


The Tibetan-Italian-Tibetan Dictionary of Fr. Orazio della Penna (1680–1745): An Untapped Resource for the History of Tibetan Language, Society and Early Buddhist-Christian Interreligious Contacts¹

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A. Introduction: what we know about the dictionary of Della Penna now

ncounters between cultures offer multiple opportunities to advance the frontiers of knowledge on a wide range of subjects. When these encounters are well documented in original source materials, the prospects are even greater, particularly if a multidisciplinary approach is applied to their analysis. A fresh example of a major source providing evidence of an important cultural encounter can be found in the Tibetan-Italian and Italian-Tibetan dictionary compiled by Fr. Francesco Orazio della Penna (born count Luzio Olivieri, 1680–1745) during his apostolic mission to Tibet. This paper discusses the history of the dictionary, assesses its scientific value, considers its current condition, and sketches a plan of multidisciplinary study for this important testimony of the first significant encounter between Christianity and Buddhism in Lhasa.

At the time of this writing, information on the history and contents of Della Penna's dictionary is limited to a handful of secondary sources, some of which are over a century old. In addition, with only two exceptions, none of the scholars who wrote about the dictionary ever set eyes on it. The first notice of the existence of this dictionary is very early: in his *Alphabetum Tibetanum* Agostino Antonio Giorgi (1711–1797) stated that a Tibetan lexicon containing 33,000 words was kept in the Capuchin hospice in Nepal, but that, given the distance, he

¹ I would like to thank Elio Marini for making the manuscripts available for study, and for providing the photographs shown here. I would also like to thank John Bray, Elena De Rossi Filibeck, Michael Sweet and Leonard Zwilling for their unstinting support throughout this research and their valuable comments on this paper.

had no hope of seeing it.² Similar intelligence was re-echoed in the 18th and 19th centuries,³ but only in 1912 did Fr. Felix [Finck] of Antwerp (1868–1932) examine a set of three manuscripts containing Tibetan-Italian and Italian-Tibetan dictionaries that had been found in the library of Bishop's College (Calcutta). Fr. Felix deduced that they corresponded to the original ones prepared for the Capuchin mission to Tibet, and discussed them in an article published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*.⁴

His brief description revealed that they consisted of a Tibetan-Italian lexicon and two Italian-Tibetan vocabularies. The Tibetan-Italian (designated as ms. I by Fr. Felix) was “one foot long by 6 ½ inches broad”,⁵ contained 191 leaves,⁶ and comprised the letters from *kha* to *sa*. Father Felix posited that “this dictionary is properly a collection of all the sentences which the author could get from native teachers, completed by means of extracts from the *Padma tangyig*, a popular series of legends about Padma Sambhava”.⁷ The two Italian-Tibetan copies were quite different: the first (ms. II.A of Fr. Felix) is described as “measuring 10 ⅝" × 8 ¼", strongly bound and written by several hands on English-made paper”.⁸ It numbered 854 pages and comprised the letters from A to S. The second manuscript (II.B), was the older of the two: it measured 13 ½ inches by 7 ½ inches, was written on Tibetan paper, and was also incomplete, covering the entries between the middle of letter N, and Z in 430 pages.

Although all three texts showed evidence of damage wrought by time, they were judged to be still sufficiently readable. Yet, Fr. Felix's paper did not spur much follow-up research in the world of Asian and Tibetan studies for another forty years. At first, interest in the find, and particularly in the history of the Capuchin missions to Tibet, was circumscribed among missionaries and scholars of missiology, and between the 1920s and 1930s Della Penna's dictionary was mainly

² “Lexicon Tibetanum triginta trium millium vocabulorum, jacet Mss. in Hospitio PP. Capuccinorum *Nekpal*. Magno rebus nostris suisset usui; sed tam longe abest, ut de eo edendo [sic] vix spes una supersit”, Giorgi, 1762: lviii (italics in the original). The 1759 edition of *Alphabetum Tibetanum* lacks this passage and the long introduction in which it appears. On the different editions of Giorgi's *Alphabetum* see Bellini, 2011: 49-50; Pomplun, 2020: 202-205.

³ On the wide influence of Giorgi's *Alphabetum Tibetanum*, which was read, among others, by the likes of sir William Jones (1746–1794) Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) and Georg Hegel (1770–1831), see Pomplun, 2020.

⁴ See Felix of Antwerp (Finck), 1912.

⁵ Felix of Antwerp, 1912: 382.

⁶ In reality they are 193; see Lo Bue, 2001: 90.

⁷ Felix of Antwerp, 1912: 382.

⁸ Felix of Antwerp, 1912: 383.

discussed in publications about the Capuchin order's missions.⁹ Only in 1952, with the publication of the first volume of Luciano Petech's *I Missionari Italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal* (hereafter *MITN*), was the dictionary of Della Penna discussed in the context of its contribution to the study of Tibet.¹⁰

In the lengthy introduction to this seven-volume collection of documents relating to the Catholic missions to Tibet and Nepal in the 18th century, Petech dedicated a section to the written works of the Capuchin missionaries. Here, he described the manuscripts of the dictionary, although he appears not to have seen them in person. He compiled his sketch of their history and appearance on the basis of the information found in the 1912 article by Felix of Antwerp, supplemented by Giorgi's *Alphabetum Tibetanum* (1762), and the two articles by Johannes of Reifenberg (which contained some inaccuracies, rectified by Petech). Still, for reasons hard to pinpoint¹¹ Petech's mention of these texts did not generate interest or curiosity, and the dictionary remained in the archives of Bishop's College, seemingly undisturbed, and definitely unstudied, for the rest of the 20th century.

In the summer of 2001, however, *The Tibet Journal* published "A Note on the Dictionaries Compiled by Italian Missionaries in Tibet", a short article by the late Erberto Lo Bue which summarized the history of the "earliest known European lexicographic studies of the Tibetan language".¹² These included, in addition to Della Penna's Italian-Tibetan and Tibetan-Italian dictionary, the earlier Latin-Tibetan vocabulary compiled between 1707 and 1711 by the first group of Capuchin missionaries to Tibet, François Marie de Tours (d. 1709), Giuseppe da Ascoli (1673–1710) and Domenico da Fano (1674–1728). The original of this dictionary has never been found,¹³ but a 74 page extract of it is

⁹ These included a monograph (Jann 1925), two articles published in the *Analecta Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum*, (Ioannes [Lenhart] of Reifenberg 1931 and 1934) and two more studies on the Capuchin missions in India and Tibet (Terzorio 1926 and 1932). In addition, Felix of Antwerp published in Lahore *Essays on the Capuchin Missions in India* (no date), which at present is unavailable to me.

¹⁰ Petech, *MITN*, 1952: vol.1, XCII-XCIV.

¹¹ I would suggest that in 1952, and certainly in 1912, the discipline of Tibetan studies was still in a pioneering phase and the scholarship dedicated to it was still rather focused on the broader themes of religion, art and history.

