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The Origin of the Tibetan Kingdom

— HUGH RICHARDSON

In the Tshomsang Chronicle there is a list of forty-two kings down to 'Brī-dun-brtan, Glang derma, who died c. 842 A.D. Most are little more than shadows; some are clearly mythical; others legendary: some, perhaps, real persons of whom oral tradition has preserved little but their names; only of the last eleven has history anything definite to say.

The early part of the genealogy is seen by Professor Peletz as representing Bon cosmology and the first seven names seem to fall into that category. The list begins with Yub-bla bsdag-drug who dwelt above high heaven and had six sons, with one more, Khri'i bdun-thugs making seven. Although those names might appear to mean Six High Father Lords and the Line of Seven Enthroned Ones, they only account for two persons in the list, and it is a point of little consequence since they are clearly denizens of the outer world. With Nyag-khri btsun-po divinity descends briefly to earth. In the poetic language of the Chronicle "he came like a shower of rain to this sheltered place, as lord of the hidden land, to become ruler of Tibet of the six divisions; after which he went to heaven". In a ninth century inscription from Rkône-po his name appears as Nya-gri and his line is said to have dwelt for seven generations at Phying-ba stag-tse which is identified with the ruinous castle near the ancient royal burial ground at 'Phyang-ra'yan. Later tradition, without any basis in early documents, changes the name to Gnya-khri and elaborates a legend that he was carried on the necks (gnya?) of his new subjects.
According to the Chronicle Nyag-khri was succeeded by five kings with the syllable Khri in their names, of whom it is said that when the son was old enough to ride a horse the father withdrew to heaven, suggesting a ritual - and violent - termination of these early reigns. Later tradition recounts how the kings returned to heaven on a magic rope. Although that myth is not found in surviving early ones, that does not necessarily imply that it was not current in the early centuries.

After the seven Khri kings, who had special links with heaven, comes a line headed by Dri-gum btsan-po who, although a son of the last heavenly Khri, was involved in earthly conflict and death. In an obscure story he challenged one Lo-ngam rta-rdzl who succeeded in neutralizing the magic powers with which Dri-gum was protected and so was able to kill him. The encounter took place at Lo-ngam's capital Nyang-ro sham-po. Although there is mention of Dri-gum's protecting deity Lde-bka gung-rgyal - The mountain god 'O-lde gung-rgyal? - being driven in defeat to the shores of Glang Ti-tsee it is unlikely that it was so far in the west. Later tradition sees the site as being in the valley of the Nyang - chu near Gyantse; while the pundit Nain Singh of the Indian Survey found a similar story current near the Dangra Yum-mahö, a lake sacred to the Bon-po; but many indications point to the valley of the Rkong-po Nyang-chu. The two sons of Dri-gum who had been taken into banishment in Rkong-po eventually avenged their father by killing Lo-ngam in his palace of Nyang-ro sham-po. According to the Chronicle, the younger Nya-khyl became ruler of Rkong-po while the elder Sha-khyl betook himself to Phying-ba - that is the capital of the Tibetan Kings. The story is adumbrated in a ninth century inscription from Rkong-po with the difference that Nya-khyl is described as the elder and Sha-khyl, who became Lha-btsan-po, ruler of Tibet, as the younger. That may reflect an earlier tradition about their common ancestry which the Tibetans sought to reverse in order to claim seniority after they had reduced the rulers of Rkong-po to the position of gyal pgon - feudatory Prince. A hint of an earlier tradition may also be seen in the Btsan-no bka'-thang where the mountain on which the legendary founder of the Tibetan royal line descended - usually held to be in Yar-lung-is described as Rkong-po Lha-ril rgyang-do. That

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might be identified with the sacred Lo-ril east of the Ama lake and pass seen by the Abbot Hoc and Gabet and by pandit Nain Singh. The story may be an amalgam of hazy memories from different ethnic groups or tribes of people of Tibetan stock from the east coming into conflict with other such immigrants already settled in the country.

In the Chronicle Sha-khyi, Spu-ide gung-rgyal, is succeeded by seven kings with the syllable leg or leg in their name, followed after one generation by a line of kings whose names mostly include the syllable lde — regarded later as the royal etymology — and also brtan which was part of the names of almost all the kings down to U'il-dun-brtan.

Into this seemingly coherent genealogical tree must somehow be fitted a name of prime importance which is not included there. In the inscription on the pillar at the tomb of Khei lde-drong-brtan and In that on the Sino-Tibetan treaty pillar at the Lhasa Jo-Khang it is 'Od-ide spu-rgyal who appears as the founding ancestor who came from being a god to rule over men. He is similarly described in a document from Tangshak recording a prayer at the foundation of a temple on the frontier in celebration of the establishment of peace. The Lhasa inscription also quotes a sort of poem, using words like those in the Chronicle about Nyag-khi, describing Tibet as the centre of high mountains, the source of great rivers, a high country, a pure land. From that it might appear that the two were one and the same, and in the fifteenth century they were so identified by 'Gos Lo-sgra'ba in his Deb Nsang where he quotes the Lhasa treaty inscription as saying that the kings held sway since the divine 'Od-lde spu-rgyal (sic) founded the kingdom; and he goes on to comment that since Gnya-khi btsam-po 'Od-lde (sic) there were forty-two kings.

The use of similar language about different personages — especially divine beings — does not necessarily mean that they were identical. Both Gnya-khi btsam-po and Spu-lde gung-rgyal are described as coming like rain upon the earth; and Spu-lde gung-rgyal — who was also Sha-khyi and Grang-mo gnam seer brisig — was eighth in descent from Nya-khyi and clearly not the same person. His divine powers seem, moreover, to have been compro-
nised when his father who had the power to return bodily to heaven, was defeated and killed and his body thrown into the river, while his sons were bound and exiled. But one should not look too critically into the language and doings of mystical divinity; and the Tibetan kings down to Dhu'i - dun-brtan were always referred to as sons of god.

In addition to his appearance in the two royal inscriptions and the prayer, 'O-ide spu-rgyal is mentioned in the chronicle at the end of a passage enumerating the rival principalities by which Tibet was surrounded. Apart from other lists of principalities, some clearly mythical relating to kingdoms of gods and demons and princesses skilled in poisons and cures, those in the Chronicle and in Pellet's Tibetan 1290 deal with real places which came to form part of the Tibetan kingdom and whose rulers have an appearance of verisimilitude. Of them it is said that by internal feuding they destroyed one another and in the end were not a match for 'O-ide spu-rgyal. This would seem to bring 'O-ide down virtually to historical times for some of the places named - e.g. Ngas-po, Khum-oro and Skyi-ro were conquered by Grem-ri ston btsan, while Dags-po, Nyang-po and Khong-po were finally subjugated in the time of his son Srong-brtan sgrun-po; and Zhang-zhung not until much later, perhaps by the ninth century a haze of legend had come to attribute the conquest of the neighbouring principalities to 'O-ide spu-rgyal as a symbol or personification of Spu-rgyal Tibet, much as John Bull stands for Britain and Uncle Sam for the U.S.A., without any exact idea of chronology.

In this context there is a lively contribution from Chinese historians who are known for their habitual and rational recording of events and for their interest in the doings of peoples beyond the frontier who might disturb their peace. In the earlier of two versions of the Tang Annals it is related that the origin of the Tibetans is uncertain but some say they are descended from Tsor-la Li-iou-kou of the Southern Liang. He had a son, Fanou, who was quite young when his father died in 414 A.D. and, after various misfortunes, fled westward across the Huang-ho and founded an extensive state among the Chi'lang who followed him enthusiastically. He changed his name
to Suu-pou-ye and called his dynasty T'o-pa which became corrupted into T'ou-fan. The later version starts with an ancestor among the Ch'iang who was called Hou-ti pou-sou-ye. It goes on to repeat the alternative story about Fann; and then records the names of seven successors of the first prince (Hou-ti pou-sou-ye) as follows: Kia-si-tong-so; T'o-tou-ou; Kia-li-che-jo; F'ou-long-jo; Kia-so-lo; Louen-tsan-sou; K'i-long-tsan also called K'i-sou-nong whose clan was Fou-ye. Among these names 'O-loe spu-rgyal, Tho-go-nya-brtse; Slom-brtse and Srong-brtse can be recognized; they and the others, must have been provided by a Tibetan informant about the middle of the tenth century; while the Fanni story seems to have come from Chinese sources.

There is nothing improbable in a Ch'iang tribe accepting the leadership of a dynamic prince from some other people, in the kaleidoscopic pattern of dynasties of short or long duration and of greater or less territorial extent created by the medley of peoples in north China and neighbouring central Asia during the fourth and fifth centuries there was, as Professor W. Eberhard has pointed out, no real national unity and tribes or groups of one people might readily join or be absorbed by another. The Southern Liang, whose territory was in eastern Kansu, were Hsien-pi; a basically Mongol people containing Han and Turkic elements. Before the Southern Liang there had been a powerful kingdom, described by Eberhard as Tibe-tan, spreading from Yunnan to Ch'inchu where they were neighbours and rivals of the Hsien-pi; and it is just when the Tibetan kingdom broke up that Fanni is supposed to have created his kingdom among them. It is noticeable that the names of 'O-loe spu-rgyal's successors in the Tang Annals number only six before Srong-brtse sgam-po who was born c. 610 A.D. That would go back to Khril-thog-brtse in the Tibetan Chronicle's list and to a possible date around 410-420, the supposed time of Fanni. If it is intended that Hou-ti pou-sou-ye, Fanni, immediately preceded Kia-si-tong-so that would make him the seventh predecessor of Srong-brtse sgam-po and contemporary or identical with Khri-sgra sbang-brtse of the Chronicle.

