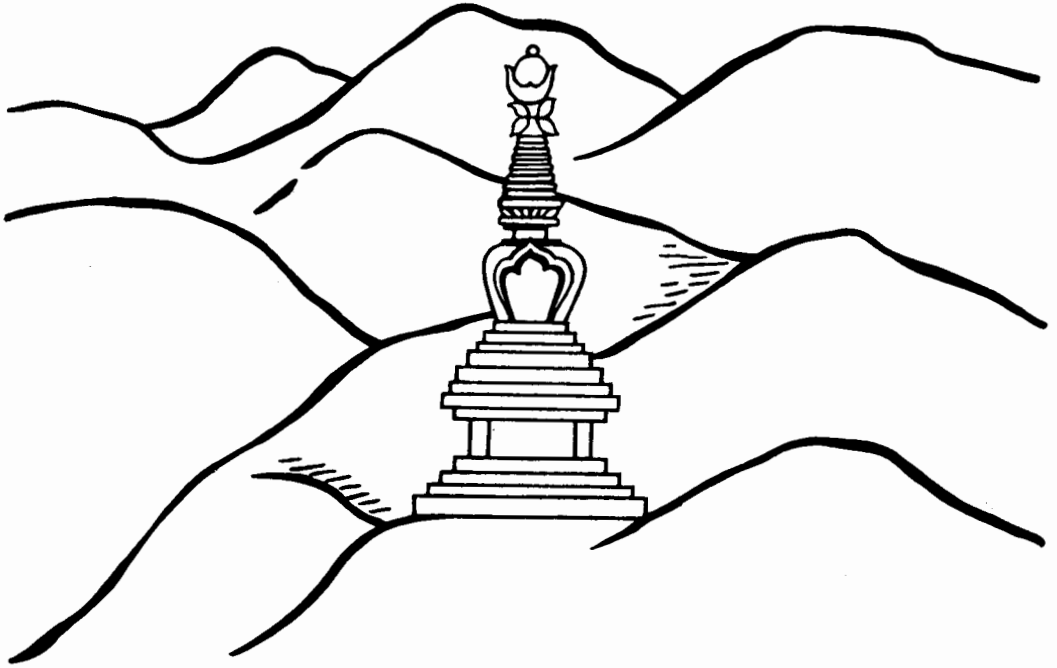


# BULLETIN OF TIBETOLOGY



1992

*NEW SERIES*

No. 2

2, August 1992

SIKKIM RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TIBETOLOGY  
GANGTOK, INDIA

The Bulletin of Tibetology seeks to serve the specialist as well as the general reader with an interest in this field of Study. The motif portraying the Stupa on the mountains suggests the dimensions of the field.

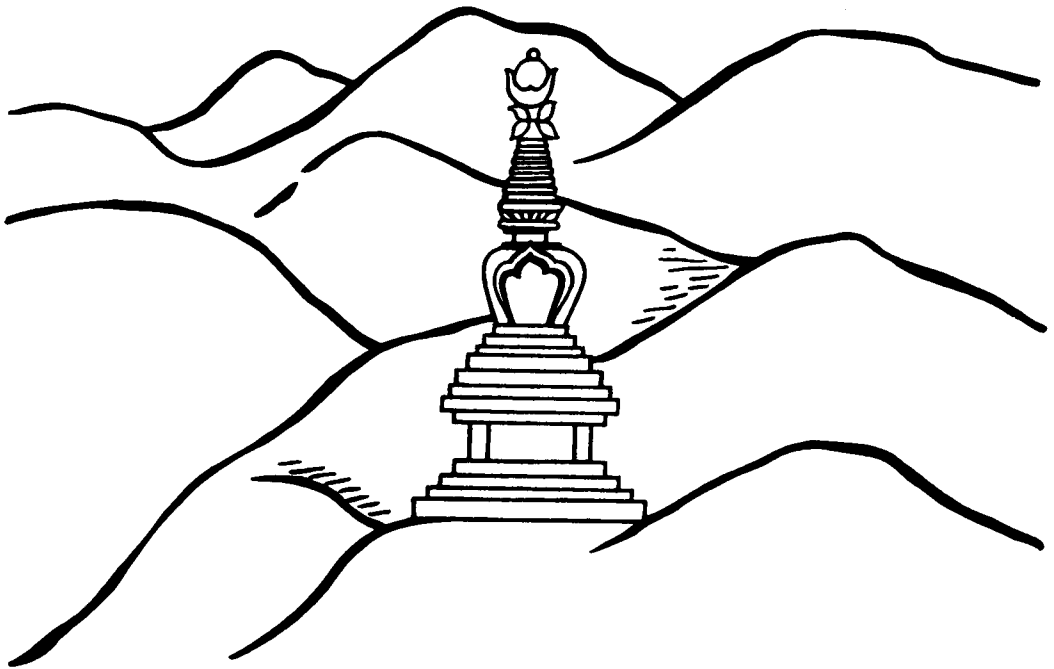
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# MENTION OF TIBETAN KINGS IN SOME DOCUMENTS FROM TUNHUANG

HUGH E. RICHARDSON

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Compared with the fundamental contribution to the early history of Tibet in the Annals and Chronicles from Tunhuang the other manuscripts of which a large number are included in the invaluable *choix de Documents Tibétains* edited by Madame A. Spanien and M. Y. Imaeda although having much of social and administrative importance disclose little about the doings of the *btsan-pe* except in a formal religious context.

There is, however, a strange little fragment Pelliot *Tibétain* (Pell T) 1144 relating to the ill-fated Stag-bu *snya-gzigs* the grand-father of *Srong-brtsan sgam-po*. And in F.W. Thomas *Literary Texts and Documents* (TLTD) II p.53 the story of the rise and fall of the dynamic arriviste and intriguer *Khyung-po Zu-tse* who was accused of plotting against *Srong-brtsan*. *Srong-brtsan* is also named in a religious context together with his descendent *Khri-Srong Lde-brtsan* in No. 370 of the collection of Tibetan documents in the India Office Library as having brought the Buddhist doctrine to Tibet.