¹² Lo Bue, 2001: 88.

¹³ It is presumed to be in Rome, but while working on *MITN* Petech did not find it. A new search is now under way, conducted by professor Elena De Rossi Filibeck and myself in collaboration with the Historical Archives of Propagation of the Faith of the Dicastery for Evangelization (Archivio Storico di Propaganda Fide del Dicastero per l'Evangelizzazione). We are grateful to Don Flavio Belluomini, the Archivist at the Historical Archives of Propaganda Fide, for his kind support in this endeavor.

kept in the National Library in Paris.¹⁴

The key revelation of Lo Bue's article, however, concerned the dictionary by Della Penna: "Olivieri's manuscript was rediscovered by P. Hosten in 1911,¹⁵ only to be forgotten again until 1999, when E. Marini, an Italian teacher who has devoted much of his time to study Father Orazio's life, retrieved the original manuscripts of both the Tibetan-Italian and the Italian-Tibetan dictionaries compiled by the Capuchin missionary, and kindly allowed me to examine them on a couple of occasions".¹⁶ By the start of the 21st century, then, the manuscripts had been moved to Italy. Still, at that time the possibilities of a collaboration for the study of these texts remained unrealized, and only recently have I been able to establish contact with the owner and come to an agreement to make them accessible for research.¹⁷

In view of the importance of these texts and their potential for the advancement of our knowledge of Tibet, in the following sections I will recap their complicated history from the time they were completed to today, highlighting their significant, but often obscure role for the history of Tibetology; I will then assess their historical value, which spans linguistic, cultural and religious arenas; and finally I will detail their current condition and propose a plan to study them, in agreement and in partnership with the current owner, who in the past years has continued his researches on the life and works of Della Penna and has achieved several successes, among which I should mention

¹⁴ The extract has been scanned and can be viewed on the website of the Bibliothèque Nationale at this address: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b541005425> (last access 23 February 2023). The dictionary is preceded by 8 pages of explanation of the "Tibetan alphabet", with information on how various syllabic clusters were pronounced at the time. The first English translation of this text has been completed by Alla Sizova and is being prepared for publication. A later, handwritten copy of this Latin-Tibetan dictionary, made in 1773 by Michel-Ange André Le Roux Deshauterayes, is kept at the Bavarian State Library; see <https://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/0009/bsb00094600/images/index.html?id=00094600&groesser=&fip=193.174.98.30&no=&seite=7> (last access 13 March 2023). It has some remarkable differences compared to the original: while the former comprises three columns: Latin, Tibetan and phonetic reading ("*spiegazione*"), the latter attempts to turn the dictionary into a Tibetan-Latin one, and its columns are re-arranged in the following way: phonetic reading, Tibetan and Latin.

¹⁵ I have been unable to trace the 1911 publication referenced here. Perhaps Lo Bue was referring to the notes by Henri Hosten, S. J. (1863–1935), added to Fr. Felix of Antwerp's article, although these do not state explicitly that Rev. Hosten found the manuscripts.

¹⁶ Lo Bue, 2001: 90.

¹⁷ A first clue to the renewed search for this dictionary was given in Venturi 2021: 221, n. 28.

obtaining a cast of the famous bell of the Catholic church in Lhasa¹⁸ and the recent discovery of the only existing portrait of Orazio Della Penna.¹⁹

B. The history of the dictionary after the abandonment of the Lhasa mission (1745).

The early history of the dictionary can be partially reconstructed through the letters and documents pertaining to the Capuchin mission, which were collected, organized, copiously annotated, and inserted into the appropriate historical context with a masterly introductory essay by Luciano Petech.²⁰ According to these records, the Capuchins Domenico da Fano, Orazio della Penna and Giovanni Francesco da Fossombrone (1677–1724/1725), who had arrived in Lhasa on October 1, 1716, were already working on a dictionary at the beginning of 1717, as a letter by Domenico da Fano states that “in the meanwhile we are preparing to make a copious dictionary, all drawn from their books”.²¹ Since da Fano had already stayed in Tibet between 1709 and 1711²² and this was his second trip there, he was charged with the

¹⁸ After the closure of the Capuchin church and hospice, this famous bell, inscribed with *Te Deum Laudamus*, was hung for many years in the Jokhang, as testified by various travelers to Lhasa in the early 20th century, starting with members of the Younghusband incursion in 1904 (see for example Candler 1905: 3, n. 2 and 273). By 2004, when Mr. Marini made a cast of the bell, it was kept in a storage room in the Jokhang complex. The bronze reproduction now hangs from a newly built structure in Pennabilli and was rung in 2005 when the XIV Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso visited Della Penna’s native village for the second time.

¹⁹ An article in Italian on the history of this discovery has been published online: <https://www.pangea.news/orazio-missionario-tibet-ritratto-pennabilli/> (last accessed February 1, 2023). The portrait was likely painted in Della Penna’s hometown in the Marche region during his sojourn in Italy between 1736 and 1738, when he had returned from Tibet in order to ask for more funds for the Lhasa mission. The modern name of Della Penna’s hometown, Pennabilli, is derived from the conjunction of the names of the two neighboring villages of Penna and Billi. In the 18th century documents Della Penna’s full name is given as Francesco Orazio della Penna de’ Billi.

²⁰ *I Missionari Italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal. I Cappuccini Marchigiani*, vols. 1-4. Roma: La Libreria dello Stato, 1952-1953. This edition also includes, in the last three volumes (5-7) all the correspondence and documents relating to the mission of the Jesuit Ippolito Desideri, who had arrived in Lhasa on 18 March 1716 and left on 28 April 1721, and operated alongside Father Della Penna for much of this period.

²¹ “Noi fra tanto ci prepariamo con fare un copioso dizionario tutto cavato da’ loro libri”, excerpt from a letter (CL. 33) written in Lhasa on 15 February 1717 (*MITN*, vol. 1, 84-85). All translations from Italian into English are mine.

²² *MITN*, vol. 1: CXIII. In 1713 he penned a “Breve relazione” on his experience, which includes a description of the “kingdom of Tibet” and of the city of Lhasa, as well as of Tibetan customs and religion, can be found in *MITN*, vol. 3: 3-37. The first

leadership of the Capuchin mission in Tibet and Nepal (his title was *Prefetto*). When his declining health obliged him to depart from Lhasa in 1722, he entrusted the responsibility for the Lhasa mission to Orazio della Penna.²³ As we have seen above, da Fano had already collaborated on the earlier Latin-Tibetan dictionary, and so we can surmise, even from this brief excerpt, that he also contributed to this second effort, at least at the beginning.