It is noticeable also that Khri-sgra sbang-brtse is the first king to whom is attributed a queen free a historically recorded clan; and that practice is followed regu-
larly after him, from his time the genealogical tree may have some more substance — though tenuous — than what has gone before. Five generations or so is no great stretch of time for oral tradition in a society without written records to preserve a reasonably consistent family memory.

Khris-thog-ritsan’s successor Lha-tho-do sny-a-ritsan has a special place in later literature perhaps because of the syllable “Lha” in his name. It is said that the first trace of Buddhism reached Tibet in his reign when volumes of scripture fell or the roof of his palace but no one was able to read them. He is said also to have lived to the age of one hundred. Recent calculations of his data, shown on the Tibetan coinage, put his birth at the year 173 according to W.D. Shakya and at 254 according to Zurshang Shappo. That is to stretch the longevity of Stong-ritsan’s predecessors beyond the bounds of credulity and a more reasonable estimate would be c. 460 A.D.

Nothing in these diverse traditions clarifies the relationship between Nyag-khri ritsan-po and ‘O-lde sru-rgyal. It emerges only that for the Buddhist Chos-rgyal the divine first ancestor was ‘O-lde sru-rgyal. while Nyag-ri ritsan-po holds that place for the rulers of Kong-po — of whose religious persuasion there is no certainty. A prince of Kong-po witnessed the edict of Khri lde-strong-ritsan to maintain the Buddhist faith but that might have been a political as much as a religious act; and in later days Kong-po together with Drgu-po and Nyang-po had a bad reputation as ‘poisonous countries’ which might imply some religious shortcomings. At last, with the reign of Stag-bu sny-a-gzigs, Lha-tho-do’s great-grandson and Stong-ritsan sgrub-po’s grandfather, milder speculations can be left behind and it is possible to trace some history in the legend; and the story as told in the Chronicle is so lively that it is surprising it has made virtually no impact on later histories.

The king, Stag-bu sny-a-gzigs, third in succession from Lha-tho-do sny-a-ritsan, had his capital at phying-ba stagtse. His neighbour at Nyenkar mying-po was Zang-po-rje Stag-skya-bo, prince of Nyag-po in the Skyi Chu and Pham-po valleys, who was an arrogrant and tyrannical ruler, even one of his ministers — leaders of great clans.
or families — Mnyan 'Dzil-zung Nag-po warned him of the disastrous consequences of such behaviour, he deposed him and ignored his advice. 'Dzil-zung in disgust took refuge with another prince, Zing-po-RE Khri-pangs-sum of 'O-yul whose capital was at Yu-sne of Sngur-ba. With his support 'Dzil-zung killed Stag-skyu-bu whose territory of Klum and Yel fell to Khri-pangs-sum. As his reward 'Dzil-zung received the castle of Sngur-ba and lands in the lower part of Klum. Among the subordinate landholders or bondsmen (brun) in those states who became his subjects were two leading members of the Myang clan, Nam-to-re khru-gu and his son 5mon-to-re Tseng-sk'u, who also had formerly been ministers of the defeated Zing-po-rje of Ngas-po. Mnyan 'Dzil-zung's wife, the lady of Pa-tshab, so grievously insulted and humiliated her new subjects that they complained to Khri-pangs-sum, the overlord of Mnyan 'Dzil-zung, but he ignored their complaint. Not long after, one of Khri-pangs-sum's own ministers, Dba's Bchos-to-re Khu-gu was killed in a duel with the prince's Son-po priest, Oshen Khri-bzhe 'Dron-kung. Bchos-to-re's elder brother Phangs-to-re Dbyi-tshab, appealed to the prince for blood-money but was rudely rebuffed. He got in touch with Myang Tseng-sk'u who was equally resentful of the ill treatment he had suffered. The two of them, with Tseng-sk'u taking the lead, decided to offer their allegiance to Bitsam-po spu-rgyal, that is to say Stag-bu snya-gzigs, whom they described in a short allusive song as a son of man who is indeed a son of god, a true lord whom it would be good to serve. They swore an oath of enmity to Zing-po-rjes and loyalty to Spu-rgyal-bitsam-po. Dba's Dbyi-tshab then recruited into the conspiracy his uncle Btong-to-re of Moon and when the uncle died his son took his place. Myang Tseng-sk'u similarly took into his confidence Nag-seng of Tshes-pong, a follower of Stag-bu snya-gzigs, who became the go-between through whom Myung and Dba's communicated their purpose to the king. Stag-bu snya-gzigs was at first hesitant to take part in the feud because his sister was married to Zing-po-rje: also his wife appears to have been a kinswoman of Zhug-po-rje for her name was Stong-zung 'bro-ga of 'Og-god ('01 = 'O-yul?), but he agreed to go along with them.

The conspirators made their way secretly to Phying-ba to take an oath of loyalty to Stag-bu snya-gzigs in
person. Their movements aroused suspicion among the men of Yar who attempted to seize them; and before action could be taken against Zing-po-rje, Stag-bu snya-gzigs was dead. The brief mention in the Chronicle discloses none of the circumstances but Professor Geza Uray in an important article in Acta Hungarica 1972 cites Pelliot Tibetain 1144, an unpublished fragment, in which a few scattered words tell that the King Sug-bu was captured by '01-god, Lord of Yar-'brog and was handed over to Kludur, king of Lho-brag, who imprisoned him. There is also a fragmentary mention of his wife.

A more detailed account of the fate of Stag-bu snya-gzigs is found in the Phgal-chas Bon-eyi lugs gnis, showing that Bon histories often have some special acquaintance with early traditions. It is related how Stag-po gnyan-gsal (sic) subdued the twelve nyal pham-feudatory principalities, and then made war on Phan-ra-rje, king of Lho-brag but was defeated and imprisoned, Stag-po gnyan-gsal's Bon-po priest, the Sng-shen Khri-ri-khad rescued him by his magical powers. In gratitude the king made over the kingdom to him. This is a rather different version from that of the Chronicle. It implies that Stag-bu gnyan-gzigs was the aggressor whereas the Chronicle says he died before action could be taken against Zing-po-rje Khri-pangs-sum -- Phan-ra-rje in the Bon story is clearly a variant of that name. The implication of '01-god of Yan-'brog suggests that the conspiracy which the men of Yar appear to have detected gave an excuse for their ruler '01-god, who was a vassal of Khri-pangs-sum, to take action against Stag-bu snya-gzigs on behalf of his lord. Yar and Yan-'brog do not necessarily imply the country round the Yan-'brog Msho but may just as well be the upland grazing lands near the Ori-gu mtshe at the head of the Yan-lung valley. There is no mention in the Chronicle of Lho-brag or Kludur but it appears from its brief comment that Stag-bu snya-gzigs did not survive whatever incident may have occurred.

An obscure 'all-piece in the Chronicle story after referring to the death of Stag-bu snya-gzigs seems to suggest that the conspiracy was somehow disclosed by one Spug Gyi-m-tang rma-ba, a follower of Tshes-pong Nga-song the man who acted as go-between to the king, Spug Gyi-m-
tang at first would not share his bed with his wife for fear of betraying the plot in his sleep; but after wandering nightly in the hills he eventually returned to sleep with her. For some reason they quarrelled and he bit out her tongue so that she died. He also died without issue before an attack was made on Zing-po-rje. Other members of the clan, however, continued to be active in Tibetan affairs and one Spug Gyim-tshang rma-chung was sent in 653 to govern Zhang Zhung.

The conspirators evidently came out of the affair unscathed. They added three more to their number, and undeterred by the death of Stag-bu snya-gzig, took an oath of allegiance to his two sons, Slon-mdzhan and Slon-kol. This seems to have been done at the request of the princes, who had the duty of avenging their father. The words of the oath are recorded at some length in archaic language passed down, perhaps, in the family tradition of the noble ministers who swore it. A number of other members of the Myung, Teshs-pom and Dba's clans also joined in the oath.

Why, it may be asked, were they so ready to give their loyalty to Stag-bu snya-gzig and later to his two young sons. Their domain seems to have been quite small and was threatened on the north by more powerful rulers in Ngaspo and 'O-hul and on the south from Var-throg. The answer must lie in the name Spu-rgyal which has an aura of special sacred and mystic qualities. It was to btsan-po Spu-rgyal that loyalty was pledged, not to any king or prince by name. For Myung and Dba's, Btsan-po Spu-rgyal though a man was also a son of god. One of his ancestors Tho-do snya-btsan had the name "Lha". The Rkong-po inscription relates how one of Dri-gum btsan-po's two sons became Lha Btsan-po, the divine btsan-po, and went to rule at Phyirg-ba stag-rte; and even when the influence of Buddhism was well established, the kings, with the title of Lha sras or Lha btsan-po, hacked back in their inscriptions to their descent from 'O-ide spu-rgyal. The essence of that sacred quality is nowhere spilled out; but, if spu-rgyal means "hairy king" it might point to the monkey ancestor revered in the primitive beliefs of the Ch'ang people in their ancestral home on the north-west borders of China, a myth later to be adopted rather laboriously into the hagiology of Tibetan budd-
him. But whatever its source, it was that sanctity that held together in fealty a kingdom depending greatly on ministers from different parts of the kingdom, often rivals of one another and sometimes more powerful than the btsam-po himself.