*Khri-Lde-gtsug-brtsan* is mentioned by implication in TLTD II p.9, a damaged and incomplete account of events in the vassal 'A-zha state where a Tibetan princess had married the ruler in 689 as the ruler who married a Chinese princess in 710. He is also referred to though not by name in the *Li Yul Chos-kyi lo Rgyus* as the religiously minded Tibetan ruler who married a Chinese princess and gave shelter in Tibet to monks from Khotan.

*Khri-Srong Lde-Brtsan* is named, as mentioned above, in the India Office Library Document No. 370, "A volume of the Dharma that came down from Heaven". He is presumably also the ruler in Pell T. 1091 a fragmentary text which I understand to concern the rising against the Tibetans at *Sha-cu* in about 797.

*Khri Gtsug Lde-Brtsan* (*Ralpacan*) is the *btsan-po* most frequently named in Tunhuang documents. Pell T. 100, although not all legible, appears to be the dedication to him of some religious works by a monk of a temple at *Sha-cu*, in which he is eulogized in the mystic language of kingship invoking the ancestral *Spu-rgyal*. In Pell T. 130 he is the beneficiary of a prayer which mentions his religious acts such as making images and founding temples. One of the dangers from which it is prayed he may be delivered-*gza'*-may mean epilepsy as I suggested in a note in *BSOAS* 1961. It is known from Chinese sources that he suffered continually from illness.

Pell T. 132 is a long prayer in which his name appears, almost casually, near the end.

In TLTD II. pp. 93,96,98 he is associated with the building of a temple in the border region by his generals to celebrate the establishment of peace there.

Pell T. 735 and 1088 which are not in Choix de Documents, name him, in the first, as having religious texts copied for his benefit, and in second which is a small fragment, in association with one of his ministers, Brgya-Byin.

Pell T. 1123 is another long prayer for his benefit. Pell 1290 is a rather confused document which has been examined by Madame Spanien in *Etudes Tibetains*, pp. 317. It seems to me to be an exercise, copying passages from a number of different documents. In it there is a song by the great monk minister Yon Tan (Bran-ka dpal-gyi yon-tan) on the occasion when the king's name was changed from Mu-tsu to Khri-Gtsug lde-brtsan. A dragon year of the skyid-rtag era which Khri-Gtsug-lde-brtsan took for his reign following a Chinese model, is mentioned. That should be 826 as 812 would be too early according to the view that he succeeded to the throne in 816. The problem cannot be discussed here.

No. 637 in the India Office Library collection mentioning a dpal lha btsan-po probably refers to him. He is seen as ordering the translation of religious texts by the pandits Jnanagarbha and Cog-ro klu'i rgyal-mtshan. The latter is assigned by later histories to the reign of Ralpacan. Finally Pell T. 999 names him together with 'Od-srung as receiving the dedication of copies of religious texts from religious leaders of Sha-cu who also gave a banquet in his honour.

Khri-Gtsug lde-brtsan's successor and reputedly assassin, Khri-'U'i dun-brtan is the beneficiary of a long prayer in Pell T. 134 and I take it that he is also the 'U-rum dpal in Pell T. 83 Mlle Lalou's *Inventaire de manuscrits Tibetains de Touen houang*. It is not reproduced in Choix de documents so I have not been able to check whether 'U-rum is perhaps 'U-dum. The btsan-po's name in the Tunhuang Chronicle is given as 'U' i dum-brtan. These prayers may seem surprising in view of the later reputation of Glang-darma ('U' i dum-brtan) as the ruthless persecuter of Buddhism and having connived at the assassination of Ralpacan.

Although the tradition is often confused, there is general agreement that for part of his reign—six months according to most, but two years in the history of Dpa'-bo Gtsug-Lag- Darma ruled righteously, after which wicked ministers brought about suppression of the faith. In only one of the documents from Tunhuang-No.752 in the India Office collection—is there a possible reference to that; a fragment praying that disturbances may cease, ends with the hope that the enemy (or enemies) of the rdo-rje thegpa, the Vajrayana, may be frustrated. On the other hand Pell T. 840 which is edited by Mr. Samten Karmay in a contribution to Tantric studies in honour of R.A. Stein. Louva in 1981, states that the holy religion (Dam-Chos) flourished in the time of the *lha-sras* Dar-ma and his nephew (*Dbon-sras*) 'Od-srung.



Perhaps in Central Tibet there was hostility to the practitioners of a particular form of doctrine and it is probable that an end was put to the extensive privileges and donations granted to monasteries by Ralpacan and to the political activities of monks including elevation to the highest offices of state, which had offended the conservative nobility.

But whatever may have happened there, it is evident that Buddhism not only survive in the north-eastern provinces of the Tibetan kingdom but also had the protection of the administration regardless of its persecution in neighbouring China between 842 and 848.

All this time the country was wracked by violent fighting between rival ministers. Shangkungje of Dba's was out for himself, while Shangpipi of 'bro whose family had long connections with the Tibetan royal house and whose origin was in the neighbourhood of Sha-cu, can be seen as supporting 'Darma's successor 'Od-srung for whom and for his mother the lady 'Phan prayers continued to be offered.

In Pell T. 999 as mentioned above, 'Od-srungs' name is linked with that of Khri-Gtsug Ide-brtsan. The religious dignitary principally responsible for the offering was the abbot Rong-ben (Hong pien) who later led the return of the Chinese of Sha-cu to allegiance to the Chinese Emperor on the collapse of the Tibetan authority in 850. Pell T. 131 is a long, florid, prayer for 'Od-srung and his mother. As it is complete I have translated it below to show the way such things were written. There is also what may be an interesting point near the end in the mention of a brother.

