43.

²² See *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 346: 3.206.

²³ On the Sarig Yugur, see HOPPE 1998: 56, 151, n. 2 and CLARK 1996: 38-39.

²⁴ See *Songshi* 40: 14.117.

²⁵ Regarding the Xizhou Uighurs, see the paragraphs on Gaochang and Kucha below.

Rulers of Tsong kha and Marriage Alliances

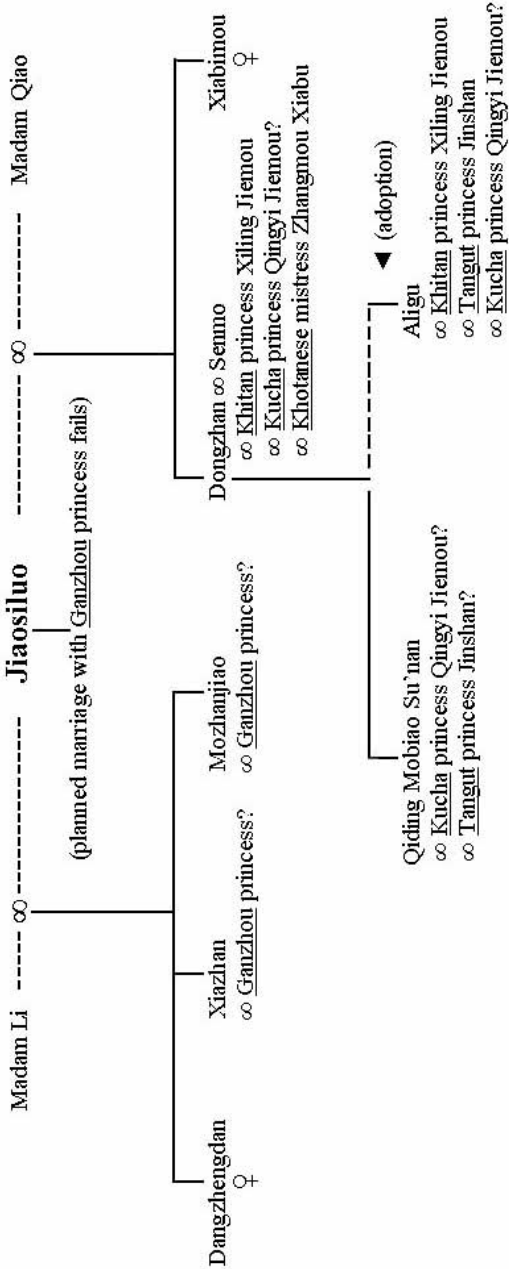


Figure 3: Rulers of Tsong kha and Marriage Alliances

3. Suzhou □ □ (Near Modern Jiuquan □ □) and Guazhou □ □
(Near Modern Anxi □ □)

Neither Suzhou nor Guazhou is specifically mentioned in connection with Tsong kha, and this can be interpreted as further evidence that the two were not independent oasis states but probably belonged to the realm of the Ganzhou Uighurs as already mentioned above.²⁶ Suzhou came under attack from the Khitan in about 1008 and later also from the Tanguts.²⁷ We still do not know when and by whom it was finally conquered. According to the *Historical Atlas of China*, the Suzhou area had become part of the Tangut Empire by 1038.²⁸ Guazhou came under attack by either the Khitan or Tanguts at about the same time as Suzhou and probably also fell in the 1030s. However, different Chinese sources offer different dates: we find 1030, 1036 and 1037.²⁹

4. Shazhou □ □ /Dunhuang □ □

According to Chinese sources, the Shazhou rulers had sent 'tribute' to the Chinese court and received 'gifts' and 'titles' in return since the beginning of the Song Dynasty in the mid-tenth century. Tribute missions from Shazhou are mentioned up to the mid-eleventh century.³⁰ Although Shazhou is not specifically mentioned in connection with Tsong kha, this, again, might be an indication that at the beginning of the eleventh century Shazhou was not an independent oasis state, but was part of the realm of the Ganzhou Uighurs, or was at least closely affiliated with them.³¹ For instance, in 1014 the Shazhou ruler styled himself the *Shazhou Huigu Dunhuang junzi* □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ , or the 'lord of Dunhuang of the Shazhou Uighurs'.³² Another source speaks of the *Gan-, Shazhou Huigu kehan waisheng* □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ , the 'Uighur Khan of Gan- and

²⁶ Refer to n. 15 above.

²⁷ See *Ganzhou fuzhi* 1: 179 and the early twentieth century *Gansu xin tongzhi* 46: 6.

²⁸ See Tan Qixiang, vol. 6: 36-37.

²⁹ See IWASAKI 1986: 103 and *Gansu xin tongzhi* 46: 7.

³⁰ According to URAY (1988: 516), the last tribute mission is mentioned in 1052. However, I was not able to verify his source. On the different tribute missions see also YANG 2003: 34.

³¹ See n. 15 above.

³² See *Gansu xin tongzhi* 46: 6.

Shazhou, the son-in-law/nephew (of the Chinese emperor)'.³³ The context implies that this is the title of only one person and not of two khans. However, in 1030 the Shazhou ruler styled himself *Shazhou Zhenguo wangzi* 王 子 王 子 王 子, the 'king' or 'prince' of Shazhou who protects the country'.³⁴ What might have caused the Shazhou ruler to change his title in 1030? Possible explanations could be:

- a. It is usually assumed that Shazhou was conquered by the Tanguts in the 1030s.³⁵ Thus the change of title might have occurred in connection with the new Xixia overlordship.
- b. Shazhou might have become fully independent after the fall of Ganzhou and before it was conquered by the Tanguts.
- c. It might have fallen under the influence of the encroaching Liao Empire.
- d. It might have become associated with the Xizhou Uighurs.
- e. Or Shazhou might have come under the influence of the Yellow Head Uighurs.³⁶

It seems most probable, in fact, that Shazhou was associated with the Xizhou Uighurs after Ganzhou had been seriously threatened by the Tanguts.³⁷ We know, for instance, that Shazhou allied itself with Kucha in 1037 to send tribute to the Song court. Although the Shazhou area (including Guazhou and Suzhou) was repeatedly attacked by the Tanguts starting from 1030, Shazhou still sent seven tribute missions to the Song between 1034 and 1049.³⁸ The final conquest of Dunhuang itself apparently did not occur before 1052/53.³⁹ In fact, only in the 1070s do we find definite evidence of Tangut presence in Shazhou.⁴⁰

Thus, assuming that Shazhou was never really independent during the eleventh century, having been first dominated by Ganzhou, then by Xizhou and later by the Tanguts, it is not surprising that we find no evidence of any military or marriage alliances between Tsong kha

³³ See *Songshi* 40: 14.114.

³⁴ See URAY 1988: 516.

³⁵ See, for example, HAMILTON 1996: 136 and DUNNELL 1994: 179.

³⁶ For the Yellow Head Uighurs see the Ganzhou chapter above.

³⁷ See KYČANOV 2004: 155 who, however, refers to Moriyasu in this matter.

³⁸ See *Songshi* 40: 14.123.

³⁹ See URAY 1988: 516.

⁴⁰ See DUNNELL 1994: 179 and 1996: 36.

and Shazhou. However, it appears probable that the two nevertheless at least entertained trade relations.

5. *Gaochang* □ □ /*Qocho/Jiaohe* □ □ /*Xizhou* □ □
(*Near Modern Turfan/Tulufan* □ □ □)

The area of Gaochang came under Uighur domination in the mid-ninth century and was apparently the centre of Uighur power in the Tianshan □ □ area during the tenth and eleventh centuries. However, it remains uncertain how far Gaochang's sphere of influence actually extended at given times.⁴¹ Unfortunately, Chinese sources are somewhat confused when they refer to the different Uighur realms. The *Songshi*, for example, has different sections on Gaochang, the Uighurs in general and on Kucha, with the Gan- and Shazhou Uighurs mentioned in the general Uighur section. Furthermore it often refers to the so-called 'Xizhou Uighurs', who are supposed to be equivalent to the Kucha Uighurs,⁴² although 'Xizhou' was one of the old names for Gaochang during the Tang Dynasty and is thus usually associated with this area.⁴³ To make things even more complicated, during the Song Dynasty the name 'Xizhou' apparently also referred to the area of Yanqi □ □ /Kara-shahr, near today's Korla/Ku'erle □ □ □, which is roughly midway between Kucha and Gaochang.⁴⁴ It is usually assumed that the formerly independent realms of Gaochang and Kucha had been united sometime during the tenth century and remained so until the eleventh century.⁴⁵ However, we might also consider the possibility

⁴¹ In 1001 the Uighurs claimed that their realm extended from the snow mountains in the west, i.e., the Tianshan, to the Yellow River in the east; see *Songshi* 40: 14.115. A similar claim is made in a Uighur stake inscription found in Qocho that obviously also refers to the early eleventh century (HAMILTON 2004: 122). Furthermore, we find also the expression *Gaochang zhu guo*, 'all the countries/principalities of Gaochang' in *Songshi* 40: 14.161, which seems to imply that the realm of Gaochang consisted of several subordinate principalities. See also TIAN 2003: 13.

⁴² See *Songshi* 40: 14.123.

⁴³ However, the Chinese military unit that was also called by the name of 'Xizhou' not only moved its seat to Kucha, but also repeatedly changed its name during the seventh and eighth centuries.

⁴⁴ See *Qinding huangyu xiyu tuzhi* 3: 16v, 5:7. Thus, the centre of Uighur power might have shifted at different times and it appears possible that at some point Yanqi was in fact the capital of the united Uighur realm and not Kucha or Turfan/Gaochang proper, but this needs to be examined further.

⁴⁵ Our knowledge of the history of the relations between Gaochang and Kucha from the eighth to the twelfth/thirteenth century is still very limited, as is apparent

that Gaochang and Kucha remained separate, though closely associated political units until Kucha became part of the realm of the Muslim Qarakhanids sometime during the latter part of the eleventh century.⁴⁶ According to the 18th century geographical work *Qinding huangyu xiyu tuzhi*, general references to ‘Gaochang’ in Song Chinese sources might also refer to the former capital or summer residence of Beiting 回回 /Beshbaliq, about 150 km north of modern Turfan, and not necessarily to the area of Gaochang proper.⁴⁷

A unique, but important reference to Tsong kha in this connection concerns its first ruler Jiaosiluo, who, according to some Chinese sources, was supposed to have come from a place named ‘Gaochang Moyuguo’ 高昌莫玉国.⁴⁸ I have not been able to identify Moyuguo 莫玉国, but I presume that it does not designate a *guo* 国, namely a ‘Kingdom or Principality of Moyu’, but that Moyuguo was the Chinese rendering of a Uighur place name in the realm of Gaochang.⁴⁹ Thus, ‘Moyuguo’ might, for example, represent the Turkish ‘Murtuq’, a village not far from where the famous Buddhist grottoes of Bezeklik are situated.⁵⁰ If we presume that Jiaosiluo’s place of origin was in fact in the Turfan area, this would mean that Jiaosiluo was born in a locality under Uighur rule.⁵¹ However, we do not automatically have to consider him a Uighur, since Gaochang, like Tsong kha, had a multi-ethnic population.⁵² Although it appears

from more recent publications. See, for example, TIAN 2003, PETECH 1992, UMEMURA 1996: 365 and TROMBERT 2000.

⁴⁶ On Kucha, see paragraph 6 below.

⁴⁷ See the map and notes in *Qinding huangyu xiyu tuzhi* 3: 10-11.

⁴⁸ See, for example, *Songshi* 40: 14.160 and *Longpingji* 20: 9v.

⁴⁹ According to Chinese custom, the name of the bigger territorial unit precedes the smaller unit, e.g. Zhongguo Beijing. Therefore, with regard to Gaochang Moyuguo, Gaochang should refer to the kingdom or principality whereas Moyuguo designates the smaller locality, e.g. a village or oasis.

⁵⁰ Another location called Moyu 墨玉, albeit with different Chinese characters, is found near Khotan where a great hoard of mainly Song coins, but also including a few Qarakhanid coins, has been unearthed in 1992. See BIRAN 2001: 80. However, this Moyu is most probably not related to Gaochang Moyuguo.

⁵¹ The Turkologist MALJAVKIN (1983: 80) explicitly maintains that Jiaosiluo was born in Turfan.

⁵² The population of Tsong kha probably consisted of remnants of the formerly dominant ‘A zha people (Ch. Tuyuhun 吐谷浑) and of the Qiang 羌, Central Tibetans who had remained after the disintegration of the Tibetan Empire in the ninth century, Tanguts (who were actually multi-ethnic as well), Uighurs, other Turkish people like the Shatuo 沙陀, and last but not least, Chinese who stayed in and around former Chinese military garrisons established during the Tang Dynasty.

that the majority of the population was either Uighur or Chinese, there is evidence of friendly Tibetan-Uighur relations in Gaochang during the tenth century when Jiaosiluo was born. Furthermore, Gaochang might still have had a small community of Tibetans remaining from the time of the Tibetan domination during the eighth and ninth centuries, or a community of Tibetan merchants.⁵³

However, since the origin of Jiaosiluo still remains obscure, we also have to consider the possibility that the above-mentioned Chinese sources that refer to Gaochang Moyuguo are misleading or mistaken.⁵⁴

6. *Kucha/Guici* □ □ (*Quci* □ □ /*Qiuci* □ □)/*Anxi* □ □ /Modern
Kuche □ □

The Uighurs dominated the Kucha area at least since the late ninth century. The area of Kucha proper is called Guici (variants: Qiuzi, Jiuci), or Anxi in Chinese. However, when the Song Chinese referred to the greater realm of Kucha, they also called it ‘Xizhou Huigu □ □ □’, ‘Xizhou Guici □ □ □ □’, and ‘Guici Huigu □ □ □ □’.⁵⁵ Thus, the ruler who was usually designated as the ‘Xizhou Huigu kehan/Khan of the Xizhou Uighurs’ by the Chinese might have been the khan of Gaochang proper (the former Xizhou), Kucha proper, or of a united Uighur realm of Gaochang and Kucha, with the latter alternative being the most likely.⁵⁶ In 981, for example, the Uighur ruler was styled *Xizhou waisheng shizi wang Asilan han* □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □.⁵⁷ The *waisheng* □ □, or ‘foreign born’ in the

Some evidence seems to suggest that the majority of the Tsong kha population led a nomadic or semi-nomadic life and was organized in tribes according to Central Asian patterns. They coexisted with a small settled population of farmers, traders and monks living in and around fortified villages that also served as ‘residences’ for the tribal chieftains. For a more detailed study of Tsong kha’s population see HORLEMANN 2004: 174-88.

⁵³ See VON GABAIN 1973: 27-28.

⁵⁴ One Chinese source provides ‘Wusanmie 武三咩’ as the place of origin of Jiaosiluo. This, however, could be the Chinese rendering for Dbus Bsam yas, a famous place in Central Tibet. For more information, see HORLEMANN 2005.

⁵⁵ See *Songshi* 40: 14.123.

⁵⁶ See the paragraph on Gaochang above. The history of the relations between Kucha and Gaochang from the eighth to the twelfth or thirteenth century still remains obscure, as may be seen in recent publications; refer, for example, to LIU 2004: 180-82, GENG 2004: 95-96, TIAN 2003, TROMBERT 2000, and PETECH 1992: 10-11. Concerning the title of the ruler, see *Songshi* 40: 14.123.

⁵⁷ See *Songshi* 40: 14.110. For possible identifications with Uighur rulers according to Uighur sources see, for example, UMEMURA 1996.

Songshi is probably mistaken for *waisheng* 外甥, meaning ‘nephew, son-in-law’, which refers sometimes to a real but often also to a fictitious family relation between a non-Chinese ruler and the Chinese emperor, and expresses the subordinate status of the foreign king with regard to China. *Shizi* 獅子 is to be considered as a misprint for *shizi* 狮子, ‘lion’, a duplication of *Asilan (han)*, i.e. Arslan (khan), the ‘lion (khan)’, apparently a frequently recurring name among Gaochang rulers.⁵⁸ Furthermore, in 1018 we hear of a *Guici guo kehan wang Zhihai* 龟兹国可汗王智海, ‘Zhihai, the khan and king of the realm of Kucha’, who seems, however, to be identical with the Gaochang ruler.⁵⁹ Thus it seems that Kucha and Gaochang—at least at certain times—were governed by one and the same individual, who is sometimes referred to as the ruler of Xizhou and sometimes as the ruler of Kucha.

Apparently Kucha sent tribute missions to the Song court on a rather irregular basis starting from 962 onwards. The *Songshi* mentions missions in 962, 965, between 968 and 976, 981⁶⁰ and 1013, as well as between 1023 and 1038.⁶¹ After a gap of more than three decades, three more tribute missions from the Kucha Uighurs are documented for 1071, 1072 and 1096. Tribute goods in this last mission also included one or more Buddha statues made of jade.⁶² The absence of missions between 1038 and 1071 might have been due to the unstable situation in East Turkestan caused by the advance of the Tanguts to the east and the Muslim Qarakhanids to the west. It still remains uncertain when exactly the Kucha area was conquered by the Qarakhanids and how tightly it came under Muslim rule. According to Arabic sources, it appears as if Kucha was already under Qarakhanid rule by the mid-eleventh century.⁶³ If this holds true, then the Muslim ruler must have been exceptionally tolerant with regard to symbols of non-Islamic religions such as the jade Buddhas presented to the Chinese in 1096 as mentioned above.

⁵⁸ For other Uighur rulers called ‘Arslan’ among their multiple names and titles see, for example, SUNDERMANN 1992: 66 and UMEMURA 1996: 365–68.

⁵⁹ See *Songshi* 40: 14.117 and TIAN 2003. For possible identifications with Uighur rulers according to Uighur sources see also UMEMURA 1996.

⁶⁰ In 981 the Chinese sent a mission to the Xizhou Uighurs that probably returned in 984, and which gave a rather detailed report to the Chinese emperor. See *Songshi* 40: 14.113–14.114.

⁶¹ See *Songshi* 40: 14.113–14.123 passim.

⁶² See *Songshi* 40: 14.123.

⁶³ See LIU 2004: 181, GENG 2004: 96, KOTCHNEV 2001: 42 and BIRAN 2001: 80.

With regard to Tsong kha, we learn that around 1060 to 1062 a ruler from the ‘western region’ (*xijie* □ □) named Mangmi □ □ sent a mission to Tsong kha and offered presents and a marriage alliance.⁶⁴ It is not clear whether this ruler Mangmi was from Kucha, but we know that around 1060 either Jiaosiluo’s son Dongzhan □ □ or Dongzhan’s son Qiding Mobiao Su’nan □ □ □ □ did indeed marry a Kuchean princess. Her Chinese name reads Qingyi Jiemou □ □ □ □, or Qingying Jiemou □ □ □ □, where ‘Jiemou □ □’ is probably a phonetic rendering of the Tibetan *rgyal mo*, ‘queen’.⁶⁵ (See figure 3: Rulers of Tsong kha and Marriage Alliances.) Later on, this Kuchean princess probably became the wife of the new Tsong kha ruler, Aligu □ □ □, the successor and adoptive son of Dongzhan.⁶⁶ The Kuchean princess is last mention-ed in 1099/1100, when, together with the Khitan and Tangut princesses, all surrendered to the Chinese army that attacked the Tsong kha residential seat in Qingtang.⁶⁷ Kuchean tribute or trade missions also seem to have continued until the end of the eleventh century, since the *Songshi* mentions a mission in 1096 that travelled as far as Taoxi □ □, the area west of the Tao River in Tsong kha, although this territory was by then partly under Chinese rule.⁶⁸ If Kucha was indeed under Qarakhanid rule by the mid-eleventh century, this would mean that Tsong kha also entertained relations with a newly converted Muslim area.

7. Khotan/Yutian □ □ /Near Modern Hetian □ □

The realm of Khotan is generally considered to have been conquered by the Muslim Qarakhanids in about 1006,⁶⁹ although some scholars assume that the influence of the Qarakhanids did not become apparent before the mid- or even late eleventh century.⁷⁰ For in-

⁶⁴ See the eleventh-century work *Lequanji* 22: 24r.

⁶⁵ See *Lequanji* 22: 24r.

⁶⁶ Aligu apparently exercised the levirate, taking the wife or wives of close deceased male relatives as his own wives. It seems that the former Khitan wife of Dongzhan as well as the former Tangut wife of Dongzhan’s son also became Aligu’s wives. See HORLEMANN 2004: 87.

⁶⁷ See *Song huiyao jigao* (compiled in early 19th century) 33b: 10-34a: 2.

⁶⁸ See *Songshi* 40: 14.123.

⁶⁹ See, for example, KOTCHNEV 2001 passim, ZHAO 2001: 104 and PETECH 1992: 10.

⁷⁰ See, for example, REN 1997: 30. Also Biran has pointed out that most of the sources referring to the incorporation of Khotan into the Qarakhanid realm and into

stance, in 1038 the Tanguts still claimed that Khotan had become their vassal state,⁷¹ which seems to imply that Khotan was not yet dominated by the Qarakhanids. In 1063, however, a Chinese source explains that the self-designation of the Khotan ruler *Hei han* 黑汗 stands for *qara* (= *hei* 黑, black) and *khan*, which apparently points to the domination by the Qarakhanids at least by that time.⁷²

Khotan maintained tribute relations with Song China starting from the mid-tenth century and often sent monks on these missions. It seems that Khotan also joined with Kucha from time to time to send tribute missions to China, and that they used to travel along the Gansu Corridor passing Guazhou and Shazhou before this route was blocked by the Tanguts. According to the *Songshi*, the missions stopped altogether between 1025 and 1063.⁷³ Three missions sent between 1068 and 1081 did not return to Khotan for reasons unknown.⁷⁴ Perhaps these missions had been intercepted by the Tanguts. Starting from 1081 onwards, Khotan sent its tribute missions to China via Tsong kha, which provided guides to the Khotanese as well as living quarters for the Khotanese merchants in the Tsong kha capital Qingtang.⁷⁵ However, these activities probably came to a halt in 1099 when the Chinese started to attack Qingtang.

In 1093 the Khotanese are supposed to have asked the Song court for assistance against the Tanguts, but in vain. In 1097, Khotan reported to the Chinese that the Khotanese themselves had attacked the Tanguts in Shazhou, Suzhou and Ganzhou.⁷⁶ If Khotan was in

Muslim religious life apparently pertain to the late twelfth, or early thirteenth century (private communication). Thus eleventh-century Khotan might have had some kind of vassal status with regard to the Qarakhanids instead of having already been fully incorporated into their realm. However, the conquest and incorporation of Kashgar, approximately 400 km northwest of Khotan, by the Qarakhanids in the second half of the tenth century is undisputed.

⁷¹ See DUNNELL 1994: 179.

⁷² Although the Khotan ruler is already mentioned as *heihan* in 1009, it seems to me that this title only slipped into the fourteenth century work *Songshi* in retrospect; see *Songshi* 40: 14.107. Concerning doubts that the Chinese *heihan* is a proper rendering of the Turkish *qara khan*, see JIANG 2001.

⁷³ See *Songshi* 40: 14.108.

⁷⁴ See *Songshi* 40: 14.109.

⁷⁵ See *Songshi* 40: 14.109 and the late eleventh/ early twelfth century work *Qingtanglu* in *Shuofu* 35: 12r.

⁷⁶ See *Songshi* 40: 14.109. Tangut attacks on Khotan, unfortunately without dates, are also confirmed by the *Qingtanglu* in *Shuofu* 35: 12r, which even refers to a complete conquest of Khotan by the Tanguts. This event is supposed to have caused 100 merchant families from Khotan to flee to Tsong kha.

fact already firmly under Qarakhanid rule, as is generally assumed,⁷⁷ and if the aforementioned Chinese sources are not mistaken, this would mean that already by the end of the eleventh century the Muslims had ventured as far east as the Gansu corridor. This might also shed new light on the question of why and when the so-called Dunhuang documents were hidden in a sealed cave at the Mogao Grottoes near Dunhuang/Shazhou.⁷⁸

Apparently, the relations between Tsong kha and Khotan intensified after the Tsong kha ruler Dongzhan (1032-1083; reigned 1065-1083) had taken a Khotanese woman named Zhangmou Xiabu □ □ □ □ either as his servant or his mistress. She had two sons—obviously not from Dongzhan—Aligu □ □ □ (1040-1096; reigned 1083-1096) and Su'nān Dangzheng □ □ □ □ (died between 1096 and 1099).⁷⁹ Dongzhan adopted Aligu, who was his junior by only eight years, and thus the Khotanese Aligu became the successor to the Tsong kha throne in 1083.

FINAL REMARKS

The picture that has been drawn here of the relations of Tsong kha to its neighbours on the Silk Road still remains sketchy due to the scarcity of sources. Hence, only a few general observations seem warranted:

1. Tsong kha played a vital strategic role during most of the eleventh century and thus continuously entertained political, military and economic relations with its many neighbours, of which the intensity varied according to the actual geopolitical situation.

⁷⁷ See nn. 69, 70.

⁷⁸ It is usually assumed that the cave was closed in or before 1035 in order to protect the documents from the advancing Tangut troops. Alternatively, it has been proposed that the cave served as a deposit for 'sacred rubbish'. For summaries of the different theories, see HAMILTON 1996: 136 and RONG 1996: 23-24. However, according to Rong, the cave did not serve as a deposit for 'sacred rubbish' but was the storage room of the former Sanjie Monastery. Furthermore, he assumes that the cave was closed in the early eleventh century when Khotan was attacked by the Qarakhanids (RONG 1996). In my opinion, advancing Muslim troops seem more likely to have precipitated the concealment of these documents than the advent of the Buddhist Tanguts in the 1030s. However, the question of when the cave was actually sealed, at the beginning or maybe only towards the end of the eleventh century, requires further research.

⁷⁹ See HORLEMANN 2004: 86.

2. Hardly any information is available on religious and cultural exchange. However, we can presume that this lack of information is mainly due to the fact that we must rely on official and semi-official Chinese sources. These are known to be preoccupied with political affairs and to neglect religion and culture.

3. At first glance, it seems surprising that our sources do not mention ties between Tsong kha and Shazhou/Dunhuang. However, this might further support the hypothesis that during most of the tenth and eleventh centuries Shazhou was not an independent political entity but probably part of the Uighur realm of either Ganzhou or Xizhou, and later under Tangut control.

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PART TWO

LITERARY AND ORAL TRANSMISSIONS

THE HISTORY OF THE CYCLE OF BIRTH AND DEATH:
A TIBETAN NARRATIVE FROM DUNHUANG*¹

Yoshiro Imaeda

FOREWORD

Formerly European historians, relying exclusively on later (that is to say, post-eleventh-century) Tibetan documents, thought that before the introduction of Buddhism, there was a religion in Tibet called 'Bon'. As Tibetan studies advanced, the more complex reality of the religious situation in ancient Tibet began to emerge. The first important step was to note that Bon was only one element of the religious world and that the Bon pos were only one category of priests of ancient Tibet. It was therefore necessary to dissociate the properly indigenous elements from those that were foreign, and group them together under the designation of 'nameless religion' (STEIN 1962: ch. IV, 'Religion et Coutume').

A further step was undertaken in the article of Madame Ariane Macdonald, 'Une lecture des Pelliot tibétain 1286, 1287, 1038, 1047 et 1290: Essai sur la formation et l'emploi des mythes politiques dans la religion royale de Sroñ-bcan sgam-po', published in 1971. In this article she proposed a different, though still fragmentary, vision

* Dedicated to Ariane Macdonald, who in 1971 opened a new perspective on the religious history of ancient Tibet.

¹ This is a revised English version of my thesis at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, IVème Section, Paris, which was published in 1981 under the title *Histoire du cycle de la naissance et de la mort: Étude d'un texte tibétain de Touen-houang* (Genève/Paris: Librairie Droz). I have taken into account several publications that have appeared since then in order to correct and ameliorate several passages in the original and include new materials, in particular the article of J.W. de Jong, 'Le Gaṇḍavyūha et la Loi de la naissance et de la mort', which improves the interpretation of several passages of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. However, my original argument of 1981 remains essentially unchanged.

I heartily thank Ms. Susan Taponier of Paris, a long time friend, for kindly checking my English translation of the French original. Without her help, this chapter would not have been possible.

of the ancient religion practised by the people of Tibet. (For a critical review, see STEIN 1985.) With the help of the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang—the only documents contemporary with the period under study (seventh to tenth centuries)—she identified the fundamental features of the ancient pre-Buddhist religion, which she believed was designated by the term *gtsug*, or *gtsug lag*. She further proposed that it was on the basis of *gtsug/gtsug lag* that the theory of the sovereignty of the ancient kings was founded. Although this is not the place to summarize her arguments, which has been done with clarity and concision by Mme A.M. Blondeau (1976), it is helpful to recall the theory of life and death of this pre-Buddhist religion and the rites that are tied to it, because they directly relate to our study, which also concerns a Tibetan text from Dunhuang.

Let us first examine the notion of time, of which the pre-Buddhist theory of death and survival is a part. Time is conceived in the form of great chronological cycles. The first, happy period, which starts with the creation of the world, is called ‘the good period when the gods and the human beings are not separated’. This ‘golden age’ is said to have lasted ten thousand years, and to have ended the day when a demon, imprisoned in the underworld, appeared on the earth.

The second, ‘bad period’, is divided into three sub-periods, each one worse than the previous one. It is the period of the gradual degeneration of the tenets of the *gtsug*, the loss of human attachment to proper religion and the abandonment of its practices.

The third and last period is ‘the age of calamities’. This is the worst one of all. It will be followed by ‘the good period of the gods’, which is the beginning of a new cycle marked by the reanimation of those who practised *gtsug*.

On the other hand, according to the conception of survival in this religion, there were two countries for the deceased: one to be avoided and one to be attained. These are ‘the country of miseries and suffering’ (*nyon mongs sdug pa'i yul*) and ‘the country of joy and happiness’ (*dga' dang skyid pa'i yul*), respectively. The latter is the celestial country of the dead (*gshin yul*) where the deceased await resurrection at the beginning of a new cycle.

This explains the fact that the funeral rituals are aimed essentially at sending the deceased persons, guided by psychopomp animals on a perilous journey, to the country of the Dead (*gshin yul*), where they live happily until their resurrection.²

² As Mme A. Macdonald has noticed regarding the theory of Time (MACDONALD 1971: 357) and the conception of *gtsug lag* (376-86), it is probable

Buddhism, which made its way towards Tibet from India and China as well as from Central Asia, found itself confronted with the ancient indigenous religion. This religion was the foundation of the sovereignty of the ancient kings and the vehicle for concepts and practices that were fundamentally different from and incompatible with those of Buddhism. During the several centuries that followed the introduction of Buddhism, Buddhist disseminators struggled against indigenous religious representations and the followers of the ancient religion who resisted the Buddhists with a philosophy and literature of their own. At the end of this conflict, about which we have no exact knowledge for lack of authentic documents, the elements of the pre-Buddhist religion were absorbed into Buddhism as well as into Bon, which was established as an organised religion from the eleventh century. This process of assimilation was so successful that even the name (if it ever existed) of the ancient religion disappeared from later Tibetan literature.

The Dunhuang text that is the subject of this study allows us to witness the first efforts of the disseminators of Buddhism in Tibet.

INTRODUCTION

1. The manuscripts

Among the Dunhuang manuscripts kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris³ and the British Library in London,⁴

that there are foreign influences (Indian as well as Chinese) in the formation of this ancient religion of Tibet. It is, however, beyond the scope of the present study to look for them, because we are concerned only with the comparison of this pre-Buddhist Tibetan religion as it existed at the end of the eighth century with Buddhism, the newcomer to Tibet.

³ This collection has been catalogued in M. LALOU 1939-61.

⁴ We think it is useful here to make a brief survey of the manuscripts, in particular the Tibetan manuscripts that concern us directly, which were brought back by Aurel Stein from his second (1906-08) and third (1913-16) expeditions to Central Asia. The total collection was divided in an artificial way into two parts: the mainly "Chinese" collection in the British Museum and the "Tibetan" collection in the India Office Library. Both collections are now preserved in the British Library. We owe to TAKEUCHI Tsuguhito (1998: xv-xxviii) a fairly comprehensive survey of the Tibetan collection in the British Library.

There are also Tibetan texts written on the verso of Chinese texts preserved at the British Museum. They have been listed with a short notice of two or three words for each by GRINSTEAD (1963: 36-37). The famous manuscript of the *Tibetan Annals*

there is a story written entirely in verses of seven syllables, which we have designated in this study by the title *History of the cycle of birth and death*. We have decided on this title after taking into account, on the one hand, the term *skye shi'i lo rgyus* 'history of birth and death', a term employed here and there in the manuscripts to designate the principal subject of the text, and on the other hand, the title which is found at the beginning of two manuscripts: *Skye shi 'khor lo'i chos kyi yi ge le'u* 'Chapter of the treatise of the law of the wheel (=cycle) of birth and death' (PT 220), and *Skye shi 'khor lo'i le'u bstan pa'// lha bu rin chen lag (=lags) cis (=gis) dris pa*, 'Chapter of the cycle of birth and death exposed at the request of the son of the gods named Rin chen, "Jewel"'⁵ (IOL Tib J 345). To date, we have discovered nine copies of this text, all of them incomplete. Although none of the copies contains the complete text, we have been able to establish an almost integral text of the *History* by collating them. First, here is a brief description of each of the copies.

under the number Or. 8212 (187), which was edited and translated by F.W. Thomas in *DTH*: 53-75, is among them.

As for the Tibetan collection of the India Office Library, its inventory does not seem to have been done in a systematic way. First, a certain number of manuscripts have been published with a description, a transcription of the text, and an annotated translation by THOMAS (1935-55 and 1957). Then, LA VALLÉE POUSSIN (1962) treated almost the entire collection in his *Catalogue*, giving each manuscript a serial number. More recently, the research team of the Toyo Bunko (Oriental Library), Tokyo, has published a more exhaustive list in *Toyo Bunko*.

In this study, we use the abbreviation IOL Tib J followed by the number of the *Catalogue* to designate the manuscripts in this collection. As for the manuscripts that were not inventoried by La Vallée Poussin, we have systematically designated them by the abbreviation I. O., followed by the number of the volume and the number of the folio in which they are currently preserved.

⁵ The name of this principal person of the *History* appears as Rin chen (or cen) in two syllables, or as Rin chen (or cen) lags (or lag) in three syllables. The third syllable is used when it is necessary to add a syllable to achieve the verse in seven syllables of our *History*. STEIN (1983: 179) suggests that the name is Rin chen lags and that it is a translation of Shancai, the Chinese name of Sudhana, the main character in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, which inspired Chapter II of our *History*. However, we think that the name of our character is Rin chen and that *lags* is an emphatic syllable. Furthermore, even if one accepts that the name Rin chen lags is inspired by, even if not translated from, Sudhana of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, there is no particular reason to assume that it is a translation from the Chinese name Shancai, because Rin chen lags may as well be an older rendering of the Indian name Sudhana, as Nor bzangs is the later canonical rendering: Rin chen = *nor* = *dhana*; lags = *bzangs* = *su*.

PT 218

The manuscript has thirty-five folios. The sheets used for the present manuscript measure approximately 10 cm by 33 cm and have one or sometimes two holes in the middle. They are pieces (probably halves) of larger sheets measuring approximately 20 cm by 33 cm, of which we see half of the encircled hole.

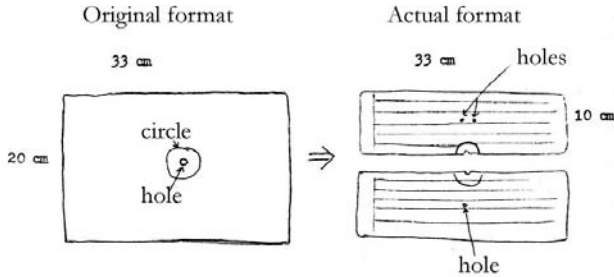


Illustration (1)

As for the number of holes perforated in the folios for the string used to keep them together (except the half-hole originating from the original large folio), it seems that at the beginning there was only one hole, made before writing. Then, so that the hole enlarged by use would not interfere with the writing, another one was sometimes added nearby. One notices this on the following sixteen folios: *kha* to *da* (10), *ba* to *ja* (5) and *ya*.

The folios have six or seven lines on each side (*recto* and *verso*), and eight lines exceptionally on the *recto* of folios *pha* and *tsa* and the *verso* of folio *zha*.

The text of our *History* seems to end on the *verso* of the last folio *khma*, at the second, rather abraded line, which reads as follows, after the actual end of the text of the *History*: // *lha rin cen* (one illegible syllable) *rdzogs* (two or three illegible syllables) *chos dbyangs gyis bris te zhus bs..on* (two illegible syllables) ...s // This is the colophon of the manuscript, which may be translated as follows: 'End [of the treatise exposed at the request of] Rin chen, [son of the] gods. [The manuscript has been] copied and revised by Chos dbyangs...' The name of this copyist does not appear in other Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang and therefore we cannot know his identity.

There are two syllables at the beginning of the third line: *bsngo' ba' //*. The remaining part of the *verso* is devoid of text. Did the

copyist start a new text? The presence of these two syllables poses a crucial problem for the interpretation of the *History*. We will come back to this question later.

Instead of the usual pagination which consists of putting the serial number of folios in the left margin of the *recto* using Tibetan numbers either in figures or written in letters, this manuscript is paginated by the letters of the Tibetan alphabet. In later Tibetan texts, the letters of the alphabet are normally used only to designate one volume of a collection, or to distinguish different texts within a single volume. It is most probably this unusual pagination that prompted Marcelle Lalou to ask if the manuscript was ‘coherent’ at the end of her description (*Inventaire*, I: 62). In fact, the analysis of the text allows us to establish the order according to the Tibetan alphabet: *kha*, *ga*, *nga* ... *ha*, *a*, *kna*, *khna*, *gna*, *ngna*, *kma*, *khma*. The pagination of the last six folios, which consists in writing another letter under each letter of the Tibetan alphabet (in this case *na* and *ma*), is also employed in other Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang, such as PT 291, 1336, 1337, 1349, 1343, 1480, IOL Tib J 67 and 382. Among them, PT 291, in particular, consists of seven folios that do not follow one another. However, the four folios marked respectively *kna*, *khna*, *gna*, and *ngna* can be read as a whole. This is the same system of pagination used in our manuscript.⁶

Our manuscript is missing only the first folio, the marginal pagination of which should be *ka*. Marcelle Lalou took folio *kna* to be the first one of the manuscript and labelled it ‘Pelliot tibétain 218’, which, as a rule, should appear only on the first folio. This error is understandable given that the first folio was, and still is, missing.

Three irregularities can be observed in the make-up of the folios:

1. In its original state, the manuscript included two folios *cha* and *da*, each with a text on *recto* and *verso*. But, unlike the others, each of these folios was composed of two folios pasted together, one with the text of the *recto* and the other with that of the *verso*. The restoration department of the Bibliothèque Nationale separated the two folios and found that the folio that contains the text of the *recto* also has a text on the *verso*, but written in the direction opposite to normal reading. Therefore, in the cases of folios *cha* and *da*, we find a folio (a) with a text of the *recto* and the *verso*, and a folio (b) with

⁶ For other pagination systems found among the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang, see *Catalogue*, Pagination: xv-xvi.

only a text on the *verso* and its empty side pasted to the *verso* of folio (a) in normal reading order. The text on the *verso* of folio (b) is identical, except for a few variants, to that on the *verso* of folio (a).

We think that the copyist of folios *cha* and *da* was mistaken twice in the writing direction of the text of the *verso* and judged it preferable to write the text of the *verso* on a new folio—leaving the *recto* of this folio devoid of text—which he later pasted in the correct direction on top of the *verso* of folio (a), deleting in this way the *verso* of folio (a) to obtain a normal layout for the reading of the text.

In the photographic reproduction of the manuscript given in IMAEDA 1981, we have placed the *verso* of folio (a) of folios *cha* and *da* in the normal direction to facilitate reading. However, this is how folios *cha* and *da* actually look:

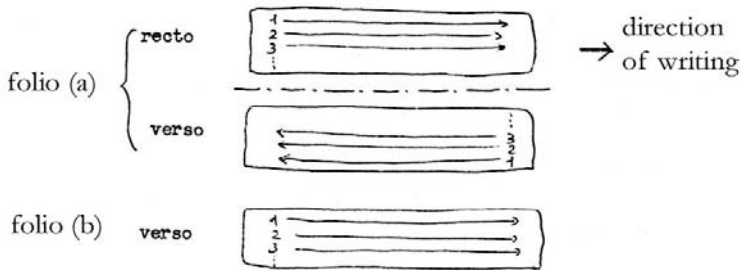


Illustration (2)

2. On the *recto* of folio *nya*, there are five lines of text in the normal direction and two lines and a syllable written in the reverse direction (that is, upside down) and crossed out by a line. The part of the text written in this way (the lower part of the folio is mutilated, as we shall see later) corresponds, except for a few spelling variations, to that written in the normal direction. In the present state of the folio, we cannot understand the reason for this anomaly. There may have been an important error in the lost part of the text written upside down, which the copyist noticed after starting the third line, forcing him to delete what he had already written and to start writing the same text again on the other side of the folio without throwing away the folio already begun.

3. The passage which extends from folio *a*, *recto*, l. 6, to folio *kna*, *verso*, l. 1, is only a repetition of the preceding passage which goes from folio *ha*, *recto*, l. 3 to folio *a*, *recto*, l. 6. The explanation for this anomaly seems to be the unusual system of pagination of the manuscript: the copyist went in the ordinary manner to the beginning of line 6 of folio *a*, *recto*—the last letter of the Tibetan alphabet—where the discourse by the teacher Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan ends and that of the Buddha Śākyamuni is announced. At this point, the copyist copied a passage from line 3, folio *ha*, *recto* to line 6 of the *verso* that precedes folio *a* in order to fill the remaining part of folio *a*, *recto* and its entire *verso*. There is no logical reason for this repetition. Then, just at the beginning of folio *kna*—the first folio with a pagination composed of two letters of the Tibetan alphabet—from the *recto* to the *verso*, l. 1, one again reads the announcement of the account of the Buddha Śākyamuni by Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan, just as it was written between folio *ha*, *verso*, l. 6 and folio *a*, *recto*, l. 6.

The copyist may have thought that readers might make a mistake by misunderstanding his pagination system and so start reading the manuscript from folio *kna*. In this case, readers would start by reading the announcement of the story of the Buddha Śākyamuni and then go on to the story itself, which ultimately can be considered as a unified entity.

Besides this, the lower parts of nine consecutive folios from *cha* to *pha* have been mutilated by a tear. This makes it impossible to read the text of the torn part. Except for this, and the fact that the margins of certain folios and the *verso* of the last folio *khma* are rather worn, the manuscript is quite legible on the whole and more complete than the others. We have therefore taken this manuscript as the basis for our study.

PT 219

Concertina of six folios. One finds in this manuscript two passages of the *History*. The first, on the *recto*, corresponds to the text of PT 218 from folio *ta*, *verso*, l. 6, to folio *na*, *recto*, l. 5, while the second, on the *verso*, corresponds to the text from folio *la*, *verso*, l. 6, to folio *ha*, *recto*, l. 6. This manuscript, together with the following one, has been published in facsimile in SPANIEN AND IMAEDA 1978: plates 161-64 (PT 219) and 165 (PT 220).

PT 220

Fragment of a scroll. One finds in this manuscript twenty-one lines from which the right half is missing, and giving the beginning of the *History*. The first eleven lines contain a part that is missing in PT 218 and the last ten lines correspond to the text of folio *kha*.

PT 366-367

Under two different, but successive, shelf marks, three consecutive folios from the same concertina. The *recto* contains a part of our *History* from line 6 of PT 220 to line 4 of folio *kha*, *recto* of PT 218. On the *verso* there is a passage from another text entitled *Lha yul du lam bstan pa*, 'Account of the way to the country of the gods', which Marcelle Lalou studied twice.⁷

IOL Tib J 99

Two non-consecutive folios of a concertina. On one side, two passages of the *History* correspond to the text of PT 218, folio *ta*, *verso*, ll. 1-6, and folio *cha*, *recto*, l. 3 to *verso*, l. 1. On the other side, one finds two texts, apparently of Buddhist inspiration, which seem to have no relation to the *History*.

IOL Tib J 151

Concertina of ten folios. On the *recto*, the text corresponds to a passage from PT 218 that starts at folio *nga*, *verso*, l. 3 and ends at folio *nya*, *verso*, l. 7. The *verso* contains a passage of the text that is also found on the *verso* of PT 366 and 367, namely the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa*. We will see later the significance of the presence of this text together with our *History* in these two manuscripts.

IOL Tib J 345

Fragment of a scroll with twenty-two lines of which the last eighteen (ll. 5 to 22) contain the beginning of our *History* up to line 10 in PT 220. The first four severely mutilated lines seem to belong to a Buddhist text, without any clear relationship to our *History*.

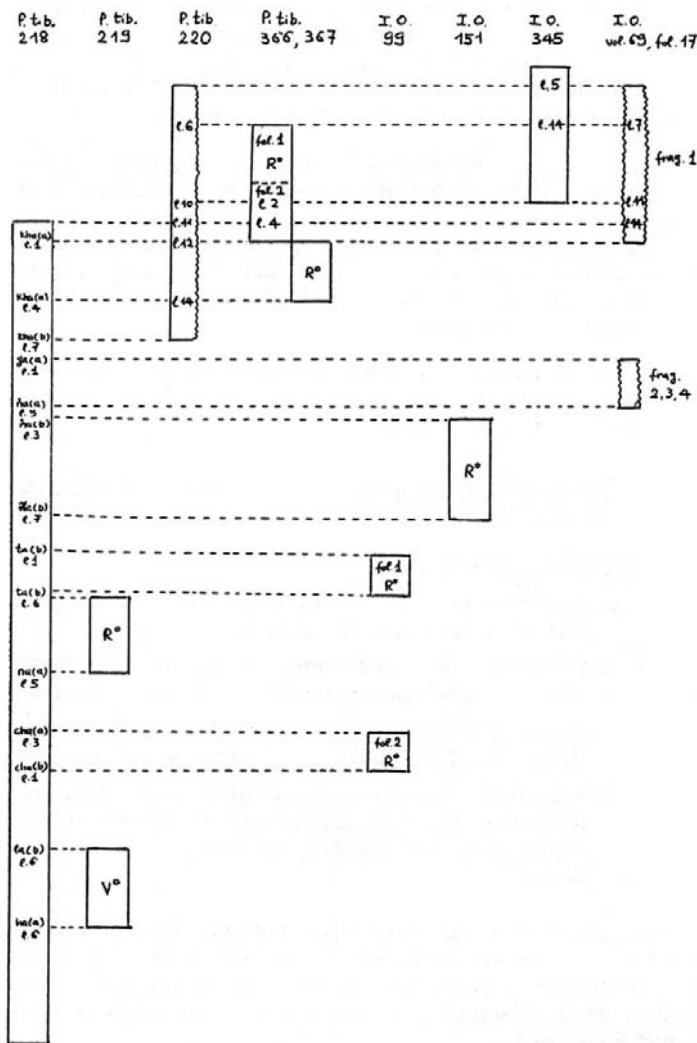
I. O. vol. 69, folio 17

Four fragments of a severely mutilated scroll that have been assembled in a disorderly manner. One of the fragments corresponds to the passage found in lines 1 to 12 of PT 220, and the three other

⁷ See LALOU 1938 and LALOU 1949.

fragments correspond to passages or letters of PT 218, folio *ga*, *recto*, l. 1 to folio *nga*, *recto*, l. 5.

The synoptic table below shows the correspondences between these nine manuscripts.



Synoptic table of the correspondences among the manuscripts

2. *Analysis of the History:*
Canonical Sources and the Problem Posed by its Composition

Before undertaking a complete translation of the *History*, here is a general outline of it. There are no elisions in the text.

- Sanskrit title (IOL Tib J 345, l. 5)
- Tibetan title (PT 220, l. 1, and IOL Tib J 345, ll. 5 -6; I. O. vol. 69, fol. 17, frag.1, l. 1)
- I. Description of a country of the gods and the sudden death of its king named 'Od 'bar rgyal, 'King of Blazing Light'.
 1. Splendour of the king of the gods, 'Od 'bar rgyal, and his country (PT 220, ll. 1-6; PT 366, folio 1, l. 1; IOL Tib J 345, ll. 6-15; I. O. vol. 69, fol. 17, frag. 1, ll. 2-7).
 2. His sudden death and the great confusion that results among his entourage and in particular for his son, named Rin chen, 'Jewel' (PT 220, ll. 6-9; PT 366, folio 1, l. 1, to folio 2, l. 1; IOL Tib J 345, ll. 15-21; I. O. vol. 69, fol. 17, frag. 1, ll. 7-10).
 3. Appearance of 'Phrul chen Dutara, who explains that the death of 'Od 'bar rgyal is due to the law of birth and death (PT 218, folio *kha. recto*, l. 1; PT 220, ll. 10-11; PT 366, folio 2, l. 1 up to PT 367, l. 1; IOL Tib J 345, l. 21 up to the end; I. O. vol. 69, fol. 17, frag.1, l. 11-12).
 4. Rin chen asks Dutara what he must do so that (his dead father) will return (*slar mchi*) [to life], whether it will be possible to encounter him (*phrad*), and what he must do so that he will be at peace and happy (*bde zhing skyid pa*). (PT 218, folio *kha, recto*, l. 1 to verso, l.1; PT 220, ll.12-17; PT 367, l. 1 up to the end; I. O. vol. 69, fol. 17, frag. 1, l. 14 up to the end).
- II. Pilgrimage of Rin chen in search of the remedy against the law of birth and death: he encounters and engages in dialogue in different places with a series of twenty-five teachers who are unable to give him the remedy (PT 218, folio *kha, verso*, l.1, to folio *kna, verso*, l.3; PT 220, l.17, up to the end; PT 219, IOL Tib J 99, IOL Tib J 151; I. O. vol. 69, fol. 17, fragments 2, 3 and 4).
- III. In the country of Magadha, the encounter of Rin chen with Śākyamuni, who at last explains the law of birth and death and its remedy.
 1. Description of Śākyamuni and his country (PT 218, folio *kna, verso*, l. 3, to folio *khna, verso*, l. 4).
 2. Speech of Śākyamuni:

- a. Inevitability of death (PT 218, folio *khna*, verso, l. 4, to folio *gna*, recto, l. 2).
- b. Longevity of the various categories of gods (PT 218, folio *gna*, recto, l. 2, to folio *ngna*, recto, l. 5).
- c. Reprehensible practices of certain funeral rituals (PT 218, folio *ngna*, recto, l. 5, to folio *ngna*, verso, l. 7).
- d. Merits of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī* ‘formula of the victorious cranial protuberance’, which is the remedy against death (PT 218, folio *ngna*, verso, l. 7, up to the end).

Merely reading this analysis raises a number of fundamental questions concerning the composition of this *History*, its titles, its sources, the identity of its author, the date of its composition and the religious context to which it belongs.

Let us first examine the problem of titles. Our *History* has two, one in (Tibetan-transliterated) Sanskrit, and the other in Tibetan.

Sanskrit title

Only IOL Tib J 345 (l. 5) gives the Sanskrit title: *rgya gar gyi skad du sang gra dar ma de*, ‘In the language of India, *Saṅgrādarmade*’.⁸ The unusual presence of the particle *gyi* between *rgya gar* and *skad*, the strangeness of the compound ending in *de*, which does not make much sense in Sanskrit, and above all, the literary form of the *History* that we are going to examine, suggest that the Sanskrit title is a fictional one invented to give our *History* the appearance of being the translation of a Sanskrit text to give it greater authenticity.

Tibetan title

PT 220 (l. 1): *skye shi 'khor ba'i chos kyi yi ge le'u*, ‘the chapter of the treatise on the law of the cycle of birth and death’.

The compound *skye shi*, ‘birth and death’, is attested in another Dunhuang manuscript, IOL Tib J 710 (see DEMIÉVILLE 1970: 46), where it renders the Sanskrit *saṃsāra*, which, according to the Buddhist terminology fixed in 814, is normally rendered *'khor ba* (*Mvp*, nos. 797, 2165).⁹ The successive enumeration of the two compounds *skye shi* and *'khor ba* in our title therefore seems in a

⁸ For EIMER (1981: 561), this is *saṃkramadharmadeśanā*, and for DE JONG (1985: 8) it is *saṃsāradharma*.

⁹ TUCCI 1958: 48 and YAMAGUCHI 1979: 12.

sense redundant. The author no doubt wanted to express in a concrete manner the Buddhist notion of *saṃsāra* ‘transmigration’, which was not yet familiar to his Tibetan readers. Further, the terminology was probably not yet fixed.

The term *chos kyi yi ge* is also attested in another Tibetan manuscript, PT 92 (*Inventaire* I: 30): *thard pa chen po phyogsu rgyas pa'i chos kyi yi ge*, which is the abbreviated Tibetan title of a Buddhist text translated from Chinese. This Tibetan translation is incorporated into the current Kanjur (*P* no. 930): *'Phags pa thar pa chen po phyogs su rgyas pa 'gyod tshang kyis sdig sbyangs te sangs rgyas su grub par rnam par bkod pa shes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*. We can see that the term *chos kyi yi ge* ‘religious writing’ corresponds to *mdo*, a Tibetan term usually used to translate the Sanskrit word *sūtra*. It seems, then, that before the term *mdo* was adopted to translate the term *sūtra*, compounds like *chos kyi yi ge*, or *dar ma* (the phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit *dharma* ‘law’, see PT 33, 735, 1003, 1005 etc.) were often used to designate this same word.¹⁰

As for the word *le'u*, it generally designates a ‘chapter’, or ‘part’ of a work. Is our *History* itself a part of a larger work? We will come back to this question later.