A set of four further letters written by Fr. Gioacchino da Sant'Anatolia (1684–1764)²⁴ clarifies somewhat the advancement of the work on the dictionary.²⁵ This had progressed enough that by 1721 a first draft seems to have already existed. In fact, in a response to a statement by Ippolito Desideri (1684–1733) that the Capuchins did not know Tibetan well and that Desideri himself had taught the language to Orazio della Penna, Fr. Gioacchino states that:

When I was coming to Lhasa, half a day away from here I met Desideri, who was leaving for Hindustan. The next day I arrived and found, already made, the small catechism; the life of Shākya thub pa, their dastardly legislator, translated; he [della Penna] was at the end of his translation of the *Lam rim chen mo*, and had made a most copious vocabulary.²⁶

A second letter, written in 1724, seems to indicate that the dictionary was used on a constant basis, on account of the translations of Tibetan texts on which Della Penna was working. In addition, we can infer that there were more than one copy of the dictionary, since one had been destined to be brought to Rome:²⁷

The Father Superior [Della Penna] is applying himself to translate the books of this false law; he made a very large dictionary and a catechism of our Holy Law, by which at this time they do not hold us anymore as infidels like before. We have distributed one to each convent, they read it, and

English translation of this document has been published very recently, see Sweet and Zwilling 2022.

²³ *MITN*, vol. 1: LIII. In 1725 Della Penna then became the Prefect of the entire Capuchin mission to Tibet and Nepal.

²⁴ On Gioacchino da Sant'Anatolia see a brief biography in *MITN*, vol. 1: CXV. He was in Lhasa from 1721 to 1733, and then again briefly in 1741. He was the only missionary companion of Orazio della Penna for most of this time.

²⁵ These letters will be presented here not in the order in which they were written (as in *MITN*), but following the timeline of the events they describe.

²⁶ *MITN*, vol. 1: 150 (CL. 52, dated Lhasa, 2 August 1731). Gioacchino da Sant'Anatolia arrived in Lhasa on 1 May 1721, and Ippolito Desideri had left on 28 April 1721.

²⁷ See *MITN*, vol. 1, 125. The letter (CL. 46) was penned in Lhasa on 20 November 1724.

Lamas, Rabjampas (*rab 'byams pa*) and Trabas (*grwa pa*) praise our Holy Law and universally state that it only has one defect, that it does not consider transmigration. Of all we did, of all, the Very Reverend Father Prefect Domenico da Fano will bring to Rome copies in Tibetan and in our language, together with the permission obtained by this Grand Lama to build a small convent, the copy of which I attach here, translated in our language by the Reverend Father Superior for your solace.²⁸

Indeed, the above-referenced copy of the dictionary had left for Rome well before 1724, as shown from this excerpt:

Before Fr. Domenico of holy memory left from Lhasa, I saw with my own eyes the letter he wrote to Rome in order to have permission to bring with him the translations of these Tibetan books made by this Very Reverend Father Prefect [Orazio della Penna], as many as six in number. And the very same Fr. Domenico, after my arrival in Lhasa, while I was helping him in the grueling work of doctor, was able, with the assistance of the Very Reverend Prefect and by means of a very copious vocabulary of about 30,000 words and more, made by this Very Reverend Prefect, and that the aforesaid Fr. Domenico was bringing with him, he could, I said, learn the language of the Tibetans.²⁹

Notwithstanding the convoluted language, this letter illustrates that by 1722, the year in which Da Fano left Lhasa, the dictionary contained about 30,000 words and therefore was deemed sufficiently complete to be brought back to Rome, both to show as an example of the work accomplished and to serve as an instrument of teaching to perspective missionaries.³⁰ This is further confirmed by another letter discussing

²⁸ Two copies in *dbu can* of the original permission to build a “convent” (Tib.: *dgon chung*) granted by the VII Dalai Lama are still kept in the Historical Archives of Propaganda Fide, together with a translation made at that time. The document is also reproduced in *MITN*, vol. 4: 186-187.

²⁹ See *MITN*, vol. 1: 137 (CL. 50, written on 20 July 1731).

³⁰ On the importance of learning “exotic” languages and creating dictionaries and grammars in order to facilitate future missionary work see Zwartjes 2011. In this regard, Propaganda Fide in 1626 instituted the “Tipografia Poliglotta”, which printed grammars and dictionaries—as well as catechisms and liturgical books—in the languages of the nations they were seeking to evangelize. In order to do so, the Tipografia Poliglotta specifically produced the types for each script. For the Tibetan language two sets of Tibetan mobile characters were carved in 1738; one of these was transported to Lhasa on Della Penna’s second mission there, from 1741 to 1745, and is now considered lost. On the Tipografia Poliglotta see Pizzorusso, 2004; for a history of Tibetan typefaces see de Baerdemaeker, 2020.

the same topic, and providing a full list of all the texts that had been destined for Rome:

After I arrived in Lhasa, capital of Great Tibet, on 1 May 1721, our Father Prefect Domenico da Fano wrote to Rome for permission to bring with him coming back to Europe all the works translated, in major part by our current Father Prefect Francesco Orazio della Penna de Billi, which are:

The life of Shākya thub pa, main legislator of this wretched people;

A book that deals with the Tibetan God;

The rule of their heathen religious men;

An explanation of their idols;

Another of the Tibetan world;

A small catechism of our Holy Law;

And a vocabulary of about 30,000 words.³¹

All these books written in Italian and Tibetan, a part of which Fr. Domenico da Fano brought with him and [another] part were sent from Lhasa to Bengal with the intention of sending them to Rome to materially show that what was said against us was false.³² But since the Cardinals forbade to the Capuchins or suspended the dispatch of new missionaries and the yearly remittance, the poor man [Da Fano] died more of heartbreak than of sickness in Bengal in 1726,³³ where all those works remained.³⁴

In conclusion, then, the majority of these documents seem to have never arrived in Rome. In fact, Domenico da Fano, who had left Lhasa in 1722, remained at the Capuchin mission in Bengal until his death in 1728, and thus never returned to Italy. Therefore, the documents carried out of Tibet at this time were either lost on the arduous trip across the Himalayas or possibly left at one of the Capuchin missions along the way in Kathmandu, Bettiah, Patna or Chandernagore.

Considering that no exemplars of Della Penna's dictionary have ever been found in the Archives of Propaganda Fide, and that even Giorgi lamented that the dictionary, left at the Capuchin mission in

³¹ It is likely that at this point the dictionary did not contain 30,000 words. The letter by Gioacchino da Sant'Anatolia is very late compared to the time of the events it discusses (twelve years later) and it seems probable that Fr. Gioacchino conflated the number of entries that the dictionary had at the time he was writing with the period to which he is referring.

³² This refers to the dispute with the Jesuits on the jurisdiction of the mission to Tibet, and particularly to Desideri's accusation that the Capuchins had abandoned the Lhasa mission in 1711 because they were not proficient in Tibetan.

³³ In reality Domenico da Fano died in 1728, not in 1726.

³⁴ See *MITN*, vol. 1, 171 (CL. 56, written from Bhaktapur on 5 November 1733).