Pell T. 230 is fragmentary prayer also for them. Enough survives to identify it as alluding to the troubles of the time and it seems worth while to attempt a translation I have done below :

Pelliot Tibetan No. 131 : Offered as a prayer. To the Tathāgatas dwelling in the three ages, and all the Buddhas who have subdued their enemies and are fully perfected in the boundless regions of the world of ten directions, reverence. To these purified by the essence of the doctrine, who are separated from all action, to those excellent beings who possess the good fortune of natural knowledge and have turned to the way of the highest knowledge, reverence. To the saintly clergy of unchanging nature, the field of merit of all gods and men, to all those spiritual sons who represent the lineage of the Tathagata wherever they may be to them also reverence. To Tshangs-Pa the lord of all who endure suffering, and to Brgya-byin powerful among the gods who protect the faith of the three ages and maintain the abode of the departed Buddhas wherever they may be, and to those who act as chief of the kings of the gods, reverence. To the four great kings etcetera, the ten protectors of the world who guard the four continents in trust and have promised by their might and magic power over the gods and nagas, the demons and spirits who act to disturb the world, to prevent them from causing confusion and, in order to keep them under control, to maintain and protect the kingdom by their powers, to those

generals of the gods, chiefs of the world, to them also reverence. With concentration in our minds presenting to those holy ones offerings, garlands of pure flowers, cymbals, scented incense powder, butter lamps, gifts, dainties, grain riches, horses etcetera, the wealth of gods and men, with whatever errors there may be proceeding from our body, speech or mind being purified by the saints, with honour and respect and further with increasing agreement with the religious edicts in the time of the ancestors of the *lha sras* which dispel hostility towards the Three Jewels, we all high and low with humble submission saddened by our desires, further confused by the shame of our thoughts, repenting with all our heart and making confession with all the saints as witnesses and praying that we may not act so in future, we have made this vow. We rejoice in all that tends to increase the two-fold accumulation of virtue and pray that all the saints who have achieved deliverance from action by their good deeds may by the power of their compassion not abandon the world and realising in their mind the infinity of the universe, will remain for the sake of sentient beings. And we beg that all those saints who dwell in their appointed abodes will swiftly turn the wheel of the Dharma and guarding all Tibet will give orders for its protection. May 'phags-pa Rnam-thos-sras, the Lord of Lcang-lo Palace, revealing the manner of his dwelling in the centre of Ri-rab, also come to the world outside and by his power perform the task of destroying by his frown the *Gnod-sbyin* hordes and may he take a vow to protect and guard the doctrine of the Buddhas of the three ages wherever it may be found. And may Arya 'Jam-ba'-la, being our support, promise to bestow wealth in the highest perfection on those who seek enjoyment in the world according to their wishes, and from time to time may appear and establish virtue in the world, and according to his promise may perform good deeds in addition to those listed. And for the great king of all Tibet who dwells at Lha-dum-bal, "Od-srung of the house of the lady queen "Phan, together with his subjects and court we uttering his name and further supporting him by offering our bodies and lives, making this prayer that he may be endowed with all good, pray especially for his protection. If it does not turn out well according to our hopes, dedicating it to the brother as we have promised, and giving into your hands the life and dominion of the *btsan-po lha-sras*, the mother and son, their subjects and our life and existence also, we pray that by your power you will promise to uphold and maintain them and just as we pray, will bestow on them the gift of the wish-fulfilling tree.

## Notes

1. *dkar-cag*-is unusual in this context; it is seen elsewhere in early documents as meaning a list of crop payments.
2. This strange statement, if I understand it rightly, seems to imply that some danger threatened 'Od-srung and shows also that he had a brother. It is possible that a brother is implied in Pell T. 1132—**yum sras mched 'phrul gyi snga nas, and yum sras mched dgung dang 'dra ba'i zha snga naa**. This might underly the later tradition of rivalry by two claimants by different mothers-'od-srung and Yum-brtan. I have questioned the existence of the latter in my article "Who was Yum-brtan" in *Études Tibetaines*, 1971.

Pelliot Tibetan No. 230 measuring 14 cm. by 22 cm is the left part of a manuscript which, judging by examples of complete documents, may have been twice as wide. I have translated what is possible for surviving half-lines. Where there are isolated words, unintelligible out of context, I have usually transcribed the Tibetan. The lines, apart from the first, are of virtually equal length.

In spite of the fragmentary nature of the documents there is enough to allow some not unreasonable speculation about the contents of the whole. The first six lines are general prayer. In line seven 'Od-srung and his mother, for whose benefit the document is presumably dedicated, are named. The following eleven lines record the religious deeds done by or on behalf of the ruler. The nineteenth line onwards contain several references to disloyal subjects; and the document concludes with prayers for loyalty among subjects and peace and prosperity for the ruler and all Tibet.

This can be seen as referring to the disorder which followed the murder of Glang-darma and the troubled accession of 'Od-srung leading, as recorded in the new Tang Annals, to fierce fighting in the border regions between Shangkungje of Mo (Dba's?) and Shangpipi of Mulu or Mo lo (Bro?) respectively opponent and supporter of the new regime. That continued until 849 when Shangpipi, whose resources were exhausted, retired to the west of the Kan chou prefecture.

#### Translation :

1. Being purified from all...
2. and/the merit of all the virtuous deeds of various men...
3. Chad la/exhortation to turn the wheel of dharma to the highest degree...
4. to those who desire/for the benefit of many beings/in the world *yu*
5. by the firm power from those who protect the doctrine of the holy one guarding(?)...
6. by all/abiding in the excellent way/of many beings...
7. will be made firm/in this way the lha-sras Khri 'Od-srungs, the ruler and his mother (brtsan yum for btsan-yum?)...
8. rejoicing as the result of confessing sins/giving encouragement prayer...
9. many mandalas from the centre and outer regions according to the mantra...
10. merit and/guiding many men to deliverance and/ of the saints...
11. the merit of setting of images and opening their eyes, and...
12. offering a banquet/the merit of offering many religious donations...
13. also/the great minister who raises up the dominion of the ruler and people of Tibet (*rjes 'bangs* for *rje-'bangs*?)
14. escorted by many clergy/by the single minded thought of many...
15. The 'Bum etc./and many sutras and mantras *kl (klog ?)*...