After the oath-taking a plan of campaign was made and Slon-mtshan set out at the head of an army of ten thousand men while his younger brother stayed with the queen-mother. The princes were quite young and the phrase gshabs kyi gtaus describing the start of Slon-mtshan's expedition may imply that this was the first venture of his majority. Similar expressions used of a child's first steps and a young man setting up an independent household for the first time; and it is applied also later to Srong-brtan sgam-po's first military expedition.

The campaign against Zing-po-rje, here described as Dgu-gri a title probably annexed from Dgu-gri Zing-po-rje of Ngas-po whom he had conquered, is recorded very briefly. Its climax was the capture of the castle of Yu-gna by damming a river in Khum so that the defence works were flooded. Zing-po-rje was in this way destroyed. His territory as far as Bre-sna in Rkong-po (West of the Nyang-chu) was annexed by the btsam-po who proclaimed that the country of Ngas-po should be known as 'Phan-yel. His ministers and subjects greeted him by the title of Btsan-po; he took the name Gnam-ril Slon-mtshan and he rewarded suitably all those ministers who had delivered Zing-po-rje's domains into his hands. Nyang Tsung-sku received the castle of Sngur-ba which had belonged to 'Dzi-zung who had insulted him; Dua's Dbyal-tshab got those of the Sschen who had killed his brother; all received numbers of huntsmen (bmon), Nyang, Dba's, Mnon, and Tshes-pong became Councillors of the king.

The authority of the btsam-po and his ministers at this time was established in a comparatively small stretch of country in the valleys of the Skyl-chu and the Gtsang-po from Yar-lung and 'Lon to the borders of Rkongs-po. But the rising star of Btsan-po Spu-rgyal soon attracted adherents from farther afield.

Outstanding among these was Khyung-po Spung-sad Zu-tse, a vigorous, ambitious, arrogant and unscrupulous figure.
who was active in Tibetan affairs for many years. He
comes on the scene in the reign of Sron-mtshan, claiming
to have shown his allegiance by decapitating Mar-mun,
ruler of Rtsang-bod and giving twenty thousand households
to the Dtsen-po who forthwith returned them to him as
a reward. The location of Rtsang-bod is debatable but
it might be north of the Dtsang-po around and north-west
of Shenga and Shigatse. The prompt return of the subjects
suggests that it was not seen at that time as suitable
for direct rule.

The next show of loyalty by Zu-tse was in announcing
the minister Mong Sengon-po as guilty of treachery and
encompassing his death, Mong is shown in a list of minis-
ters in an earlier section of the Chronicle as having had
some connection with the fall of Mar-mun; but he does
not appear to have taken any part in the cohabitation
to support Slag-bu snyi-grigs or Sron-Mtshan, his, how-
ever, claimed for Zu-tse, as another proof of loyalty,
that he somehow supported the campaign against Zing-po-
je. This seems out of chronological order for the cam-
paign took place before the supremacy of Sron-mtshan was
established while, in the Mar-mun incident he is describ-
ed as Dtsen-po. If there is anything in the claim it may
mean only that Zu-tse approved of what had been done.

He next appears in the record when a campaign was
being planned against Dags-po which is described as having
rebelled — perhaps it was part of Zing-po-rje's territory
which had been taken over by Sron-mtshan. When one Seng-
go snyi-chen volunteered to undertake the task Zu-tse ins-
sulted and humiliated him. Seng-go was, nonetheless,
successful. Then Myang Zhang-sun the son of Myang Zhemp-
akur was appointed to the royal service and a banquet
was held at which Smpag-sad Zu-tse vaunted his own achieve-
ments. He dwells on his conquest of Rtsang-bod and his
suppression of Mong Sengon-po. He does not mention Zing-
po-rje; but Myang Zhang-sun, having been urged to reply,
praised the great deeds of his father and Dha's Phungtsa-
to-re in the defeat of Zing-po-rje. That throws doubt
on the claim that Zu-tse was involved in that affair;
and the proud reply by Zhang-sun and his promotion
to high office seems to have aroused enmity and envy
on the part of Zu-tse.
In the list of ministers one Mgar Khri-sgra 'dzil-r-mun is shown as succeeding Mong Sgon - po before Myang Zheng-snang was appointed Chief Minister with the title Mang-po-rje. Myang became an all-powerful figure after the death of Gnam-ci Slom-mtsphan, while Strong-rgtseab was too young to take effective action, and suppressed a widespread rebellion that followed Gnam-ci's death. Some time after that Spung-sad Zu-tshe falsely accused him of disloyalty and brought about his dismissal and execution.

Myang Mang-po-rje Zheng-snang is said to have been succeeded by another minister of the Mgar clan who also fell under an accusation and committed suicide. Spung-sad Zu-tshe then became chief minister, a post he had probably coveted for some time. In it he won a great reputation for wisdom and boldness; and he conquered all the northern Zang-shung for the btsan-po. Ye was succeeded by Mgar Ston-rgtseab Yul-zung. There is no information about when or why this took place; but in the end Zu-tshe fell victim to the same accusations and suffered the same fate which, in that world of intrigue and rivalry, he had brought on others. In his retirement in old age he is said to have invited Khri Strong-rgtseab to his palace with treacherous intent and that this was detected by Mgar Yul-zung whereupon Zu-tshe committed suicide. But much was to happen before that.

According to a damaged passage at the beginning of the Annals, some time after the fall of Myang Mang-po-rje Zheng-snang the sham-po set out on an expedition against the 'A-xa (Ts-yu-sun) and China. The Chronicle puts that event before the fall of Myang but it might be expected that the evidence of the Annals is the more acceptable.

Although the haphazard arrangement of the Chronicle, as we have it, leaves much to be conjectured, an incident recorded there may well be placed soon after the fall of Myang. In his old age Dba-s's Phang-po-rje Dbyar-tshab, who had been a partner of Myang Mang-po-rje's father in allegiance to Stog-bu rgya-gsal and in establishing Khi Slom-mtshan as btsan-po, besought and was granted a visit at his own house from Khri Strong-rgtseab in order that he and his family could take an oath of loyalty to the
btam-po in person. Perhaps the Dba’s had been suspected of sympathising with their former colleague the Myang, and Phanges-to-re was eager to dispel that idea by openly condemning the disloyalty of Myang Mang-po-rije Zhang-snang. The btam-po himself first took an oath, praising the loyalty of the Dba’s and vowing to protect them and their estates so long as they remained in fidelity. He promised also to build a tomb for the Dbyi-tshab and to sacrifice a hundred horses there; and he sang one of those allusive songs which enrich and enliven the Chronicle. Dba’s Dbyi-tshab replied in kind. Then he and his six sons took the oath of loyalty on a white stone which the btam-po afterwards set up as the foundation of the tomb to be built for the Dbyi-tshab. The impressive words of the King’s vow and that of the Dba’s are recorded at length in archaic language which must have been transmitted in the Dba’s family from generation to generation together with the insignia of the golden letter bestowed upon them.

Although in neither the Chronicle nor the Annals is there a clear sequence of chronology for these events, a fixed point is provided by the invaluable Chinese historians. Already in the period 581–600 of the Sui dynasty there was some knowledge of a Tibetan ruler Luntsen Solung-tsen, who must have been Gnam-ri Stong-namshad, with an army of 100,000 men and a kingdom extending to the borders of India but it is the Tang Annals in which the first fire date is found when they record the arrival in 634 of the first mission from Tibet. The Chinese responded with a return mission in the wake of which the Tibetans sent another. They had heard that the Turks and the Tu-yu-hun had been given princesses in marriage to their rulers and they requested one for their btam-po. When this was refused the btam-po set out on a punitive expedition against the Tu-yu-hun (’A-zha), as recorded in the Tibetan Chronicle, whom they held responsible for the refusal. Having defeated and scattered them he besieged the Chinese border town Sung chou and renewed the demand for a princess in threatening terms. He defeated one Chinese force sent against him but when a larger army arrived he withdrew with some losses. The Chinese, nevertheless, realising that they had underrated the Tibetans and had a new power to face, granted a princess. In 641 Mgar Stong-rtsen was sent with lavish presents to receive her
and escort her to Tibet. That momentous event is recorded also in the Tibetan Annals and forms virtually the starting point for a continuous Tibetan history.

Before that another remarkable but otherwise unknown incident is related in a damaged passage in the Annals. There was enmity between the brsam-po, the elder brother Srong-rtse and the younger brother Btsan-srong. As the result of treachery by a servant Btsan-srong died by burning.

Although no precise dates are given in the Annals after the arrival of the Chinese princess until the dog year, 650 A.D. from when events are recorded annually, it is said that after three years Llig Skyu-shur was destroyed and all the Zhang-zhung were brought under subjection. There may be some question whether this event c. 644 relates to Spons-sad Zu-tes's claim to have conquered all the northern Zhang-zhung. The name of the Zhang-zhung ruler said to have been conquered by Zu-tse, according to a divination document from funhuang-Pelliot Tibetan 1047 - is Llig Myi-rhya. And it is victory over Llig Myi-rhya that is celebrated in the Chronicle as the achievement of Khri Srong-btsan and his minister Srong-rtse in another of those splendid exchanges of song. The relation between Llig Myi-rhya and Llig Skyu-shur is not clear. The latter appears in several of the lists of principalities and according to F.W. Thomas it figures also in Bon writing. If the conquest of Zhang-zhung in 644 was effected by Spons-sad Zu-tse it would mean that his career in Tibetan affairs extended for almost half a century.