Nepal, was too far away for him to be able to consult,³⁵ it seems that Della Penna made no attempt to carry a copy with him in 1732, when he left Tibet to go to Rome in order to secure more funds for the mission. It is more likely that he carried at least an exemplar with him in 1745, when the Capuchin mission was expelled from Tibet after the dispute concerning the refusal of the Christian neophytes to perform *corvée* services (*'u lag*) for the Dalai Lama.³⁶ However, Della Penna died not long after arriving in Patan in July of the same year,³⁷ and as a consequence it is likely that the dictionary remained at the mission in Kathmandu, also because for some time the Capuchins hoped for an opportunity to return to Tibet,³⁸ and a lexicon would have been useful to get acquainted with the language beforehand.

That the manuscripts of the dictionary were left in the Capuchin hospices seems to be confirmed by the fact that at an undetermined date in the early 19th century an English officer of the East India Company, Major Barré Latter (1777–1822),³⁹ acquired manuscript(s) of the dictionary in Patna. Our earliest source on the find is a letter from 1824 describing the donation to Bishop's College, in Calcutta, of a collection of books on Tibet gathered by Major Latter. According to this document, Major Latter had purposefully searched for records of the work done by the Catholic missionaries, but it appeared that:

...nothing had been done by them except the composing of a treatise on the alphabet which had been printed and was well known in Europe⁴⁰ and also a dictionary, the only two

³⁵ See above, n. 1.

³⁶ The trial and public punishment of the Christians who refused to perform the *'u lag* took place in May 1742. On some of the missionaries accounts of the events see *MITN*, vol. 2: 83-108 (report of the Lhasa mission); 109-127 (letter of Fr. Costantino da Loro); 128-129-131 (letter of Francesco Orazio della Penna); vol. 3: 233-252 (report of Fr. Gioacchino da S. Anatolia); 254-255 (report of Fr. Tranquillo d'Apecchio).

³⁷ The epitaph on his tomb was already reproduced in Giorgi's *Alphabetum Tibetanum*, 1762: 435. Note that in the short biography of Orazio Della Penna found in Petech, *MITN*, vol. 1: CXIV, the place of death of Orazio Della Penna is given as Patna, although this is corrected to Patan in the "Addenda et Emendanda" section, in vol. 7: 235.

³⁸ When he learnt of the death of Pho lha nas (1689–1747) Fr. Tranquillo d'Apecchio wrote to his son 'Gyur med rnam rgyal (d. 1750) asking for permission to cross the border into Tibet; although a passport was initially conceded, it was revoked soon afterwards. See *MITN*, vol. 1: LXIV-LXV.

³⁹ On Major Latter's biography and his important role for the preservation of these manuscripts see Bray 2008 and 2012.

⁴⁰ This must refer to Giorgi's *Alphabetum Tibetanum*, copies of which circulated also in India, notwithstanding its considerable size and weight. See for example the excerpt of a letter written by Sir William Jones in 1786 (when he already resided in Calcutta): "I have read since I left Calcutta 800 pages in quarto concerning the

existing copies of which were in manuscript in India. One of these copies a friend of Major Latter had already sent him, having obtained it from Bettiah, to which place the Roman Catholic Mission retreated after their expulsion from Thibet, and the other, *which was the original*, Major Latter was fortunate enough to discover himself in the Roman Catholic College, Patria [*sic*, read: Patna].⁴¹

It would seem, then, that the original manuscripts, i.e. the copies handwritten by Orazio Della Penna (I and II.B of Fr. Felix's article), were retrieved in Patna, while the copy written by multiple hands, II.A of Fr. Felix, was found in Bettiah. Indeed, we may conjecture that it was exactly after having obtained the copy from Bettiah that Major Latter began to look actively for the originals.

At this point we should also add that the letter explains that Major Latter spent a considerable amount of time and money to retrieve works on Tibet in order to allow "the Rev. Mr. Schroeter, who was employed first by the Church Mission Society and afterwards by the Government of India, but who resided in Major Latter's house, the means of acquiring that language".⁴² The "Rev. Mr. Schroeter" is, of course, Friedrich Christian Gotthelf Schroeter (1786–1820), the well-known compiler of the first Tibetan-English dictionary, *A Dictionary of the Bhotanta, or Boutan Language*, published in Serampore in 1826.⁴³

The connection between Schroeter's dictionary and the Roman Catholic missions has long been recognized, as it was already cursorily mentioned in the very preface of Schroeter's dictionary: "It is highly probable that the following Dictionary was written by some of the Roman Catholic missionaries who formerly laboured in Thibet",⁴⁴ and "The Dictionary was originally written in Italian, and has been partly

Mythology and History, both civil and natural, of Tibet. The work was printed with every advantage of new types and curious engravings at Rome, about ten years ago, and was compiled from the papers of an Italian father, named Orazio, who had lived thirty years in that country and Napal [*sic*], where he died." This passage is quoted in Pomplun, 2010: 213.

⁴¹ See Felix of Antwerp, 1912: 395. A portion of this extract is also cited in Bray, 2008: 52. The italics here are mine.

⁴² See the letter reproduced in Felix of Antwerp, 1912: 395-396. As John Bray has eloquently explained, Major Latter made the manuscript available to the Lutheran missionary F. C. G. Schroeter and personally engaged him to study Tibetan with a dual objective: of contributing to the spread of the Christian doctrine and facilitating official communications with Himalayan states, with which Major Latter had struggled to exchange diplomatic messages free of possible misinterpretations during the 1814–1816 Nepal war. See Bray, 2008: 44–52.

⁴³ On the Serampore dictionary and its probable connections to Della Penna's attempts to render Christian concepts in Tibetan see Zwilling, forthcoming. I am grateful to Leonard Zwilling for having generously shared a draft of this article.

⁴⁴ Carey, "Preface", in Schroeter, 1826: II.

translated into English by Mr. Marshman".⁴⁵ Later, in 1881, in the introduction to his *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, H. A. Jäschke conjectured, on the basis of Schroeter's English translation, about the possible methods used by the missionaries to create the lexicon, although the name of the original author could not yet be identified.⁴⁶

The first Tibetan dictionary, intended for European students, was published at Serampore, as long ago as 1826. It contains the collections, amassed in view of a dictionary and grammar, by a Roman Catholic missionary, who was stationed in eastern Tibet or close to the frontier in Bhotan. There was nothing to assist him, except the scanty contributions, given by Georgi [sic] in his *Alphabetum Tibetanum*.⁴⁷ He had to cope with an entirely unworked language. He evidently took the one way possible of making acquaintance with it, sufficient to enable him to understand, to speak, to read and write. Each word or sentence was jotted down, as soon as it was heard, or was committed to writing, at the request of the learner, by some native expert. After a while, the attempt could be made to master a book. In the instance of our missionary, Padma Sambhava's book of legends appears to have been selected, a work which represents rather a low level of literature, yet just on that account, perhaps, as a specimen of popular and current literature, not unsuitable to start from. Then, step by step, as best he could, our missionary had to possess himself of some abstract views, which would serve as a preliminary basis for a grammar. And had it been granted to this first occupant of the field to reduce his materials to an ordered system and to prepare them himself for publication, it is possible, that in Europe the knowledge of the Tibetan language might have reached, some fifty years earlier, the stage at which it has now arrived. The very name of that Roman Catholic missionary, however, has been lost.