16. and/and acting according to the *Hom* mantra of the fierce deities/the *dkyil 'khor* (?) of the planets...
17. and/the chief of those who have passed from the world/power and vows...
18. the merit of etc./others also/subjects...
19. *zhing*/actions contrary to orders and the law/great punishment...
20. giving and edict by the power of the compassion of the lady mother...
21. *Po* by those who know the means/stern repression...
22. uniting the internal administration/disloyal subjects punishment and (*byor*)...
23. from above/causing the subjects to be reconciled/establishing happiness in tranquility...
24. in the presence of the mighty (*brtsan* for *btsan*?) mother and son/enjoying long life (maintaining ?) the kingdom...
25. rule over the subjects with increasing glory for ever/'*bangs* (?)
26. harmful spells of etcetera/demons that attack the body/evil omens *la stogs-pa*...
27. *ni*/increasing its firmness for ever/petition for spreading it by good...
28. in the manner of a (*chos-skyong*) *ba'i* religion protecting king/religion to all the world...
29. by changing their minds/these who turn to the disloyal path...
30. giving up uncertainty? (*g-yo bor nas*) /in future according to the manner of subjects (*rjes-'bangs*, perhaps for *rje 'bangs*, ruler and subjects).
31. praying for continual blessings (*mtud* for *btud*)/the *lha sras* and his ancestors...
32. by seeking the loyalty of the subjects/watching over the person and dominion of the ruler...
33. *sgro-nas*? *sgo nas* ? having discussed, or by the door/receiving happiness in their winds/agreeing with one thought...
34. not harming by evil spells etc. and/method...
35. accomplishing/the while land of Tibet peace and/(freedom from) illness...

The above are the only references to the Tibetan kings which I have been able to find.

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The publication programme of Catalogue Series of all the Buddhist works preserved in the SRIT will be a landmark contribution in the field of documentation and library science. The Institute intends to bring out more issues in the coming years.



# THE LIFE OF SUM-PA MKHAN-PO (1704-1788), THE CELEBRATED AUTHOR OF DPAG-BSAM LJON-BZAN

(Translated from Deb-ther rgya-mtsho<sup>1</sup>)  
— Dr. Sanjit Kumar Sadhukhan

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Sum-pa mkhan-po ye-s'es dpal-'byor was the nephew of bsTan-'dzin chos-rgyal. In the account of Erti-ni tha'i-ji tshans-pa-skyabs (of Kokonor), Sum-pa was born in the Wood-Monkey year (A.D. 1704) of the 12th Rab-byuñ cycle.

Sum-pa read Erti-ni...s **Brag-dkar me-loñ** and learned the rules of the religious practice. When he was admitted into the monastery Thar-s'ul chos-skyoñ rgya-mtsho yoñs-dzin was appointed his teacher. Sum-pa acted accordig to his teacher's instruction and (later) became a very kind lama. He was ordained under an initiator lama (of the Thar-s'ul monastery) in the Iron-Tiger year (A.D. 1710). He was admitted into the school of philosophy of the dGon-luñ monastery in the Water-Serpent Year (A.D. 1713)<sup>2</sup> and studied well. At the age of 20 years in the Water-Hare year (A.D. 1723) he heard **rDor-'phren** under dPa'-rin Ñag-dbañ bkra-śis. He went to dbUs. Staying in the sGo-man school of philosophy he heard **brTsi-bśhag** from dPon-slob La-mo rnam-mkha', the first among the eight dGe-bses-s of Cun-gar. In the winter he began his study on Phar-phyin (Prajñāpāramitā) in the stream of religion. kLu-'bum-pa Mog-kyā 'jam-dbyañs rgya-mtsho became his teacher. At that time, rTa-tshag rje ndruiñ, Thor-god sgo-man sprul-sku, mÑa'-ris sprul-sku and bTsan-po No-monhan came to the school of philosophy (i.e. they joined the school as teachers). In the Fire-Horse year (A.D. 1726) he obtained the degree of gLin-bsre dka'-bcu.

In 'Bras-spuñs dge-'phel he heard the explanation of the doctrine from Bo-'u-kyā mñam-bshag-pa, mKhar-rdo bzod-pa rgya-mtsho, Shogs Don-yod mkhas-grub, Chu-mig-luñ-pā bla-ma 'Jam-dbyañs-pa, and others. Earlier and later he heard a vast number of things from Khri Nam-mkha'-bzā, Khri Ñag-dbañ mchog-ldan, Kon-po bKa'-'gyur-pa Chos-rin-chen, Shva-dmar s'es-rab rgya-mtsho, Sems-ñid dam-chos who was the teacher of sGo-man school, and others. He practised all those. He learned śabda-śāstra (grammar, composition of verse, etc.) under mDzo-mo mkhar-pa sMonlam lhun-grub, the disciple of Pra-ti dge-bses, *Sum-bcu-pa* (of Thon-mi) under bSam-blo mi-thuñ of sKu-'bum monastery and various arts of writing (dbu-can, dbu-med, etc.) and geometrical measurement under bTsan-po mi-tshañ-pa Tsa-grags-pa lhun-grub. He practised two varieties of astrological calculation, one for human benefit and the other for bringing harm

to the human beings, from Lha-dbañ-pa, who was the district officer of sKyor-mo-luñ and also the personal disciple of the regent (of Tibet), and Sog-ram-pa Ñag-dbañ rgya-mtsho who was the discipline of Lug-mgo bla-mkhyen Ñag-dbañ, and who used to teach Baidurya dkar-po (an astrological text of sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho).