IOL Tib J 345 (l. 5 to 6): *skye shi 'khor lo'i le'u bstan pa' // Lha bu rin chen lag (=lags) cis (=gis) dris pa' // ‘Chapter of the cycle of birth and death, presented at the request of the son of the gods named Rin chen’.*

It is evident that the term *'khor lo* ‘wheel’ (Skt. *cakra*) is used here in the same sense as *'khor ba* in the preceding title.

I. O. vol. 69, fol. 17. The only remaining part of the first line of the fragment 1 reads as follows: ... *dun te // lha bu rin* ... The second line, again very fragmentary, contains a passage corresponding to the text of the last two syllables of line 7 and the first three of line 8 of IOL Tib J 345. A comparison of this fragment with the other two contained in PT 220 and IOL Tib J 345 leads us to believe that the first line must have been part of the title of our *History*. It must have been different from that of IOL Tib J 345, at least the part that precedes *lha bu rin (chen)*, but the manuscript is too fragmentary to allow us to reconstruct the whole title.¹¹

¹⁰ Cf. RICHARDSON 1977 and STEIN 1983: 175.

¹¹ Refer to the collated transcription of Chapter I given below.

Now let us tackle the problem of sources by quickly reviewing the plot of the *History*.

All of Chapter I seems to be the original composition of the author, inspired by canonical sources. It relates the sudden death of the king of the gods, King of Blazing Light, the confusion of his son Rin chen, and finally, the departure of Rin chen in search of the remedy against death following the advice of 'Phrul chen Dutara. This introduction is of paramount importance for understanding the entire *History*.

It should be noted, first of all, that Dutara's epithet, '*phrul chen*', 'great '*phrul*',¹² had a well defined and important meaning in pre-Buddhist Tibetan religion. In fact, '*phrul*' was one of the two supernatural faculties, with *byin*, characteristic of the divine nature of Tibetan kings. The term '*phrul*' designated first a set of magical powers, and in particular, the ability to move between the sky and the earth. It also designated a mental and intellectual capacity superior to that of ordinary human beings.

Rin chen, upset by the unexpected death of his father, and hoping that his father will return to life and become as before (*slar 'ong sngon bzhin yod du re*), asks Dutara what he must do in order for his father to live again, so that it will be possible to encounter him (*ji bgyis slar mchi 'phrad par rung*), and further, what he must do to ensure his father's peace and happiness (*ji bgyis bde bzhin skyid par 'gyur*). Dutara replies, 'Although I know that birth and death exist, I do not know what to do to remedy it (*skye shi yod par 'tshal du bas // de la ci phan bdag ma 'tshal*).' As he himself is unable to give a satisfactory reply, Dutara advises Rin chen to go in search of other teachers who might know the answer. So, fearing that his deceased father might not reach the place of peace and happiness (*bde skyid gnas*), Rin chen departs on a pilgrimage in search of the law of birth and death, a pilgrimage which occupies all of Chapter II of the *History*.

Expressions such as 'to be at peace and happy' (*bde zhing skyid pa*), and especially 'the place of peace and happiness' (*bde skyid gnas*) immediately recall *dga' skyid yul* 'the country of joy and happiness', which characterises the country of the Dead to which the funeral ritual of the pre-Buddhist religion was intended to send the

¹² Although this name seems to be a Tibetan transcription of a Sanskrit name, it is difficult to reconstruct the original name. Is there any link between Dutara and Dhūtarāja, the name of a *bodhisattva* attested in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*? (EDGERTON 1970: 286). We owe this reference to Mme A.M. Blondeau.

deceased person.¹³ The author of our *History* does not use the literal expression employed in the indigenous pre-Buddhist religion, but changes *dga'* 'joy' to *bde* 'peace, comfort'. However, it is obvious that they are one and the same country, not only in the intention of the author but also in the eyes of the readers—followers of the ancient religion to whom our *History* is addressed.

On the other hand, the word *phan* (*pa*), which appears in Dutara's reply, and which we have translated 'to remedy', is used in Tibetan Buddhist terminology to translate the Sanskrit term *hita* 'benefit, beneficial' (*Mvp*, no. 2871, etc.). It is also employed the compound *phan yon*, which translates the Sanskrit *anuśaṃsā* 'merit' (*Mvp*, no. 2626). However, we should recall that the same word, *phan* (*pa*), was used in the pre-Buddhist religion as a technical term to designate, in the context of funeral ritual, the success (*phan*) or the failure (*ma /mi phan*) to 'cure' or revive the deceased.¹⁴ In this context the response of Dutara can be better translated, 'I don't know what to do to bring the deceased back to life.'

It is therefore clear, except for some minor terminological variations, that the attitude of Rin chen in this situation represents exactly the approach to death that one would assume held sway based on a reading of pre-Buddhist funeral rituals.

However, the organisation of this beginning can be compared with that of the *Purification of All Evil Destinies* (*Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*), which is discussed at the end of our *History*.¹⁵ In this Buddhist text, the god named Vimalamañiprabha (Nor bu dri ma med pa'i 'od) 'Pure Jewel Light' suddenly passes away and falls from the assembly of Thirty-three Gods into the great hell of Avīci. In this unexpected situation, the gods, starting with Indra, ask the Buddha, 'O Lord, where is he reborn? Is he experiencing happiness or sorrow? ... O Blessed One, how can he be saved from such a succession of suffering? How can he be freed from accumulation of suffering? Save O Lord, save O Blessed One.'¹⁶ The similarity of the situation, the presence of the element 'od 'light' in the names of both personalities, and the confusion raised by their deaths among their retinues suggest that the framework of our *History* may have been modelled on that of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*, which,

¹³ STEIN 1971: 497, n. 52.

¹⁴ STEIN 1971: 501, 512, 522, 524, 526 etc.

¹⁵ This has been suggested by KAPSTEIN (2000: 206, n. 20).

¹⁶ SKORUPSKI 1983: 5.

judging from the number of Dunhuang manuscripts related to it,¹⁷ had become well-known in Tibet by this time. We will return to this question later.

Turning now to Chapter II, we can state from the outset that it is a much abbreviated adaptation of the famous pilgrimage of Sudhana (Nor bzangs) in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* (*Sdong po bkod pa*).¹⁸ This *sūtra*, which was widely disseminated, occupies a substantial part of the work entitled *Buddhāvataṃsaka* (*Sangs rgyas phal po che*). Its Sanskrit text has been edited twice, by SUZUKI AND IZUMI (1934-46, 1949), and by VAIDYA (1960), and has been translated into English from the Chinese (CLEARY 1984-87). We will base our study on the Tibetan version (*P* no. 761, chapter 45; vol. 26, pp. 117-315), consulting the Sanskrit original (in Vaidya's edition) as necessary.

It goes without saying that the best way to demonstrate that our *History* depends on the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* would be to detail the corresponding passages in both of them. However, because the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* is very voluminous and, as we shall see later, of limited interest for our study, we are not going to undertake such a

¹⁷ We have a large number of manuscripts from Dunhuang in various forms concerning this canonical text.

First, we have a folio that has the abbreviated fundamental formula (*rtsa ba'i rig pa*) used in this tantra, PT 419.

This formula is found in a text entitled *Dug gsum 'dul ba* 'Taming of the three poisons': IOL Tib J 420, 421 (complete), 720 (fragment) and PT 37 (incomplete at the beginning). This text recommends as a remedy against the three poisons (see n. 65) the following three formulae: 1) that of *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*, 2) that of a deity who we cannot identify for the time being, and 3) that of Avalokiteśvara. The last one is the famous formula in six syllables *Om maṇi padme hūṃ*, which is usually absent from the Dunhuang manuscripts. Cf. IMAEDA 1979.

We find also in PT 389 one of the maṇḍalas presented in this tantra, which has the Buddha Śākyamuni in the centre. LALOU (1936), in publishing this manuscript, did not identify this maṇḍala. For the iconographic detail, see *P* no. 116, vol. 5, pp. 88-4-8 to 88-5-4, and no. 3451 (commentary by Buddhaguhya), vol. 76, pp. 34-3-5 to 35-3-5. See also SAKAI 1969 and UJIKE 1975.

Finally, we have two rituals concerning this maṇḍala: 1) IOL Tib J 439-712 (these two are in fact a single manuscript) which seem rather detailed and 2) PT 37, 67, 298 and IOL Tib J 440, a ritual to perform at the four gates of the maṇḍala.

¹⁸ Refer to RENOU AND FILLIOZAT 1953: no. 2012 (Sanskrit text), no. 2037 (Tibetan text) and no. 2112 (Chinese version). On the other hand, the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* is one of the nine most popular texts among the Buddhists of Nepal; see Hodgeson 1874: 13. The pilgrimage of Sudhana, which is the main theme of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, gave birth to various artistic works (FONTEIN 1967). According to the *Sba bzhed*, the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* was also adapted to illustrate the wall of Bsam yas, the first monastic complex of Tibet (STEIN 1961: 37). The story of Nor bzangs (Sudhana) also illustrates the eleventh-century monastery of Tabo in Western Tibet (STEINKELLNER 1995).

demonstration here. We will simply point out certain significant differences between the two versions, which we think are sufficient to illustrate the peculiar features of our *History* in comparison with the available Sanskrit version.

First of all, from a stylistic point of view, the prose text of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* is rendered in verses of seven syllables in our *History* (a feature that we have of course not been able to retain in our translation). Furthermore, at the end of each visit of Rin chen to the teachers he encounters, three onomatopoeias—*pu ru ru*, *si li li* and *ti ri ri*¹⁹—are added, which are absent from the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. The presence of these onomatopoeias, which are usually found in songs, and the style of our *History* written entirely in verses of seven syllables to facilitate memorisation, suggest that our *History* was at least partially sung.

Secondly, while in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* Sudhana visits a total of fifty-five teachers, from Mañjuśrī at the outset to Samantabhadra at the end, with Avalokiteśvara in the middle (twenty-eighth), Rin chen in our *History* visits only twenty-seven teachers, counting Dutara as the first and Śākyamuni as the last. Apart from these and other modifications, moreover, we should point out that the author of the *History* used only the first half of the itinerary of Sudhana's pilgrimage.

As for the volume of the text, which comprises 195 folios of large format in the *sūtra*, it is considerably reduced to 30 folios of small format in our *History*. To show the manner and the extent to which the author of the *History* abridged the text of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, here is the passage recounting Sudhana's visit to the wandering ascetic Sarvagāmin (Thams cad du 'gro ba) 'One who goes everywhere'²⁰ (no. 21 of list B of the teachers given below), corresponding to the visit of Rin chen to Kun tu 'gro ba, 'One who goes everywhere', here qualified as *tshangs pa*²¹ (no. 20 on list A of the teachers). First, the passage from our *History*:

¹⁹ Two of them are attested in another manuscript from Dunhuang, *DTH*: 116: *si li li* and *pu ru ru*. See, too, STEIN 1956: 397, and HELLFER 1977: 386-87.

²⁰ *P* vol. 26, pp. 187-2-4 to 188-4-4; VAIDYA 1960: 137-39.

²¹ In the Tibetan translation of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, this teacher is described as an *kun tu rgyu* (*parivrājaka*) 'wandering ascetic' and named Thams cad du 'gro ba (Sarvagāmin) 'One who goes everywhere'. However in our Dunhunag text, he is described as a *tshangs pa* named Kun tu 'gro ba 'One who goes everywhere'. It may be that, at the time of the writing of our *History*, before being used in classical Buddhist terminology to translate the Indian deity Brahmā (*Mvp*, 3088 etc.), the term *tshangs pa* designated in the pre-Buddhist terminology a category of religious

(folio *za, verso*) Then, after having crossed many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, climbed the mountain Shin tu rnyed pa ‘Well found’. There he saw *tshangs pa* Kun tu ’gro ba ‘One who goes everywhere’, who had an excellent colour and radiated light like the sun and the moon. His splendour and his virtues were blazing and he was encircled by a retinue of ten thousand *tshangs pa*. Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself at the feet of Kun tu ’gro ba and joined his hands to say, ‘O *tshangs pa*, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came here to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I pray you, *tshangs pa*, instruct me.’ He beseeched him in this way with numerous pleasant words.

Kun tu ’gro ba replied, ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Kun tu ’gro ba, have found the door of luminous knowledge (*ye shes snang ba’i sgo*). I instruct all creatures using various means suitable to their respective vocations. These are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

(folio *a, recto*) Rin chen responded, ‘My father is named ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred (*tshe ’phos*), and he has changed bodies (*lus rjes*),²² what must I do so that he will return [to life] (*slar mchis*), and so that it will be possible to encounter (*phrad*) him again? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy (*bde zhing skyid pa*)?’ Thus he asked.

Kun tu ’gro ba replied, ‘It is the law (*chos*) of birth and death. The history (*lo rgyus*) of birth and death is extremely profound. I do not understand its principle (*chos tshul*). Good man, go and ask Utpala, the head of the merchants, the history of birth and death.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated himself respectfully, and, in search of the doctrine (*chos tshul*) of birth and death, continued his journey with his suite to encounter Utpala, the head of the merchants; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li*, and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

Now, here is the parallel passage from the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*:

(pp. 187-2) Then, Sudhana, son of the head of the merchants, remembered clearly Acalā (Mi g.yo ba), the ‘Immovable’, the

person or indigenous that which we cannot determine with certainty today. We have kept the Tibetan term *tshangs pa* in our translation because it is peculiar to our text.

²² The first part of this expression designates death and the second part rebirth in another life. This expression is used later in Tibetan Buddhist terminology as a synonym for transmigration (*saṃsāra*).

woman who had taken the five vows (*upāsikā*, *dge bsnyen ma*) and her instructions—what she had taught, well taught, promulgated, explained, said, well said, expressed, analysed, declared and widely taught. In believing, following, understanding, accepting, examining and discerning them, he went from one place to another, from one country to another. Travelling in this way, he arrived in the country of Amitatosala (Dga' 'dzin tshad med pa) the 'Country which brings limitless joy',²³ and looked for the town of Tosala (Dga' ba 'dzin pa) the 'Town which brings joy'. At sunset, he entered the town of Tosala. (187-3). Arriving at a crossroad, he looked for the wandering ascetic (*parivrājaka*, *kun tu rgyu*) Sarvagāmin (Thams cad du 'gro ba) the 'One who goes everywhere', from one place to another, from one crossroad to another and from one district to another. To the north of the town, there was a mountain named Sulabha (Shin tu pad mo) the 'Easily accessible',²⁴ where herbs, medicinal plants and trees grew. When night fell, he saw on the top of this mountain a bright light as if the sun was appearing. Having seen it, he rejoiced greatly and thought, 'I will certainly find my benevolent guide (*kalyāṇamitra*, *dge ba'i bshes gnyen*) at the top of this mountain.'

Leaving the town, he went to the mountain Sulabha and climbed it. When he arrived at the top, where a bright light was blazing, he saw from afar Sarvagāmin. This ascetic was more brilliantly coloured than Mahābrahma (Tshangs pa chen po), and was surrounded on all sides by ten thousand Brahmas (Tshangs pa). Sudhana went up close to him and prostrated himself. Then, he walked around him a hundred thousand times, keeping Sarvagāmin on his right, and then stood in front of him and said, 'O Saint! Although I have already made the decision to attain the unequalled *bodhi* (*anuttarasamyaksambodhi*), I do not yet know what the practices and obligations of the bodhisattva are. (187-4) As I have heard that you, saint, give instructions to bodhisattvas, I came to ask you to teach me the practices and obligations of the bodhisattva.'

²³ We have given the English translation of the name of this country according to the Tibetan version. The original Sanskrit word Tosala does not seem to have any particular meaning (MONIER-WILLIAMS 1964: 456), though the Tibetan suggests a derivation from *tuṣ*, 'to be pleased'.

²⁴ The Tibetan translation is almost incomprehensible. The element *su-* of the original Sanskrit is rendered in Tibetan by *shin tu*, which is perfectly normal and correct. But we fail to understand why the Tibetan word *pad mo* (= *ma*) 'lotus' is used to translate *labha*, which means 'access, accessible' (MONIER-WILLIAMS 1964: 1232).

Sarvagāmin replied, ‘Son of good family, you have already produced the unequalled *bodhicitta* (the decision to attain *bodhi*); that is good, that is good. Son of good family, I, Sarvagāmin, have already taken up the career of the bodhisattva (which consists in) going everywhere. I passed by the door of meditation (*samādhi, ting nge ’dzin*) that contemplates all; I have obtained magical power (*abhijñāna, rdzu ’phrul*) to stay “without reality” (*avastuka, dngos med*) and without structure (*anabhisamkāra, mngon par ’du bya ba med pa*); I entered by the door of luminous knowledge of the *prajñāpāramitā*. Likewise, I can be beneficial to beings through all sorts of means appropriate to their thought and to their intelligence; I can do good to beings regardless of their external appearance, colour, shape, size etc.; their mode of existence, place of birth, way of being born, dwelling place, way of dying, and their vocation; in short: gods (*deva, lha*), serpents (*nāga, klu*), “malevolent spirits” (*yakṣa, gnod sbyin*), celestial musicians (*gandharva, dri za* “perfume eaters”), titans (*asura, lha ma yin*), “birds of prey” (*garuḍa, nam mkha’ lding*), “sirens” (*kiṃnara, mi ’am ci*), “great serpents” (*mahoraga, lto ’phye chen po*), the damned (*naraka, dmyal ba*), animals (*tiryāṇa = tiryagyon, byol song = dud ’gro*), beings of the world of Yama (*preta, yi dags*), humans (*manuṣa, mi*), non-humans (*amānuṣa, mi ma yin*),²⁵ those who follow the vehicle of the “auditors” (*śrāvaka, nyan thos*), “Buddhas for themselves” (*pratyekabuddha, rang sangs rgyas*), and the followers of the “Great Vehicle” (*mahāyāna, theg pa chen po*).²⁶

‘By giving certain beings the *dhāraṇī* (*gzungs*) which includes in itself all the sciences of the world,²⁷ I teach them the various sciences of this world.

‘By using the four appropriate means (*catvārisaṃgraha-vastūni, bsdu ba’i dngos po bzhi*),²⁸ I allow certain beings to attain omniscience.

²⁵ This list of different categories of beings is not exhaustive. It is aimed at showing that the acts of the *bodhisattva* extend to all the beings in the Buddhist cosmology. Cf. RENOU AND FILLIOZAT 1953: nos. 2266-69.

²⁶ This list of the three vehicles—the well-known triple classification of the evolution of Buddhism—has the same purpose as the list of beings just mentioned: to show that the field of activities of the *bodhisattva* covers everything.

²⁷ These are the five branches of science: 1) grammar (*śabda-vidyā, sgra’i rig pa*), 2) logic (*hetu-vidyā, gtan tshigs kyi rig pa*), 3) philosophy, metaphysics (*adhyātma-vidyā, nang don rig pa*), 4) medicine (*cikitsā-vidyā, gso ba rig pa*) and 5) arts (*śilpa-sthāna-vidyā, bzo gnas kyi rig pa*).

²⁸ These are the means (*upāya, thabs*) that the *bodhisattva* uses to convert beings to Buddhism: 1) gift (*dāna, sbyin pa*), 2) agreeable speech (*priya-vādītā, snyan par*

‘By praising the *bodhicitta* to certain beings, I incite them to sow the firm seed of *bodhi*.

‘By praising all the practices of the bodhisattva to certain beings, I make them pronounce the vow to purify all the countries of the Buddha, and to help all beings to mature.

(188-1) ‘By showing certain beings that one experiences the suffering of hell as retribution for bad acts, I make them disgusted with bad acts.

‘By showing certain beings that all the virtues which one acquires by making offerings to the Tathāgata lead with certainty to attaining omniscience, I fill them with joy.

‘By praising the virtues of the Tathāgata to certain beings, I make them pronounce the vow to attain omniscience, by devotion to the virtues and the body of the Buddha.

‘By praising the great person of the Buddha to certain beings, I make them aspire to obtain the body of the Buddha that is indestructible, spontaneous and capable of acting as Buddha, with application and without interruption.

‘By praising the liberty of the Buddha to certain beings, I make them wish to obtain the body of the Buddha that dominates everything and is stopped by nothing.

‘Son of good family! In this town of Tosala, I preach everywhere: the intersection of four streets, small paths, streets, crossroads of three streets, districts; (188-2) and to everybody—men, women, boys and girls. I take on a body that varies in size and shape according to their thought, preparation, capacity and behaviour. In this way, nobody knows who I am, or from where I come. But the important thing is that I succeed in making myself heard by them and in making them practise without error what I preach to them.

‘In Jambudvīpa, there are ninety-six schools of different ideas.²⁹ In order to tame their adherents, I preach to them using the means that are appropriate to them. In this way, in all of Jambudvīpa—towns, villages, countries, regions, royal palaces—I do good to all creatures as I am doing in this town.

smra ba), 3) benefit (*artha-caryā*, *don spyod pa*) and 4) similar objective (*samān-ārthatā*, *don ’thun pa*). Cf. *Mvp*, nos. 924-28 and *Mochizuki*, II: 1856-57.

²⁹ This is the symbolic number used in Buddhist texts to express the various schools of ‘heretical’ thinking; refer to *Mochizuki*, I: 671-72.

‘In the same way, I do good on the four continents,³⁰ the “small cosmos made of a thousand universes” (*sāhasracūḍika-lokadhātu*),³¹ the “middle-sized cosmos made of a thousand times a thousand universes” (*dvisāhasromadhyama-lokadhātu*) and the “great cosmos made of a thousand times a thousand times a thousand universes” (*trisāhasramahāsāhasra-lokadhātu*). In short, in all ten directions, by manifesting myself in different forms and colours, I do good to creatures regardless of their place, base, support, world or direction, (188-3) by all sorts of manners, ways, reasonings, works, acts and languages.

‘O son of good family! I know only this practice: to go and penetrate everywhere.

‘As for other bodhisattvas, they can either assume the same body as each of the creatures (to be converted), or possess concentrations (*samādhi*) equal to the number of the bodies of the creatures, or penetrate by means of the magical body into all the places where creatures are, or experience (themselves) the life of each of the creatures of the world, or produce emanations which are agreeable to look at and therefore please everybody, or manifest themselves in accordance with the race, the character and existence of each creature, or observe during numerous æons the vow of “non-attachment” (*apratihata*, *thogs med*), or engage in practices as varied as the net of Indra (*indrajāla*), or endeavour tirelessly to do good to beings, or regard with equanimity creatures of the three times, or manifest the state of the knowledge without Self (*anātman*, *bdag med*), (188-4) or apply, by great compassion which is illuminating everywhere, to plant the root of good in all creatures. How can I know them all and describe their virtues?

‘O son of good family! In the south there is a country named Prthurāṣṭra (Khams chen po), “Great country”. There lives the chief of the incense merchants named *Utpala-bhūmi* (Longs spyod Utpala). Go there and ask him how one practises and fulfils the obligations of the bodhisattva.’

Then Sudhana, son of the head of the merchants, prostrated himself, touching with his head the feet of Sarvagāmin, the wandering ascetic, walked in a circle a hundred thousand times keeping him to his right, looked at him many times and left him.

³⁰ These are the four continents situated at the four sides of Mount Meru: *Jambudvīpa* (South), *Pūrvavideha* (East), *Avaragodānīya* (West) and *Uttarakuru* (North). See LA VALLÉE POUSSIN 1971, tome II: 145-46.

³¹ By successively multiplying by a thousand the basic universe comprising Mount Meru, the four continents, etc, one obtains the three kinds of cosmos enumerated here. Refer to LA VALLÉE POUSSIN 1971, tome II: 170.

First of all, there is a profound difference in the literary style and length of the two versions. The extract from Chapter II of our *History* is a versified and much abridged version compared to that of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, which is in prose and much lengthier. This is the reason why it is difficult, if not impossible, to understand our *History* without referring to its source.

However, it is not simply an abridged and versified version. While the questions Sudhana asks in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* concern exclusively the practices of the bodhisattva, in our *History* Rin chen asks each teacher, 'What must I do so that my father will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' The reasons for the two pilgrimages are therefore completely different: our *History* uses the motivation of Sudhana's pilgrimage only as a framework for Rin chen's enquiry concerning the law of birth and death. Thus, in our *History*, there is almost nothing left of the content of the doctrinal discourses of the teachers as they are developed in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*; these discourses have but a secondary importance and are only versified skeletal extracts from the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*.

If the author of the *History* chose the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, it was, however, not merely out of interest in the plot of Sudhana's pilgrimage, which was so well suited to the *History*. In fact, the most important element of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* that subsists in our *History* from Dunhuang is without doubt the notion of 'means' (*upāya*, *thabs*), which is brought out as we have noted in the passage cited above; in order to convert beings to Buddhism, the bodhisattva employs a wide variety of means. During his pilgrimage, Sudhana encounters many teachers who are quite different from one other. But, in spite of the differences of doctrinal discourse, they are all 'benevolent guides' (*kalyāṇamitra*), who allow Sudhana to advance in the steps of his career as a bodhisattva; and it is this that is essential. The notion of 'means' (*upāya*, *thabs*), so clearly expressed in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, probably gave the author of our *History* a certain amount of freedom and allowed him to use and even modify the canonical texts to achieve his objective, which was to convert the Tibetans to Buddhism.

Now let us take a look at other modifications that the author of the *History* has brought to the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. To account for them, we have drawn up lists of the teachers whom Rin chen of our *History* (A) and Sudhana (Nor bzangs) of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* (B) respectively visit.

List A

NAME	TITLE	DWELLING PLACE
1) 'Phrul chen Du ta ra	<i>lha</i>	—
2) Khams gsum 'phrul pa	<i>lha'i rje</i>	yul Mi mo mchog/ri Mgul legs pa
3) Sa 'og lha 'dre rje	<i>lha 'dre'i rje</i>	ljongs Rgya mtsho'i sgo
4) Bar snang dbang chen	—	Lang ka gnas kyi mtsho 'gram
5) Sprin chen rgyal po	—	grong khyer Rdo rje
6) Btang brjod	<i>tshong dpon</i>	yul Nags tshal gnas pa
7) Yid bzhin	<i>dge bsnyen ma</i>	—
8) 'Jigs mchog dbyangs	<i>drang srong</i>	yul Chu bo gtsang ma
9) Rgyal drod skye mched	<i>bram ze</i>	yul Yongs su tshol ba
10) Byams ma	<i>bu mo</i>	Seng ge rnam par bgyings pa
11) Blta na sdug pa	<i>dge slong</i>	Mig gsum
12) Dbang chen rgyal po	<i>khye'u</i>	grong khyer Sgo rab
13) Rin chen mang ba	<i>dge bsnyen ma</i>	grong khyer Rgya mtshor gnas pa
14) Mkhas mchog	<i>khyim bdag</i>	Rmad du byung ba
15) Rin chen gtsug phud	<i>tshong dpon</i>	grong khyer Seng ge gzhon nu
16) Kun tu mig	<i>tshong dpon</i>	yul Rtswa'i rtsa ba/grong khyer Kun tu sgo
17) Me	<i>rgyal po</i>	grong khyer Ta la'i rgyal mtshan
18) 'Od chen	<i>rgyal po</i>	grong khyer Shin tu snang ba
19) Mi g.yo ba	<i>dge bsnyen ma</i>	Rgyal po brtan pa'i pho brang
20) Kun tu 'gro ba	<i>tshang pa</i>	grong khyer Tshad yongs su 'dzin pa/ ri Shin tu rnyed pa
21) Utpala	<i>tshong dpon</i>	Rgyal srid Yangs pa
22) Rnam par snang byed	<i>sgrol ba</i>	grong khyer Khang bu brtsegs pa
23) Rgyal mchog	<i>tshong dpon</i>	grong khyer Dga' ba'i phreng ba
24) Seng ge mthu	<i>dge slong ma</i>	Dga' ba'i 'byung ba'i nags tshal chen po
25) Khri pa	<i>khyim bdag</i>	grong khyer Dge ba mthar phyin
26) Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan	<i>dge slong</i>	Rgyas par 'gengs pa
27) Shākya thub pa	<i>sangs rgyas</i>	yul Dbus 'gyur

List B

NAME	TITLE	DWELLING PLACE
1) 'Jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa	<i>byang chub sem dpa'</i>	grong rdal chen po Skyid pa'i 'byung gnas
2) Sprin gyi dpal	<i>dge slong</i>	yul Mi mo gya nom mchog/ri Mgul legs pa
3) Rgya mtsho'i sprin	<i>dge slong</i>	ljongs Rgya mtsho'i sgo
4) Shin tu brtan pa	<i>dge slong</i>	Lang ka'i gnas Rgya mtsho'i ngogs
5) Dra byi la'i sprin	<i>dra byi la</i>	Dra byi la'i grong rdal rdo rje'i grong rdal
6) Btang brjod	<i>tshong dpon</i>	yul Nags tshal na gnas pa

7) Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan	<i>dge slong</i>	'Jam bu gling gi mgo 'gebs pas rgyas par 'gengs pa
8) Yid bzhin	<i>dge bsnyen ma</i>	grong khyer 'Od chen po
9) 'Jig mchog dbyangs	<i>drang srong</i>	yul Chu bo gtsang ma
10) Rgyal po'i drod kyi skye mched	<i>bram ze</i>	yul Yongs su tshol
11) Byams ma	<i>rgyal po</i>	grong khyer Seng ge rnam par bsgyings pa
12) Blta na sdug pa	<i>dge slong</i>	yul Mig gsum pa
13) Dbang po dbang phyug	<i>khye'u</i>	grong khyer Sgo bzang po [pa
14) Phul du byung ba	<i>dge bsnyen ma</i>	grong khyer Rgya mtsho brtan
15) Mkhas pa	<i>khyim bdag</i>	grong khyer 'Byung ba chen po
16) Rin chen gtsug phud	<i>tshong dpon</i>	grong khyer Seng ge'i gzugs
17) Kun tu lta ba	<i>tshong dpon</i>	yul Spa'i rtsa ba, grong khyer Kun nas sgo
18) Me	<i>rgyal po</i>	grong khyer Ta la'i rgyal mtshan
19) 'Od chen po	<i>rgyal po</i>	grong khyer 'Od bzang po
20) Mi g.yo ba	<i>dge bsnyen ma</i>	rgyal po'i pho brang Brtan pa
21) Thams cad du 'gro ba	<i>kun tu rgyu</i>	yul Dga' 'dzin tshad med pa/grong khyer Dga' 'dzin pa/ri Shin tu pad mo
22) Longs spyod Utpala	<i>tshong dpon</i>	yul Khams chen po
23) Dpa'o	<i>mnyan pa</i>	grong khyer Khang pa brtsegs pa
24) Rgyal ba dam pa	<i>tshong dpon</i>	grong khyer Dga' ba'i phreng ba
25) Seng ge rnam par bsgyings pa	<i>dge slong ma</i>	grong khyer Ka ling ga'i nags tshal
26) Lha'i bshes gnyen ma	<i>bcom pa ma</i>	yul Bgrod dka' ba/grong khyer Rin po che rgyan
27) Nan khugs	<i>khyim bdag</i>	grong khyer Dge ba'i pha rol tu phyin pa
28) Spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug	<i>byang chub sem dpa'</i>	ri Potala

Let us examine these two lists of the teachers with care:

Mañjuśrī ('Jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa), the first teacher who Sudhana visits in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* is, as we have seen earlier, replaced by 'Phrul chen Dutara in our *History*. As for the following three teachers, while their dwelling places remain the same in the two versions, their names have changed completely. This change deserves closer investigation.

The expression *khams gsum*, which is in the name of the teacher Khams gsum 'phrul pa lha'i rje 'Lord of the gods who has magic power in the three worlds', is usually indicative of a Buddhist context, and this is indeed the case in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. The three worlds of the well-known Buddhist cosmology are the *Kāmadhātu*, comprising the three evil destinies (*durgati*) and the four continents on the earth and the first six stories of the gods, the *Rūpadhātu* in

space and the *Ārūpyadhātu* on top of it. However, because of the expressions *sa 'og* in *Sa 'og lha 'dre rje* 'Lord of the underground diabolical deities', and *bar snang* in *Bar snang dbang chen* 'Great powerful one of the intermediate world' that follow, it seems more likely that *khams gsum* in our *History* refers to a tripartite division of the universe as the ether, the earth including the underworld, and the intermediate realm (= the atmosphere). Since ancient times, these are the three stages which constitute the Tibetan universe, which is vertically divided into three parts: the gods (*lha*) above, diabolical divinities like the *klu* below, and humans in the middle.³²

In this way, following just the etymology of the names of these three teachers of the *History*, and not those of their dwelling places, which remain the same as in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, we adduce that Rin chen, leaving his divine country (situated without doubt in the upper sphere), goes first to the place of the Lord of the gods who has magic power in the three worlds and who also probably resides in the upper world. Then he descends to the lower world, to the place of the Lord of the underground diabolical deities, and finally arrives at the intermediate stage where the human beings dwell. This signifies for Tibetans that his pilgrimage covers the entire universe.

After the dialogue with the first four teachers, Rin chen follows on the whole the same terrestrial itinerary—though much shortened—as does Sudhana in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*.

The absence from list A of the teacher *Lha'i bshes gnyen ma* (26th in list B) may have been a mere oversight on the part of the author of our *History*, but the presence of the word *lha* 'god' in the name can also be considered as a reason for her omission from the *History* of Rin chen. For, as we have seen, starting with the fourth teacher, *Bar snang dbang chen*, they are all earthly teachers, with Śākyamuni as the last one whom Rin chen goes to see. It is probably the presence of the word *lha* 'god' in the name of *Lha'i bshes gnyen ma* (although the word is employed here to render the Sanskrit word *vasu* in the name *Vasumitra* of the Sanskrit original) which led the author of the *History* to exclude it.

As for the change of order of *Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan* from seventh position in list B to 26th position, just before Śākyamuni, in list A, it can perhaps be explained by the fact that among the countries of the teachers of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, his is the only one which is specifically situated in *Jambudvīpa*. The insertion of Śākyamuni of *Magadha* in *Jambudvīpa* as the last of the teachers of

³² MACDONALD 1959: 419-20 and STEIN 1962: 22, 170.

our *History*, in order to replace Avalokiteśvara (Spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug) in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, would have obliged the author of the *History* to place Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan, also from Jambudvīpa, just before Śākyamuni, which makes the itinerary of Rin chen more logical from a geographical standpoint.

It should be noted, however, that all the teachers of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* in fact are in Jambudvīpa. This must have been obvious for someone familiar with Indian Buddhist cosmology. The change of order of the teacher Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan in list A implies that the author of our *History* did not know Indian geography, and this is one of the grounds for the hypothesis which we will develop below, according to which the author was Tibetan.

From what we have seen so far, we have here a fine adaptation of the pilgrimage of Sudhana in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, but with a fundamental difference between the two versions. In the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, Sudhana's visit to the various teachers is of paramount importance; each teacher contributes precious teachings concerning the practices of the bodhisattva, which is the main purpose of Sudhana's quest. In our *History*, however, all of the teachers whom Rin chen visits, apart from Śākyamuni, despite their virtues, are incapable of answering the fundamental questions Rin chen asks about the law of birth and death. It is precisely their inability that is underlined over and over throughout the pilgrimage. After all, the pilgrimage of Rin chen, and therefore all of Chapter II, is only one element—quite interesting from a literary point of view but completely secondary in the end—in the organisation of our *History*.

After Chapter II, in which the pilgrimage of Rin chen is narrated, what follows in the *History* is a description of Śākyamuni and of his country (Chapter III, 1), and the discourse on the inevitable nature of death (Chapter III, 2a). These are not taken from the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* and are original compositions of the author. He tackles the fundamental question of death, about which Rin chen had asked at the beginning of the *History*. The author has the Buddha declare that all beings, even the gods, die (Chapter III, 2b). He condemns certain funeral rites (Chapter III, 2c) and in the end recommends, without pronouncing it, however, the formula of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā*, as the remedy against death (Chapter III, 2d). It is likely that the author of the *History* is alluding here to pre-Buddhist religion, whose followers practised very elaborate funeral rituals in order to send the deceased to the land of the Dead, where they would live happily until their resurrection. In our *History*, the author declares these funeral rites to be useless and replaces them with rites centred on Buddhist formulæ.

Some of the passages that we have just surveyed are extracts from Buddhist texts. For example, in Chapter III, 2b, Śākyamuni reveals the number of years allotted to the various categories of beings, from human beings to the *Naivasamjñā-nāsamjñāyatana* gods who reside at the top of the *Ārūpyadhātu* world. This theory of the lifespan of beings is not alien to Buddhist cosmology, as it is discussed thoroughly in the *Abhidharmakośa*,³³ and we even know a *sūtra* entitled *Āyuspariyantasūtra* (*Tshe'i mtha'i mdo*, *P* no. 973)³⁴ that deals exclusively with the subject. The list of our *History* is only an abbreviated and schematised version of this theory and even contains some errors (see below).

As for the passage concerning the merits of the formula of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* recommended by Śākyamuni at the end of the *History* (Chapter III, 2d), it is in fact an abbreviated and reordered extract of the text which is found shortly before the end of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī* (*P* no. 198, vol. 7, pp. 167-5 to 168-4).³⁵ The aim of this canonical text is, as the epithet of one of its Tibetan versions (*P* no. 198), *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*, *Ngan 'gro thams cad yongs su sbyong ba*, indicates, to 'purify all the bad destinies (*durgati*)' in order to allow its followers to avoid them.³⁶ As is clear from this epithet, this *dhāraṇī* has the same objective as the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*.

From what we have seen until now, we can say that our author must have used the composition of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*-

³³ LA VALLÉE POUSSIN 1971, tome II: 171-74.

³⁴ The passage that concerns us is found in *P* vol. 39: 62-3 to 64-2.

³⁵ There are five different translations of this text in the current Kanjur: *P* nos. 197 to 201. As for the formula (*dhāraṇī*) itself, it is almost identical in all the versions. As far as the composition of the translations is concerned, we can divide them into two groups: 1) no. 198 in which the son of the Shin tu brtan pa (Supraṭiṣṭhita) gods and Indra appear, and 2) nos. 197, 200 and 201 in which they are absent. No. 199 is a sort of combination of the two groups; it belongs rather to group 2 but an episode involving Shin tu brtan pa that is found in no. 198 is inserted in the middle of it in a completely abrupt and illogical way. No. 198 is the only ancient translation (translated by Jinamitra, Surendrabodhi and Ye shes sde), and is therefore the only one that is present among the Dunhuang manuscripts—PT 6, 54, 74 and 368.

The formula (*dhāraṇī*) itself is present in PT 72, 73, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, IOL Tib J 322 (not in the Tibetan transliteration of the Sanskrit *dhāraṇī*, but in Tibetan translation), and 348 (?). The *dhāraṇī* is also well represented among the Chinese Dunhuang manuscripts. Cf. FUJIEDA 1960.

³⁶ The copyist of the PT 397, for example, copied the formula 'in order to acquire merits, not to fall into the bad destinies (*durgati*), and to reach the dwelling of Amitābha' (*Inventaire*, I: 99).

tantra, and that he has inserted into the *History* elements from other Buddhist texts and arranged them in an original way with some modifications. We have noted three instances of this: the pilgrimage of Rin chen, the theory of the lifespan of beings, and an extract from *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī*. With regard to the first case, it is certain that the pilgrimage of Sudhana (Nor bzangs) in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* served as the model. As for the second case, it is difficult to tell on which text the author of the *History* based his work, because the theory of the lifespan of beings is a part of Buddhist cosmology that is well attested in various Buddhist works. It is possible that further passages were inspired by, or contain quotations from other texts that we have not been able to identify.

After this rapid overview of the *History*, we cannot help but notice with surprise that the formula of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā*, which should be the culmination of the text, is absent. Is this absence simply due to forgetfulness on the part of Chos dbyangs, the copyist of PT 218? We will come back to this question later. First, however, we shall present a complete translation of the *Skye shi'i lo rgyus* and will indicate the relationship between our *History* and other texts from Dunhuang before proposing a definitive hypothesis concerning the authorship and the date of the text.

TRANSLATION

History of the Cycle of Birth and Death

(In the following pages, the peculiar and aberrant forms of Tibetan spelling in the Dunhuang manuscripts are not indicated except in cases in which it seems necessary for the interpretation of the text. This principle is equally followed with regard to the differences between copies.)

Chapter I³⁷

1. Formerly all the gods possessed of body (*gzugs yod lha*)³⁸ hoped that their life would be eternal: for innumerable æons they had

³⁷ Given the importance of this chapter, which determines the rest of the *History* and the considerable variants among the manuscripts of this chapter, we have drawn up the collated transcription at the end of the study. On the other hand, the whole Chapter I has been translated by KAPSTEIN (2000: 5-6). We do not, however, agree with his interpretations in all details.

never seen the law of birth and death (*skye shi'i chos*) because they had a long life of numerous years. The Lord of this world (*de'i khams rje*) was called 'Od 'bar rgyal, 'King of Blazing Light'. The dwelling place that he occupied ...³⁹ was made solely of light and shone dazzlingly bright. Everything above and below it was reflected in it as in a mirror. Both the sun and the moon decorated the 'hole of the stars' (*skar khung*).⁴⁰ The feeling of well being and comfort given by this country was beyond description. Food and treasures appeared whenever one wished. Everything there was made of magical materials. The light emanating from the body [of 'Od 'bar rgyal] blazed like gold. His thousand sons, ten thousand parents and all his retinue had the same magical power (*'phrul stobs*)⁴¹ as he. Everybody hoped to remain thus forever (*rtag du*).⁴²

2. One day the life of 'Od 'bar rgyal was exhausted and the moment of the fall arrived for him. His magical power (*'phrul stobs*), his indescribable virtues (*yon tan*) and the beautiful blazing light of his body disappeared (*yal*). He stopped speaking, moving or breathing.⁴³ Everyone found it extraordinary and asked each other what was the fault and what was the law. Nobody knew the meaning of the law (*chos don*). His thousand sons, ten thousand parents and all his retinue were plunged into an ocean of suffering and, beating their bodies, showed the signs of the most profound sadness. They wished that the king would return [to life] and be as he was before (*slar 'ong sngon bzhin yod du re*).

3. There was among the gods a god named Dutara who was quite old and who had great magical power (*'phrul chen*). He came to the residence of 'Od 'bar rgyal and declared, 'You are in error. You are infected by ignorance. Everything that exists in this world

³⁸ This category of gods is unknown to us. However, it is highly probable that the tripartite Buddhist cosmology—the *Kāmadhātu* (*'dod pa'i khams*), the *Rūpadhātu* (*gzugs kyi khams*) and the *Ārūpyadhātu* (*gzugs med pa'i khams*)—is applied here by the author to the deities residing at these respective *dhātu* (*khams*). In this case, these deities would be those residing in the *Rūpadhātu* (*gzugs kyi khams*).

³⁹ As the last half of text is missing here, the translation is uncertain. It is a pity, because it seems that it is a question of 'Od 'bar rgyal's own dwelling-place.

⁴⁰ An opening in the roof for light, smoke and passage. For details, see Stein 1957: 54-55.

⁴¹ For the meaning of the word *'phrul* in the religious system of Ancient Tibet, see MACDONALD 1971: 337-38.

⁴² I. O. vol. 69, fol. 17, frag. 1, l. 7 and PT 366, fol. 1.

⁴³ We have followed the version of IOL Tib J 345: *smra zhing 'gul lbugs kun myi mkhyen*. We have changed, however, *lbugs*, which is not found in our dictionaries, to *dbugs*, 'breathe, breath'.

(*kham*s), when seventy thousand⁴⁴ aeons have passed, will become like him. Know that this is the law of birth and death. I do not know, however, how to remedy (*phan*)⁴⁵ it. There is no remedy.⁴⁶

When Dutara had spoken thus, the excellent son of 'Od 'bar rgyal, named Rin chen, having listened with great respect and thought, respectfully asked this great expert of magical power (*'phrul chen*), 'I find that your words are the supreme truth.⁴⁷ When the moment [of the accomplishment of the law] of birth and death arrives, what must one do so that [the deceased] will return [to life],⁴⁸ and so that it will be possible to encounter him?⁴⁹ What must one do so that [the deceased] will be at peace (*bde*) and happy (*skyid pa*) [in the other world]?'

Dutara replied, 'Although I know that birth and death exist, I do not know what to do to remedy (*phan*) the fact. If you wish to ask what is the doctrine (*chos tshul*) of birth and death, good man, [go] there.⁵⁰ There is the Lord of the gods who has magical power in the three worlds (*kham*s *gsum* '*phrul pa lha'i rje*), a *btsun pa*⁵¹ endowed with great magical power. Question him, reflect and understand!' Dutara expressed his idea in these terms, in a persuasive way.

Then Rin chen, son of the gods, out of respect for his father, and thinking of his sufferings (*mya ngan*),⁵² and fearing that he might not arrive at the place of happiness and peace (*bde skyid gnas*),⁵³ aspired to look for and understand the meaning of the law of birth and death. Thus with a retinue of various experts in magical power (*'phrul mkhas*), ... [he departed] without [the slightest idea of] coming back, and without looking back.⁵⁴

⁴⁴ One finds this number in the ancient religion where it designates the number of years of the stay in the country of the Death (*gshin yul*). See MACDONALD 1971: 366, n. 591.

⁴⁵ Refer to p. 121 above.

⁴⁶ PT 367.

⁴⁷ PT 367.

⁴⁸ PT 218 and 367.

⁴⁹ PT 218 and 220.

⁵⁰ This entire phrase is found only in PT 367.

⁵¹ This term, which translates in Buddhist terminology the Sanskrit *bhadanta* 'venerable' (*Mvp*, nos. 8702, 9220), must refer to a notion that we have not yet been able to determine precisely in the pre-Buddhist religious system.

⁵² The translation of this passage is uncertain.

⁵³ Refer to p. 121 above.

⁵⁴ As the last two verses are almost illegible, the translation is hypothetical.

Chapter II⁵⁵

(2) (folio *kha*, verso) Rin chen arrived in the country named Myi mo mchog, the ‘Best of women’, the dwelling place of the Lord of the gods who has magical power in the three worlds.⁵⁶ The Lord dwelt in a place rich in medicinal plants at the top of the mountain called Mgul legs, the ‘Good throat’. Rin chen prostrated himself at the feet of the Lord, walked around him and joined his hands to say, ‘O Saint (*’phags pa*), deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, Lord of the gods, to instruct me.’ Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The Lord of the gods replied, ‘Good man, what do you want to ask me? I, Lord of the gods who has magical power in the three worlds, have obtained “the intelligence of the eyes” through the power of veneration. By the power of the formula (*dhāraṇī*) that encompasses the clouds of teaching, looking into the ten directions, I see the Tathāgatas, their varied forms and colours, (folio *ga*, recto) their inconceivable magical emanations (*rnam par ’phrul pa*), their lights radiating in all directions and many other inconceivable virtues. Having seen all that, I can explain to the beings the magical powers [of the Tathāgatas]. These are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

Rin chen continued, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred [from this world to the other], and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy (*bde zhing skyid pa*)?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

The Lord of the gods who has magical power in the three worlds replied, ‘I do not understand this doctrine (*chos tshul*). This is the

⁵⁵ The whole of chapter II is, as we have seen above, merely an extremely shortened adaptation of the pilgrimage of Sudhana (Nor bzangs) in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. As a result, the translation is extremely difficult, if not impossible, without referring to the original text of the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. We have therefore compared the two texts in order to translate it here. The significant modifications that the author of the *History* has made are discussed above (pp. 124-37). We do not point out each and every minor difference between the two texts, nor do we go into the details of the doctrines presented by each teacher. These details are much abbreviated, fragmented extracts of the original and as such they no longer present any essential interest and play only a secondary role in our *History*.

⁵⁶ About the name of this teacher together with those of the following two teachers, Sa ’og lha ’dre rje ‘Lord of the underground diabolical deities’ and Bar snang dbang chen ‘Great powerful one of the intermediate world’, see above p. 133.

law (*chos*) of birth and death. The history (*lo rgyus*) of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Good man, go there. There, in the country called Rgya mtsho'i sgo "Door of the Ocean" (folio *ga, verso*) dwells the Lord of the underground diabolical deities (*sa 'og lha 'dre rje*). Ask him the law of birth and death.'

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated himself respectfully in front of the teacher, and set out with his retinue in search of the law (*chos tshul*) of birth and death to encounter the Lord of the underground diabolical deities; divine tiara (*cod pan*) [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.⁵⁷

(3) Then, after crossing many countries (*yul khams*), Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the country named Rgya mtsho'i sgo, the 'Door of the Ocean'. Having prostrated himself, touching with his head the feet of the Lord of the underground diabolical deities, and walked around him, he joined his hands to say, 'O Saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, *btsun pa*, to instruct me.' (folio *nga, recto*) He thus beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The Lord of the underground diabolical deities replied, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? When I was submerged, here in the country named Rgya mtsho'i sgo, in concentration (*samādhi*), meditating on all the virtues of the ocean, I saw appear in its centre a precious, well-planted lotus with various ornaments that was supported by numerous lords.⁵⁸ It was raining flowers of a divine nature. On the magnificent lotus was sitting the Tathāgata. His [eighty] signs (*anuvyañja*) and [thirty-two] characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*) were inconceivable, his virtues and his magical power indescribable. Then, extending his hand, the Tathāgata touched me and revealed a teaching called the Universal Eye, which explained the obligations of the bodhisattva.⁵⁹ Therefore, I have obtained the formula (*dhāraṇī*) of deliverance. (folio *nga, verso*) Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen continued, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do

⁵⁷ Refer to n. 19 above.

⁵⁸ See DE JONG 1985: 11.

⁵⁹ See DE JONG 1985: 12.

so that he will return [to life], so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

The Lord of the underground diabolical deities replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Good man, go there. There in the country named Mtsho 'gram, "Shore of the ocean", on the way to Lañkā dwells Bar snang dbang chen "Great powerful one in the intermediate world". Ask him about the history of birth and death.'

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter Bar snang dbang chen; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(4) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived at the country Mtsho 'gram, 'Shore of the ocean' on the way to Lañkā, and (folio *ca*, *recto*) encountered Bar snang dbang chen, 'Great powerful one in the intermediate world'. Having prostrated himself and joined his hands, he said, 'O Saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, *btsun pa*, to instruct me.' He beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

Bar snang dbang chen replied, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Bar snang dbang chen, have found the door without obstacle that leads to the deliverance of the bodhisattva. Therefore, I can go freely with my body to all the countries of the Buddhas in the ten directions. By the blessing of "without reality" (*dnegos med*, *avastuka*), I can fly in the sky, penetrate the earth, and there is no danger of my drowning in the river. I am capable of making clouds appear imitating all living creatures. I have listened to all the correct teachings (*yang dag chos tshul*) preached by the Buddhas of the ten directions. (folio *ca*, *verso*). As I have the abilities, any living creature that sees me is certain to obtain *bodhi*. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen continued, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

Bar snang dbang chen replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and question Sprin chen rgyal po "King of the great clouds".'

Rin chen, son of the gods, having listened to these instructions, prostrated himself respectfully. He then set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death (folio *cha*, *recto*) to encounter Sprin chen rgyal po; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(5) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in Rdo rje grong khyer, 'Town of diamond'. Sprin chen rgyal po, 'King of the great clouds', sitting on the throne, was preaching the Law to numerous beings. Rin chen, having seen him, prostrated himself, touching his forehead to the feet of Sprin chen rgyal po ... He said, 'O Saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. [I am plunged in] an ocean of [indescribable] suffering. [I beg you to] instruct me.' Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

Sprin chen rgyal po replied, 'Good man, [what do you want to ask me?] I have obtained the formula of Sarasvatī. The light comes out of my mouth. All the beings who see this mass of light or who are touched by it (folio *cha*, *verso*) gather around me. I have explained to them the ornament of the wheel of the Scripture (*yi ge'i 'khor lo'i rgyan*)⁶⁰ in such a way that they know and understand it. I have done this so that they do not turn away from the supreme Awakening. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen replied, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

Sprin chen rgyal po replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. [The history of birth and death is] very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man. [Question] Btang brjod, "One who speaks of liberation",⁶¹ head of the merchants.'

⁶⁰ We do not exactly understand what this expression means.

⁶¹ The name of this teacher in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* is Mukta, 'Liberation'. The Tibetan version gives him the name Btang brjod, for which I owe the interpretation given here to M. Kapstein.

Rin chen, son of the gods, having listened to these instructions, prostrated himself respectfully. He then set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter Btang brjod, head of the merchants; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(6) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, (folio *ja*, *recto*) arrived in the country Nags tshal gnas pa, 'Forest dwelling'. Having seen Btang brjod, head of the merchants, he prostrated himself respectfully at his feet and joined his hands to say, 'O Saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. [I am plunged in] an ocean of [indescribable] suffering.'