Today, many of the finer points concerning the history of *A Dictionary of the Bhotanta, or Boutan Language*, and particularly the passage from Major Latter's hands to Schroeter's translation, have been clarified by

⁴⁵ Carey, "Preface", in Schroeter, 1826: III.

⁴⁶ See Jäschke, 1998 [1881]: v.

⁴⁷ In reality, it was the *Alphabetum Tibetanum* that was written on the basis of the reports that arrived in Rome from Della Penna and other missionaries. The works of Della Penna consulted by Giorgi were his two reports entitled *Breve notizia del regno del Thibet* and *Breve raguaglio del gran regno del Thibet* (both are transcribed in *MITN*, vol. 3: 47-85). See Bellini, 2011: 34. On Giorgi's debt to Orazio Della Penna and Cassiano (Belligatti) da Macerata, see Pomplun, 2020: 208-209.

John Bray.⁴⁸ However, we do not yet know if Schröter and Marshman used only the Tibetan-Italian manuscript (since *A Dictionary of the Bho-tanta* is only from Tibetan into English), and neither do we know if they translated faithfully the entire work of Della Penna, or whether they made a selection of the terms to include. This can only be determined by a careful comparison of the texts, and it is one of the goals of the project of study of Della Penna's dictionary, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Proceeding with the reconstruction of the history of the manuscripts, we have seen that after they were used by Schroeter, and with the death of Major Barré Latter in 1822, they were donated, around 1824, to the newly established Bishop's College of Calcutta by Major Latter's widow.⁴⁹ For the rest of the 19th century, and until the publication of Fr. Felix's article in 1912, their existence was forgotten. Similarly, for the rest of the twentieth century the dictionary remained, virtually ignored, in the library of Bishop's College. Then, according to the catalogue of the archives of Bishop's College, the texts were discovered to be missing in 1993.⁵⁰ In 1999 they were found and acquired by Mr. Marini, and only now they are finally accessible for research.

C. An assessment of the dictionary's historical value

In order to fully illustrate the historical prominence of the three manuscripts that comprise, at this date, the only known remains of Della Penna's dictionary, I would like to recapitulate here some concrete data that will render immediately evident the magnitude of this work.

⁴⁸ See Bray 2008, which discusses the circumstances around the production of Schroeter's *Dictionary*.

⁴⁹ See her letter accompanying the donation, reproduced in Felix of Antwerp, 1912: 395-396: "The collection chiefly consists of manuscripts and printed books in the Tibetan language. Some are works on their mythology, others elementary works used by them for the study of the languages in their colleges and schools, and were obtained by Major Latter from Tibet at a considerable expense. There are also dictionaries, Italian and Tibetan and Thibetan [*sic*] and Italian, compiled by the Roman Catholic Mission during twenty years' residence at Lhassah. These are considerably damaged by insects, but sufficient remains to form a very complete dictionary. The one in a black leather cover only extends as far as the letter S, but the dictionary of which it appears to be a fair copy forms part of the collection and is complete to the end". This letter confirms that already in 1824 the manuscripts were damaged by insects, and that ms. II.A of Fr. Felix only included up to the letter S.

⁵⁰ The records of Bishop's College archives (viewable on the College website in 2020, but now unavailable) are marked near the entry for the manuscripts with the following writing, in pen: "missing, move (? Or: Mar.?) 1993". Other books in the catalogue are marked as missing, with or without date. When contacted by email about the whereabouts of the manuscripts in 2020, Bishop's College expressed no interest in their recovery (personal communication, 23 July 2020).

Part of this information already appeared in the above-mentioned article by Lo Bue, but it will be recapped here in addition to other elements I have observed myself when I examined the manuscripts, together with professor Elena De Rossi Filibeck, in September 2021.

As illustrated above, of the three manuscripts, two are autographs by Della Penna; they are both written on Tibetan paper, although the pages have been turned by 90 degrees so that they could be used to write two long columns side by side, and could be bound on the long edge, fashioning a European-style volume. Both render the Tibetan in *dbu can*, and have no column for romanization. The Tibetan-Italian manuscript, of 386 pages in length, comprises entries that range from *kun ma* to *slo ma*, while the Italian-Tibetan one has 436 pages which cover the entries from “nome d’un religioso di Sciacchia-tuba” (name of a Buddhist religious person) to “zuffa, questione” (tussle, issue). Fortunately, the copy of the Italian-Tibetan (960 pages), which as we have seen above was found in Bettiah by a friend of Major Latter, and which appears to be written by different hands, can help complete the Italian-Tibetan section, since the entire volume, written on European paper and bound in leather, covers all the entries between the letters “A” and “S”. Unlike the two original manuscripts, that are missing portions because of the damage wrought by time, this copy appears to be the first of a two-volume set, since the end of the entries also coincides with the end of the volume, and there are no signs of missing pages.

A brief inspection of the contents of the two sections shows that the autograph Tibetan-Italian manuscript (see figure 1) is likely a working copy, possibly created while the author was studying with a Tibetan lama at the monastic college of bZhi sde⁵¹ or, later, at the

⁵¹ Della Penna had begun his long association with the monastery of bZhi sde when he began to study there together with Ippolito Desideri, at the time that Lha bzang khan (d. 1717) assigned them a teacher and instructed them to go and study in the monastery where he resided. According to Desideri, their residence at bZhi sde took place between 25 March and the end of July 1717 (*MITN*, vol. 6: 318). This is also confirmed by a letter from Gioacchino da Sant’Anatolia, although his dates are less precise (*MITN*, vol. 1:149). Also according to another letter by Gioacchino da Sant’Anatolia (*MITN*, vol. 1: 138) in 1731 Della Penna was working in the monastery of bZhi sde at a Tibetan edition of the monumental catechism of Tournet, which comprised “900 large Tibetan sheets” (“un catechismo di 900 carte grandi buttiane” see *MITN*, vol. 1: 137). On the monastery of bZhi sde (bZhi sde grwa tshang), see Alexander, 2005: 223-240. Notice especially that Alexander 2005: 224 clarifies that the structure in the current location, just north of Beijing East Road (see map on Alexander 2005: 20) was founded by the Seventh Dalai Lama around 1754-1755. Instead, at the time of the Capuchin mission in Lhasa, the bZhi sde grwa tshang was located in the area in front of the Ra mo che (*Ra mo che’i mdun phyog*). After leaving bZhi sde, in August 1717, Della Penna and Desideri were admitted to study and reside at Se ra (Sweet and Zwilling, 2010: 45).