Sadly there is nothing in the Annals about the achievements of the last six years of Srong-btsan's life; it is said only that he lived with the Chinese princess for three years. She survived Srong-btsan by twenty-two years. That suggests that she was very young when she came to Tibet and dispels the aura attached to her name as the founder of the Cha-khang. A little more can be gleaned from the evidence in the Chronicle which relates in general terms that he was responsible for organising the internal administration of the state, agricultural systems, the etc., and for introducing texts of the religious laws. Inscriptions of his successors also attribute to him the

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foundation of the Jo-khang. But it is to the Tang Annals
that one must turn for factual information. There it is
recorded that in 646 Srong-brtsan sent Mgar Stong rtsan
(Lutungtsen) to congratulate the Emperor on his victory
over torma with a flowery message and the present of
a jar, in the shape of a goose, made of solid gold, seven
feet high. In 648 when a Chinese envoy was plundered
in India Srong-brtsan sent an army to chastise the offen-
ding Indian leader; and the evidence that the two Chinese
emperors with whom he was contemporary -- Tai Tsung
and kao - tsung - treated him with admiration and res-
pect as a powerful and independent ruler and ally enhances
the unquestioned greatness of Srong-brtsan Sgam-po as
the real founder of a great Tibetan Kingdom.
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Price Rs. 150/-
Nag tsho Tshul khrims rgyal ba’s
Bstod pa brgyad cu pa
in Its Extant Version

Transliterated by
HELMUT EIMER (Bonn)

Of the Bstod pa brgyad cu pa by Nag tsho Tshul khrims rgyal ba there appears to exist only one complete version contained in the Legs par bshad pa bka’ gdam’s rin po che’i gsung gi gees btus nor bu’i bang mdzod, a collection of smaller works belonging to the Bka’ gdam’s school. If we consider the special position of this hymn of praise within the biographical tradition concerning Atiśa Dipamkaraśrījñāna (A.D. 982–1054), it is remarkable that most probably no other complete version is found anywhere.

The accessible blockprint of the Legs par bshad pa bka’ gdam’s rin po che’i gsung gi gees btus nor bu’i bang mdzod seems to

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2 This xylograph was in the library of the late kli byang Rin po che, Lodrin Sherap Dargyab Rinpoche prepared a microfilm of it. I would like to express my sincere thanks for the permission to use this copy from the personal library of L. S. Dargyab Rinpoche. The Bstod pa brgyad cu pa covers in this edition the leaves 1552 to 2085.

3 For an investigation of the role played by the early hymns of praise within the tradition concerning Atiśa see H Eimer, Berichte, pp. 300–325 (paras 8. to 8.3.2.3.).

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come from Central Tibet, its colophon does not indicate the place of issue, but it names a man of the khyen bral yang po (A.D. 1520-1593) as having owned one of the manuscripts before the book was printed. By this a terminus post quem is given, i.e., the xilograph cannot have been prepared before the middle of the XIXth century.

In the extant version of the Bstdod pa bhrad cu pa a brief gloss is given after line 29. It says that the preceding lines, i.e., lines 1 to 29, are regarded by Bstdod nams lha'i dbang po and bstenchen (Kun dga' rgyal mtshan), as having been adopted from the Jo bo'i tigs phun sem sbyogs par bstdod pa composed by Sa'i shing po, an Indian pandit who accompanied AtiSa to Tibet. This gloss cannot have been inserted into the text before the beginning of the XIXth century, because Bstdod nams lha'i dbang po finished his Bka' gdams rin po chos 'byung rnam thar nyin mo bhrad pa'i lo stong (short title: Bka' gdams chos 'byung rnam thar) in A.D. 1554 and Kun dga' rgyal mtshan finalized his Bka' gdams kyi rnam 'par thar pa bka' gdams chos.

* The book comprises 297 folios (1b and 2a three lines, 2b and 3a five lines, other pages six lines), the marginal legend up to fol. 12a is bang mdzad. The actual size is not known to us. The Bstdod pa bhrad cu pa covers folios 156b to 206b.

* On fol. 206b.

* This title of the present hymn of praise is not recorded elsewhere, in the Jo bo'i tigs phun sem sbyogs pa (fol. 22b) the reference runs as follows: ... pa (A.D. 1554) sa'i shing po ra'ig gi bka ma lugs spyod phun sem sbyogs pa'i sgo nas bstdod pa...

* For references within the biographical tradition concerning AtiSa see H. Eimer, Kham bhar rgyas pa. Materialien zu einer Biographie des AtiSa (Diss. München), Wiesbaden 1979, part 1, p. 356 (s.v. Pa'iSa ti Sa'i shin po) and p. 407 (s.v. Sa'i shin po).

Bstan pa brgyad cu pa

'byung gsal ba' sgron me (short title: Eka' gdam sbsos 'byung sgron me) ten years later.

It could well be that the extant Bstan pa brgyad cu pa was not copied from a full version of that hymn of praise handed down by tradition. We may assume that it was compiled out of those lines which appear as quotations from the original version in other more recent works. Thus, for instance, more than 300 lines appearing in the extant version of the said hymn of praise have been found quoted in the Eka' gdam sbsos 'byung sgron me by Kun sgag rgyal mtshan.

The present publication is meant to make the Bstan pa brgyad cu pa as given by the Legs pa ba' ha' as pa' bka' gdam sbsos rin po che'i gsal gi goe bsu nar bu'i dang mdud available for further studies. For the sake of precise reference, in the

9 Xylograph comprising 417 folios in the personal library of Loden Sherap Dgyag Rinpocbe; a reprinted edition was prepared by B. Jampaling Norbu. Eka' gdam sbsos rtsom par thar pa' bka' gdam sbsos 'byung gsal ba' sgron me. A detailed account of the spread of the Kadampa sect in Tibet. Reproduced from a khampa sbu-med ms. New Delhi 1972.


11 G. S. Cybikov, Lam-rim chen-po (Stejpan lutsi bka'- drenstvl). Zobienie Czarnohopy i mongolskom i ruskom pre- vodach. Vypusk II. Russkij preved pri pravnych i pramechani. Vludapovok 1913 (Izvestija Vospodnego instituta, 12-r god izdanija. 1910-1911 Akademije uslovom, tov XXXVIII), pp. 4-10, presents a Russian rendering of the verses from the Bstan pa brgyad cu pa quoted in the Mongol version of Tsongkhapa's Lam rim chen mo. Some verses have been rendered into English by G. N. Roe- Rich, Bseup Annals, I, in the notes to pp. 241 and 343. About ninety lines have been translated into English by H. Eimer.
transliteration the single lines, not the stanzas, are numbered. The glosses and the colophon are given in italics. References to folio, page and line of the xylograph appear enclosed in parentheses. A survey of which lines are quoted in some important works going back to an early tradition is added by way of appendix.

Atīśa (Dīpankaraśrīnjāna)
Blockprint of the Brjadh stong pa, Lhasa, about A.D. 1950

Jo bo rje'i bstod pa brgyad cu pa
Nag (1562) tsho lo tsā bas mdozad pa ni l

-na mo gu ru ma nrye gho sā ya l

001
1 shar plo rga ba hor yul mchog na l
1 de na grong khrey chen po yod l
1 bi km ma ni pu ra yin l
1 de ri dbus na rgyal po'i khab l
1 sho brang shin tu yangs pa yod l

005
l guer ari rgyal mtshan can (3) zhes bya l
l rong spyn dnga' thang 'byor pa ni l
1 rgya nag stong khyun rgyal po 'dra l

stong khyun ni rgya nag skad de shar rgyal po zer l
1 khyim ni 'bum phrag nyl shu dbun l
1 yul de'i rgyal po dge ba'i dpal l
1 btsun mo dpal mo'i 'od zer can l
1 yab yum gnyis (4) la sras gsum mnga' l
1 pa dma'i snying dang zla ba'i snying l
1 dpal gyi snying po zhes bya 'o l
1 rgyal bu pa dma'i snying po la l
1 btsun mo 'nga yod sras ni dgus l
1 sras kyi thu bo bsod nams dpal l
1 da ita'i dus na mkhes pa che l
1 dha na shri zhes bya bar grags l
1 (5) 'bring po zla ba'i snying po ni l
1 da ita bla ma rje btsun yin l

020

25
Nag tsho Tshul khrims rgyal ba's

1 chung ba dpal gyi snying po ni i
1 dge slong bi rya tsa ndra yin i
1 de ita bu yi bham ga la'i l
1 rgyal srid spangs nas thar par gshed s i

'ld yan je bo'i rig s phun sum tshega par bsdod pa pa nglia sa'i
snying po medzad (6) par bsdod nams thal'i dbang po dang las
chen guyis gsungs l

1 khyod ni yon tan kun gyi 'byung gnas te l
1 yon tan rgya mtho ltar zab thugs rje can l
1 mkhas pa chen po khyod kyi yon tan las l
1 don dang ladan par bsag gi's bsdod par bgyi l
1 (16a) rig pa'i gnas lปรากฏ dag gi mkhyen pa rgyas i
1 bsag dang gzharn gyi mnyam pa nyid du mdzad l
1 yab ni bsag gzharn brje bar mdzad pa yi l
1 dpal ladan mar me mdzad la phyang 'tshal le l
1 rang don yai bar (2) dor nas gzharn gyi don l
1 lhur mdzad de ni bsag gi bla ma lags l
1 dngos sam brgyud pas gzharn don rtog tu mdzad l
1 bla ma snying rje can la phyang 'tshal lo l
1 khyod ni nyan thos theg pa'i sgor chugs nas l