[Btang brjod, head of the merchants] made appear on his body the Buddha Bhagavat of the ten directions in a number equal to the specks of dust in the ten countries [of the Buddhas] in the ten [directions], together with their teachings and qualities, the different vehicles (*theg pa*), and the emanations (*sprul pa*) of Buddha showing the various ways of behaviour. He came out of his meditation (*samādhi*) and said to Rin chen, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? With my knowledge of the Ornament without obstacle, I have also seen the Buddhas of the ten directions. (folio *ja*, *verso*) They do not arrive here nor does my body equally go [there]. The manifestations of the Tathāgatas are like dreams and shadows, and like material made with magic. Their voices are also like an echoes and resonance. I know that the manifestation of my own spirit is also like a dream, a reflection of the moon on the water, an illusion and an echo. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

(folio *nya*, *recto*) Then Rin chen spoke thus: 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred, and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

The head of the merchants replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and ask [the *upāsikā* (*dge bsnyen ma*), the lay woman who has taken five vows,] Yid bzhin "According to wish" the history of birth and death.'

Having listened to these instructions, [Rin chen prostrated himself] respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the

doctrine [of birth and death] to encounter the *upāsikā* Yid bzhin; (folio *nya, verso*) divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(7) [Then, after crossing] many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived [in the country where dwelt Yid bzhin, ‘According to wish’]. This well-adorned country was surrounded everywhere by trees, trees of jewels, fruit trees, ... and by walls. In the centre was the palace decorated with jewels. Yid bzhin [was there...] All the gods of the upper sphere (*mthos ris, svarga*), humans, [beings of the world of] Yama and animals were gathered there coming from the ten directions... Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself at the feet of the *upāsikā* and walked around her to say, ‘O Saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, *upāsikā*, to instruct me.’ He beseeched her with numerous pleasant words.

The *upāsikā* replied, ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? (folio *ta, recto*) I, *upāsikā* Yid bzhin, have obtained the deliverance (named) “the banner of happiness without suffering”. Seeing me or hearing me is beneficial. Likewise all the actions [of those who do] are beneficial. All the beings who see me obtain without fail the supreme *bodhi*. The Tathāgatas came from the ten directions to sit on this throne. I have listened to all the teachings. Ceaselessly I see the Tathāgatas and I listen to their teachings. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

Rin chen replied, ‘My father is called [’Od ’bar rgyal]. As his life has been transferred, and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?’ Thus [asked Rin chen].

The *upāsikā* replied, ‘It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. [I do not understand] the doctrine of it. Go there, [good man, and ask] in the country of Chu bab gtsang ba, “Pure river”, the ascetic (*rṣi, drang srong*) ’Jigs mchog dbyangs “Supremely terrifying melody”...’ (folio *ta, verso*).

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death, to encounter ’Jigs mchog dbangs; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(8) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the country Chu bab gtsang ba, 'Pure river'. There, various forests of jewels shone and were decorated with varied flowers and fruits. In the centre of these various forests was the ascetic 'Jigs mchog dbyangs 'Supremely terrifying melody'. His hair was plaited and he wore the tiara, his upper clothes were made of herbs and skin, and his lower garments of bark. He was sitting on a cushion made of herbs and was surrounded by ten thousand ascetics. Rin chen bowed, prostrated himself (folio *tha*, *recto*) and walked around him to ask him with joined hands, 'O Saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, ascetic, to instruct me.' He beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

'Jigs mchog dbyangs reached out and touched the head of Rin chen. At this moment, Rin chen, son of the gods, had the following vision: He was with all the Tathāgatas of the countries of the Buddhas in the ten directions, and was blessed... He saw all the virtues of the Jina. The ascetic 'Jigs mchog dbyangs, having removed his hand, [said to Rin chen], 'Do you remember [what you have seen]?'

Rin chen replied, 'Yes, thanks to the blessing of the holy teacher that you are.' (folio *tha*, *verso*) ...

'Jigs mchog dbangs continued, 'Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen replied, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred, and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

'Jigs mchog dbangs replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and ask the brahman (*bram ze*) Rgyal drod skye mched, "Source of victorious heat", the history of birth and death.'

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death, to encounter the brahman Rgyal drod skye mched; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(9) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, (folio *da, recto*) arrived in the country named Yongs su tshol ba, 'Sought for everywhere'. There, the brahman Rgyal drod skye mched 'Source of victorious heat' was practising strict asceticism in order to attain omniscience. He saw that on each of the four sides, a mass of fire as big as the mountain was burning, and that he was completely surrounded by a high mountain that looked like the edge of a sword. Rin chen, having seen the brahman, prostrated himself at his feet and said with his hands joined, 'O Saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. [I am plunged in] an ocean of [indescribable] suffering. I beg you, [brahman,] to instruct me.' Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The brahman replied. '[What do you want to ask me, good man?] I, [Rgyal drod] skye mched, by the virtue and the blessing of rigorous asceticism ... gather everybody in front of me. [When I practise asceticism,] in all the countries of serpents, (*nāga, klu*), musicians of genius (*gandharva, dri za*), (folio *da, verso*) titans (*asura, lha ma yin*), "birds of prey" (*garuḍa, nam mkha' lding*), sirens (*kimnara, mi 'am ci*) and sons of the gods of the *Kāmadhātu*, the cymbals resound, the earth quakes and the magical light that even illuminates Hell (*dmyal ba*) appears. The sufferings of all are appeased. Thanks to this light, I am also seen. I tame all those that come here. All the erroneous views of each are transformed. I convert them all by preaching the Law according to their personal capacity and lead them to *bodhi*. All the sentient beings who touch this mountain of fire obtain the concentration, peace, tranquillity and the supernatural capacity (*mngon shes*) of a bodhisattva. Such are my personal virtues. I have obtained only the bodhisattva's deliverance called "the inexhaustible maṇḍala".⁶² What do you want to ask me, good man?"

Rin chen replied, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred, and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

The brahman replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death (folio *na, recto*) is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and question

⁶² The qualification of this deliverance is unknown.

Byams ma “Compassionate one”, daughter of King Seng ge dpal, “Glorious lion”.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully, and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the daughter Byams ma; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(10) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the country called Seng ge rnam par bsgyings pa, ‘Outstretched Lion’. There, the dwelling of King Seng ge dpal, ‘Glorious lion’, was splendid, decorated with all sorts of jewels. His daughter, Byams ma, ‘Compassionate one’, was sitting on a sandalwood throne, surrounded by five hundred servants ... Her body was shining brightly. Rin chen prostrated himself, touching with his head the feet of Byams ma, and walked around her ... [saying], ‘O, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. (folio *na*, *verso*) [I am plunged in] an ocean of [indescribable] suffering. [I beg you to] instruct me.’ Thus he beseeched her with numerous pleasant words.

Then Byams ma showed ... On each of these bases, there were Tathāgatas of the sphere of the Law who had produced for the first time the thought of the Awakening, those who were practising conduct, those who were showing the miracle of the supreme Awakening, those who were turning the wheel of the Law and those who were entering into complete nirvāṇa. She showed them all in the manner of reflection, like the reflection of the sun, the moon and the stars in a clear lake. After having shown such qualities, she pronounced the following words: ‘I, daughter Byams ma, know the chapter of the word of the Prajñāpāramitā entitled “Universal ornament”. He who practises this doctrine obtains the *dhāraṇī* of the universal door. In the teaching of this *dhāraṇī* all the doctrines are united. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

(folio *pa*, *recto*) Rin chen continued, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred, and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him, and what must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

The daughter Byams ma replied, ‘It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and ask the monk (*bhikṣu*, *dge*

slong) Blta na sdug pa, “Beautiful to look at”, the doctrine of birth and death.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(11) Then, [after crossing many countries,] Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the country named Mig gsum, ‘Three eyes’. In the middle of various forests dwelled the monk Blta na sdug pa, ‘Beautiful to look at’, decorated ..., endowed with excellent virtues [obtained by means of] practices, surrounded by different beings. (folio *pa*, verso) ... ‘In order to produce knowledge among the groups of different beings, ... in remembering the method of the Tathāgatas, all the beings ... I walk.’ Each step was supported by a lotus of divine jewels. Rin chen prostrated himself, touching with his head the feet of the monk Blta na sdug pa, and joined his hands and said, ‘O Saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, monk, to instruct me.’ Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The monk replied, ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? I, the monk Blta na sdug pa, have practised in a single life the religious behaviour with Tathāgatas as numerous as the sands of the thirty-eight Ganges. I have listened to their words. I have received their instructions and their teachings. I have purified my previous vows. (folio *pha*, recto) I entered in the field of the achievement. I have purified the circle of conduct. I have completely achieved the [six] perfections (*pāramitā*),⁶³ and I have also learned the miracle [of the Supreme Awakening]. Further, my practices are infinite. When I walk on this promenade, at each production of thought, the practice of the bodhisattva is manifest. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

Rin chen replied, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred, and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

⁶³ They are 1) perfect gift (*dāna*, *sbyin pa*), 2) perfect conduct (*śīla*, *tshul khrim*), 3) perfect patience (*kṣānti*, *bzod pa*), 4) perfect zeal (*vīrya*, *brtson ’grus*), 5) perfect meditation (*dhyāna*, *bsam gtan*) and 6) perfect wisdom (*prajñā*, *shes rab*).

Blta na sdug pa replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and ask the boy without equal, Dbang chen rgyal po, "King of great power", the history of birth and death.'

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully, and set out with his retinue to encounter the excellent boy (*khye'u mchog*), Dbang chen rgyal po; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(12) (folio *pha, verso*) Then, [after crossing many countries,] Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived at the town of Sgo rab, 'Excellent door'. There, the excellent boy Dbang chen rgyal po, 'King of great power', was on the shore of a river with fresh water... He was surrounded with ten thousand young and excellent boys. Rin chen prostrated himself by touching his head to the feet of the boy without equal, Dbang chen rgyal po, and joined his hands to say, 'Deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, Dbang chen rgyal po, to instruct me.' Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The boy without equal replied, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Dbang chen rgyal po, have learnt from Āryamañjuśrīkumāra different sciences of this world.⁶⁴ I know who will be reborn in the superior sphere (*mtho ris, svarga*) and in the erroneous destinies (*log 'gro = ? ngan 'gro, durgati*); I can distinguish those who practise the law of good actions from those who practise the law of bad actions. (folio *ba, recto*) I have also obtained luminous knowledge. Based on these, I liberate numerous beings. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen replied, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred, and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him, and what must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

The boy without equal replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man. There at the town of Rgya

⁶⁴ Cf. n. 27.

mtshor gnas pa “Dwelling on the ocean” lives the *upāsikā* (*dge bsnyen ma*) Rin chen mang ba, “([one who possesses] many jewels”, who practises the discipline. Question her.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully, and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the *upāsikā* Rin chen mang ba; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(13) Then, (folio *ba*, *verso*) after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the holy town of Rgya mtshor gnas pa, ‘Dwelling on the ocean’. There was a house made of jewels, with beams of gold decorated with turquoise and covered with a net of jewels. In its centre on a high and immaculate chair was sitting the *upāsikā* Rin chen mang ba, ‘[who possesses] numerous jewels’. She was young and beautiful, her hair was undone(?); she wore no ornaments and was clad in white. Ten thousand divine servants surrounded her. Rin chen, son of the gods, having seen her, prostrated himself respectfully, and joined his hands to say, ‘Deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, *upāsikā*, to instruct me.’ Thus he beseeched her with numerous pleasant words.

The *upāsikā* replied, ‘What do you want to ask me? I, Rin chen mang ba, have obtained the bodhisattva’s liberation called the Ornament of inexhaustible treasure and merits. (folio *ma*, *recto*) My body gives off an excellent perfume. The beings who breathe this perfume are purified from the stain of the three poisons⁶⁵ and are established in the three doors of liberation.⁶⁶ Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me?’

Rin chen continued, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

⁶⁵ They are ‘ignorance’ (*moha*, *gti mug*), ‘concupiscence’ (*rāga*, *’dod chags*) and ‘hatred’ (*dveṣa*, *zhe sdang*).

⁶⁶ This phrase of our *History* is not found in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. Is this because the version that our author used was different from the one currently in the Kanjur? Or did our author incorporate a passage here from somewhere else? As we have found in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* passages corresponding to the rest of chapter II, except for this passage, we are inclined to adopt the second hypothesis.

The *upāsikā* replied, ‘It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I don’t understand its doctrine. Go there, good man, and ask the master of the house (*khyim bdag, grhapati*) Mkhas mchog, “Excellent expert”.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the master of house Mkhas mchog; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(14) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, (folio *ma, verso*) arrived in the town of Rmad du byung ba ‘Miraculously appeared’. At a crossroads under the shade of trees of jewels, magical flowers were raining, a net of jewels was spread like a canopy, and everything was decorated with banners, standards and divine ornaments. There, on a throne of jewels, sat the master of the house Mkhas mchog, ‘Excellent expert’, surrounded by numerous persons. Rin chen, son of the gods, having seen him, prostrated himself at his feet and joined his hands to say, ‘O Expert (*mkhas pa*), deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, master of the house, to instruct me. Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The master of the house replied, ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? I, master of the house Mkhas mchog, have found the treasure (*gter*) of all the merits, which fulfils the wish (*yiḍ bzhin mdzod*). I can therefore furnish all kinds of objects according to the desire of each being. It is like the rain that falls from the sky. (folio *tsa, recto*) I also create pleasure and satisfy everybody. Although I preach [in different ways] in accordance with [the capacity of understanding of] each in order to liberate him by appropriate means (*thabs, upāya*), it is to make all the beings enter into the Great vehicle (*theg pa chen po, mahāyāna*), which is the unique teaching. I sow also the grains and the shoots of good. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

Rin chen continued, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

The master of the house replied, ‘It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand

the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and in the town of Seng ge gzhon nu, “Young lion”, question the head of the merchants Rin chen gtsug phud, “Tuft of jewelled hair”, about the history of birth and death.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter Rin chen gtsug phud; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(15) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the town of Seng ge gzhon nu, ‘Young lion’. There he saw in the centre of an assembly the head of the merchants Rin chen gtsug phud, ‘Tuft of jewelled hair’, chief without equal who practises the Law. (folio *tsa*, *verso*) Having prostrated himself at the feet of the head of the merchants, he joined his hands and said, ‘Deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, head of the merchants, to instruct me.’ Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

Rin chen gtsug phud entered his proper seven-storey residence made of jewels in which all needs are fulfilled as wished. Having shown it to Rin chen, son of the gods, Rin chen gtsug phud said, ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Rin chen gtsug phud, made, countless æons ago, abundant offerings to the Tathāgatas and to their entourage. I have transferred (*bsngos*) the root of this good for the following three aims: 1) that all beings be rid of pains and sufferings (*nyon mongs sdug bsngal*), 2) that all beings follow the holy teaching and 3) that all beings make offerings to the Tathāgatas. I have made a great prayer and the transfer has been realised. (folio *tsha*, *recto*) Many beings therefore benefit from this transfer. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me?’

Rin chen continued, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

Rin chen gtsug phud replied, ‘It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man. There in the town of Kun tu sgo, “Door [which opens] everywhere”, ask to the chief of merchants of

incense Kun tu mig, “Eye [which sees] everywhere”, the doctrine of birth and death.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the head of the merchants of incense; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(16) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the country Rtswa'i rtsa ba 'Root of the herb'. There, [in the centre of] (folio *tsha*, *verso*) ten thousand towns, was the town of Kun tu sgo, 'Door [which opens] everywhere'. Rin chen found there the head of the merchants of incense, who was handling all kinds of incense. Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself at the feet of the head of the merchants of incense and joined his hands to say, 'O Kun tu mig, “Eye [which sees] everywhere”, head of the merchants of incense, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, head of the merchants of incense, to instruct me.' Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The head of the merchants replied, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Kun tu mig, head of the merchants, make abundant offerings of perfumed objects to the Tathāgata and I make all the beings rejoice. Having found the incense without equal, the foundation of the law, I appease all the illnesses of beings. I eliminate all fears and I annihilate all obstacles. I thus protect all beings and show them the law of the “four immeasurables” (*tshad med*, *apramāṇa*).⁶⁷ (folio *dza*, *recto*) Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen continued, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

Kun tu mig replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man. There, in the town of Ta la'i rgyal mtshan,

⁶⁷ These are: 1) immeasurable compassion (*maitrī*, *byams pa*), 2) immeasurable pity (*karuṇā*, *snying rje*), 3) immeasurable joy (*muditā*, *dga' ba*) and 4) immeasurable indifference (*upekṣā*, *btang snyoms*). Refer to LA VALLÉE POUSSIN 1971, tome V: 196-203.

“Standard of the *tāla* tree”, ask King Me, “Fire”, about the doctrine of birth and death.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter King Me; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(17) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the town of Ta la'i rgyal mtshan, ‘Standard of the *tāla* tree’. There on the lion throne decorated on all sides was sitting King Me ‘Fire’, (folio *dza*, *verso*) possessed of [eighty] excellent marks and [thirty-two] characteristics. Ten thousand ministers surrounded him and were occupied with the affairs of the king. Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself at the feet of the king and joined hands to say, ‘O king, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, king, to instruct me.’ Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The king replied, ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? I, king Me, I have obtained a bodhisattva’s liberation from illusion. As for the beings who are susceptible of becoming the field [of merits], I make them avoid the way of the ten evil actions,⁶⁸ and follow that of the ten good actions.⁶⁹ The virtues of this appropriate means are inconceivable and beings cease their suffering. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

Rin chen continued, ‘My father (folio *wa*, *recto*) is called ‘Od ‘bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

The king replied, ‘It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man. There in the town Shin tu snang ba “Extreme light” dwells the king ‘Od chen, “Great light”. Ask him the history of birth and death.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search

⁶⁸ They are 1) murder, 2) theft, 3) illicit love, 4) lying, 5) deceitful words, 6) insults, 7) frivolous words, 8) covetousness, 9) spitefulness, and 10) false opinion. See LA VALLÉE POUSSIN 1971, tome III: 137 ff.

⁶⁹ They consist in not committing the ten bad acts enumerated above.

of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter King 'Od chen; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(18) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the town of Shin tu snang ba, 'Extreme light'. It was surrounded on all four sides by a fence of diamonds, a wall of seven kinds of jewels, and a basement of gold. The spring was perfumed with sandalwood (folio *wa*, *verso*) and its bottom was composed of golden sand. The town was completely surrounded by forests of *tāla*. There were also all kinds of flowers. Many charming birds were singing with pleasing voices. There was also a nice scent (?).⁷⁰ In the centre in a house-sanctuary, King 'Od chen, 'Great light', was sitting on a throne made of a lotus of jewels. He had the thirty-two characteristics of a great man. [His body] was shining like the sun, and he was surrounded by his servants and possessed numerous objects. Upon seeing him, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself at the feet of King 'Od chen by stretching the members of his body and joined his hands to say, 'O king, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, king, to instruct me.' Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

King 'Od chen replied, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? I, king 'Od chen, (folio *zha*, *recto*) have heard of the bodhisattva's conduct called "Excellent standard of kindness". In order to bring an end to birth, the transmigration of numerous beings, of all, completely ... in the sphere of the Law. To show the knowledge of omniscience, I tame everybody according to the Law. I have obtained the concentration called the revolution (?) of the organs of sense that are free of passions, suffering and birth, which is preceded by the great kindness and brings all desired objects. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen continued, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

King 'Od chen replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand its doctrine. Go there, good man. There, in the palace of King Brtan pa,

⁷⁰ Refer to DE JONG 1985: 19.

“Firm”, ask the *upāsikā* (*dge bsnyen ma*) Mi g.yo ba, “Immovable”, the history of birth and death.’

Having listened to these instructions, (folio *zha*, *verso*) Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully, and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the *upāsikā*; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(19) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the country of King Brtan pa, ‘Firm’. There was the *upāsikā* Mi g.yo ba, ‘Immovable’, who looked young, was very beautiful and observed the discipline. She was with her father and mother, and numerous members of her family and her entourage, and she was preaching the doctrine (*chos kyi tshul*) to them. Upon seeing her, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully and joined his hands to say, ‘O *upāsikā*, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, *upāsikā*, to instruct me.’ Thus he beseeched her with numerous pleasant words.

The *upāsikā* replied, ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? I, *upāsikā* Mi g.yo ba, have formerly obtained from the Tathāgata Pralambabāhu (Phyag rab tu brkyang ba), (folio *za*, *recto*) the essence of invincible knowledge and ten thousand doors of concentration. When I enter into concentration, the worlds in the ten directions quake, the light of the concentration appears everywhere and great magic (*rdzu phrul*) arises. I plant the root of good. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

Rin chen continued, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

The *upāsikā* replied, ‘It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man. There in the town Tshad yod ’dzin pa,⁷¹ ask the *tshangs pa*⁷² Kun tu ’gro ba, “One who goes everywhere”.’

⁷¹ In the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, the country and the town of this teacher are named respectively Dga’ ’dzin tshad med and Dga’ ba ’dzin pa (refer to p. 126 above). The copyist of our *History* must have merged these two names into one resulting in the curious name Tshad yod ’dzin pa.

⁷² See n. 21.

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the *tshangs pa* Kun tu 'gro ba; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* (folio *za*, verso) and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(20)⁷³ Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, climbed the mountain named Shin tu rnyed pa, 'Well found'. There he saw the *tshangs pa* Kun tu 'gro ba, 'One who goes everywhere'. This one had an excellent colour and radiated light like the sun and the moon. His splendour and his virtues were blazing, and he was surrounded by a retinue of ten thousand *tshangs pa*. Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself at the feet of Kun tu 'gro ba and joined his hands to say, 'O *tshangs pa*, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, *tshangs pa*, to instruct me. Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

Kun tu 'gro ba replied, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Kun tu 'gro ba, have found the door of luminous knowledge (*ye shes snang ba'i sgo*). I instruct all beings by various appropriate means in accordance with the vocation of each one. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

(folio 'a, recto) Rin chen continued, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

Kun tu 'gro ba replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and ask Utpala, the head of the merchants, the history of birth and death.'

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated himself and set out with his retinue in search of the law of birth and death to encounter Utpala, the head of the merchants; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

⁷³ Cf. above pp. 124-26.

(21) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the kingdom called Yangs pa ‘Stretched’. There, he saw Utpala, the head of the merchants, who was surrounded by many people. Rin chen prostrated himself at the feet of the head of the merchants and joined his hands to say, ‘Deign to look upon me with compassion. (folio *’a, verso*) I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, head of the merchants, to instruct me.’ Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The head of the merchants replied, ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Utpala, the head of the merchants, have obtained the concentration “without dust”. By the falling rain of *utpala* flowers, beings obtain all sorts of good. The beings who breathe the perfume that comes out of them become free from pain and illness and they will not even be burnt by fire. Further, they will not be infected by poisons, will reject sin and will respect their vows (*sdom pa*). Everybody will have the pure spirit and will unfailingly obtain *bodhi*. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

Rin chen continued, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy? (folio *ya, recto*) Thus asked Rin chen.

The head of the merchants replied, ‘It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand its doctrine. Go there, good man, and at the town of Khang bu brtsegs pa, “Pagoda” (*Kūṭāgāra*), and ask the ferryman Rnam par snang ba, “Luminous one”, the history of birth and death.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the ferryman Rnam par snang ba; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(22) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived at the shore of the ocean. He saw near the gate of the town the ferryman Rnam par snang ba, ‘Luminous one’, explaining the quality of the island of the ocean to several hundred thousand merchants and also to all sorts of people. (folio *ya, verso*) He saw those who were wishing for all kinds of jewels to be born (?) on the island of the ocean. Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself at

the feet of the ferryman and joined his hands to say, 'O ferryman, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, ferryman, to instruct me.' Thus he beseeched him with numerous peasant words.

The ferryman replied, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Rnam par snang ba, have obtained the diamond level. I lead numerous beings to the island of the ocean, and I satisfy them with as many jewels as they want and I bring them back. Then I preach to them the doctrine (*chos tshul*), and I liberate them from transmigration in the three worlds (*kham s gsum 'khor ba*). Drying the ocean of three poisons and that of the spirit (?), I lead beings into the ocean of knowledge. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen continued, (folio *ra, recto*) 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

The ferryman replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I don't understand its doctrine. Go there, good man. There in the town of Dga' ba'i phreng ba, "Rosary of joy", lives the head of the merchants Rgyal mchog, "Excellent victorious". Ask him the history of birth and death.'

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated himself and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the head of the merchants, Rgyal mchog; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(23) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the town of Dga' ba'i phreng ba, 'Rosary of joy'. There, he saw in the forest of *asoka* trees (folio *ra, verso*) the head of the merchants, Rgyal mchog, 'Excellent victorious', surrounded by a hundred thousand masters of the house. He was benefiting them by giving them teachings. Rin chen prostrated himself at the feet of the head of the merchants and joined his hands to say, 'O Rgyal mchog, head of the merchants, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, Rgyal mchog, to instruct me.' Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The head of the merchants replied, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Rgyal mchog, head of the merchants, have obtained the ability to go everywhere. I preach the law according to the manner of each and I stop the stream of the evil destinies (*ngan song, durgati*). Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen continued, 'My father (folio *la, recto*) is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

The head of the merchants replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and in the town of Dga' ba 'byung ba'i nags tshal (chen po), "Great forest of the source of joy", ask the nun (*bhikṣuṇī, dge slong ma*) Seng ge mthu can, "Powerful lioness", the history of birth and death.'

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the history of birth and death to encounter the nun; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(24) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, (folio *la, verso*) arrived in the town of Dga' ba 'byung ba'i nags tshal chen po, 'Great forest of the source of joy'. There, in the wall made of sunlight, were lakes, ponds and pools whose water possessed the eight virtues.⁷⁴ They were encircled by an enclosure of seven jewels. There were blooming flowers of a divine nature, magical trees [which produced] fabrics, sandalwood and fruit trees. At the bottom of each jewel tree, a lion throne was placed. Rin chen, son of the gods, saw in the centre the nun Seng ge mthu can, 'Powerful lioness', surrounded by numerous beings. Rin chen prostrated himself at her feet and joined his hands to say, 'Deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, holy nun, to instruct me.' Thus he beseeched her with numerous pleasant words.

⁷⁴ It is cold, clear, light, tasty, soft, not fetid, and does not harm either the throat or the stomach. Refer to LA VALLÉE POUSSIN 1971, tome II: 144.

The nun replied, (folio *sha, recto*) ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Seng ge mthu can, have heard this thanks to the concentration that includes all the Laws. I preach the Law in accordance with the ability of the beings between the superior sphere (*mtho ris*) and the three evil destinies of transmigration. Thus having completely rejected the errors, all of them practise the obligations of a bodhisattva. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

Rin chen continued, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be in peace and happy?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

Seng ge mthu can replied, ‘It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and in the town of Dge ba mthar phyin, “Perfection of good”, (folio *sha, verso*) question the master of the house Khri pa “Occupant of the throne”.’

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated himself respectfully set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the master of the house, Khri pa; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(25) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the town of Dge ba mthar phyin ‘Perfection of good’. There, he saw the master of the house, Khri pa, ‘Occupant of the throne’, who was making abundant offerings at the stūpa of the sandalwood throne. Rin chen prostrated himself at his feet and joined his hands to say, ‘O saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, master of the house, to instruct me.’ Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words.

The master of the house replied, (folio *sa, recto*) ‘What do you want to ask me, good man? I, master of the house, Khri pa, have opened the door of the sandalwood throne of the stūpa of the Tathāgata and I have obtained the concentration of the ornament of good eyes. I have seen innumerable Jina of the past, and known all of their virtues. I practise and I preach to others. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?’

Rin chen continued, ‘My father is called ’Od ’bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do

so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

The master of the house replied, 'It is the law of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it. Go there, good man, and ask the monk (*dge slong, bhikṣu*) Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan, "Standard of the ocean", the history of birth and death.'

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen, son of the gods, prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the history of birth and death to encounter Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan; divine tiara [vibrating] (*folio sa, verso*) *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

(26) Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived in the country Rgyas par 'gengs pa, 'Amplly filled', at the edge of the Jambudvīpa continent. There, the monk Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan, 'Standard of the ocean', was immersed in concentration, performing few acts and not moving. His emanations (*rnam par 'phrul pa*) were unimaginable: from all the hairs of his body appeared numerous emanations of the bodhisattva. By his supernatural power, he made beings mature at each moment. By making offerings to all the Buddhas, he purified all the countries. He completely removed the aggregate of the suffering of all beings and blocked all the evil destinies (*ngan song lam*). In the same way, he opened the way leading to happiness (*bde lam*). He appeased the suffering of beings, (*folio ha, recto*) and dispelled the obstacle of ignorance. From each member of his body appeared all kinds of beings, namely, merchants (*vaiśya*) kings (*kṣatriya*), *brahmins*, ascetics (*ṛṣi, drang srong*), daughters of *nāgas* (*klu*), titans (*asura, lha ma yin*), "Listeners" (*śrāvaka, nyan thos*), "Buddhas-for-self" (*pratyekabuddha, rang sangs rgyas*), "malevolent genies" (*yakṣa, gnod sbyin*), "demoniac beings" (*rākṣasa, srin po*), "sirens" (*kiṃnara, mi 'am ci*), musicians of genius (*gandharva, dri za*), Universal Emperors (*cakravartin, 'khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po*) ...⁷⁵... Mahābrahma (*tshangs pa chen po*) and bodhisattvas and others with their own virtues and retinues. In the same way, he made

⁷⁵ At this point our text reads *zla ba mang po*, 'many months', an expression that is not appropriate here. In fact, in the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, we find this expression in a later passage (P 151-4-7), where it indicates the elevated number of emanations of the Buddha.

a light come out of each hair, forming a circular net. Thus Rin chen saw all kinds of virtues of Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan. For six months and six days, Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan remained immersed in concentration, producing all these phenomena. When he came out of his concentration, Rin chen told him, 'O saint, deign to look upon me with compassion. I came to ask you what I do not understand. I am plunged in an ocean of indescribable suffering. I beg you, *btsun pa*, to instruct me.' Thus he beseeched him with numerous pleasant words. (folio *ha*, verso)

The monk replied, 'What do you want to ask me, good man? I, Rgya mtsho'i rgyal mtshan, as I have obtained the concentration of the ornament of purity, have no obstacle for the practices of this world, neither to enter into the different virtues of the Buddha nor to practise them. Such are my personal virtues. What do you want to ask me, good man?'

Rin chen continued, 'My father is called 'Od 'bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy?' Thus asked Rin chen.

The monk replied, 'It is the doctrine of birth and death. The history of birth and death is very profound. I do not understand the doctrine of it.⁷⁶ (folio *kna*, recto) Go there, good man. There in a country named Magadha lives the Buddha Śākyamuni, protector of the world. For countless æons, he has perfectly liberated the beings from birth and death.⁷⁷ He has eradicated all the sufferings of the illnesses caused by the three poisons. He has taught the law of birth and death, contemplated the five destinies (*gati*),⁷⁸ which are the realms resulting from acts (*karma*, *las*), shown the eight Hells, and [taught] the ten good actions that are the good remedy and the ten perfections (*pāramitā*).⁷⁹ He has accomplished the good by mean of the four "immeasurables", and taught by the nature of the four

⁷⁶ Regarding the anomaly of the manuscript at this point, see above pp. 113-15.

⁷⁷ *skye zhing 'chi las yongs su bsgrol*. In a rare passage concerning Buddhism in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, we find the same expression: *skye shi las bsgrol* (= *bsgrol*) to (DTH: 114). This clearly indicates that the Tibetans were extremely receptive to this aspect of Buddhism.

⁷⁸ For the number of destinies (*gati*), either five or six, see MUS 1939: 39.

⁷⁹ They are, in addition to the six we have already seen (n. 63): 7) perfect means (*upāya*, *thabs*), 8) perfect vow (*pranidhāna*, *smon lam*), 9) perfect power (*bala*, *stobs*) and 10) perfect knowledge (*jñāna*, *ye shes*).

meditations.⁸⁰ In brief, his virtues are indescribable. The Buddha, protector of the world, is the doctor of illness, of birth and death, the saviour of the ocean of suffering, the torch that lights the darkness, the leader who instructs the ignorant people. As he knows the law of birth and death, ask him about this doctrine.' (folio *kna*, verso)

Having listened to these instructions, Rin chen prostrated himself respectfully and set out with his retinue in search of the doctrine of birth and death to encounter the Buddha, the Sugata, Bhagavat Śākyamuni; divine tiara [vibrating] *pu ru ru*, jewel cymbals [sounding] *si li li* and various harmonious drums [resounding] *ti ri ri*.

Chapter III

1. Then, after crossing many countries, Rin chen, son of the gods, arrived at Magadha. There, in front of the *mahābodhi* tree, the Buddha Śākyamuni was dwelling [by his supernatural ability] in the sky, at the height of seven *tāla* trees. He was sitting on a throne of jewels, surrounded by many beautiful lights forming a rainbow. The [eighty] marks of excellence (*anuvyañjana*, *dpe byed bzang po*) were dazzling, and the thirty-two characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*, *mtshan*) adorned his body. His parasol covered the ten thousand countries in the ten directions. The canopy, made of a net of jewels, was opened. The smell of excellent incense floated according to the movement of the wind, (folio *khna*, recto) and it was raining celestial flowers. In the air, numerous ascetics (*rṣi*, *drang srong*) and 'science-holders' (*vidyādhara*, *rig 'dzin*) were flying here and there and were praising Śākyamuni with numerous and pleasant words. Bodhisattvas possessing magical power (*byang chub sems 'phrul ba*), all the gods of each stage between heaven and earth, human beings, non-human beings, 'birds of prey' (*garuḍa*, *nam mkha' lding*), 'serpents' (*uraga*, *lto 'phye*), 'sirens' (*kiṃnara*, *mi 'am ci*), animals and the departed (*preta*, *yi dags*)—everyone was listening respectfully to his teaching (*chos*). Śākyamuni was truly turning the wheel of the Law (*dharmacakra*, *chos kyi 'khor lo*), and the Law that he was preaching was understood by all according to their capacity of understanding. Rin chen, good son (*dge ba'i bu*), was much intimidated and extremely frightened, and started to shiver and his hair began to stand on his head. He was unable to ask for the teaching (*chos tshul*). Upon noticing him, the Bhagavat addressed him, 'You, Rin chen, son of the gods, who are here in this numerous assembly, what

⁸⁰ They are the four *dhyāna*: the first, the second, the third and the fourth. Refer to LA VALLÉE POUSSIN 1971, tome V: 128ff.

teaching (*chos tshul*) do you want to hear? Tell me.’ Thus spoke the Buddha Śākyamuni.

The son of gods stood up in the crowd. (folio *khna*, verso) Then, having taken the cloth from his right shoulder, he prostrated himself, touching the feet of Śākyamuni with the top of his head, and walked around Śākyamuni three times, keeping him to his right. Joining his hands, and kneeling down, he asked respectfully, with his head down, ‘My father, a god possessed of form (*gzugs yod lha*), is called ‘Od ‘bar rgyal. As his life has been transferred and he has changed bodies, what must I do so that he will become like he was before, and what should I do so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be happy (*bde ba*)?’ Thus asked Rin chen.

2a. The Bhagavat replied, ‘Is it the law (*chos*) that you want to ask me? Think this over well and listen to me attentively. In the three worlds (*kham*s *gsum*), everything that is born dies. Birth is due to the power of acts (*karma*, *las*). Dying is also subordinated to acts. When the moment of the law of birth and death arrives, all the gods of each stage between the sky and the earth fall, and all who have great magical power (*‘phrul chen*) and numerous powers (*mthu*) release them. Everything that exists in the three worlds dies sooner or later. As everybody dies in this way, there are at every moment more and more people in Hell. (folio *gna*, recto) To die sooner or later is the law of the cycle [of birth and death] in the three worlds (*kham*s *gsum* ‘*khor ba*’i *chos*).

2b. Everyone is proud of his longevity, but in the end nobody escapes from death.

Human beings on earth have a life of a hundred years.

For the “Four Great Kings” (*Cāturmahārājakāyikadeva*), a day is worth fifty human years, and their life lasts a thousand years.

For the gods of the sky, Mtshe ma (*Yāma*),⁸¹ a day is worth two hundred human years, and their life lasts four thousand years.

⁸¹ See, too, DE JONG 1983: 224. The copyist must have made a contraction at this point. According to the *Āyuspariyantasūtra*, P vol. 39, the passage should read as follows:

For the *Trāyastriṃśa* gods, one day is worth two hundred human years, and a lifespan is two thousand years.

For the *Yāma* gods, one day is worth four hundred human years, and a lifespan is four thousand years.

For the *Tuṣita* gods, one day is worth eight hundred human years, a lifespan is eight thousand years.

For the *Nirmāṇarati* gods, a day is worth eight hundred human years, and their life lasts eight thousand years.

For the *Paranirmitavaśavartin* gods, a day is worth a thousand⁸² human years, and their life lasts sixteen thousand years.

For the *Brahmapāriṣadya* gods, their life lasts half a *kalpa*.

For the *Brahmapurohita* gods, their life lasts a *kalpa*.

For the *Mahābrahmāṇa* gods, their life lasts a *kalpa* and half.

For the *Parīttābha* gods, their life lasts two *kalpa*.

For the *Apramāṇābha* gods, (folio *gna*, *verso*) their life lasts four *kalpa*.

For the *Ābhāsvara* gods, their life lasts eight *kalpa*.

For the *Parīttasubha* gods, their life lasts sixteen *kalpa*.

For the *Apramāṇasubha* gods, their life lasts thirty-two *kalpa*.

For the *Subhakarṣṇa* gods, their life lasts sixty-two *kalpa*.

For the *Anabhraka* gods, their life lasts a hundred and twenty-five *kalpa*.

For the *Puṇyaprasava* gods, their life lasts two hundred and fifty *kalpa*.

For the *Brhatphala* gods, their life lasts five hundred *kalpa*.

For the *Avṛha* gods, their life lasts one thousand *kalpa*.

For the *Atapa* gods, their life lasts two thousand *kalpa*.

For the *Sudarśana* gods, their life lasts four thousand *kalpa*.

For the *Sudṛṣā* gods, their life lasts eight thousand *kalpa*.

For the *Akaniṣṭha* gods, their life lasts sixteen thousand *kalpa*.
(folio *ngna*, *recto*)

For the *Ākāśānantyāyatana* gods, their life lasts twenty thousand *kalpa*.

For the *Vijñānānantyāyatana* gods, their life lasts forty thousand *kalpa*.

For the *Akiṃcanyāyatana* gods, their life lasts sixty thousand *kalpa*.

For the *Naivasamjñānāsamjñāyatana* gods, their life lasts eighty thousand *kalpa*.

However, everyone dies when life is exhausted. Although all the gods are proud of their longevity, they all die. Likewise, your father is dead. All deaths are caused by the power of acts. It is difficult to purify the accumulation of past acts.

⁸² The figure 'thousand' must be a mistake for 'one thousand six hundred'. Refer to the *Āyuspariyantasūtra*, P vol. 39, plates 62-2-3 to 62-3-1.

2c. All who are considered to be knowledgeable among the beings of this world do harmful acts in the hope that these acts will remedy (*phan*) [death. For example:]

Some say that if one burns [the corpse] with fire, or if one throws it to the water, it remedies [death].

Some who are ignorant and in error say that if one puts the corpse on the top of a trident (*triśūla*), it remedies [death].⁸³

Some say that if one realises the mantra (*sngags*) of the brahmans (*bram ze*), it remedies death.

Some says that if one observes the four heretic (*mu stegs*) laws, and one makes offerings, (folio *ngna, verso*) it is good for death.

Some say that if one practises the law of a '*gur ma* (= ? a *gur ma*, "singers") and one realises its meaning, it remedies death.

Some say that if one practises the law of the god of the fire (Agni), it remedies death.

Some say that if one buries together with the corpse all the objects that belonged to the deceased, it remedies death.

Some say also that if one sacrifices a horse, a buffalo (*ma he, mahiṣa*), a goat and a sheep for the deceased, it remedies death.

These practices (*chos*) are all indescribable and are all erroneous.

You, you have produced *bodhicitta* since innumerable *kalpa*. Today, look at all the erroneous practices in the ten directions.'

Having spoken thus, the Buddha emanated from his cranial protuberance various lights that illuminated everything in the three worlds.

[The Buddha continued,] 'Fools, the ignorant and those who are in error practise all the erroneous laws (*log pa'i chos*) in the hope of remedying death. Be aware that everything they practise produces only harm and never remedies death.'

2d. Then, Rin chen, son of the gods, inclined himself, prostrated himself and joined his hands to say to the Bhagavat (folio *kma, recto*), 'I have understood the law of birth and death. Its virtue is indescribable. What is the medicine (*sman*) against death? I beg you, Bhagavat, to teach me.' Thus he beseeched him.

The Bhagavat replied, 'All deaths are due to the power of acts. All acts are the actions committed in the past. Death results from the

⁸³ Given the presence of words of obvious Indian origin such as 'the mantra of the brahmans', 'Agni' and '*mah he (mahīṣa)*', which do not exist in Tibet, it seems that the eight funeral practices in this series were not those practiced in Tibet. It is therefore possible that this passage is a quotation from a canonical text that we have not yet been able to identify.

power of acts and there is no remedy against the death of others. All bad actions that one has committed in the past can be purified only by various good actions. An act such as killing others (*pha rol*) committed in the past can be purified by the practice (*chos*) of “not killing but nourishing”. All the erroneous practices are purified by the gift of the Law. All the passions, like desire (*rāga*, *'dod chags*) and hatred (*dveṣa*, *zhe sdang*), are purified by the gift of the Law that leads to the other side. All the powers of the diabolical deities (*lha 'dre*) are subjected by the blessing (*byin rlabs*) of the Three Jewels (*triratna*). Thus, if one practises the law of good actions (*dge ba'i chos*), it remedies death. Furthermore, one can be born a god, move all the bodhisattvas, liberate oneself from all sin. Virtue is indescribable. The law that remedies death has clearly been preached by innumerable Buddhas of the past. (folio *kma*, *verso*) If one practises this law that remedies death, by practising the great formula (*dhāraṇī*, *gzungs sngags*), one can be born where one wishes. Here, therefore, is the formula of Gtsug tor rgyal ba, the “Formula of the victorious cranial protuberance”; for the deceased whose life is exhausted, one has to practise it according to the ritual.⁸⁴

‘The tantrist (*sngags mkhan*) wears a white cloth, recalls mentally the formula (*dhāraṇī*), and makes a square maṇḍala. He makes offerings by dispersing various flowers and incense. In meditating clearly on the Tathāgata, he prostrates himself. He joins his hands, folds the index fingers and presses their tips with his thumbs. He snaps his fingers (*ban tol* = *bem tol*).⁸⁵ He recites the formula one hundred and eight times. Then he recites the formula twenty-one times over white mustard flour and disperses this flour over the corpse. Thus, escaping from the three evil destinies (*durgati*)—hell, the destiny of the animals (folio *khma*, *recto*) and the world of the Lord of death, that is to say, the world of the departed (*preta*)—the deceased will be born in the superior sphere (*svarga*, *mtho ris*).

‘[Even if one cannot practise in such a complete way], all the practices concerning this formula are beneficial; writing, contemplating, reading, explaining [to others], reciting, offering and depositing in a stūpa.

‘[On the other hand] if one attaches the formula to the top of a standard, and one places the standard either on a high mountain or on the roof of the house, by the simple fact of seeing it, being touched

⁸⁴ What follows is an abbreviated and reordered extract of the text found shortly before the end of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayādhāraṇī* (*P* vol. 7, no. 198, plates 167-5 to 168-4).

⁸⁵ Refer to DE JONG 1983: 224.

either by its shadow, by the dust that touched it, or by the wind that touched it, all the harmful causes are purified; hell is rejected, the passions (*nyon mongs*, *kleśa*) are annihilated together with the sufferings of the worlds of the animals and those [in the world] of the Lord of death, that is to say, the departed (*preta*). A short life and ill luck are eliminated. Avoiding in this way the evil destinies (*durgati*), one is born in the superior sphere, a place of happiness (*bde ba'i gnas*). As soon as one sees the formula (folio *khma*, *verso*), all the stains of the acts accumulated over eight thousand *kalpa* are purified without a trace.'

End of the search of Rin chen, son of the gods.

[The manuscript has been] copied and revised by Chos dbyangs.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE *HISTORY* AND OTHER TIBETAN TEXTS FROM DUNHUANG

As we have noted, the formula of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* that the Buddha Śākyamuni recommends and to which the whole *History* leads is absent from the text of the *History*. It is incomprehensible that the text seems to end here. About this, two hypotheses are possible.

The first one would be to conceive of our *History* as a sort of Tibetan introduction to the Indian *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī*, which was already well represented among the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang (refer to n. 35 above). This hypothesis is not entirely satisfactory, because it does not explain the elements that we have noticed in the course of our study, namely, the presence of the word *le'u* 'chapter, part' in the title of the *History* (see p. 110), the two syllables *bsngo' ba* at the beginning of the third line of the *verso* of folio *khma* of PT 218 after the colophon of the *History* (p. 112) and the presence of the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa* 'Account of the way [which leads] to the country of the gods', a text written twice on the *verso* of the text of our *History*, on PT 366-367 and IOL Tib J 151 (pp. 115-16).

The second hypothesis is to understand our *History* as the first part of a more important whole at the end of which the formula (*dhāraṇī*) is presented. The two syllables *bsngo' ba*, situated after the colophon of our *History*, could be the beginning of a new *le'u* 'chapter', which would be the second chapter of this larger work. As for the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa*, it would constitute the third and last

part of the same. Let us now examine the relationships between these elements and how they support this hypothesis.

The *Lha yul du lam bstan pa* has been studied by LALOU (1938, 1949).⁸⁶ The text written on the other side of the same manuscript, PT 239, designated by the term *bsngo ba* ‘substitution’, has been studied and translated into French by R.A. Stein.⁸⁷ Finally, Madame Ariane Macdonald has studied both of them in a new perspective and demonstrated their close relationship (MACDONALD 1971: 373-76).

The first phrase of the text of the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa*, ‘de nas gshin lam bstan pa’, ‘Then, the account of the way of the deceased’, and the fact that PT 733, the last folio and back cover for PT 239, furnishes the end title *Lha yul du lam bstan pa rdzogs so* ‘End of the Account of the way [which leads] to the country of the gods’, establish the reading order of these texts as follows: first the *Bsngo ba* and then the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa*.

The first *Bsngo ba*, or ‘Substitution’ text, has six paragraphs. It is addressed directly to the deceased and indirectly to the living who perform the funeral rituals. At the beginning of each paragraph, the author indicates the pre-Buddhist term that should be ‘substituted’. They are the *ring gur*, ‘tent of the corps’, *dbon lob* ‘maternal relatives’, and the *phru sangs*, ‘pure grains’, terms the precise meaning of which we still do not understand. In addition, there are the *skyibs lug*, ‘sheep of shelter’, *rta*, ‘horse’ and *gnyen sris g.yag*, ‘yak, respect (part?) of relative’, which are the psychopomp animals used in the funeral rituals of the pre-Buddhist religion. The author condemns their use and recommends in their place Buddhist rituals, in particular the recitation of the formulae of the gods, *lha’i sngags* (*mantra, dhāraṇī*), without however specifying which one.

We should recall that Śākyamuni in our *History* warns Rin chen against certain reprehensible practices like the sacrifice of animals

⁸⁶ Up to now, we have identified five manuscripts (complete and incomplete) of this text: PT 37-III, 239, 366, 367 (these two fragments are counted as one), 733 and IOL Tib J 151.

⁸⁷ STEIN 1970. In addition to the manuscripts already identified—PT 239 and IOL Tib J 504—we can add PT 37-V and I. O. vol. 56, fol. 25, which contain a part of the text. J.W. DE JONG (1983: 224) understands the word *bsngo ba* in a purely Buddhist context as ‘to transfer the merit’. However, our text is not written in an exclusively Buddhist environment, so such an interpretation is out of context, and does not take into consideration the religious situation of ancient Tibet. Our text is written in the climate of Tibet when it was undergoing the process of “Buddhicization”. In the context of funeral practices of the period, *bsngo ba* specifically means replacing one practice by another, as demonstrated by STEIN (1970).

such as horses, buffaloes, goats and sheep (Chapter III, 2c, p. 169). It seems that the text develops this passage of our *History* so as to better adapt it to the religious context of ancient Tibet, and that it can be considered as a supplement to the *History*.

Finally, in the second text, the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa*, the author presents three formulae whose recitation allows the deceased to avoid the three evil destinies (*durgati*): those of Avalokiteśvara, Gaganagañja and, above all, that of Durgatipariśodhana, the importance of which we will explain in this context. At the end it presents the path to follow in order to arrive at the holy country of the gods, the place of perfect peace and happiness (*bde skyid phun gsum tshogs pa'i lha yul dam pa*).

The formula of Durgatipariśodhana, 'Purifier of the evil destinies', is in fact the fundamental formula (*rtsa ba'i rig pa*)⁸⁸ presented in the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*, a text that is well represented in the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang (see above n. 17). As the title clearly indicates, the aim of this tantra is to 'purify all the evil destinies', an aim it shares with the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī* (cf. p. 135). Thus, it is not the formula of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* announced in the *History* that we find at the end of the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa*, but the fundamental formula of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*, which shares the same end. The copyist probably preferred the fundamental formula of the *Durgatipariśodhana*, because, having a common purpose, it is far shorter than that of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā*. The latter must have been considered too long in the context of the Buddhist conversion of Tibetans who were not accustomed to teachings of this type.⁸⁹ From the doctrinal point of view, there is no

⁸⁸ P vol. 5, no. 116, plates 84-3-1 to 2: *Oṃ namo bhagavati sarvadurgatipariśodhana-rājāya tathāgatāya arhate saṃyaksambuddhāya tadyathā oṃ śodhane śodhane sarvapāpaṃ viśodhani śuddhe viśuddhe sarvakarma āvaraṇa viśodhani svāhā*. See, too, LALOU 1949: 45.

⁸⁹ Here is the complete formula according to the study by HIKATA (1939: 38-40): *Oṃ namo bhagavate sarvatrailokyaprativiśiṣṭhāya buddhāya te namaḥ, tadyathā, oṃ bhrūṃ bhrūṃ bhrūṃ śodhaya śodhaya viśodhaya viśodhaya, asamasam antāvabhāsa-spharaṇagatigahanasvabhāvaviśuddhe, abhiṣimcatu māṃ sarvatathāgata-sugatavarava-canāmṛtābhiṣekair, mahāmudramantra-pada(ir) āhara āhara āyusandhāraṇī, śodhaya śodhaya, gaganasvabhābavisuddhe, uṣṇīṣavijayapariśuddhe, sahasraraśmisaṃcodite, sarvatathāgatāvalokini śatpāramitāparipūrāṇi sarvatathāgatamāte dasabhūmipratīṣṭhite, sarvatathāgatāhṛdayādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite mudre mudre mahāmudre vajrakāyasaṅghātanaparīśuddhe, sarvakarma-āvaraṇa-viśuddhe, pratinivartaya-āyurviśuddhe, sarvatathāgatasamayādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite, oṃ muni muni mahāmuni, vimuni vimuni mahāvīmuni, matī matī mahāmātī, (su)matī sumatī ma(hāsumatī), tathatābhūtakotīparīśuddhe viśphuṭabuddhiśuddhe, he he jaya vijaya vijaya smara smara sphara sphara, sarvabuddhādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite, śuddhe*

contradiction at all because the two formulae have the same aim, to save beings from the evil destinies. The formula announced by Śākyamuni in our *History* was later replaced by the fundamental formula of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*, which, as we have noticed earlier (pp. 122-23), is plausibly the source of inspiration for the framework of our *History*. In the latter, as we have seen, Rin chen, son of the gods, is frightened by the sudden death of his father, 'Od 'bar rgyal, 'King of Blazing Light', whereupon he departs on a pilgrimage in order to find a solution to the situation. He asks a series of teachers, 'What must I do so that my father will return to life, so that it will be possible to encounter him and so that he will be at peace and happy?' In the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*, it is a god named Vimalamañiprabha (Nor bu dri ma med pa'i 'od), 'Pure Jewel Light', who dies suddenly, and it is Indra who then asks the Buddha, 'O Lord, where is he reborn? Is he experiencing happiness or sorrow?' (SKORUPSKI 1983: 5) In both texts, one is confronted with death and inquires about the whereabouts and the situation of the deceased. Given the thematic similarity between the two texts (even the presence of the word 'od, 'light', in the names of the deceased characters in both), we may propose that the author of the *History* might have used the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra* as a source of inspiration and adapted it to his *History*. However, in the current state of our knowledge, we cannot consider the supposition of a trilogy consisting of our *History*, the *Bsngo ba* and the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa* as completely demonstrated, because no manuscript has yet been discovered that gives the three texts together and in the order that we have proposed.

