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**Colour plates: *The Secret Visionary Autobiography* of the Fifth Dalai Lama (see pp. 54—65).**

**Front cover:**

The *cakra* for the separation of the guardian deities from the person they are protecting.  
A separate folio, 55×20 cm.

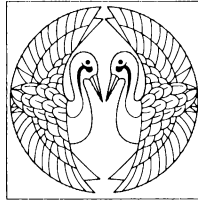
**Back cover:**

**Plate 1.** *Cakras* for summoning spirits of foes and for warding off evil spirits, as well as the articles used to perform the ritual for propitiating of the goddess lHa-mo. A separate folio, 55×20 cm.

**Plate 2.** The *cakra* for the suppression of the *dam-sri* spirits. A separate folio, 55×30 cm.

**Plate 3.** *Cakras* for calming illnesses and acquiring wealth, and the articles used to perform the corresponding ritual. A separate folio, 55×20 cm.

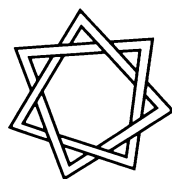
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES  
ST.PETERSBURG BRANCH



# **Manuscripta Orientalia**

*International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research*

Vol. 2 No. 1 March 1996



**75ESA**  
**St. Petersburg-Helsinki**

# Manuscripta Orientalia

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## Printing and distribution

Printed and distributed by Dekadi Publishing Ltd Oy, Helsinki, Finland

## Subscriptions

The subscription price of Volume 2 (1996) (*ca.* 288 pages in 4 issues) is US\$ 176.00 for institutions and US\$ 156.00 for individuals including postage and packing.

Subscription orders are accepted for complete volumes only, orders taking effect with the first issue of any year. Claims for replacement of damaged issues or of issues lost in transit should be made within ten months after the appearance of the relevant issue and will be met if stocks permit. Back issues are available for US\$ 50 per issue.

Subscription orders may be made direct to the distributor: Dekadi Publishing Ltd Oy, PO. Box 976, FIN-00101 Helsinki, Finland. Tel. +358-0-638 119, Fax +358-0-638 441. Also to the publisher: 14 Dobrolyubov St., apt. 358, 197198 St. Petersburg, Russia. Tel./Fax +7(812)238-9594, E-mail [bi@thesa.spb.su](mailto:bi@thesa.spb.su).

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*V. L. Uspensky*

## **TWO YEARS OF CATALOGUING OF THE TIBETAN COLLECTION IN THE ST. PETERSBURG BRANCH OF THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES: SOME PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES**

The St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (henceforth the Institute) possesses one of the world's largest collection of the Tibetan xylographs and manuscripts. Outside Asia it is the largest collection of such kind. Its origin goes back to the eighteenth century, and it had been increasing rapidly up to the mid-twentieth century.

At present the Tibetan collection of the Institute numbers about 20,000 items, the amount of works' titles has never been counted (surely, there are numerous duplicates there). The most voluminous are the collections of Tibetan books printed in the Peking and Buriat monasteries. The books printed in Central Tibet and, especially, in Amdo are also numerous [1].

Needless to say that the cataloguing of such a big amount of block prints is a very hard and time-consuming work. Attempts were made in the 1930s to make a card catalogue, but the Second World War calamities and the transferring of the Institute to another building soon after the end of the war, along with many other misfortunes of the time, prevented this work from being completed. At present a huge cardfile represents a sad memorial to this work, as the library numbers, which the cards refer to, have changed.