1 tshul khrims grang (3) rnga bshin du bs-ung mdzad pa'i l
1 tshangs sphyod dpal dang ladan pa'i dge slong mdog l
1 gnas brtan 'dul ba 'dzin la phyang 'tshal lo l
1 khyod ni pha rol phyin pa'i sgor chugs nas l
1 lhag pa'i bram pa rnam par dag pa yi l
1 byang chub (4) sams kyiis 'gro rnam mi g Chung ba'i l
1 blo ladan snying rje can la phyang 'tshal lo l
1 khyod ni gshag snyags theg pa'i sgor chugs nas l
1 rang thar gshis shing rdo rje'i thugs dang ladan l
1 rnal 'byor dbang phuyag s va dhu ti pa l

26
I shes (6) pa'i brtal zhugs 'dzin la phyag 'tshai lo l
I rigs kyi nang nas mchog gyur pa l
I khyod ni rgyal po'i rigs su 'khrungs l
I dregs pas nyes pa thams cad kyang l
I zhabz kyi pa dmor spyi bos gzugs l
I 'khor ba'i skyon dang mtshan (6) gzigs nas l
I bha nggs la yi rgyal srid de l
I mchil ma'i thal ba bzhiin bor nas l
I sangs rgyas bstam pa'rgyas par mdzad l
I o ta nta yi pu ri na l
I rab byung l 'ma phrag phyed dang guum l
I bi kram ni shi la na l
I rab byung bgya phrag ma longs (16b) tsam l
I rtsa ba'i sde bzhis tshang bar zhugs l
I sde pa'i kongs dregs khyod mi mdzad l
I ma ga dha yi yul gyi ni l
I gnas zhi ma lus thams cad kyi l
I ston sa'i 'khor ni bzhi so yi l
I kun gyi gtsug gi nor bur gyur l
I khyod ni sde pa bo bzog (2) kyi l
I kun gyi spyi la bzhugs pas na l
I thams cad kyis ti long champ len l
I khyod kyi 'tsig rten chos brgyad po l
I thams cad khyad du bsad nas ni l
I gzhon dag gi itar mos pa yi l
I sems dang bstun pa'i spyod pa mdzad l
I gzhon (3) dag dad par mi 'gyur zhung l
I mi ramsa sems dang 'gyi gyur pa l
I gsho zhung skur ba 'deba la sog l
I ghan gyi sdi rkyen khyod mi mdzad l
I nam yang gzhan dag mi dad pa i
I dug dang 'dra bar spong bar mzdad i
I slob ma ji itar (4) 'dod pa yi i
I chos kyi gdams ngag gsungs par mzdad i
I jig rten mi rmams thams cad kyi s i
I brnyas shing skur ba 'debs pa dang i
I phrag dog rgyan can byed na yang i
I gnyen po bsten nas phyir la 'gyes i
I khyod kyi sku lus (5) mthong ba na i
I thams cad mthun par shin tu mos i
I sku mdangs 'jam zhing gsal ba dang i
I dang po tha ma'i mig chags 'gyur i
I rnam par 'tsho ba spangs pa yis i
I khyed kyi sku la snyun mi mnga' i
I bweed nams tshogs ni bsags (6) pa yis i
I zhal mthong tsam gyi dad pa byed i
I khyod ni spyod lam thams cad du i
I chos dang mthun par mzdad pa yis i
I jig rten kyi na ma tho ba i
I grags pa ngan pas khyod mi gos i
I tshul khrims rmam par dag gyur pas i
I skyob pa (7a) shad kyi se nag ye i
I zab pa dang ni rgya che bu'i i
I bstan pa khyod kyi thugs la gnas i
I sangs rgyas bstan pa rin po che i
I bskur dang 'dzin dang skyong ba yi i
I 'dren pa khyod ni 'das pa na i
I bstan pa rol du nub dang (2) 'dra i
I mtho dang dma' dang mnyam pa la i
I phrag dog rgyan can 'gzan mi mnga' i
I de liar khyod ni thams cad kyis l
I gtre bo bzhin du bkur ba yin l
I ba na nyl ahr rtsa gcig ra l
I rgyu rtsal drug cu rtsa bzhii dang l
I bzo yi gnas na thams (5) cad dang l
I legs par shyar ba'i shad dang ni l
I sgra yi btan bcos thams cad dang l
I tshad ma kun la mchas pa lags l
I bla ma bzang po mang bsten pas l
I khyod ni thos sa'i rgyan gyi brgyud l
I theg pa gsum dang sde siod gsum l
I khyod ni mchas (4) pa chen po yin l
I khyod ni mchas pa mang po yi l
I bsha la bstan ba'i skyes bu yin l
I bdag dang gzhain gyi rgo l ba ni l
I kun kyang tshab bcad phan pa'i mdzad l
I sangs rgyas ye shes zhal snags yi l
I slob ma brgyud pa'i brgyud du 'khrungs l
I khyod kyi (6) mkhan po shyor lam pa l
I yin par kun ka grags pa laags l
I rtog tu bsten pa'i bla ma ni l
I sha nti pa dang gser jling pa l
I bha dra bo bshi dznay na shri l
I dngos grub thob pa mang po dang l
I khyad par du yang klu sarub nas l
I gcig nas gcig tu brgyud pa (6) yi l
I zab pa dang ni rgyas che ba'i l
I gdams pa khyod la mngas' ba yin l
I khyod ni sngs rgyas thams cad kyi l
I byin riabs thugs la skye ba yin l

29
Nag tsho Tahul khrims rgyal ba'i

1 khyod ni bo lab pa gsun ldan pas
1 'thai ba'i tahul khrims baal ba yin
1 tahul (17b) khrims dri ngad ldan pas na
1 ring ma gnas pa rnam sbyang 'de
1 kha na ma the phra rank la 'lang
1 thugs ni shin ta 'jigs pas mdzad
1 dran dang she sbyin ldan pa yis
1 tahul bzin ma yin yid mi mdzad
1 bag yod dran dang y.yo sgyu (2) med
1 lzung ba'i ryes pas khyod ma yos
1 'di la mi shyn 'di la shyn
1 'di la mi 'bul 'di la 'bul
1 thugs ni kun la snyoms gyur pas
1 gang la'ang bye brag dbyar mi mdzad
1 dkon mcobog gsun dange thugs dam lha
1 bla ma rnam (2) dang 'gro ba lnga
1 'di drug nga yi lha dang ni
1 jo bo yin zhes rtag tu gsungs
1 khyod ni stong nyid rnal 'byor pa
1 rtag tu chos sku'ngang la gnas
1 gzugs sku nyid kyi thugs dam lha
1 thun mthams rnal 'byor yeogs mi mdzad
1 dpal (4) ldan dgyes pa'i rdo 'je dang
1 osm tehig 'ksod pa'i rgyal po dang
1 dpa' bo 'jig rten dbang phyug dang
1 jo no rje bsun sgrol ma sogs
1 zhai gzigs gnang ba thob pas na
1 rmi lan na 'am mgon sun du
1 zab pa dang ni rgya che ba'i
1 dam (5) chos rtag tu gsun pa lags
I gsang sngags theg pa'i gzhung lta'i na i
I skhyed pa'i rim pa bstan par nges i
I pha rho phyin pa'i gzhung lta'i na i
I skhyor ba'i lam pa yin par gsal i
I rang ihar byin gis bralbs es zhes i
I grags pa snyan (6) pas phoyas beur khyab i
I khyod ni gsang sngags rnal 'byor pa i
I dri med rdo :je thugs dang idan i
I khyod sngon so ma pu ri na i
I rtog ge 'bar ba gsungs pa'i tse i
I da ni lo ni nyl shu na i
Irtsa yi 'du byed gongs 'gyur gsung i
I de nas lo ni (18a) ljon pa na i
I bod du 'byon pa'i dus su ni i
I bl kra ma la, shi lar ni i
I da ni lo ni bco brgyad na i
I tse yi 'du byed btsang nas ni i
I 'lus 'di bod du 'jog ko gsung i
I 'ji skad gsungs bzhin ma 'khrul par i
I byung ba de ni ngo mthar (2) che i
I khyod kyi rnam smin shu 'lus de i
I bod kyi yul du bzhag nas su i
I smon gam gyis ni shu lus de i
I byams pa'i sphyin sngar dga' idan du i
I 'khrungs par sgrul mas lung bstan gsungs i
I nam mkha' dri med ces bya ba'i i
I lha yi bur ni 'khrungs (3) par 'gyur i
I zab pa dang ni rgya che ba'i i
I chos ni byams pa'i mgon las gsal i
I des na khyod ni 'dzam gling gi i
rgyas du gyur pa chen po yin l
snyan par grags shing 'gran zla med l
mikhas pa 'rangs kyi bja mar 'os l
dpal ldan rdo rje sems (4) dpa' yis l
gsungs pa'i gsang engags rgyud sde bshad l
rim pa gnyis pa'i man nag nl l
mikhas pa mang po'i brgyud pa mnga' l
gsang engags phyi nang rgyud sde dang l
mikhas pa mang pos mdzad pa'i gzhung l
gzigs dang gsal dang bshad (6) pa yis l
gzhung la shin tu goms par mdzad l
khyod kyi slo ma'i tshogs la nl l
gdams ngag itsa bar gsungs pa rl l
bsags pa'i yo byad thams cad nl l
'khor ba'i rgyur nl ma btang gsungs l
gzhan gyis brnyas thabs byas pa (6) dang l
glo bur ryon mongs skyes pa dang l
gzhan dang rtsod pa tyung nas yang l
gyen pos myur du zlog cigs gsungs l
gsong gyi sbyin pa'i 'bras bu yis l
gzhan gyis bsags pa khyod la 'bul l
yo byad mnga' ba thams cad 'yang l
longs (18b) spyod hrung phyir chud mi gzon l
dge ba mdzad pa thams cad kyang l
'khor ba'i rgyu nl spang ba'i phyir l
'khor guem yongs su dag pa dang l
store pa'e ma zin gang yang med l
dge ba'i bshes gnyen dang bral ching l
theg chen mdo sde ma thos (2) pas l
snying rje las byung byung chub sms l
Bod pa bgyed cu pa