For these reasons, we are reduced to conjectures, though our working hypothesis seems to be the only theory that satisfactorily explains the designations written on the folios—*Bsngo ba* and *Lha yul tu lam bstan pa*—which are apparently independent of our *History*, as well as the word *le'u* 'chapter' in the title of the *History*, and finally, the mystery of the formula of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* announced but not presented in the *History* itself. The relationship of our

śuddhe buddhe vajre vajre mahāvajre suvajre vajragarbhe jayagarbhe vijayagarbhe varjavaragarbhe vajrodbhave vajrasambhave, vajre vajrini vajrambhavatu mama śarīraṃ sarvasattvānāṃ ca kāyapariśuddhir bhavatu me sadā sarvagatipariśuddhiś ca, sarvatathāgataś ca māṃ samāśvāsayantū, budhya budhya sidhya bodhaya bodhaya vibodhaya vibodhaya mocaya mocaya vimocaya vimocaya, śodhaya śodhaya, viśodhaya viśodhaya samantā(tpa)rimocaya samantaraśmipariśuddhe sarvatathāgataḥṛdayādhiṣṭhānādhiṣṭhite mudre mudre mahāmudre mantrapade svāhā.

History with other texts from Dunhuang thus offers a new perspective that improves our understanding of this work, to which we may now return.

When the unexpected death of 'Od 'bar rgyal occurs, nobody knows how to remedy (*phan*) the new situation. Therefore, thinking of the sufferings (*mya ngan*) of his father, and fearing that he will not reach the place of happiness and peace (*bde skyid gnas*), Rin chen, the excellent son of 'Od 'bar rgyal, departs on a pilgrimage in search of the law of birth and death. Rin chen asks each teacher, 'What must I do so that my father will return [to life], and so that it will be possible to encounter him? What must I do so that he will be at peace and happy (*bde zhing skyid pa*)?' As we have seen (p. 122), the attitude of Rin chen in this situation is exactly the one that the pre-Buddhist religion recommended to its followers in the face of death and life after death.

The response of the Buddha Śākyamuni is extremely interesting to analyse. After a brief discourse on the theory of the retribution of actions (*karman*), and on the inevitable nature of death for all beings, he condemns certain funerary rituals [including animal sacrifices] by saying, 'Fools, the ignorant and those who are in error practise all the erroneous laws in the hope of remedying (*phan*) death. Be aware that everything they practise produces only harm and never remedies (*mi phan*) death.' Then he announces, without actually revealing it, the formula of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* and presents its rituals as the only reliable means to avoid falling into the evil destinies (*durgati*) and to attain the superior sphere, the place of peace (*bde ba'i gnas*).

So ends our actual *History*, which relates the search for the means to remedy death from the Buddhist point of view. The Buddhists, in fact, found themselves face to face with a population submerged in the indigenous religion. It was impossible to impose new ideas on them in an abstract way and so it was therefore necessary to employ an appropriate 'pedagogical method'. It is this that led to the creation of the story of Rin chen that, situated in a time qualified by the use of 'formerly' (p. 137), could be used as a 'story of origin', an example of the efficacy of Buddhism in the search for a remedy against death.

Let us turn now to consider the author of our *History*. No manuscript provides any information on this subject. The colophon of PT 218—the only copy that contains the end of the *History*—mentions only the copyist. Aspects of the text, such as the presence of a Sanskrit title, its use of canonical sources of Indian origin and the anonymity of the author may give the impression that this is an Indian *sūtra* translated into Tibetan. The analysis and the reading of

the *History* demonstrate, however, that it can only be the work of a person very familiar with the Tibetan milieu.

The presence of the Sanskrit title does not, of course, suggest that our *History* might be a translation of a Sanskrit work. As we have seen, this 'Sanskrit' title does not make much sense and is most probably a fiction similar to those we find in the 'apocryphal' *sūtras*. Furthermore, we have to remember that the *History*, together with all its canonical sources that were originally written in prose, was entirely composed in verses of seven syllables. In addition to this, we find typically Tibetan onomatopoeias of three syllables like *pu ru ru*, *si li li* and *ti ri ri*, literary flourishes that are rarely found in works translated from other languages. It appears therefore more probable that the *History* was written by a Tibetan-speaker who was also well read in the canonical Buddhist texts from which he derived some of his source materials.

Furthermore, the *History* includes several additional elements that are undeniably Tibetan. We have already seen that, after the death of his father, Rin chen is concerned above all with his achievement of happiness in a new life, reflecting the attitude that the followers of the pre-Buddhist religion took when faced with death and life after death. This element of our *History* surely reflects the religious climate of ancient Tibet. The modifications that the author made to the passages taken from the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra* that we have studied are also most significant from this point of view. The names of the first three teachers whom Rin chen encounters have been completely changed. Thus in our *History* they are respectively named Khams gsum 'phrul pa lha'i rje, 'Lord of the gods who has magical power in the three worlds', Sa 'og lha 'dre rje, 'Lord of the underground diabolical deities', and Bar snang dbang chen, 'Great powerful one of the intermediate world' (p. 133). The etymology of their names shows us that this change has been made so that their names cover the entire universe according to indigenous Tibetan conceptions. The other modifications that we have noticed (pp. 131-35) were also made in the same spirit, aiming to adapt the Indian sources to the Tibetan milieu. All these observations reinforce our hypothesis according to which the author of the *History* was a Buddhist Tibetan. Given the fictional title in Sanskrit attested in IOL Tib J 345, we can rightly consider our *History* as a kind of Tibetan 'apocryphal' *sūtra*.

As for the date of the text, we can only suggest a hypothesis, for want of substantial evidence. The actual state of our paleographical knowledge unfortunately does not allow us to establish a chronology of the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang. They date from the

seventh to the tenth century, but no dating from the material condition of the manuscripts is possible. Therefore, we rely on indications internal to the *History* itself.

The author has used, as we have seen, several Buddhist texts of Indian origin, all of which were translated into Tibetan no later than 824, for the *Ldan kar ma Catalogue* of Buddhist texts compiled in this year mentions them all: the *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*, no. 24; *Āyuspariyantaśūtra*, no. 284; the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*, no. 323; the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī*, no. 348; and the *Abhidharmakośa* and similar texts, nos. 686-691.⁹⁰ But, on the other hand, we have noticed that several Buddhist terms do not follow the Buddhist terminology laid down in 814 in the *Mahāvīyutpatti* (pp. 119-20).

Taking these elements into consideration, we are probably not wrong in saying that our *History* was written in about 800, a period that follows the acceptance of Buddhism by the royal court of Khri Srong lde btsan and the foundation of Bsam yas Monastery, the first monastic complex of Tibet, events that did not, however, lead the Tibetans immediately to abandon their pre-Buddhist ancestral religion.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen at the beginning, there are in the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang nine copies of our *History*, which is rather a large number for a single text, apart from some cases of canonical texts. It is evident therefore that our *History*, notwithstanding some inexactitudes from a purely doctrinal point of view, was well accepted in the Tibetan world of the period, and must have been intended for wide circulation. We will not reconsider the theme of the *History*, but in the eyes of the followers of pre-Buddhist religion, it demonstrated the efficacy of Buddhism in the search for a remedy against death.

In the *Bsngo ba*, the 'Substitution' text that follows the *History*, the funeral rituals that had primordial importance in pre-Buddhist religion are rejected and substituted by Buddhist practices. Finally, the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa*, 'Account of the way [which leads] to the country of the gods', which forms the third and last part of the whole, demonstrates that, thanks to the three formulae to be recited, in particular that of *Durgatipariśodhana*, the deceased avoids the

⁹⁰ LALOU 1953. For the date of this catalogue, see YAMAGUCHI 1978: 18-20.

three evil destinies (*durgati*) and arrives in the holy country of the gods, the place of perfect peace and happiness (*bde skyid phun gsum tshogs pa'i lha yul dam pa*). This is exactly the country to which Rin chen, the hero of our *History*, wished to send his dead father; this was the aim of all deceased persons in the pre-Buddhist religion.

We can therefore make two remarks:

First of all, Rin chen, the protagonist of the *History*, is totally immersed in the pre-Buddhist religion and hence the Tibetans of the period could generally identify themselves with him.

Then, like our *History*, the *Bsngo ba* and the *Lha yul du lam bstan pa* are situated in the transitional period, the first stage of the transformation of pre-Buddhist rituals into Buddhist practices, for we find in these texts Buddhist formulae whose recitation is prescribed in order to reach the holy country of the gods, the place of perfect peace and happiness that belonged to the pre-Buddhist religion. Skilfully, the Buddhists did not immediately seek to alter post-mortem aims, but left in place the goal of the indigenous religion in the mind of the Tibetans, without imposing upon them an overly abstract idea of 'life after death'. They preferred first to tackle the rituals, the means employed by the old religion, as these seemed to them most reprehensible and in total contradiction with Buddhism, for they included the sacrifice of animals and even humans. At the same time, the Buddhists tried on the one hand to find in the terminology of the pre-Buddhist religion usages that accorded with Buddhist doctrine (for example *phan*), and, on the other, to transpose indigenous notions to more or less similar Buddhist concepts (replacing, for instance, *dga' dang skyid pa'i yul* with *bde skyid gnam* or *lha yul*).

Outside India, its land of origin, Buddhism was able to make itself accepted in many countries by responding to certain of the concerns and traditions of the various social groups that it encountered. This was the case in Tibet, where Buddhism first acclimatized itself and then overcame the indigenous religion, determining forever the destiny of the Tibetan people. It is extremely difficult to know which elements of Buddhism were advanced for this purpose by the first disseminators, because there existed in Tibet at this time extremely variable Buddhist trends—Indian as well as Chinese, Mahāyānist as well as Tantric. In fact, the Tibetan manuscripts from Dunhuang demonstrate the extreme variety of the facets of Buddhism that were already translated into Tibetan. It will be therefore only when we have achieved a thoroughgoing, minute examination of the Dun-

huang archive that we will be able to understand more clearly how Buddhism penetrated the Tibetan world.

Nevertheless, the examination of the texts that we have analysed here already reveals a significant dimension of the story: because of the preoccupation of the followers of pre-Buddhist religion with death and life after death, and the common aim of the two canonical texts—the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā-dhāraṇī* and the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhanatantra*—used in our Buddhist booklets directed against pre-Buddhist beliefs, we can say that one of the aspects of Buddhism on which the first disseminators insisted and to which the followers of the indigenous religion were very receptive was the comforting side of the theory of transmigration (*saṃsāra*), that is to say, the prospect of being reborn as a god or at least to avoid the evil destinies. This is, from a doctrinal point of view, however, far from the supreme aim for the follower of Buddhism.

COLLATED TRANSCRIPTION OF CHAPTER I

Doubtful readings are given in *italics*. Ellipses (...) indicate lacunae and illegible passages.

A = IOL Tib J 345, B = PT 220, C = I. O. vol. 69, fol. 17, frag. 1, D = PT 366, 367, E = PT 218

A (l. 5) // rgya gar gyi skad du sang gra dar ma de//

A bod skad du skye shi'i 'khor lo'i (l. 6) le'u bstan pa'//

B (l. 1) // bod skad du skye shi 'khor ba'i chos kyi yi ge le'u ...

C ... (l. 1) ... dun te/

A lha bu rin chen lag cis dris pa'i// gna' skal pa grangs (l. 7) myed pa'i

B ... (l. 2) pa grangs myed pha

C lha bu rin ...

A snga nas// gzugs yod do chog lha rnams yod do 'chog kun yang// (l. 8)

B snga nas// gzugs yod lha rnams yod do chog // ...

C (l. 2)...n kyang

A tshe lo mangs pas// skye shi'i chos ni ma mthong ste// de bzhin rtag
 B ...
 C tshe lo mang // ..

A du 'dug *du re*// (l. 9) de'i 'khams rje 'od 'bar rgyal// khang gyim
 B (l. 3) 'dug du re// de'i 'khams rje 'od 'bar rgyal// khang khyim
 C .. (l. 3)... l// khang ...im

A gnas pa'i khang *ca* ...
 B gnam sa'i ...
 C gnam sa'i ...

A (l. 10) khang pa de ni 'od tsam brtsegs// 'od bzang 'bar ba lta myi bzod//

A ... (l. 11) na gnas so cog// de la mye long shin du snang//
 B ... (l. 4) bla 'og gnyis na gnas so chog// de la mye long bzhin du snang//
 C ... (l. 4) bla ... nyis na gnas ...

A nyis zla gnyis gyi skar skung spras// (l. 12) yul bzang gnas bde bshad
 B gnyi zla ...
 C (l. 5) ... nas b... shad

A myi rdzogs// kha zas nor kun bsams nas 'ong// (l. 13) de dag kun
 B ... (l. 5) kun bsams nas 'ong// de dag kun
 C myi rdzogs//

A kyang 'phrul gyi rdzas// lus 'od gser 'od 'bar ba 'dra// bu stong
 B kyang 'phrul kyi rdzas// lus ...
 C ... (l. 6) ... 'bar ba 'dra'// ...

A (l. 14) gnyen khri 'khor kun yang// 'phrul stobs snang ba de dang 'dra//
 B ... (l. 6) snang ba de dang 'dra'//
 C ...

A kun kyang de (l. 15) bzhin rtag du re// re zhig 'khams
 B kun kyang de bzhin 'dug du re// re shig ...
 C (l. 7) n rtag du re// re shig ...
 D (PT 366, fol. 1) kun kyang de bzhin rtag du re re shig khams

A de 'od 'bar rgyal// tshe zad ltung ba'i dus (l. 16) bab ste// 'phrul stobs
 B ...
 C ...
 D de'i 'od 'bar rgyald// ... ba'i dus bab (l. 2) ste// 'phrul stabs

A yon tan bshad pa myed// lus 'od bzang po 'bar la (l. 17) yal// smra
 B (l. 7) bshad pa myed// lus 'od bzang po 'bar ba yal// smra
 C (l. 8) ... myed lus 'od bzang ...
 D yon tan bshad pa myed// lus 'od 'bar ba bzang po yal// smra

A zhing 'gul lbugs kun myi mkhyen// kun kyang de'i mtshar snyam
 B zhing 'gro ...
 D zhing (l. 3) 'gro 'phrul kun myi mkhyen kun gyang 'di la mtshar snyam

A (l. 18) sem// de la ci nongs ci chos shes// thams shad gcig la gcig 'dri
 B (l. 8) ci chos shes// thams chad gcig la gcig 'dri
 C (l. 9) // ... ltar ji nongs ...
 D sems// 'di lta ci nongs ci chos (l. 4) shes// thams chad gcig la gcig 'dri

A yang// (l. 19) de'i chos don sus ma shes// bu stong gnyen khri 'khor kun
 B yang// de'i cho ...
 C ... (l. 10) nyen ... khor kun
 D yang// de'i chos don sus ma shes// bu stong (l. 5) gnyen khri 'khor kun

A yang// mye ngan rgya mtsho (l. 20) 'i nang du shugs// lus brdabs lag
 B (l. 9) zhugs// lus brdabs lag
 C y...
 D kyang// mya ngan rgya mtsho'i nang du zhugs// lus brdabs lag

A brdabs mye ngan myed// slar 'ong sngun bzhin yod (l. 21) du re// lha'i
 B brdabs mya ngan byed// slar 'ongs sngon ...
 C (l. 11) lha'i
 D brdabs (fol. 2) mya ngan byed// slar 'ongs sngon bzhin yod du re// lha'i

A nang na tshe ring ba// 'phrul chen du ta ra zhis bya // de'i 'od 'bar... end.
 B (l. 10) 'bar ...
 C nang ...
 D nang na tshe ring ba// 'phrul chen du ta (l. 2) ra zhes bya// de ni 'od 'bar

B gnas su 'ongs// de ni nor zhing 'khrul par bshad// kye...
 C (l. 12) shad// khyed kun ...
 D gnas su 'ongs// des nis nor cing 'khruld par bshad// khyed kun

B (l. 11) khri
 D (l. 3) ma rig bslad pa yin// de'i kham na yod do cog// bskal pa bdun khri

B dus bab nas// kun kyang de dang 'dra' bar 'gyur// de ni skye shi ...
 D dus 'das nas// (l. 4) kun kyang 'di dang 'dra bar 'gyurd// de ni skye shi

D chos shes bya// de la ci phan bdag ma shes//
 E (kha, recto, l. 1) chos zhes bya'// de la ji byas phan myed ces//

B (l. 12) 'bar rgyal gi bu rab ming//
 C (l. 14) 'bar rgyal gyi bu ... end.
 D (PT 367) phan ba myed ces bshad pa dang// 'od 'bar rgyal gi bu rab
 E de skad mang du bshad pa dang// 'od 'bar rgyal gyi bu rabs

B rin chen lag ces bya ba des// ...
 D mying// rin chen lag ches bya ba (l. 2) des// shin du gus par mnyan brtags
 E mying rin cen la ... (l. 2) bya ba des// shin du gus par mnyan brtags

B (l. 13) skye shi'i dus bab na//
 D nas// de ni rab bya bden bar shes// de ltar skye (l. 3) shi dus bab na//
 E nas// de ni rab 'bar na bar shes de ltar ste bshi dus bab na//

B de la ci bgyis phrad par rung// de la ci b...
 D de la cir bgyis slar mchir rung// de la ci bgyis bder
 E de la ji bgyis slar mchis phrad (l. 3) par rung// de la ji bgyis bde zhing

B (l. 14) smras pa//
 D gyur zhes// (l. 4) 'phrul chen de la gus par dris// du ta ra 'is slar smras pa//
 E skyid par 'gyur// 'phrul cen de la gus par dris// du ta ra 'is slar smras pa//

B skye shi yod par 'tshal du bas// de la ci phan bdag ...
 D skye shi yod par 'tshal du (l. 5) bas// de la ci phan bdag ma 'tshald//
 E skye shi yod par (l. 4) 'tshal pas na// de la ji phan bdag ma 'tshal//

D skye shi'i chos tshul dri bzhed na// 'di nas dge ba ... end.

B (l. 15) ba yin//
 E khams gsum 'phrul pa lha'i rje// shin du 'phrul cen btsun ba yin//

B de la dri zhing brtag rig ces// shin du chub par bshad pa dang ...
 E de la (l. 5) dri zhing brtag rigs zhes// shin du chud par bshad pa dang//

E lha bu rin cen lag de yang// pha'i mya ngan sri zhu g.yos// bde skyid

B (l. 16) sems// skye shi chos brtag don gnyer snyam//
 E (l. 6) gnas la yongs myi sems// skye shis chos brtag don gnyer snyams//

B 'phrul mang sna tshogs ...

E 'phru mkhas sna tshogs khor dang bcas// (kha, verso) ... sphrul la 'gro'//

B (l. 17) ye myed//

E phyir 'ongs gnas dran yongs ye myed//

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ORAL TEACHINGS AND WRITTEN TEXTS: TRANSMISSION AND TRANSFORMATION IN DUNHUANG

Sam van Schaik

THE WORLD OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Manuscripts, far more than printed texts, can be born out of a variety of situations. A manuscript can contain anything from hastily scribbled notes to a fine copy of a revered scriptural text. Every manuscript is different from every other, differing in the circumstances of its creation and in the idiosyncrasies of its creator. Manuscripts, in their great variety, have much to tell us about the mutability of the text. The relative stability of printed editions leads us to think of textual changes as occurring at certain stages in the transmission of a text, generally when it is edited for a new printed edition. Manuscripts show us a much more fluid situation.

While cataloguing the Dunhuang manuscript collection at the British Library, I have been struck by a number of manuscripts that are distinguished by a particularly poor quality of handwriting and orthography. It might be argued by those familiar with the Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts that poor handwriting and wild orthography are the norm, rather than the exception. There is indeed a surprising degree of variation due to the differing circumstances of each manuscript's creation, but this does not entail an orthographic free for all.

The Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts fall into identifiable groups, among which we might place at one end of the scale the thousands of carefully copied and corrected *sūtras* which were the products of organized scriptoria working during the Tibetan imperial period. Here orthographic variations are at a minimum and have been eradicated as much as possible in the editorial process. In the middle of the scale are the manuscripts that have been copied carefully, but outside of the scriptorium and usually without revisions. Most of these would have been for personal use, and contain texts like short treatises, prayers and collections of spells. At the other end of the scale are the manuscripts I am concerned with here, noticeably more

scruffy in appearance than those that occupy the middle of the scale. The individual letters are poorly formed, as if by the hand of a child, and lines veer away from the horizontal. Orthography varies quite noticeably more than in the bulk of the Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts, several different spellings of the same word sometimes appearing even within the same manuscript.¹ The initial temptation is to leave these manuscripts well alone, and spend one's time with more beautiful specimens. However, forced to confront them in my cataloguing work, I began to notice similarities between them that led me to think that they were not merely the discarded work of some novice in the Tibetan language.²

In this paper I will be exploring the theory that these manuscripts are artefacts of teaching situations, specifically when a student sits and takes down the words of a teacher. The teacher might be giving a general lecture, or reciting a text from memory. The student might be particularly quick with a pen, and copy nearly every word, or only manage general summaries. He or she might have been present at the teaching, but only written it down from memory when ink, paper and tranquility were available. But in any of these cases, there are certain things that happen that do not occur when a text is simply copied from another written text.³

¹ The study of the palaeography of the Dunhuang manuscripts is very much in its infancy, and the paleographic analysis of the Tibetan manuscripts lags behind the work that has been done on the Chinese by Japanese and French scholars. Cristina Scherrer-Schaub has identified some of the general characteristics and laid down some provisional chronological guidelines with regard to the Tibetan collections from Dunhuang and Tabo (SCHERRER-SCHAUB 1999 and 2002). Yet studies of Chinese and Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts still rely heavily on connoisseurship. While I must admit to basing my categorizations here on visual recognition of similarities stemming from my experience with a large number of manuscripts, I have been working with Jacob Dalton and Tom Davis to develop a more scientific system for handwriting recognition based on forensic handwriting techniques. See DALTON, DAVIS AND VAN SCHAİK forthcoming.

² As well as the evidence presented below, it is interesting that in some of the manuscripts we seem to have examples of the writer switching between a hasty, scruffy hand and a neat, 'fair copy' hand (for example, see Or.8210/S.95). This, and some of the other manuscripts mentioned in this paper can be viewed online on the website of the International Dunhuang Project (<http://idp.bl.uk>).

³ There are other possible reasons for the poor quality of the writing that do not necessarily imply oral transmission, one of which is that the texts were written by a scribe or scribes who did not have Tibetan as a first language (and thus would most likely have been Chinese). Another possibility is that the poor hand indicates that the writer was not a professional scribe, and turned to writing only when the situation demanded it. Of course, neither theory excludes the possibility that the manuscripts are records of oral transmission.

TEACHING AND TEACHERS IN DUNHUANG

To begin with, I would like to look at the evidence that teaching situations in which texts are transmitted and written down did occur at Dunhuang. Dunhuang was in its heyday one of the great centres of Buddhist practice, art, scholarship and translation. Situated on the edges of the Chinese and Tibetan cultural spheres, and at the eastern end of the Silk Route, it received a huge cultural input. From the eighth to the tenth centuries, Dunhuang contained resident monastic communities of Chinese, Tibetan, Khotanese and Turkic monks.⁴ There was also a steady flow of eminent teachers passing through Dunhuang. Chinese Buddhists would stay awhile as they began their pilgrimages to India, and Indians and Tibetans would stop off on their way into China. Evidence is found among the Dunhuang manuscripts of high-status Buddhist teachers travelling in both directions.

For example, in the Stein collection we have a kind of passport for a Chinese monk who was on a pilgrimage to visit Nālandā in India. The manuscript contains a series of letters of introduction written in Tibetan, apparently in the tenth century. The Chinese monk passed through the Tibetan-ruled areas south-east of Dunhuang before arriving there.⁵ We also have the well-known Pelliot tibétain 849, a long scroll that ends with an account of the journey through Tibet to China of an Indian teacher called Devaputra. The main part of the scroll contains thematic glossaries in Tibetan and Sanskrit which, as Matthew Kapstein has suggested, were probably compiled by a local Tibetan with the help of Devaputra himself.⁶

A less well-known but equally fascinating manuscript is a phrasebook containing a series of bilingual conversations in Khotanese and Sanskrit. Among these conversations are some that speak of pilgrims coming from Khotan and India to see the *bodhisattva* Mañjuśrī in China.⁷ Another conversation mentions the arrival of a travelling Tibetan teacher. Most interestingly, one of the

⁴ See TAKATA 2000.

⁵ IOL Tib J 754. The letters in this 'passport' have been discussed in THOMAS 1927, and will be the subject of a forthcoming paper by myself and Imre Galambos. There are several other Dunhuang manuscripts concerning pilgrimage routes, written in Chinese; for example Or.8210/S.353 and Or.8210/S.529.

⁶ Pelliot tibétain 849 was first transcribed and translated by Joseph Hackin in 1924. It was recently revisited in a study by Matthew Kapstein (KAPSTEIN 2006).

⁷ The destination would have been Wutaishan, famed throughout the Buddhist world as the dwelling-place of Mañjuśrī.

phrasebook's dialogues contains a series of questions from Person A about which books Person B owns.⁸ 'Sūtra, Abhidharma, Vinaya, Vajrayāna,' is the answer, followed by the question 'Which do you like?' 'I like Vajrayāna; teach it!' comes the very definite response from Person A.⁹ It is not clear whether Person B, the one with the books, is supposed to be the travelling pilgrim or a local monastic librarian. In either case, we get from this phrasebook a sense of a place where Buddhist texts and teachings are frequently passed back and forth between travellers and the local population. We also get a sense that the newest genre of teachings, Vajrayāna, is in the highest demand.

An immediately striking characteristic of those manuscripts that I am suggesting may be records of teaching situations is that many of them are recycled. The scribe has used a Chinese scroll and written on the blank *verso* side.¹⁰ One such scroll [see fig. 3] is written on the *verso* of an almanac composed for the year 956. The scroll would have been re-used after the almanac was no longer needed and before the library cave at Dunhuang was sealed sometime in the early eleventh century. This is persuasive, though by no means conclusive, evidence that most of the similar manuscripts that I will discuss here are also from the tenth century. Most of these re-used Chinese scrolls are incomplete Buddhist texts. We know that scrolls like these were collected by a librarian at the monastery in Dunhuang where these manuscripts originally came from.¹¹ The scrolls were meant for repair, but it seems that they were also used as a stock of scrap paper for recording teachings.

ORAL TRANSMISSION

The study of oral traditions in the West has been a very productive field throughout the last century, and many of its insights can be profitably applied to Buddhist texts. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Francis James Child of Harvard University recorded hundreds of popular ballads that had been handed down

⁸ Book here translates *pūstaka* in Sanskrit, and *pustya* in Khotanese. From these words are derived the Hindi *pothi* and perhaps the Tibetan *dpe cha* as well.

⁹ Pelliot 5386: [1.29] *sūtra avīdarma vīnaya vajrāyāna / sūtra avīdarma vīnīva vajrāyāna* [1.32] *mama vajrāyāna kṣamattī śaikṣapaya / vajrāyāna kṣamai parya vā pūṣtai*.

¹⁰ The palaeographic term for this is *opisthograph*.

¹¹ See RONG XINJIANG 2000: 260, 263.

orally through several generations.¹² Several decades later, another Harvard professor, Milman Parry, developed a sophisticated structural analysis of oral poetry, taking Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as his basic material. Parry developed the theory that oral texts rely on formulas. That is, they are composed of hundreds of prefabricated metrical phrases that the poet can stitch together.¹³ This lends a repetitive character to the text that will be familiar to anybody who has read a Buddhist *sūtra*.

After Parry's death, the curator of his collection of oral literature at the Harvard College Library, Albert Lord, continued Parry's work, adding his own research on the ballad singers of contemporary Yugoslavia.¹⁴ Lord found many of the characteristics of Homer's texts in the ballads of these illiterate singers showed how the ballad singers did not memorize a text word for word, but as formulas arranged around conventional themes. And he showed that an oral text has no set length, but can be extended or shortened depending on the context of the telling. Lord's research was based on individuals or cultures on which literacy had yet to have an impact. His methodology was later taken up by anthropologists such as Jack Goody, who collected data and defined the characteristics of what came to be known as *primary orality*, that is, the features found in oral cultures where literacy has had little or no impact.

There have been some moves to apply the oral-formulaic theory of Parry and Lord to the earliest phase of Buddhist literature, where primary orality may well be a relevant concept. Some have seen traces of oral composition everywhere in early Buddhist scripture.¹⁵ Others have questioned the wisdom of applying Parry and Lord's theory to the Indic world, pointing out that Indic Buddhists seem to have applied a much more rigid memorization and transmission

¹² The ballads were published in a series of volumes (the tenth and last published posthumously) of *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* between 1882 and 1898.

¹³ This illuminates the etymology of the Greek word from which we derive our *rhapsodize* (*rhapsōidein*: 'to stitch together a song').

¹⁴ Albert Lord's seminal work is *The Singer of Tales* (LORD 1960).

¹⁵ The oral character of texts from the Pali canon was first discussed by Lance Cousins (COUSINS 1983), who has recently returned to the subject in the 2005 Numata lecture series at the School of Oriental and African Studies. The same topic has been further discussed in GOMBRICH 1990, COLLINS 1992 and GETHIN 1992. Donald Lopez has discussed the possible application of orality studies to early Buddhist literature, and suggested that the Mahāyāna *sūtras* also display the signs of oral composition and transmission that have been identified in the Pali scriptures (LOPEZ 1996: 44-45).

structure than the improvising bards of European cultures.¹⁶ Some have attacked the very foundations of the Parry-Lord theory: Paul Griffiths' *Religious Reading* offers a particularly robust and well-supported criticism.¹⁷

In any case, theories based on non-literate societies will be of limited use to the study of literate cultures like Tibet, where we want to examine the ongoing oral transmission of texts within a literate culture.¹⁸ There seems little use in debating the accuracy of a model that was designed for primarily oral cultures when we are dealing with the persistence of oral transmission within a context of literacy. I would argue that much more fruitful comparisons may be made with the literature and practices of medieval Europe, where oral transmission remained a strong element within a literate culture. José Cabezón's comparative study of Tibetan and European medieval scholasticism, *Buddhism and Language*, made the case for common ground in terms of scholastic practice, and Cabezón has more recently applied the same comparative method to the concepts of authorship and composition in Tibet.¹⁹ A comparison of the practices of memorization and transmission would be equally illuminating. Without attempting any such thing here, I will occasionally point to comparable situations in the medieval European context.

Most contemporary Tibetan teachers still insist on the necessity of a ritualized permission to read a text in the form of a recitation of the text by the teacher. Great importance is also attached to the oral commentary on any transmitted text. The persistence of orality in present-day Tibetan Buddhist education and scholasticism has been discussed in the context of Dge lugs pa scholasticism by Anne Klein

¹⁶ LOPEZ (1996: 32–41) has discussed the disjunction between the workings of oral cultures as proposed by followers of Lord and Parry's theory like Jack Goody on the one hand, and the verbatim memorization that is thought to have been the method of transmitting the Vedas on the other. GETHIN (1992) has mentioned that the memorization of lists by Buddhist Mātikās runs contradictory to modern theories of orality, which exclude list-making. And finally, WYNN (2004) has challenged the whole premise of Cousins by disputing the existence of textual evidence for improvisation in early Buddhist scriptural recitation.

¹⁷ GRIFFITHS 1999: 28–34.

¹⁸ In describing a culture as literate here, I do not mean to state anything about the extent of literacy, only that literacy was to be found among the majority of the scholastic and ruling classes. The extent of literacy in Tibet was briefly discussed in EKVALL 1964: 124, and recently in DREYFUS 2003: 80–82. It is also worth noting that some recent writers have argued that primary orality itself may be more of a scholarly construction than a reality. See FINNEGAN 1998: 139–74.

¹⁹ CABEZÓN 2001.

and George Dreyfus in their accounts of contemporary practice.²⁰ And it is not only in the contemporary scene that oral transmission can be shown to play a vital role. Leonard van der Kuijp has argued for the importance of oral transmission throughout the history of Tibetan Buddhism, citing, among other interesting Tibetan sources, a passage from the fifteenth-century Sa skya master Go rams pa, in which the phrase ‘mere book’ (*dpe cha tsam*) is used to describe a text for which the oral transmission has died out. Van der Kuijp summarizes the relationship of oral transmission to written texts in Tibet in a paragraph that is worth quoting in full:

As such, the text as a concrete and public manifestation of the tradition in question played a relatively subordinate role to the teaching and learning process, and only served as a point of departure, as a means and not an end in itself. Its life was given and sustained by a steady interaction between itself and these processes, regardless of whether the latter took place in a more or less continuous fashion, or in solitary retreat with only infrequent interruptions. In this way then, it is clear that when a lineage that had been previously grounded in oral transmissions was for whatever reason no more, this interaction ceased and the pulse of the text came to an abrupt halt. It was only at this time that it became possible to reduce the lineage and the oral transmission inspired by it, to what it never was, to a ‘mere book’.²¹

A fascinating glimpse of early Tibetan attitudes to oral transmission is found in Bu ston’s *Practical Guidance on the Five Stages*, written in the fourteenth century. The passage concerns a vow laid upon Bu ston’s lama not to write down the oral precepts he received from his own lama. Bu ston writes:

My lama said: ‘Writing down the precepts of the oral transmission is much like a king being brought down to the level of the masses and wandering through town. The consequences will be grave and the power and usefulness of the precepts will vanish. Once the words have been written down, people will attempt to develop wisdom by obtaining [the text] without seeking out practical guidance for applying it. Ultimately it will become a [mere] reading transmission, which will actually cause the extinction of the oral precepts.’²²

²⁰ KLEIN 1994: 1–28; DREYFUS 2003: 149–63. Dreyfus has argued, as I do here, that the characteristics of primary orality (as developed by Walter Ong) do not apply to the Tibetan situation.

²¹ VAN DER KUIJP 1983: 4.

²² *Rim lnga’i dmar khrid* from the *Bu ston gsung ’bum* vol.X (*tha*), f.21a, ll.5–6: *spyir snyan brgyud kyi gdams ngag yi ge ris su ’god pa ’di rgyal po dmangs su bab*

Bu ston's lama goes on to ask that if Bu ston does write down the teachings, he be very careful about circulating them, especially not giving them to those with no intention of practising them, who are only collecting reading transmissions (*bklags lung*).²³ The reservations expressed by Bu ston's lama bear a striking resemblance to those that we find in Plato's *Phaedrus*, which also appear in the words not of the author but of the author's teacher, in this case Socrates:²⁴

Those who acquire [writing] will cease to exercise their memory and become forgetful; they will rely on writing to bring things to their remembrance by external signs instead of their own internal resources... And as for wisdom, your pupils will have the reputation for it without the reality: they will receive a quantity of information without proper instruction, and in consequence be thought very knowledgeable when they are for the most part quite ignorant.²⁵

The parallels between the two passages are obvious. Most striking is the anxiety that the written text will become a substitute for true wisdom.²⁶ Jacques Derrida used Plato's words as a jumping-off point to explore the privileging of the oral over the written throughout Western intellectual history.²⁷ Though van der Kuip's

pa'am grong du rgyu ba dang 'dra ste/ nyes dmigs che zhing gdams ngag mthu dang phan thogs chung ba yin/ yi ge ris de byung phan chod lag len gyi dmar khrid rtsad mi gcod par yi ge de thob pas shes rab byed cing / mjug tu bklag lung du 'gyur pas don la gdams ngag rabs 'chad du 'jug pa zhi'g 'dug /

Thanks to Kurtis Schaffer for pointing out the translation of this passage in ROERICH 1949: 424, n. 5. The translation here is my own.

²³ This anxiety that the reading transmission would degenerate into a mere ritual of permission to obtain and read books continues to be expressed in later centuries, for example by 'Jigs med gling pa in the eighteenth century (VAN SCHAİK 2000: 24).

²⁴ To be quite accurate, the words are being attributed by Socrates to an Egyptian king called Thamus. We might speculate that both of these great figures (Bu ston and Plato) distance themselves from the pronouncements against writing in their own texts because of the centrality of writing to their own careers.

²⁵ Plato, *Phaedrus*, in HAMILTON 1995: 75–76. The passage is central to the discussion of Plato's work and oral culture in Ancient Greece in HAVELOCK 1963. The passage is read in terms of ancient practices of memorization in CARRUTHERS 1990: 30–31.

²⁶ In addition, the link between memorization and the persistence of oral transmission emphasised in Plato's text is also suggested by Bu ston: the request to Bu ston's lama came from the lama's own teacher, who complained that due to his advanced age his memory was too weak to memorize all of the proper meanings and terms.

²⁷ 'Plato's Pharmacy', in DERRIDA 1981: 63–171.

words are an insightful analysis of the subordination of the physical text to the oral tradition, one is reminded of Derrida's critique of the 'supplementary' character ascribed to writing in the European tradition. Without attempting to extend Derrida's critique directly to the Tibetan scene, one can perhaps see parallels in Tibet to the distinction perceived in ancient European discourse between 'good writing' (wisdom represented by the book, ultimate reality by mantric syllables, and so on) and 'bad writing' (the 'mere book').²⁸ The status of writing and of the text as physical artefact through Tibetan history is certainly a complex subject that deserves a proper study. In any case, I think we can say with some certainty that oral transmission has remained a vital aspect of Tibetan religious culture through most of its history. I now return to look at the impact that oral transmission has had on the texts themselves.

ERRORS OF HEARING

I have been exploring a method for identifying instances of oral transmission that is based on the difference between manuscripts that have been copied from other manuscripts, and those which are records of an oral teaching. The difference is found in the errors of the scribe who wrote the manuscript down. This is because errors produced by mistakes of the eye may be distinguished from errors produced by mistakes of the ear.²⁹ This has become clear to those who have attempted to process the vast amounts of ballad and folksong material collected by Frances James Child and his successors. The various different versions of a particular song that are found in this collection point to a 'distortion complex'. The distortion comes about when either the performer or the scribe recording the performance attempts to understand what they have heard in terms of what they *think* they have heard.

It should be possible in theory to distinguish the variations caused by oral transcription from the mistakes of the copyist. The most familiar scribal mistake is *haplography*, also known as eye-skip, the result of the copyist missing an entire passage because the next passage begins or ends with the same syllables. The complement to

²⁸ DERRIDA 1981: 149.

²⁹ I have chosen these terms in preference to W.E. Richmond's *scribal error* and *typographical error* (RICHMOND 1961). In any case, the distinction made by Richmond between his two terms seems to me to be rather unclear.

this error is *dittography*, where a passage is transcribed twice. Neither of these errors should appear in a transcription from an oral source. The mistakes of the ear are transformations that seem to make most sense in an oral transcription, primarily mistakes caused by homophony. For example, Child collected several versions of a Scottish song called *The Gypsy Laddie* (a popular ballad which, incidentally, travelled to America as *The Gypsy Davy* and was recorded under that title by Woody Guthrie, among others). Version C of the ballad, which was recorded from a Scottish source, contains the line:

As soon as they saw her weel-faurd face
They coost their glamourye owre her.

Here the word *glamourye* is an archaic Scottish term for a spell, clearly unfamiliar to later singers in England, where Version G was recorded:

As soon as her fair face they saw
They called their grandmother over.³⁰

Admittedly this is an extreme example; other errors of hearing that are less amusing but still significant appear throughout the variant forms of the ballads.³¹ I believe that these forms of distortion or transformation may also be identified in our Dunhuang manuscripts.

³⁰ This song is no. 200 of Child's collection; the versions are C and G respectively. These lines are cited in RICHMOND 1961.

³¹ The same kinds of error have also been observed in European medieval manuscripts. See CHAYTOR 1945: 19–21. Chaytor uses these errors to argue that the scribe did have a manuscript to copy from but was affected by the habit of reading aloud, a habit that was almost universal in the medieval period. But this view (prevalent since the nineteenth century) has been disputed in CARRUTHERS 1990: 170–1. More recently, John Dagenais has set out a series of 'registers' to describe the way scribes change texts as they copy them. Among these are the *linguistic register* and the *register of discourse*, which in simplified terms refer to the transformative effect of the scribe's expectations regarding the language and subject-matter of the text (DAGENAIS 1994: 136–37). These registers cause transformations in copies made from manuscripts similar to those found in transcriptions of oral sources. However in the manuscripts discussed below the transformations are so much more pronounced than in most Dunhuang manuscripts that the explanation of oral transmission seems worth pursuing.

THE VERSIONS OF *OVERCOMING THE THREE POISONS*

I began to explore the possibility of identifying errors of hearing in the Dunhuang manuscripts when I looked at three different versions of the same text that appear in three different manuscripts, all written in the scruffy handwriting that I mentioned earlier. The text, *Overcoming the Three Poisons* (*Gdug gsum 'dul ba*), is a prayer relating instructions for the moment of death. The prayer is best known for containing the earliest identified instance in Tibetan of the *om maṇi padme hūṃ* mantra.³² All three versions of the text are different. The differences may simply be due to the fact that the texts are derived from different sources, but I would like to tentatively propose that there is a preponderance of differences that indicate scribal mishearings. If so, this suggests that at least one version of the text was taken down from an oral source. To keep it simple I shall only compare two of the three versions here [see fig. 4]. Let us look at a short extract as it appears in these two versions:

	Version 1 IOL Tib J 421: 1v.1–5	Version 2 IOL Tib J 420: 1r.1–9
1	/sdus byas skya ma'i lnga phung bzhig/	/dus byas sgyu ma'i lnga phung zhig /
2	/e ma myI rtag slu ba'i chos/ /gzha mtshon sgyu ma yod las	/e ma myen tog bslu ba'i chos / /gzham mtshon sgyu ma yod las
3	myed/ /sprIn tshogs na pun snang las	myed / /sprin mtshogs na bun snang las
4	thIm/ /ngo mtshar rmad kyIs glub	thim / /phon mtshan smad kyis glug
5	bar gyur/ /bden las rtsun gyI stan byang	bur / /bden las rtsun du sdun byung
6	ba' /	ba'i /

Close Homonyms (Prefixes and Suffixes)

The easiest error to make when writing down an orally delivered text is to mistake one homonym for another. Written Tibetan, with its many silent prefixes and suffixes, is awash in homonyms. So the

³² See IMAEDA 1979.

simplest differences we can identify are those where the prefixes and suffixes change. For example, in l. 1 of the two versions, the syllable *sdus* appears with its prefix *sa* in Version 1 and without it in Version 2. On the other hand, in l. 4 the syllable *tshogs* appears with its prefixed *ma* in Version 2 and without it in Version 1. Such differences in later Tibetan printed texts are often ascribed to variations in local dialect, or simply to the lack of standardized orthography. Regional variations at least are unlikely to be the culprit here; the similar form of the manuscripts (both are in codex or booklet form), the quality of the manuscript paper, and the fact that the manuscripts were found in the same bundle in the Dunhuang cave, make it most likely that we are dealing with two versions of the text produced in the same place at around the same time.³³ The lack of a standardized orthography may be at fault, though the differences between these two versions are much more pronounced than one usually sees between two manuscript versions of the same Dunhuang text. In any case, the next kind of variation cannot be the effect of mere orthographic deviations.

Distant Homonyms: Errors of Interpretation

As well as variations on the level of the single syllable, we come across variations where the scribes have made a more interpretative error. Rather like participants in the party game ‘Chinese whispers’, they have heard one word as another. We can see this in l. 2 where Version 1 speaks of phenomena being delusory and impermanent, while Version 2 speaks of phenomena as delusory flowers. Here the scribe of Version 2 has probably misheard *myi rtag* (‘impermanent’) as *myen rtog* (‘flower’). On l. 5, the scribe of Version 1 has written the word *ngo mtshar* (‘wonderful’), and then the word *rmaḍ* (‘marvellous’) which function here as adverbs. The scribe of Version 2 has written the word *phon* (‘bundle’) followed by the word *mtshan*

³³ The Tibetan manuscripts in the Dunhuang cave were found in rather chaotic bundles mixed with manuscripts in other languages such as Khotanese or Sanskrit. Aurel Stein used his archeological ‘site numbers’ to number the manuscripts according to their original bundle. Unfortunately, Paul Pelliot, a brilliant textual scholar with little interest in archaeological procedures, did not number the manuscripts he obtained in the same way. The Stein bundles do seem to contain some coherent groups of manuscripts, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi has begun to explore dating the bundles using the few datable manuscripts in each bundle. See TAKEUCHI forthcoming.

smad (perhaps ‘the second watch of the night’), which is nonsense in this context, but shares most phonetic elements with the syllables of Version 1. Some of the other major homophonic variations between the texts that make slightly better sense than this might well survive to be passed further along the chain of transmission.

Our analysis of homophony does beg the question of how Tibetan syllables were pronounced in tenth-century Dunhuang. Unfortunately, the main evidence for this is the Dunhuang manuscripts themselves, so we are in danger of getting involved in a circular argument.³⁴ Nevertheless, since we must begin somewhere, these homonyms do give us more clues than we have ever had before about how the Tibetan language was pronounced at this time (at least in Dunhuang). There are similarities to modern pronunciations, and little evidence for the theory that all prefixes and suffixes were pronounced in early Tibetan and only gradually became silent. The following are a few examples taken from various manuscripts:

IOL Tib J 420, 421: *khu* equivalent to *gru*

IOL Tib J 716, R1: *thol* for *'khrol*

IOL Tib J 716, V1: *yogs* for *g.yogs*

IOL Tib J 37/2: *gom pang* for *go 'phang*

IOL Tib J 384, throughout: *-gs* ending often changes to *-s* ending

IOL Tib J 754, l. 1: *ja* corrected to *bya*; l. 27: *ca* corrected to *phyags* [see Appendix]

Major Variations

In some cases, the differences between the versions cannot be explained by a simple mishearing of homophones. I have taken the following extract as an example:

³⁴ Steven Beyer has written insightfully on this topic, based on a limited group of previously transcribed manuscripts (BEYER 1992: 28-36). Another method of phonological analysis, using ancient bilingual Sino-Tibetan inscriptions, appears in LAUFER 1914.

	Version 1 IOL Tib J 421: 10v.5–7	Version 2 IOL Tib J 420: 7v.7–8
1	<i>/khrum khrum thum bum <u>sam myI</u></i>	<i>/khrum khru dum bu 'bum</i>
	<i><u>khyab/</u></i>	<i><u>dang khri /</u></i>
2	<i>/zhes stang <u>mye bzhlñ 'bar ba la/</u></i>	<i>zhe stang 'bar la khad/</i>

The syllables at the end of the lines here share some phonetic elements, but they are different enough that mere mishearing does not quite seem an adequate explanation of them. One possibility is that these manuscripts were not after all written down at the same oral teaching, but derive from variant versions. The multitude of homophonic variations would still be enough to show that at some point at least one of the texts was transmitted orally. But we still should not rule out the possibility that the two manuscripts derive from a single teaching situation. The major variations between these texts usually occur, as here, at the end of a line of verse. If a scribe happens to be falling behind the recitation, it is the ends of the lines that are more likely to be lost. Most of us will be familiar with the difficult simultaneous practice of listening and recovering from memory that is required when taking down notes from an oral presentation. If anything is lost it is more likely to be the ends of phrases than the beginnings. Rather than leaving phrases unfinished, one inserts plausible words. We would expect that, unlike the mishearings discussed above, such substitutions should make some sense in the context, and the end of line variations in these manuscripts do generally make sense.

A similar principle may be behind the variation we find in the famous six syllable mantra of Avalokiteśvara:

	Version 1 IOL Tib J 421: 12v.7	Version 2 IOL Tib J 421: 12v.7
	<i>oṃ ma nI pad me huṃ myi tra</i>	<i>ōṃ ma ma ni pad me / /hum mye/</i>
	<i>swa hā/</i>	

It's clear at first glance that neither of these versions is the simple six syllables of the famous mantra. But there is good reason to believe that the scribe of Version 1 captured the mantra that was taught, or something close to it. The mantra occurs towards the end of the text,

and the scribe of Version 2 appears to have been succumbing to fatigue. He inserts some unnecessary punctuation in the middle, and then falls behind and cannot catch the last part of the mantra. Mistakes like this would have been common among scribes who knew little or no Sanskrit, and this is likely to have been a frequent cause of variations in the transmission of mantras.

COMPLEXITIES OF ORAL TRANSMISSION

As mentioned earlier, there are three manuscript versions of the text of *Overcoming the Three Poisons*. How might they have come to be? The picture that first occurred to me is of three students sitting at the feet of the teacher, scribbling away as he speaks. We know that in medieval Europe, before the widespread use of the printing press, university students had no textbooks, and had to rely on their own written transcriptions of lectures. Surely monks and lay practitioners at Dunhuang, attending the lectures of visiting or resident teachers, would also have had to create their own copies of the text being taught.³⁵

Visiting teachers in particular, who would not be travelling with a large personal library, would often be teaching from memorized texts. We know that Indian Buddhist teachers tended to rely on memorized rather than written texts in India through to the fifth century, based on the account of the Chinese pilgrim Faxian, who reported his difficulties in finding any written copies of the fundamental Vinaya texts that he wanted to bring back to China.³⁶ That memorization continued to be greatly esteemed and revered in later centuries is shown by the Chinese pilgrim Yijing's account of Indian teachers and students in seventh-century India.³⁷ Furthermore, we know that the Indian and Central Asian teachers who brought texts to China often brought them in memory rather than as written books.³⁸ And of course, right down to the present day, memorization continues to be central to traditional Tibetan monastic education, which conforms

³⁵ The necessity for university students in medieval Europe to write their own manuscripts of texts, and their reliance on dictation is discussed in HAJNAL 1959: 65–68.

³⁶ GILES 1956: 64.

³⁷ TAKAKUSU 1896: 182–83.

³⁸ See SANDER 1992: 141–42, and CH'EN 1964: 366–67.

with most pre-modern educational cultures in the belief that texts must be made one's own through the memorization process.³⁹

Memorization in itself may account for some of the variations discussed in the previous section. As Mary Carruthers has noted in her major study of memory in medieval Europe, the memorization of texts unites written with oral transcription, and eye with ear.⁴⁰ The memorized text may undergo changes in the mind of the one who has memorized it before he or she has even recited or written it down. Therefore, it is usually difficult to tell from the manuscripts whether a text had been transformed in the mind of the teacher, or by the hand of the listening scribe. One of my university professors in English literature once recited in class the first stanza of Robert Herrick's *On Julia's Clothes* thus:

Whenas in silks my Julia goes,
Then, then (methinks) how sweetly flows
That liquefaction of her globes.

On reading the poem a few days later I realized the last word of the stanza is actually *clothes*. The poem had undergone a minor transformation during its residence in the mind of the professor, and had I not had access to printed editions of the work I would have retained and perhaps passed on this subtly altered version of the poem. Note that, as in some of our examples from *Overcoming the Three Poisons*, the substituted word in this case retained the vowel sound of the original word.

There is a further reason why textual variations are spread by travelling teachers teaching from memory: if the traveller soon moves on, there is little chance to revise the rough transcriptions of his teachings. Any fair copies would tend to replicate many of the mistakes of the rough drafts, and thus carry on the signs of oral transmission. I have found some plausible examples of fair copies from the rough drafts, in which it does appear that the scribe has attempted to correct the rough draft but has reproduced of some of the characteristic mistakes in the original.⁴¹

³⁹ The best study of this is DREYFUS 2003: 79–97, who writes (p. 92): ‘Scholars must have an active command of the texts that structure the curriculum, not simply the ability to retrieve information from them. Knowing where bits of information are stored is not enough: the texts must inform one’s thinking and become integrated into one’s way of looking at the world’.

⁴⁰ CARRUTHERS 1990: 122.

⁴¹ IOL Tib J 440 may be a fair copy of a text in PT 37. And IOL Tib J 420 (our Version 2 of *Gdug gsum 'dul ba*) may well be a copy from PT 37 as well.

A fair copy like this, ultimately derived from an oral teaching, might later be used in a teaching situation, and be transmitted orally once again.⁴² Thus the chain of textual transmission goes on, composed of a mixture of written and oral links. Even where there are clear signs of oral transmission, it does not necessarily mean that the actual manuscript we are studying is a direct transcription of an oral teaching. Studies of 'orality' as against 'literacy' in textual composition and transmission have progressed in recent decades to an acknowledgement that there is no theoretically clear distinction between these two modes in any society where both reciting and writing are practised. The authors of a study on medieval French *Jongleurs* have summarised this complexity very effectively:

But it is also possible (and probably more common) for an extant manuscript to represent *in part* the effects of both written and oral transmission. For example, a written copy of a written copy of an oral performance of a written copy of an original composition could differ from another version of the same poem because of both scribal modifications and oral improvisation.⁴³

As this kind of complexity has come to be recognized, in recent years the theoretical opposition of oral and literate transmission central to the earlier work of Marshall McLuhan and Walter Ong's much-read introduction to the subject has been criticised at some length.⁴⁴ All this is to say that, having identified the characteristics of oral transmission in a manuscript, we must not leap to the conclusion that the manuscript in front of us is directly derived from an oral teaching. The transcription of the oral teaching may only be just one link, and not the most recent one, in the chain of transmission.

Furthermore, PT 849, the record of the teachings of Devaputra, looks like a fair copy that has been made without the help of the teacher, who might have corrected many of the Sankrit renderings.

⁴² Such a situation in the context of Theravada Buddhism is described in COLLINS 1992: 129.

⁴³ QUINN AND HALL 1982: 6. A similar point has been made by J.M. Foley in his survey of the field (FOLEY 1984: 5).

⁴⁴ See for example, CARRUTHERS 1990 and FINNEGAN 1998. These recent developments in the study of oral traditions have been summarized in MILLS 1987.