While out on a pilgrimage in the Fire-Horse year (A.D. 1726)<sup>3</sup> he visited Tsa-ri and 'Dab-'brel-ba'i rtsa-'mchog gron in Tsa-ri bab-skor. In the southern side, in rGyañ-rin-kho he visited a very high mountain which was called Sa-mi-svar by the ācāryas and rGya-gar señ-ge by the Tibetans.

In the Iron-Pig year (A.D. 1731) he came back to his own country. He got the initiation of Dus-'khor (Kālacakra deity) from the great scholar dGe-'dun don-grub. He received religious instructions from Khri-chen sprul-sku, dKa'-chen smon-lam-pa, Tshis-ka'i sñags-rim-pa, etc. in La-mo bde-chen monastery. He inquires about the religious advice on 3 **man-ñag**, etc. which successively came down to Gro-tshañ brag sprul-pa'i-sku from Kun-mkhyen goñ-ma ('Jam-dbyans bshad-pa Ñag-dban brtson-'grus). He gave rDor-'phreñ initiation in dGa'-ldan bsad-sgrub gliñ (a monastery) in the Dragon year (A.D. 1736).

In the Fire-Serpent year (A.D. 1737) he went to China and praised the Emperor. In the Earth-Horse year (A.D. 1738), while staying near the river called San-li behind tTsho-bdun temple, he saw that rJe-btsun tham-pa'i sprul-sku who was the son of Hal-ha don-grub lvañ was driven away by the army of Cun-gar.

In the Earth-Sheep year (A.D. 1739) he came back (to Tibet). In the Iron-Monkey year (A.D. 1740) he got dGon-luñ ri-khrod (a cave monastery), congregation halls of two bDe-skyid sgrub-sde-s of Zva-khog and dGon-luñ dga'-ldan lha-rtse built. He got Sri-gnon 'bum-pa chen-po and Sum-pa'i zin-yon temple along with dMar-gtsañ temple repaired. He got the huge statue of the Maitreya Buddha, built in the big temple of dGon-luñ. He got small temples and 3 other statues, built at the left and right sides of that temple of Maitreya. He got the great shrines built on the low land just in front of the monastery. In the Water-Dog year (A.D. 1742) he went to Pe-ciñ (the capital of China) and came back in Pig year (A.D. 1743). After five years he got a temple with images etc. built in Bo-śog-thu monastery of Pokhog. He became abbot of this monastery in the Fire-Tiger year (A.D. 1746). With this term and two more terms before and later it he became abbot for three times in total. In the Iron-Horse year (A.D. 1750) he went to Ri-bo rtse-lna. He also became abbot of the following monasteries : bKra-śis chos-gliñ, Ser-luñ, 'Brug-lun, 'Dul-ba dgon, dGa'-ldan rin-chen gliñ, Pho-rod pra-sde'i dgon, etc.

He composed many works, including a history of the doctrine called **dPag-bsam ljon-bzañ**<sup>4</sup> among the rTsis literature his **dGe-ldan rtsiś gsar**<sup>5</sup> is very famous.



It is the previous story that when Pan-chen thams-cad mkhyen-pa<sup>6</sup> stayed in sKu-'bum monastery, Sum-pa approached him in an auspicious moment and heard many things on medicine, tantra, the properties and various natures of the king, minister and army of the barbarians. At times he heard the nature of birds and animals like tiger etc.

He assembled many disciples as Thu'u-bkvanrin-po-che did. When Sum-pa was paying homage to the tomb of rJe 'Nag-dbañ chos-kyi rgya-mtsho, a small piece of thread like thumb in size fell inside the tomb. It is said that Sum-pa took that piece of thread into his mouth and as a result of this he got a long life and also became a very rich man. He died at the age of 85 years in the Earth-Monkey year (A.D. 1788). Kun-mhyen Bar-ma worshipped the shrine of his tomb.

Sum-pa had his autobiography. There Sum-pa is generally found to be famous among the names of the eighteen great castes of Tibet. This very Sum-pa also prepared 100 sets of 100-volume **Kanjur** written in gold by the order of the mother of the King of Lvan-li of China. At his request to the King the temples were built in a large number in the Amdo country and the zones with their fixed worship places were settled.

#### Notes :

1. I have used the printed edition of this work entitled **Histoire Du Bouddhisme Dans L'Amdo** Published by Imprimé Pour L'école Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris.
2. In the text the year is clearly mentioned as Water-Monkey i.e. A.D. 1752 but it is absurd. It will be Water-Serpent i.e. A.D. 1713. Sum-pa in his autobiography mentions the 9th year of his age as the year of his admission into dGon-lun.
3. Though in the text the year is clearly mentioned as Earth-Serpent i.e. A.D. 1749 but from the fact that he returned in the Iron-Pig year i.e. A.D. 1731 can by no means justify the former year of his pilgrimage. It should be the Fire-Horse Year i.e. A.D. 1726 and also it is justified by the statement in Sum-pa's autobiography, "at the age of 22nd year".
4. Full title of this oft-quoted work is '**Phags-yul rgya-nag chen-po bod dan sog-yul du dam-pa'i chos-byun-tshul dpag-bsam ljon-bzan**. It is written in 1748 and contains 317 folios of large format. It comprises the first volume of the Complete Works of the author.

From the Indian historical point of view it is an extremely important work yet to be fully deciphered. It recounts the history of Buddhism in India (fols. 41a4-95a6). It records a detailed history of Tibet (fols.