monastic university of Se ra. The entries are arranged largely according to the Tibetan alphabetical order, although lemmas that start with a prefix are listed alongside those that do not have any, so for example “gso ba”, “curare, dare le medicine” (“to cure, give medicines”) is immediately followed by “gos bzo”, “arte del sartore” (art of the tailor), and both are listed under the letter “ga”. In addition, so far I have been unable to determine if any criterion was used for ordering the vowels, although it may be that the apparent indiscriminate arrangement of the vowels may be due to the fact that this manuscript seems to be a first draft. The impression that it is a rough-copy is amplified by the presence of horizontal lines as marks to distinguish sections within the broader letter-entries.⁵²

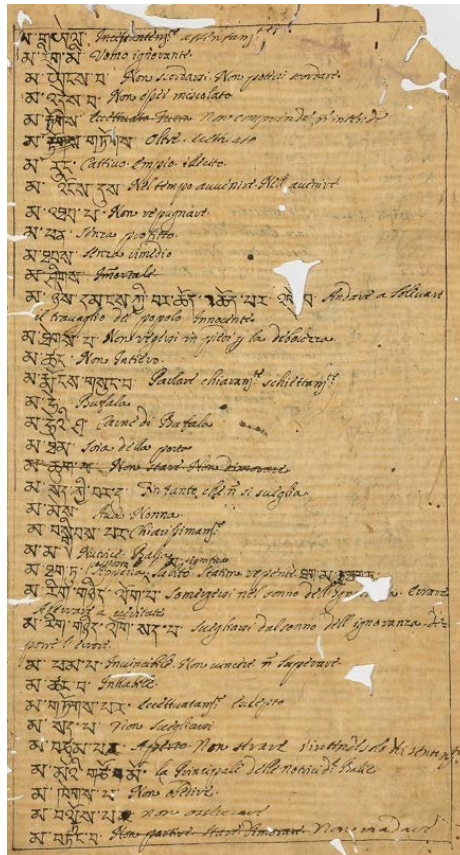


Figure 1. A page from the Tibetan-Italian autograph manuscript by Orazio della Penna. Image courtesy and copyright Elio Marini.

Another open question regarding this manuscript concerns its sources. We have seen above that Jäschke, on the basis of his examination of Schroeter's *Dictionary*, hypothesized that Della Penna read the legends of the life of Padmasambhava while studying under his teacher, an otherwise unknown *rabs byams pa* Yon tan dpal bzang.⁵³ How much of the dictionary is derived from the *Padma bka' thang*,⁵⁴ and how much came from oral instructions or simply casual daily conversations can only be ascertained through a detailed research of this manuscript, in order to ultimately establish the microhistory of the dictionary's making.⁵⁵ For example, it is possible that this manuscript was used as a sort of notebook that may contain more than just the results of the relatively brief period of study with Desideri at bZhi sde, since Della Penna sojourned in Lhasa for much longer than his Jesuit "colleague" and rival.⁵⁶

⁵³ The name appears in Tibetan script in the "Explanation of the formula *Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ* compiled by the monk Ngag dbang" (MITN, vol. 4: 170). It is also spelled so in Giorgi's *Alphabetum Tibetanum* (1761): 559; although in the errata section it is corrected as Yon tan Ngag dbang dpal bzang (p. 765). In the reports by Della Penna, his roman character transcriptions omit the "ngag dbang" portion of the name: Rabgiambà Jontenppehl-Szagn (see MITN, vol. 3: 87, and the variant spelling Rabgiambà Tontepphel-Tzagn on p. 91). Pomplun notes that he could not find mention of this *rab 'byams pa* in the history of Se ra by Rzung rtse byams pa thub bstan; see Pomplun 2011: 396, n. 39. A more careful reading of the colophon of the "Explanation of the formula *Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ* compiled by the monk Ngag dbang", however, shows that although the text itself was indeed written by Ngag dbang, who modestly refers to himself as "the illusory reflection of a śramaṇa (Tib.: *dge sbyong*)", it was commissioned by *rab 'byams pa* Yon tan dpal bzang, who is identified as the caretaker (Tib.: *dkon gnyer*) of the Ra mo che. It is thus possible that the teacher originally assigned to Della Penna and Desideri from Lha bzang Khan was a monk from the Ra mo che (which, after all, was close to the bZhi sde), who continued to tutor them also at Se ra. The colophon in question reads: *yi ge drug ma'i 'bru 'grol mdor sdus tsam rang gi go tshul ltar bkod pa 'di ni / rgya gtags ra mo che'i bkon [= dkon] gnyer rabs 'byams pa yon tan dpal bzang gis dgos bsung [= gsung] ba bzhin / dge sbyong gi gzugs bsnyan ngag dbang ming can gis r mo che'i bar khang du smras so //*.

⁵⁴ Or, perhaps, another hagiography of Padmasambhava; Pomplun 2011: 387, n.7 has briefly outlined the possible texts accessed by Desideri.

⁵⁵ In his forthcoming article on the Serampore dictionary, Zwilling argues that many of the lemmas in this lexicon appear to be drawn from the *Lam rim chen mo* rather than the *Pad ma bka' thang*. This is possible, since we know that both Della Penna and Desideri were acquainted with this important text. Still, it must be kept in mind that we do not know for sure how much of the Serampore dictionary corresponds to that of Della Penna: see for example Bray 2008: 63 on the possible contributions of the editor John Clark Marshman (1794–1877), on a variety of Hindu references. In addition, if the Serampore dictionary, which is Tibetan-English, only translates the Tibetan-Italian ms., which appears to be a draft, it is possible that its sources (as well as its accuracy) may be limited compared to a later "fair copy".

⁵⁶ While Desideri stayed from March 18, 1716 to April 28, 1721, the former lived in Lhasa for twenty years in total, from October 1, 1716 to August 25, 1732 on his first

Concerning the autograph Italian-Tibetan portion (see figure 2), it is a much cleaner copy, written with elegant calligraphy in Italian and a consistent vertical line separating the Italian lemmas from their Tibetan translations. At times the Italian-Tibetan can give the impression that it is based on an Italian vocabulary, since some entries in Italian are listed without corresponding Tibetan translation, although the respective terms exist in Tibetan. When this happens, it looks as if the Italian lemmas had been written down in advance, in anticipation of adding the equivalent Tibetan whenever it was encountered.