EXTENDING THE STUDY

The method I have outlined is as yet experimental and will need to be applied to a much greater range of manuscripts if its usefulness is to be confirmed. A wider application of the method is theoretically possible. If we are to take the presence of homophonic variation as an indication of an oral source (if not actual proof) we can broaden our search to cases where we have one copy of a text. In several manuscripts written in the rough hand that I mentioned above, variant forms of the same syllables crop up, sometimes in their correct form, and at other times switching prefixes and suffixes or collapsing into a purely phonetic rendering. Unfamiliar sounds like foreign words are transcribed very eccentrically. In one interesting manuscript, which looks like notes taken during a teaching on how to construct certain maṇḍalas (IOL Tib J 384), the first maṇḍala is said to have come from the country of Draviḍa. This unfamiliar Indic word is written differently each time it appears:

r10.1: 'dra byi tra

r10.1: tra byid tra

r13.1: 'dra byid tra

The particular susceptibility of place-names to this type of error has been noted with regard to the Child ballads.⁴⁵ Furthermore, elsewhere in the same manuscript we have a repeated use of the word *bo de swat twa* (a poor transcription of the Sanskrit *bodhisattva*) for a divine personage who features in a story about the origin of one of the maṇḍalas. The reason for the use of this mistranscribed Sanskrit term (rather than the Tibetan *byang chub sems dpa'*, which is in general use throughout the Dunhuang manuscripts) may be that the teacher whose words are recorded here was using the Sanskrit term, which was taken by the scribe to be a personal name for this character in the story. The particular form in which the Sanskrit word is transcribed would have been affected by the teacher's pronunciation. Poor transcription of Sanskrit terms is also a feature of Pelliot tibétain 849, as noted by Matthew Kapstein. As mentioned above, Pelliot tibétain 849 probably represents notes taken from an Indian teacher by a Tibetan who was unfamiliar with Sanskrit.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ RICHMOND 1961: 229–31.

⁴⁶ KAPSTEIN 2006. As Kapstein notes, some of the apparent mistranscriptions are not in fact based on Sanskrit, but on a variety of early New Indo-Aryan.

The subject matter of the manuscripts in the rough hand that I have grouped together here is overwhelmingly tantric. As the phrasebook says, 'I like Vajrayāna; teach it!' Most of these teachings are in the class of Mahāyoga, at that time the highest class of tantra. But there is also a significant group of texts that, like *Overcoming the Three Poisons*, draw upon a Yoga tantra, the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*.⁴⁷ The main theme of this tantra is, as the title suggests, liberating beings from the lower realms. There are many differences between the two canonical versions of the text, one of which is from the earlier period of translation, and the other of which is from the later.⁴⁸ The confusion surrounding the transmission of the tantra, which was discussed in Tibetan sources, suggest that the tantra and texts deriving from it were widely taught and transformed in the process of transmission.⁴⁹

Why the prevalence among these oral transcriptions of material concerned with rituals for death and the post-death state? For one thing, this kind of practical ritual would have been in high demand, both by lay people and by monks who could make use of it in services for lay people. It is in the sphere of death rituals that Buddhism came head to head with the old religious practices of Tibet, and death rituals would have been the stock in trade of many Buddhist monks.⁵⁰ It is interesting that Avalokiteśvara and his six-syllable mantra, a truly fundamental element of Tibetan popular Buddhism, also appear in these manuscripts.⁵¹ So these oral transcriptions quite probably represent the teachings that were up to date and in popular demand at the time they were written down.

⁴⁷ As well as the *Gdug gsum 'dul ba* manuscripts, we have IOL Tib J 384, IOL Tib J 493, Or.8210/S.421, PT 37 (other texts which come after the *Gdug gsum 'dul ba*) and PT 296.

⁴⁸ The two versions are found in the *bka' 'gyur* (P. 116 and P. 117). They are discussed in WEINBERGER 2003, chapter two, and SKORUPSKI 1983.

⁴⁹ VAN DER KUIJP 1992.

⁵⁰ On the interaction between Buddhism and previous Tibetan religious practice in the sphere of death rituals, see STEIN 1970.

⁵¹ On the significant role of Avalokiteśvara in the Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts, see VAN SCHAIK 2006. As well as the Amoghapāśa maṇḍala in IOL Tib J 348, there is a prayer invoking Avalokiteśvara in IOL Tib J 719. The prayer sets out a wrathful maṇḍala with Mahābala at the centre. The relationship between these two deities is not clear in this case, but Mahābala appears in a number of depictions of the Amoghapāśa maṇḍala from Dunhuang, including IOL Tib J 754, which also contains the monk's passport mentioned earlier, and a Vajrakīlaya *sādhana* written in the scruffy handwriting under discussion here.

THE PERSISTENCE OF ORALITY

It has long been recognised that before printing became dominant in Western culture, memory and oral transmission played a crucial role.⁵² In a world of few books, one's education had to be remembered, and texts were transmitted both with and without the support of writing. Although we understand that in traditional Buddhist societies memory and oral transmission continue to play an important role to the present day, we do not always follow the full implications of this fact. When one examines a large manuscript collection, one begins to see how unstable and mutable a text can be without the stabilizing influence of printing.⁵³

It is arguably an inherent feature of manuscript culture that texts are often copied through oral rather than visual means. In a culture before print, there is no publication as we understand it. Dissemination of the text must be carried out through oral performance or teaching. As I mentioned earlier, even if the teacher is working from a written text, it would be very rare that all of the recipients of the teaching would already have their own copies. If they wanted a copy of the text, it would be necessary to make one, sometimes through the agency of sight, and sometimes through the agency of hearing. This was certainly the case in medieval Europe.⁵⁴

Again in an analogy with Europe, the widespread adoption of printing technology in Tibet is likely to have limited the mutability of the text. Many later productions of Tibetan authors, which find their way quickly into print, are stabilized then and there, and subsequently subject only to the errors of the copyist when one printed edition is superseded by another. Print technology certainly introduces more consistency and stability to the process of transmission. The traditional assumption that printing was not in general use in Tibet before the fifteenth century seems to be fairly accurate, even if printing technology was known to Tibetans before

⁵² For a recent and extensive study of this subject see CARRUTHERS 1990.

⁵³ The great difference between the world of the manuscripts and that of printed texts has been discussed in a recent monograph on a European manuscript tradition by John Dagenais: 'That manuscripts are different from modern printed editions is obvious enough, and yet when we have spent some time among manuscripts we begin to realize just how powerful this difference is. Manuscripts are, in fact, a vital culture'. (DAGENAIS 1994: 36).

⁵⁴ CHAYTOR 1945: 115–37.

that time.⁵⁵ Therefore, the high level of textual transformation found in the manuscripts in this study must have continued to be a feature of textual transmission for several centuries after the period of the Dunhuang manuscripts.

If there is a general conclusion to be drawn from this study, it is that the number of hands (as well as ears and eyes) involved in the formation of the text as it comes down to us is not limited to the initial period of creation, but increases at each stage of transmission. Some Buddhist texts are born into written form, and their subsequent transmission is well controlled within the monastic environment; these exhibit the least mutability.⁵⁶ Others, such as *Overcoming the Three Poisons*, are either born into an oral setting, or achieve a popularity that propels them into multiple informal, often oral, transmissions. Dunhuang seems to have been an environment in which such informal transmissions were common, and surely it was not unique in this regard.

This kind of text—popular and therefore subject to oral teaching and transmission situations—comes to us only after having passed through the agency of unknowable numbers of teachers and scribes. At each oral rendition and copying of the text, there is the opportunity for changes to be introduced by the teacher, and for further changes to be introduced, almost simultaneously, by the scribe. The older the text, the more significant this process becomes. These texts are often attributed within the tradition to the agency of a buddha or *bodhisattva*, and there is a temptation in the academic study of Buddhist scripture to treat this as a kind of mask hiding the face of the real, human author. Yet the fact that many such texts have passed through numerous stages of transmission, each one

⁵⁵ Leonard van der Kuijp has addressed the issue of the earliest Tibetan printed manuscripts in two articles. With exceptions, which include the early 14th century Tibetan texts produced by Mongol sponsors (VAN DER KUIJP 1993) of Buddhism and reports of printed *dhāraṇī* sheets in the 13th century (VAN DER KUIJP 2003: 391), Tibetans seem to have been slow to take up the woodblock printing technology that had been in use in China since the 8th century. This seems quite within the realms of possibility when we consider that printing did not become widespread in India until the nineteenth century.

⁵⁶ Thus the Indic Buddhist *śāstra* literature was relatively stable and produced few major variant texts, unlike the *sūtra* literature. An exception that perhaps proves the rule is the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, a *śāstra* which did circulate in widely variant versions, as witnessed by the many divergences between the canonical and Dunhuang versions (see SAITO 1993). It is likely that the immense popularity of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* took it outside of the major monastic centres, where it became subject to more fluid transmission situations, oral as well as written.

transforming them in some way, from the trivial to the profound, should make us wary of this assumption. Indeed, since the text comes to us at the end of a long chain of dependent origination, the empty forms of the buddhas and *bodhisattvas* may in fact be a better metaphor for agency than an imagined original human author.

APPENDIX: SCRIBAL CORRECTIONS ON THE HOOF IN A VAJRAKĪLAYA *SĀDHANA*

One feature of certain manuscripts, not mentioned above, is strongly suggestive of transcription from an oral source. The first syllable of the word is written erroneously, and the whole word needs to be written out again. The correction appears not in the margins or between the lines, but in the running text. Several instances of these corrections appear in IOL Tib J 754, a Vajrakīlaya *sādhana*.⁵⁷ On l. 1, we see the crossed-out syllable ~~ja~~ followed by *bya*, which looks like a case of the mishearing of a homonym. Similarly, on l. 27 we see ~~ea~~ followed by *phyags*. This kind of error also occurs in PT 37, although here the scribe has not crossed out the initial erroneous syllable. Examples are *bya sbyong* on f.5v and *ga sgribs* on f.6r.

The Vajrakīlaya manuscript also contains corrections that may have been made after the initial transcription. The mantras, which are poorly transcribed, have also been partially corrected, perhaps later in consultation with the teacher (unlike the fair copies mentioned above):

- l. 18: *kyi la ya kyi la ya* corr. *ki la ya ki la ya* (*kī* heard as *kyi*)
- l. 19: *bhug tsi ti* corr. *bhag tsi ta*

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- IOL Tib J 754/1-5: Chinese pilgrim's letters of passage
- IOL Tib J 754/7: Vajrakīla *sādhana*

⁵⁷ The *sādhana* has been discussed in MAYER AND CANTWELL 1994.

- PT 37: Booklet containing several texts including *Overcoming the Three Poisons* (version 3)
 PT 849: Devaputra's teachings
 Pelliot 5386: Sanskrit-Khotanese phrasebook

A note on conventions for references within manuscripts:

- Pothī and booklets: Folio number followed by lowercase *r* (recto) or *v* (verso) to mark the side; e.g. 1r.1
 Scrolls: Side in uppercase (*R* or *V*) followed by item number; e.g. R1.1
 Concertinas: Side in lowercase (*r* or *v*) followed by number of panel; e.g. r1.1

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PART THREE

CHINESE TRENDS IN TIBETAN BUDDHISM

THE TIBETAN *YULANPEN JING*

□ □ □ □ □ □

Matthew T. Kapstein

The present is the third (and presumably the last) in a series of articles consecrated to the study of Chinese traditions concerning the arhat Mulian, that is, Mahā-Maudgalyāyana (Ch. (Da)mu(qian)lian □ □ □ □), as these are known in Tibetan sources. The first (KAPSTEIN 2001) offered an introduction to the subject, together with a transcription and translation of the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 686, in which we find a verse summary of the celebrated ‘transformation text’ on Mulian’s salvation of his mother from hell, the *Da muqianlian mingjian jiumu bianwen* □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □. This was followed by a more detailed study (KAPSTEIN 2007) that attempted to trace the influence of the Mulian tales in later Tibetan Buddhist literature. In both of these essays, I referred briefly to the existence of a Tibetan version of the well-known Chinese Buddhist apocryphon, the ‘Sūtra of the Yulan vessel’, *Yulanpen jing* (T 685), that had been translated during the early ninth century by the Dunhuang-based master ’Gos Chos-grub (Ch. Facheng □ □), who seems to have been also the author of the abbreviated retelling of the transformation text.¹ Here, I present a more detailed account of the Tibetan text of the sūtra, followed, in the appendix, by an improved edition of the abridgement of the *bianwen* given in IOL Tib J 686.

The interest of the Tibetan *Yulanpen jing* stems in part precisely from the apocryphal status of the Chinese original.² Though a thorough inventory of Chinese apocryphal scriptures in Tibetan translation has never been undertaken, it is safe to say that only a small fraction of such works was ever translated and that, for reasons that are not yet well understood, the Tibetans in general seem to have

¹ On this figure see DEMIÉVILLE 1952, INABA 1977, UHEYAMA 1983, and VERHAGEN 1992.

² BUSWELL 1990 provides an excellent survey of the apocryphal scriptures as a key issue in the study of Chinese Buddhism. See, too, KUO 2000 for a useful review of the topic and the present state of research.

intentionally avoided these texts. Although efforts were made to translate Buddhist literature from Sanskrit virtually in its entirety, the Tibetan project of translating Buddhist Chinese was remarkably restrained, so that it seems fair to ask of any given Chinese apocryphon that we find in Tibetan, just what may have motivated its translation?

The question is easiest to answer with respect to relatively late translations, for instance, those of the *Beidou jing* ('Sūtra of the Northern Dipper', *T* 1307, *Foshuo beidou qixing yanming jing* 佛說北斗經) realized under the Yuan dynasty, or of the apocryphal *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra* ('Sūtra of the Heroic March', *T* 945, *Shoulengyan jing* 首楞嚴經) and the *Sishi'erzhang jing* ('Sūtra in Forty-two Sections', *T* 784, 四十二章經) both commissioned in the Qianlong era (1735-1796) during the Qing.³ In these cases, the interests of the court required the imperial promulgation of particular scriptures: the cult of the Northern Dipper came to play a role in Yuan rites of royal protection, while the last two scriptures mentioned occupied so central a place in the Qing-period conception of Chinese Buddhist teaching that their apocryphal origins were frankly unimaginable. For this reason, it was deemed necessary to incorporate them into the Tibetan scriptural corpus as well, as if they were authentic Indian sūtras.⁴

The Tang-period translations are more difficult to assess. R. A. Stein has argued that some of the Tibetan translations of Chinese Buddhist works, including both Chan texts and various apocrypha, as well as certain Confucian writings, make use of a vocabulary (Stein's 'Chinese' vocabulary) based on direct translation of Chinese that so closely resembles indigenous Tibetan usage that translations and

³ For the Tibetan versions of these three apocrypha, see, respectively, FRANKE 1990, STAEL-HOLSTEIN 1936, and FEER 1868. It may be noted that Stael-Holstein, while very much aware that the authenticity of the larger *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra* is questionable, considers the work not to have been *in toto* a forgery, on the grounds that it incorporates some elements of Indian origin. Part of the larger *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, moreover, had been translated into Tibetan already during the eighth or ninth century. As for the last mentioned sūtra, Feer does not seem to have entertained the thought that the *Sishi'erzhang jing* might be inauthentic.

⁴ This is made quite explicit in the emperor's preface to the *Śūraṅgamasamādhisūtra*, translated in STAEL-HOLSTEIN 1936. In this connection, an amusing anecdote, for which I am grateful to Professor Raoul Birnbaum (UC Santa Cruz), relates that one of the later Lcang-skya khutugtus was asked by a Chinese devotee whether or not this sūtra was to be considered an apocryphal work. Of course not, the hierarch replied, one finds it after all in the Tibetan Bka'-gyur! (Though this work was included in the Snar-thang Bka'-gyur, the *Sishi'erzhang jing*, though published xylographically, seems not to have entered into any edition of the Tibetan canon.)

autochthonous works may be on occasion confused.⁵ Though the evidence is unsure, tradition holds Chinese Buddhist and non-Buddhist works to have been first introduced during the time of Khri Lde-gtsug-btsan (r. 712-755), thanks to the influence of his Tang royal bride, the princess of Jincheng 金城公主 (d. 739). At the same time, however, it is certain that many of the extant Tibetan translations from Chinese were produced far from the center, that is in Dunhuang, and date only to the first half of the ninth century. Contrasting with the ‘Chinese’ vocabulary, we often find in use here the standard ‘Indian’ translation lexicon, even in cases where the source language was in fact Chinese. Moreover, in some instances we find multiple translations of one and the same Chinese work—even examples in which versions using the Chinese and Indian conventions, respectively, are known—that were no doubt produced under differing circumstances and may have been destined for differing audiences.⁶ These and other variable factors caution us against hastily adopting any specific covering explication for Tang Sino-Tibetan translation. In the particular instance with which we are concerned here, however, we are in the fortunate position of being able to situate the work with relative precision, for the colophon is signed by the noted ninth-century translator ’Gos Chos-grub of Dunhuang. But, as the œuvre of this translator includes a related text, the summary of the transformation tale given below in the appendix, that was clearly intended for tibetophone Chinese use in the region of Dunhuang,⁷ it seems plausible that the translation of the *Yulanpen jing* was similarly conceived and so not in the first instance intended to augment the Tibetan translation canon at all.⁸ Just how it came to be transmitted to central Tibet, where it was in a sense canonized by its inclusion in the manuscript Bka’-’gyur-s as noted below, remains a mystery.

⁵ STEIN 1983: 209: ‘Le vocabulaire des traductions du chinois est souvent le même que le vocabulaire indigène traditionnel (archaïsant). Si le titre ou le sujet d’un texte donné n’est pas précisé, on ne peut pas dire avec certitude s’il s’agit d’un écrit indigène ou d’une traduction du chinois.’

⁶ Particularly noteworthy in this respect is the *Bayang jing* (□ □ □ □ T 2897) on which see STEIN 1983: 156-59 and *passim*; and EIMER 2002.

⁷ On the use of Tibetan by Chinese Buddhists as evidenced in the Dunhuang documents, see especially TAKATA 1994.

⁸ Refer to the ‘notes and comments’ on paragraph 28 below. Note, too, that our text is not mentioned in either of the surviving imperial period scriptural catalogues, the *Ldan kar ma* (LALOU 1953) and the *’Phang thang ma* (RTA-RDO 2003).

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

The Tibetan *Yulanpen jing* is so far known only from three of the manuscript versions of the Tibetan Buddhist canon, where it is entitled 'Phags pa yongs su skyobs pa'i snod ces bya ba'i mdo. It is text number 266 in volume 79 of the Stog Palace Bka'-gyur manuscript,⁹ as catalogued by Tadeusz SKORUPSKI (1985: 144). Géza BETHLENFALVY (1982) lists it as Ulan Bator no. 314, and as Tokyo no. 266 following the handlist prepared by Kōjun Saitō. As the *Yulanpen jing* was never included in the printed Tibetan canons, its occurrence in these three manuscripts (though no doubt there are others as well), all ultimately derived from the 14th or 15th century Rgyal-rtse *Them spangs ma* manuscript, raises some interesting questions in connection with Tibetan canonical transmission, especially in regard to the possibility that our text was to be found in the *Them spangs ma* itself. The reproduction of the Stog Palace manuscript is, however, the only one that I have actually been able to consult to date, so that my edition and comments are necessarily based on it alone.¹⁰

The Chinese text of the *Yulanpen jing* reproduced here follows the Taishō edition and my division of the work into numbered passages is strictly a matter of convenience, in order to facilitate the comparison of the two versions considered. While the punctuation of the Taishō has been left as is, it should be noted that this is often not reliable. The translation follows the Tibetan, though in one passage (no. 2), I translate also the Chinese, as the two texts are entirely independent of one another in this instance. The relationship between the Chinese and Tibetan texts, and the conventions adopted by 'Gos Chos-grub in his translation, will be discussed in the following section. For an English translation based on the Chinese text, interested readers may find it convenient to consult the work of TEISER (1988: 48-54).

As STEIN (1983) has observed, Buddhist works were translated into Tibetan following two quite different types of conventions, which may be termed Indian and Chinese respectively. The former is of course better known, generally regarded as the standard, and its

⁹ In *The Tog Palace Manuscript of the Tibetan Kanjur*, Sherig Dpemzod Series (Leh, Ladakh: C. Namgyal Tarusergar, 1975-1980), 109 vols.

¹⁰ As Paul Harrison notes (correspondence, 5 February 2007), 'Judging by the numbers of the Stog, Tokyo & Ulan Bator mss, this text must have been in Vol. Sa of the Shel dkar (London) Kanjur, which is unfortunately now missing.'

lexicon, representing the Sanskrit Buddhist vocabulary, is in large measure canonized in the two great glossaries of the early ninth century, the *Mahāvvyutpatti* and its companion, the *Madhyavyutpatti*, or *Sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*. The Chinese translation conventions, by contrast, frequently deviate from Indian-inspired usage and appear to be less thoroughly standardized. Among Buddhist texts, this approach to translation is represented primarily in a variety of Chan documents, as well as apocryphal or popular scriptures, many preserved at Dunhuang but some known from the canonical collections as well.

An additional feature of the old translations to which Stein called attention is of particular pertinence here: the so-called ‘Indian’ and ‘Chinese’ translation conventions do not strictly correspond, in the case of originally Chinese works, to the source language. In other words, some Chinese Buddhist texts were translated into Tibetan adhering closely to the ‘Indian’ system of conventions. This may be seen in certain well-known canonical works such as the Tibetan translation of Yijing’s version of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra* (NOBEL 1958), to mention just one example.¹¹ In some cases, as Stein also noted, we even find doublets, the same text being found in Tibetan in both ‘Indian’ and ‘Chinese’ versions, e.g., the *Bayang jing*, referred to earlier (n. 6).

In connection with our present text, ’Gos Chos-grub’s translation of the *Yulanpen jing*, Stein’s findings permit us to specify that, while Indian conventions were quite closely adhered to throughout, lending to the work much the appearance of a sūtra of *bona fide* Indian origin, at a number of key points concessions were nevertheless made to elements of characteristically Chinese usage.¹² In one instance, the literal rendering of Ch. *daoyan* 道眼 ‘eye of the path’ as *lam gyi mig*, this may reflect the translator’s hesitation over a term that seemed not to be part of the standard Indian Buddhist vocabulary. In another case, we find *egui* 鬼, equivalent to Skt. *preta*, translated as *yi dags ltogs po*. Here, though *yi dags* alone

¹¹ Of course, in this case one might argue that the adherence to the ‘Indian’ conventions is fully warranted by the fact that the text in question is in most respects of genuine Indian (or, perhaps in some passages, Central Asian Indic) origin. While this is quite true, the point is rather that here and in other, similar cases, without regard to the question of authenticity, the translators of these works into Tibetan were entirely aware of the trilingual system of equivalencies, and so were quite capable of translating Buddhist Chinese so as to convey the look and feel of a text rendered directly from Sanskrit.

¹² STEIN (1983: 160) remarks that ‘Čhos-grub ... emploie toujours le voc[abulaire] ind[ien].’

would have fulfilled the normal requirements of translation, *ltogs po* ‘hungry’ has been added in order to retain explicitly the connotations of the Chinese term. Fuller reflections on these and other philological details will be found in the notes and comments given below.

The transcription of the text that I provide here is by no means to be regarded as a critical edition. With only one of the three known manuscript versions of the Tibetan at my disposal, my aim has been only to reproduce its contents with accuracy. For the Chinese, similarly, I have copied the text as given in the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, without regard to different editions (with the exception of a single character in passage 12). As will become clear in my remarks, however, although the Tibetan does correspond closely to the text found in the *Taishō*, the Chinese version upon which Chos-grub based his translation nevertheless differed from it in some notable respects.

1. [a25] □ □ □ □ □ [258a3] \$ /rgya gar skad du/
 □ a’arya pa ri sha ra Ni bha
 nydza n’a ma s’u tra/
 bod skad du/ ’phags pa yongs
 su skyob pa’i snod ces bya
 [a26] ba’i mdo //

In the language of India: *Āryapariśaraṇibhaṇja-nāma-sūtra*
 In Tibetan: *’Phags pa yongs su skyob pa’i snod ces bya ba’i mdo*
 (‘*The Sublime Sūtra entitled, The Vessel of Universal Protection*’)

2. [a27] □ □ □ □ □ □ sangs rgyas dang byang chub
 □ □ □ □ sems dpa’ thams cad la
 phyag ’tshal lo //

Ch. Translated by the Yuezhi Tripiṭaka [master], the Indian
 Dharmarakṣa, of the Western Jin dynasty.
 Tib. Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!

3. [a28] □ □ □ □ □ □
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
 □ □ □ □ □
 'di skad bdag gis thos pa dus
 gcig na / bcom ldan 'das yul
 mnyan yod na rgyal byed kyi
 tshal mgon med zas sbyin gyi
 kun dga' ra ba na bzhugs te/

Thus have I heard: at one time the Lord dwelt in Śrāvasti, in the Jetavana, the garden of Anāthapiṇḍada.

4. □ □ □ □ □ □ [a29] □ □ □ □ □
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
 [b1] □ □ □ □ □ □ □
 □ □ □
 de'i tshe tshe dang ldan pa
 mo'u 'gal gyi bu chen po
 mngon par shes pa drug thob
 nas / pha ma gnyis gdul
 zhing/ drin bsab par 'dod
 pa'i phyir / lam gyi mig
 gis 'jig rten rnam la rnam
 par bltas na /

At that time, Āyusman Mahā-Maudgalyāyana, having obtained the six super-cognitions, desiring to convert [his] two parents and to repay [their] kindness, inspected the worlds with the eye of the path.

5. □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
 □ □ □ □ □ □ [b2] □ □
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
 □ [b3] □ □ □ □
 □
 bdag gis ma dus las 'das te/
 yi dags ltogs po'i nang du
 skyes te / zas dang skom bza'
 zhing btung ba med pas /
 pags pa dang rus pa 'ba' zhig
 phan tshun 'brel bar mthong
 nas/ mo'u 'gal gyi bu yongs
 su gdung bas ngus te / lhung
 bzed zas
 [258b] kyis bkang ste ma'i
 drung du song ngo //

Thereupon, seeing that his mother was deceased and born among hungry ghosts, without food or drink, only skin and bone hanging together, Maudgalyāyana wept in total misery. Filling his begging bowl with food, he went before his mother.

6. □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ de'i ma lhung bzed kyi zas
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ thob pa / lag pa g.yon pas ni
 [b4] □ □ □ □ □ □ zas g.yogs / lag pa g.yas na
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ ba las / zas khar ma phyin par
 □ me lce 'bar bar gyur pas zas
 □ thob par ma gyur to /

His mother got the food in the bowl, covering the food with her left hand, while taking it up in her right. As she was about to eat, before the food reached her mouth, it changed into blazing tongues of flame, so that she did not obtain any food.

7. □ □ □ □ □ □ [b5] □ mo'u 'gal gyi bu yongs su
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ gdung bas ngus te / myur du
 □ □ □ □ □ □ slar log nas don 'di zhib tu
 □ bcom ldan 'das la gsol pa
 □ dang/

Maudgalyāyana wept in total misery, and quickly returned to present these facts to the Lord in detail.

8. [b6] □ □ □ □ □ □ bcom ldan 'das kyis bka' tsal
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ pa / khyod kyi ma'i sdig pa'i
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ rtsa ba shin tu zab cing /
 □ mdud par gyur / khyod gcig
 □ pu'i mthu'i stobs kyis ci byar
 □ yang med la /

The Lord said: 'Your mother's sinful roots are very profound and entangled [lit. 'knotted']. There is nothing at all you can do by your power alone.

9. □ [b7] □ □ □ □ □ Khyod sri zhu smre bas /
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ gnam sa 'gul kyang / gnam
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ gyi lha dang / sa'i lha dang /
 □ □ □ □ □ □ [b8] □ bdud dang mu stegs can lam
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ la gnas pa'i skyes bu dang /
 □ rgyal chen bzhi'i lha dag gis
 □ kyang ci byar med pas /

□

‘Even if you, with pious conduct and lamentations, should move heaven and earth, there is nothing at all that can be done by even the gods of heaven, or the gods of earth, or the Māras, tīrthakas, and persons who abide on the path, or the deities [in the realm] of the four great kings.

10. □ □ □ □ □ □ □ phyogs bcu'i dge 'dun gyi
 [b9] □ □ □ □ □ □ mthu stobs kyis gdod de grol
 □ □ □ bar 'gyur te /

‘Therefore, it is by the power of the saṃgha of the ten directions that she will come to be liberated.

11. [b10] □ □ □ □ □ □ ngas de 'dir yongs su skyob
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ pa'i chos bstan pa nyid kyis
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ bgegs thams cad spong
 □ □ □ □ □ [b11] □ □ zhing sdug bsngal gyi phung
 □ □ □ □ po bzlog par bya'o /

‘I shall teach here the doctrine that will entirely protect her, whereby all obstacles will be abandoned and the mass of suffering will be stopped.’

12. [b12] □ □ □ □ □ □ bcom ldan 'das kyis /
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ mo'u 'gal gyi bu la bka' stsal
 □ □ □ □ □ [b13] □ □ □ □ pa / phyogs bcu'i dge 'dun
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ ston zla ra ba'i nya la dgag
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ dbye byed pa'i tshe / rabs
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ bdun tshun chad kyī pha ma
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ dang / da ltar gyi pha ma
 □ □ □ □ [b14] □ □ □ □ bgegs kyī gnas dang / gnas
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ pa dag gi phyir / ro brgya
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ dang ldan pa'i zas dang /
 □ □ □ □ □ 13 □ □ □ 'bras bu lnga dang / snod

¹³ Taishō gives the character *zhu* □ in a more complex form composed of radical □ + phonetic □. I follow here the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text

‘On that very day, when the sublime saṃgha settles into balanced absorption in rock caves, and the many assemblies gathered together there [include] those who have attained the four goals, those who roam in the forest, those who have become empowered in the six super-cognitions and so act beneficially, and all the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and those great persons, the bodhisattvas of the ten planes, who skilfully manifest themselves as bhikṣus, then, with mind one-pointed, they partake of the food [offered] during the ceremony of the separation from the prohibitions.

14. □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ tshul khirms yongs su dag pa
 □ □[b20] □ □ □ □ phun sum tshogs par byed
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ par 'gyur te/ 'phags pa'i
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ dge 'dun gyi lam gyis ni de lta
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □[b21] bu yin pas / gang gis dgag
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ dbye byed pa'i dge 'dun 'di
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ lta bu zhig de dag la mchod
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ pa byed na da ltar gyi pha ma
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ dang / rabs bdun tshun chad
 □ □ □ □ □[b22] □ □ kyi pha ma dang / nyes par
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ ngan song gsum gyi sdug
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ bsngal las nges par 'byung
 □ zhing rnam par grol nas / gos
 □ zas dang ldan par 'gyur ro //

‘They come to practice pure and perfect discipline, and then, because it is so owing to the path of the sublime saṃgha, whoever worships such a saṃgha that thus performs the separation from the prohibitions, [may be assured that] their present parents and ancestors down to the seventh generation will emerge from the sufferings of the three sinful and evil destinies and having been freed will have clothing and food.

15. □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ da ltar gyi pha ma gang yin
 □ □ □[b23] □ □ □ □ □ □ pa de dag ni bsod nams kyis
 lo brgya'i bar du bde bar
 gnas par 'gyur ro //

‘On taking the first of the food, it should be placed beforehand in front of a stūpa of the Tathāgata, and, after the saṃgha have completed their prayers, they should partake of the food themselves.’

19. [b28] □ □ □ □ □ de'i tshe dge slong mo'u
 □ □ □ □ □ 'gal gyi bu dang / dge
 □ □ □ □ □ 'dun mang po dang / byang
 □ □ □ □ □ [b29] □ chub sems dpa'i dge 'dun
 □ □ □ □ □ chen po nams rab tu dga'
 □ □ □ □ □ zhing dge slong mo'u 'gal
 □ □ □ □ □ gyi bu yongs su gdung bas
 □ □ □ □ □ ngu ba'i sgra yang zhi bar
 □ gyur to /

At that time, the bhikṣu Maudgalyāyana and the manifold saṃgha and the great saṃgha of the bodhisattvas rejoiced, and the cries of lamentation of the bhikṣu Maudgalyāyana were stilled.

20. □ □ □ [c1] □ □ □ de'i tshe mo'u 'gal gyi bu'i
 □ □ □ □ □ ma yang bskal pa gcig gi bar
 □ □ □ □ □ du yi dags ltogs pa'i sdug
 □ □ □ □ □ bsngal myong ba las thar par
 □ □ □ □ □ gyur to / /

At that time, Maudgalyāyana's mother, too, was released from the experience of an æon of suffering as a hungry ghost.

21. [c2] □ □ □ □ □ bcom ldan 'das la / mo'u 'gal
 □ □ □ □ □ gyi bus yang 'di skad ces gsol
 □ □ □ □ □ to / / bskyed pa'i ma yin na /
 □ □ □ □ □ [c3] □ □ dkon mchog gsum gyi yon
 □ □ □ □ □ tan gyi mthu dang / dge 'dun
 □ □ □ □ □ gyi mthu byin gyi rlabs kyi
 □ □ □ □ □ stobs kyis der thar te / slad
 □ □ □ □ □ [c4] □ □ □ □ □ ma'i tshe dus kyi sangs rgyas
 □ □ □ □ □ kyi slob ma sri zhu spyod pas
 □ □ □ □ □ thams cad dang / sri zhu

□ □ □ □ □□□[c5]	dang bcas pa su'ang rung ba
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	de dag kyang / da ltar gyi pha
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	ma dang / rabs bdun gyi pha
□ □	ma yongs su skyob pa'i slad
	du yongs su skyob pa'i snod
	kyis mchod par bgyid rung
	lags sam /

Maudgalyāyana then petitioned the Lord as follows: 'As it is the mother who has given one birth who is freed there by the power of the Three Jewels' attributes and by the blessed force of the saṃgha, therefore, in the future, ought not all disciples of the Buddha who practice pious conduct, and all those others who are endowed with pious conduct, worship by means of the vessel of complete protection in order to entirely protect present parents and parents throughout seven generations?'

22. [c6] □ □ □□ □ □ □	bcom ldan 'das
□ □□ □ □ □ □ □ □	[260a] \$ / / kyis bka' stsal
□ □ □ □□	pa / ngas yang dag par bshad
	par bya ba las deng khyod
	kyis legs par zhu ba zhus pa
	shin tu legs so / /

The Lord declared: 'In respect to what I am about to well explain, you have now made an excellent request and that is very good.

23. □ □ □[c7] □ □ □ □	rigs kyi bu dge slong ngam /
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	dge slong ma'am / rgyal
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	po'i bu 'am / rgyal po'am /
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	blon po mams sam / dmangs
□ □ □□ □ □ □ □ □	kyang rung ste / gang sri zhu
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	spyod cing snying brtse ba
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	dang bcas pa de dag gis
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	kyang / da ltar gyi pha ma
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	dang / rabs bdun tshun chad
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	kyi pha ma'i ched du ston
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	zla ra ba nya la / de bzhin

□ [c10] □ □ □ □ □	gshegs pa rnam dgyes
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	shing/ dge 'dun dgag dbye
□ □ □ □ □ □ [c11]	byed pa'i tshe ro brgya dang
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	ldan pa'i zas rnam snod du
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	bkang ste / phyogs bcu'i
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	dge 'dun dgag dbye byed
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	pa'i mchod nas / da ltar gyi
□ □ [c12] □ □ □ □	pha ma lo brgya'i bar du na
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	ba med cing sdug bsngal
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	gyi mi bde ba rnam med pa
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	dang / rabs bdun tshun chad
[c13] □ □ □ □ □ □	kyi pha ma yang yi dags
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	ltogs pa'i sdug bsngal dang
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	bral te / lha dang mi'i nang
□ □ □ [c14] □ □	du skyes nas / bsod nam kyi
	bde ba thug pa med pa
	myong bar smon lam gdab
	par bya'o//

'O noble son! whether one be a *bhikṣu* or a *bhikṣuṇī*, a prince, a king, ministers, or even a commoner, whosoever is possessed of pious conduct together with loving kindness, [that person, who] on behalf of present parents and parents down to the seventh generation, on the full moon of the first autumn month, delighting the Tathāgatas at the time when the saṃgha parts from the prohibitions, fills a vessel with hundred-flavoured foods and so performs the worship of the saṃgha of the ten directions who are parting from the prohibitions, should pray that their present parents will be free from illness and discomfort for a century, and their parents down to the seventh generation will be free from the sufferings of the hungry ghosts, and that, having been born among gods and men, they will experience meritorious bliss without limit.

24. [c15] □ □ □ □ □ □	sangs rgyas kyi nyan thos
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	gang sri zhu bsgrub pa / da
□ □ □ □ [c16] □ □	ltar gyi pha ma dang / rabs
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □	bdun tshun chad kyi pha ma
	rtag tu rjes su dran pa de dag
	gis kyang / lo re bzhin du
	ston zla ra ba nya la rtag par

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ sri zhu dang / snying brtse
 [c17] □ □ □ □ □ □ bas da ltar gyi pha ma dang /
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ rabs bdun tshun chad kyī pha
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ ma'i ched du / yongs su
 □ □ □ □ □ □ [c18] □ skyob pa'i snod bshams te /
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ de bzhin gshegs pa dang
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ dge 'dun mchod nas / pha
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ ma'i snying brtse
 □ □ [c19] □ □ □ □ □ [260b] ba'i byams pas rnyed
 □ □ □ □ □ pa'i drin bsab par bya'o //
 □ □ □ □

'As for the service to be accomplished [for] the Buddha's
 śrāvakas, those [who do so] always recollecting present parents
 and parents down to the seventh generation, and annually, on
 the full moon day of the first autumn month, perform a
 perpetual service, with love on behalf of present parents and
 parents down to the seventh generation, must arrange a vase of
 protection. Having worshipped the Tathāgata and the saṃgha,
 they should repay the kindness obtained through parental
 loving kindness.

25. □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ de bzhin gshegs pa'i nyan
 □ □ □ [c20] □ □ □ thos thams cad kyis kyang/
 □ gus pas chos 'di yongs su
 gzung bar bya'o zhes gsungs
 pa dang /

'All of the Tathāgata's śrāvaka-s, too, must respectfully accept
 this Dharma.'

26. [c21] □ □ □ □ □ de'i tshe tshe dang ldan pa
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ mo'u 'gal gyi bu dang /
 □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ 'khor bzhi po rnamshin tu
 □ □ □ □ □ □ [c22] dga' bas / bcom ldan 'das
 □ □ □ kyis gsungs pa la mngon par
 bstod do //

So he spoke, and at that time Āyusman Maudgalyāyana and the four assemblies rejoiced greatly, so that they manifestly praised what the Lord had said.

27. [c23] □ □ □ □ □ □ 'phags pa yongs su skyob
pa'i snod ces bya ba'i mdo
rdzogs so // //

The *Sublime Sūtra of the Vase of Complete Protection* is completed.

28. zhu chen gyi lo tsa ba dge
slong 'gos chos grub kyis
rgya'i dpe las bsgyur cing
zhus te gtan la phab
pa'o // //

The translator-in-chief *bhikṣu* Chos-grub has translated this from the Chinese exemplar, and has corrected and redacted it.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

1. The Tibetan translation begins, surprisingly, with an 'Indian' version of the title, despite the clear indication in the colophon (no. 28) that the text is translated from the Chinese. The title as given, *Āryapariśaraṇibhañjanāma-sūtra*, is clearly a calque, in Tibetan pidgin Sanskrit (e.g., pidgin *bhañja* for Skt. *bhājana*), of the Tibetan version of the title, *'Phags pa yongs su skyob pa'i snod ces bya ba'i mdo*. There can be little doubt that a later copyist or editor was responsible for this addition and that only the Tibetan title was due to 'Gos Chos-grub's original.

The most important question raised by the title concerns Chos-grub's treatment of the problematic expression *yulanpen* □ □ □, rendered here as *yongs su skyob pa'i snod*. As is well-known, the title of this sūtra is based on a term, *yulan* or *yulanpen*, that does not make good sense in Chinese. Therefore, it has often been interpreted as a foreign—Sanskrit, Pali, or Iranian—loanword. The Sanskrit *avalambana*, 'pendant, hanging down', has been the most frequently suggested source, and is thought to refer here to rites for the

salvation of souls ‘hanging downward’ in hell.¹⁴ Indeed, it sometimes seems assumed that this explanation is so highly plausible, despite the absence of evidence supporting such a use of *avalambana* in known Indic contexts, that writers on East Asian Buddhism have on occasion written of ‘Avalambana’ as if it were an established fact that this is the true proper name of the ghost festival. The Tibetan translation of the *Yulanpen jing* is of interest to us in the first instance, therefore, because it provides some indication of the manner in which the title was understood by a prominent Tang-period translator in Dunhuang, who was familiar with both contemporary Chinese and Sanskrit Buddhist usage.

Chos-grub’s rendering of the title may be translated *The Sublime Sūtra entitled, The Vessel of Complete Protection*. It seems quite clear that the derivation from *avalambana* in the meaning of ‘hanging down’ does not at all accord with this interpretation. Given the literalness with which Chos-grub translated the sūtra overall, it seems implausible that he would have provided a paraphrase or approximate rendition of the title, if a Sanskrit term such as *avalambana* were clearly in the background. Though not therefore supporting the derivation of *yulan(pen)* from *avalambana*, Chos-grub’s interpretation of the title is nevertheless consistent with another of the proposed Indic etymologies, which holds that the source word might be the Pali and Buddhist Sanskrit term *ullumpana*, ‘saving, pulling out [of evil circumstances]’. (Scholars of Chinese Buddhism have often mistranscribed this as *ullampana*, *ullambana*, or even *ullambhana*, thereby avoiding the phonological problem posed by the replacement of the short *u* of the second syllable with the short *a* of *yulanpen*.) It is not at all clear, however, that Chos-grub was himself aware of this explanation; for the phrase *yongs su skyob pa* is used a total of four times in the text (in passages 11, 21, 24), twice as part of the phrase *yongs su skyob pa’i snod* = *yulanpen*, but twice (nos. 11 and 21) to render *jiu* 救 ‘to save, liberate, deliver (from distress)’. All in all, it seems more prudent to hold that ’Gos Chos-grub understood *yulanpen* as a set expression, referring to a vase or vessel used for rites of protection. Though this is semantically consistent with a hypothetical derivation from *ullumpana*, it does not confirm the fact of such a derivation.

2. The Chinese and Tibetan of the second passage are altogether independent of one another, as it is merely a question in both cases

¹⁴ See, e.g., EITEL 1981 [1888]: 185-186, sub ‘ullambana’.

of conventions used for introducing canonical scriptures. The Chinese attributes the purported translation of the work to the famous Dharmarakṣa of the Western Jin dynasty (265-317 C.E.), an attribution whose origins remain obscure. The Tibetan inserts the standard formula of homage to the buddhas and bodhisattvas that, following a convention said to have been adopted by the translation committees of the monarch Ral-pa-can (reigned 815-841), was to be used to introduce all Mahāyāna sūtras. It is of course impossible to know whether it was Chos-grub or a later editor who added it in this case.

3. The opening *nidāna* well exemplifies Chos-grub's general strategy of employing standard expressions used for the translation of Indic Buddhist works to represent the Chinese. Thus, for instance, *fo* □ 'Buddha' is rendered here as *bcom ldan 'das* 'Bhagavān' in accord with the usage generally adopted for the text as a whole (see also paragraphs 7, 8, 12, 17, 21, 22, 26), though there is some alternation with *de bzhin gshegs pa* as well (see §18 below). Note, too, that if one strictly follows the Tibetan punctuation, which is not always a good idea, the beginning may be read 'Thus have I heard at one time...' It is out of place here to enter into the old dispute as to whether *ekasmin samaye* is better construed with the preceding or following phrase.

4. Similarly, the phrase *de'i tshe* 'at that time', though not at all found in the Chinese, is added at the beginning of the narrative apparently just in order to conform to normal stylistic conventions. So, too, Damuqianlian □ □ □ □ Mahā-Maudgalyāyana, is granted the title *tshe dang ldan pa* 'Āyusman', as would be expected in a genuine Indic text.

As mentioned earlier, a peculiar element in this passage is the expression *lam gyi mig* 'eye of the path', a precise rendering of Ch. *daoyan* □ □. In Indic Buddhist usage we might expect *divyacakṣuḥ* in this context, Tib. *lha'i mig*. Chos-grub, however, chose not to interpret the text at this point and so favored instead an exact representation of the Chinese term. On the equivalence Ch. *dao* = Skt. *mārga* = Tib. *lam*, refer to STEIN 1983: 168.

5. Note that *egui* □ □, Skt. *preta*, is here translated *yi dags ltogs po*, the final *ltogs po/pa* being unnecessary except insofar as it specifies the sense of the Chinese. Thus usage was adopted by Chos-grub throughout: see also passages 20 and 23. □

6. For Ch. flaming coals', Tib. freely translates *me lce 'bar ba*, 'blazing tongues of flame'.

7. Ch. laid out everything as it had happened' (TEISER 1988: 50). Tib. *don 'di zhib tu ... gsol pa*, 'to present these facts ... in detail'.

9. We find here the first of five occurrences of the character *xiao* 孝 'filial piety' (cf. paragraphs 21, 23, 24), translated in all cases as *sri zhu*, for which I give 'pious conduct' in English, though 'respect' or 'honour' are equally satisfactory. Although the equivalence of Ch. *xiao* and Tib. *sri zhu* has been accepted for lexical purposes down to the present day (e.g., *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, 2973, which gives *xiaojing* 孝敬), it is clear that the Tibetan does not have the pronounced connotations of filiality that are regularly associated with the corresponding Chinese. *Sri zhu* pertains rather, to the proper behavior due to social superiors in general. Where Tibetan specifies *filial* piety in particular, some such locution as *pha ma la sri zhu*, 'pious conduct toward parents', is often employed.

The translation of Ch. *waidao* 外道 by Tib. *mu stegs can*, 'tirthaka', is typical of what STEIN (1983: 155, 187) holds to be the 'Indian' usage. In translations adhering to the Chinese conventions, we find *mur 'dug pa* (in later usage *mur stug/thug pa*), a distinction which gave rise, in Rnying ma pa literature, to two distinct types of 'heretics', *mu stegs* and *mur stug*. See, for example, DUDJOM RINPOCHE 1991: I.63ff.

11. This is the first occurrence of the phrase *yongs su skyob pa'i chos*, 'doctrine of complete protection' (Ch.) that no doubt supplies the basis for Chos-grub's interpretation of the text's title. See §1 above.

12. The Chinese and Tibetan translations of *Pravāraṇā*, as and *dgag dbye*, respectively, though strictly synonyms, are interestingly different in their emphasis. The former, as TEISER (1988: 32) suggests, can be taken to mean 'following one's bent', whereas the latter strictly denotes 'separation from prohibition'.

13. Ch. , Tib. *mngon par shes pa drug la dbang thob pas don byed pa dang / nyan thos dang/ rang sangs rgyas thams cad*. TEISER (1988: 51) reads the Chinese here as saying,

‘those who use the six penetrations to be free; those who convert others, hear preaching, and awaken to causality’, while the Tibetan has, ‘those who have become empowered in the six super-cognitions and so act beneficially, and all the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas’. However, ‘hear preaching’ and ‘awaken to causality’ are perhaps best taken in this context as literal renderings on Teiser’s part of the Chinese terms for *śrāvaka* and *pratyekabuddha*.

For *bo* བོ = Skt. *pātra*, ‘bowl’, Chos-grub specifies *dgag dbye’i zas*, ‘food [offered] for the Pravāraṇā’.

14. The Tibetan omits Ch. 六親 ‘six kinds of relatives’.

16. Ch. 隨心所生 ‘born freely through transformation’ (TEISER 1988: 52), Tib. *ji ltar ’dod bzhin du ... skye ba*, ‘born as they desire’. The Tibetan recovers the sense of ‘transformation birth’ (隨生) in the following *rdzus te skye ba*, ‘born miraculously’.

17. The first five characters of the Chinese text of this passage 隨心所欲 are not at all represented in the corresponding Tibetan, as indeed they are not in the ‘Three Editions’ of the Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties, and in the Old Song Edition (1104-1148 C.E.) ‘belonging to the Library of the Imperial Household’ (Taishō n. 25). TEISER (1988: 52) rightly ignores the punctuation of the Taishō here and, construing this phrase with the preceding sentence, translates ‘and receive unlimited joy’.

18. For *fo* 佛 Chos-grub here uses *de bzhin gshegs pa*, ‘Tathāgata’, instead of *bcom ldan ’das*. Interestingly, there does appear to be a precise semantic shift involved here, besides a mere preference for variation for stylistic reasons. The use of *bcom ldan ’das* appears to be restricted to occasions when the text is referring to the particular Buddha (i.e., Śākyamuni) who is Mulian’s interlocutor. *De bzhin gshegs pa*, on the other hand, as employed here (and in §§23, 24, 25) may be interpreted as referring to any Buddha. So, too, the two occasions (§§21, 24) on which *fo* is translated using the standard Tibetan rendering of *buddha*, i.e., *sangs rgyas*. These distinctions, of course, are not at all in evidence in the Chinese.

21. Here, and at §§23, 24, we find the only instances in which the expression 隨心所欲 is actually used within the body of the text. Chos-grub translates it as *yongs su skyob pa’i snod* at the first and last occurrences, but uses *snod* alone at §23. In the present paragraph, the

consistent. In any event, as our present text is so far known only from the late Stog copy, we cannot rely upon it for an exact record of the orthographical conventions of Chos-grub's ninth-century text.

28. The translator's colophon here follows the standard format and closely resembles Chos-grub's usage elsewhere, e.g., at the close of the Yijing version of the *Suvarṇaprabhāṣottamasūtra*: 'zhu chen gyi *mkhan po dang lo tstsha ba bcom ldan 'das kyi ring lugs ban de 'gos* chos grub kyis rgya'i dpe las bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'. (NOBEL 1958: II.334, with *italics* added to indicate the differences from our text.) The formal titles of *mkhan po* and, especially, *bcom ldan 'das kyi ring lugs*, reflect Chos-grub's status in the monastic hierarchy recognized by the Tibetan imperial government and his role as a member of official translation committees. Does the absence of these titles in the colophon of the *Yulanpen jing* suggest, perhaps, that its translation was undertaken as an extracurricular activity?

APPENDIX

CHOS-GRUB'S SUMMARY OF THE TRANSFORMATION TEXT, IOL TIB J 686

The text of one folio given below is transcribed from a microfilm copy of the manuscript held in the Stein collection of the British Library. The original is written in a generally legible, but rather unattractive, cursive script. The reading of just one syllable (underlined and followed by a question mark in the transcription below) is doubtful. An additional syllable, intercalated in line a7, is printed here in small, subscript letters. The present transcription supercedes that given in KAPSTEIN 2001, the publication of which included a number of printing errors and did not distinguish *gi-gu* ('i') and reverse *gi-gu* ('I'). As a translation may be found in both in the aforementioned article and in KAPSTEIN 2007, it is not repeated here.

It is likely that the Chos-grub who composed this short verse summary of the transformation text on Mulian's salvation of his mother is indeed none other than the translator of the *Yulanpen jing*, 'Gos Chos-grub. Although this suggests that he played a rather strong role in the transmission of the Chinese Mulian traditions to Tibet, it should be emphasized that this brief epitome was written on

behalf of a Tibetophone Chinese patron and that as yet we know very little regarding the place of the Tibetophone Chinese of Dunhuang in the transmission of Buddhism to Tibet itself. It would help if we had more precise knowledge than currently seems available concerning the circumstances of the translation and transmission history of the longer Tibetan versions of the transformation text, on which see TAKASAKI 1987 and KAPSTEIN 2007. However, the versions of that work which have become available to date offer no concrete indications regarding its provenance and the period of its composition. It seems most plausible that it is, like the present text, a mid- or late-Tang work from the region of Dunhuang.