- 95a6-287b7). It contains a brief history of China (fols. 288a1-292b6) and of Buddhism in China (fols. 292b7-300b2). It also gives a short account of the history of the Mongols (fols. 300b2-312b2) and of the history of the spread of Buddhism among them (fols. 312b2-316a1).
5. Full title of this work is **rTsis-kyi bstan-bcos kun-gsal me-loñ-gi gshuñ : zla bsil rtsi-sbyor dge-ldan rtsis gsar**. It is included in the seventh volume of the Complete Works of the author and consists of 96 folios. The work contains numerous mathematical charts and diagrams.
  6. This is the second Panchen Lama Pan-chen bLo-bzañ ye-śes (1663-1737).

# Tibetan Scholars in the Yüan Court of China Influx of the Mongols in China

Jayeeta Gangopadhyay

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The success of Chengiz Khan (1167-1227) in conquering China facilitated his success to establish a new dynasty called the Yüan dynasty (1260-1368) to rule China for more than a century. That was political. In the cultural history of East Asia, it could bring forth a substantial effect when Buddhism integrated China, Tibet and Mongolia. This was of no less importance than the contribution of the preceding dynasties, viz., the T'ang dynasty (618-907). The Five Dynasties (907-960) and the Song dynasty (960-1279) in China. During these dynasties, Buddhism flourished under the patronage of the rulers amidst upheavals and encounter with Confucienist, Daoist and other systems of thought. The rulers of the preceding dynasties were participants of a cultural change through the ages, whereas to the Yüan rulers, Buddhism was foreign though not alien. Now we shall deal in details with the historical background of the Yüan court and the Tibetan priests patronized by the court to spread Buddhism among the Mongols.

The Mongols are referred to in the 'Secret History' (Yüan Ch'a Bi Shih) at the "Da-da (Tartars) as distinguished from the other steppe tribes or tribal unions,<sup>(1)</sup> The Yüan period marks the period of integration of Chinese with the Mongols. The Mongols with their own ideosyncracies and temperaments, manifested their adaptability in different circumstances while ruling the Chinese people. The Mongol rulers thus imbibed Chinese culture to a great extent and evidences may be cited to prove the cultural advancement of China during the Mongol rule.

Measures were adopted by the Chinese intelligentsia to safeguard their traditions and heritage inspite of the intrudence of the Mongols politically. The Yüan court also preferred to retain the merit points of the Chinese, though the latter was subjugated forcibly, such mutual understanding paved the way for the above-mentioned cultural advancement later on alien outlook towards the Mongol rulers was generated among a section of the Chinese which led to the decline of the dynasty. Thus the orthodox outlook of medieval socio-religious traits among the people of China and Mongolia continued until they came into contact with the West during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

## Invitation of Tibetan scholars to the Yüan Court

The inviting of Tibetan Buddhist priests by the Mongol rulers to preach Buddhism began during the reigns of the Grandsons of Chengiz Khan. Koden, alias Godan was the first to invite the Sakya Paṇḍita-Kun-dga-rgyal-mtshan (1182-1251) the head of the Sa-skya (tawny soil) sect,<sup>(2)</sup> Dor-ta (Docrda dargan) was sent by Koden or Godan to invite the Sakya Pandita and went to Kansu to the court of Godan in 1241 reaching the Prince's camp in 1247<sup>(3)</sup>. Sir Herbert Franke has pointed out that there exists considerable disparity in the extant versions of the letter written by Ogodai to the Sakya Paṇḍita.<sup>(4)</sup> The purpose of the invitation was to preach Buddhism to his subjects and to keep the promise of his deceased ancestors. Valuable tributes were sent along with the letter. According to Gos-lotsa-ba, Sakya Panchen (Sakya Pandita) visited the court of Godan in Kansu in 1244<sup>(5)</sup>. This incident marks an epoch of theocratic rule in China. A chronological table of the Sakya Pandita's family is given below:

Dpal-chen-Od Po	
(1150 A.D.)	
(Eldest)	(Youngest)
Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (b 1182 A.D.)	Zangs tsha Bsod nams rgyal mtshan (b 1184 A.D.)
Phyag-na (b 1239 A.D.)	Phag Pa Bla-Ma (b 1235 A.D.)
	Acarya Rinchen rgyal mtshan (b 1238 A.D.)

Besides the priests of the Sakya-pa sect, scholars from the Karma-pa sect (a Tantric school of Buddhism meaning "action, service"). Kublai Khan himself personally invited Karma Pakshi, a monk of the Karma-pa sect to his court though he essentially favoured the Sakya-pa sect and Phag-pa had secured his goodwill by his talent and excellence. After Kublai Khan's reign, Tibetan preceptors of the Karma-pa sect were invited to the Mongol court and the Karma-pa sect of Tibet rose in importance in place of the Sakya sect.

## Patronization of Kublai Khan

Kublai Khan (1215-1294), successor of Godan, further established contacts with the Sakya priests by inviting the nephew of the Sakya Paṇḍita (vide table given below) called Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan alias Phag-pa (1235-1280), an expert on Buddhist doctrines of the Sakya sect and Tibetan grammar. Phag Pa not only set up a firm base for Tibetan Buddhism in China, but was also instrumental in winning the support of the Mongol rulers. He was appointed the spiritual preceptor (di-shih) of Kublai Khan, who conferred great honours upon him. As a Buddhist scholar, he provided the Mongols with a pseudo- historical legitimating theory, and also invented an alphabet for writing pre-classical Mongolian still known as the phag-pa script.

Phag-pa returned to Tibet from the Yüan court in the year 1265 and after staying there for about three years he again left for China in the year 1268.