I spangs nas gsang sngags 'ba' zhig spyod i
I gned sbyin leg na rdo rje dang i
I cin po sha za sogs par skye i
I khyod kyi shes rab thugs rje yis i
I shing rtsi chen po'i lam du lusud i
I rgyud kyi dpongs (3) pa mi shes par i
I sgra bzhin 'jug pa'i sngags pa kun i
I log pa'i lam du zhugs grigs nas i
I khyod kyiis yang dag iam du bslod i
I ita ba mi mthun sna tshogs pa i
I sngon gyi slob dpod plje 'brangs nas i
I so sor mi mthun rtsod pa kun i
I (4) khyod kyiis lugz dang rig pas bkrol i
I khyod ni sngags rgyas bstan pa yi i
I kha 'brog nyl ma'i 'od zer yin i
I phyin ci log gi lta 'dzin pa i
I khyod kyiis yang dag bstan la bsue i
I kyang chub chen po'i pho brang du i
I thams cad 'dus shing 'tshogs (5) pa na i
I rang dang gzhon gri se pa yi i
I grub mcha' n gan pa'i tgu lo ba kun i
I sngag ge nga ro'i sgra skaw kyiis i
I thams cad kyi ni klad pa' kems i
I chos kyi dbyeings na rtog bzhugs pas i
I ye shes tshogs ni rdzogs par mdzad i
I theg chen mdo se (6) las gsugs pa'i i
I thabs kyiis bsod nams tshogs bsogs mdzad i
I khyad jar can gyi bsod nams tshogs i
I myur du rdzogs par mdzad pa'i phyir i
I gsang sngags rgyud sde thabs kyiis ni i
Nag taho Tshul khrima rgyal ba’s

1 'lad pa med par rdo‘od par mdzad
1 khyod (19a) ni mthong dang thos pa dang
1 rgyal po na i rigs ma yin
1 nub phyogs ka rna’i rgyal po gnyis
1 rtsod pa chen po byung ba’i thehe
1 ma ga ohar ni dmag drangs pas
1 ko long ma mdzad snying rje ’khruungs
1 khyed la zhe sdang ni mnga’ bas
1 ’tsho ba’i yo byad ma gto gs pas

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tsod pa brgyad cu pa

1 yo byad thag ma ma par btang i
2 luz dang strog la ma gzigs par i
3 chu bo chen po yang yang brgal i
4 de gnyis bedum (6) nas mdza' bor mdzad i
5 saung rje sems can mi gtong bas i
6 thub pa'i brtan zhugs khyod kyiis barungs i
7 khyod la bdag dang gzan med pas i
8 dgra zun pham la khang dregs med i
9 kun gyi pha ma khyod lta bu i
10 deng sung dus na nga (19b) mtha' che i
11 rgyu 'bras 'brel ba chud gzon pa'i
12 gzan dag sdig pa byed gzigs ra i
13 'di ni' kro ba cit 'gyur zhes i
14 thugs kyiis mi bzod spyan chab 'byung t
15 yon tan bsngags pa mtha' yas pas i
16 phyogs bcuf grags (2) pa snyan pas khyab i
17 bdag gi gdung ba sel ba phyir i
18 bla ma rje btsun la bsod pa i
19 bdag gir bsod par ma zad kyi i
20 gang zag gzan rnaa khyod la bsod i
21 bsod pa dang ni smad pa yis i
22 khyod la dges dang mi dges med i
23 yon (3) tan rgya mtha' khyod bsod pas i
24 bdag gi yid ni shin tu chin i
25 khyod mthong nas ni dad gyur nas i
26 kun kyang bskyen bcu byed la brtsou i
27 khyod ni gzan la phas pa dang i
28 bde mdzad thugs ni chung gyur pas i
29 gzan gyis ji litar zhus pa (4) baZin i
30 mi gnang bar ni khyod mi mdza'i

35
Nag tsho Tshul khrims rgyal ba's

1. Bia ma bod du ma byon na l
2. Thams cad long ba bzhin du 'gyur l
3. Mkhyen pa rgyas pa khyod byon pas l
4. Bod du ye shes nyl ma shar l
5. Bod du byon pas 'brom ston dang l
6. Khu ston rngog ston la sogs pa l
7. (5) Khyod la dad cing 'dun pa yi l
8. Slob ma'i tshogs ni ma lus pa l
9. Thams cad ji ltar 'dod pa bzhin l
10. Kus gyi yid ni chim par mdzad l
11. Khyed la chos 'brel slob na ni l
12. Chud ni za bar mi 'gyur te l
13. Skyes bu chen po'i chos lugs slob l
14. (6) Shing rta chen po'i lam du 'dzud l
15. Bia ma dge ba'i bshes gnyen dam pa khyod l
16. Lo ni bce dgur bsten cing 'grogs na yang l
17. Khyod kyi sku gaung thugs la 'khrul pa yi l
18. Nyes pa'i dri ma byung ba mthong re skan l
19. Ma ga tha yi bdag po ni l
20. Rgyal po (Zha) na'i rya phé la yen l
21. Longs spyod 'byor pa mnga' thang sogs l
22. 'Di tsam zhes ni brjod par dka' l
23. Dma dpeng 'bum phrag mang por Idan l
24. Rab brtan sa srungs bu lta bur l
25. Dregs pas rngams shing 'gying ba yang l
26. Khyod kyi zhab (2) gnyis spyi bor len l
27. Gzi brjod Idan pa'i lha rnam dang l
28. Mthu dang rdzu 'phrul stobs Idan pa'i l
29. Gnog sbyin tshogs rnam ma lus pa l
30. Bsrung zhirg bshen yon bkar byed la brtsa l

36
Bstod pa brgyad cu pa

I khyod kyi yon tan dran pas na l
I mch'i ma dkru zhir gi ba spu ldang l
I bla ma (3) rje btsun khyod dang ni l
I dga' idan gnas su 'grogs par shog
I nag tsho dge slong tshul khrims rgyal ba yis l
I rang gi bla ma rje btsun bstod pa yis l
I rang gi bu la byams pa'i 'gro ba lnga l
I thams cad dge' idan gnas su 'grogs par (4) shog
I tshigs bred brgyad cu thams pa yis l
I bla ma rje btsun bstod pa yis l
I slob ma gnyis slob gsum slob sog l
I khyod la bstod cing 'dun pa rnams l
I shin tu dad pa'i yid kyi ni l
I rtog tu bstod pa byile shig ces l
I tshul khrims (5) rgyal bas gsal ba 'dabs l

ces kham ssum chos kyi rgyal po dpal idan mar me mdzad ye
shes la bstod pa'i rab tu byed pa tshigs brad brgyad cu pa 'di l
nag tsho lo tshela ba tshul rgyal bas sbyar ba rda nga so l

At'Ha (Dpamtraksharama)
Blockprint of the lam yig
In the Lam rim chen mo, Knam thar rgyas pa, Bka’ gdams chos 'byung rnam thar and the Bka’ gdams chos 'byung sgron me are quoted:
Lines 1–8; 10–19; 22–23; 20–21; 129–136

In the Lam rim chen mo, Knam thar rgyas pa, and the Bka’ gdams chos 'byung sgron me are quoted:
Lines 34–37; 38–41; 42–45; 46–49; 58–67; 68–70; 111–112; 161–168; 246–251

In the Lam rim chen mo and the Knam thar rgyas pa are quoted:
Lines 111–114; line 116; lines 127–128; 145–148

In the Lam rim chen mo are quoted:
Lines 169 and 172

In the Knam thar rgyas pa are quoted:
Lines 24–25; 87 and 90; 159–166; 177–186; 248–251; 260–265; 266–271; 276–292; 334 and 336

In the Bka’ gdams chos 'byung sgron me are quoted:
SRID-PAHI-KHORLO
(Wheel of Life)
Srid-Pa'i 'Khor-lo