In 1992 the Institute signed an agreement with the Asian Classics Input Project (henceforth ACIP) on the IBM-based computer cataloguing of the Tibetan collection. According to the agreement, the necessary computer equipment was to be provided by the ACIP, and the Tibetan operators had to come to St. Petersburg. But it was only in May 1994 that the group of three Tibetan monks from the Sera Mey (Se-ra smad) Monastery (Bangalore, India), headed by Mr. Michael Roach, the director of the ACIP, arrived in St. Petersburg, being equipped with necessary computers. Since on the working group headed by Dr. L. S. Savitsky, the curator of the above-mentioned collection, has started the cataloguing. The very fact that the cataloguing project has been successfully carrying out up to the present day, is to a great extent due to the indefatigable labours of the three young Tibetan monks, namely Geshe Thubten Phelgye, Ngawang Kheatsun and Jampa Namdol. These three seem to work as patient and accurate as their ancestors who wrote, engraved in the wood-blocks and then printed thousands of books, information on which is now being input into the data-base by them.

It had been agreed initially that only a title catalogue would be compiled, but later Dr. L. S. Savitsky, together with Mr. M. Roach, elaborated a more detailed scheme including twenty-two parameters, according to which every entry had to be described [2]. This scheme is as follows:

1. **Catalogue Serial** of the computer catalogue.
2. **Collection Reference**, being the call number of the Tibetan collection for the entry described.
3. **Title** of the work described.
4. **Ornamental Sanskrit Title**, if occurs.
5. **Extra Languages**. Since there is a considerable part of bilingual texts, mostly written in Tibetan and Mongolian, and even tri- and quadrolingual ones, this parameter has been included only to mark the presence of a non-Tibetan language. No corresponding title in this other language is given.
6. **Monastic Seal**. Many of the Tibetan books bear the seals of monasteries, book-shops or persons they once belonged to. Now the chart of the seals is at the disposal of the working group.
7. **Brief Title**, being the (left) marginal title.
8. **Author** as given in the colophon.
9. **Year of Publication** as given in the colophon.
10. **Format** (xylograph or manuscript).
11. **Material** (provenance of the paper: Tibet, China, Russia).
12. **Paper Colour/ Edge Colour**.
13. **Grade of Paper**.
14. **Readability**.
15. **Tibetan Volume** as marked in the original entry.
16. **Pagination**.
17. **Lines per page**.
- 18—19. **Dimensions: Outside** (size of paper) and **Inside** (usually size of the wood-block frame).
20. **Location** (generally, the place of printing or, sometimes, the place of composition of the text as reflected in the colophon).
21. **Drawings**.
22. **Colophon** (complete text) [3].

It is hardly necessary to say that inputting of every entry described in such a detail requires a lot of painstaking labour from the Tibetan operators, and the completion of the cataloguing seems to be postponed, moreover that simulta-

neously with this work the operators were making a complete catalogue of the Tibetan collection kept in the St. Petersburg University library, which is much smaller than that in the Institute, having but a few duplicates. The situation is quite different in the Institute where hundreds of thousands items are kept, including numerous duplicates. At present every item is described anew regardless of the fact that a dozen of its obvious duplicates have already been input.

A regrettable omission in the scheme of description implied is the absence of the Chinese character(s) used in the xylograph either as a marginal title or a cover mark. This omission seems even more distressing if we take into account that these Chinese characters are very important for the identifications of the xylographs in Tibetan, which were printed in Peking, moreover that the Institute possesses a big collection of them.

Another problem arising from the vast amount of information being input is the providing of an easy access to the catalogued works. For example, how can one find in this computer catalogue information about the forth volume of Tsong-kha-pa's *gsung-'bum* of the bKra-shis lhun-po edition? How to reflect in the catalogue the original entity of the volume belonging to a certain collection of works when every entry is treated as a separate work, thus forming a conglomerate of texts of an obscure origin? The parameter number fifteen of the description scheme is sometimes of little help when you need a certain volume. Very often the information on where a volume or a work described was printed, is missing in the colophon, or this editorial colophon does not exist at all. For this reason, it is rather difficult to identify separate volumes of *gsung-'bums*, which are very numerous in the collection of the Institute, especially, when we deal with the editions, information on which is not available in the existing catalogues. The problem becomes even more complicated when we deal with a number of successive editions of a work, in

which one and the same colophon is reproduced — a point of a constant headache of scholars.