In the year 1269 Phag-pa received instructions to invent a script for the Mongols which we have just mentioned. In 1278 he wrote a brief dogmatic treatise for Zhen Jin (1243-1285), Kublai's son and heir apparent, this book dealt with the basic creeds of the Sakya sect. The work entitled "what one should know was later translated into Chinese under the name " Zhang suo Zhih lun" by Su-pa (Chin, Sha-lo-pa 1259-1314) and included in the Chinese Buddhist Tripiṭaka, Phag-pa further accomplished the prodigious task of rendering the voluminous Tibetan canon into Mongolian together with his associates after careful comparison with the Chinese versions through the imperial court. During the reign of King Yesun Temur (1324-1328) the Tibetan Sakyapa lama Shes-rab-seng-ge translated a large number of texts into Mongolian. Among other translators were son-ston, and his other noted disciples such as Dan-Pa Aluhunsali, Shalopa, Dayipa, Kabunadasi, etc. Phag-pa returned to the Sakya monastery in 1277 at the age of 42 on the occasion of the Buddhist assembly at Chu Mig in the next year. He spent his last days in Tibet and passed away in 1280 A.D. at the age of 45.

After the death of Phagpa, two other Tibetan priests called Chos Kyi 'Od-Zer and Gyuin ston-rdo-rje dpal came to the Yüan Court. Chos-kyi-'od Zer devised a kind of script for the Mongols besides translating from Sanskrit a philosophical poem 'Bodhi carya' written by Śāntideva and writing a commentary on it. Gyuin ston-rdo rje-dpal besides being the teacher of Bu-ston Rimpoche (1290-1364) expounded the Kālacakra along with other Tibetan scholars such as Shes-rab-seng-ge, Son-ston rdo-rje gyal-mtshan (one of the translators of the Kalacakra among several others) who also translated the Kavyādarśa, Avadānā Kalpalatā and other texts into Tibetan and has brother Dpan blo-brtan Pa. The later two are considered to be the founders of philological studies in Tibet. Shes rab-

seng ge is said to have copied the Tantra section of the Bka'-'gyur and the Vinaya.

## **Spread of Buddhism in Mongolia**

It seems strange that the Buddhist attitude of service to humanity won over the cruel hearts of the Mongol rulers. Apparently the magic rituals and doctrines of the Tibetan esoterics attracted the Mongol rulers as a device for administration, and on the other hand, the Tibetan scholars considered it profitable to associate themselves with the Mongol rulers from the political point of view. During the Yüan period, many scholars from Mongolia came to China and took up the work of translating Buddhist texts into Mongolian after receiving imperial orders. Some of these were honoured with the highest religious title of "Guo-shih" (Imperial Preceptor). The Uighur script derived from the Syriac, was extensively used for translation into Mongolian. The use of this dialect for Buddhist texts became prevalent after the Uighurs founded a kingdom in the 9th century and texts in Uighur were printed in Beijing in 1330.

One of these Mongolian scholars was Kaludanasi, who was conversant with Buddhist philosophy and all the local dialects. He had studied Buddhism and Tibetan under Phag-pa at imperial orders and later took up the work of translating Sanskrit and Tibetan sūtras into Mongolian which was completed in 1294.

Another noted Mongolian scholar was Bilannashili from Kanmmla. He received the title of Guo-shih in 1331. In the year 1312 he received imperial orders to translate Buddhist texts. He translated a number of well-known sutres, such as the Leng-Yan Jing (Suraṅgama-samādhī), Da Cheng Zhuang Yan Bao Da Jing (Kāraṇḍa Vyūha sūtra) the Da Nie Pan Jing (Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra) and others.

Aluhunsali (1245-1309) was another Mongolian scholar. He also learnt some local dialects from phagpa and translated Buddhist sūtras.

Translations of Buddhist texts continued during the reign of Emperor Buyantu Khan (Ren Zong/1312-1320) who ordered, the entire Tripiṭaka to be copied in golden letters. The Classic of Filial Piety (Xiao Jing) was also translated into Mongolian by imperial orders with a preface by the Emperor Objaitu Temur (Cheng Zong) (1295-1307). Buddhism thus spread to Mongolia by means of translations. The work of translation was completed later in the reign of Legs Idan Khutuktu Khagan (1604-1634) by numerous scholars under the guidance of Kun-dga-od-zer. Sir Charles Eliot has remarked "It looks as if the first growth of Mongolian Buddhism was part of a political system and collapsed together with it <sup>(6)</sup>.

## **Buddhism in China during the Yüan rule**

On the whole, Buddhism was greatly patronized during the Yüan dynasty, Kublai Khan favoured all religions except Daoism. Buddhism especially appealed to him as a religion that would enable him to subjugate his subjects, special emphasis was laid on the printing of the Buddhist canon. During the reign of Objeitu Temur (cheng Zong) (1295-1309), the snar-than-bstan-'gyur (Narthang Tanjur) were collected and printed from Beijing at the initiative of the Yüan court after compilation by Bu-ston Rinpoche in 1410. Various editions of the Bstan-'gyur (Tanjur) and Bka'gyur (Kanjur) were subsequently prepared. During the reign of Kublai Khan, a new collection of the Chinese Tripitaka (the ninth) was published in 1285-1287, large sums of money were expended for the purpose of printing.

Numerous Buddhist monasteries were also built during the Yüan dynasty. Large sums of money were also expended for the building of monasteries and as grants for them. These monasteries built within Beijing and outside the city between 1270 and 1354 are Dahuguo Renwang Ssu, Shengshou Wanan Ssu Dalong Xiangji Qing Ssu, Dajue Hai Ssu, Da Shou Yüan Zhong gud Ssu, and Shu Xiangssu. In the Shou An Shan Fo Ssu built in 1321, a bronze statue of the Sleeping Buddha was carved. After these monasteries were built a number of about three hundred monks are said to have been stipulated for each monastery, and large plots of land were donated for monasteries by the imperial court. A census taken at the end of the thirteenth century records over 42,000 Buddhist temples and 213,000 monks in China <sup>(7)</sup>. Injunctions were also issued for the chanting of Buddhist texts in the monasteries. The shamanistic element added to the popularity of Tibetan Buddhism. During the Yüan period, a number of politically motivated secret societies claiming connection with Buddhism also became very active such as the Maitreya society, the white cloud society and White Lotus society. Buddhist, shamanistic and confucian rituals were simultaneously performed during the Yüan dynasty.