— J.K. RECHUNG

The Wheel of Life which is called "Srid-pa'i 'khorlo' in Tibetan and "Bhava Chakra" in Sanskrit should be painted as fresco on the entrance wall of the Vihara (gtseg-lag-khang) as mentioned in the Vinaya-vibhanga (lung-rnam-b'gyed). This is also mentioned in the Moa Commentary written by the great Pandita Ganaprabha in his Vinaya Sutra (Mdo-risa-wa). The reason for having the fresco on the entrance wall of the Vihara is for the purpose of meditation on the Four Noble Truths (Tib, Bden-pa-bshi, Skt, Cātvari Satyam) i.e., (i) the truth of suffering (Tib, Sdug-bshang bden-pa, Skt, Dukkhasatiya), (ii) the truth of origination of suffering (Tib, Kun-’byung-bden-pa, Skt, Samudayasya), (iii) the truth of cessation of suffering (Tib, 'gog-pa'i bden-pa, Skt, Niruddhasatiya) and (iv) the truth of path which leads to cessation of suffering (Tib, Lam-gyi bden-pa, Skt, Margasatiya). The truth of suffering is depicted in a human bondage symbolised by the non-substantive belly of the Lord of Death (Tib, Gshin-rje, Skt, Yama) on which stands the impermanent nature of transmigratory existence. The truth of origination of suffering is depicted through the central navel point of Gshin-rje where lies lust symbolised by a dove, envy symbolised by a snake, and their tails swallowed by ignorance symbolised by a pig. The truth of cessation of suffering, Nirvana, is depicted by a radiant white circle above Gshin-rje which is pointed out by Buddha. The truth of path which leads to cessation of suffering is depicted through two slokas:

Brtsam-par-byas-shing-dbyung-bar-byas/
Sangs-gryas-bsten-la-'jug-par-byas/
'dam-buh-kyem-la-glang-ches-bahin/
'chi-bdag-sde-nil-gshom-par-byas/
It means that "once human life is attained, every effort must be made to enter into the Doctrine of Buddha and lead a virtuous life after knowing the misery and misfortune of worldly existence. In order to be released from the vicious circle one must practice the Four Noble Truths so that one can overcome all temptations connected with death, just as elephant in a swamp tramples reeds and creepers."

It mainly dwells on how one had entered samsara and how one can be released from it and obtain Nirvana. It is mentioned in the Jataka (Mtsad-brgya-dpag-bsam-khris-shing) that during the time of Buddha there was a famous Buddhist King Gesha-can-snying-po (Bimbisara, 582-554 B.C.) of Rgyal-poh-khab (Rajagiri) in Magadha and another king named U-tra-ya-na (6th century B.C.) of Sgra-skogs (Vatsa). Both their kingdoms were very rich and powerful. During this period, however, when one kingdom was prospering the other one was going through a lean period. It was customary for these two kings to exchange the choicest gifts which were sent through their respective traders. One day King U-tra-ya-na presented King Bimbisara a very rare armour studded with jewels having the power to ward off the effects of weapons, poison, fire etc. King Bimbisara was so delighted with the gift that he could not find words to express his happiness at receiving such a gift. The King ordered his ministers to evaluate the gift and was told that it was priceless and was the rarest armour in the world. King Bimbisara could not find a suitable gift to reciprocate King U-tra-ya-na's gift and was very depressed. He called his ministers and discussed as to what gift should be sent. Then his Prime Minister Dbyar-Tshul ('arshakara) suggested that since Lord Buddha was residing in his kingdom and since he was the most precious jewel in the three worlds, it would be a fitting present if a painting of Lord Buddha was presented to King U-tra-ya-na. This present would also bring good fortune to the Kingdom.
of Vatsa and accumulate merits for its people. King Bimbisara was impressed at this suggestion and went at once to meet Lord Buddha. He then explained everything to the Lord and the Lord told the King that he should present the painting as it would have a very beneficial effect on King U-ira-ya-na. Therefore, as advised by Lord Buddha, the painting of the Wheel of Life was commissioned. From that time the tradition of Thanka-painting was started.

Below the painting are inscribed Skyabs-'gro prayers (Sharmanagamama) of taking refuge in Buddha Sangs-rgyus-dkon-mchog, Dharma/Chos-dkon-mchog and Sangha Rig-’don-dkon-mchog: Bsal-pab-gahi (basis of the percepts); Rten-'brel bcu-gnyis (twelve links of causation) and Lugs-rgyung lugs-idog (forward and reverse meaning of twelve links of causation).

In the intermediate circle of the Wheel of Life, the five worlds are drawn as advised by Lord Buddha. In the innermost circle of the Wheel of Life are drawn a pig, a dove and a snake. The pig symbolises ignorance, the dove, lust, and the snake, envy. The snake’s tail is drawn as in the mouth of the dove in Bkha-gums-glegs-ban, a cock is depicted instead of a dove. Most paintings on the twelve dependent origination also depicts a cock which follows Bkha-gums-glegs-ban tradition and the dove’s tail in the mouth of the pig. The meaning of this is that envy is caused by lust and lust is caused by ignorance. The tie between the intermediate world and the innermost circle of ignorance, lust and envy, is drawn in half white and half black. White symbolises good deeds and black symbolises sinful deeds. People are shown going upwards in the white portion, who represent people who have performed good deeds in their life time and are now going to take rebirth in a world of gods (Tib. Lha, Skt. Deva) and human beings (Tib. Mi, Skt. Manushya). People shown going down in the black portion represent people who have sinned and are therefore going to take rebirth in the world of animals (Tib. Dpal-'gro, Skt. Tiryak), hungry ghosts (Tib. Yi-dugs, Skt. Preta) and hell (Tib. Dmyul-ba, Skt. Naraka).

In the intermediate circle there are five parts.
out of which the two upper parts symbolise virtuous life of the inhabitants of heavenly and human worlds. The remaining three worlds in the lower part symbolise sinful deeds leading to a world of animals, ghosts and hell.

Outermost circle shows twelve different phases of life (Tib. Rten-'brel chu-chyis, Skt. Pratityasamutpadā) from ignorance to death. Ignorance (Tib. Ma-cig-pa, Skt. Avidyā) is depicted as an old and blind woman which means that one cannot see one's surroundings and, therefore, cannot know the true meaning of all that exist due to ignorance. Karmic formation (Tib. Hdo-byed, Skt. Samskāra) is depicted as making a clay pot. As a clay pot can be made into any shapes and sizes, similarly, one's life is shaped by its former actions. Hence some live in happiness and some live in misery, some are rich and some are poor, and some are high and some are of low status. Consciousness (Tib. Rnam-ses, Skt. Vijñāna) is depicted in the form of a monkey, because a monkey never stays in one place and similarly the mind wanders about. Name and form (Tib. Mṅa-gaugs, Skt. Nama-rupa) is depicted by a man and woman in a boat crossing a river. This shows the mind and body is taking the next stage of development without losing continuity. Formation of senses (Tib. Skyen-mched, Skt. Ayatana) is depicted by an open house which means one can enter and stay. Similarly, six minds (Rnam-ses-tshog-drjug), which have their base in the six sense organs, are to remain in them. Contact (Tib. Reg-pa, Skt. Sparśa) is depicted by an embracing couple drawn to each other by lust. This symbolises contact between objects and six sense organs leading to more desires. Feeling (Tib. Tshor-ba, Skt. Vedana) is depicted by a man struck by an arrow in the eye which symbolises various feelings of happiness, sorrow and indifference. Craving (Tib. Sred-pa, Skt. Trṣṇa) is depicted by a man drinking wine which symbolises the limitless desires arising out of six sensual pleasures. Craving (Tib. Len-pa, Skt. Upadana) is depicted by a monkey plucking fruit from a tree. This symbolises that this action enforces the seed of rebirth, as the seeds of fallen fruits help to grow other fruits. Becoming (Tib. Srid-pa, Skt. Shava) is depicted by
A pregnant woman symbolising the fruit of accumulated \textit{Karma} leading to a new birth (Tib. \textit{Bir}th) is depicted by a woman giving birth which symbolises the act of taking rebirth. \textit{Old age and death} (Tib. \textit{Rta-thi}, Skt. \textit{Jarararuta}) is depicted by a person carrying a dead body symbolising the aging process leading to death.

All these twelve links of causation come under four major premises (Tib. \textit{Rten-bral-yan-lag-brshl}, Skt. \textit{Catvavigga-pratitya-samutpada}): (i) \textit{Projecting cause} ('phamen-byed-kyi-yan-lag), (ii) \textit{Projected effect} ('phanga-pahi-yan-lag), (iii) \textit{Materialising cause} ('grub-byed-kyi-yan-lag) and (iv) \textit{Materialised effect} ('grub-pahi-yan-lag).

\textit{Projecting causes} are ignorance, \textit{Karmic} formations, and consciousness. \textit{Projected effects} are name and form, six sense organs, contact and feelings. Materializing causes are thirst, attachment and becoming. Materialized effects are birth, old age and death.

The Wheel of Life is drawn in the lap of \textit{Gshin-rje} symbolising that after taking birth, caused by one's \textit{Karma} and attachment, one cannot escape from the jaws of the Lord of Death. [In Thup-pai-dgon-rgyas (Skt. \textit{Munimalasamkara}), page 119 of Pandita 'Jes-med \textit{Byung-gyues-sbams-pa} (Skt. \textit{Ambayakara}, 11th century A.D.), which forms the Tangyur \textit{Vo}, Ah, it is mentioned that \textit{Gshin-rje} is also the King of \textit{Yi-drag} (Preta).] On top of the outermost circle of twelve links of causation, a full moon is drawn to illustrate the realisation of Nirvana at the end. Depiction of the raised hand of Buddha towards the full moon beside the Wheel of Life symbolises the Buddha showing the path to Nirvana.