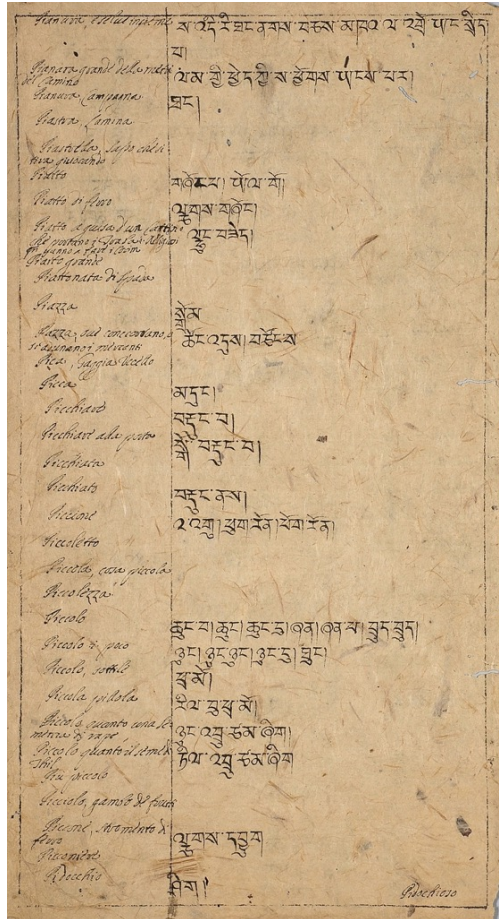


Figure 2. A page from the autograph Italian-Tibetan manuscript by Orazio della Penna. Image courtesy and copyright Elio Marini.

mission, and then again from January 6, 1741 to April 20, 1745. See Petech, *MITN*, vol. 1: CXIV and vol. 5: XVI-XVII.

However, other entries are clearly created on the basis of Tibetan lexical meanings that are non-existent in Italian, such as “avere la libertà di operar bene ed essere disoccupato da cose terrene come i Religiosi” (to have the freedom to act well and be disconnected from earthly things like the Religious ones”, *dal ba*).⁵⁷ These examples show that also the modus of creating the Italian-Tibetan manuscript is not immediately clear and needs to be researched further. In general, however, many entries in this section seem built on the vernacular language spoken in Lhasa at the time of Della Penna’s sojourn, raising the tantalizing perspective that the dictionary may be used to reconstruct the state of the colloquial language in Lhasa in the early 18th century.

As mentioned above, it seems possible to reconstruct the entirety of Italian-Tibetan section because of the survival of the copy written by multiple hands (see figure 3), but although the two manuscripts seem to correspond, a line-by-line comparison has not been attempted yet, and there is a possibility that when it will be completed it will reveal differences between the two. Still, the more utilitarian approach of the Italian-Tibetan has the potential to present a snapshot of daily life situations and even reflect the social consequences of the major historical events that occurred in the first half of the eighteenth century, as well as to offer significant insights into how Della Penna understood and engaged with the Buddhist literary culture he was approaching.

⁵⁷ This definition seems to point at a misunderstanding; while *dal ba* per se means “rest”, or “leisure”, it seems that Della Penna here translated a portion of an explanation of the broader sense of *dal ba* which is found also in Sarat Candra Das 1991 [1902], 623: *spyir mi khom pa’i gnas brgyad du ma skyes par dam pa’i chos bsgrub kho pa ni dal ba zhes bya*. Das’s source for this expression is the *Klong chen snying thig gi theg mchog mdzod*, the famous treasure text discovered by Jigs med gling pa (1729/1730–1798) at the age of twenty-eight (*more tibetico*), so around 1757. This is later than the period of writing of Della Penna’s dictionary, and thus this definition must be older than the second half of the 18th century.

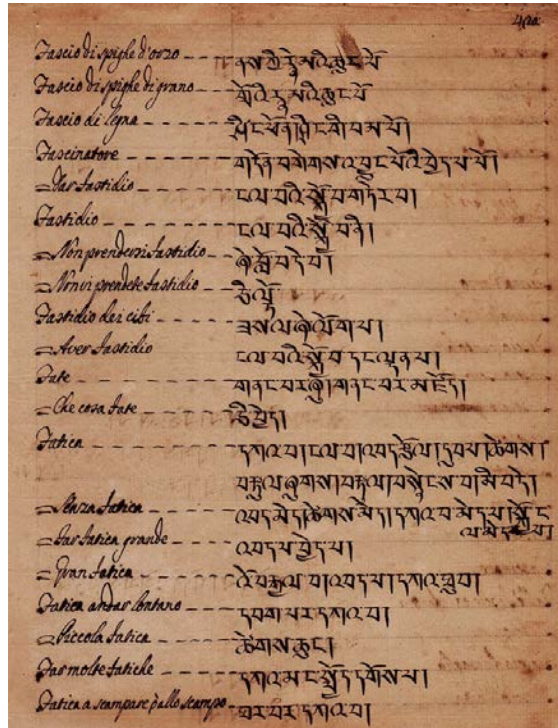


Figure 3. A page from the copy of the Italian-Tibetan dictionary by Della Penna. Image courtesy and copyright Elio Marini.

A few examples of utilitarian language found during our inspection of the manuscripts can provide an idea of the manifold social circumstances witnessed by Della Penna. The dictionary includes expressions tied to daily life such as “*orlare una veste*” (“to hem a robe”, *gos la mtha’ ’gril btang ba*); and “*ornarsi per andare dal re*” (“to dress up to go to the king”, *rgyal po’i drung du ’gro pa’i phyir lus brgyan pa*), “*imbriarsi, divenir briaco*” (“to get drunk”, *chang dang dug gis myos pa*) but also numerous terms connected with one of the principal activities performed by the Capuchin friars, who provided medical care gratis to the people of Lhasa. Thus, a number of terms connected with human anatomy and medical conditions can be found. In addition, certain expressions vividly recall the historical circumstances witnessed by the Capuchin friars: “*dare la sentenza di morte, condannare a morte*” (“to condemn to death”, *gsod pa’i nang khrims bcas pa*), and “*impalare*” (“to impale”, *gsal shing rtse la bskyon*) bring to memory the different traumatic events experienced by the Capuchins during their stay in Tibet: the Dzungar sack of Lhasa (1717); the executions ordered by the Qing authorities on the collaborators of the Dzungar occupation (1721); and

finally the grisly punishments inflicted by Manchu officials to those judged responsible for the murder of Khang chen nas (d. 1727). Those public violences, tortures and executions greatly shocked the missionaries, who comment on them in several documents.⁵⁸

Naturally, as the main purpose of the missionaries was to introduce Christianity in Tibet, a significant trove of terms concerns religious topics. Therefore, the dictionary offers remarkable possibilities to examine how Buddhist expressions were adapted to render Christian concepts, as well as the strategies adopted to solve questions concerning the translation of Christian terminology, for which often there were no applicable equivalents in Tibetan. This necessitated the creation of neologisms or suitable paraphrases that could capture the intended meaning without creating confusion, and caused instances of appropriation of Buddhist terms, as well as superimposition and misrepresentation of their meanings.⁵⁹ Conversely, the dictionary can also reveal the choices made to render in Italian Buddhist concepts and ideas that were completely foreign and often puzzling for the Capuchins. Lastly, even the lacunae in the dictionary are revealing of the extremely knotty task of finding equivalent terminology: thus, *peccato originale* ("original sin") is left untranslated, while *Giudei* ("Jews") is rendered with a straight calque from the Italian (*rjus sde'i*).