It should be added also that many of the Tibetan authors styled their names in different ways. Thus it would be useless to look for such an author as Ngag-dbang mkhas-grub, because this celebrated lama of Qalqa Mongolia always signed his works as Vāgīndra-paṭu-siddhi (the Sanskrit translation of his Tibetan name).

All these difficulties have been pointed out here in order to attract attention of the interested scholars who could give their valuable pieces of advice either on these or other related problems. In the opinion of Mr. M. Roach, with whom I have had a chance to discuss these issues, the problems mentioned may be considered as collateral ones with regard of the tasks of the present work which is aiming only at inputting the material existing.

Still the volume of information concerning each item looks impressive. Particularly valuable are the complete texts of the colophons of the works catalogued. Generally, their presence in the descriptions makes look valuable and interesting even the well-known popular Buddhist works copied and printed in numerous copies throughout the centuries, since the colophons often contain most precious information.

Some words should be said about the Buddhist Canon of which several editions are kept in the Institute. Definitely, they will not be described in the same way as other works. Though no special discussion on this issue have been made yet, it is obvious that the most important thing would be to identify its number in a corresponding edition, when describing the volumes.

The cataloguing project may be considered the most stimulating and daring attempt to provide vast information on the Tibetan written heritage, or, to be more exact, on the heritage of all those peoples who confessed the Tibetan Buddhism. If carried out successfully, it would enlarge considerably a corpus of information every tibetologist wishes to be in possession of.

## Supplement

Here is an example of the description of a text composed by the famous author Gung-thang dKon-mchog bstan-pa'i sgron-me, which has been catalogued by the Tibetan operators. A comparison can be made by the reader with its description in the catalogue of the Naritasan Institute for Buddhist Studies [4].

- 1: 19629
- 2: B8605/1
- 3: འཕྲུལ་ལྷན་འདས་མ་ལྷ་མོ་རིག་བྱེད་མ་ལ་བསྟོན་པའི་རྒྱ་ཆེར་འགྲེལ་པ་རྩི་རྒྱུ་སྤྲོད་བའི་སྐབས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་སོ། །
- 4: *Tri-vajra-āloka-bhagavatī-devi-kurukulle-studatīka-nama-bijahāra*
- 5: L(añca script) T(itle page only)
- 6: 21
- 7: བསྟོན་འགྲེལ།
- 8: བཙུན་པ་དགོན་མཚོག་བསྟན་པའི་སྟོན་མ།
- 9: NO

- 10: XYL
- 11: T(ibet)
- 12: W(hite), Y(ellow)
- 13: G(ood)
- 14: G(ood)
- 15: ཉི་པ།
- 16: 1A—137B
- 17: 6
- 18: 8.9 × 51.2 (cm)
- 19: 6.7 × 47.0 (cm)
- 20: NO
- 21: 1A — ལྷོ།; 2A — ལྷོ།; 2B — ལྷོ།

22: འཕྲུལ་ལྷན་འདས་མ་ལྷ་མོ་རིག་བྱེད་མ་ལ་བསྟོན་པའི་རྒྱ་ཆེར་འགྲེལ་པ་རྩི་རྒྱུ་སྤྲོད་བའི་སྐབས་བྱ་བ་འདི་ནི། དགེ་བའི་བཞེས་གཉེན་སངས་རྒྱས་དངོས་སུ་མཐོང་སྟེ། བསམ་སྦྱོར་གཉེས་གྱིས་ཚུལ་བཞིན་དུ་བསྟན་པ་ལ་གཞེན་བྱ་ནོར་བཟང་དང་ཚེས་མཚུངས་