The Wheel of Life can be discerned through Four Noble Truths and twelve links of causation. Here it is explained from twelve links of causation. Again these twelve links of causation revolve in two different spheres of life - three lower worlds and three upper worlds.

How does twelve links of causation work in three lower worlds (\textit{Ngan'-gro})? By the force of ignorance of one's action, \textit{Karma} is accumulated which results
in the formation of consciousness having a distinctive mark of various karmic inclinations (vag-chags). This consciousness frequently cultivated by thirst and clinging, leads to three lower worlds of beasts, hungry ghosts and hell. This suffering will last till the exhaustion of karma accumulated in previous lives. Till the complete ending of various karma caused by mental delusion, one is subjected to rebirth in another world, here also one must endure another round of suffering as a water mill to endure the hardship of turning the water for irrigation.

How does twelve links of causation work in three upper worlds (Bde-hgyur)? Notwithstanding mental obscuration, caused by the sensual world that prevents one from seeing the true nature of internal and external world, one can still be reborn in upper worlds by the force of virtuous acts of charity (Tib. Shyin-ba, Skt. Dana), moral conduct (Tib. Tshul-khrin, Skt. Sila), contemplation (Tib. Tsn-ngo-'zin, Skt. Samadhi) and whatever acts that prevent the mind from vacillation. For example, in the realm of human beings, despite lack of penetration into the real nature, one, however, divert ones mind towards the accumulation of other virtuous acts.

The sum result of these virtuous acts is transferred to a formation of distinct consciousness. This consciousness, cultivated and developed by attachment (Tib. Sred-pa, Skt. Trisma) and grasping (Tib. Lên-pa, Skt. Upadana), enters into a mother’s womb and then appears in the shape of body and mind. When body and mind gradually develop along with other sense organs (Tib. Skyen-mchad, Skt. Sadayatana), these sense organs (Tib. Reg-pa, Skt. Svara) come into contact with the physical world and experience the sensations (Tib. Tshor-ba, Skt. Vedanā) of happiness, sorrow and indifference. The consciousness from its embryonic stage in the mother’s womb gradually takes the shape of six sense organs and at the completion of ten months, would appear in the external world. Then it is subjected to yet another vicious circle of suffering. When the body grows it is drawn towards lust (Tib. 'don-chags, Skt. Raga), anger (Tib. She-sdang, Skt. Vesā) caused by mental
obscuration (Tib. Gti-mug, Skt. Moha), and as a result he will be overwhelmed by mental and physical affliction. Then he will go again for fresh accumulation of virtuous and sinful karma. After the completion of previous karma, his present life will come to an end. However, by the force of various moral and immoral acts cultivated in immeasurable past and present lives, his life will be confined within the six realms and go through endless suffering from time to time.

These twelve links of dependent origination are further divided under three heads: (1) karmic formation (Tib. Las, Skt. Karma), (2) mental defilement (Tib. Nyon-mongs, Skt. Klesa) and (3) suffering (Tib. Sog-chen, Skt. Dukkha). (1) Physical and mental elements (Tib. 'du-byed, Skt. Sanskara) and becoming (Tib. Srîd-pa, Skt. Bhava) are karmic formation. (2) Ignorance (Tib. Ma-rig-pa, Skt. Avidya), Attachment (Tib. Sred-pa, Skt. Trisna) and grasping (Tib. Len-pa, Skt. Upâdana) are mental defilement. (3) Causative and resulting phase of consciousness (Rgyu-dus dang 'bras-dus-kyi-rnam-ses), name and form (Tib. Skye-mched, Skt. Sadyata-tara), contact (Tib. Reg-pa, Skt. Sparśa), sensation (Tib. Tshor-ba, Skt. Vedana), birth (Tib. Skye-ba, Skt. Jati), and old age and death (Tib. Rgu-si, Skt. Jâramarama) are suffering.

Emancipation (Tib. Thrarpa, Skt. Noksha) means breaking the cord that binds us to transitory existence due to ignorance and its karmic accumulation. By these two factors of ignorance and its consequent karmic formation, we are bound to the three states of the sensual world (Kham-gsum): 'dod-pa'i Khams, Skt. Kâmaloka (the phenomenal world), Gaugs-kyi khams, Skt. Rupa-loka (the world of astral forms), Gauges-med-kyi khams, Skt. Arupa-loka (the spiritual world) i.e. the world of formless spirits: five or six worlds: gods and titans, human beings, hungry ghosts, beasts and hell: and four states of earthly existence: born of the womb or vivaraporus (Mngol-skyes), born out of an egg or oviparous (Sông-skyes), born out of heat and humidity or moisture sprung (Gdrod-ser-skyes), and born in a supernatural way or apparitional (Rus-skyes). They have a binding nature and escaping from their cord is called emancipation. Ignorance and its
resulting activities force us to go through this circle of birth and rebirth which is full of suffering. Knowing and contemplating on the Wheel of Life from the standpoint of twelve dependent origination, clearing the fail-
ciles that the six sense organs arise out of nothing (Rgyud-
med-pa) or that they are a chaotic creation with no agreement between cause and effect (Mi-mtha-
pa'i-rgyud), will attain emancipation. A person who has thought on these in his previous life and continues his endeavour to understand this by virtue of his former inclination will reach the sublime state ('phags-pa'i-go-'phang). This is an excellent method of emancipation from the circle of existence.

On receipt of the painting, King U-tra-ya-na perceived the truth (Tib. Bden-pa mthong-ba, Skt. Satyadar-
sana).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

2. Avadana-Kalpalata Skt. - Tib. by Kshemendra with its Tibetan version Ed. S.C. Das called Rgogs-brjod-
4. Lam-rim-chen-po by Tsong-kha-pa page 151, Shol Edition
The article entitled "More Early Inscriptions From Tibet" by Hugh Edward Richardson was published in the Bulletin No. 2 of 18 July, 1988. The author has now written to us regarding an erroneous reference in respect of a date in that article.

Relevant portion of the letter from Mr. Richardson is reproduced below:

"May I make correction to my article "More Early Inscriptions from Tibet" in the Bulletin for 1988 No. 2? On p. 6 in the first para I wrote that the monkey year in which the inscription was made "can only be 804 A.D." I had assumed that Khri Lde-srong-brtsan died in 815 — a year before the monkey year 816; that date is given also in Tsepon W.D. Shakabpa's "Tibet". But Sa-skya Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan is his Bod-gyi rgyal-rab states that Khri Lde-srong-brtsan died in a bird year; and in the Tang Annals his death is stated to have been reported in China in 817. That was a Tibetan bird year. It is most likely that the monkey year of the inscription is 816 by which time negotiations for a treaty had been going on since 810 when the Chinese Emperor sent a letter on the subject to the great monk-minister Bran-ka Dpal-gyi yon-tan (See Pelliot, Histoire Ancienne du Tibet, p 125; and Demleville, Le Concile de Lhasa p. 224)"

Summary of the Wheel of Life

We know that the Karmic formation and ignorance whose intrinsic nature is misery, produce the afflicted mental and physical aggregates (Phung-po). Here the reason for contemplating on the Wheel of Life from the standpoint of twelve causal factors is to know that all the declining elements have their root in ignorance. This ignorance, which is like an obdurate darkness, has to be conquered.

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How does one conquer this obdurate darkness? First by clearing the erroneous view that all the internal and external elements have no cause or that they arise out of different causes as fire out of water. Having absorbed, contemplated and developed the Buddha's rich treasure of knowledge, it generates awareness to the path of emancipation after being disgusted with the transient life. One who has endeavoured on this in his past lives is gifted with inborn inclination to progress towards the exalted state.

In Arya-Subahu-pariprccha-nama-sutra (Tib. 'phags-pa dpung-bzang rgyud), it is mentioned that in order to overcome ignorance, one has to contemplate on the twelve dependent origination. Having fully perceived the twelve causal factors, according to Arya-Salistambha-nama-mahayanasutra (Tib. 'phags-pa Sa-li-ljang-pahi-mdö), one will be freed from the retribution of his Karma and can foresee the end of his future rebirth. Moreover, he will not hold on the fallacious views and by virtue of this, no heretical views can arise within him. According to Nagarjuna, the meaning of the twelve dependent origination is the essence of all the teachings of the Buddha. For him the victorious were those who have understood the essence of the doctrine of relative existence and those who have diligently studied its subtle meaning.

- J.K. Rechung
RINCHEN TERZO (Derge Palpung Edition) in 61 volumes of xylographs of which the only set available outside Tibet is in Sikkim Research Institute of Tibetology collections. Rinchen Terzod (precious hidden treasures), an encyclopedia of Nyingma works. Five volumes of Rinchen Terzod including the catalogue Volume (Karchay) were reproduced per photo-mechanic process (Tibetan text with English introductions). Folio Volumes: ha-891, Kha-843, Ga-919 and Ga-876. pub. 1976-1978.

Price Cloth binding - 450/- per vol.
Paper binding - 350/- per vol.
Karchay - 150/- per vol.

PRAJNA or the famous Sanskrit-Tibetan Thesaurus-vocabulary was compiled by Tenzing Gyaltshen, a Khampa scholar educated in Nyinmapa and Sakya schools of Derge in 1771 A.C. Though this book was preserved in xylograph few copies of the block prints are found outside Tibet. The lexicon portions are now presented in modern format with Tibetan words in Tibetan scripts and Sanskrit words in Sanskrit scripts (Sanskrit-Tibetan text with foreword in English). Folio-223 pub: 1963.

Price Rs. 40/-.