## **Sino-Tibetan relations**

The priest and patron relationship that began with Kublai Khan and Phag-Pa, continued in the subsequent period between the Manchu Emperore and the Dalai Lama till the end of the Qing dynasty in 1911. The relationship between Goden and the Sakya Pandita has been described as that between lord and subject, while that between Kublai Khan and Phag Pa has been described as that between patron and lama by T.W.D. Shakappa.<sup>(8)</sup> The patron-lama relationship helped to develop a spiritual-temporal alliance with Tibet which has been maintained over the centuries. After the supremacy of the Sa-skya sect through the centuries, while attempting to depose the less influntial sects, it finally declined with the fall of the Yüan dynasty and the installation of the Ming dynasty in 1368. The Gelugpa

(School of Pure Discipline) took the place of the sa-skya in the Ming dynasty, the name being changed by Tsong-Kha Pa from the 'Kadam sect (Teachings of Atisa) introduced by Atisa in 1039. The Ge-Lugpa or 'Virtuous order originated at the Gaden (Dga'-ldan) monastery near Lhasa set up by Tsong Kha-Pa, who was an eminent philosopher of medieval Tibet. The Gelugpa sect soon acquired supremacy over all the other sects, maintaining it for several centuries till the present day. It spread from Tibet to Mongolia, emerging as a powerful theocratic government.

While comparing the viewpoints of various Chinese and Western scholars from different sources on the impact of the Tibetan priests in the Yüan Court Sir Herbert Franke,<sup>(9)</sup> has noted that a majority of the scholars have recorded negative assessments about them. The reason was that the common people were indignant about the huge sums of money spent by the Mongol rulers in honouring the Tibetan priests and the costly rituals which these priests apparently caused the Mongol rulers to indulge in. The nationality of the priests apart from being Buddhist further aroused severe criticism from these scholars. In the opinion of Sir Herbert Franke himself who however, expresses doubts as to whether the Tibetan priests actually ruined the national economy, though he holds them partially responsible for the early down fall of the Yüan dynasty, Sir Charles Eliot also agrees with this view.<sup>(10)</sup> It may be added that without the Tibetan priests of the Yüan Court, the story of Chinese history in the medieval period would have been a totally different one.



## NOTES

- (1) "The secret History of the Mongol Dynasty" (Yüan Chao Bi Shin) Translated and Edited by Dr. Wei Kwei Sun. Published by the Department of History, Muslim University, Aligarh, with a Foreword by Professor Muhammad Habib. Pg 12.
- (2) The Sakya teachers are believed to have taken Mañjus'ri as a source of their inspiration. It is based on the Tantric Buddhist ritual of 'Marga' and 'Phala' in the fruitful path' of 'Marga-phala' as enunciated by the Indian teachers Vasuputra and Virupa. Their principal deity was cakra-ṣamvara.
- (3) The Blue Annals, Part Two by George N. Roerich, Published by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal 1949. Pg 577-78.
- (4) China under Mongol Rule Edited by John D. Langlois. Jr., Princeton University Press, Article entitled 'Tibetans in Yüan China' by Herbert Franke Pg 304 fn. no. 38.
- (5) The Blue Annals by George N. Rocrich Part One Pg. 211.
- (6) Hinduism and Buddhism by Sir Charles Eliot Vol. 3 Pg. 357.
- (7) Encyclopedia of World Religions by G. T. Bettany, Bracken Books, London. Pg. 326.
- (8) Tibet-A Political History by Tsepon W.B.Shakabpa, New Haven and London. Yale University Press 1967. Pg. 71.
- (9) Same article as f.n. no. 4 Pg. 326-28
- (10) Hinduism and Buddhism by Sir Charles Eliot Vol. 3 Pg. 357.



## OUR THREE MAJOR ART PUBLICATIONS

1. **RGYAN DRUG MCHO G NYIS** (Six ornaments and Two Excellents) reproduces ancient scrolls (1770 A.C.) depicting Buddha, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmakirti, Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha. Reproductions are as per originals today after 300 years of display and worship with an attempt at restoration or retouching. The exposition in English presents the iconographical niceties and the theme of the paintings, namely, the Mahayana philosophy; the treatment is designed to meet the needs of the general reader with an interest in the Trans-Himalayan art or Mahayana. A glossary in Sanskrit-Tibetan a key to place names and a note on source material are appended. Illustrated with five colour plates and thirteen monochromes. (English text) Foli 54 Second Reprint. 1980 and priced at Rs. 150/-
2. **SANGS RGYAS STONG** : Subtitled An Introduction to Mahayana Iconography. This book of 75 pages (11 and half inches x 8 inches) contains 4 colour plates and more than 80 line drawings (sketeches); thick paper back with Jacket depicting 33 Buddhas. Intended for the lay readers, this introductory account is based on original sources in Pali, Sanskrit and Tibetan. The basic concept of thousand Buddhas is explained at length, while all the important symbols and images in their variant forms are presented from believers' point of view. Art critic or academician will find the book worthy of perusal. (English text), Folio 75 pub. 1988 and priced at rs. 150/-
3. **TALES THE THANKAS TELL** : Subtitled An Introduction to Tibetan Scroll Portraits. The book has 64 pages (11 and half inches and 8 inches) and contains well produced eleven colour plates, with Jacket depicting Buddha Sakyamuni and his two disciples. The book tells much about Mahayana Pantheon and particularly about the legends and myths around Buddhism as depicted through numerous Scroll Portrait forms. These colourful portraits speak about the contacts with the traditions of Tartary, China, India, Iran and Byzantium. Pub. 1989 and priced at Rs. 200/-