[a1] \$ // ston zla ra ba nya la hur sun ci'I phyir byed pa'I lo rgyus
mdo tsam du bstan pa // // yul chen mnyam dka' zhes ni nram grags
pa/ // de'i rgyal po gzugs can snyIng po'i // blon po

[a2] chen po gces phan me'u gal lya // grong khyer shIng thags na ni
gnas pa ste // // de'i bu mying ko le ta zhes bya // nam zhig ston pa
chen po shag kya thub // rgyal po'i khab tu mngon bar sangs rgyas
tshe //

[a3] ston pa'I bka' yis 'phags pa rta thul gyis // me'u dgal bu nI btul
nas rab tu byung // des ni nan tan chen po spyad pas na // sdug
bsngal mthar byas zag pa zad pa thob // nyan thos

[a4] nang na rdzu 'phrul mchog tu gyurd // 'phags pa me'u dgal bu
nI chen po yis // pha ma'I drin nI yongs su glan pa'I phyir // pha ma
gnyis la legs nyes rab bshad de // bslabs te

[a5] gnas la bkod byas chos bstan kyang // me'u dgal yum gyi
mying nI sngo nag mdog // las la myi 'dzem sdig la shin du mos //
gzhan gyi 'dod cing sar sna phrag

[a6] dog che // bu la drang po myi smra g.yo sgyu byed // dkon
mchog gsum la ma dad skur pa 'debs // dge bshes mkhan po drin
gnas la // rim gro med cing yid dang 'gal bar byed //

[a7] de nas 'chI ba'i dus byas tshe 'phos nas // myi dge las ky^{rlung}
gis rab bda's te // mnar myed gnas su sdug bsngal myong bar gyurd /
/ de tshe me'u dgal bu nI chen po yis/ // bdag ma mtho ris bde gnas

[a8] gang dag du // skyes par gyurd ces rnam par rab brtags na //
mtho ris bde gnas de dang de dag du // bdag gi ma ni mthong bar ma
gyurd nas // ston pa myi mchog la nI yongs zhus pa // bdag gi ma nI

[a9] las zad tshe 'phos te // lha myi bde gnas na nI myi gda' na //
'gro ba gang dag du nI skyes par gyurd // thub pa chen po kun
mkhyen lung bstan gsol // de nas ston pa myi mchog gis //

- [b1] me'u dgal chen po la nI bka' stsald pa // khyod ma myi dge las
rnams spyad pas na // mnar myed gnas su sdug bsngal myong bar
gyurd // nga'I mthu yIs khyod ni der song la // ma'i sdug bsngal ra
mda' rab tu byos // de nas me'u dgal bu nI ston pa'I
- [b2] mthus // rdzu 'phrul gyI nI mnar myed gnas phyin te // bu dang
ma nI de tshe phrad par gyurd // gcig la gcig gI rab 'jus cho nges
btab // me'u dgal ma'i sdug bsngal mthong nas nI // ma la zas skom
sna tshogs byin gyurd kyang //
- [b3] las kyi dbang gIs mye dang rnag du gyurd // de nas me'u dgal
ma'i sdug bsngal rnams // ston pa la ni zhib du gsol pa dang // de
tshe ston pas me'u dgal chen po la // khyod kyis ma'i sdug bsngal
zad 'dod na //
- [b4] nyan thos dge 'dun tshul nI rab tshang ste // ston zla ra ba nya
la 'chung [?] ba'i tshe // dkon mchog gsum la mchod la bsod nams
byos // des nI ma'i sdug bsngal rab zhI ste // lha myi'i gnas su skye
bar 'gyur zhes
- [b5] gsungs // de lta bas na blo ldan mkhas pa dag / ngan song sdug
bsngal spong zhing bde 'dod na // myi dge bcu'i las dang mtshams
myed las // shin tu bsgrims te gtan nas rab spongs la//
- [b6] mkhan po slob dpon pha ma la // bsnyen bkur rim gro zhe sa
tshul bzhin byos // rdzogs so //
- [b7] \$ / / dge slong chos grub kyis bgyis //

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THE CONJUNCTION OF CHINESE CHAN AND TIBETAN
RDZOGS CHEN THOUGHT: REFLECTIONS ON THE TIBETAN
DUNHUANG MANUSCRIPTS IOL TIB J 689-1 AND PT 699¹

Carmen Meinert

INTRODUCTION

During and for some time after the Tibetan domination of the Inner Asian oasis of Dunhuang, which began in the late eighth century and lasted until the middle of the ninth, Tibetan Buddhism was subject to various Chinese Buddhist influences, particularly to that of the Chan tradition (*chanzong* 禪宗). The century following the disintegration of the Tibetan Empire (roughly 850 to 950) is usually described as the most obscure period of Tibetan history. Manuscripts recovered in the grottoes of Dunhuang at the beginning of the twentieth century, however, show a variety of religious practices that were in vogue during that time of political anarchy in Tibet. Since there was no central authority to control various religious speculations, different traditions sometimes syncretistically merged owing to doctrinal similarities. This may be seen to some extent in the teachings of Chan and of the Great Perfection (Rdzogs chen).²

¹ This article is based on a preliminary version first presented at the 9th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (Leiden 2000) and published as MEINERT 2002. It was originally prepared for publication in 2001, but during the intervening delay it was not possible to revise it as fully as I intended, owing to health problems since that time. I am grateful to Thub bstan Chos dar and to Dge bshes Padma tshe ring for their discussions of the manuscripts.

² According to later Chinese historiography Chan Buddhism was brought to China in the sixth century by Bodhidharma and spread to Dunhuang and Tibet in the late eighth century. These developments are described further below. Rdzogs chen emerged during the early spread of Buddhism in Tibet in the eighth and ninth centuries and is transmitted down to the present as the pinnacle of the teachings within the nine vehicles (*theg pa dgu*) of the Rnying ma school, the ‘ancient school’ of Buddhism in Tibet. For an overview of Rdzogs chen as part of the Rnying ma system, see DUDJOM RINPOCHE 1991: 294-345; TULKU THONDUP 1997: 15-49. S. Karmay has already pointed out that similarities between Chan and Rdzogs chen led to misunderstandings about both traditions in the early period (KARMAY 1988: ix).

Within the corpus of Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts we find among others two short documents demonstrating the early spread of Chinese Chan Buddhism and its Tibetan assimilation in the Sino-Tibetan border area during the early ninth through the early tenth centuries: the manuscripts IOL Tib J 689-1 (two folios) preserved in the collection of the British Library in London, and its commentary PT 699 (five folios) from the collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. In 1979 Okimoto Katsumi first called attention to these two manuscripts in a short article that contained a transliteration of IOL Tib J 689-1 and identified PT 121-3 as another copy of the same text and PT 699 as a commentary on the root-text IOL Tib J 689-1.³ Even though K. Okimoto pointed out that these are important manuscripts in regard to the connection between Chan and the Tibetan teachings of Rdzogs chen, his research did not go into any further detail. In 2004, S. van Schaik and J. Dalton published an article in which they presented PT 699 as a Mahāyoga commentary on a Chan text.⁴

The aim of the present chapter is to contextualize these two Dunhuang manuscripts in their historical and philosophical framework in order to shed new light on the relationship between Chan and Rdzogs chen thought in the ninth and tenth centuries in the Sino-Tibetan border region. I argue, first, that the root text IOL Tib J 689-1 is to be read as an instruction on the nature of mind as it is transmitted in the Chan tradition. Here, the teaching is described as ‘gazing at mind’ (Tib. *sems la bltas*, Ch. *kanxin* 看心),⁵ and thus

For a comprehensive comparison of Chan and Rdzogs chen thought in the eighth and ninth centuries, refer to MEINERT forthcoming.

³ OKIMOTO 1992: 423–427.

⁴ Though VAN SCHAİK and DALTON 2004 advance a very different interpretation of these manuscripts, this demonstrates above all the fluidity of the categories of Mahāyoga and Rdzogs chen prior to their codification as distinct paths to enlightenment.

⁵ The Tibetan past tense *sems la bltas* is intentionally translated in the present continuous form ‘gazing at mind’ as Tibetan Chan manuscripts from Dunhuang sometimes use *sems la bltas* instead of the future tense *sems la blta* (cf. PT 21: f. 2r, PT 823: f. 1.4). The Chinese original *kanxin*, for instance in P. chin. 4646: f. 135a, is clearly used in the present continuous tense (cf. DEMIÉVILLE 1987 [1952]: 43). See also n. 28 below. However, the phrase *rang gi sems la bltas na/ (Lung chung: f. 115a.3)* could also be translated as ‘if one has gazed at one’s own mind’ without changing the meaning in general. But because we are trying to deal with both the Tibetan translation and the Chinese original, one English translation for both terms is chosen here as a matter of convenience. I am aware of the difficulties surrounding this procedure.

pertains to the tradition of Hwa shang Mahāyāna,⁶ the Chinese advocate at the famous Bsam yas debate in the late eighth century.⁷ Second, I maintain that the Tibetan commentary PT 699 to the original Chan text IOL Tib J 689-1 may be seen as a reflection of the local religious situation in the area of Dunhuang. In particular, PT 699 discloses a Tibetan understanding of Chinese Chan Buddhism and provides an example of how Chan concepts were interwoven with elements from other traditions such as Rdzogs chen. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a look at how later Tibetan scholars criticized this syncretic current of Inner Asian Buddhism, which in their view appeared to be attempting to pass itself off as Rdzogs chen teaching. The great tenth-century work *Bsam gtan mig sgron* (*The Torch of the Eye of Meditation*, hereafter *Torch of Meditation*) by Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes,⁸ a treatise on *dhyāna* and the four approaches to realization that were popular in ninth to tenth century Tibet,⁹ appears in its critique to be pointing exactly to the view expressed in the commentary PT 699.

THE TIBETAN CHAN MANUSCRIPT IOL TIB J 689-1 (The *Small Treatise*)

Text Historical Considerations

The manuscript IOL Tib J 689-1 covers two folios (f. 115a-116b) of four lines each, neatly written in the *dbu can* script that was popular

⁶ The name Hwa shang Mahāyāna appears in Chinese manuscripts as Heshang Moheyan.

⁷ The Bsam yas debate was perhaps not in fact a physical debate with actors present on stage. Nonetheless, it had a lasting influence on the development of Buddhism in Tibet. For further references, see MEINERT 2002, 2006.

⁸ In dating the *Bsam gtan mig sgron* to the tenth century, I follow the research of KARMAY 1988: 102, who has discussed at length the Tibetan sources giving different dates for the life of Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes (loc. cit.: 99-103).

⁹ GNUBS CHEN 1974. Hereafter abbreviated in the footnotes as *SM*. In the main text, for ease of comprehension I have adopted short English titles for works frequently mentioned. For instance, the *Torch of the Eye of Meditation Explaining [the Meaning] of Meditation, Composed by Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes Rin po che* is contracted to *Torch of Meditation*.

The *SM* is an exposition of the four following methods of realization: the gradual path (*rim gyis pa*) as it was advocated by Kamalaśīla at the Debate of Bsam yas (chapter four: 65-118); the teachings of simultaneous entrance (*cig car ba*) as promoted by Kamalaśīla's opponent, the Chinese Chan Master Hwa shang Mahāyāna (chapter five: 118-86); Mahāyoga (chapter six: 186-290); and Rdzogs chen (chapter seven: 290-494).

in Dunhuang in the ninth and tenth centuries. It is a palm-leaf-style manuscript which is, in respect to the paper, format and writing style, similar to other Chan manuscripts, for instance to two copies of a cycle of teachings by Hwa shang Mahāyāna, IOL Tib J 468 and IOL Tib J 709. These formal elements had been current since the Tibetan dominion over Dunhuang at the end of the eighth century.¹⁰

The short text given in IOL Tib J 689-1 is quoted three times in Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes's *Torch of Meditation*. Here, in the chapter on the Chan school, designated as Cig car ba, our text is cited under the title *Lung chung* (*Small Treatise*),¹¹ for which reason, following the Tibetan, I will hereafter refer to it by that name. The same chapter of the *Torch of Meditation* quotes another work under the title *Rgya lung chen po* (*Great Chinese Treatise*, hereafter referred to as the *Great Treatise*).¹² This *Great Treatise* refers to a corpus of texts that report the teachings of Bodhidharma, the 28th Indian patriarch of the *dhyāna* tradition, who came to be known as the first patriarch and forefather of Chinese Chan Buddhism. The title *Great Treatise* does *not* refer to a single text but rather to the contents of a series of texts.¹³ This is probably the reason why in Tibetan this corpus is given the general heading *Great Treatise*.

¹⁰ In the second half of the eighth century when the Tibetans conquered the Gansu corridor (Longyou dao □ □ □), moving westwards from the east, all means of communication between the central part of the Tang territory and Central Asia was cut off. As a result of that, Chinese influence, for instance, on the culture in Dunhuang diminished and was replaced by a strong Tibetan influence. Everyday items such as the thin Chinese paper were gradually replaced by items from the Tibetan cultural sphere such as the thicker Tibetan style paper.

¹¹ SM: 144.4, 160.1, 172.2-3.

¹² In the SM the *Rgya lung chen po* is cited four times: 130.2-3 (*Rgya lung chen po*), 173.5-176.5 (*Ma ha yan gyi bsam gtan Rgya lung chen po*), 177.5-178.2 (*Rgya lung chen po*), 179.1-3 (*Rgya lung*).

¹³ KARMAY 1988: 95 has earlier mistakenly assumed that the *Rgya lung chen po* is the title of a single text. However, what came to be known as the *Rgya lung chen po* in Tibetan may perhaps be identified with a collection of texts recovered from the Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang early in the twentieth century to which BROUGHTON 1999 has given the title *Bodhidharma Anthology*. This *Bodhidharma Anthology* is but one part of a larger corpus of ten texts presenting the teachings of Bodhidharma, itself in turn containing seven texts, which Broughton has named: 1. Biography, 2. Two Entrances, 3. First Letter, 4. Second Letter, 5. Record I, 6. Record II, 7. Record III (BROUGHTON 1999: 4-6). This corpus was first partly published by SUZUKI (1935) under the title *Long Scroll of the Treatise on the Two Entrances and Four Practices*, and interpreted by him in SUZUKI 1936. It is preserved in different parts in the following Dunhuang manuscripts: Beijing *su* 99, S. chin. 2715, S. chin. 1880, S. chin. 3375, S. chin. 7159, P. chin. 2923, P. chin. 3018, P. chin. 4634, P. chin. 4795. Apart from S. chin. 7159, all documents are reprinted in LIN 1998, vol. □ *shang*,

Let us assume that the title *Small Treatise* was similarly chosen as a general heading. If so, it may not be a direct translation of a single original Chinese text, but rather a general title, indicating that this is a summary or abstract of a more comprehensive teaching or text. The question we should ask, then, is: whose teachings might be at issue in this *Small Treatise*?

In fact, a careful comparison of frequently recurring expressions and phrases within the rather limited corpus of Tibetan Chan manuscripts reveals a great similarity between the *Small Treatise* and the teachings of Hwa shang Mahāyāna. A number of phrases referring to the method of 'gazing at mind' (*sems la bltas*, *kanxin*), at times even the exact words, occur in at least three other Dunhuang manuscripts attributed to Hwa shang Mahāyāna: (1) *Bsam gtan cig car 'jug pa'i sgo* (*The Gate of Simultaneous Entrance into Meditation*, IOL Tib J 468),¹⁴ (2) PT 21¹⁵ and (3) PT 823.¹⁶ Yoshiro Imaeda has shown that PT 823 is a Tibetan translation of parts of the famous Chinese account of the Bsam yas Debate, the *Dunwu dacheng zhengli jue* 頓悟大乘政理決 (*Ratification of the True Principle of the Mahāyāna Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment*, hereafter called *Ratification of the True Principle*).¹⁷ On the basis of these manuscripts I will briefly outline the contents of the *Small Treatise* which provides a synopsis of Hwa shang Mahāyāna's teachings,¹⁸ before turning to analyze and trace back the doctrinal

367-437. The title *Rgya lung chen po* either refers to the body of texts mentioned herein or to an as yet unidentified corpus of scriptures.

¹⁴ According to L. Gómez, IOL Tib J 468 (2 folios) is only the beginning of a larger text entitled *Bsam gtan cig car 'jug pa'i sgo* of which the manuscripts IOL Tib J 709, PT 116, PT 117, PT 812 and PT 813 form different portions. For a reconstruction of this as a single text, see GÓMEZ 1983. The following passages from IOL Tib J 468 correspond to similar passages in the *Lung chung*: IOL Tib J 468: f. 28b.3-4 to IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115.3-4; IOL Tib J 468: f. 29a.5 to IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115.4; and IOL Tib J 468: f. 29b.5 to IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116.1.

¹⁵ PT 21: f. 19-21v. is quoted in the *SM*: 184.2-3 under the title *San de'i mdo*, the meaning of which is unknown. The passage PT 21: f. 2, 4v corresponds to the *Lung chung* at IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115.2-3.

¹⁶ PT 823: f. 1.4, 2.1-2 matches the *Lung chung* at IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115.2-4.

¹⁷ For a translation and historical commentary of the Chinese dossier on the Great Debate of Bsam yas (P. chin. 4646, *Dunwu dacheng zhenglijue* [ZLJ]), see the exquisite work by DEMIÉVILLE (1987 [1952]). A critical edition of P. chin. 4646 is given in RAO 1970. See, too, IMAEDA 1975: 128, who identifies PT 823 as corresponding to ZLJ: f. 133b-142a.

¹⁸ Comprehensive research on the Tibetan Chan manuscripts pertaining to Hwa shang Mahāyāna has been undertaken by GÓMEZ 1983. Cf. n. 14 above.

source of its Dharma¹⁹ of ‘gazing at mind’ to Bodhidharma’s teaching on ‘quieting the mind’ (*anxin* 安心).

The Contents of the Small Treatise

In the *Ratification of the True Principle*, the most comprehensive text on the teachings of Hwa shang Mahāyāna, it is stated as a fundamental assumption that sentient beings are bound to *saṃsāra* due to the ‘habitual tendencies’ (*xiqi* 習氣) of ‘concepts of discrimination’ (*wangxiang* 妄想).²⁰ These habitual tendencies hinder their ‘original omniscience’ (*benlai yiqie zhi* 本來一切智).²¹ Enlightenment, however, is achieved by nonattachment (*bu quzhuo* 不取著) with respect to those deluded thoughts, regardless of whether they arise or not.²² When the practitioner becomes ‘aware of their arising’ (*qi jue* 起覺), without grasping or abiding in them, each thought is liberation and *prajñā*.²³

Judging from its contents, it is at this point that the *Small Treatise* can be linked to the teachings of Hwa shang Mahāyāna as exposed in the *Ratification of the True Principle*. The *Small Treatise* explains how ‘the principle of bringing about complete *nirvāṇa* without remainder of the aggregates’ (*phung po lhag ma ma lus par yongs su mya ngan las bzla ba’i don*)²⁴ is to be realized. The meditation instruction, which also appears verbatim in the *Ratification of the True Principle*,²⁵ is as follows:

Having reversed mind’s six faculties so that they do not engage in deluded objects,²⁶ one gazes at one’s own mind (*rang gyi sems la bltas, kanxin*)²⁷ and [realizes] that it has no reality whatsoever.

¹⁹ When the expression Dharma is capitalized, it is used to mean *buddha-dharma*, the ‘Buddhist teachings’; *dharma* with a small ‘d’ refers to ‘phenomena’.

²⁰ ZLJ: f. 129b: □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□; also f. 134b.

²¹ ZLJ: f. 134b: □□□□□□□□□□□□□□

²² ZLJ: f. 135a: □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

²³ ZLJ: f. 135a: □□□□[...] □□□□[...] □□□□□□□□□□□□ The equivalent Tibetan passage is PT 823: f. 2.2-3: *myi bden ba’i ’du shes g.yos te tshor na/ [...] ma chags na/ sems thang re yang grol thar re re ste/*

²⁴ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.1-2. *Bzla ba* is here the causative of ‘*das pa*’ (‘passing beyond’), as in *mya ngan las ’das pa* (‘*nirvāṇa*’), and should not be confused with the homonym meaning ‘to recite’.

²⁵ ZLJ: f. 135a. The Chinese equivalent will be discussed below.

²⁶ On the translation ‘deluded objects’ for ‘*khrul pa yul*’, refer to n. 31 below.

²⁷ This passage is quoted in *SM*: 144.4-5.

Therefore, nothing is to be thought of. Because afflictions are not being minded, so nothing is to be conceptualized. In this way the objects of mind are completely purified and there is nothing to abide in.²⁸

Through this practice of ‘gazing at mind’ the practitioner sees *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* as no different: the ‘nature of primordial gnosis’ (*ye shes kyi rang bzhin*) is realized as being empty and even the concept of emptiness is seen to be insubstantial. Having gradually cleansed all the habitual tendencies of karma, all thoughts are ‘self-liberated’ (*rang grol*). By not ‘conceptualizing’ (*myi rtog*) the arising of thoughts, and ‘not abiding’ (*myi gnas*) in their non-arising, it is a meditation on the ‘inconceivable primordial gnosis’ (*bsams gis myi khyab ba’i ye shes*), which is ‘free from arbitrary thinking’ (*bsam du myed pa*).²⁹ Thus, the essence of this teaching, which was handed down to Kāśyapa and later to Bodhiharma, is as follows:

Nonconceptuality is vividly clear, and [even this] lucidness is not conceptualized. This is the primordial gnosis of intrinsic awareness, which cannot be designated as ‘this’ [existing entity].³⁰

Terminological Peculiarities

Two phrases occurring in the *Small Treatise* are of considerable interest for their relevance in assessing the commentary PT 699 below: (1) the expression ‘reversing mind’s six faculties so as not to engage in deluded objects’ and (2) the phrase ‘to bring about complete *nirvāṇa* without remainder of the aggregates’.

(1) The meditation method called ‘gazing at mind’ is expressed as ‘reversing mind’s six faculties so as not to engage in deluded ob-

²⁸ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.3-4: *sems kyi sgo drug 'khrul pa yul la myi 'jug par bzlog nas/ // /rang gi sems la bltas na/ sems kyi dngos po ci yang ma yin bas/ /cir yang myi bsam/ /nyon mongs pa'i rnam pa yid la myi byed pas/ ci la yang myi rtog/ /de ltar sems kyi spyod yul yongs su dag pas/ /ci la yang myi gnas/.*

²⁹ *Bsam du myed pa* occurs in PT 823: f. 7.2 as a translation of the Chinese phrase *sheng wuyi xin* 生無疑心 in P. chin. 4646: f. 139a. Here *sheng wuyi xin* means ‘having no doubtful thoughts’. However, L. Gómez also identified *bsam du myed pa* as the Chinese term *wusi* 無思 ‘no-thought’ (GÓMEZ 1983: 142).

³⁰ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.3-4: *rnam par myi rtog sa le ba/ /sa le ba la rtogs pa myed/ /di ni rang rig ye shes ste/ /'di zhes gdags su myed pa'o/.* This passage is quoted in *SM*: 160.1-2.

³⁶ Demiéville mentions the Japanese author Genei, who, in a work dated 829, cites a commentary of Weiwei to the *Śūraṅgamasūtra* (DEMIÉVILLE 1987 [1952]: 44-45, 52).

zhenjing miaoxin zhong suo xianwu 妙明真精妙心中所現物). If the practitioner is able to ‘return’ (*fan* 反) all differentiation to its source, then he will experience non-dual suchness, the miraculous mind.³⁷ The text further mentions the term *fanyuan* in connection with the liberation of the six faculties and asserts that if one faculty is turned to its source all six are liberated.³⁸ Thus, if the original Chinese phrase ‘turning the luminosity [of the mind] towards the mind’s source’ (*fanzhao xinyuan*) is a gloss for the method called ‘gazing at mind’ (*kanxin*, *sems la bltas*),³⁹ this method is meant to be an immediate *return* to mind’s source itself and might even be seen as a face-to-face recognition of the nature of mind. The Chinese Dunhuang manuscript *Zhujing yaochao* 卍卍卍卍 (*A Copy of the Essence of Various Canonical Scriptures*) offers the following explanation that would seem to support this interpretation:

In the *Vajrasamādhisūtra* it is said: ‘Empty mind, being non-agitated, encompasses the six *pāramitā*’.⁴⁰ This [statement points out] the gate of the Sudden Teachings of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Endless sūtras and exegetical scriptures of the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna teachings have been composed in order to [explain] to all sentient beings the primordially self-existing Buddha-nature. However, they merely point

³⁷ Loc. cit.: 48. *Lengyan jing*, T vol. 19, 110c.22-23. I could not identify a similar passage in Kumārajīva’s translation of the original.

³⁸ For the Chinese, see n. 33 above. This passage seems to be wide-spread in the Chan materials from Dunhuang. It also occurs in *Zhujing yaochao* 卍卍卍卍 (*A Copy of the Essence of Various Canonical Scriptures*), a Dunhuang manuscript from the collection of the Daikoku University 卍卍卍卍, T vol. 85, no. 2819, 1196c.22-24. For a further discussion of the six faculties, see, e.g., *Lengyan jing*, T vol. 19, 123a.15-29.

³⁹ This is clearly the way *fanzhao xinyuan kanxin* 卍卍卍卍卍 has to be read in ZLJ: f. 135a. However, DEMIÉVILLE 1987 [1952]: 78 interprets the term *zhao* as ‘illuminer, refléter, regarder, connaître’ and gives the following French translation: ‘Retourner la vision vers la source de l’esprit, c’est “regarder l’esprit” ...’ On the contrary, in what is probably the most comprehensive research on the teachings of Heshang Moheyan in recent years, GÓMEZ 1983: 93, though paying close attention to Demiéville’s œuvre, interprets this very passage differently and proposes: ‘To turn the light [of the mind] towards the mind’s source, that is contemplating the mind’. Although I also follow Demiéville’s argumentation in my discussion, I do not agree with his interpretation of *zhao* in this context and prefer that of Gómez, whose reading of the teachings of Heshang Moheyan takes account of a number of texts attributed to him and on this basis argues for the translation ‘to turn the light’ for *fanzhao*.

⁴⁰ The passage quoted is found in the *Jingang sanmei jing xu pin di yi* 卍卍卍卍 (*Vajrasamādhisūtra* with preface, chapter one), T vol. 9, no. 273, 367a.14.

In the preface Tankuang addresses his 'Majesty' (*sheng* 聖) as follows:

In the *Twenty-two Questions on Mahāyāna* the expression in question, ‘*nirvāṇa* without remainder’, appears in a fourfold description of *nirvāṇa*, as it is taught by Tankuang in accordance with the doctrines of the Chinese ‘Mind-Only school’ (*weishi pai* 唯識派). The third one in this list is indeed named ‘*nirvāṇa* without remainder’ (*wuyu yi nieban*)⁴⁵ and as such is mentioned by Tan-

[illegible]

⁴⁵ XINGYUN DASHI 1989, vol. 2, 1812a. The four kinds of *nirvāṇa* are: (1) ‘*nirvāṇa* of the purity of self-nature’ (*benlai zixing qingjing nieban* 本來自性清淨涅槃 □□□□□□

Moreover, it is said that ‘*nirvāṇa* of the purity of self-nature’ is inherent in all sentient beings, whereas ‘*nirvāṇa* with and without remainder’ are realized through practice and only the Buddha himself is said to be endowed with ‘*nirvāṇa* without an abode’.⁵⁰ Thus, according to Tankuang, ‘*nirvāṇa* without remainder’ appears to be the highest realization of a *bodhisattva*, but not yet that of a Buddha.

If we return again to the Tibetan Chan manuscript *Small Treatise* two points can be made about the results of Hwa shang Mahāyāna’s practice of ‘gazing at mind’. First, it is a teaching that leads to the realization of a *bodhisattva*. As it is described in the *Ratification of the True Principle* it is ‘a practice that is no practice’.⁵¹ Through being completely freed from all conceptualizing, the luminosity of mind free from discrimination is realized.⁵² Second, however, the *Small Treatise* also states that *samsāra* is *nirvāṇa* and that one is ‘not abiding anywhere’ (*ci la yang myi gnas*). Is this statement not just the same as that which Tankuang had described as ‘*nirvāṇa* without an abode’, namely, the supreme *nirvāṇa* of a Buddha? It may be, but it is apparent that the teachings presented in the *Small Treatise* are not very clear-cut as to the kind of attainment to which they ultimately lead. Finally, to attain a ‘nonconceptual’ state (*rnam par mi rtog pa*) is the object of any Mahāyāna Buddhist path.

The Philosophical Treatment of ‘Gazing at Mind’ (kanxin)

Having outlined the contents and some terminological problems of the *Small Treatise*, let us consider the central meditation instruction of ‘gazing at mind’ in more detail. J. Broughton has already pointed out a connection between Dunhuang Chan Buddhism and the Baotang School of Sichuan.⁵³ As the *Small Treatise* itself asserts, the meditation practice described there was transmitted from Kāśyapa to Bodhidharma. Two remarks found in the work *Torch of Meditation* also link the teachings of Hwa shang Mahāyāna to the teaching of Bodhidharma. First, it is said that the precepts transmitted to Kāśyapa were passed down in a sevenfold lineage through

⁵⁰ *Dacheng ershier wenben*, T vol. 85, 1185b.16-18: □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ PACHOW 1979b: 44, 88.

⁵¹ ZLJ: f. 131 bis.b: [...]□□□□□□□□□□. Cf. DEMIÉVILLE 1987 [1952]: 67-68.

⁵² IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.3: *sa le ba la rtogs pa myed*.

⁵³ BROUGHTON 1983: 15-31.

Bodhidharma and finally to Hwa shang Mahāyāna.⁵⁴ Second, it is stated that the meditation of Hwa shang Mahāyāna is based on the previously mentioned *Great Treatise* (*Rgya lung chen po*), which is attributed to Bodhidharma.⁵⁵

A closer look at the *Great Treatise* will also further our understanding of the *Small Treatise*. Moreover, it will shed new light on the meditation method ‘gazing at mind’, which is to be seen as a further development of Bodhidharma’s teaching of ‘quieting the

⁵⁴ SM: 15.1-3: *de la rgyu'i theg pa bcom ldan 'das sku mya ngan las 'da' kar 'od sgrungs la gdams ngag phog de dar mō dhā ra la sogs pa nas/ rgya nag por bdun rgyud tha ma ha shang ma hā yan la thug*. SM: 24.5-6: */des brgyud pa'i tha ma ha shang ma hā yan gyi gzhung cig car 'jug pa [...]*. The same information is given in the *Bka' thang sde lnga* (*Five Chronicles*), f. 19a, revealed by O rgyan gling pa (1323-?): *dpe don mang po 'od srungs nyid la gsungs/ de nas da mo ttā ra la sogs nas/ rgya nag sprul bdun brgyud pa brgyud pa'i tha/ Hwa shang ma hā yā na nyid la thug/* (cf. TUCCI 1958: 68). The great historian Kaḥ thog Tshe dbang nor bu (1698-1755) also discusses this sevenfold lineage and refers to the same quotation from the *bKa' thang sde lnga*. See KAḤ THOG 1976-7 [1744]: 7b.2-6: */rgya nag bdun brgyud zhes bsgrang ba'i rgya nag bdun brgyud ni tsung men du grags pa 'di yi sde tshan kho nar nges la/ de yan slob dpon dha rmo tta ra ma bsgrang ba Hwa shang hu'i kho nas ma hā ya na'i bar [snying po] don brgyud gyi bla rabs bdun byung ba la sprul pa bdun brgyud du rnam par bzhag gam sems shing/ lo paṇ bka'i thang yig las [...]* */dpe don mang po 'od srung nyid la gsung/ de nas dha rmo tta ra la sogs nas/ rgya nag sprul bdun brgyud par brgyud pa'i tha/ Hwa shang ma ha ya na nyid la thug/*.

This sevenfold lineage of Chan Buddhism ending with Hwa shang Mahāyāna has to be seen as a regional phenomenon restricted to the Dunhuang area. The later standard Chinese historiography only acknowledged a six-fold lineage from Bodhidharma to Huineng. Thus, for instance, the *Lengjia shizi ji* 楞伽師子記 (Record of the Masters and Disciples of the Laṅkāvatāra school [LJSZJ]), composed in 716 or 720 by Jingjue 經覺, T vol. 85, no. 2837, 1284c-1290c; yet it lists Shenxiu as the sixth patriarch. A similar regionalism can be observed in the Baotang School in Sichuan. Here Wuzhu (無住, 714-774) claimed that he was the seventh patriarch of Chan Buddhism as well (cf. DEMÉVILLE 1979: 3-4).

⁵⁵ SM: 173.5: *ma hā yan gyi bsam gtan rgya lung chen po las [...]*. This passage must be understood as being ‘from the *Great Treatise*, a dhyāna treatise [transmitted by] Hwa shang Mahāyāna’s meditation [is based]’. It is not very likely that the author of the SM, Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, erroneously attributed the *Rgya lung chen po* to Hwa shang Mahāyāna (according to the reading: ‘the meditation of Hwa shang Mahāyāna in the *Rgya lung chen po*’), because Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes quotes extensively from the text we find preserved in Dunhuang manuscript PT 116, where the *Rgya lung chen po* is clearly attributed to Bodhidharma. PT 116, VIb: f. 164.2-3: *bdun rgyud kyī dang po bo de dar ma ta las bshad pa las [...]*. The quotation following this passage (PT 116, VIb: f. 164.1-165.3) is identical to the citation in the SM: 130.2-4 under the title *Rgya lung chen po*. (The passage is quoted in this article further below.) Therefore, Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes must have been aware that Hwa shang Mahāyāna was not the author of the *Rgya lung chen po*, yet nonetheless regarding him as in the tradition of Bodhidharma.

Two of the quotations from the *Great Treatise* given in the *Torch of Meditation* are translations of the Chinese original found in the *Erru sixing lun* 二入六行論 (*The Treatise on Two Entrances and Four Practices*).⁵⁷ The first of these, in the Chinese version, reads as follows:

If one rejects the false and reverts to the real and in a coagulated state abides in wall-examining, then self and other, common man and sage, are identical; firmly abiding without shifting, in no way following after the written teachings—this is mysteriously tallying with principle. It is non-discriminative, quiescent, and inactive; we call it entrance by principle.⁵⁸

³⁷ SM: 130.2-3, 173.5-176.5. There are a number of Dunhuang manuscripts that include the *Erru sixing lun*: Beijing su □ 99 (title: *Chanrong anxin yi* □ □ □ □ □ [The Meaning of Quieting the Mind in Chan Buddhism]), S. chin. 3375, S. chin. 7159. The *Erru sixing lun* is also incorporated in the Dunhuang manuscript S. chin. 2054, where it is introduced as *Lüebian dacheng rudao sixing* □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ (A Brief Discussion on the Entrance and Four Practices in Mahāyāna Buddhism) with a preface by Tanlin (□ □, 6th century), one of Bodhidharma's close disciples. A copy of this manuscript is given in LJSZJ: T vol. 85, 1284c.25-1285b.16. It has been recently rendered into English in BROUGHTON 1999: 9-12. Though the *Erru sixing lun* has traditionally been attributed to Bodhidharma, Broughton argues that his disciple, Tanlin, actually composed this text as a summary of Bodhidharma's teachings. See BROUGHTON 1999: 70-74.

⁵⁸The last two sentences in brackets are not included in the *SM*: 130.2-4. For the Chinese text see: *T* vol. 85, 1285a.14-16: □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
□□□
□□□ For the most part, I follow BROUGHTON'S translation (1999: 9), but have made some emendations.

The Tibetan passage is found in *SM*: 130.2-4: *Rgya lung chen po las/ gal te mi bden pa spangs te/ yang dag pa la phyogs shing rtogs pa spangs te/ lham mer gnas pa bdag dang gzhan yang med/ ma rabs dang/ 'phags pa yang mnyam zhing gcig ste/ mi 'gyur brtan par gnas na/ de phan chad yi ge bstan pa'i rjes su mi 'brang*

teachings. He stated, that ‘thus quieting mind is “wall-examining”’.⁶¹ This inter-pretation of Bodhidharma’s teachings by Daoxuan is noteworthy because it does not refer to ‘wall-examining’ as a mere physical posture and practice, that is sitting cross-legged in front of a wall. Rather, Daoxuan interprets it as an immediate recognition of ‘True Nature’ itself, as we shall see further below. The Tibetan interpretation of ‘wall-examining’ supports Daoxuan’s interpretation yet goes one step further. In the *Torch of Meditation* the Chinese term *zhu biguan* ‘abiding in wall-examining’ is rendered into Tibetan as *lham mer gnas* ‘abiding in luminosity’.⁶² The term *lham me* is synonymous with *lhan ne* and *lhang nge* meaning ‘clear, vivid and vividly resplendent’.⁶³ The Tibetan rendering *lham me* for Chinese *biguan* is to be understood in this way. In the *Torch of Meditation* this very same sense of the luminosity (*lham me*) of mind is confirmed on a different occasion where a summary of the Rdzogs chen teachings is given. Here the term *lhan ne lhang nge* is used instead of *lham me*. The passage reads as follows:

In the spontaneously perfected suchness of the supreme yoga, of Atiyoga, all dharma-s primordially self-radiate in the perfect and pure sphere of self-arising primordial gnosis. They are not separately sought as cause and fruition because they are spontaneously perfected. The Great Adept [lit. Great Soul] [realizes that] not [so much as] a moving particle can be named. What is there [then] to be meditated on in the clear and radiant (*lhan ne lhang nge*) primordial luminosity, which is intrinsic awareness, not to be expressed, unmovable, undefiled and not abiding. There is no action of minding; there is nothing but suchness, the principle of non-existence. For those who accept this, it is the great primordial non-discrimination—neither

⁶¹ *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 16: *Shi Putidamo* □ □ □ □ : □ □ 提達摩 (Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks: Master Bodhidharma), first completed in 645 by DAOXUAN □ □, in *T* vol. 50, no. 2060, 551c.5-6: □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ A passage with much the same meaning also appears in Bodhidharma’s hagiography preceding the *Erru sixing lun*. See: *LJSZJ*: *T* vol. 85, 1285a.8; BROUGHTON 1999: 9.

⁶² In *SM*: 130, Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes quotes from a text closely resembling a well-known Dunhuang manuscript, in fact one of the most important scrolls documenting the spread of Chinese Chan Buddhism in Tibet: PT 116 VIb: f. 165.1-3: *gal te myi bden ba spang te/ yang dag pa la phyogs shing/ rtog pa spangs te/ lham mer gnas na/ /bdag kyang myed/ gzhan yang myed/ /ma rabs dang 'phags pa yang mnyam zhing gcig ste/ /myi 'gyur bar brtan par gnas na/ /de phan cad yi ge dag bstan pa'i rjes su myi 'brang ngo/*.

⁶³ ZHANG YISUN *et al.*, 3100b.

hindering manifestations nor discriminating them—where even ‘non-discrimination’ is a [mere] designation.⁶⁴

Here the meaning of Rdzogs chen is described as the recognition of the luminosity of one’s own mind, of self-awareness: it is the co-emergence of ‘emptiness and awareness’ (*stong rig*), a void within which its dynamic is manifest as luminosity.

According to the above-mentioned interpretation of Daoxuan, Bodhidharma’s ‘wall-examining’ has to be understood in a similar way: that it is through ‘wall-examining’ that the luminosity of mind is to be discovered. ‘Wall-examining’ equals ‘quieting the mind’. Therefore, we shall have to take a closer look at the meaning of ‘quieting the mind’ (*anxin*) in Bodhidharma’s teachings.

From Bodhidharma’s ‘quieting the mind’ (anxin) to ‘gazing at mind’ (kanxin) in the Small Treatise

In the tenth-century collection *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄 (*Record of the Mirror of the Thesis*), the author Yongming Yanshou (永明延壽, 903/4-976) proclaimed the essence of the One-Mind thesis. In the ninety-seventh chapter, the teachings of Bodhidharmatāra⁶⁵ are summed up in a quotation of one of his works named *Anxin famen* 安心法門 (Dharma Gate for Quieting Mind). Thus, Yongming Yanshou also saw in ‘quieting the mind’ the core of Bodhidharma’s

⁶⁴ SM: 60.2-6: *a ti yo ga lhag pa'i rnal 'byor gyi lhun rdzogs de bzhin nyid ni/ snang srid gyi chos so cog rang byung gi ye shes nam par dag pa'i klong du sel med par ye nas rang gsal ba la/ rgyu dang 'bras bu ril ma btsal bar lhun gyis rdzogs pa ni/ bdag nyid chen po pas/ de la g.yo rdul ming yang med pas/ rang rig pa ma bzhaq ma g.yos ma bslad ma zhugs par lhan ne lhang nge ye gsal bar ci zhig bsgom/ ci zhig dran par byar yod de med/ med pa'i don de nyid kho na yod/ de dang len pa su zhig ste/ ye mi rtog pa chen po la/ snang ba bkag pa yang med la/ de la rtogs pa med de/ mi rtog pa nyid kyang bla dwags so/* For another passage using the expression *lhan ne lhang nge lham me* in connection with the Rdzogs chen doctrine, refer to SM 29.4.

⁶⁵ In the *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 (*Transmission of the Lamp in the Jingde Era*), T vol. 51, no. 2076, 217a.10-14, it is said that the first patriarch only took the name Bodhidharma after having received transmission from Prajñātāra. Before that, he was called Dharmatrāta. It is due to the influence of the *Lidai fabao ji* 歷代寶錄 (*Record of the Dharma-Treasures Down Through the Generations*), T vol. 51, no. 2075, 180c.3, that the name Dharmatrāta circulated in the Chan tradition in Dunhuang. See YANAGIDA 1983: 28 and BROUGHTON 1983: 10.

teachings.⁶⁶ Here the main theme is the understanding of emptiness (*śūnyatā*) that culminates in the realization of ‘Dharma-realm nature’ (*fajie xing* 法界性) and ‘non-duality’ (*wuer* 無□). The passage reads as follows:

The Master [Bodhidharma] composed the *Dharma Gate for Quieting Mind* (*Anxin famen*), which says: ‘When one is deluded, the person pursues dharma; when one understands, dharmas pursue the person. [...] It is merely that whatever involves mental discrimination, calculation, and [the realm of objects] manifested by one’s mind is a dream. If consciousnesses and thought are calmed, so that there is not a single pulse of thought, it is to be called correct awakening’ [...] ⁶⁷

‘Mind is no-mind, and this is comprehending the path of the Buddhas. When in the midst of things you do not give rise to views, it is called comprehending the path. No matter what you meet, you directly understand its source. This person’s eye of wisdom is open. The wise one trusts to things and does not trust to self. [...] Not seeing one thing is called seeing the path. Not practicing one thing is called walking on the path. Every locus is without locus. This is the locus of Dharma. [...] By examining Dharma one attains liberation. If you see [characteristics], remember, and discriminate, then you will suffer from a scalding cauldron, a blazing furnace, and so forth. [...] If you see that the Dharma-realm nature is the *nirvāṇa* nature and you are without memory and discrimination, then it is the Dharma-realm nature’.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ *Zongjing lu* □ 鏡路 (*Record of the Mirror of the Thesis*), compiled by YONGMING YANSHOU 永明延壽 in 961, *T* vol. 48, no. 2016, 939b.25. BROUGHTON 1999: 146, n. 7, has shown that the passage quoted here corresponds to various parts of what he calls ‘Record I’, one text of the *Bodhidharma Anthology*, which is itself part of a larger corpus of texts attributed to Bodhidharma (see n. 13 above). This ‘Record I’ is included in the following Dunhuang manuscripts: Beijing *su* □ 99 (see n. 57 above), S. chin. 2715, S. chin. 1880 (incomplete), S. chin. 7159 (incomplete), P. chin. 3018 (incomplete), P. chin. 4634 (incomplete).

⁶⁷ *Zongjing lu*, *T* vol. 48, 939b.25-29: □ 述□□□□□迷時人逐□□□時□逐人□[...]□□□□□計校□□現量□□□□□夢□□識□□滅□□□□□□□正□□□[...] By and large, the translation follows BROUGHTON 1999: 78-79, but with some emendations.

⁶⁸ *Zongjing lu*, *T* vol. 48, 939c.17-26: □□□□□□□達□□□□物□□□□達□□逢物直達□□□原□□人慧眼開□□□任物□任己□[...]□□物□□□□□□□物□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□[...]□□□□□□□憶□□□□□受鑊湯爐炭□事□[...]□□□界性□□□□□□ The translation follows BROUGHTON 1999: 78-79, with some emendations.

This passage provides an even broader perspective on the meaning of ‘quieting the mind’. It clearly shows that in the teachings of Bodhidharma it was *not* merely understood as a practical meditation instruction, but as the realization of the absolute itself. ‘Quieting the mind’ is pointing directly to the nature of mind, which is beyond any limits of discrimination. This boundlessness of mind, of the absolute, is in Chan terminology expressed in the paradoxical phrase ‘mind is no-mind’. In a different work attributed to Bodhidharma this phrase is elucidated as follows:

Because mind is no-mind, it is called Dharma mind. Today’s practitioners understand this as the destruction of all delusions. Mind is like space, indestructible, and therefore it is called the adamant mind. Mind does not abide in abiding, nor does it abide in non-abiding, and therefore it is called the mind of *prajñā*. The mind nature is broad and great. Its operation is directionless. Therefore, we call it the Mahāyāna mind. The mind substance is penetrating, without obstacles, unimpeded, and therefore it is called the *bodhi* mind. Mind has no bounds. It is not localized. Because mind is without characteristics, it does not have limits. As it operates without defect, it is not unlimited. It does not have bounds nor is it unbounded, and therefore it is called the mind of the Reality Bound.⁶⁹

As we can see from these passages, the absolute is not merely defined by the aspect of emptiness, but also by the aspect of knowing,⁷⁰ as is evident in the description here of no-mind as the ‘mind of *prajñā*’. Indeed mind, according to Bodhidharma, is in its many facets co-emergent insomuch as it is empty and knowing, a

⁶⁹ S. chin. 2715 in *Dunhuang chanzong wenxian jicheng*, 1998, vol. *shang*, 402.2-6: 今時破惑虛破壞廣運用方摩訶衍開礙提崖畔方向邊用癢邊際際際 This passage is ‘Record I’, paragraph 48, in Broughton’s reading of the *Bodhidharma Anthology*. I generally follow BROUGHTON 1999: 37, with occasional emendations.

⁷⁰ The Tibetan Chan manuscript called the *Small Treatise* adopts similar diction. Having penetrated emptiness, ‘one meditates on inconceivable primordial gnosis, which is beyond thoughts’ (IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.1: *bsam gis myi khyab ba’i ye shes la bsam du myed par bsgom mo*). Gómez posits that the term *bsam gis myi khyab ba* might even be an awkward translation of the Chinese term *wuxin* 無心 ‘no-mind’ (GÓMEZ 1983: 159, n. 28). For a similar usage of this term, refer to IOL Tib J 468: f. 2b.5; PT 117: f. 5b.2; PT 812: f. 9a.3-4; PT 813: f. 8a.2; P. chin. 4646: f. 140b (translated in DEMIÉVILLE 1987 [1952]: 97, n. 8).

characterization in Chan terminology that might even remind us of the previously mentioned Rdzogs chen teachings in the *Torch of Meditation*.⁷¹

As noted earlier, 'quieting the mind' in the teachings of Bodhidharma is not meant as a specific practice, but as the realization of the absolute principle. Indeed, in the *Lengjia shizi ji* (*Record of the Masters and Disciples of the Laṅkāvatāra school*), (hereafter called the *Record of the Laṅkāvatāra school*),⁷² which is a record of the early Chan tradition, the first entry, which concerns Guṇabhadra (□那跋陀□, 394-468), divides 'quieting the mind' (*anxin*) into four different stages. The stages are differentiated by the degree to which one is able to realize the mind that has insight into 'true reality' or the 'principle' (*lixin* 理心).⁷³ Therefore, it is apparent that the early Chan movement spoke mostly about the principle and very little about the practice of Chan itself. Even the famous scholar-monk Zongmi (宗密, 780-841) noted this very same point in the *Chanyuan zhuquan ji duxu* 禪源諸詮集都序 (*General Preface to the Collection of Explanations of the Chan Source*), a preface to a work that was, in its day, the most comprehensive collection of Chan writings in the Tang dynasty (618-906).⁷⁴

Despite Zongmi's critique of the lack of meditation instructions in the scriptures of the early Chan movement, we do, in fact, find an actual meditation instruction in the writings of the fourth Chan

⁷¹ See the quotation of *SM*: 60.2-6, cited at n. 62 above.

⁷² The Dunhuang manuscript *LJSZJ* represents a somewhat different account of the early transmission of the Chan movement than do the later ones such as DAOXUAN'S *Xu gaoseng zhuan* (*Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*), mentioned above. The *LJSZJ* provides comprehensive hagiographies of (1) Guṇabhadra, the translator of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, (2) Bodhidharma, (3) Huike, (4) Sengcan, (5) Daoxin, (6) Hongren, and (7) Shenxiu. The Dunhuang manuscripts (S. chin. 2054 and P. chin 3436) were first identified by HU 1935: 198-238. A later publication, YANAGIDA 1971: 49-326, provides a critical and annotated version with a Japanese translation. Within the corpus of Dunhuang manuscripts we also find a Tibetan translation of the *LJSZJ* (IOL Tib J 710-2). See UHEYAMA 1968 and the revision of this article in DEMIÉVILLE 1970: 46-47.

⁷³ *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, no. 2837, 1284a.29-b.7. Of the four stages, the first is called 'being against true reality' (*bei lixin* 背理心), the second 'going towards true reality' (*xiang lixin* 向理心), the third 'entering true reality' (*ru lixin* 入理心), and the fourth '[being] true reality [itself]' (*lixin* 理心).

⁷⁴ *Chanyuan zhuquan ji duxu* □□□詮集□□ (General Preface to the Collection of Explanations of the Chan Source), compiled in 833 by ZONGMI □□, in T 48, no. 2015, 399a.24: □今□集□家述作□ For a translation of the *Chanyuan zhuquan ji duxu*, see BROUGHTON 1975. For further research on this important work and its author, see GREGORY 1991; JAN 1972, 1990a, 1990b.

patriarch Daoxin (□□, 580-651). Here we observe a transition from the preceding philosophical account of ‘quieting the mind’ (*anxin* □□) to a specific meditation practice of ‘gazing at mind’ (*kanxin* □□).⁷⁵ Again, it is in the *Record of the Laṅkāvatāra* school that the teachings of Daoxin are clarified with reference to his *Rudao anxin yao fangbian famen* □□□□方□□□ (*The Essential Expedient Teachings for Quieting the Mind Through Which One Enters the Way*).⁷⁶ This work might actually have been anticipated by a verse of Bodhidharma entitled *Rudao fangbian jie* □□方□偈 (*Verse of Expedient Teachings for Entering the Way*).⁷⁷ In any event, it is this concept of ‘quieting the mind’ (*anxin*) that links Daoxin directly to Bodhidharma, though Daoxin interprets *anxin* as an expedient means and therefore as ‘a unified mindfulness that is to be maintained without deviation’ (*shouyi buyi* 守□□□).⁷⁸ Daoxin actually relates four ‘specific means’ (*fangbian* 方□) of meditation. He describes: (1) a method to ‘cultivate the body’ (*xiushen* □身);⁷⁹ (2) a method to ‘maintain unified-mindfulness without deviation’ (*shouyi buyi*);⁸⁰ (3) a method to ‘truly contemplate body and mind’ (*zhenguan shen xin* 真□身□);⁸¹ and (4) a method to ‘gaze at mind’ (*kanxin*).⁸² For Daoxin the expedient means of ‘gazing at mind’ is the ultimate

⁷⁵ CHAPPELL 1983 discusses the historical problems surrounding the authenticity of the transmission from Bodhidharma to Daoxin. Some Japanese scholars even see the roots of Daoxin’s Chan meditation practice in the Tiantai tradition rather than in Bodhidharma. However, even if there was no personal contact between Bodhidharma and Daoxin, the nature of the transmission is still expressed in the affinity of their spirit and essential teachings.

⁷⁶ *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, 1286c.21. A translation of the *Rudao anxin yao fangbian famen* is provided in CHAPPELL 1983: 107-21. Bodhidharma (d. 532) and the split of the Chan movement into the Northern branch of Shenxiu (神秀, d. 706) and the Southern branch of Huineng (慧能, d. 713) are separated by roughly two centuries. The *Rudao anxin yao fangbian famen* is, together with Bodhidharma’s *Erru sixing lun* and Hongren’s (弘忍, 602-675) *Xiuxin yao lun* □□□□ (*Essential Treatise on Cultivating Mind*; Beijing yu 字 04, in *Dunhuang chanzong wenxian jicheng* 1998, vol. shang, 524-532), the only reliable document giving evidence for the practice and doctrine of the early Chan movement. Daoxin’s teachings are crucial in regard to the subsequent development of Chan.

⁷⁷ P. chin. 2923 in *Dunhuang chanzong wenxian jicheng* 1998, vol. shang, 410.13-14. This verse is part of what BROUGHTON calls the ‘First Letter’ of the *Bodhidharma Anthology* (1999: 13).

⁷⁸ CHAPPELL 1983: 96. *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, 1287a.15, 1288a.20.

⁷⁹ *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, 1288a.22-b.16.

⁸⁰ *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, 1288b.16-c.12.

⁸¹ *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, 1288c.12-1289a.9.

⁸² *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, 1289a.9-22.

method, which leads to the sudden realization of original mind.⁸³ Thus, even though it is described *expressis verbis* as a method for a beginning practitioner,⁸⁴ nonetheless, with ‘gazing at mind’ Daoxin offers a method for immediately introducing the nature of mind.