མིང་། དེའི་མཐུས་ལྟར་དང་རྟོགས་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་གྱི་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས་གོ་  
 འཕང་མཐོན་པོར་གྱུར་བ་སྐབས་པའི་ རྒྱལ་མཚན་འཛིན་པ་ཚེན་པོ་  
 མཁུལ་གྱུབ་བསྟན་འཛིན་གྱིས། བསྟོན་པའི་རྩ་བ་འདི་ཉིད་པར་ཚེན་  
 ལྷན་བ་མཐའ་ཡས་ཀྱིས་རྒྱལ་དབང་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁུལ་པའི་འཕྲིན་  
 ལས་ཀྱི་སློབ་འབྲེད་དུ་གསུངས་པ་དང་ཕྱོགས་མཐུན་པར་སྐབས་མགོན་  
 མཚོག་སྐལ་རིན་པོ་ཚེ་སློབ་བཟང་གྱུབ་བསྟན་འཛིན་མེད་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་  
 ཞལ་སྒྲ་ནས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་པར་དཀར་པའི་མཛད་འཕྲིན་བསྟན་འགྲོ་ཡོངས་  
 ཀྱི་ཕན་བདེའི་དགའ་སྟོན་དང་ཆབས་གཅིག་པར་རྒྱས་པའི་ཕྱིར་དུ།  
 འདི་ལ་གསང་བ་གསུམ་གྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་གསལ་བར་སྟོན་ཅིང་། བྱུང་

པར་རང་ལམ་གྱི་ལུས་ཡོངས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་འགྲོས་དང་མཐུན་པ་  
 མིན་ཏུ་རྒྱས་པ་ཞིག་དགོས་ཞེས་གསུང་ནན་ཚེན་པོས་བསྐྱལ་པ་བཞིན།  
 མདོ་སྐགས་གྱུབ་བསྟན་ཡོངས་སུ་རྟོགས་པའི་མངའ་བདག་དཔལ་ཉེ་  
 རུ་ཀ་དང་གཉིས་སུ་མེད་པའི་བླ་མ་རོ་རྩེ་འཆང་ཚེན་པོ་རྩེ་བཙུན་དཀོན་  
 མཚོག་འཛིན་མེད་དབང་པོའི་ཞལ་སྒྲ་ནས་ཀྱི་ཞབས་རུ་ལ་སྤྱོད་པོར་  
 བསྟེན་པའི། བཙུན་པ་དཀོན་མཚོག་བསྟན་པའི་སྟོན་མེས། རྒྱལ་  
 བའི་ལྷན་གྱིས་ཟིན་པའི་ཚོས་གྲུ་ཚེན་པོ་བཀའ་ཞིས་འབྲིལ་དུ་སྐྱར་བ་  
 འདི་ཡང་གྱུབ་བསྟན་ཡང་སྤྱིང་ཕྱོགས་དུས་ཀུན་ཏུ་དར་ཞིང་རྒྱས་ལ་  
 ཡུན་རིང་དུ་གནས་པའི་རྒྱར་གྱུར་ཅིག།

Notes

1. For a more detailed exposition of the holdings of the Tibetan collection in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, as well as for their main features, see the forthcoming publication by the author of the present article in *Asian Research Trends*, No. 6 (1996).
2. Because Mr. Robert Chilton (ACIP) presented a paper dealing with the St. Petersburg Tibetan Catalogue Project at the Seventh Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (Schloss Seggau — Graz, June 1995), where the computer issues were discussed in detail, these matters are only touched upon in the present article. I am hoping very much that the paper by Mr. Chilton will be published in the proceedings of the Seminar.
3. For the transliteration system for Tibetan and Sanskrit used by the ACIP see “Entry operator transcription chart” in *Asian Classics Input Project*, Release 3 (1993), pp. 48—50.
4. *Descriptive Catalogue of the Naritasa Institute Collection of Tibetan Works*, ed. Ch. Yoshimizu, vol. 1 (Narita, 1989), p. 557, No. 2278. In this catalogue the Lhasa edition of the Gung-thang’s *gsung-'bum* is described, while the text described by the Tibetan operators originates from its Bla-brang edition.