Another noteworthy point of interest of this dictionary, unrelated to its lexicographic value, concerns its contribution to our knowledge of the Italian Catholic missions in Tibet. In fact, it should be pointed out that the literature on Ippolito Desideri, notwithstanding his relatively short sojourn compared to Della Penna, vastly surpasses that on Della Penna and on the Capuchin missions in general.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ The Capuchin missionaries were particularly shocked by the Dzungar sack of Lhasa. Every letter written after that episode mentions that the Dzungars despoiled them of everything, including the underpants they were wearing (i.e.: "Il dire essere spogliati noi fin dell'abito e mutande che si portavano in dosso ed esser stati flagellati a sangue con frusta da cavallo... per far confessare ove si era nascosto l'oro e l'argento", in a letter by Domenico da Fano dated 28 May 1728; *MITN*, vol. 1: 109). See similar mentions also in other letters from the same period: *MITN*: vol. 1: 111, 112, 114-115. On the executions cum tortures meted out in 1728 see *MITN*, vol. 1: 144, 164; and also Petech 1972: 148-149.

⁵⁹ The missionaries themselves were aware of this problem. See for example a letter (CL51) in which Della Penna complains about the expression chosen by Desideri to translate "God"; Petech, *MITN*, vol. 1, 142 (although Desideri used the term in question, "*sGam phyä*", only once; see *MITN*, vol. 7: xxiv). On some translations of Christian terms in Tibetan found in the Serampore dictionary, see Zwilling, forthcoming.

⁶⁰ Among the major recent publications on Ippolito Desideri and his work we should mention: Sweet and Zwilling 2010, the first complete English translation of Desideri's *Historical Notices of Tibet* (the earlier, and much cited, De Filippi 1937 was incomplete); Pomplun 2010, a study of Desideri's writings and of the ideas that

Understandably, Desideri's detailed account of his travels and experiences in Tibet, coupled with his sophisticated grasp of the Tibetan language and Tibetan Buddhism, has generated much attention among scholars. Conversely, the Capuchin missions, although they lasted longer (in three phases: 1707–1711; 1716–1732; 1741–1745) and involved over a dozen friars, have received much less notice.⁶¹ The major reason for the Capuchin missions' neglect is that the only works compiled by the Capuchins that could have come close to Desideri's prowess, those written by Della Penna, have been almost entirely lost.⁶² Among this is the dictionary, now finally accessible for research after a series of intricate vicissitudes. A serious and concerted study of this dictionary is an imperative, as this text will bring to light a crucial component of the Italian missions to Tibet that has not been possible to examine until now. Furthermore, it can be used as a tool to examine key avenues of historical enquiry and open vast horizons for research in several different fields, including of course Tibetan and missionary history, but also extending to religious studies, translation studies, the study of intercultural encounters, linguistics, and lexicography. The number of entries in the dictionary, which was estimated at around 35,000 by Della Penna himself,⁶³ is indeed in the tens of thousands (so far only the lemmas in the copy of the Italian-Tibetan have been counted, and they amount to over 23,000) and therefore the possibilities for in-depth research are ample.

D. Plans for further research and current collaborations.

As shown in the foregoing sections, the dictionary of Della Penna is the oldest dictionary translating Tibetan into a modern western language, Italian. Although the existence of this dictionary has been known since 1912, its manuscripts were lost at the end of the 20th century and only fortuitously recovered. They are of inestimable historical and linguistic value, as they comprise the original documentation of the first important European attempt to write a bilingual Tibetan

underpinned his interpretation of Tibetan society and culture; Lopez and Jinpa 2017, English translation of a portion of Desideri's unfinished confutation of the idea of the transmigration of the soul; and Toscano 1981–1989, a set of Italian translations of almost all of Desideri's treatises in Tibetan.

⁶¹ With the exception of De Rossi Filibeck 1998; Engelhardt 2005 and 2015, Kaschewsky 2020 and Sweet and Zwilling 2022.

⁶² The works by Della Penna included translations from Italian to Tibetan (see *MITN*, vol. 1: LXXXVIII, nos. 3, 4, 7); translations from Tibetan to Italian (*MITN*, vol. 1: LXXXIX-XC, nos. 1-4, 9); letters and polemical works written in Tibetan (*MITN*, vol. 1: LXXXVIII, nos. 5, 6); and treatises compiled in Italian, but likely derived from Della Penna's reading of canonical texts (*MITN*, vol. 1: LXXXIX, nos. 5, 6).

⁶³ See *MITN*, vol. 3: 88.

dictionary.⁶⁴ They are invaluable in reconstructing the colloquial language in Lhasa in the early 18th century, and they are equally important for the history of the Capuchin missions in Tibet. To undertake in-depth research on these manuscripts is therefore crucial, especially given the conditions of the manuscripts, which are about 300 years old and were already reported as damaged in 1912. Today, the two autograph texts by Della Penna still show signs of old insect damage, but are generally quite readable; while the copy of the Italian-Tibetan, for which iron-based ink was used on European foolscap paper, has begun to oxidize, and, although largely readable, would require extensive and costly restorations in order to preserve its long-term integrity.

Therefore the research plan developed for these manuscripts starts from the basic and fundamental task of digitization of the texts, in order to facilitate the study of their content, prevent the overuse of the texts, and preserve their contents for posterity. The next step would involve a full transcription of all the entries into a database, which would enable cross-referenced searches and thus immensely facilitate the research phase proper, enabling, among other things, an understanding of how the dictionary was created, structured and organized. Once this preliminary work is done, it will be possible to sort the entries in the dictionary into thematic categories, which will be analyzed in conjunction with appropriate Tibetan sources and missionary records for a variety of research aims, only a few of which can be predicted at this premature point. For example, appropriate study may help to form a fuller portrait of the daily experiences of the missionaries and their interactions with Buddhism and all layers of Tibetan society, from the courts to the lower classes; to better understand the prevalent medical ailments in Lhasa at the time; or to compare how colloquial expressions have changed from the early 18th century to today.

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⁶⁴ The preceding attempt, the Latin-Tibetan dictionary compiled by François Marie de Tours, Giuseppe da Ascoli and Domenico da Fano was compiled at a very early stage and was judged by Petech to be "still a very rough work, based on the spoken language, with several mistakes and misunderstandings" (*MITN.*, vol. 1: xCII). Notwithstanding this, it can be useful for the reconstruction of the historic pronunciation of Lhasa Tibetan in the early 18th century, since its 2538 entries comprise Latin lemmas, the Tibetan in *dbu can*, and its phonetic reading in Latin script.

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