In order to practice Daoxin’s ‘gazing at mind’, first the body has to be relaxed in a sitting posture, and then body and mind are harmonized. Mind is quieted and the spiritual path becomes clear. The process of realizing original mind is explained as follows:

The state of mind is lucid and pure. As the contemplation becomes increasingly clear, and inside and outside are empty and pure, the nature of mind becomes utterly tranquil. It is nothing else but awakened mind just like this. [...] The secret spiritual power is never exhausted but constantly shines forth. This is called the Buddha-nature. Those who see Buddha-nature are eternally free from [the cycle of] life and death (*saṃsāra*) and are called ‘those having transcended the world’. Therefore, it is said in the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra*: ‘Suddenly you regain original mind’.⁸⁵

This teaching by the fourth patriarch, Daoxin, of ‘gazing at mind’ is the connecting thread between Bodhidharma’s ‘quieting the mind’ and ‘gazing at mind’ as it is described in our Dunhuang manuscript, the *Small Treatise*. On the one hand, it is obvious that Daoxin is indebted to Bodhidharma’s concept of ‘quieting the mind’, which points to the luminosity of mind itself. Yet, on the other hand, he further develops Bodhidharma’s ‘principle’ (*li*) into the ‘expedient means’ (*fangbian*) of ‘gazing at mind’. This very same meditation instruction, which later, in the Dunhuang materials, came to be renowned as Hwa shang Mahāyāna’s method, is also expressed in the *Small Treatise*, which we know is an instruction pointing out the nature of mind. Therefore, the *Small Treatise* may be seen as a continuation of a traditional theme in the early Chan movement in Central China, a movement that also flourished in the Sino-Tibetan border area. This development may be regarded as an extension in terms of the affinity of the essential teachings; although the direct lineage of transmission from master to disciple is not considered in

⁸³ *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, 1289a.18: 豁□還□□□□□

⁸⁴ *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, 1289a.20-21: □□□□方□□□

⁸⁵ *LJSZJ*: T vol. 85, 1289a.13-18: □地明□□□察□明□內外□□□□□□
 □滅□□□□滅□則□□顯矣□[...]□靈□竭□常存□□□□□□□□□□
 □□永□□□□□□□人□□□維摩□□□豁□還□□□□□□ By and large, I follow CHAPPELL 1983: 119, but have made some emendations.

the present chapter, it is treated elsewhere.⁸⁶ Let us now turn to the Tibetan commentary PT 699 to see how it fits into the broader picture of Sino-Tibetan Buddhism and how this Chan instruction on the nature of mind was interpreted by Tibetans in the Sino-Tibetan border area.

THE TIBETAN COMMENTARY PT 699

Text History

The Tibetan commentary PT 699 to the *Small Treatise* covers five folios. I will refer to it as the *Commentary* hereafter. Like the *Small Treatise*, it is a palm-leaf-style manuscript, but is not as neatly drafted. It is written in the 'bru ma script, i.e., a mixture of *dbu can* and *dbu med*.⁸⁷ The comments are arranged in a rather peculiar way and decrease drastically in length towards the end. For example, the commentary to the first passage of the *Small Treatise* covers more than one folio, that is, nine lines,⁸⁸ whereas the concluding phrase of the *Small Treatise* is elucidated by just a single expression.⁸⁹ From folio 1a.1 to folio 4a.3 the comments are written following immediately the quotation of the original text. They are also written in the same size as the cited root text. However, at folio 4a.4 the format of the explanatory comments changes suddenly to interlinear annotations written in letters half the size of the root text though in the same hand. We hardly know anything about the circumstances under which a text such as the *Commentary* might have been drafted. A comparison with the *Small Treatise* suggests, however, that the *Small Treatise* was probably copied earlier under different circumstances by a scribe, whereas the *Commentary* PT 699, as a

⁸⁶ RAO 1964: 173-76.

⁸⁷ S. Karmay identified the script of other similar Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts as 'bru ma. Refer to KARMAY 1988: 59; also KARMAY 1985: 280.

⁸⁸ The first phrase *mtha' yas pa'i sems can thams cad* 'limitless sentient beings', despite its relative unimportance for the document as a whole, is explained in great detail with regard to the six classes of beings and the innumerable beings without form (PT 699: f. 1a.1-1b.2).

⁸⁹ The very important closing line of the *Lung chung*—*rnam par myi rtog sa le ba/ /sa le ba la rtogs pa myed/ /di ni rang rig ye shes ste/ /'di zhes gdags su myed pa'o/ /* ('Nonconceptualization is vividly clear, and [even this] lucidness is not conceptualized. This is primordial gnosis of intrinsic awareness, which cannot be designated as "this" [existing entity]')—is only briefly commented on with the expression *i ti yin no* (PT 699: f. 5a.).

much later composition, might even be in the original handwriting of the author himself.⁹⁰

The evidence that helps to date the manuscript PT 699 and integrate it into the context of the Buddhist movement in the Sino-Tibetan border area comprises: (1) the codicological criteria for Dunhuang manuscripts developed by the Japanese scholar Ueyama Daishun; and (2) the proper names and titles of texts mentioned in the *Commentary*. We may consider these points in turn.

(1) Based on his codicological work, involving criteria such as types of paper, writing instruments, spacing of columns, and handwriting styles, the Japanese scholar Ueyama Daishun arranged about 140 of the most important Chan manuscripts from Dunhuang into three chronological strata.⁹¹ The first period dates to 750-780, when Chinese culture still exerted a strong influence on the remote Central Asian oasis. The second period, from the 780s to circa 860, roughly correlates with the period of Tibetan dominion over Dunhuang, which left a strong Tibetan cultural impact. Finally, the third period, continuing into the 900s, is associated with the restoration of Chinese power over the Dunhuang area through the regime of the *Guiyi jun* 归义军 ('Return to Righteousness Army'), though this third period did not result in a complete reestablishment of cultural identity with Central China. In accord with this scheme of three periods, Ueyama proposed that in the first period high-quality Chinese paper was used, whereas in the second period coarse paper and palm-leaf style manuscripts appeared. As a result of the Tibetan dominion over Dunhuang, when Dunhuang was cut off from China proper, Chinese writing brushes were eventually replaced by local products such as wooden pens introduced by the Tibetans. Ueyama further remarked that in the third period coarse paper and writing utensils brought by the Tibetans continued to be in use. The manuscripts of that period are often characterized, moreover, by unskilled calligraphy.⁹²

With regard to this general information, these points can be made about the *Commentary*. Judging from the palm-leaf style paper, it

⁹⁰ The first few lines of folio 4b give the impression that the root text was copied first and the interlinear notes added later. However, line nine of folio 4b shows that this was not the case throughout. The root text beginning with *bsam gis myi khyab pa'i ye shes la* starts not on the far left side of the folio, but only near the middle of the line, after the explanation *myi gnas gang la yang myi gnas s.ho/*.

⁹¹ UYAMA 1982 and 1990: 401-23. The gist of D. Ueyama's research is also summarized in BROUGHTON 1999: 98-104, 152-53.

⁹² Refer to BROUGHTON 1999: 152 (5).

was clearly produced following the Tibetan dominion over Dunhuang. Moreover, even though it is unclear how much later than the *Small Treatise* the *Commentary* was composed, we might tentatively date it to the second half of the ninth century, when knowledge about Chinese Chan Buddhism, though probably still rather fresh, had already begun to be combined with elements from other traditions as well. It was a time when neither the Tibetans nor the Chinese exercised complete control over the Dunhuang area. The assumption of the late ninth century as the date of composition of the text is also supported by the following argument.

(2) If we look at names and other works mentioned in the *Commentary* (PT 699) we are brought to the time around the reign of king Khri Srong lde bstan (755-c. 800). An enumeration of names includes Gnubs Nam ka'i snying po, Rlang Su ga ta go ba, Lang 'gro Dkon cog 'byung nas, Dbu na A nang,⁹³ 'Brom Za Sril pa and Mar Kong za Rin cen.⁹⁴ Even though not all names can be identified clearly, at least two of them are renowned, in later traditional sources, among the twenty-five disciples of Padmasambhava, namely Gnubs Nam ka'i snying po and Lang 'gro Dkon cog 'byung nas.⁹⁵

According to these late sources, Gnubs Nam ka'i snying po is said to have received initiation from Padmasambhava in the late eighth century and thereafter travelled to India to study the doctrines of Śrī Heruka (*yang dag he ru ka*) under Hūṃkara.⁹⁶ After he had returned to Tibet he collaborated on many translation projects together with the great late eighth-century Rdzogs chen masters Vimalamitra and Vairocana.⁹⁷ Nam ka'i snying po is believed to have later concealed many 'treasures' (*gter ma*).⁹⁸

⁹³ He is perhaps to be identified with 'Bu na A na mentioned in PT 44 as a Vajrakīla adept. See KAPSTEIN 2000: 158.

⁹⁴ PT 699: f. 2a.7-b.1. This passage has been mentioned by OKIMOTO 1979: 82 (= 427) and KARMAY 1988: 98.

⁹⁵ DUDJOM RINPOCHE 1991, vol. 1, 535-36.

⁹⁶ TĀRANĀTHA 1983: 40.

⁹⁷ TĀRANĀTHA 1983: 40-41, states that Gnubs Nam ka'i snying po brought Vimalamitra and Vairocana, who were both living in exile in the eastern Tibetan region of Tsha ba rong, back to Central Tibet to assist in the spread of Buddhist teachings. Nyang Nyi-ma 'od-zer's (1124-1192) *Chos 'byung me tog snying po sbrang rtsi'i bcud* (*Honey-Blossom Nectar of Religious History*) lists a number of texts translated together by Gnubs Nam ka'i snying po and Vairocana during the reign of Khri Srong lde bstan. See folios 369b-370a, in MEISEZAHN 1985: plates 250.2-249.3. Moreover, we also know of another Nam ka'i snying po whose clan designation is Tshig tsa, not Gnubs, and who is mentioned in the Tibetan Dunhuang manuscript PT 996 (LALOU 1939; KARMAY 1988: 98-99). Tshig tsa Nam kha'i

Lang 'gro Dkon cog 'byung nas is mentioned, too, as a high-ranking minister (*nang blon*) under king Khri Srong lde btsan, before he became a monk and received initiation from Padmasambhava.⁹⁹ However, in the *Torch of Meditation* he is quoted as an example of the Cig car ba tradition, that is the Chan school.¹⁰⁰ I will return to him further below, as he is of particular interest in regard to the conjunction between Chan and Rdzogs chen thought in the *Small Treatise*.

The *Commentary* quotes also from a text entitled *Rdo rje sems pa'i zhus lan* (*Questions and Answers of Vajrasattva*),¹⁰¹ a Mahāyoga text by Gnyan Dpal dbyangs.¹⁰² In 1977 Ueyama was the first to examine critically the Dunhuang manuscript PT 837, which is a complete copy of the *Questions and Answers of Vajrasattva*.¹⁰³ He further resolved the problem raised by the occurrence of two figures named Dpal dbyangs—Sba Dpal dbyangs and Gnyan Dpal dbyangs—and placed Gnyan Dpal dbyangs, whom he identified as

snying po is also cited in *SM*: 180.3-4 as the author of a work entitled *Cig car 'jug pa'i mdo* (*The sūtra of Simultaneous Entrance*). This master, apparently a contemporary of king Khri Srong lde btsan, was part of an Inner Asian Chan lineage connecting Kucha, Dunhuang and Tibet that seems to have flourished along the silk-road between 750 and 850. Its transmission passes from the Kuchean (?) A rtan hyver through Be'u sing Hwa shang and Man Hwa shang to the Tibetan Tshig tsa Nam ka'i snying po. LALOU 1939: 506 (= PT 996: f. 5a.3-4) further states that another Chan master named Spug Ye shes dbyangs passed away at the age of eighty, most likely in 838, in the retreat hut of Nam kha'i snying po ('*di bsdu pa'i bsam gtan gi mkhan po/ spug ye shes dbyangs lo brgyad cu lon te/ rta'i lo'i son slar ba chos brgyad la/ khri ga mong 'yog mda' na/ tshig tsa nam ka'i snying po'i dben sar/ snga dro ma g.yos bzhin du tshe 'das te/ [...]*.)

⁹⁸ DUDJOM RINOCHE 1991: vol. 1, 515-16, 747.

⁹⁹ Lang 'gro Dkon cog 'byung nas is also said to have obtained accomplishment through the empowerment and instruction of Padmasambhava. As a sign of this, he is reputed to have been able to hurl mighty thunderbolts like arrows in the sky (DUDJOM RINOCHE 1991: vol. 1, 536).

¹⁰⁰ Lang 'gro Dkon cog 'byung nas is quoted twice in the Cig car ba chapter of *SM*: 150.6-151.6 and 169.1-170.1. The first quotation is from a *Sgom lung* (*Treatise on Meditation*).

¹⁰¹ PT 699: f. 4b.7-9.

¹⁰² R. Kimura has identified the quotation found in PT 699 with a passage from the same work as given in the Peking block-print: *P* 87, no. 5082, 165.1-6 (KIMURA 1981: 191, n. 25).

¹⁰³ UYAMA 1977. Further copies of the *Rdo rje sems pa'i zhus lan* are in IOL Tib J 470 and PT 819 (fragmentary). The text is quoted five times in *SM* (30.3-4, 201.6-202.5, 219.3-4, 255.6-256.2, 277.3-4) under the title *Zhus lan*, and expressly attributed to Mkhan po Dpal dbyangs (*SM*: 30.3). For further research on this text, see EASTMAN 1983: 45-47.

the author of the *Questions and Answers of Vajrasattva*, in the first half of the ninth century.¹⁰⁴

Considering the references to these names and texts in the *Commentary*, one may conclude that the author was either contemporary to those mentioned, or, what is more likely, lived not long after them, when knowledge about them was still fresh and their texts still in circulation. Therefore, this second line of argument also suggests that the *Commentary* might have been composed in the second half of the ninth century.

Contents of the Commentary (PT 699)

The author of the *Commentary* breaks the root text up into three divisions: (1) an introduction, (2) the main body of the commentary, and (3) a conclusion.¹⁰⁵ He further concludes his commentary with a note categorizing the genre of the text.¹⁰⁶ The introductory part is the least relevant for our discussion on Chan and Rdzogs chen thought. It lists in great detail various matters such as the six realms of sentient beings (f. 1a.1-5), the eight kinds of suffering (f. 1b.4-6), the four streams from which suffering originates (f. 1b.6-7), and the meaning of the net of ignorance (f. 1b.7-2a.6). Finally, the term ‘to bring about nirvāṇa without remainder of the aggregates’ (*phung po*

¹⁰⁴ UHEYAMA 1977: 11. KARMAY (1988: 69) assumes that Gnyan Dpal dbyangs was probably a teacher of Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, the author of the *SM*, and therefore dates him to the late ninth century. YAMAGUCHI 1975 has extensively discussed the matter of two Dpal dbyangs and concludes that Sba Dpal dbyangs was one of the first seven monks and the successor to the abbotship of Bsam yas monastery and that Gnyan Dpal dbyangs authored the *Rdo rje sems pa'i zhus lan* and a cycle of Mahāyoga texts known as the *Sgron ma drug* (*The Six Lamps*): (1) *Thugs kyi sgron ma* (*The Lamp of the Mind*, P 150, no. 5918), (2) *Lta ba yang dag sgron ma* (*The Lamp of the Correct View*, P 150, no. 5919), (3) *Mtha' yi mun sel sgron ma*, or *Lta ba rgum chung* (*The Lamp Removing the Darkness of the Extremes*, or *The Small Collection of the View*, P 150, no. 5920), (4) *Thabs shes sgron ma* (*The Lamp of Means and Wisdom*, P 150, no. 5921), (5) *Rnal 'byor spyod pa'i lugs nges pa'i don ji bzhin bsgom thabs*, or *Man ngag rgum chung* (*The Meditation Technique According to the Definite Meaning of the Yogācara System*, or *The Small Collection of Quintessential Instruction*, P 150, no. 5922), and (6) *Lta ba rin po che sgron ma* (*The Lamp of the Precious View*, P 150, no. 5923). See, too, UHEYAMA 1977: 8, KARMAY 1988: 66, n. 21, and TUCCI 1958: 141-50.

¹⁰⁵ The first part covers PT 699: f. 1a.1-2b.2, the second f. 2b.2-3b.7, and the third f. 3b.7-5a.5. The author of the *Commentary* divides the text in a manner well known from later tradition into the ‘introduction’ (*klad kyi don*), ‘main part’ (*gzhung gi don*) and ‘conclusion’ (*mjug gi don*). He also uses an equivalent designation for the first part: *de yan cad ni glad rgyangs so* (f. 2b.2).

¹⁰⁶ The closing note covers PT 699: f. 5a¹5-10.

lhag ma ma lus par yongs su mya ngan bzla ba) is explained by listing the aforementioned masters, Gnubs Nam ka'i snying po and so forth, as such accomplished ones.

The main body of the *Commentary* is a lengthy exposition of how to settle the mind in meditation,¹⁰⁷ a meditation interpreted as a practice of 'nonconceptuality' (*myi rtog par bsgom*), which is to be attained by first observing instructions on the bodily posture:

Letting one's vision drop [to the floor] in front of the tip of the nose, the objects of sight are cut off. Pressing the tongue against the palate, concepts are cut off. Placing the right hand into the left, [the duality] of grasper and grasped is cut off. Crossing the right leg over the left, the coming and going of perceived objects is cut off. In brief, [this is] how to meditate on nonconceptuality.¹⁰⁸

This meditation is further described as a gradual process. When one is not distracted by the objects of the mind's six faculties, one is 'gazing at mind', which is here understood as a 'method' (*thabs*) to utterly deconstruct the eight aspects of existence and non-existence of mind.¹⁰⁹ 'Gazing at mind' is seen as a step-by-step analysis of mind based on 'reasoning' (*gtan tshigs*) and 'discriminative awareness' (*shes rab*). Finally, mind's 'ultimate principle' (*don*), which one has comprehended, is 'intrinsic awareness' (*rang rig*) that is beyond any designation.¹¹⁰ Therefore, the gradual approach is completed by a sudden realization of intrinsic awareness. Furthermore, the process of 'non-mentation' (*yid la myi byed pa*) and 'non-conceptualization' (*myi rtog pa*) is explained in terms of 'three precepts' (*lung gsum*),¹¹¹ 'three quintessential instructions' (*man*

¹⁰⁷ PT 699: f. 3b.7: *Sems gzhang pa'i thabs bstan pa*.

¹⁰⁸ PT 699: f. 2b.3-4: *dmyig sna gong du dbab/ pa ni lta ba'i yul bcad pa yin la/ lce rkan la gnan pa ni/ smra bsam gi yul bcad pa yin la/ lag pa g.yas kyi g.yon bnan pa ni gzung 'dzin gi yul bcad/ rkang pa g.yas kyi g.yon bnan ba ni/ 'ongs gro gnyis kyi yul bcad pa yin no/ spyir bsus (= bsdus) na rnam par myi rtog par bsgom mo/*.

¹⁰⁹ PT 699: f. 3a.2: *rang gi sems la bltas na ni/ thabs yin la/ de tsam la myi gnas pa ni/ sems yod myed rnam pa brgyad do/ sems rnam pa brgyad kyi gtan tshigs kyi gtan la phab la/*. The eight aspects referred to are examined by questioning: Is mind (1) subject or (2) object? (3) permanent or (4) annihilated? (5) arising or (6) ceasing? Does it have (7) the four colors or (8) eight forms? (PT 699: f. 3a.2-3: *sems 'di gzung 'dzin gcig yin nam/ rtag chad yin nam/ skye 'gag yin nam/ kha dog rnam bzhi yin nam/ dbyibs rnam pa brgyad yin nam/*).

¹¹⁰ PT 699: f. 3b.1-2: *ci ltar chud pa don de ni/ rang gi rig pa'i don der zad/ rig pa de yang 'di ltar ste/ mying du brtags shing brjod du myed/*.

¹¹¹ The 'three precepts' are 'non-thinking' (*bsam myed*), 'nonconceptualizing' (*rtog pa myed*), and 'non-abiding' (*gnas myed*); see, too, PT 699: f. 3b.3-4.

ngag gsum)¹¹² and ‘three seeds’ (*’bru gsum*).¹¹³ As a result one becomes a pure vessel in which *samādhi* and discriminative awareness are co-emergent.

The concluding remarks of the *Commentary* on the meditation instructions discuss the fruition of this practice. Mind is permanently to be tamed in order to disclose that it is without any reality; however, it is to be internalized as nonconceptuality.¹¹⁴ As *dharmatā* is unmistakably realized by means of discriminative awareness, suffering and enlightenment do not exist apart from one other.¹¹⁵

The subsequent explanations of the understanding of emptiness do not provide any further information, but merely paraphrase the root text. However, the interpretation of the following passage—that having gradually cleansed all *karmic* habitual tendencies, [thoughts] are ‘self-liberated’ (*rang grol*)—is of utmost interest. The *Commentary* says:

When the antidote to the *śrāvaka*’s [one-sided] quiescence [which is detrimental to the realization of Buddhahood] is internalized, even the movement [of mind] is equipoised simply in [the syllable] A. [...] [Then] supreme insight into the *dharmatā* of mind [is accomplished] by means of no-supreme-insight; [and likewise serenity] by means of no-serenity. Then one meditates [on insight and serenity] equally. [...] Having equally [practiced] insight and serenity one attains

¹¹² The ‘three quintessential instructions’ pertain to ‘no-mind’ (*sems myed*), ‘no-recollection’ (*dran myed*), and ‘illusion’ (*sgyu ma*); see PT 699: f. 3b.4-5. These ‘three quintessential instructions’ together with the following ‘three seeds’ appear as the main instructions of Chan master Wuzhu (無住 714-774) of the Sichuanese Baotang school (保唐) in the important Dunhuang Chan scroll, Dunhuang PT 116: part IVb, f. 165.4-166.1. Refer also to the translation of PT 116: part V-VIb, in FABER 1986: ‘In the explanations of Chan master Wuzhu [it says]: ‘No-mind is discipline, no-recollection is *samādhi*, and the non-arising of the illusory mind is discriminative awareness’ (*bsam brtan gyi mkhan po bu cus bshad pa las kyang/ myi sems pa ni tshul khrims so/ /myi dran ba ni ting nge ’dzin/ /sgyu ma’i sems myi ’byung ba ni shes rab bo zhes ’byung/*). The equivalent Chinese passage is found in the *Lidai fabao ji* (T vol. 51, 189a.17-18): 憶戒定莫慧. For an account of Wuzhu’s teachings, see JAN 1972: 43-45.

¹¹³ The ‘three seeds’ are the practice of ‘discipline’ (*tshul khrims*), ‘*samādhi*’ (*ting nge ’dzin*), and ‘discriminative awareness’ (*shes rab*); see PT 699: f. 3b.5-6.

¹¹⁴ PT 699: f. 4a.2: *sems ni dngos po myed cing rnam par mi rtoḡ pa’i ngang du gyur pa’i dus na/ g.yo myed par ni gdul ba ltar/ de bzhin du rang gi sems rtag du gdul/*.

¹¹⁵ PT 699: f. 4a.3-4: *sdug bsngal las ma gtogs pa byang cub kyang logs na myed do/ ye nas bdag du myed pa’i chos la gdod ma nas ma byung ba ni/ chos nyid rtogs pa’i dus na/ shes rab kyis rig cing chos nyid kyi don phyin cu ma log par yongs su rtogs pa’o/*.

instantaneously the adamantine *samādhi*, the *bhūmi* of the Buddha, [that of] all-encompassing light.¹¹⁶

According to the text's quotation from the *Questions and Answers of Vajrasattva*, mentioned earlier, in this unwavering *samādhi* insight and serenity have to be practiced simultaneously to penetrate completely the emptiness of self. Only then does mind not abide anywhere.¹¹⁷ Without being distracted one should 'meditate nonconceptually' (*myi rtog par bsgom*). Here nonconceptuality is interpreted as thinking neither about the meaning of nonconceptuality, nor about anything else.¹¹⁸ Finally, in the revolution of the ground the condition of *dharmadhātu* is equal and 'primordial gnosis of mind is self-illuminating' (*sems kyi ye shes rang gsal*).¹¹⁹ The closing sentence of the root text, confirming primordial gnosis of intrinsic awareness, is then sealed by the expression *i ti yin no*.¹²⁰

The concluding lines of the *Commentary* put forth the differences between the masters of Atiyoga and those teaching according to *sūtra*. The former are like a *garuḍa*, instantaneously illuminating all vehicles without exception, whereas the latter are like a young goat clumsily climbing the rock, expounding the teachings in a complicated manner.¹²¹

Terminological Peculiarities in the Commentary (PT 699)

Even though the *Commentary* is not a very eloquent piece of scholarly work, it is still a remarkable example of how original

¹¹⁶ PT 699: f. 4b.2-3: *nyan thos zhi ba 'i gnyen po ste ngang du gyur pa'i dus na/ 'gyur ba yang a tsam du cha bnyam/ [...] sems chos nyid lha[g] mthong myed pa'i tshul gi lhag mthong/ de zhi [g]nas myed pa'i tshul gis cha snyoms te bsgom mo//. [...] zhi [g]nas lhag mthong cha snyoms pa las rdo rje lta bu ting nge 'dzin sangs rgyas kyi sa kun du 'od skad cig la sbyor ro//.*

¹¹⁷ PT 699: f. 4b.6-9: *rdo rje sems pa'i zhus lan las kyang/ bdag du 'dzin pa'i de ni yongs ma spangs/ chos su 'dzin pa de ni rang dbang bdag myed par mthong zhing gnas pa de ni phyi'i yul la yang myi gnas/ nang gi sems la yang myi gnas gang la yang myi gnas s+ho//.*

¹¹⁸ PT 699: f. 4b.10: *rnam par myi rtog pa'i don 'di bsam ba ma yin ba gzhan la bsam du myed do//.*

¹¹⁹ PT 699: f. 5a.2-4: *kun [g]zhi gnas gyur nas chos kyi dbyings kyi ngang du bnyam mo/ [...] sems kyi ye shes rang gsal zhing byung ngo//.*

¹²⁰ PT 699: f. 5a.5.

¹²¹ PT 699: f. 5a.6-7: *khyung chen nam lang gcod kyang skyes 'gro ma lus shes/ theg pa so sor gsal yang [...] a ti yo ga 'chad pa'i sloba dpon [...]. PT 699: f. 5a.7-8: mdo sde 'chad pa'i sloba dpon ci lta bu zhe na// [...] smad pa'i rna bu brag la 'dzeg pa'i/ myi 'tsham 'tsham bar 'chad pas//.*

Chinese Chan concepts surrounding the meditation method of 'gazing at mind' became interwoven with elements of Rdzogs chen teachings, at least inasmuch as these were known to the author of the *Commentary* in the late ninth century. In fact, the author seems to have understood the root text, the *Small Treatise*, as a Rdzogs chen teaching, as he refers in the closing section to the masters of Atiyoga and clearly distinguishes their all-encompassing view from the gradual approach of the *sūtra* masters. Nevertheless, he was also aware of the Chan tradition. For instance, he refers to the lineage of twenty-eight Indian patriarchs from Kāśyapa down to Bodhidharma.¹²² Hence, the *Commentary* may be regarded as evidence for a syncretic Buddhist movement in the Sino-Tibetan border area in the late ninth century. As we shall see, peculiarities in its terminology demonstrate a slight shift of interpretation with respect to the original meanings of some Chinese terms. At the same time, I will also point out examples of the continuity of Chan thought and its integration with typically Rdzogs chen expressions as indicating a unique regional current of Sino-Tibetan Buddhism.

A terminological analysis of certain expressions in the *Small Treatise* reveals that the meditation method of 'gazing at mind' is meant to be a direct recognition of the nature of mind, which leads to the highest realization of a *bodhisattva* or even to that of a Buddha. The *Commentary*, however, frequently applies a terminology that differs somewhat from that of the Chinese Chan tradition and therefore provides a novel interpretation. Five examples will be considered in turn.

(1) As noted above, the expression 'reversing mind's six faculties so as not to engage in deluded objects' (*sems kyi sgo drug 'khrul pa'i yul la myi 'jug par bzlog*) is a rendering of the Chinese phrase 'turning the luminosity [of the mind] towards the mind's source' (*fanzhao xinyuan*), and is thus understood as a definition for the meditation method called 'gazing at mind' (*sems la bltas, kanxin*). Moreover, it is meant to be an immediate *return* to the minds' source itself. However, the commentator only indirectly connects this expression to the meditation method of 'gazing at mind', but instead to regard it still as a preliminary practice similar to that of taking the right bodily position. Just as sitting upright brings the body into the

¹²² PT 699: f. 5a.1-3: 'od srungs che la chos gtad pa/ rgya gar gi mkhan po nyi shu rtsa brgyad khungs brgyud pa'i mtha' ma dar ma ta la gtad do/. The standard lists of the 28 Indian patriarchs of Chan Buddhism according to Chinese sources are found in YAMPOLSKY 1967: 8-9.

proper position, turning away from engaging in deluded objects does the same for the mind. It functions as an antidote for any sensory distractions of mind. The author then provides a literal explanation of the phrase ‘reversing mind’s six faculties from not engaging in deluded objects’ and clarifies how each faculty goes astray.¹²³

Summing up, if the practitioner continues to be engaged in deluded objects that distract the mind, then he is also not reverting from the path of reflection and analysis (*rtog dpyod lam*). The process of further leads to a complete deconstruction of any concept of the existence or non-existence of mind. Thus, beginning with the analysis of the six sense objects, the *Commentary* provides a step-by-step explanation of how the ultimate goal of the meditation process is to be obtained. Nevertheless, the commentator acknowledges, in accord with the *Small Treatise*, that finally the meaning of a complete recognition of the ultimate principle, and therefore an ‘instantaneous’ (*skad cig la*) attainment of Buddhahood, is ‘intrinsic awareness’ (*rang rig*).¹²⁴

(2) In the *Small Treatise*, the ultimate attainment is described as ‘bringing about complete *nirvāṇa* without remainder of the aggregates’ (*phung po lhag ma ma lus par yongs su mya ngan las bzla ba*). According to Chinese sources it is understood as the realization of suchness and therefore as a state of mind freed from any discrimination.¹²⁵ The *Commentary* is, at least in part, very close to this interpretation. It says:

If no more dichotomous habitual tendencies remain in the consciousness, it is called ‘[*nirvāṇa*] without remainder of the aggregates’.¹²⁶

However, we must also consider the aforementioned list of accomplished ones, who are given as examples of having attained such a realization. This enumeration includes Gnubs Nam ka’i snying po and Lang ’gro Dkon cog ’byung nas.¹²⁷ In referring to

¹²³ One example (from PT 699: f. 2b.6) reads as follows: ‘The nose goes astray if it follows smell. This is like a *gshed*-demon waiting for a burnt offering’ (*’sna ’khrul te dri la ’jug pa’i dpe ni/ gshed dri bo gsur la skru ba ’dra/*).

¹²⁴ PT 699: f. 3b.1-2: *ci ltar chud pa don de ni/ rang gi rig pa’i don der zad/ rig pa de yang ’di ltar ste/ mying du brtags shing brjod du myed/*.

¹²⁵ Cf. above n. 48: *buqi wangxin* 不□妄心.

¹²⁶ PT 699: f. 2b.1-2: *rnam par shes pa’i sems la/ gzung ’dzin gi bag chags myi gnas pa ni/ phung po lhag ma ma lus pa zhes bya ba yin no/*.

¹²⁷ PT 699: f. 2a.7.

them, the *Commentary* provides a literal interpretation of the foregoing passage, affirming that it is an actual body that passes beyond.

In his comprehensive study of the early Rdzogs chen movement, S. Karmay first brought attention to a passage in the *Torch of Meditation* discussing *nirvāṇa* with and without remainder.¹²⁸ There, in the chapter on Mahāyoga, it is said that if the defilements of the aggregates are exhausted, one becomes a *vidyādhara* ‘with bodily remainder’.¹²⁹ There follows a quotation from the *Questions and Answers of Vajrasattva* (*Rdo rje sems pa’i zhus lan*), a text that we have seen cited elsewhere in the *Commentary*.¹³⁰ It reads as follows:

What is the meaning of accomplishing Buddhahood within one lifetime? It means that with a body having remainder [of the aggregates] one may realize the accomplishment of a *vidyādhāra*, who has the power over life. And through just this life as a *vidyādhara* [one] may become the unsurpassed [Buddha] Samantabhadra.¹³¹

Then the *Torch of Meditation* lists, as does our *Commentary*, the names of masters who accomplished this goal. Among them we also find Gnubs Nam ka’i snying po, who is said to have passed away escorted by *ḍākini*.¹³²

If we return to the *Commentary*, two points can be made in terms of the Tibetan interpretation of the phrase ‘*nirvāṇa* without remainder of the aggregates’ in general and about Gnubs Nam ka’i snying po in particular. First, in its Tibetan usage we can see an extension of the Chinese concept, which did not take the expression in its literal sense, but in the philosophical sense of attaining the state of a *bodhisattva* or even that of a Buddha.¹³³ Second, the comparison

¹²⁸ KARMAY 1988: 191-92.

¹²⁹ SM: 277.1: *phung po’i zag pa yang zad nas/ da ltar gyi rnam par smin pa lhag ma’i lus ’dis tshe la dbang ba’i rig ’dzin ’grub/*.

¹³⁰ See above, nn. 101 and 117.

¹³¹ SM: 277.2-3: *sangs rgyas tshe gcig gis ’grub pa’i don ji lta bu lags/ /lhag mar bcas pa’i lus nyid kyis/ /tshe la dbang pa’i rig ’dzin ’grub/ /rig pa ’dzin pa’i tshe nyid kyis/ /bla med kun tu bzang por ’gyur/*. For the original, which differs only slightly, see PT 837, l. 117 and P 87, 165.4-6: *sangs rgyas tshe gcig gis ’grub pa’i don ji lta bu lags/ /lhag mar bcas pa’i lus nyid kyis/ /tshe la dbang pa’i rigs ’dzin thog/ /rig pa ’dzin pa’i tshe nyid kyis/ /bla med byang chub thob par ’gyur/*. See also KARMAY 1988: 191-192.

¹³² SM: 278.2: *jo bo (gnubs) nam ka’i snying po mkha’ ’gro mas bsus nas gshegs/*. The clan name Gnubs is given in an interlinear note.

¹³³ Refer to the discussion of ‘*nirvāṇa* without remainder’ beginning at n. 45 above.

with a similar passage in the *Torch of Meditation* reveals a link to the Rdzogs chen teachings. Gnubs Nam ka'i snying po is presented as an example of one who accomplished the state of Samantabhadra, the supreme ādi-Buddha of the Rdzogs chen teachings, the realization of the *dharmakāya* itself. In the description proffered by the *Torch of Meditation*, a progression may be observed from exhausting the defilements of the aggregates, through becoming a *vidyādhāra* 'with remainder of the aggregates', and finally to becoming Samantabhadra himself, who is beyond any designation and remainder of the aggregates. In this sense, the expression '*nirvāṇa* without remainder of the aggregates' might be taken in its literal meaning. This is exemplified by Gnubs Nam ka'i snying po, who abandoned common bondage to the coarse bodily form and passed away escorted by *dākinīs*. However, there is no textual evidence that his accomplishment might be taken as a 'rainbow body' (*'ja' lus*), literally understood as designating the complete disintegration of the body and at the same time the supreme realization within the Rdzogs chen teachings.¹³⁴

(3) The *Commentary* explains that all the habitual tendencies of karma are purified through the 'adamantine *samādhi*' (*rdo rje lta bu'i ting nge 'dzin*), which is defined as the co-emergence of serenity and insight.¹³⁵ The term 'adamantine *samādhi*' is used in the causal philosophical vehicles (*rgyu mtshan nyid theg pa*) to describe the final removal of 'cognitive obscurations' (*shes bya'i sgrib pa*) before attaining the eleventh *bhūmi* of a Buddha.¹³⁶ Here, the metaphor of a diamond as an 'indestructible material' (*rdzas kyi rdo rje*) symbolizes the 'indestructibility of primordial wisdom' (*ye shes kyi rdo rje*), which is to be realized in *samādhi*.¹³⁷

In the eighth-century Tibetan translation by Ska ba Dpal brtsegs of the *Mahāyānasūtrāṣṭakārikā* (*Verse Ornament of the Mahāyāna Sūtras*), usually attributed to Maitreya, the realization of the

¹³⁴ On the 'rainbow body', see now KAPSTEIN 2004.

¹³⁵ PT 699: f. 4b.2-3: *zhi nas lhag mthong cha snyoms pa las rdo rje lta bu ting nge 'dzin*.

¹³⁶ 'Emotional obscurations' (*nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa*) are purified on attaining the first *bhūmi* of 'great joy' (*rab tu dga' ba*). In progressing from the second to the tenth *bhūmi*, the 'cognitive obscuration' is cleansed. The tenth *bhūmi* is threefold, and the complete purification of the third part of the tenth *bhūmi* is accomplished by means of the 'adamantine *samādhi*'. Then all obscurations are purified and the eleventh *bhūmi* of a Buddha is obtained.

¹³⁷ Furthermore, the *vajra* as a ritual object carries the same meaning: the five-pronged *vajra* symbolizes the union of the 'five wisdoms' (*ye shes lnga*).

adamantine *samādhi* is described in terms of the five paths to enlightenment:

If [the fourth path] of meditation is completed, one attains to the final [path] of meditation.¹³⁸ Then the bodhisattva, who is empowered [in the highest stage], obtains the adamantine *samādhi*, which is not to be destroyed by discursive thoughts.¹³⁹

The commentary of 'Ju Mi pham Rin po che (1846-1912) on this passage elaborates further the meaning of the expression 'adamantine *samādhi*' in relation to the path of no-more-learning:

Then the bodhisattva attains to abiding on the final tenth *bhūmi*. Through the great light rays from the Buddhas of the ten directions, he is empowered as the regent of the *dharmarāja*. Through that he obtains the adamantine *samādhi*, which is not destroyed by discursive thoughts apprehending characteristics. Having completely uprooted even the subtle habitual tendencies of the dualistic appearances of apprehended [objects] and apprehending [subject], [the bodhisattva] is freed from the two obscurations and their habitual tendencies. Then, he [attains to] the ultimate transformation, the great abandonment that is without any taint of obscuration. This is the eleventh *bhūmi* of 'no-more-learning' [i.e., Buddhahood]. [The Buddha] abides as long as the sphere of the sky exists for the benefit of all sentient beings and [fulfills] manifold activities.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ The 'five paths' (*lam lnga*) to enlightenment, as taught in the causal vehicles, are: (1) the 'path of accumulation' (*tshogs lam*); (2) the 'path of joining' (*sbyor lam*); (3) the 'path of seeing' (*mthong lam*); (4) the 'path of meditation' (*bsgom lam*); and (5) the 'path of no-more-learning' (*mi slob pa'i lam*). See also DUDJOM 1991: vol. 2, 147. The object of meditation on the final path of 'no-more-learning' (*mi slob pa'i lam*) is the 'adamantine *samādhi*' (*rdo rje lta bu ting nge 'dzin*).

¹³⁹ MAITREYA, *P* 108, no. 5521, f. 23a.4-5: *sgom pa yi ni mthar phyin te/ /sgom ba tha ma thob nas ni/ /byang chub sems dpa' dbang bskur ba/ /rdo rje lta bu'i ting nge 'dzin/ /rtog pas mi shigs pa thob nas ni/*.

¹⁴⁰ MI PHAM RIN PO CHE, *Theg pa chen po mdo sde'i rgyan gyi dgongs don*, in *Mi pham gsum 'bum*, vol. A, f. 194b.4-6: *sgom pa yi lam gyi tha ma sa bcu pa la gnas pa thob nas ni/ byang chub sems dpa' de la phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas rnams kyis 'od zer chen pos chos kyi rgyal po'i rgyal tshab tu dbang bskur ba de la brien pas rdo rje lta bu'i ting nge 'dzin mtshan 'dzin gyi rtog pas mi shigs pa thob nas/ gzung 'dzin gnyis snang gi bag chags phra mo yang drung nas phyung bas sgrib gnyis bag chags dang bcas pa bral ba'i gnas gzhan du gyur ba'i mthar thug pa/ sgrib pa kun gyi dri ba med pa spangs pa chen po dang/ sa bcu gcig pa mi slob pa'i sa gang la gnas na sems can kun la nam mkha'i kham ji srid du/ phan pa'i phyr mdzad pa sna tshogs/*.

Again, we see that in the ‘adamantine *samādhi*’ all dichotomous habitual tendencies are removed. This explanation entirely accords with that of ‘*nirvāṇa* without remainder of the aggregates’ discussed above. Moreover, this passage directly leads us to what Mi pham Rin po che calls the ‘eleventh *bhūmi* of no-more-learning’ (*sa bcu gcig pa mi slob pa’i sa*). The *Commentary*, however, uses the expression the *bhūmi* of ‘all-encompassing light’ (*kun du ’od*), to the meaning of which we now turn.

(4) The locution ‘*bhūmi* of the Buddha, [that of] all-encompassing light’ (*sangs rgyas kyi sa kun du ’od*) is a distinctive appellation for the attainment of the eleventh *bhūmi*. In Mi pham Rin po che’s commentary on the *Man ngag lta ba’i ’phreng ba* (*Quintessential Instruction [Called] the Garland of Views*), an early Rdzogs chen text attributed to Padmasambhava, the term ‘all-encompassing light’ is traced back to its original source in the system of the causal philosophical vehicles. Mi pham Rin po che argues as follows:

Spontaneously entering into the ‘*bhūmi* of the great accumulation wheel of the [seed] syllables’, which is the fruition [of the Rdzogs chen teachings],¹⁴¹ is according to the general causal philosophical vehicles named the *bhūmi* of a Buddha, that of ‘all-encompassing light’. By means of emanating a great amount of light, those who are to be tamed are made into a suitable vessel. This is the reason why [the attainment of this *bhūmi*] is so-called. In the general *vajrayāna* it is renowned as the thir[teenth] *bhūmi* of a Buddha.¹⁴² Here, ‘all-encompassing light’ means that the *dharmakāya*, which is without characteristics and naturally illuminating, is all-pervading.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ The original passage in PADMASAMBHAVA (attr.), *Man ngag gi rgyal po lta ba’i ’phreng ba*, in *P* 83, no. 4726, f. 418b.4 reads: *de ltar tshul ’di ni rdzogs pa chen po’i mthar phyin pa’i don/yi ge ’khor lo tshogs chen gyi sa la lhun gyis ’jug pa ste/*

¹⁴² Here, for the third *bhūmi* read the thirteenth. See MI PHAM RIN PO CHE, *Slob dpon chen po padma ’byung gnas kyis mdzad pa’i man ngag lta ba’i ’phreng ba’i mchen ’grel nor bu’i bang mdzod*; in *Mi pham gsum ’bum*, vol. DA, f. 20a.3: ‘The great accumulation, which is spontaneously accomplished, is the Dharmamaṇḍala of the fruition. It is also named the “*bhūmi* of the great accumulation wheel of [seed] syllables” and the “thirteenth *bhūmi* of a Buddha”’. (*’di lta bu’i ’bras bu’i chos kyi dkyil ’khor gyi tshogs chen por lhun gyis grub pa ni yi ge ’khor lo tshogs chen gyi sa zhes kyang bya/ sangs rgyas kyi sa bcu gsum pa zhes kyang bya’o/*.)

¹⁴³ MI PHAM RIN PO CHE, *ibid.*, f. 19b.4-6: *lam ’di’i ’bras bu ni yi ge ’khor lo tshogs chen gyi sa la brtsal med lhun kyis ’jugs pa ste/ de yang spyir mtshan nyid kyi*

Even though the expression ‘*bhūmi* of all-encompassing light’ originates in the system of the causal philosophical vehicles, its meaning nonetheless corresponds to the thirteenth *bhūmi* in the *vajrayāna* or to what is called in Rdzogs chen terminology ‘*bhūmi* of the great accumulation wheel of the [seed] syllables’. This last term *yi ge ’khor lo* (‘wheel of the seed syllables’) has to be understood as the maṇḍala of the central seed syllable A, which is, in the Rdzogs chen teachings, a symbol of *śūnyatā* and the essence and origin of all.¹⁴⁴ In the commentary of Klong chen rab ’byams pa (1308-1363) on the *Guhyagarbhatantra* (*Rgyud gsang ba snying po*), the seed syllable A is defined as follows:

In the *’Jam dpal mtshan brjod* (*Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, the *Litany of the Names of Mañjuśrī*), it is said: ‘A is the supreme letter. Arising from within, it is not born. [...]’ In the [*Prajñāpāramitā*]*sūtra* it is said: ‘Oh Subhūti, ultimately [all] letters are unborn and of the nature of A. The nature of A is the self-nature of mind, completely beyond all existents and non-existents’.¹⁴⁵

Let us recall again the passage in question in our Dunhuang manuscript, the *Commentary*. Here it is said that the *bhūmi* of ‘all-encompassing light’ is attained after the antidote to the *śrāvaka*’s one-sided quiescence is fully comprehended and one has accomplished the adamant *samādhi*. It is further said that all movement of mind is equipoised simply in A.¹⁴⁶ We know that the author of the *Commentary* at least came into contact with early Rdzogs chen thought as it was transmitted, for instance, in the Dunhuang manuscript of the *Questions and Answers of Vajrasattva*.

theg pa spyi las sangs rgyas kyi sa kun tu ’od ces bya ste/ ’di ltar ’od zer mang po bkye bas ’dul ba’i ’gro ba snod du rung bar mdzad pa’i phyir de skad ces grags so/ /rdo rje theg pa spyi las ni sangs rgyas kyi sa gsum du grags te/ /de la kun tu ’od ni chos kyi sku mtshan ma med pa rang bzhin gyis ’od gsal bas kun la khyab pa’o/.

¹⁴⁴ Geshe Pema Tsering (Dge bshes Padma tshe ring), in his oral explanation, confirms this interpretation of the seed syllable A in regard to the Rdzogs chen term *yi ge ’khor lo*.

¹⁴⁵ KLONG CHEN RAB ’BYAMS PA, *Gsang snying ’grel pa*, f. 65a.3-4: *mtshan brjod las/ a ni yig ’bru kun gyi mchog/ /khong nas ’byung ba skye ba med/ [...] mdo las/ rab ’byor yi ge ni don dam par ma skyes pa ste a’i ngo bo nyid do/ a’i ngo bo nyid gang yin pa de ni sems kyi rang bzhin te dngos po dang dngos po med pa thams cad las yang dag par ’das pa’o/.*

¹⁴⁶ PT 699: f. 4b.2: *’gyur ba yang a tsam du cha bnyam/*. Compare the passage cited at n. 116 above.

Karmay has already shown that this text is an early example of the intermingling of Mahāyoga doctrines with such early Rdzogs chen materials as the *Sbas pa'i rgum chung* (*The Small Collection of Hidden Precepts*).¹⁴⁷ Therefore, we might even see the statement of our *Commentary* that the 'movement [of mind] becomes equipoised simply in A' in the light of the previously mentioned Rdzogs chen interpretation of the letter A, that is, as the realization of *śūnyatā*, the basic nature of all. Finally, the attainment of the 'bhūmi of all-encompassing light', which is used here to mean the result, is also affirmed in a tantric text and not only in the sūtras, as Mi pham Rin po che has stated. For instance, in Klong chen pa's commentary on the *Guhyagarbhatantra*, it says:

The fruition, the omniscient Buddha, abides on the eleventh *bhūmi* of 'all-encompassing light' and effortlessly accomplishes the two aims [of oneself and others].¹⁴⁸

(5) The *Commentary* concludes the last sentence of the root text, which confirms primordial gnosis of intrinsic awareness, with the pithy expression *i ti yin no*.¹⁴⁹ The term *i ti*, which in its Sanskrit transcription is not very common in the later *Bka'* 'gyur and *Bstan* 'gyur literature—it is usually represented instead by the Tibetan equivalent *ces bya ba*—is, however, found in early Rdzogs chen texts. The *Bi ma snying thig* (*Innermost Essence of Vimala-*

¹⁴⁷ KARMAY 1988: 68. The *Rdo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan* incorporates almost one third of the early Rdzogs chen text named *Sbas pa'i rgum chung* (*The Small Collection of Hidden Precepts*, lines 19-26). This text, attributed to Buddhagupta, is today only available in the Dunhuang manuscript IOL Tib J 594 and is studied in detail in NAM MKHA'I NOR BU 1984 and KARMAY 1988: 59-76. The *SM* quotes the *Sbas pa'i rgum chung* three times (*SM*: 382.2, 404.1-2, 440.5-6), though not referring directly to the same text we find in IOL Tib J 594, but indirectly to other works incorporating parts of it, namely, the *Lta ba rgum chung* (*The Small Collection of the View*) and *Man ngag rgum chung* (*The Small Collection of Quintessential Instruction*), on which see above, n. 104. KARMAY 1988: 60-61 identifies the passages of the *Sbas pa'i rgum chung* concerned. For a facsimile of IOL Tib J 594, see also KARMAY 1988: appendix. It is of interest that there appears to be a striking similarity between IOL Tib J 594 and our *Commentary* (PT 699) in regard to their layout. Apart from the handwriting of IOL Tib J 594, which resembles the *dbu can* - *dbu med* mixture of the *Commentary*, brief interlinear annotations are also added, – just as in the last two folios of the *Commentary*.

¹⁴⁸ KLONG CHEN RAB 'BYAMS PA, *Gsang snying 'grel pa*, f. 50b.6: 'bras bu rnam pa thams cad mkhyen pa'i sangs rgyas bcu gcig kun du 'od kyi sa la bzhus nas don gnyis lhun gyis grub pa/.

¹⁴⁹ PT 699: f. 5a.5.

mitra), a Rdzogs chen scripture traditionally held to have been concealed by the eighth/ninth century scholar Vimalamitra, though revealed in about the eleventh century and later gathered in the *Snying thig ya bzhi* (*Four-Part Innermost Essence*) by Klong chen pa,¹⁵⁰ frequently employs the locution *i ti*. Here, we find *i ti* used in order to seal *gter ma* texts, in some cases even followed by the seal *rgya rgya rgya*.¹⁵¹ The term thus appears in relatively early Rdzogs chen literature in conjunction with the most secret teachings.

Furthermore, the same term, transcribed as *i thi*, is also later employed by the Gsar ma schools, once again to seal the most secret instructions. For instance, in 'Jam mgon Kon sprul's (1813-1899) exposition of the Sa skya school in the *Gdams ngag mdzod* (*Treasury of Instructions and Techniques for Spiritual Realization*) the expression *i thi* is used as follows:

Because the profound path is the pivot, keep it secret to those of lesser intelligence. *I thi*.¹⁵²

Or:

This [teaching] is not a [suitable] object for those of lesser intelligence; therefore, one should investigate it and hand it down to a [heart-]son. *I thi*.¹⁵³

And in the section devoted to the Bka' brgyud schools, the term *i thi* clearly seals the innermost teachings as well:

¹⁵⁰ The *Snying thig ya bzhi* (*Four-Part Innermost Essence*) compiled by Klong chen Rab 'byams pa Dri med 'od zer (1308-1363), includes the (1) *Bi ma snying thig* (*Innermost Essence of Vimalamitra*), attributed to Vimalamitra, (2) *Bla ma yang thig* (*Further Innermost Essence of the Spiritual Masters*) by Klong chen pa, (3) *Mkha' gro snying thig* (*Innermost Essence of the dākinī*), attributed to Padma-sambhava and Ye shes mtsho rgyal, (4) *Mkha' gro yang thig* (*Further Innermost Essence of dākinī*) by Klong chen pa, and (5) *Zab mo yang thig* (*Profound Further Innermost Essence*) by Klong chen pa. It is available in a number of editions, including a Sde dge xylograph and KLONG CHEN RAB 'BYAMS PA 1970, which edition I have used here. The traditional history of Klong chen pa's redaction of the collection is given in his biography in DUDJOM 1991: vol. 1, 575-96. For a discussion of the *Bi ma snying thig*, see also PRATS 1984.

¹⁵¹ BI MA SNYING THIG: 1 (*i ti*); 27.6 (*i ti rgya rgya rgya*); 105.6-106.1 (*i ti rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya rgya shu bham*); 34.5 (*a ti rgya*).

¹⁵² 'JAM MGON KON SPRUL 1971: vol. 4 (*Sa skya'i skor*), 786: *zab lam gyi thil yin pas blo dman la gsang ngo/ i thi*.

¹⁵³ Ibid.: vol. 4 (*Sa skya'i skor*), 782: *dman pa rnams kyi yul min pas brtags te bu la sbyin par bya/ i thi*.

This is the heart-essence. *I thi*.¹⁵⁴

Therefore, we might say that the author of our *Commentary* used the designation *i ti* in a similar way to seal a secret and essential instruction that directly points to mind's luminosity, to 'self-knowing primordial gnosis' (*rang rig ye she*) itself.¹⁵⁵

Philosophical Considerations

The author of the *Commentary* appears to reside not only in the geographical borderland between Tibet and China, but also in a culturally intermediary space situated between the Chinese Chan Buddhist heritage and the emerging Tibetan Rdzogs chen system. His understanding is in the first instance indebted to a Chinese conception of Buddhist immediacy, but he explains the method of 'gazing at mind', which was meant to be a direct recognition of the nature of mind in the Chinese context, more in terms of a gradual process of realization. Here, he relies on the ceaseless investigation of any movement in the mind and on the practice of 'serenity and insight' (*zhi gnas dang lhag mthong*).

However, the author of the *Commentary* does not adhere solely to the supremacy of the gradual path, for he acknowledges an 'intrinsic awareness' (*rang rig*) whereby he returns to the teaching of immediacy once more: it is simply in understanding the intrinsic awareness of primordial gnosis that the supreme eleventh *bhūmi* of a Buddha is accomplished. In this sense we might regard the *Small Treatise* as being interpreted here from the perspective of the omniscience of mind, an interpretation that is also confirmed by Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes in his *Torch of Meditation*. It is in the chapter on the exposition of the Chan standpoint that he refers to the *Small Treatise* in connection with Lang 'gro Dkon cog 'byung nas, who, as we have seen, is also mentioned in the *Commentary* as an accomplished one.¹⁵⁶ In the *Torch of Meditation*, this same figure is quoted as stating that by virtue of 'discriminative awareness' (*shes rab*) one reaches to the 'natural sphere' (*ngo bo nyid kyi dbyings nyid*) beyond

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.: vol. 5 (*Mar pa bka' brgyud skor*), 69: *thugs kyi nying khu/ i thi*.

¹⁵⁵ PT 699: f. 5a.5. However, this is merely one possible interpretation. In Sanskrit texts *i ti*, meaning 'thus, so', simply marks the end of a quotation. Hence, I am not able to establish definitively the intention the *Commentary*'s author, in his use of term *i ti*. I thank Henk Blezer for his remarks.

¹⁵⁶ PT 699: f. 2a.7. See also above, nn. 99-100.

any conceptualization.¹⁵⁷ Here, Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes comments that this is not the gradual path, but the teaching of ‘simultaneous entrance’ (*cig car zhugs pa*) that reveals omniscience from the very beginning.¹⁵⁸ It is in this context that he also refers to the passage from the *Small Treatise* that states that *saṃsāra* becomes *nirvāṇa*.¹⁵⁹

The author of the *Commentary* does not mention a precise doctrinal basis when he refers to the masters of Atiyoga in his concluding lines. Therefore, the question arises, what might have been the connecting thread that enabled the author of the *Commentary* to conjoin elements of Chan meditation with Rdzogs chen? I propose looking again at the final line of the *Small Treatise* which he sealed with the expression *i ti yin no*. It reads:

Nonconceptuality is vividly clear, and [even this] lucidness is not conceptualized. This is the primordial gnosis of intrinsic awareness, which cannot be designated as ‘this’ [existing entity].¹⁶⁰

‘Nonconceptuality’ (*rnam par mi rtog pa*) is the essence of the Chan Buddhist teaching as it is presented both in the *Small Treatise* and by the author of the *Commentary*. It is an oft-repeated matter of discussion in other Chan manuscripts from Dunhuang as well. For instance, the most important Tibetan Chan scroll, PT 116, elaborates in great detail (part VIa, f. 146.2-163.3) the coincidence of non-conceptuality with twenty-three key concepts of Mahāyana Buddhism. Nonconceptuality is the main theme running through additional Dunhuang manuscripts, too. For instance, we find among them three translations of the *Āryāvikalpapraveśanāmadhārāṇī*, one in Chinese (*Foshuo ru wu fenbie zongchi jing* 十方總持經, *jiang* 薑 23) and two in Tibetan (*’Phags pa rnam par mi rtog par ’jug pa’i gzungs*, IOL Tib J 51 and 52).¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁷ Lang ’gro Dkon cog ’byung nas is quoted in a passage discussing the ‘faults of conceptualizing’ (*rtog skyon*). Refer to *SM*: 169.1-170.1.

¹⁵⁸ *SM*: 170.3-4: *dang po nas thams cad mkhyen pa nyid la cig car zhugs pa ste/ de ni bslab pa med pa’i bslab pa zhes bya’o/*.

¹⁵⁹ *SM*: 170.2-3: *lung chung nas gsungs pa ltar/ sams g.yung du ’gyur zhing sdug bsngal nyid byang chub la/ ’khor ba mya ngan las ’das par ’gyur ro/*. This quotation corresponds to PT 699: f. 4a.1 and 4a.3.

¹⁶⁰ PT 699: f. 5a.5: *rnam par mi rtog sa le pa/ sa le pa la rtog pa myed/ ’di ni rang rig ye shes te/ ’di zhes gdags su myed pa’o/*.

¹⁶¹ Cf. UYAMA, EASTMAN, and BROUGHTON 1983: 32-42. The Chinese Dunhuang manuscript of the *Foshuo ru wu fenbie zongchi jing*, *jiang* 23, and other related texts are translated in MEINERT, C., TAM SHEK-WING, SHEN WEIRONG, and H.

Moreover, an early Rdzogs chen text mentioned earlier, *The Small Collection of Hidden Precepts*, to which the Mahāyoga *Questions and Answers of Vajrasattva* is also indebted, begins with reference to nonconceptuality, declaring:

Homage to the glorious Samantabhadra. To whatever extent profound nonconceptuality appears as an object of the intellect, the experience of this profound nonconceptuality is an experience and not reality itself.¹⁶²

Moreover, if we look again at the important testimony regarding Buddhist currents in ninth- and tenth-century Tibet, which we find in the *Torch of Meditation*, its author clearly emphasizes his aim as being ‘to comprehend thoroughly the expositions of nonconceptuality according to each vehicle’ (i.e., Rim gyis pa, Cig car ba, Mahāyoga and Atiyoga).¹⁶³

Therefore, we might conclude that in the Dunhuang area a regional Buddhist current developed, far removed from the Buddhist mainstreams of both Central Tibet and Central China. This tradition did not identify itself so much in terms of a lineage transmitted from master to disciple within only one tradition; rather, it seems to have developed more around a particular theme, the topic of ‘nonconceptuality’ (*rnam par mi rtog pa*). One result is the syncretic tradition we have just reviewed.

THE TIBETAN CRITIQUE OF THE SYNCRETIC TRADITION

The Tibetan dominion over Dunhuang between roughly 786 and 848 triggered an exchange of different Buddhist currents that developed apart from mainstream Tibetan or Chinese Buddhism and incorporated ideas and terminology derived from the Chan as well as the Rdzogs chen traditions. Our *Commentary* exemplifies this trend.

SHIU forthcoming. For a discussion of the *Āryāvikalpapraveśanāmadhāraṇī* in relation to the *Bsam gtan mig sgron*, see also MEINERT 2003.

¹⁶² *Sbas ba'i rgum chung*, IOL Tib J 594: f. 1b.1-2: *bcom ldan 'das dpal kun tu bzang po la phyag 'tshal lo// ji tsam rtog myed zab mo zhig/ blo yi yul du snang na/ myi rtog zab mo nyams myong na/ myong ba yin phyir de nyid myin/*. The translation follows KARMAY 1988: 71, with some emendations. See also NAM MKHA'I NOR BU 1984: 97-98, 115-40.

¹⁶³ SM: 12.5: [...] *theg pa so so'i mi rtog pa'i gzhung gzhi legs par khong du chud pa* [...].

Although this regional, syncretic current of Buddhism did not have a great impact on later mainstream Chinese Chan, in Tibet it remained a topic of argument for many centuries. The most comprehensive source for our knowledge of these developments is still the tenth-century *Torch of Meditation* by Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes. Though the author has only a moderate opinion of the Chinese Chan standpoint, acknowledging it to be an authentic Buddhist path and not a heresy, nevertheless, he does deem it inferior to the Rdzogs chen teachings.¹⁶⁴ This type of gradation of the teachings may even remind us of Zongmi's system of classification (*panjiao* 判教) of the various Chan schools in Tang-dynasty China, which he introduced in his *General Preface to the Collection of Explanations of the Chan Source* (*Chanyuan zhuquan jidu xu*) written in 833.¹⁶⁵

I propose to regard our Dunhuang manuscript of the *Commentary* as an example of the syncretic teaching Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes might have had in mind when writing his *Torch of Meditation*. He himself states:

On the occasion [of writing] the *Torch of Meditation*, I have explained in detail [the Cig car ba tradition], because it might mislead one as it is similar to the Rdzogs chen teachings.¹⁶⁶

In fact, the targets of his critique were those who, in his view, understood clear neither the principles of Chan, nor those of Rdzogs chen. He argued that while some, perhaps even the author of the *Commentary*, claimed their own erroneous views to be the authentic Rdzogs chen doctrine, they were, in fact, mixing together elements of two distinct traditions. Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes went so far as to buttress his argument with a citation from one of the early texts of the *Sems sde bco brgyad* (*Eighteen [Teachings] of the Mental Class*), the *Spyi bcings* (*General Outline [of the Rdzogs chen Doctrine]*):

¹⁶⁴ The different levels of the understanding of 'nonconceptuality' (*mi rtog pa*) in the four systems (Rim gyis pa, Cig car ba, Mahāyoga and Rdzogs chen) are ranged like the rungs of a ladder. See *SM*: 60.6-61.1: *de dag gi khyad par skad [= skas] kyi gdang bu bzhin te/ dper na skad [= skas] gdang la mtho dman yod par dang 'dra ste/ mi rtog pa 'di bzhi yang khyad par yod (ston tsen mahā a ti)*).

¹⁶⁵ See above n. 74.

¹⁶⁶ *SM*: 186.1-3: *rnal 'byor mig gi bsam gtan gyi skabs 'dir/ ston mun dang rdzogs chen cha 'dra bas gol du dogs pa'i phyir rgyas par bkod do/*.

[...] However, there are still those who do not understand the view [of Rdzogs chen]. They have neither confidence in the view nor a genuine transmission of the quintessential instructions. Merely being versed in the lower [teachings] they say: ‘By virtue of intrinsic awareness one does not realize the [true] nature of *dharmatā*, wherein the empty unborn, called “thusness”, is not taken as an object. Hence, neither is it an object of primordial gnosis, and when perceived is non-dual. That actually is [the view of] the Great Perfection (Rdzogs chen), beyond activity and beyond seeing’. These people claim it to be Rdzogs chen, yet they rely on the meditation of the Madhyamaka [system]. The [Rdzogs chen] *Spyi bcings*¹⁶⁷ says: ‘Merely relying on the meditation of the *Ston men* [Chan school], they claim it to be the supreme Rdzogs chen teachings. This is like a prince descending to become a subject and so contradicts the scriptures’. [...] To these people, their own erroneous views appear as Rdzogs chen’.¹⁶⁸

To conclude, we have seen how the *Small Treatise* as an authentic instruction on the nature of mind within the Chinese Chan tradition was translated into Tibetan in Dunhuang, yet due to the translator’s terminological choices the meaning underwent a slight transformation even during its initial journey from Chinese to Tibetan. Subsequently, when the teachings of the *Small Treatise* were interpreted by a Tibetan scholar in the *Commentary*, they were further transformed and also commingled with elements of the Rdzogs chen doctrine. A century later the resulting syncretism became a target of criticism for Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes, who sought to clarify the distinctive qualities of Chan and of Rdzogs

¹⁶⁷ The original passage from the *Spyi bcings* in the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum* (*Ancient Tantra Collection*) could not be identified. However, the text is identified as the eleventh of the *Sems sde bco brgyad* (*Eighteen Sems sde Texts*) and is described as such in 'JAM MGON KOŃ SPRUL 1971: vol. 1 (*Rnying ma'i skor*), 198.6-199.2 (in *Sems sde bco brgyad kyi dgongs pa rig 'dzin rnams kyis rdo rje'i glur bzhengs pa* [*Vajra-Songs of the Vidyādhara, the Intention of the Eighteen Sems sde Texts*]).

¹⁶⁸ SM: 311.1-6: [...] *de lta ba ni ma shes/ lta ba'i gdengs ni bral/ khungs su brgyud pa'i man ngag ni med/ 'og ma la lce shyangs pa'i gang zag kha cig/ rang rig pas chos nyid kyi ngo bo ma skyes stong pa de bzhin nyid bya ba la dmigs 'dzin med la mi rtogs pas/ 'ye shes kyi yul yang med/ dmigs pa'i dus na gnyis su med de/ /de kho na rdzogs pa chen po yin te/ de la ni bya ba dang mthong ba med do/ /zhes smra ba'i gang zag ni/ /rdzogs chen du khas 'ches nas dbu ma'i bsam gtan la rten 'cha' ba yin/ /spyi bcings las kyang/ rdzogs chen bla na med par khas 'ches nas/ /ston men bsam gtan tsam la rten 'cha' ba/ rgyal po'i sras 'bangs babs pa lung dang 'gal/ zhes 'byung ste/ [...] de ni rang gi lta ba 'khrul pa rdzogs chen du snang ba [...].*

chen thought.¹⁶⁹ Thus, we have a chain of causality that spans two cultures and at least two centuries.

TRANSLITERATION OF PT 699

(1a.1) //mtha' yas pa'i sems can thams cad//¹⁷⁰ mtha' yas pa'i sems can [thams] can mang po la bya/ dmyal ba'i 'jig rten gi 'khams ni/ /sa gzhi chen po tsam du mang ngo/ de mang ba las bltas na/ yi dags 'jig rten gi 'khams kyi ni sen/ (1a.2) mo steng gi sa tsam du yod de nyung ngo/ yang na yi dags kyi 'jig rten gi 'khams ni sa gzhi chen po bdal ba tsam du mang ngo/ yang na byol song gi 'jig rten gi 'khams ni sen mo steng gi sa tsam las myed¹⁷¹ de nyung ngo/ yang na byol song gi 'jig rten gi 'khams/ (1a.3) ni sa gzhi chen po bdal pa tsam du yod de mang ngo/ yang na myi'i 'jig rten gi 'khams ni sen mo steng gi sa tsam du nyung ngo/ yang na myi'i 'jig rten gi 'khams ni sa gzhi chen po bdal pa tsam du yod de mang ngo/ yang na lha ma yin gi 'jig rten gi 'khams ni sen mo steng gi (1a.4) sa tsam du las myed de nyung ngo/ yang na lha ma yin gi 'jig rten gi 'khams ni sa gzhi chen po bdal pa tsam du yod de mang ngo/ yang na lha'i 'jig rten gi 'khams ni sen mo steng gi sa tsam du las myed de nyung ngo/ yang na lha'i 'jig rten gi (1a.5) 'khams ni sa gzhi bdal pa chen po tsam du yod de mang ngo/ mar mar ni mang yar zhing nyung ba ni/ myi dang lha bsod nams che bas ni/ yar nyung ba yin no/ byol song man cad¹⁷² bsod nams chung bas ni/ mar zhing yang ba yin no/

'o ni¹⁷³ gzugs su snang ba'i sems/ (1a.6) can dang gzugs su myi snang ba'i sems can gnyis/ gang mang zhe na gzugs su myi snang ba'i sems can ni/ stong sum gi stong chen po ri rabs dul¹⁷⁴ blags pa tsam du yod de mang ngo/ gzugs su snang ba'i sems can ni shing rta'i phang lo'i dmyig gang las myed do/

¹⁶⁹ See also MEINERT 2006.

¹⁷⁰ The original text of the *Lung chung* (IOL Tib J 689-1) is marked with an underline. When the quotations of the *Lung chung* given in the *Commentary* differ from the original manuscript IOL Tib J 689-1, this is indicated in each case. Orthographical variations are marked only at the first occurrence. IOL Tib J 689-1 regularly reads *thams can* instead of *thams cad*.

¹⁷¹ This manuscript uses an orthography which is consonant with many Dunhuang manuscripts. Here, the consonant *m-* is usually written *my-*.

¹⁷² *man cad* = *man chad*.

¹⁷³ 'o ni = 'o na.

¹⁷⁴ *dul* = *rdul*.

byang cub¹⁷⁵ (1a.7) sems dpa' spyen rnam par dag pas gzigs na/ de'i ba spu bu ga na srin bu pi pi ling zhes bya ba grong khyer stug por yod do/ de'i ba spu bu ga na yang ki ling zhes bya ba mang po yod de/ de la ni mtha' yas pa zhes bya'o/ sems can gi¹⁷⁶ las dang nyong mongs (1b.1) pa mtha' yas so/ nam ka¹⁷⁷ yang mtha' yas so/ lung las kyang kyang¹⁷⁸ nam ki¹⁷⁹ mthar thug gyur pa ci tsam bar/ sems can ma las mtha' yang de tsam mo/ ci tsam las dang nyong mongs mthar gyur pa/ bdag gi smon lam mtha' yang de tsam mo/ zhes 'byung ste/ (1b.2) sems can gi don mang nas gzhas la nyung nas bya ba ni ma yin no/ snying rje ni thabs cis kyang bya'o/ lung las kyang myi rtog bzhin du sems can don/ myi lam tshul du skye 'gro sgrol zhes 'byung ngo/

'khor ba'i btson ra/¹⁸⁰ btson yang myed/ / (1b.3) btson du 'dzin mkhan yang myed/ /btson bdag kyang myed/ 'du byed sred pas ni rgyu byas/ /ma rig pa'i sred len gis ni rkyen byas/ /sdug ngal la ni gnas bcas// rnam par shes pa/ mying dang gzugs/ skye mched drug/ rag pa¹⁸¹ tshor ba/ skye ba dga'i¹⁸² shi la gtugs¹⁸³ (1b.4) nas 'khamsum du shing brte'i phang lo¹⁸⁴ bzhin du/ 'khor ba la ni btson zhes bya'o//

//sdug bsngal gi chu bo// sdug bsngal gsum dang brgyad du 'byung/ de yang skye ba'i sdug bsngal dang/ na ba'i sdug bsngal dang/ dga' ba'i sdug (1b.5) bsngal dang/ 'chi ba'i sdug bsngal dang/ gnyen byams pa dang bral gis dogs pa'i sdug bsngal dang/ dgra stangs ba dang ba 'phrad gyis dogs pa'i sdug bsngal dang/ yod pa myi thub pa'i sdug bsngal dang/ myed pa myi rnyed pa[']i sdug bsngal dang/ yang na ni cig la/ (1b.6) 'du byed kyi sdug bsngal la/ sdug bsngal thams bcad¹⁸⁵ nas/ ga las byung zhe na/ sdug bsngal gi chu bo las/ chu bo la yang bzhi ste/ sred pa[']i chu bo dang/ ma rig

¹⁷⁵ *byang cub* = *byang chub*.

¹⁷⁶ *gi* = *gyi*.

¹⁷⁷ *nam ka* = *nam mkha'*.

¹⁷⁸ The second *kyang* is superfluous.

¹⁷⁹ *nam ki* = *nam mkha'i*. The text often omits ' ('*a-chung*) in the genitive. In what follows, I have usually added it in brackets ['], e.g., *rnyed pa[']i* instead of *rnyed pi*.

¹⁸⁰ This passage is not intelligible, but is reconstructed according to IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.1.

¹⁸¹ *rag pa* = *reg pa*.

¹⁸² *dga' ba'i* = *rga ba'i*.

¹⁸³ *gtugs* = *thug*.

¹⁸⁴ *shing brte'i phang lo* = *shing rta'i 'phang lo* (cf. f. 1a.6).

¹⁸⁵ *thams bcad* = *thams cad*.

pa[']i chu bo dang/ lhag ma[']i chu bo dang/ nga rgyal gi chu bo kun
la zhon nas/ 'khor ba'i glung (1b.7) phyogs su zhugs nas/ sdug
bsngal las thar pa[']i dus myed de/ de la chu bo zhes bya'o/

/ma rig pa'i rgya mo dral zhing// chu bo thams bcad na ga las
byung/ ma rig pa las byung/ rig pa chen po sangs rgyas bcom
ldan 'das thams (2a.1) /cad mkhyen pa'i ye shes dang ldan ba de la/
ma rig pa zhes bya 'am/ de la yang ma rig pa zhes myi bya/ rig pa
chung na nyan thos 'phrul gi spyen can de la bya 'am/ de la yang myi
bya/ rig pa myed pa ste/ thing shing nags mtshal lung du ma bstan
(2a.2) pa de la gdags sam/ de la yang myi gdags/ 'o na gang la gdags/
thog mar ni ma dad/ tha mar ni ma phyogs/ lha dang slob dpon ni
zhal ma mthong/ rgyu 'bras kyi chos la ni yid ma ches/ bden ba gnyis
kyi don ma rtogs pas/ ma rig pa zhes (2a.3) bya'o/ bden ba gnyis la
kun rdzob kyi bden ba dang/ don dam pa'i bden ba 'o/ kun rdzob ni
srid pa dngos su snang ba la bya'o/ don dam pa[']i bden ba ni chos
thams cad sgyu ma tsam du snang ba'i don de ni don dam pa'o/

rgya mo zer na dper na bya rgyar (2a.4) chud na 'phur ba'i rlabs
myed/ ri dags rgyar chud pa la 'bros pa[']i bang myed/ pa dang 'dra
bar na/ 'jug pa[']i tshogs drug phyin cu log du¹⁸⁶ ltas pa des/ ma rig
pa[']i rgyar chud de/ de dral na 'di ltar dral na bdag gi ye shes kyi
dral lo/

(2a.5) lung las kyang spar thabs gcig gis khyu mchog glang po
glad 'gems pa/ gcan zan rgyal po gangs kyi seng chen mthu/ nyon
mongs mye ngan gcig car skems byed pa/ myi g.yo shes rab pha rol
phyin pa[']i dang/ thob dang bngon rtogs¹⁸⁷ gang (2a.6) zhiig brjod
myed pa/ ma rig glang po glad pa 'dra pa la/ rig pa[']i ye shes seng
ge spar thams kyi dral bas¹⁸⁸/ ma rig pa[']i rgya mo dral la/ don gis
na bdag gi ye shes skad cig mas nyon mongs pa skems par byed pas/
ma rig pa[']i rgya mo dral (2a.7) zheg bya'o/

phung po lhag ma ma lus par yongs su mya ngan las bzla ba'i don
du¹⁸⁹ /phung po lhag ma ma lus pa ni/ gnubs nam ka[']i snying po
dang/ rlang su ga ta go ba dang/ lang 'gro dkon cog 'byung nas¹⁹⁰
dang/ dbu na a nang dang/ (2b.1) 'brom za sril pa dang/ mar kong za
rin cen dang/ grub pa po de rnams kyang phung po[']i lhag ma ma

¹⁸⁶ *phyin cu log du* = *phyin ci log du*.

¹⁸⁷ *bngon rtogs* = *mngon rtogs*.

¹⁸⁸ Before *dral* is the syllable *bra*, which is yet crossed out.

¹⁸⁹ This passage is not intelligible, but is reconstructed according to IOL Tib J 689-1; f. 115a.1 2.

¹⁹⁰ Lang 'gro Dkon cog 'byung nas = Lang 'gro Dkon chog 'byung nas.

lus pa yin na/ don gis na ci srid rnam par shes pa'i sems la/ gzung 'dzin gi bag chags myi gnas pa ni/ phung po lhag ma ma lus pa zhes (2b.2) bya ba yin no/ de yan cad ni glad rgyangs so/

rka lag ni bsnol/ tshigs pa ni bsrang/ lus ni myi bskyod/ ngan ni myi brjod¹⁹¹ //phyag rgya rnam pa lnga dang sbyar ste/ myi rtog par bsgom mo/ phyag rgya rnam pa lnga la/ dmyig sna gong du dbab/ (2b.3) lce rkan la gnan/ lag pa g.yas kyis g.yon bnan/ rkan pa g.yas kyis g.yon bnan/ tshigs pa bsrang ste bsgom/ dmyig sna gong du dbab/ pa ni lta ba[']i yul bcad pa yin la/ lce rkan¹⁹² la gnan pa ni/ smra bsam gi yul (2b.4) bcad pa yin la/ lag pa g.yas kyis g.yon bnan pa ni gzung 'dzin gi yul bcad/ rkang pa g.yas kyis g.yon bnan ba ni/ 'ongs [']gro gnyis kyi yul bcad pa yin no/ spyir bsus¹⁹³ na rnam par myi rtog par bsgom mo/

(2b.5) sems kyi sgo drug 'khrul ba'i¹⁹⁴ yul la myi 'jug par bzlog nas// lus 'khrul te rag bya la 'jug pa'i dpe ni/ bye'u rnyong la zin pa 'dra/ yid 'khrul te chos la 'jug pa[']i dpe ni rkyang la dar phyar ba 'dra/ dmyig 'khrul (2b.6) yul la 'jug pa[']i dpe ni/ bya gyi myed rang gi mjug ma la lta ba 'dra/ rna ba 'khrul te sgra la 'jug pa'i dpe ni/ sha ba la khos btab pa 'dra/ 'sna 'khrul te dri la 'jug pa'i dpe ni/ gshed dri bo gsur la skru ba 'dra/ lce 'khrul te dri la (2b.7) 'jug pa[']i dpe ni/ dug 'chang 'thungs pa 'dra/ lung las kyang yul drug bslu la mkhas/ rnam shes ni 'phyar la g.yeng/ de rnams las bzlog nas myi 'jug par bya'o/ skyes bu gang gis sems chol/ rtog dpyod lam las bzlog (3a.1) /nas/ sems mye ngan las 'das pa¹⁹⁵ yin nam/ de ltar ma yin te/ lung las kyang ci ltar rtogs pa'i don de ni/ rang gi rim pa tsam du zad/ ces 'byung ngo//

//rang gi sems la bltas na/ sems kyi ngo bo¹⁹⁶ ci yang ma (3a.2) yin bas/ [ci la yang myi bsam ba ni]¹⁹⁷ //rang gi sems la bltas na ni/ thabs yin la/ de tsam la myi gnas pa ni/ sems yod myed rnam pa

¹⁹¹ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.2 reads *rka lag bsnol/ /tshigs pa bsrang/ /lus myi bskyod/ /ngan myi brjod/* instead of *rka lag ni bsnol/ tshigs pa ni bsrang/ lus ni myi bskyod/ ngan ni myi brjod/*.

¹⁹² Before *n* (in *rkan*) is a crossed out *l*.

¹⁹³ *bsus* = *bsdus*.

¹⁹⁴ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.2 reads *'khrul ba* instead of *'khrul ba'i*.

¹⁹⁵ *mye ngan las 'das pa* = *mya ngan las 'das pa*.

¹⁹⁶ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.3 reads *dngos bo* instead of *ngo bo*.

¹⁹⁷ The *Commentary* omits this passage, which appears in IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.3, as *cir yang myi bsam/*. However, it is discussed in the *Commentary* further below (f. 3b.3).

brgyad do/ sems rnam pa brgyad kyis gtan tshigs kyis gtan la phab la/ sems 'di gzung 'dzin (3a.3) gcig yin nam/ rtag chad yin nam/ skye 'gag yin nam/ kha dog rnam bzhi yin nam/ dbyibs rnam pa brgyad yin nam/ shes rab gcig yin nam/

gzung ba ma yin bas ni yul rnam pa kun la 'jug pa[']i phyir ro/ (3a.4) gzung ba yang ma yin no/ 'dzin pa yang ma yin no/ sems kyi khyad bar las yul bye brag gcig yin nam/ de yang ma yin te mang po zhis 'dzin pa yang ma yin no/ sems rtag pa zhis yin nam byas na// (3a.5) rtag pa ma yin bas/ se gol brdabs pa tsam zhis la yang/ nyan thos kyi 'phrul gi spyan can ni/ brgya' drug bcur 'grang ngo/ dper na shog shog sum rgya' drug bcur bltas na/ smyung gis¹⁹⁸ thal gis phug na/ phugs kyang phugs la (3a.6) bgrang du yod pa dang 'dra bar/ sems kyi rgyun la yang de bzhi du yod do/ 'o na chad pa zhis yin nam byas na/ de yang ma yin/ mye mar rlung gis ma bskyod pa tsam zhis phyi'i yul la breng nge 'jug pas/ chad pa yang ma yin [n]o/ 'o na sems (3a.7) 'di skye ba yin ni/ skye ba yang ma yin no/ dngos por ma grub/ mtshan mar ma grub/ dbyibs su ma grub/ skye ba ma yin/ 'gag pa ma yin/ chu glung bzhi sems ni/ rnam pa yul kun la rgyu zhis/ skyod cing 'jug pa'o/ sems 'gag (3b.1) pa ma yin no/ 'o na sems myed pa zhis yin nam/ zab mo nyag gcig gi[s] spyod yul la/ shes rab kyi thal gis bsgoms te/ rtog go/ skyes bus brtags na/ gzhan la btsal du yod dam/ btsal dang myed ste/ lung las kyang ci ltar chud pa don de ni/ (3b.2) rang gi rig pa[']i don der zad/ rig pa de yang 'di ltar ste/ mying du brtags shing brjod du myed/ don chud 'di tsam snyon myed de/ sems la myong ba rdul tsam myed/ gzhan du myong dang rig ces bya ba ni/ nyan thos rang rgyal phyal bar ltung ngo zhes 'byung ngo//

(3b.3) nyon mongs pa rnams¹⁹⁹ pa yid la myi byed pas ni ci la yang myi rtog/ da ni lung gsum man ngag gsum 'bru gsum dang sbyar ro/

sims kyi ngo bo ci yang ma yin bas/ ci la yang myi bsam ba ni²⁰⁰ bsam myed dang sbyar ro/ sems kyi ngo bo bsams du (3b.4) myed pas/ nyon mongs pa rnams ci la yang myi rtog pas/ rtag pa²⁰¹ myed pa dang sbyar ro/ sems gang na yang myi gnas pas²⁰² gnas myed dang sbyar ro/

da ni man ngag gsum dang sbyar ro/ sems kyi ngo bo gang du yang ma grub pa ni/ sems myed (3b.5) dang sbyar ro/ sems dran bar

¹⁹⁸ *smyung gis* = *smiyugs gis*.

¹⁹⁹ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.3 reads *pa'i rnam pa* instead of *pa rnams*.

²⁰⁰ Cf. n. 197 above to 3a.2.

²⁰¹ *rtag pa* = *rtog pa*.

²⁰² Cf. n. 205 below to 3b.7.

bya ba'i yul myed pas/ dran myed dang sbyar ro/ dran bar bya ba'i yul myed pas/ sgyu ma dang sbyar/

yang na sems kyi ngo bo ci yang ma yin bas ni/ tshul khirms dang sbyar/ nyon mongs pa rnam yid la myi byed pas ni/ (3b.6) ting nge 'dzin dang sbyar/ de ltar sems kyi spyod yul yongs su dag pas/ ci la yang myi gnas zhes bya ba ni/ shes rab dang sbyar/ dpe ni snod ma chags pa dang 'dra bar/ chu blugs pa dang/ gnyi zla'i gzugs brnyan gsal bar snang ba bzhin du/ (3b.7) ting nge 'dzin cha cig du bdag gis bsgoms la/ ting nge 'dzin bsgom du bdub²⁰³ nas/ lhag mthong gi shes rab skye'o/ de yan cad sems gzahag pa['ji thabs bstan pa lags so/

de ltar sems kyi spyod yul/ yongs su dag nas²⁰⁴// [/ci la yang myi gnas/]²⁰⁵ (4a.1) yun ring du gnas na²⁰⁶/ sems g.yung du 'gyur ro²⁰⁷/ lung las kyang sems ni glog dang rlung dang sprin dang 'tshungs/ rgya mtsho chen po rlabs dang 'dra/ rnam par myi rtog pa['ji sems nyams su ma lon gi bar du/ bsgom ba'i don ni/ (4a.2) sgyun²⁰⁸ can gi spyod yul 'dra bas/ dga' zhing 'phyar ba dag rtog du gdul bar bya'o/ sems ni dngos po myed cing rnam par myi rtog pa'i ngang du gyur pa'i dus na/ g.yo myed par ni gdul ba ltar/ de bzhin du rang gi sems rtog du gdul/ (4a.3) bar bya'o/

ma skyes ma byung sdug bsngal nyid kyang byang cub²⁰⁹ 'khor ba nyid kyang mye ngan las 'das²¹⁰ ste/ ye shes kyi rang bzhin gdod ma nas ma byung ba'o²¹¹/ sdug bsngal las ma gtogs pa byang cub kyang logs na myed do/ ye nas bdag du (4a.4) myed pa'i chos la gdod ma nas ma byung ba ni/ chos nyid rtogs pa'i dus na/ shes rab kyiis rig cing chos nyid kyi don phyin cu ma log par yongs su rtogs pa'o/

²⁰³ *bdub* = *thub*.

²⁰⁴ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.4 reads *spyod yul yongs su dag pas/* instead of *spyod yul/ yongs su dag nas/*.

²⁰⁵ The *Commentary* omits this passage which appears in IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.4 as *ci la yang myi gnas/* instead of *gang na yang myi gnas pas*. However, it is discussed earlier in the *Commentary* (f. 3b.4).

²⁰⁶ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.4 reads *'dug nas* instead of *gnas na*.

²⁰⁷ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115a.4 reads *'gyur* instead of *'gyur ro*.

²⁰⁸ *sgyun* = *rgyun*.

²⁰⁹ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.1 reads *byang chub* instead of *byang cub*.

²¹⁰ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.1 reads *mya ngan las 'das* instead of *mye ngan las 'das*.

²¹¹ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.1 reads *gdod nas ma byung/* instead of *gdod ma nas ma byung ba'o/*.

mthar' mar²¹² myi 'gag/ da ltar myi gnas/ myi 'gag pa'i sems rtogs
pa[']i 'og du[/] da ltar myi gnas zhes bya ba ni yang 'di kho na yin
go zhes gdags su myed pa[']i don/ don 'di kho na lta bu yin go zhes
gdags su myed pa[']i don no//

(4a.5) dus sum du bnyam bar stong nas²¹³/ (4a.6) dus sum rabs kyis
stong pa ma yin gi/ (4a.7) dus sum gi bnyam ba nyid du stong ngo/

(4a.5) stong pa nyid kyang stong la²¹⁴/ (4a.6) chos kyis dbyings
sto[ng] pa nyid du (4a.7) stong la/

(4a.5) stong pa nyid la stong pa nyid myi rtog²¹⁵/ (4a.6) stong pa cig
la stong pa 'di ma yin gis stong pa zhes (4a.7) bya ba'i don ni stong
pa tsam du ma grub bo//

(4a.5) byung tshor zhi ba'i rjes la/ (4a.6) tshor ba ni skyid sdug
nyams su myong ba'o/ byung ba ni rkun po dang 'dra/ (4a.7) tshor ba
ni myel che 'dra/ phyi tshor ba ni sems 'dod pa[']i yon tan (4a.8)
lga la 'phro//

(4b.1) sems dang kun gzhi bag chags brgya' cu rtsa bzhi²¹⁶ ched du
dgag cing nan kyis gnan myi rgos te²¹⁷/ (4b.2) nyan thos zhi ba[']i
gnyen po ste ngang du gyur pa[']i dus na/ 'gyur ba yang a tsam du
cha bnyam²¹⁸/ myi rgos pa ste sems chos nyid lha[g] mthong myed
pa[']i (4b.3) tshul gi lhag mthong/ de zhi [g]nas myed pa'i tshul gis
cha snyoms te bsgom mo//

(4b.1) khad kyis byang zhing shugs kyis rang grol te²¹⁹ (4b.2) zhi
[g]nas lhag mthong cha snyoms pa las rdo rje lta bu (4b.3) ting
nge 'dzin sangs rgyas kyis sa kun du 'od skad cig la sbyor ro//

²¹² IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.1 reads *mthar* instead of *mthar' mar*.

²¹³ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.1-2 reads *dus gsum mnyam bar stong zhing/* instead of *dus sum du bnyam bar stong nas/*.

²¹⁴ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.2 reads *stong pa nyid kyis stong la/* instead of *stong pa nyid kyang stong la/*.

²¹⁵ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.2 reads *myi rtog go/* instead of *myi rtog/*.

²¹⁶ The root text IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.2 gives a more intelligible version: *sems dang kun gzhi bag chags rgyu ba rtsing zhib tu 'byung ba/*.

²¹⁷ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.3 reads *ched dud gag ching/ /nan kyis gnan myi dgos ste/* instead of *ched du dgag cing nan kyis gnan myi rgos te/*.

²¹⁸ *cha bnyam* = *cha mnyam*.

²¹⁹ In the original text this passage follows after *ting nge 'dzin myi g.yo bar mnyam pas* (IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.3 4).

(4b.1) shes rab myi dmyigs pa dang// (4b.2) shes rab myi dmyigs pa ni zhi gnas nyin lan gsum mtshan (4b.3) lan gsum du myi rtog par bsgom mo//

(4b.4) ting nge 'dzin myi g.yo bar bsnyoms pas²²⁰/ (4b.5) ting nge 'dzin myi g.yo ba ni lhag mthong tsam zhig mthong cha ma snyoms pas ni ri rabs tsam (4b.6) zhig mthong bas kyang myi 'grub ste/ de ltar ci bzhi²²¹ zhe na rdo rje sems pa[']i zhus lan las kyang/ (4b.7) bdag du 'dzin pa[']i de ni yongs ma spangs/ chos su 'dzin pa de ni rang dbang bdag myed par (4b.8) mthong zhing gnas pa de ni phyi'i yul la yang myi gnas/ nang gi sems la yang (4b.9) myi gnas gang la yang myi gnas s.ho//

(4b.4) 'byung ba la myi rtog/ (4b.5) 'jug pa[']i tshogs drug la myi rtog/ yang na (4b.6) bdag sems kyi rtsing zhib la yang myi rtog go/

(4b.4) myi 'byung ba la myi gnas/ ma tshor ma byung ba la myi gnas/ (4b.6) byar ni rdul tsam yang myed pas/ skad cig kyang (4b.7) yengs su myi rung//

(4b.4) nyin mtshan thun sum²²² du/ brtson 'grus kyi yu ba bcad de²²³// (4b.5) nying lan gsum du mtshan lan gsum du myi rtog par bsgom mo//

(4b.9) bsam gis²²⁴ myi khyab pa'i ye shes la bsam du myed myed²²⁵ par bsgom²²⁶// (4b.10) de ltar bsgom pa[']i tha cig go/

(4b.9) lung las kyang²²⁷ bsam bya bsam par myi bya ste/ bsam ba²²⁸ ma yin par yang myi bsam mo/ (4b.10) rnam par myi rtog pa'i don 'di bsam ba ma yin ba gzhan la bsam du myed do//

²²⁰ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.4 reads *myi g.yo ba cha mnyam pas* instead of *myi g.yo bar bsnyoms pas*.

²²¹ *bzhi* is superfluous.

²²² IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.4 reads *thum gsum* instead of *thun sum*.

²²³ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 115b.4 reads *bcad te/* instead of *bcad dell*.

²²⁴ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.1 reads *bsams gis* instead of *bsam gis*.

²²⁵ The second negation particle *myed* is superfluous (see IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.1).

²²⁶ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.1 reads *bsgom mo/* instead of *bsgom/*.

²²⁷ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.1 reads *lung las* instead of *lung las kyang*.

²²⁸ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.1 reads *bsam bya* instead of *bsam ba*.

(5a.1) lung las kyang soms shig 'gal bar ma sems shig/ (5a.2) rnam par myi rtog pa'i don la gsal bar ma sems shig pa'o//

(5a.1) [yang lung las] je phra je zhi je gsal je bnyam dag²²⁹/ (5a.2) kun [g]zhi gnas gyur nas chos kyi dbyings kyi ngang du bnyam mo²³⁰/ (5a.3) kun [g]zhi bag la nyal ba'i cha phra mo yan cad yang bya'o/ sems kyi ye shes (5a.4) rang gsal zhing byung ngo/

[/rnam par myi rtog dbyings na bdag myed gsal/]²³¹

(5a.1) 'od srungs che la chos gtad pa/ (5a.2) rgya gar gi mkhan po nyi shu rtsa brgyad khungs brgyud pa'i (5a.3) mtha' ma dar ma ta la gtad do/

(5a.1) dar ma ta la de ltar bsgom²³²/ (5a.2) gang zag la bdag myed pa dang chos la bdag myed par gsal lo//

(5a.5) rnam par myi rtog sa le pa'/ sa le pa²³³ la rtog pa myed/ 'di ni rang rig ye shes te²³⁴/ 'di zhes gdags su myed pa'o/ /rdzogs so²³⁵/ i ti yin no//

(5a.6) /khyung chen nam lang gcod kyang skyes 'gro ma lus shes/ theg pa so sor gsal yang/ spyi rgya rlabs kyis gcod// gsal la ma 'dres che ba[']i don ston pa/ 'kha'²³⁶ lding khyung ltar don gi che ba 'byin/ bgrod par bya ba[']i lam gi bye brag la// (5a.7) a ti yo ga 'chad pa[']i slob dpon ci lta bu zhe na//

(5a.7) mdo sde 'chad pa[']i slob dpon ci lta bu zhe na// (5a.8) ngang pa[']i rgyal po myi 'g.yog²³⁷ gnas su gcod/ de bzhin blobs dpon²³⁸

²²⁹ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.2 reads *yang lung las je phra je gsal je mnyam dag*/ instead of *je phra je zhi je gsal je bnyam dag*/.

²³⁰ *bnyam mo* = *mnyam mo*.

²³¹ The *Commentary* omits this passage completely (see IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.2).

²³² IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.3 reads *'di lta sgom*/ instead of *de ltar bsgom*/.

²³³ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.3 reads *sa le ba/ sa le ba* instead of *sa le pa'/ sa le pa*.

²³⁴ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.3 reads *ye shes stel*/ instead of *ye shes tel*/.

²³⁵ IOL Tib J 689-1: f. 116a.4 reads *rdzogs s+ho*/ instead of *rdzogs sol*/. Cf. n. 117 above and comments in the chapter of KAPSTEIN, p. 242, §27.

²³⁶ *'kha'* = *mkha'*.

²³⁷ *gyog* = *mgvogs*.

²³⁸ *blobs dpon* = *slob dpon*.

rgyud kyi don 'chad pa// tshig gi bde sbyor myi 'khyog²³⁹ gnas su
 gcod/ smad pa[']i rna bu brag la 'dzeg pa'i/ myi 'tsham 'tsham
 bar 'chad pas/ skyon nyid yon btan²⁴⁰ yin// (5a.9) mang po 'dus
 so 'dus pa[']i nang na/ chos 'chad pa/ skad byings don dang ldan bas/
 khong bkrar go/ ru sbal skungs pa²⁴¹ lta bu'i blos 'chad pa/ gab pa'i
 sbas pa de shes slobd dpon yon [tan] yin// // (5a.10) zhes 'byung
 ngo//

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Abbreviations

LJSZJ	<i>Lengjia shizi ji</i> □ □ □ □ □ [Record of the Masters and Disciples of the Lankāvatāra school], S. chin. 2054
P. chin.	Chinese Dunhuang manuscripts from the Pelliot collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France
S. chin.	Chinese Dunhuang manuscripts from the Stein collection in the British Library, London
SM	<i>Bsam gtan mig sgron</i> [The Torch of the Eye of Meditation], by Gnubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes
ZLJ	<i>Dunwu dacheng zhengli jue</i> □ □ □ □ 政 □ 決 [Ratification of the True Principle of the Mahāyāna Teaching of Sudden Enlightenment], P. chin. 4646

Tibetan Dunhuang Manuscripts

IOL Tib J 51	'Phags pa rnam par mi rtog par 'jug pa'i gzungs, the Āryāvikalpapraveśanāmadhārāṇī.
IOL Tib J 52	'Phags pa rnam par mi rtog par 'jug pa'i gzungs, the Āryāvikalpapraveśanāmadhārāṇī.
IOL Tib J 468	The Beginning of the <i>Bsam gtan cig car 'jug pa'i sgo</i> (The Gate of Simultaneous Entrance into Meditation), by Hwa-shang Mahāyāna, additional fragments of which are preserved in IOL Tib J 709, PT 116, PT 117, PT 812 and PT 813. Refer to n. 14 above.
IOL Tib J 470	<i>Rdo rje sems pa'i zhus lan</i> , attributed to Gnyan Dpal-dbyangs.

²³⁹ 'kyog = mgyogs.

²⁴⁰ yon btan = yon tan.

²⁴¹ skungs pa = skug pa.

- IOL Tib J 594 *Sbas pa'i rgum chung*, attributed to Buddhagupta.
 IOL Tib J 689-1 Tibetan Chan treatise, cited in later sources as the *Lung chung* (*Small Treatise*).
 IOL Tib J 710-2 Tibetan translation of the *LJSZJ*.
 PT 21 Tibetan Chan text.
 PT 116 Florilegium including major Tibetan Chan works.
 PT 121-3 A second copy of the text given in IOL Tib J 689-1.
 PT 699 The *Commentary* on IOL Tib J 689-1.
 PT 819 Fragmentary copy of the *Rdo rje sems pa'i zhus lan*, attributed to Gnyan Dpal dbyangs.
 PT 823 Tibetan fragment of the *ZLJ*.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

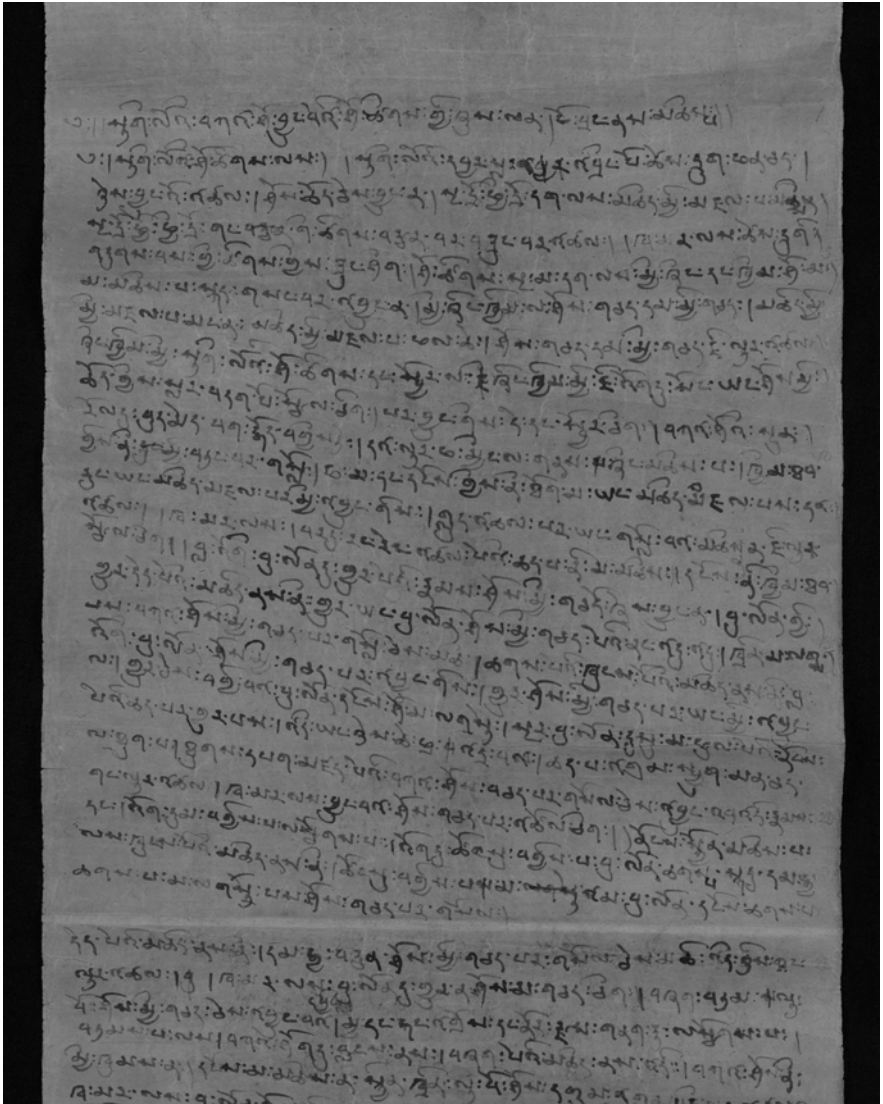


Fig. 1. The second part of IOL Tib J 740, 'Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict', lines 238-66.
(See B. Dotson, *Divination and Law in the Tibetan Empire*.)

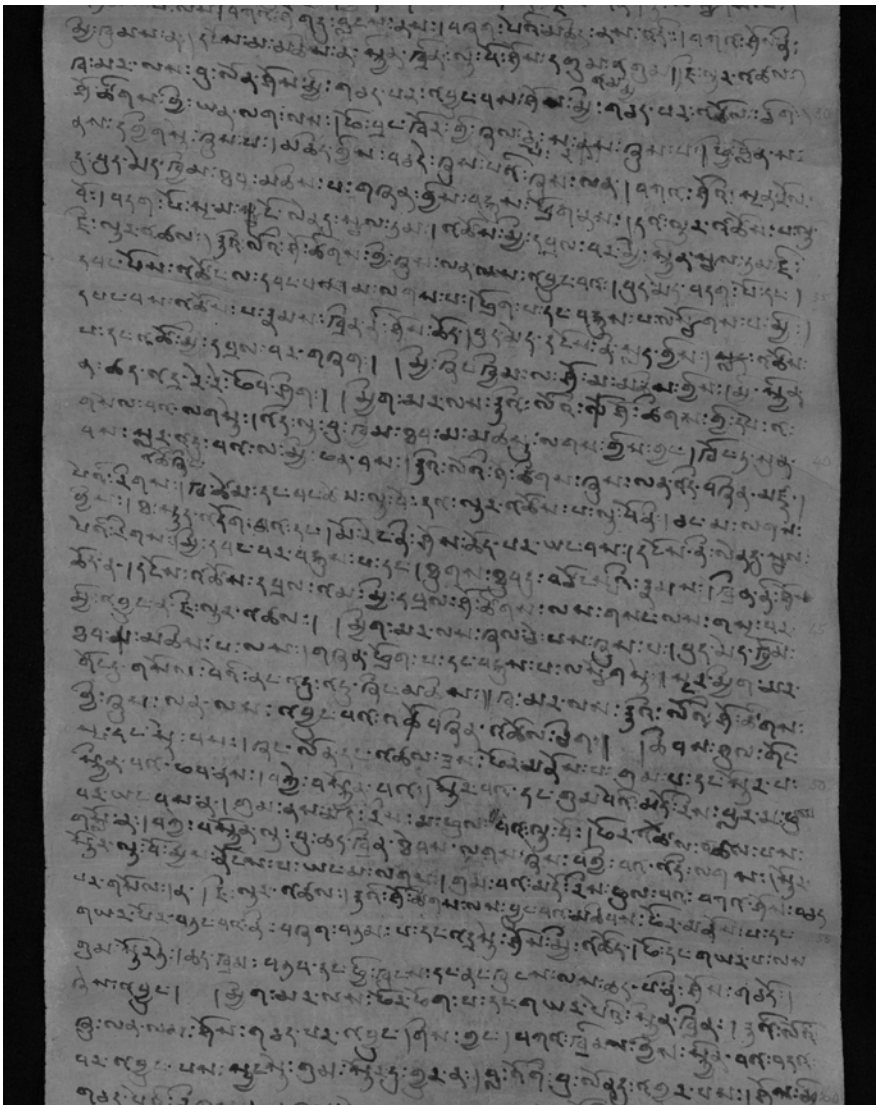


Fig. 2. The second part of IOL Tib J 740, 'Replies concerning the dice statutes from the tiger year dice edict', lines 266-97.
(See B. Dotson, *Divination and Law in the Tibetan Empire*.)

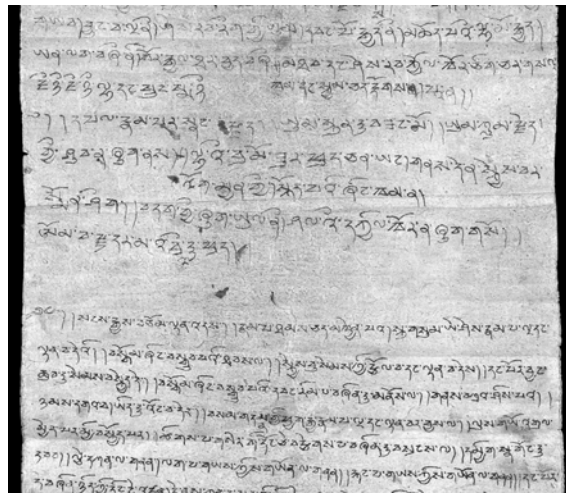


Fig. 3. Or. 8210 S: *recto*, a Chinese almanac,
and *verso*, a Tibetan text.
(See S. van Schaik, *Oral Teachings and Written Texts*.)

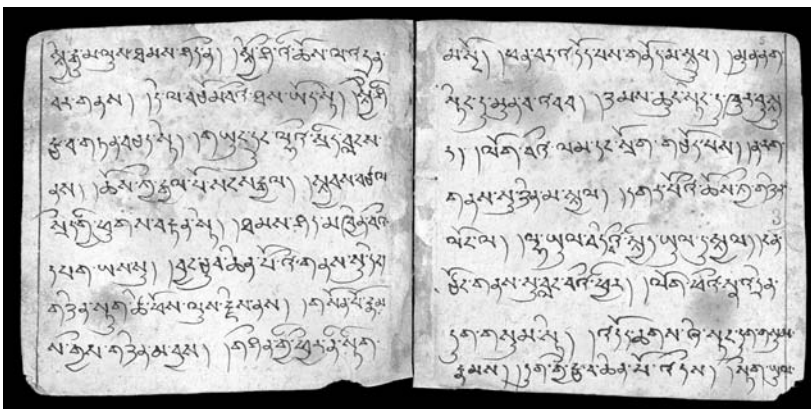
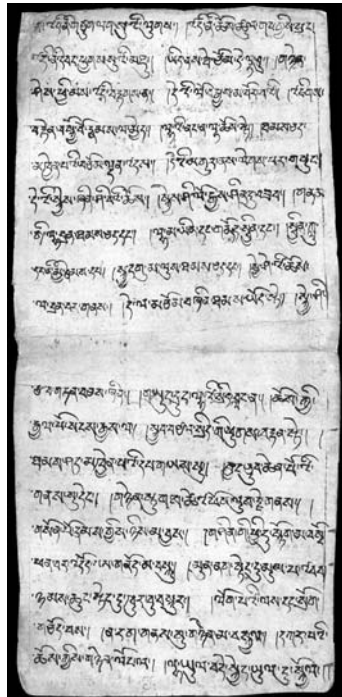


Fig. 4. IOL Tib J 420 (above) and IOL Tib J 421: two versions of *Overcoming the Three Poisons*.
(See S. van Schaik, *Oral Teachings and Written Texts*.)